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Portrait on the Edge of Cultures: (Illumination of Georgian Historical Documents)

Illumination of Georgian historical documents (15th -19th centuries) is one of the most significant part of secular art.

Decoration of Deeds on the one hand, demonstrates the artistic processes that took place in Georgian Miniature; on the other hand, it represents a vivid source of the political and social condition and is more interesting from the view point of the development of the history of Portrait.

In Georgian fine arts the history of a portrait is connected to donors' portraits and is mainly associated with cult images. Not many examples of secular art and especially in particular portraits survived. Thus, the illumination of the historical documents and portrait images, presented here are significant.

The earliest surviving examples up to this day are the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries images of the illuminated documents (noblemen, churchman and saints) with their representative character and certain monumentality, faithfully following the tradition of the donor's painted portraits, but their artistic expression is connected to the contemporary mural painting.

Portraits of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries, on one hand, share the diversity of the processes, the mode of the Miniature (passion to European art and sharing the forms acquired from Islamic world), and on the other hand, reflect the processes of contemporary fine arts. They demonstrated a relationship with the newly enclosed 18-th century secular images of secular Portraits. In addition to that, the "deed illumination" has distinct individual characters which makes it a specific phenomenon.

This topic has not been discussed up to this day and is unknown in the Georgian and foreign academic societies. Respectively, the study of this matter widens the knowledge on the History

of the development of Georgian portrait and gives us new ground for defining the shared aspects of the interrelation of Georgian, Oriental and Occidental Art.

Studying the Illumination of Georgian Deeds is also important for the research of the development of eastern Christian art, as well as the understanding of the ideology and moreover, the interaction of medieval and modern art.