

HUSSEYNBALA MIRALAMOV

GATES OF GANJA

(Historical novel with two parts)

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Husseynbala Miralamov. Gates of Ganja.

(Historical novel with two parts)

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GATES OF GANJA¹

THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

ACTOR who plays Javad khan"s character

ACTRESS who plays Shukufa khanum"s character

ACTRESS who plays Malaknisa khanum"s character

ACTRESS who plays Astagul"s character

MUHAMMAD KHAN

VALI KHAN

AHMAD

GEORGI

FIRST DUKE

SECOND DUKE

ACTRESS who plays NONA"S character

PRIEST

PALACE COURTIERS

ACTOR who plays Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov"s character

LORIS

PORTNYAKIN

AIDE-de-CAMP

HAJI MALIK

VICEGERENT

¹ Gates of Ganja- Master Ibrahim ibn Osman made these gates by the order of Shavur I, ruler of the Shaddadids dynasty. External part of iron gates of Ganja fortress was decorated with ornaments and decorations according to chasing method. The master's name, creation date and some other ligatures (made by blacksmith Ibrahim ibn Osman ibn Ankaveykh, in 495) were marked at the top of the gates with "kufic" script, by the order of Shavur. In 1139, Demetrius I, Tsar of Georgia, invaded borders of Ganja and captured the city. Georgian army carried Ganja gates off and which are saved in Gelati Monastery up to nowadays.

First Part

First Act

SCENE. Some of the characters of the play in actor garments one by one, two by two or three by three ENTER and then EXIT stage by the same way.

ACTOR who plays Javad khan's character (enters). Well, I am Javad khan, son of Shahverdikhan, was born in 1748 in Ganja. A man should not forget great kindness. And I never come to the throne if Ibrahim khan, Qarabag's ruler does not support me. He was very good to me and I have come to the throne by his blessing in my thirty seven. We were like father and son. But much to my regret, we had a grudge against each other. The reason was my attack Georgia, joining Aga Mahammad shah Qajar. Besides Ibrahim khan other rulers also fell off in relations with me. I was alone and isolated. I tried to warm the coldness of our relations. To show my faithfulness to Ibrahim khan I sent to Shusha my son and daughter as hostage but he did not accept.

On March, in 1796 the cavalry of Ibrahim khan and Avarian ruler Omar khan attacked Ganja, fighters of Rahim khan from Charli joined them too. Tsar of Georgia Georgi knowing that it is a good

chance, attacked me with his thousands kinto². I was fully encircled. Then several months later shortage of foodstuffs began in my Fortress. More than five thousands people in Ganja died of starvation and thirst in front of my eyes. But I did not give myself up, continued to fight to the finish! The enemy saw my iron will and stepped back. I defended my self-dependence that costed dear. And for the first time I felt and knew that what is free spirit and morale. Look! My homeland Azerbaijan has been divided into many parts - Shaki, Shamakhi, Guba, Qarabag, Ganja, Iravan, Nakhchivan, Maku, Khoy, Qaradag, Ardabil, Talish, Tabriz, Urmiya, Maraga,, Sirab, Gilan khanates³, Jar-Balakan, Ilisu, Qazakh sultanate... Russia had been also divided into principalities... They united and became a State! Now they are giving orders to East and West! We will unite too, we will be a strong State too! I am longing for that and I have no any will except that! (exits).

ACTRESS who plays Shukufa khanum"s character (enters). Once I went to spring with the girls. When I began to fill my sahang⁴ by water a

² kinto- was a trader or an unemployed person mostly occupied in stealing or entertaining others in dukhans (restaurant), popular in Tbilisi in 19th century and early 20th century.

³ khanate - the territory which was under the dominion of a khan

⁴ Sahang or sanak- a long jar with a narrow long neck for water (made of copper) which azeri girls took to the spring water in the past times

boy on white horse came to me. There was tall papakh⁵ on his head, with long waisted outer garment, and silver dagger on his back... He asked for water. My grandma told that water was a repast of Imam Hussein⁶, and I filled a can and gave it to him. But I noticed that his intention was not to drink a water. He was casting a furtive glance to me. When he was gone I asked the girls who was he. They said he was Javad khan, don't you know? I really did not know him. Well, once when I was alone in the same place he came to me again. He asked for water again. I gave a can to him. Again he casted a furtive glance to me while drinking. He said:"Hey, girl, there is a wise thing in the water that you gave me. It does not make my soul soothe, it makes my heart very fiery". I felt he was tempting me. And I wanted to take my jar and leave the spring. But he barred my way, said:"I will send my match-maker for you to ask marriage. What do you

⁵ papakh - tall Caucasian hat usually made of sheepskin

⁶ Al-Hussein ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib (11 or 13 January 626 CE – 13 October 680 CE) was the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib (final Rashidun Caliph and first Shia Imam) and Fatimah Zahra (daughter of the Islamic prophet Muhammad) and the younger brother of Hasan ibn Ali. Hussein is an important figure in Islam as he is a member of the Ahl al-Bayt (the household of Muhammad) and Ahl al-Kisa, as well as being an Imam. he was killed and beheaded in the Battle of Karbala in 680 (61 AH) by Shimr Ibn Thil-Jawshan. The annual memorial for him, his family, his children and his As'haab (companions) is called Ashura (tenth day of Muharram) and is a day of mourning for Shia Muslims.

think?" My heart sank. I said son of khan never marry to the daughter of lower class! He said: If I am khan, you are also sultan!⁷ I laughed and answered: You are khan of Ganja, and what about me? Who am I? He said: You are Sultan of my heart! Do you think Ganja is bigger than my heart? I kept silence. I thought if he considers me as a king of his heart then I am inferior to none of those khan girls...

ACTRESS who plays Malaknisa khanum's character (enters). Shukufa khanum, you are talking so proudly as if you are the only sultan of Javad khan's heart.

ACTRESS who plays Astagul's character (enters). She is right... Why, we are here too!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Astagul! You make a song! Stop talking!

ASTAGUL. Why, Javad khan told me nice words too...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Never! He couldn't!

MALAKNISA KHANUM. Shukufa khanum, we always considered you as our elder lady. We obeyed you. We displayed obedience to you, listened to you, but...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. What? What do you mean?

MALAKNISA KHANUM. But... He was not dumb man when he remained with us.

⁷ Sultan - lord, ruler; master, sovereign, monarch; here - woman, lady sovereign; queen

ASTAGUL. Well, who has blue beads...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. You, barefaced, cut out your voice! Javad khan can't play with me "beads game!"

MALAKNISA KHANUM. Shukufa khanum, I felt long ago that you think of us as a bondmaid...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. (a little bit stubbornly) Yes! Who are you then? Javad khan married to you due to my advice!

MALAKNISA KHANUM. It is interesting! I haven't known about it! Why you needed a new wife of a man who had already one?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Javad khan had been so isolated, he was lost in thought day and night. And I thought if I would take you for him your brother Muhammad Hassan khan never leaves him in the lurch.

But I was failed. When he got into trouble your brother disappeared.

ASTAGUL. Why you took me for Javad khan then?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. I took you for him because of Armenians. They had to take into consideration our kinship ties and not make a split among us. You know, your real name is Astagin, I changed it and now we call you Astagul.

MALAKNISA KHANUM. Shukufa khanum, you really think that Javad khan needed the support of his wives' relatives?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Yes, sure! Don't you see we are surrounded by enemies? Our four sides

are not friends. I have given to birth at least three boys for him- one on his right, one on left and one on his back side! And what have you done for him? You gave four girls, that is all!

MALAKNISA KHANUM. Everyone has a fated lot in life, Shukufa khanum! God knows...

ASTAGUL. She is well, at least four girls gave to birth! But me... Javad khan didn't make a child... I mean I could not conceive a child by him...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. What a nice appetite you have!.. She wants to become pregnant by Javad khan! (Pause). Be off and clear out!

ASTAGUL. Yes, milady! Indeed! (exits)

SHUKUFA KHANUM. (To Malaknisa). You also go to Hell! (Malaknisa exits). They have much to say! I have to pull them up! (exits).

ACTOR who plays PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV'S character (enters followed by Portnyakin). Portnyakin, is it far to Tiflis?⁸

ACTOR who plays Portnyakin's character. No, Mister Sisyanov, we are reaching just the city.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. It is very cold here. I haven't felt cold even in Alpine Mountains.

PORTNAYAKIN. Perhaps you are sleepless and tired...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Not at all, Portnyakin! Sleeplessness and tiredness don't

⁸ In the past people called Tbilisi as Tiflis

affect me at all! It is something else, I don't know! I am not fully getting warmer...

ACTREES who plays NONA'S character. (enters the other side of the stage). Oh, my God! It is so cold today! I am shivering and shivering...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Look, Portnyakin, don't you hear? I am not alone to feel cold. So there is something in the weather indeed!

NONA. Cold winds are blowing from the direction of Ganja for ages... All Georgia is cold... Our churches are cold... Our rivers, lakes feel cold... Our trees are cold...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Portnyakin, who is she?

PORTNAYAKIN. Mister Sisyanov, she is the daughter of Georgian tsar. Nona by name...

NONA. Cold winds are blowing from Ganja for hundred years... (exits)

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Portnyakin, what do you think, maybe I am also cold because of that wind, blowing from Ganja?

PORTNYAKIN. Who knows, mister Sisyanov...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Ah, I wish we reached Tiflis as soon as possible...(they exit from stage).

ACTOR who plays LORIS's character. (a book in his hand enters). Once my father invited me and said: Revaz, I don't beleive to get cured of illness, most probably it is time to go to other world.

I am dying. And he took out of pillow a book and gave it to me and said: "This is the first book written in Armenian. Before you die please give it to your son too. And let your son also give this book to his son before dying." And in two days my poor father died... He had presentiment that he was going... Oh! So, we buried him... We were in deep mourning... Now I am free a little bit... Let me see what book it is we have to hand over from generation to generation... (reading) Vartapet Foma Metsopski. "History of Tamerlane". Vahhh! When we armenians say that we are unlucky and miserable no one believes. Look! The name of the first book written in Armenian! Why, Tamerlane, not Revaz? The response to this question is clear: we are really unhappy and poor nation. No, it can't be like that! I ought to read this book till the end. Evidently there are a lot of wise sayings in this book. Otherwise my father wouldn't... (exits).

Vali khan and Mahammad khan enter the stage

VALI KHAN. Mahammad khan, how things are going on in Iravan?

MUHAMMAD KHAN. Well, Vali kahan, how can be said, between and between! And what about Goyche?

VALI KHAN. Oh, my God! The same situation in Goyche. No choice!

MUHAMMAD KHAN. Then, we are almost between Javad khan and Russia, aren't we?

Both are shaking their heads and exit

HAJIMALIK (enters). Oh, they say, a rolling stone gathers no mass. You see, someone leaves home, but someone leaves the homeland. The latter we have to be sorry for. Even he is an enemy! This is the law of manhood!

Second Act

Javad khan's Palace. Bed-room. Javad khan and Shukufa khanum are sleeping. Semi-darkness. It is hard to distinguish household things- silk curtains, silver candlesticks.

Grand walls of Ganja Fortress seen on a light background of the stage. A man in white underclothing, is Javad khan, dragging the hard big load by groaning. It seems he is overworking himself by taking very heavy thing and becoming weak. As if he is going to fall on his face, but like a pighead he continues dragging...

JAVAD KHAN. I will... yes... I will carry it! At all costs! First this one I will carry, then that one! (he steps and stops). I will carry it! God will help me! (again steps and stops). Here they are... My Fortress, the walls of my Fortress are seen... I am reaching, yes, I am close to my Fortress... By God! (steps and stops again). No! I will not put it on the ground. I will carry it! Even my back and legs will be broken! I am not going to get rid of it! (to himself). Yes, yes, go on! You have to go on!... Pull yourself up! (He steps again. Suddenly an owl flying and coming up and turning over his head and begins to howl fragmentary). From where this bird has been come? Heyy, you, go away! Malicious! Away with you! Back to your nest! Get away! To Gelati Monastery! (Yelling) Or I will break your wings!

(Then seen sleeping Javad khan who is near his wife, he is yelling). Get away! Away with you!...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. (puting her hand on her husband"s forehead). Bismillah!⁹ Bismillah!... You, hey Javad, what did you say? What is the matter with you?

JAVAD KHAN (again yelling). I will carry!... You will see, I will... A little bit, then I am at home... Ya Allah!¹⁰

SHUKUFA KHANUM. (shaking her husband and she wants to wake him up). Bismillah... Bismillah... Oh, Javad, my God, wake up, wake up! Why are you shouting? (she wakes up and taking one of the candlesticks and lights it, coming to Javad khan shaking him again)

JAVAD KHAN (waking up and looking at his wife with great astonishment). Why you woke me up, Shukufa khanum?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Ah! What should I do? God knows, you were yelling in dream so that the whole Palace shuddered. I also trembled with fear.

JAVAD KHAN. I had a good dream. I was bringing back from Gelati Monastery Gate of Ganja! I almost was near the Fortress you woke me up! You didn"t let me to reach home... Alas!

⁹ Bismillah- a word taken from Quran: exclamation, used in the beginning of any action, sometimes horrible action, specially before starting to eat; here means in the name of God - Allah

¹⁰ My Goodness!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. If it is in this way why you were yelling?

JAVAD KHAN. There was an owl bowling around my head...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Oh! God forbid! What does it mean? I mean the owl in dream... I ought to ask Kheyransa tomorrow... She is able to realize what is what.

JAVAD KHAN. No need! That is only an owl! Let her to turn over! If you are afraid of the owl you ought not to build any house for yourself! Listen, Shukufa khanum, there are some matters that you discover them in dreams. Perhaps, the Gates of Ganja are "homesick". They are waiting for us. Well, a long time past since then... My heart bleeds each time when I look at their emptied place...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Well, that is why they are coming to you dreams...

JAVAD KHAN. Many times... No, this sort of things can't go! I must find a way out!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Go to sleep and rest a little bit, my dear! If God pleases, you will think about it tomorrow. You will use your brain. Shall I put out the candle?

JAVAD KHAN. Yes, please...

Shukufa khanum putting out the candle

Third Act

Palace of Georgian tsar Georgi. Tsar invited to his Palace well-known georgian Dukes.

GEORGI.(gloomy). Sirs, I have assembled you because of a very important matter. (pause, everybody looking at each other in anxious). Javad khan sent me a letter.

FIRST DUKE. Javad khan?

SECOND DUKE. Interesting!

PRIEST. (looking ironically). What he is writing?

GEORGI. He writes that we were friends and brothers always...

FIRST DUKE. He is telling lies! Falsehood! Who joined Aga Mahammad Shah Qajar and attack us?

GEORGI. Then, he writes he wants peace and we should live at peace...

SECOND DUKE. It is also outrageous! Blatant lie! If he wants a peace then why he has taken prisoner up to hundred our dukes?

PRIEST. Not for a year, not even for five years, for seven years sharply!

FIRST DUKE. Your Excellency, he has a secret intention, I think...

GEORGI. I don't care of it! But he wants us to return back Gates of Ganja in Gelati Monastery. He insists on and he menaces us! He wants those gates which our grandpa First Demetri took them from

Ganja to Gelati Monastery in 1139, when he invaded Ganja. A leaf of the Gate has been already used for the roof of Monastery. The other leaf of the Gate was fastened to the South fence of the Monastery to protect Fourth David's tomb, our grandfather...

PRIEST. Evidently, he wants to wage war...

SECOND DUKE. Yes, of course, the same I think. Simply he looks for an excuse...

FIRST DUKE. It is very serious! We have to think something.

GEORGI. You think...

FIRST DUKE. Your Excellency, what do you think, if we wouldn't give the Gates will he fight a war?

GEORGI. Sure! He is very sly and crafty person. He never misses good opportunity. I heard he became stronger, gathered so many young people and armed them to the teeth. To drop a hint he will attack us! But we are very weak now unfortunately, I am afraid we can't stand against him.

SECOND DUKE. Oh, my brothers, our homeland is in serious danger. We have to act indecisively. Sometimes sense solves hard problems very easily that never solved by any power. I propose to find allied powers...

FIRST DUKE. Good idea! You know, there are so many people who dislike Javad khan... For instance, Azerbaijani khans...

GEORGI. Yes, I know them well. But I am afraid though they dislike Javad khan they may take his side in this matter, I mean in the matter of

Gates... We have brought those Gates as the captured material during the glorious battle... This is our grandious historical triumph... Javad khan feels no pride in this victory! He writes me about emptied place of Ganja Gates.

PRIEST. Why? There is not an iron in Ganja, is there? Haven't they any single hammersmith to make gates?

GEORGI. They have both! If he wants he will put in order and make more beautiful gates than those one. But he doesn't want! He is obstinate! Why? Baccuse of history and his pride! I share your idea that we must find allied at any costs. We need a time. But Javad khan is waiting for an urgent response.

FIRST DUKE. If we have to return back Gates of Ganja to him then we ought to ask him instead at least our duke-prisoners.

GEORGI. You think we should write him a response letter in this content?

SECOND DUKE. Yes, Your Excellency! If we give him gates for nothing he would consider us to be chicken-hearted.

A Palace courtier coming into the room with emotion

GEORGI (nervously). Don't you know I am busy and we are consulting here with honourable guests? Why you squeezing in without permission?

PALACE COURTIER. Your Excellency, I have just got urgent news for you, I must tell you...

GEORGI. News? What news? Or Ganja people attack...

PALACE COURTIER. No, milord! New Caucasian Vicegerent Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov coming to Tiflis with his seven thousand troops!

GEORGI (smiling). Gentlemen, you spoke on ally since our discussion! That is our confederate! Our ally has already come by his own foot! He is Georgian - Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov! We must make a ceremonial reception for him! Grand welcome! Tell my daughter Nona to order maids to prepare the guest room! Most probably Pavel Dmitriyevich has been tired, let him rest at least for two or more hours. But in the evening I am going to give a grandious party for the honour of my esteemed guest.(to Dukes) You are all invited to the party! We should celebrate this successful day of our people and homeland! (to Palace courtier). Tell Javad khan"s messenger the letter will be answered in two days...

PALACE COURTIER. All right, Your Excellency! (urgently exits)

GEORGI. Now let us go and meet Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov!

Fourth Act

Same scene as First Act

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV (enters). When I arrived in Tiflis I looked around worriedly: there were too many people in the streets. It seemed to me that all Georgia had come to meet me. Kintos in wide pants were dancing and singing. Goblets made by horns filled with wine were delivered to all people. Georgian tsar with his daughter Nona was among them. Certainly, I was very pleased to be received warmly. I greeted Nona as old friends. I was interested in her, wondered if she was cold or not. At first she looked at me amazingly, then she smiled softly and then she said: "now I am ok". Strange to say, I was also not cold, not shivering any more. Then His Excellency Georgi asked me to take a seat near him in the coach. I got off the horse and took a seat in the carriage and we went to Palace. I was accommodated in the guest room, took a bath, then went to bed to rest a little bit. It was about five o'clock when I went to the evening party.

Palace of Georgian tsar Georgi. The hall has been decorated festively. Grand party organized for the honour of Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov. There are people of various classes taking part in the festive scene. The door of the guest room where Sisyanov rested is opened to the festive hall.

Orchestra playing "Suliko". The door of the guest room is opened. Georgi and Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov enter the hall under the storm of applause.

GEORGI.(to participants). Today is one of the significant events in the life of our people and homeland. We are together with our close kindred brother, adherent of Georgia Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov. You are welcome to your native land! We have the right to be pride of you! Our hearts are full of joy today! Today my daughter personally will take care of you and fill your glass with Kartli wine. Most probably you haven't drink this wine for a long time. This wine kept in Suram Fortress vault is about thirty years old not less...

NONA (standing up swiftly, she has a crown over her head decorated with big diamonds). Please, sir! Help yourself to the wine!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. (getting from her goblet). Thank you! (drinking at one gulp) Ah! Great! Really fantastic!

Applause by participants. Music. Dance begins.

NONA. (dancing with Sisyanov). I have a strange feeling in my heart. As if it is my birthday today: I am in a rose-coloured dress, pink bow on my head, girl-friends around me, young boy-friends... One of my boy-friends inviting me to dance, it is my first dance and I am dancing... He is very handsome, dancing very well, my girl-friends are bursting with envy... Oh, not! Today is my engagement!... I am engaging to the most handsome

man in Tiflis, all dukes, their wives... all people are in our ceremony, fasten on my finger engagement-ring...then waltz played and... No! Oh, no! Today is my wedding-party! I am in a white bridal dress! Red ribbon is tied on my waist! We are hand in hand taking a seat in the carriage...Zourna players are playing in the street.... Kintos are dancing... We are taken to the Church! The Priest blessing us. With his blessings we register marriage. They bring us wine in glasses like in Europe... We drink our first glass at one gulp!... Am I wearing you with my idle talks and my strange feelings?...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Oh, absolutely not! It is my pleasure! What a beautiful thing in life to listen to a lady like you!

NONA. You have arrived in time! I was very worried for my father! Poor Pa! His hands were trembling and shivering from fear! Or maybe from excitement? I don't know what he would write to Javad khan in this condition!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Who is Javad khan?

NONA. He is ruler of Ganja!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes... Yes...

NONA. Fortunately, God sent you here! Please, help my father!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes, surely! Why I am here? I have come here only for this mission!

NONA. Oh, my God! I am so happy! To speak frankly, I wearied you with my chatterings...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Oh, not at all! Don't think about it! Please...

NONA. Maybe another music... something European, don't you mind?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. I think, our national music is ok! It is like wine, affective!

NONA. Perhaps you need to rest a little bit?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV.(smiling). Why? I did nothing!

NONA. Then let me pour you wine!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. No, let us have a break. We have a long night in front...And I suppose you wouldn't let me to be alone. Now, with your permission, I would like to talk a little bit with your father...

NONA. Yes, go. But don't make me to wait for a long time...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. I promise you...

Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyvanov coming nearer to Tsar Georgi

GEORGI.(excitingly). Why are you alone? Where is Nona? Well, I charged her to take care of you, not retire from you! (looking there and here for his daughter, calling). Nona!... Nona!...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Don't worry! I am ok! And I wanted we talk a little

bit privately. Tete-a-tete! You know, I am official person!

GEORGI. You are Georgian! That is the main point!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. (laughing loudly). Ha-ha-ha!

GEORGI. Why are you laughing?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. (quietly). Don't pay attention. Something was called to my memory...

GEORGI. Mr. General, what did you remember? Could you tell me?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Why not? When I win a victory in the battle I was always praised to the skies as Russian, but when I lost the battle I had been put to shame as an unskilful Georgian. That is it! Well, these are needless things! Now, I am interested in your problems.

Tsar Georgi and Sisyanov going to a quiet corner

GEORGI. You know, we are surrounded by tatars. We are to be under threat and in great danger. To tell the truth we have already found common language with some of tatars khan. But this guy, I mean khan of Ganja, to get a working agreement with him is very difficult.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. What kind of man he is after all?

GEORGI. Too much arrogant! He doesn't like to obey! Had a chance displaying his power! He can't live without battle like his ancestors. He wants

me to return back Gates of Ganja! Namely those gates taken here by your grandfathers after Shamsaddin battle. They are captured materials. The only sign of that battle. Tell me please, how we return Gates of Ganja which are so dear to us like cross? Neither history, nor the spirit of our grandparents forgive us! Look! How many our lands occupied by them? In spite of that we signed peace treaty with them to live without fear. But all in vain! Had they become stronger they attack us...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. That is to say, are they really strong?

GEORGI. Yes, sure! Not only men, women also are fighting!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. It seems that they don't give no rest to you. Is there any weak feature or point in theirs' character?

GEORGI. Yes, there is! There is not national unity and tenderness among Azerbaijani khanates. Had they chance they are fighting with each other.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Clear! And what about Armenians? Can we rely on them?

GEORGI. Unlike tatars armenians are very slyboots. They are also nasty and treacherous. To become traitor- this is the main duty of them! They have come to Caucases, they called themselves "kakhdagan" that means "escaped people from gallows". What would you expect from woman having many husbands or from slave having many owners? They are just like that, mainly gluttonous...

They live at somebody else's expense. If you don't give them bread for a day they will begin to steal, for two days they will cut your head, for three days they will burn your house, devastate your hearth...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. And what about the armenians' attitude in regard for tatars?

GEORGI. In the presence is ok, but in an underhand way not good! How to say, in presence a god father of their child, but in underhand enemy!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Great! I am much interested in underhand way! As to Javad khan, don't worry, I myself will write him... Probably, I made Nona to have been alone so long....

GEORGI. Nona!.... Nona!... Please pour wine for Pavel Dmitriyevich and me....

Nona enters. Pouring wine for Sisyvanov and her father.

GEORGI. Let us drink to the honour of Georgia!

Fifth Act

Same as First Act. Music. Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov dancing with Nona and then going to the guest-room

LORIS. (enters, reading the book). Vartapet Foma Metsopski was born in the second half of the 14th century in Aqiovit district placed on the bank of the Van Lake. His father Stepannos was devout and took his son to Sukhara school where well-known vartapets Sarkis and Vartan were teachers. Foma studied here for 12 years, afterwards, he came to Metsop Monastery. (hesitating for a while). That is it! It seems that he took the name of Monastery for himself as nickname!.. Foma... Foma Metsopski!... Well, let us continue to read... (again reading). He has been given lessons for 35 years. In 1441 in Kilikiya after wreck of rubenids power he moved the Katalikos throne to Echmiadzin... (again hesitating for a while, then reading)... Vah.... Look, it says...."There are three Tense Forms: Past, Present and Future Tense Form. Vartapets should narrate the events happened in the Past, they must investigate the present events and they must inform on events to be taken place in future. At the same time they must explain Haykazyan people that our eternal and everlasting enemies are Middle Asia padishahs¹¹,

¹¹ here: monarch

Azerbaijani khans and the Ottoman sultans... To save ourselves from them we must always try to demonstrate ourselves like miserable and unhappy people and to set great hopes on our Christian brothers..." (to himself). We are following the same way! (praying, making a cross and exits).

Late night. Dawn has not come yet. Ganja is sleeping. Suddenly gates of Javad khan's Palace is knocked at aloud. Javad khan waking up, rising, putting on his dress, taking his saber. The Gate is knocked again at aloud.

JAVAD KHAN. (calling butler). Heyy, Ahmad, you chap, don't you hear the gate is knocked? Have you got sound sleep? Wake up, be quick! Go to the door! Tell me who is that? What he wants at late night-time?

AHMAD (in the next room, answering). Oh, my God! I didn't hear, my lord! Just now, just now! I am going...

JAVAD KHAN (to himself). It is the first time that my gate is knocked at late night-time. Who might be? He is either very close person or a stranger. I wish it was a good sign!

AHMAD (enters, making a bow). My lord, there are eight horsemen! They would like to see you!

JAVAD KHAN. Who they are?

AHMAD. My lord, I don't know.

JAVAD KHAN. What they want?

AHMAD. They say, new Vicegerent of Caucasus himself sent them to you. They have come to take you to Tiflis.

JAVAD KHAN. (thinking for a while). Tell them to go to karvansaray¹², let them come after morning worship...

Ahmad exits, Shukufa khanum enters

JAVAD KHAN. How is the bride?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. She would soon be giving birth...Her contractions are so strong and the pain so severe that... I want to send Ahmad for mamatcha¹³, let him bring her soon.

JAVAD KHAN. You don't let her to be alone as soon as midwife comes.

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Don't worry. I am going to her. I have heard noise, that is why have left the room... What is the matter? Who is coming?

JAVAD KHAN (smiling softly). The owl that I dreamed...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. What? I don't understand...

JAVAD KHAN. Tsar of Russia appointed new Vicegerent to Caucasus...His residence placed in Tiflis... He has sent his people to take me to Tiflis...

¹² karvansaray- also known as caravansary, caravansera, or caravansara in English, was a roadside inn where travelers could rest and recover from the day's journey. Caravanserais supported the flow of commerce, information, and people across the network of trade routes covering Asia, North Africa, and southeastern Europe, especially along the Silk Road.

¹³ midwife

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Why so late night, not in the daybreak?

JAVAD KHAN. I suppose, he wants to say that he can wake me up any time he likes... Take it easy! I have seen too many people like him... Better go to bride... She is alone...

Javad khan making morning worship, finishing ritual

JAVAD KHAN (praying, rising his hands up to skies). Oh, my God! I have only request for You! You save my country and people! Give us Love, Mercy, Kindness, unite us! Don't let us separate and break! Let us live under one State! I have no any request from you! We want to live independently! Freedom! That is the only sweet thing in the world for human being! You adorn our souls with Mercy! My late father Shahverdikhan said: "My son, neither you trample on somebody's right nor you force somebody to accept your right!". Heavens! Free our spirits! (finishing his worship, calls butler)

Ahmad enters

JAVAD KHAN. Have Vicegerent's people arrived in or not?

AHMAD. My Lord, they have not left yet... They stood in front of Gate until morning!

JAVAD KHAN (smiling). Better tell they were on guard of our Palace!

AHMAD. I don't know, my Lord! Oh, my God!

JAVAD KHAN. Tell the Head of mission to come in!

AHMAD. All right, milord!

Ahmad exits, Loris Melikyan enters the room

LORIS. Good morning, khan!

JAVAD KHAN.(supposingly looking at him).
I think I have seen you once... Whwre I don't remember... But... You seem to be familier to me...

LORIS. I am Loris, Khan! Don't you remember? I worked in your mill...

JAVAD KHAN. Oh, yes, you changed the stones, don't you?

LORIS. Yes, of course!

JAVAD KHAN. And have you finished the task there?

LORIS. Yes, sir!

JAVADKHAN. And what are you doing now?

LORIS. Iam in Tiflis now! At the office of Vicegerent!

JAVAD KHAN. When he arrived in Tiflis?

LORIS. Two days ago...

JAVAD KHAN. And you immediately found a chance to go to him to be under his bosom? Is he armenian too?

LORIS. Unfortunately not! He is Georgian...

JAVAD KHAN. What is his name?

LORIS. Pavel Dmitriyevich Sisyanov.

JAVAD KHAN. What is his profession?

LORIS. Serviceman, sir!

JAVAD KHAN. And military rank?

LORIS. General...

JAVAD KHAN. Probably, he has been brought up at orphanage! He grew up without father and mother, isn't he?

LORIS. No!

JAVAD KHAN. Really? But Russians always used the other nations' children and prepared generals for themselves.

LORIS. No, khan, he came of duke stock...

JAVAD KHAN. Oh, too many Georgians who are saying usually that he has come of duke stock! Strange! I have hundred Georgian prisoners in my dungeon. They all say they have come of duke stock! We heard there could be two or three Dukes, or at least five Dukes, but not hundred Dukes after all!

LORIS. Khan, he is a very noble man!

JAVAD KHAN. Noble man! If he is really a noble man why he sent his people at midnight to my house? Tell me, why you have come?

LORIS. Khan, I have to take you to Tiflis! This is the order of the Vicegerent of all Caucases!

JAVAD KHAN. Not all Caucases, he might be Vicegerent of Georgia! Because Georgia united with Russia on a voluntary basis...

LORIS. Khan, you are not any more Khan of Ganja! You are discharged from this position.

JAVAD KHAN. Who said? Sisyanov?

LORIS. Yes, sir.

JAVAD KHAN. Go and tell him that Ganja Khanate is a sovereign state! It has own territory, own flag, own State emblem, own money, own seal, and at last own ruler! Ganja has never lived under

the protection of Russia and will never live under anybody's patronage too!

LORIS. Khan, Mister Sisyanov is not going to wage war! He wants to be friends with you...

JAVAD KHAN. I will choose the friends and enemies...

LORIS. But he wants everything to be of one's own free will...

JAVAD KHAN. Free will? How?

LORIS. Mister Sisyanov wants you to be again khan of Ganja, but instead you have to give him twenty thousands manat, two hundred fifty tagar¹⁴ wheat, two hundred fifty cereals, six hundred tagar barley per year... And instead of those you will be given ten manat silver coin per day for your living... And you don't interfere in the affairs of Shamsaddin region. And you have to take an oath that you will serve Russian Padishah faithfully. Oh, yes, one more thing... And you have to give your son Husseynqulu aga for safekeeping in Tiflis, at the office of Mister Sisyanov...

JAVAD KHAN. After all, I have two deposits there, aren't they enough?

LORIS. (surprising) Two deposits?

JAVAD KHAN. Yes, two deposits! Gates of Ganja! Tell Georgi not to rely on Sisyanov! I have sent him a letter! Let him reply! And as to your new Owner, tell him, these type of things are solved by

¹⁴ unit of weight, used in Azerbaijan in XIV-XVIII centuries during elkhan and khanate periods. Some sources say that 1 tagar equals to 83,2 kg.

unsheathing one's sword! (drawing his sword). He is seeking a death for himself in Caucases!

LORIS (fearing). Kahn, dear me, ok, all right, I will tell. Sure! Please give me a letter, I will take it to him! Who am I? I am only a slave! I am a servant! You order me to bring stone for mill, I do my best! He tells me go and tel him my order, I do my best! I repaet again: Who I am? I am only a slave, that is all!

JAVAD KHAN. Now, go away, a slave! A man who came for years in spite of springs, summers, autumns and winters and reaching the top point he will never return back by my one sentence! It is an ill-fated wind! I have two ways: to give myself up or to fight! If I give myself up maybe they will not disturb my family and they might give me something for living only! Honour, pride, good name, honesty would be lost! And I will lose my respect among people! And if I fight, and be captivated by them or wounded or died they will not mercy to my family, they will kill even my grandchildren. No, I must fight! Because there is much more pain in the first way than the second one! No! I must fight! I must fight for my pride and freedom! I must fight for the sake of my homeland and people!

Sixth Act

Same as First Act

LORIS (enters, reading the book). "In the early morning Tamerlane attacked

Armenian Fortress in Van district. Ah! Alas! Bloody Fate! Oh! Alas! Bitter destiny! You could see there wreck and losses, dangers reminded the other world! All Fortress was in mourning! Sobbing, crying heard everywhere! Severe Ruler ordered to captive women and children, but ordered to chuck all men through the fortress. Dead bodies were piled up so that by chance I fell down the top and was alive..." (to himself) Wooh! Alas! What happened? How he was alive, vartapet Foma Metsopski was alive! Poor man! (looking here and there, then whispering). I have no any doubt of it! There can be no doubt that all those which had been written there are true! Quite true! All the actions- cocerning the prisoners and men thrown out of the Fortress, Foma Metsopski who was alive on the dead bodies... That is truth! But there is one thing that hesitated me! When we have built Fortress, when? And if we have built any Fortress and when we named it as Armenian Fortress? Why, we never built Fortress, did we? Oh, well, maybe it is advised like that... Ok, let it be... (shrugging his shoulders). I don't know! God knows!..(exits)

heated neither by Nona nor by wine! I don't feel even the heat of the stove! Maybe because of old age? Maybe I have got a cold? Or maybe it is the cold of destiny? It is playing with...

Portnyakin enters

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV.
Portnyakin, what news? Loris hasn't come yet?

PORTNYAKIN. Mister Sisyanov, he has just come!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. And Javad khan also...?

PORTNYAKIN. Not... He has sent a letter... (giving the letter). Shall I call Loris?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV.
Portnaykin, I don't receive milksops... We gave him a commission, but he couldn't fulfil a task! But I wanted to do for him a goodwill... His fault! (opening letter and reading, hes face changing, squashing in his palm, the again making it in normal shape and reading, thinking for a long while, then putting the letter to his porcket)

PORTNYAKIN. Mister Sisyanov, it is said, Javad khan is very rude! Is he writing something wrong that is not polite?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. No, it is ok! Nothing! Only one sentence! That is private! That is all! It seems he doesn't want to come and to obey! Pigheaded!

PORTNYAKIN. Well, he chosed the way of war, didn't he? Are we going to fight?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes! Let it be, I don't mind! You take a sheet of paper and write what I say. (Portnyakin taking a pen and a sheet of paper, writing). To Ahmad khan, Avar Ruler! I am in Tiflis since few days and I would like to find time to meet you, be your guest and stay there for two or more days. But I am very busy with military affairs. To tell the truth, it is my fault a little bit. Why on earth the God made me such hard-hearted? I like battle-fields! I want the heads of human-beings to be cut and rolled on the ground like an apple, rivers turned into bloods. (to Portnyakin). Go on! ... I want to burn haystacks wherever I attack... Fire, fire, and fire everywhere! I want to destroy houses, large buildings... I want to hear men and women's sobbings mixed with cattle's bellow...

PORTNYAKIN. Mister Sisyanov, to speak frankly, I didn't understand anything. What letter is it?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Why? Each war should be needed to win psychologically before battle...

PORTNYAKIN. Are we going to wage war with Ahmad khan or Javad khan?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Surely, with Javad khan...

PORTNYAKIN. And why we write to Ahmad khan?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. You think, I must write to each Azeri khans with whom I

am going to wage war a separate letter like this one? I know Ahmad khan well. I have read information about him in Sankt-Peterburg...He is a gawky man and chatter-boxer. He can't keep a secret. He likes gossiping. And after getting this letter he would surely tell much more to Azeri khans including Javad khan. Have got awared now?

PORTNYAKIN. Yes, Sir!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Then don't delay the letter. Be quick and send it urgently!

PORTNYAKIN.(taking military position) All right, General Sisyanov! May I go out?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. You may go! (Portnaykin exits. Sisyanov taking out his porcket Javad khan"s letter. Suddenly voice of Javad khan heard from the back stage). "You are seeking a death for yourself in Caucasess!" (squashing the letter and trowing it into the fire). We shall see! We shall see!..

End of First Part

Second Part

Seventh Act

Palace of Tsar Georgi. Priest and Dukes sitting in encircled position

GEORGI. Dear Padre! Dear gentlemen! I have good news for you! To speak frankly, I awfully was afraid Javd khan would come and meet Pavel Dmitriyevich and have intercourse with him, hold up relations with him warmly in spite of that he is Georgian. Anyway, he is a serviceman, official person! He might have probably taken the interest of State but not us! And we could have been suffered of course! But fortunately Javad khan was obstinate as he regularly be! In this case Javad khan"s disobedience was made furious His Excellency Sisyanov. And now we can hope, as His Excellency wrote in his letter, for our Shamsaddin region, those lands will be soon belonged to us!

FIRST DUKE. What about Ganja and Qazakh?

GEORGI.(smiling). A bit later... Don"t be in a hurry!

PRIEST. First of all we must build churches and religious houses in freed places.

GEORGI. Yes, yes! Right you are! I agree with you absolutely!

PRIEST. In regret, His Excellency Sisyanov, Georgian child, has not yet come to our Church! We

hadn't time to meet with him though it is very important. Our religion prefer respectability, call everybody to be in good manners, to love each other. Imagine that Georgia accepted Russian protection. Will Tsar officials respect and esteem Georgian Church?

GEORGI. I think they will! They are also Christians. Dear Padre! Don't be offended with him! He is official person! He has less time! As I mentioned before though he is originated from Georgia but he brought up in Sankt Peterburgh... If he doesn't come, you go to him! You display kindness! (to Dukes). It also concerns you! Each day one of you should go to him! You make good relations with him! Take to him expensive gifts and presents! Most probably he ought to give to high rank officials something and change their opinion...

FIRST DUKE. Yes, of course! Otherwise to keep this high position in his hand is not possible... You might be lost and say "farewell!" to your position!

SECOND DUKE. We have to assist him in military affairs too.

GEORGI. Yes, it is necessary! Though he is responsible for seven thousands troops!.. we have to support him!

FIRST DUKE. If we give him one thousand troops it would be not so bad!

GEORGI. We will...Why not? If you need any additional information you consult Nona... She is with him every day... I charged her not to let His

Excellency be alone... We have to try to make Sisyanov to attack Ganja at any costs. Javad khan threats me again. He made inquiry Loris to tell me not to rely on anybody, return back to him Gates of Ganja...(to Dukes). Gentlemen, we are very passive! Sisyanov is our son, but Armenians are crawling around his head. I don't understand, what kind of people they are, they are flowing like water everywhere...

PRIEST. The armenians have betrayed Javad khan to Sisyanov and at the same time they have betrayed Sisyanov to Javad khan. You never know whom they render a service...

FIRST DUKE. As clear as a day! They know! And it is clear only to them! Why, you don't know them! How many times they betrayed us? Though we share our bread and water with them any chance have they got they will dig a pit for us! They are professionals in giving a judgement! They will make you enemy to anybody, including your brother! Trick and sluness! That are their basic features!

GEORGI. We have to be very careful! Very careful! Don't forget that Georgian destiny is going to be solved now!...

Eighth Act

JAVAD KHAN. There is a proverb that I want to verify. What do you think?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. What proverb it is?

JAVAD KHAN. It says that if you want to buy a land buy it from a stony ground. And if you want to get married to a girl then marry to those who has a brother... I followed this proverb...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. And what have you lost?

JAVAD KHAN. Nothing... But...buttonhole is narrowed little by little I see...From one side Russian General Sisyanov, the other side Georgian Tsar Georgi... They want to destroy my hearth and home... Well, in this case... they say a friend in need is a friend indeed. You know who are real friends and who are not...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Well, when you have seen unfaithfulness in my brothers?

JAVAD KHAN. I never get into trouble... and I can't say who is who. But now I think hard times are coming, the situation is really growing very...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Ah, please, don't tell me a story! It is not so bad...Why? Azerbaijan is not only your homeland... Where are the other khans? Inform them and let they also come and you discuss, talk together, find a solution... God forbid, you can meet difficulties and then it would be too late...

JAVAD KHAN. No, Shukufa khanum, I will not beg for help... They know the situation better than me... Let them make a decision...who wants he will come...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Will you invite khans to "name-day" ceremony of Ugurlu"s child?

JAVAD KHAN. Of course, I will...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Ok, then, you try to hint at...in a nice way...

JAVAD KHAN. No, I can"t. It doesn't become me... If they speak on this topic I shall tell them about the situation... Otherwise, I will hold my tongue...

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Yes, sure, they will start a conversation. They never let you be alone...As to my brothers, they will come undoubtedly and with their detachments...

JAVAD KHAN.(smiling). Better say they will come with the whole region!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Why not?

Lights are changed

Ninth Act

Lights are changed. When lights are on a room in the Palace of Javad khan is seen.

JAVAD KHAN. (to guests). Muhammad khan, what is the matter? You fell into thinking...

MUHAMMAD KHAN. Oh, not a bit... Javad khan, I think years past very fast... I remember Ugurlu's "name-day" ceremony, years ago, but today we celebrate his son's name-day... I congratulate you! Let him become famous!

JAVAD KHAN. Thank you, Muhammad khan!

VALI KHAN. Ganja became very nice! It took a fancy to me! The Juma Mosque turned out brilliant.

JAVAD KHAN. It is the work of Architect... Sadiq by name...

VALI KHAN. I also want to build the same Mosque in Goyche...

JAVAD KHAN. Inshallah!¹⁵ Good deed!

VALI KHAN. Javad khan, the silver coins that you minted I got... Thanks a lot for that. I liked them. I think they are better than Russian and French coins..

MUHAMMAD KHAN. Mirror also was good. We liked it too...

¹⁵ If God willing!

JAVAD KHAN. Heyy, you, men, have your seats, please. You have come just now... Tired. Help yourselves to a cup of tea! We shall have time to speak...

MUHAMMAD KHAN. When your domestic servants was talking I have heard - they say Russians are going to attack Ganja? Is it true?

VALI KHAN. By the way, I have also got this news...What is new Vicegerent's name, is he Sisyanov?

JAVAD KHAN. Yes, he is!

VALI KHAN. Ahmad khan speaks about him much more...He says that Sisyanov is very cruel and merciless...

JAVAD KHAN. Sour vinegar harms its jar!...

MUHAMMAD KHAN. I don't beleive that he will attack you...

VALI KHAN. I am not sure too...

MUHAMMAD KHAN. He is as General Zubov...

VALI KHAN. We will try he to be on friendly terms with you...

JAVAD KHAN. White or black snake, damn them both!

MUHAMMAD KHAN. We should try to make peace with him. God knows what I have done for the purpose of peace... I quartered the armeninans in Iravan khante who removed from Iran and Kars. I provided them with land to build houses. Some of them was engaged in trades, some of them engaged in carpentry and bricklayering, some of

them became cobbler and potter... I permitted them to build Church too. But now I undanstand that I was wrong. If that is going like this I think for peace we might have given to them everything that we have...

VALI KHAN. To tell the truth I am also sick of that! Yes, if you got peace you can govern and rule over people. To live in peace and quiet is good. But... You are among two ways- beard and moustache! Javad khan, if you are got accustomed to power you don't want it to be lost. You try this new Vicegerent to be our friends.

JAVAD KHAN. We were friends barely with General Zubov... He listened to me anyhow...

VALI KAHN. If you want Sisyanov also would listen to you...

JAVAD KHAN. He has no intention to be friends...

MUHAMMAD KHAN. From where do you know?

JAVAD KHAN. If he, son of a bitch, really had a goodwill mission, he would not wake me up late before morning worship! It seems to me you are...

VALI KHAN... No, no! For God's sake! Never! Where you are we also there! But again, I tell you, think a little bit! You have to think well. It might be armeninans" trap too.

MUHAMMAD KHAN. Yes, right he is! We must be sober-minded. And now, what are you thinking to do?

JAVAD KHAN. Sisyanov wants me to obey Russia! To accept Russian protection! And give to Georgians Shamsaddin lands! I can't accept any of these terms!

VALI KHAN. But if he began to wage war what would happen then? Can you stand? He has guns, cannons, military supplies, more troops includingly...

JAVAD KHAN. Yes, I know.... Vali khan... I know... But I assure you! I will fight to the end! I will die in the battle-field, that is all! If I give them Shamsaddin lands today, tomorrow my grandchildren will give them Ganja! If I accept Russian protection tomorrow my grandchildren will be born like a slave... Grandchild should guard what his grandfather guarded! If I fight today tomorrow my grandchlidren will fight! We must fight for liberty of Spirit! People who possessed free spirit have their own State and Homeland! I also want to have my own State and Homeland like others!

VALI KHAN. Javad khan, nor living man all things can! One swallow does not make a summer! In this case we ought to help you! Tomorrow I will sent to your power five hundred horsemen!

MUHAMMAD KHAN. One thousand horsemen from me! I will come myself too. We will fight shoulder to shoulder! But we haven't gun!

JAVAD KHAN. We have both- swords and guns! We need only joining! Let us unite! This is the matter of honour! This is the matter of self-esteem! But one man no man! Let us be hand and glove! Be

determined persons! But, my brothers, I haven't invited you here because of that! Really and truly, God knows I invited you to my grandchild's name-day! To celebrate it!

Tenth Act

Sisyanov pitched army camp near Ganja. He is in his camp. Shawl on his neck. Writhing by cold.

PORTNYAKIN. Mister Sisyanov, I see you are cold again, aren't you?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes, sure! It is very cold! It is freezing hard today! Really bitter frost!

PORTNYAKIN. Mister Sisyanov, too many march and attacks... We are going and going.... we are in the fields for years... Beleive me, Sankt-Peterburg is seemed to me like dream... If I listened to my mother and stay at the Palace and serve there maybe I would be at the Theatre these hours and watching ladies by opera-glasses...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Hmm! It is not a good sign to remember and think on powdered faces of ladies before battle by a military officer!

PORTNYAKIN. But what about you? Don't you miss wonderful ladies of Sankt Peterburg?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. I have already forgotten ladies...since long time!

PORTNYAKIN. (smiling) And what about Nona? She is near you the whole day....

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. (smiling). You have good observation ability! Keeping your eye on her! Yes, really, she is near me the whole day! But ofically, not more! She is

interested in Georgian destiny only! She knows that I am old...

PORTNYAKIN. They say you are also Georgian... Is it right?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes, it is right! I am Georgian!

PORTNYAKIN. Do the high rank officials know where you have originated from?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Of course! (laughing aloud). If I win the battle they say "thank you, you are Russian warlord!", but if I lose it they say, he is Georgian, nothing else!

Both smiling

PORTNYAKIN. I wonder, what they would say after this battle?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Who knows! Anyway, let us try they to call us russians. Well, what do you think about it?

PORTNYAKIN. It is strange, very strange I am afraid this time... Everything is against us! Weather, the spirit of our troops... Our five hundred soldiers having now stomach-ache...Dysentery!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. It is natural case before battle! Don't worry! (pausa). It seems to me the wind blowing from Ganja smelling something specific.

PORTNYAKIN. It smells plov.¹⁶ It is prepared with rice, meat, dried fruits, currants, chestnut and

¹⁶ plov- a kind of Azerbaijani dish, prepared with rice, meat and dried fruits, national meal with rice

saffron... Today the muslims have Ramadan¹⁷ holiday.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Very good! So cover for a saucepan will not be opened!

PORTNYAKIN. Don't you think that it is a sin?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. I am a soldier! The guilt is to be lost in the field-battle! We must have loss as less as possible in this battle! We have much work to do in Caucasus! Baku remained yet! Baku attracts me like magnet. And it seems to me that I will finish my carrier in Baku! Baku battle will be my last battle!

PORTNYAKIN. Why, Pavel Dmitriyevich, you are so young! His Excellency Emperor will never send you to go into retirement!..

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes, His Excellency Emperor never send me to...But what about destiny? It depends...

PORTNYAKIN. I can't recall and think that you are so pessimist and mystical...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Well, forget! You will lead the troops to the battle!

PORTNYAKIN. Thank you, Mister Sisyanov!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Why thanks? You will thank me after victory when you will be decorated with St.Georgi Order from His Excellency Emperor by my recommendation!

¹⁷ Ramazan- the ninth month of the Muslim year

AIDE-de-CAMP (enters). Mister Sisyanov, there is somebody from side of enemy! He wants to meet you!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. (in good fig) Is he a messenger? With letter?

AIDE-de-CAMP. No, he is not a messenger! He has not a letter too. He says he has something for confidentially.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Let him come in! (AIDE-de-CAMP exits). Portnyakin, I guess your hypothesis are right. Most probably Javad khan repented for his behaviour. He is going to find ways for truce...

Loris enters

LORIS (to Sisyanov). You are Mister Sisyanov, I know you! I am very proud of being here in front of you!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. You are speaking eloquently! I have less time... Tell me who are you? What do you want? What is your aim to have come here?

LORIS. I have brought for you Ganja map as a gift! And I know khnate at my finger-tips.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. (examining his fingers). But I see that you have four fingers not five!

LORIS. O, yes, sorry! I have lost one of my fingers in the battle between armeninans and muslims...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes, go on...

LORIS. The walls of Ganja Fortress is made by onefold like Iravan khanates one...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. So they can't stand our cannon-balls...

LORIS. Sure! But Javad khan wanted to lay one more fold! He couldn't get arround! No time!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Tell me how many soldiers he has?

LORIS. About three thousands not more!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. And all are armed?

LORIS. Yes, sure!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. What type of guns they have?

LORIS. Rifles and swords...They have also three or five cannons... I know it as well as my five fingers... (looking at his fingers) oh, sorry, as well as my four fingers...

Laughing all together

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Well, what do you want from me instead of this information...

LORIS. I have only one request: you kill Javad khan! That is all! If you need I can inform you everything what is going on in Palace.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. So you may go there and be inside the Palace... Is it possible for you?

LORIS. Yes, sure!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. How?

LORIS. My sister Astagin is in Palace. She is Javad khan's wife.

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. So you are relatives...aren't you?

LORIS. Yes, sure!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. And why you hate him like enemy?

LORIS. Because he couldn't make a child and my sister could not become pregnant from him... If she would, we would have grown rich and inherit wealth and property and so on...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Clear!

LORIS. May I go out?

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes, you may! (Loris exits). When I arrived in Tiflis His Excellency Georgi told me that the armeninans are very hypocrite and traitors. They never be friends. They are double-faced. He was right... really right!

PORTNYAKIN. But we must use them for our purposes...Undoubtedly!

Town Square

JAVAD KHAN. Maybe this is our last battle! Maybe we are riding for the last time. Maybe we are rattling the sabre for the last time. At any costs we must show enemy his place! This is the proving ground and battle of manhood, bravery, diligence, honour and dignity! We ought to be blameless and irreproachable! We must fight to the last drop of blood and defend our country homeland, its mountains and fortress, its fields and valleys and

hand over them from generation to generation! A man should be afraid of losing his homeland only! I call you all to defend our homeland! I challenge you to display courage! I believe you to respond to my challenge!

Eleventh Act

Lights switched off. Then lights turn on. House of Hajimalik. In the yard.

VICEGERENT. Daddy, russians occupied Ganja Fortress, the town was taken by storm! Shops and markets were ransacked. The fire consumed the whole houses. Sobblings, weepings and cryings for help, disgust, loathing! Everywhere! People saving themselves ran away and escaped in Shah Abbas Mosque, but all in vain! They burned the Mosque too! People burned while alive and were reduced to ashes!

HAJIMALIK. Shut your mouth, guy! You always give me bad news! You never told good news! Unpleasant boy!

VICEGERENT. Why, Dad! You want good news? I have good news! But first, you ought to reward glad news! Otherwise, I wouldn't tell!

HAJIMALIK. I don't beleive in your good news!

VICEGERENT. Oh, Daddy, give me gift please, you give me!

HAJIMALIK. Well said: The goat is afraid of getting himself into trouble but the butcher is seeking for fat! You, boy, people are killed, but you ask for gift!

VICEGERENT. Why not, Daddy? Our enemy was dead!

HAJIMALIK. Who is our enemy, guy?

VICEGERENT. Don't you know? He is Javad khan!

HAJIMALIK. Javad khan?

VICEGERENT. Yes, sure! You told me that you had only one enemy by name Javad khan! So he was dead at last! You did escape with life and limb after all!

HAJIMALIK. Javad khan was my personal enemy, son! There were private problems between us! They were our own problems! There is a man who leaves home, but there is also a man who is great loss for the nation! Javad khan is a great loss for the nation! You, away with you! Be off! I don't want to see you! Ganja was reduced to ruins! Oh, my God! What will happen to us? How will you see our last days?

Twelfth Act

Lights switched off and then turn on. Nona's room.

NONA. (clasping in the arms Sisyanov's legs). It is so cold, my body doesn't grow warm! Before it seemed to me that that is because of Ganja winds. Ganja was invaded and captured, but my trembling has not gone away yet! I nearly drank a jug of wine! But not warmed yet! I sat in front of stove, fire smelling with oak was icy! But my hands and legs got frozen! My fingers are numb with cold! I thought if I get warmed near you, in your bed! And I see that it is impossible! This cold will haunt me perhaps for the whole of my life! Writ large on my face!

SISYANOV(on his feet, it seems he is speaking not to Nona, to somebody else). It is strange, I am also cold! Neither Ganja victory, nor stove, neither wine for thirty years, nor your attractive body warm my body! Javad's spirit gives me no rest, lets me have no peace! To tell the truth, I did not want to kill him! But I had no choice! I waited and waited for his capitulation! He didn't give himself up! This is destiny wind! We will be cold forever even during hot summer times!

NONA. The most horrible thing is that cold wind blowing from you to me...

SISYANOV. Maybe God turned me into ice?

NONA. What shall we do?

SISYANOV. Nothing! We shall be cold! That is all!

Juma Mosque. Inside people.

Lights changed. Ganja.

SISYANOV. I called you here for the purpose of submitting to you Decree of His Excellency Emperor! The inhabitants of the city must pay 20 thousands per year! And besides you must issue supplies - 250 tagar wheat, 250 tagar cereals, 600 tagar barley per year! Since today you must provide issue supplies the Russian army located in the city. Since today name of city is changed and will be called Yelizavetpol! People who use the word Ganja in streets, markets, stores. square, karvansaray will be punished undependently on his language, class and position. Hands will be cut! Tongues will be cut! But he will not be killed! He will live under suffering torments from this punishment. Let it be a lesson for others! That is why I am calling you to be obeyed!

People crying aloud "Ganja!" "Ganja!" and they all thronged arround crying "'Ganja!"

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV (to Portnyakin, confusing). No, it would be very difficult!

PORTNYAKIN. The same I think, sir!

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. What shall we do, then?

PORTNYAKIN. Better leave here, or great masses would not be calmed...

PAVEL DMITRIYEVICH SISYANOV. Yes, I see... You are right, let us leave here...Be quick!

They are leaving. People crying on "Ganja! Ganja!"

PORTNYAKIN.(enters, while he is speaking on the monitor shown Sankt Peterburg Winter Palace). On the day Javad khan was dead in Sankt Peterburg there was a condolence ceremony for late Yelizaveta, Emperor's wife, who died a year ago. Dukes, boyars, German Kayzer, The King of France, Austrian Duke, many people had been invited to the "Year Ceremony". Strauss waltzes were played. All were dancing. Suddenly the doors of saloon opened. Entered a man who was looking for somebody with great joy. At last he came up to Emperor, standing in front of him and submitted to him a letter fixed by a seal. The Emperor read the letter, then turned to guests, said:"Úrrah! Ganja was taken! And the brave Russian General Sisyanov proposes that as the mentioned victory happened by chance to the ""Year Ceremony" of Late Yelizaveta we change the name of Ganja into Yelizavetpol! I think for this proposal you may open champagnes and fill your glasses!"

Orchestra playing, all are dancing.

Thirteenth Act

*Lights changed. Palace of Javad khan.
Shukufa khanum and Sisyanov*

SHUKUFA KHANUM (to Sisyanov). What did you come for? How dared? (pause). Don't you fear that you would be killed here?

SISYANOV. No! I know a guest never be striken in Azerbaijan!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. It depends on the guest!

SISYANOV. It makes no difference! Guest is guest, even if he is an enemy after all!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Well, why have you come for?

SISYANOV. Sometimes you think about the person whom you defeated for days, for weeks and for years... Since many days I dream Javad khan. I dream that he is cutting my moustaches with his silver saber... I never have moustaches... but he cuts mines... I made him good proposals... no war, khanate will exist... simply a little bit compromission... that is all! He did not accept! Why? I haven't understood yet!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Your proposal was a slap in the face, not more! He would never live taking your slap in his face!

SISYANOV. And why the other khans didn't show manliness like him?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. What them had to do?

SISYANOV. Why, what? They had to unite and help Javad khan!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. But they didn't!

SISYANOV. But to my information, one had to send three hundred, one had to send five hundred and one promised to send thousand horsemen!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. They didn't send!

SISYANOV. But they promised..

SHUKUFA KHANUM. They didn't keep their words! They told fibs!

SISYANOV. And Javad khan beleived their empty promises!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Never!

SISYANOV. And why he decided to fight alone?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. There was not any other way out for him! And sometimes he didn't want to be debted in front of his people! He did not want to efface himself! People who live like Javad khan should die as Javad khan!

SISYANOV. So he knew he would die, didn't he?

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Yes, sure! When he left home we forgived each other!

SISYANOV. The next day when he died I decided to bear all expenses of his funeral ceremony. But then I changed my mind. I thought it would offend your self-esteem!

SISYANOV. Right! And I wouldn't care that you are a guest, I will kill you with Javad's sword!

SISYANOV. Please, don't be angry! After all, I changed my mind! And I have heard that you intend to bury Javad khan in Iran being careful of something!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. Do you think it is possible? Do you really think that Javad khan lost his life for Iran? Did he make a martyr of himself for Iran? No! He was killed for a righteous cause!

SISYANOV. I ordered to fix a place in the Shah Abbas Mosque for his grave... Holy place...No one ever touches!

SHUKUFA KHANUM. I can't understand the meaning of your attention and care! Perhaps you killed him physically, but he killed you morally! Please, go out!

SISYANOV (to himself). Maybe this woman is right! I killed him physically, but he killed me morally! (exits)

SHUKUFA KHANUM (softly falling on her knees, crying). Javad! You broke my backbone! You gave a greta trouble to me, Javad!

Lights switched off

ACTOR who plays the role of Loris (enters, the book in his hand, reading). Tamerlane after driving away all armeninas, haykazyan nation, called his severe rulers and asked:"Have you ever heard that any of the previous padishahs displayed a brave action like me?" They answered:"No, Sir, You are more respectable and famous than Prophet. God blessed you and forgived all sins that you did. You may go on to torment for seven years. You will

in Paradise, but your enemies will be in Hell!" (shuts the book). Well, as to him, we will be in a hopeless condition in the other world too...

ACTOR who plays the role of Sisyanov (enters). If I am not mistaken it was 17th February in 1806. Garabakh, Shaki, Shamahki khanates had been already occupied. I wanted to occupy Baku khanate to finish my task! But my health was not good, I had high fever...I couldn't even rise from bed. I said: "Am I going to die indeed? As Javad khan said, have I come to Caucasus to meet my death?" We went by the roads towards Baku for three days, on February 20 we arrived in Baku. I stayed in front of Shamakhi Gate of Icharishahar and sent my messenger to Husseinqulu Khan handing to me the keys of the town and to be surrendered. For a while the gate opened and I saw a short man taking in his hands a golden round tray with town keys inside. I told him to go away. It can't be like this. Let Husseinqulu khan himself bring me the keys of the town. The short man said nothing and went away. I was in bad state and fixed my eyes on gate. Suddenly I saw Husseinqulu khan taking golden tray in his hands inside town keys was coming up to me! When he reached me he threw down the round tray and quickly drew his sword and slashed it to my head and I fell to the ground!.. (exits)

PORTNYAKIN. Sisyanov's head rolled like a ball on the ground. There were too many legends on that head later. One said that Husseinqulu khan sent it to Iran Shah as a gift and instead he got from him

hundred gold coins. The others said that in order to have Javad khan's revenge the people passed his head through pitchfork and walked in Ganja streets. But real history remained inside the History Box. Who opens it he will get a real information! (exits)

Backfront scene. Majestic walls of Ganja Fortress. Javad khan's spirit is seen. He is in white underclothing. He is dragging the hard big load by groaning. It seems he is overworking himself by taking very heavy thing and becoming weak. As if he is going to fall on his face, but like a pighead he continues dragging...

JAVAD KHAN'S SPIRIT. I will... yes... I will carry it! At all costs! First this one I will carry, then that one! (he steps and stops). I will carry it! God will help me! (again steps and stops). Here they are... My Fortress, the walls of my Fortress are seen... I am reaching, yes, I am close to my Fortress... By God! (steps and stops again). No! I will not put it on the ground. I will carry it! Even my back and legs will be broken! I am not going to get rid of it! (to himself). Yes, yes, go on! You have to go on!... Pull yourself up! (He steps again. Suddenly heard cracks). Perhaps, that owl again howling! (foot-steps are heard)

SISYANOV'S SPIRIT. Homeless, nestless a single spirit!...

JAVAD KHAN'S SPIRIT. I am a spirit too. I am a spirit of Javad khan!

SISYANOV'S SPIRIT. Javad khan..... Javad khan.... Old my acquaintance!

JAVAD KHAN""S SPIRIT. Do you know me?
SISYANOV""S SPIRIT. Yes, sure! And very well!

JAVAD KHAN""S SPIRIT. (looking carefully). Well, where is your head?

SISYANOV""S SPIRIT. Husseinqulu khan cut my head! In Baku, in front of Fortress walls... I was beried without head! Like this!

JAVAD KHAN""S SPIRIT. Yes, I see.... Now I know who are you! Sisyanov! I had told that you came to Caucasus seeking for your death!

SISYANOV""S SPIRIT. Yes, you told... you told.. Never mind what you said! No use of remembering those days! Well, what are you carrying?

JAVAD KHAN""S SPIRIT. Gates of Ganja....

- End -

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