

SHAH ISMA'IL ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IN THE HISTORICAL AZERBAIJAN: DISCUSSION IN ART HISTORICAL TERMS WITH A PROPOSED COMPUTERIZED CATALOGUE

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Azerbaijan, its history, its archaeology, its architecture are almost unknown, or better, too little known in Europe: even in the largest European oriental library, the Library of SOAS¹, the entries under "Azerbaijan" in their computerized catalogue are only one hundred.

But the topic, and all the topics connected, especially for scholars of Caucasian and Middle East studies, seems now more and better studied."

Shah Isma'il bin Haydar (July 17th 1487-May 23rd 1524) and his mark on architecture of such a large region is to be studied, according new methods and aims.

The dynastic quarrels helped Shah Isma'il, the head of the order from 1499, in his war of conquest (1501-1503). Turcoman tribes of Anatolia were followers of Safawiyya Amasya, Karaman, Tekkely, and also in regions in dispute between Ottomans and Mamluks. Shah Isma'il, as the successor of the Akkoyunlu, claimed the region of Di-yarbakir. He seized Azerbaijan under his control in 1501, then he enlarged his state to Central Asia, to Marv, Herat and Samarkand. In 1507-1508 Ala ad-Daula was defeated and Kharput and Diyarbakir conquered, and the whole Kurdistan occupied. Also Northern Mesopotamia and Kharput and Diyarbakir remained under Safavid rule until 1515, Ahlat until 1517. In 1509 part of Georgia, Shirvan and Derbent were conquered.

In 1510 Shah Isma'il turned against the Uzbeg Khan of Tran-soxiana, and defeated them in Marv. In 1511 a revolt against the Ottomans rise in Tekke. Isma'il was thought to be the incarnation of the Godhead, and he himself the Mahdi. The head of the revolt, Shah Kuli was defeated in June 1511 near Kayseri: the rebels fled to Isma'il.

Trebizond and Erzinjaji were the basis against the Safawids. In 1512 Shah Isma'il commanded the governor of Erzinjan to lead several thousand of the Anatolian followers of the Safawiyya into Persia. In Anatolia 40.000 adherents of the Shi'a faith were been slain or imprisoned.

Selim began the long march to Persia, and whole the country became part of his empire.

In 1514 Shah Isma'il was defeated by the Ottoman Selim at Chaldiran. But in 1516 the Shah conquered again part of Georgia and the Caspian coast of Shirvan. The state perpetuated the Ardabil religious order, and the head was venerated as a divine being.

Shah Isma'il, great poet⁴ and an important contributor to the culture of his Empire, established at least two libraries in Tabriz and Ardabil. The tradition of establishing libraries, when manuscripts were very expensive, it an ancient royal tradition in this region: the libraries of Maiv, with the huge library established by Sultan Sanjar (1118-1157), burnt during the Mongol invasion, the complex of Maragha, scientific center with the famous observatory, a library, a school and other buildings, built in 13th century under the U-Khanid rule⁵ the library in the village of Sam (or Gazaniya), near Tabriz, built by Gazan Khan at the end of 13th century, two other libraries built by the minister of the same Khan little East from Tabriz, all disappeared.

Shah Isma'il met all these institutions, even well known in his country, also during his campaigns. In Central Asia the tradition of the Madrasa, a real



University and the Observatory built by the great scientist and ruler Ulug Begh in Samarqand, Bukhara, Ghizhduvand, may have left its mark.

The architecture of this period have been very imperfectly known.⁶ And even if Isma'il's accession was a turning point of the

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history of Iran, Azerbaijan and other regions, because of the political turmoil, little in architecture was produced. Not only, but the architecture, especially large religious complexes, continued the late Timurid style, and the other buildings like dams, pigeons towers, cisterns, ice houses and so on are especially hard to date. These buildings are usually omitted from general surveys, so the most profitable approach will be an accurate, complete survey of monuments, wish lists all buildings of those years in Iran, Azerbaijan, Western part of Central Asia, Eastern Anatolia, Mesopotamia.

Particularly useful will be a comparative analysis with the contemporary or not earlier very monuments of Central Asia (in today's Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) where the architects of the Timurid rulers had built, according to the definitive instructions, colossal complexes, clearly discernible and still preserved in a good number.

Also in this context, to have at our disposal exact, reliable, exhaustive lists, usable according to different criteria of research (either place, or datation, or kind of buildings, or kind of plan), that only a computerized catalogue makes possible, seems the only way of verifying every working hypothesis, of comparing different theories, of suggesting dating of non dated or with a controversial dating buildings and so on.

It is difficult to have a complete picture of the architectural production of a period so troubled, but fundamental for the following, extraordinary developments which took all, in broad sense, Iranian region, back to the magnificence of the never forgotten earlier ages (Achaemenid, Sasanian, Seljuq, Il-Khan), also because it falls on regions nowadays divided among different countries (and not long ago opposed each other): Turkey, Caucasian Republics of the former Soviet Union, Iranian Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan).

To dispose in a synoptical way of all the information related to the monuments built in the regions conquered by Shah Isma'il during the period that we are considering, enables to link up to this personage

more or less important buildings and to have a complete picture of the building works during those years.

Also the preservation of the monuments of this period can take advantage of the computerized cataloguing, which enables to have immediately up-to-date data about the present conditions of the buildings, about the previous restorations, about the damages suffered for different reasons (earthquakes, wars).⁸

Notes

1. School of Oriental and African Studies in London University.
2. A - Italian, I'm particularly proud, that in Venice, town deeply linked with this region, there is the chair of Azeri Language and Literature.
3. Hillenbrand R., "Safavid Architecture", in The Cambridge History of Iran, vol. VI, The Timurid and Safavid Periods., P. Jackson ed., Cambridge 1986, pp. 759-842, with a good bibliography is a reliable and useful text, about Shah Isma'il's architectural activity, only pp. 761-768.
4. Poet with the nom de plume of Khata'i. Bellingeri G., "Islam e turbe dell animal. La perfezione in difctto di Shah Isma'il Khatai", Annali di Ca' Foscari, 34, III serie orientale 26 (1995), pp. 319-325.
5. The observatory is dated by an inscription of 1258-59
6. For Eastern Anatolia: Sinclair T. A., Eastern Turkey: an Architectural and Archaeological Survey, 4 volumes, London 1987-1990. For Iran: Pope A.U. (editor), A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present, 6 volumes, London 1938-1939 (re-issued in 1967 in 13 volumes). For the former Soviet Union some useful studies published by Soviet scholars in Russian.
7. About architectural links with Central Asia in the former period: Bretanitskij L. S. K probleme vzairnosvjazej etnicheskoj obshchnosti kultur narodov Perednogo Vostoka - O svjazjakh arkhitektury Azerbai-jana i Srednej Azii, NAA, 1970, N6. Bretanitskij L. S., K voprosu vzaimosvjazi v srednevekovom zodchestve Azerbajdzhana i Srednej Azii, Doklady AN Azerb SSR, , IV. t. 7, Baku, 1948.
8. An international team of scholars is working about a large project of a complete computerized catalogue of all architectural monuments of Islamic world under the UNESCO patronage. The project is based in Italy, and the catalogue on CD-ROM will be published soon. The author wrote the five section of Azerbaijan, and Caucasus and Central Asia.

Xülasə

TARIXI AZƏRBAYCAN ƏRAZİSİNDƏ ŞAH İSMAYIL DÖVRÜNÜN ME MARLIQ İRSİ: TƏKLİF OLUNAN KOMPLTERLƏŞDİRİLMİŞ KATALOQL N SƏNƏT-TARİX İSTİLHLARINDA MÜZAKİRƏSİ

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Azərbaycan. onun tarixi, arxelogiyası, memarlığı Avropada, demək olar ki, məlum deyil və yaxud az məlumdur: hətta Avropanın ən böyük Şorq kitabxanası olan London Universiteti Şorq və Afrika Tədqiqatları Mərkəzi kitabxanasının kompüterləşdirilmiş kataloqunda "Azərbaycan" adı altında yoxdur.

Amma baxılan mövzu və onunla bağlı digər mövzular Qafqaz və Yaxın Şorq tədqiqatçılarına indi daha çox öyrənilmiş görünür.

Şah İsmayıl ibn I lcydor (17 iyul 1487 - 23 may 1524) və onun bu cür-böyük bölgənin məmarlığında buraxdığı iz yəni metodlara uyğun öyrənilməlidir.

Şah İsmayıl, dahi şair və öz imperiyasının mədəniyyətində dərin iz qoymuş hökmdar, Təbrizdə və Ərdəbildə iki kitabxana açmışdır. Əlyazmaların çox qiymətli olduğu bir dövrdə kitabxana açmaq ənənəsi bu bölgədə qədim şah ənənəsi idi: belə ki. Sultan Sencer tərəfindən osası qoyulmuş və Monqol hücumu dövründə yandırılmış Mərv kitabxanaları. məşhur rəsədxana, kitabxana. məktəb və digər tikililəri olan Marağa kompleksi, XIII əsrdə Elxanilərin hökmdarlığı dövründə tikilmiş tikililər, XIII əsrin sonunda Qazan-xan tərəfindən Təbriz şəhərindəki Şam (və ya Qazaniyyə) şəhərində tikilmiş kitabxana, Təbrizdən bir qədər şərqdə cəmi xanım naziri tərəfindən tikilmiş iki kitabxana məhv olmuşdur.

Şah İsmayıl öz yurdları zamanı həmin tikililərlə tanış olmuşdur.

Bu dövrün me'marlığı haqqında az məlumat var. Şah İsmayılın hakimiyyətə gəlməsi İran, Azərbaycan və digər bölgələrin tarixində dönüş yaratsa da, siyasi hərcmərclik üzündən **me** marlıqda az işlər görülmüşdür. Bələ narahət dövrdə me'marlıq yaradıcılığının tənqidi təsviri-

rini oldo etpıok mürokkobdir, soboblordon biri bu bölgonin hal-bazırda miixtolif ölkolor arasında bölünmosidir (Türkiyo, keçmiş Sovet İttifaqının Qafqaz Respublikaları. İran Azərbaycanı. İran İslam Respublikası. Əfqanıstan, keçmiş Sovet İttifaqının Mərkə/i Asiya Respublikaları: Turkmenistan, Özbəkistan, Qazaxstan).

Şalı İsmayılın işğal etdiyi bölgələrdəki tikililər haqqında mə'lumatın dövrəşdirilərək öyrənilməsi, bu şəxsiyyətin adı ilə bağlı bu və ya digər dərəcədə mühüm cəhətləri müəyyənləşdirməyə və o dövrün inşaat işləri haqqında tam təsvir yaratmağa imkan verir.

Şah İsmayıl dövrü tikililərin qorunub saxlanılması onların kompüter kataloqlarına daxil edilərək bugünkü vəziyyəti haqqında son məlumatın oldo edilməsinə, əvvəllərdə aparılmış bərpa və müxtəlif soboblar üzündən (zəlzələ, müharibə) xəsarət alması haqqında məlumatların dəqiqləşməsinə imkan verə bilər.