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CONTEMPORARY AZERBAIJANI–GEORGIAN LITERARY RELATIONS: LEILA ERADZE AND DILARA ALIYEVA

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Abstract. Beginning from the mid-twentieth century, the literary friendship between Azerbaijan and Georgia – particularly in the field of poetry – entered a new stage within the framework of comparative literary studies. There were, evidently, certain factors that gave rise to this development. Above all, the popularity of Samed Vurgun among Georgian poets and writers, his frequent visits to Georgia, his reputation across the Soviet Union, and the active participation of Azerbaijani poets and writers living in Georgia all contributed to the intensification of these literary ties. Within the scholarly sphere, this cooperation reached a new phase through the interaction between the Georgian literary scholar Leila Eradze and the Azerbaijani literary scholar Dilara Aliyeva. The poet, translator, and literary critic Leila Eradze became one of the most dedicated translators of Azerbaijani literature into Georgian. Dilara Aliyeva, for her part, not only studied the Georgian version of the *Koroglu* epic but also actively promoted Azerbaijani–Georgian literary friendship. She rendered invaluable services in translating Azerbaijani literature into Georgian. During the 1970s and 1980s, Leila Eradze was well known in the Azerbaijani literary community. She was awarded the honorary title of *Honored Worker of Culture of Azerbaijan*. Eradze actively participated in numerous cultural and literary events held in Azerbaijan and made special efforts to strengthen and expand the cultural and literary relations between the two neighboring and friendly peoples. She translated and published into Georgian the poetry collections of prominent Azerbaijani poets such as Samed Vurgun, Suleyman Rustam, Nabi Khazri, Nariman Hasan-zade, Jabir Novruz, and Isa Ismayilzade. Leila Eradze also translated into Georgian a number of prose works by Azerbaijani writers, including Mirza Ibrahimov's *Parvane*, Ismayil Shykhly's *Mad Kura*, Ilyas Afandihev's *The Willow Trench*, and Hasan Seyidbeyli's *The Telephone Girl*, as well as collections of short stories by Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, Isa Huseynov, and Alaviya Babayeva, thus introducing them to Georgian readers.

Key words: Azerbaijani–Georgian, contemporary, literary relations, artistic translation, *I Love Georgia, Songs of Friendship*, Leila Eradze, Dilara Aliyeva, Madad Chobanov.

Introduction. Since the mid-twentieth century, literary friendship between Azerbaijan and Georgia – particularly within the sphere of poetry – has represented a new stage in the scholarly study of comparative literature. There were clear reasons for this development. Above all, Samed Vurgun's popularity among Georgian poets and writers, his frequent visits to Georgia, his recognition throughout the Soviet Union, as well as the participation of Azerbaijani poets and writers residing in Georgia, all contributed to the deepening of these literary connections.

In the field of literary scholarship, these ties reached a new stage of development through the work of the distinguished Georgian poet, translator, and literary scholar Leila Eradze (1930–1998) and the prominent Azerbaijani literary scholar and translator Dilara Aliyeva (1929–1991). Eradze became one of the most devoted translators of Azerbaijani literature, while Aliyeva, in addition to studying the Georgian version of the *Koroglu* epic, also acted as an ardent promoter of Azerbaijani–Georgian literary friendship and mutual cultural exchange. She rendered exceptional services in translating Azerbaijani literature into the Georgian language.

Until the end of her life, Leila Eradze remained a passionate advocate for Azerbaijani literature. Born in Tbilisi in 1930, she defended her doctoral dissertation on Georgian–Azerbaijani literary relations. She was the author of two monographs and about one hundred scholarly articles on the subject. Her research also addressed the life and work of Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, who graduated from the

Gori Seminary and for some time lived and wrote in Tbilisi. Eradze also translated his short story *The Lost Donkey* into Georgian.

Discussion. Leila Eradze was a laureate of the State Prize of Georgia named after I. Machabeli and received her Doctor of Philological Sciences degree in 1990. Beginning in 1995, she worked as the First Secretary of the Embassy of Georgia in the Republic of Azerbaijan, where she was responsible for the development of cultural and scientific relations between the two countries.

Leila Eradze consistently took an active part in numerous literary and cultural events held in Azerbaijan and devoted special effort to the expansion of cultural and literary cooperation between the two neighboring and friendly nations. From the 1970s to the 1980s, she was well known not only in Georgia but also in Azerbaijan, where she enjoyed great respect and recognition within the Azerbaijani literary milieu. In acknowledgment of her significant contributions, she was awarded the honorary title of “Honored Worker of Culture of Azerbaijan.”

Leila Eradze translated and published in Georgian nearly thirty poetic and prose works by leading representatives of Azerbaijani literature, including the poetry collections of Samed Vurgun, Suleyman Rustam, Nabi Khazri, Nariman Hasan-zade, Jabir Novruz, Isa Ismayilzade, and others. She also translated into Georgian numerous prose works by Azerbaijani writers, such as Mirza Ibrahimov’s *Parvane*, Ismayil Shykhly’s *Mad Kura*, Ilyas Afandiyyev’s *The Willow Trench*, Hasan Seyidbeyli’s *The Telephone Girl*, as well as collections of short stories by Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, Isa Huseynov, and Alaviya Babayeva, thus introducing them to Georgian readers.

The chairman of the Writers’ Union of Georgia, Grigol Abashidze, emphasizing the strong interest in Azerbaijani literature in Georgia, highlighted the significant role of Leila Eradze as one of the key architects of Azerbaijani–Georgian literary relations:

“Many of our writers have translated, with true affection, the works of their colleagues from the fraternal republic. Among these translations are the poetry collection of Suleyman Rustam and, translated by conference participant Leila Eradze, Mirza Ibrahimov’s novel *Parvane*, which will soon be published” (Abashidze, 1980, p. 2).

One of the first poets translated by Leila Eradze was Samed Vurgun. It is well known that the theme of Georgia occupied an important place in Vurgun’s creative work. In his speeches, reports, and articles, he often referred to Georgian literature and to both its classical and contemporary representatives. Eradze not only translated his poetic works but also conducted in-depth research on the Georgian motifs in his oeuvre. She particularly examined how the history and contemporary life of the Georgian people were reflected in Vurgun’s writings. In her view, the Georgian theme appeared not only in his poems *The River Kura* and *Salute to the Leader* but also in his dramas *Vagif* and *Khanlar*. In these works, the poet praised the Georgian land and its natural beauty.

In her article “An Unknown Poem by Samed Vurgun,” Eradze concluded:

“If Samed Vurgun, in the above-mentioned poems, glorified the Georgian land, its rich and enchanting nature, and the friendship of nations, then in his plays he succeeded in creating Georgian characters who vividly express the psychology and temperament of the Georgian people” (Eradze, 1970, p. 6).

Her analysis of the characters Shaliko in *Vagif* and Koba in *Khanlar* once again demonstrates her deep knowledge of and profound engagement with Vurgun’s creative heritage.

In addition to being a distinguished poet and translator, Leila Eradze was also a skilled researcher who studied numerous problems of Azerbaijani literature. During her research in the Samed Vurgun archives, she discovered two important documents related to Georgian literature. The first was a 21-page typewritten manuscript dedicated to the Georgian poet David Guramishvili, and the second was the autograph of the poem “Rustaveli.”

The manuscript on Guramishvili’s life and works demonstrates that Vurgun had thoroughly studied the Georgian poet’s creative legacy in preparation for his jubilee. It is also known that Samed Vurgun

not only translated Shota Rustaveli's *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* but also frequently referred to Rustaveli in his speeches and articles. Therefore, when Eradze discovered the poet's unpublished poem "Rustaveli," she did not conceal her deep excitement:

"The second interesting document we found in Samed Vurgun's archive is the autograph of the poem *Rustaveli*. This poem was not included in the published collections of the poet's works" (Eradze, 1970, p. 6).

Eradze argued that the poem was written on the eve of Rustaveli's jubilee, possibly to be recited at one of Vurgun's public appearances. Both the discovery of the poem and Eradze's commentary on it were a novelty for Azerbaijani literary scholarship. She noted:

"The poem, written in syllabic verse with lines of sixteen syllables, ends with the half-line this world is my empty dish,' indicating that the poem remained unfinished. From the general tone and style, it is evident that Vurgun intended to continue revising the poem, which likely explains why it was never published" (Eradze, 1970, p. 6).

In her article "Samed Vurgun and Georgia," Eradze further expanded her research by determining the date of the poet's first visit to Georgia at the beginning of his literary career. Referring to Vurgun's 1929 poem *The River Kura*, she concluded that the poet celebrated the unity of the Azerbaijani people and their Georgian brothers. The choice of the title *The River Kura* was not accidental, as the river symbolizes both a physical and spiritual bond between the two nations. This symbolism is vividly reflected in the lines:

"Behind Tbilisi, on Gazakh's ridge,
Both belong to you – lands of friendship."

Building upon this poem, Eradze concluded that the Georgian motifs in Samed Vurgun's creative work were not accidental but were profoundly connected to his ideals and humanistic worldview (Eradze, 1970, p. 198).

The researcher also turned to Samed Vurgun's drama *Vagif*, focusing particularly on the characters Shaliko and Tamara. In her view, the Georgian characters created by the poet in this play are especially noteworthy. Shaliko is portrayed as a valiant son of the people, a courageous fighter who does not spare his blood in the struggle against the enemy. The scholar emphasized that the theme of friendship, which occupies a central place in Vurgun's creative work, stems from the historical traditions of both nations:

"Samed Vurgun often wrote about the unity of the political interests of the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples. During the Great Patriotic War, in his article *Our Oath*, the poet spoke about the joint struggle of the Transcaucasian peoples against the German invaders and their historical heroism." (Eradze, 1970, p. 1980) In her research on Samed Vurgun, Leila Eradze also explored the poet's personal friendships with Georgian writers and poets, particularly highlighting his close relationship with Giorgi Leonidze. She believed that there existed a profound creative kinship between Vurgun and Leonidze – one that transformed their personal friendship into a symbol of interethnic unity. Their letters to one another reveal the warmth of their mutual admiration and artistic respect.

As an example, Eradze refers to Leonidze's poem *Portakhala*, published in the journal *Druzhba narodov*, and to Samed Vurgun's letter written in response to this poem. She sought to uncover the reasons why the image of the Mother created by Leonidze had moved Vurgun so deeply, concluding that the theme was emotionally close to him as well. Citing the poet's letter, she wrote:

"It is difficult to express in a letter the deep impression your poem made on me. You call it a lyrical poem, but as the philosophy of your work itself confirms, I regard this beautiful lyric as a true epic – about the great Georgian people, who for centuries have lived by honest labor, suffered greatly, and at last have earned immortality and eternal dignity through their moral courage and devotion to work" (Eradze, 1970, p. 201). According to Eradze, one of the main reasons why *Portakhala* left such a profound impression on Vurgun was the image of the Mother. As the poet's letter suggests, this image of a noble Georgian woman remained indelibly imprinted in his memory.

Beyond her translations, Leila Eradze also undertook literary research on Azerbaijani prose that contained Georgian themes. Alongside her translation of Ismayil Shykhly's novel *Mad Kura (The Wild Kura)*, she analyzed the Georgian motifs in Azerbaijani fiction, offering valuable critical reflections on its themes and characters. Her interpretation represents an important example of external literary criticism of Azerbaijani literature.

It is well known that *Mad Kura* contains extensive descriptions of the Gori Seminary, and Eradze rightly emphasized its crucial role in the cultural and educational life of the Caucasian peoples:

“In these schools (such as the Gori Seminary established by Tsarist Russia in the Caucasus), alongside the agents of colonial policy, there also worked democratic educators armed with progressive ideas” (Eradze, 2015, p. 12).

Providing Georgian readers with detailed information about Ismayil Shykhly's life and creative path, Eradze accurately identified the main idea of the novel:

“The idea of the work is the gradual disintegration of an old and doomed society and its inevitable tragic end. The writer generalizes the tragedy of one family against the background of class conflict, giving it broad social significance” (Eradze, 2015, p. 12). The scholar devoted particular attention to the character of Jahandar Agha, analyzing the processes taking place within his family and assessing him not only as a representative of the landowning class but also as a complex individual. Jahandar Agha instinctively senses that everything is changing and nothing will remain as before; he contemplates the need to adapt to this transformation:

“In this feudal-patriarchal order, where the idea of changing the traditional world and its rigid laws seemed unimaginable, the first sparks of renewal arise, prompting Jahandar Agha to send his son to the Gori Seminary to receive an education” (Eradze, 2015, p. 12).

Eradze grasped the spirit of the novel well and correctly identified the true reasons behind Jahandar Agha's defense of Göytəpə (Goytapa) from the Tsarist Cossacks. Jahandar Agha refuses to conform to new norms, yet he also realizes that time will not allow life to continue under old laws. She also noted the writer's use of the restless, impetuous Kura River as a powerful symbol of time and change. Eradze regarded *Mad Kura* as one of the most significant works of modern Azerbaijani prose and lamented that Georgian literature had not yet produced a comparable novel reflecting similar social processes. Throughout her entire creative life, Leila Eradze demonstrated herself to be a true friend of the Azerbaijani people and a devoted promoter of Azerbaijani culture. In her foreword, “*Instead of a Preface*,” written for the poetry collection *You Are Dear to Me, Baku*, she expressed her affection and deep connection to Azerbaijan:

“I have spent a large part of my conscious life among you – studying your literature and culture, translating your writers' works, falling asleep and waking up with them. I am captivated by your ancient culture and centuries-old literary heritage” (Eradze, 1990, p. 5).

Leila Eradze expressed her love for the Azerbaijani people not only through her translations and scholarly works but also in her own poetry. In her poem “*You Are Dear to Me, Baku*”, she called Baku her second homeland – a city as dear and beloved as her first. Each time she came to Baku, she wrote, the city welcomed her with open arms, embracing her as one of its own.

Arriving at ancient Bilajari,
This is old Keshla, we have passed it too –
And there you are, my dear, kind Baku.
Everyone is kind to me,
All are my own, familiar faces,
Everyone speaks
The language I know best. (Eradze, 1990, p. 12)

From her youth, Leila Eradze's lyrical self had loved Baku and found harmony with its spirit. Each time she came to the city, she would wander through its streets, converse with its warm-hearted

people, and relive cherished memories. Yet every encounter felt as if she were meeting the city for the first time. In Baku, the lyrical heroine carries a thousand tender memories:

You are the faith
That burns in my heart,
You are my second,
My own dear mother.
You are my dearest place
In all this life –
Bright in destiny,
And love without stain.
You are my second
City of fate,
As sacred and beloved
As my first (Eradze, 1990, p. 12)

It should be noted that the academic study and promotion of Azerbaijani–Georgian literary relations began in earnest in the second half of the 20th century. Alongside prominent Georgian Turkologists such as Venera Jankidze, Elizbar Chavlelidze, Georgi Shagulashvili, and Mikheil Chinchaladze, Leila Eradze maintained continuous scholarly contact with Professor Madad Chobanov – a distinguished Azerbaijani scholar, doctor of philology, author of more than 60 books and hundreds of scholarly and publicistic articles, and long-time lecturer in the Azerbaijani Department of the Faculty of Philology at the A. S. Pushkin (later S. S. Orbeliani) Tbilisi State Pedagogical University.

Professor Madad Chobanov devoted considerable effort to the development of Azerbaijani–Georgian literary relations. He was among the first to conduct systematic linguistic and literary research on the mutual influence between the Azerbaijani and Georgian languages and published dozens of studies on the subject. Among his notable articles are:

- “A. Bakikhanov and the Tiflis Milieu” (Qələbə Bayraqı, 21 June 1969),
- “A. Hagverdiyev and Georgia” (Qələbə Bayraqı, 16 May 1970),
- “Azerbaijani Poets and Georgia” (Qələbə Bayraqı, 23 May 1970),
- “The Epic of Koroglu in the Georgian Language” (Gürcüstan, 15 July 1972),
- “A Georgian Scholar Studies Fuzuli” (Gürcüstan, 19 August 1972), and many others.

For the first time in the history of the South Caucasus peoples, Professor Chobanov, together with Mikheil Chinchaladze, compiled the Short Azerbaijani–Georgian Phrasebook, which was published three times – in 1977 and 1991 in Tbilisi (Qanatleba Publishing House) and again in 2000 in Baku (Borçalı Publishing House). This dictionary has played a significant role in bringing the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples closer together culturally and spiritually.

As N. Abdurahmanov and F. Khubanov noted in their review,

“Lexicography has also played no small part in the cultural and spiritual rapprochement of the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples. In 1977, the Qanatleba (‘Maarif’) publishing house in Tbilisi issued the Short Azerbaijani–Georgian Phrasebook. This book, the first step in the lexicography of the two brotherly nations, was compiled by associate professors M. Chobanov and M. Chinchaladze of the A. S. Pushkin Tbilisi State Pedagogical Institute. It serves as a valuable resource for both Azerbaijani and Georgian readers.” (Azərbaycan Müəllimi, No. 40 (6822), 24 May 1989).

In addition to his lexicographic work, Professor Madad Chobanov compiled and edited the anthologies *I Love Georgia* (Sevirəm Gürcüstanı, Baku: Azərnəşr, 1977) and *Songs of Friendship* (Dostluq nəğmələri, Tbilisi: Merani, 1978), which represented the first major anthological efforts to expand Azerbaijani–Georgian literary collaboration. Both books were warmly received by readers in both countries.

Reviews of the anthology *I Love Georgia* (Baku: Azərnəşr, 1977) emphasize:

“The friendship and brotherhood between the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples are ancient. The book *I Love Georgia*, a poetic expression of this affection, presents examples of poems by Azerbaijani poets

dedicated to the brotherly land of Georgia – its enchanting nature, its cheerful and kind-hearted people. The compiler of the collection is Madad Chobanov.” (Ədəbiyyat və incəsənət, No. 2, 7 January 1978).

The “ancient land of Georgia,” its hospitable people, “Tbilisi – the Paris of the Caucasus,” and the Kura River – the lifeline of the Caucasus – have, from ancient times to the present day, remained subjects to which Azerbaijani literature has repeatedly and enthusiastically turned. It would be difficult to find an Azerbaijani writer or poet whose creative work does not contain motifs related to Georgia.

As the poet Məmməd Araz once expressed, “Poetic affinity is the most sublime form of relationship. No nation can offer another a gift more precious, more sacred than this.” In this regard, the recently published volume *I Love Georgia* (*Sevirəm Gürcüstanı*) by “Azərnəşr” (Azerbaijan State Publishing House) may be considered a worthy gift to the Georgian people. The book was compiled by Madad Chobanov, a lecturer at the A.S. Pushkin State Pedagogical Institute.

/ Səfali Nəzərli, poet and editor at the Department of Fiction, “Azərnəşr”, *I Love Georgia, Soviet Georgia* newspaper, No. 63 (7748), May 26, 1977. /

“The roots of the cordial brotherhood and good-neighborly relations between the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples are ancient... Both nations fought side by side for years against foreign invaders, offering each other steadfast support. The echoes of this shared struggle are inscribed in many unforgettable pages of history. The recently published book *I Love Georgia* contains poems extolling the unshakable friendship between our brotherly peoples. The anthology was compiled by Madad Chobanov, with a preface written by the poet Məmməd Araz.”

/ Dilsuz Musayev, *I Love Georgia, Golden Banner* newspaper, No. 122 (3804), October 11, 1977; *Literature and Art* newspaper, No. 9, February 25, 1978. /

A review by Candidate of Philological Sciences Həmid Vəliyev, along with an image of the book, appeared in *Molodyozh Gruzii* (*Youth of Georgia*), published in Russian in Tbilisi (No. 63 (8078), May 26, 1977); in the Armenian-language *Sovetakan Vrastan* newspaper (No. 66 (11856), June 2, 1977); and in a comprehensive review by Y. Bobokhidze, accompanied by the book’s image, in *Qələbə Bayraqı – Gamarjvebis Drosha* (The Flag of Victory), a bilingual Azerbaijani–Georgian newspaper published in Bolnisi (No. 55 (4679), April 26, 1980). Information from *I Love Georgia* was also cited in the article “Georgian SSR” in Volume VI of the *Azerbaijan Soviet Encyclopedia* (Baku, 1982, vol. VI, p. 135).

The book *I Love Georgia*, compiled by Madad Chobanov and published in Baku in 1977 by “Azərnəşr,” brings together the heartfelt emotions and reflections of classical Azerbaijani poets on Georgia and its people, dating back to the 12th century. The distinguished Georgian scholar and poet Leyla Eradze, who highly valued this publication, translated into Georgian another anthology compiled by Chobanov – *Songs of Friendship* (*Dostluq nəğmələri*) – which includes poetic works by contemporary Azerbaijani poets dedicated to Georgia. The book was published in 1978 by the Georgian State Publishing House “Merani” in Tbilisi.

Reviews of *Songs of Friendship* (Georgian edition, compiled by Madad Chobanov, translated by Leyla Eradze, *Contemporary Azerbaijani Poets on Georgia*, Tbilisi: “Merani,” 1978) observe:

“In this anthology compiled by Madad Chobanov, nearly fifty poems by contemporary Azerbaijani poets about Georgia are collected. The spirit of these poems resonates closely with Georgian poetry and, as a result, has been warmly received by a wide readership. The book *Songs of Friendship* should be regarded as a commendable contribution to the literary relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia.”

/ V. Cangidze, A. Ismayilli, *Songs of Friendship, Soviet Georgia*, No. 139 (7979), November 21, 1978. /

Indeed, Georgia has, since ancient times, been one of the recurrent themes in our poets’ works. As early as the 12th century, Afzaladdin Khagani declared, “The gate of the Bagrations is open to me.” It is natural that such sentiment found vivid expression in the creative works of Azerbaijani poets, who have consistently used the theme of Georgia as a symbol of friendship, fraternity, and benevo-

lent neighborliness. The recently published anthology *Songs of Friendship*, issued in Georgian by the “Merani” Publishing House in Tbilisi, brings together Azerbaijani poems dedicated to Georgia. The contribution of its compiler, the distinguished scholar Madad Chobanov, deserves special recognition.

/ Şurəddin Məmmədov, *As a Symbol of Brotherhood, Literature and Art* newspaper, No. 1 (1876), January 4, 1980. /

Similarly, in the sphere of Azerbaijani–Georgian literary relations, Doctor of Philology and Professor Dilarə Əliyeva – like Leyla Eradze – became a devoted promoter of Georgian literature and culture in Azerbaijan. She dedicated her conscious life to this endeavor, serving as a bridge between the two nations’ literary worlds.

Dilarə Əliyeva was born in 1929 in Tiflis (now Tbilisi). After completing her studies at Azerbaijani-language secondary school No. 97 in Tbilisi (now the M.F. Akhundzadeh Azerbaijani Secondary School No. 73), she entered the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Azerbaijan State University (now Baku State University). After enrolling in the postgraduate program of the Institute of Language and Literature named after Nizami at the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, she was sent to the Institute of Literature named after Shota Rustaveli at the Academy of Sciences of Georgia. There she prepared her candidate dissertation in Russian on the topic “*Reflection of Azerbaijani–Georgian Literary Relations in 19th-Century Literature*,” which she successfully defended in 1954.

At the Institute of Language and Literature named after Nizami of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan (now the Nizami Ganjavi Institute of Literature), Dilarə Əliyeva served in various academic and administrative capacities – as a junior research fellow, senior research fellow at the Nizami Museum of Literature, head of the Department of Ancient and Medieval Literature at the Museum, senior research fellow at the Department of Literary Relations, senior research fellow at the Department of Nizami Studies, and later as leading research fellow and head of the Department of Literary Relations at the Institute. In 1984, she defended her doctoral dissertation in Russian on the topic “*Nizami and Georgian Literature*.”

Doctor of Philology and Professor Dilarə Əliyeva was active both as a literary scholar and as a translator. As can be seen from the subjects of her defended dissertations, Georgian literature held a central place in her scholarly research. Alongside her continuous academic work, she also translated works by Georgian writers and poets. Her first translation publication appeared in 1972 – a collection of Georgian short stories translated into Azerbaijani under the title *Brothers* (*Qardaşlar*, short stories, Baku: Azərnəşr, 1972, 122 pp.).

Conclusion. Subsequently, Dilarə Əliyeva’s own collection of short stories, *The Joy of a Night* (*Bir gecənin sevinci*, Baku: Gənclik, 1977, 82 pp.), was published. Thereafter, translations from Georgian literature once again became prominent in her creative activity. Among her notable translations are Archil Sulakauri’s *Up and Down* (Baku, 1978, 188 pp.); Mikheil Javakhishvili’s *The Land Calls* (Baku: Yaziçi, 1980, 248 pp.); Ilia Chavchavadze’s *The Beggar’s Life* (Baku: Yaziçi, 1987, 152 pp.); as well as the anthology *The Kura Flows into the Caspian* (*Kür Xəzərə qovuşur*, selections from Georgian literature, Baku: Yaziçi, 1988, 384 pp., co-authored). Through these works, she helped to define a significant stage in the development of Azerbaijani–Georgian literary relations. In recognition of her contributions, she was awarded the honorary title of *Honored Cultural Worker of Georgia*.

In Leyla Eradze’s creative work, Azerbaijani literature occupied a central role, just as Georgian literature did in Dilarə Əliyeva’s research. Their reciprocal studies not only revealed the cultural and spiritual heritage of both nations but also reflected the multifaceted nature of their literary relations, accelerating the processes of mutual influence and enrichment, and elevating the ancient tradition of friendship between the two peoples to a new stage. The embodiment of Azerbaijani–Georgian friendship in artistic literature found scholarly expression in the academic thought of these two distinguished figures. Both scholars, through their research, sustained and transmitted this intellectual tendency into a new era.

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