

კვლევები: ქართული ლიტერატურა
STUDIES: GEORGIAN LITERATURE

Genre Composition and Paradigmatic System of Georgian Hagiography

Nino Popiashvili

PhD in Philology, Department of Academic Research and Development, Faculty of Humanities at Tbilisi State University

Abstract: Georgian literature has developed a centuries-old tradition and was preceded by folklore, mythical thinking and worldview. By the time the first Georgian literary works were created, the Georgian language was a well-established written language, which fully reflected artistic characters, literary archetypes and models.

The formation of the Georgian literary language is directly related to the development of Georgian literature. The fact that the monuments of the ancient Georgian literature already reveal the structural properties of linguistic and literary norms indicates that the Georgian literary language was formed in ancient times.

The first texts of Georgian literature are complete literary works with specific structures, peculiarities of reflection, models and paradigms that respect and reflect the basic principles of the hagiographic genre. When studying the hagiographic model, it should also be noted that, in hagiography, both the models and the language of a writer are standardized and normed, as both the plot development and the language expression are fully established. The storyline of the piece of writing develops in it with specific formulations and linguistic clichés that have become stereotypes, and the leading character's type is also outlined. The standardized language of hagiography reflects hagiographic models, although the language of artistic or poetic

expression is completely individual and free, including the hagiographic works.

When discussing the model of Georgian hagiographic writing, two definitions were mainly utilized - "Martyrdom" or "Tsamebani" (Martyrdom) and "Life of Saints" or "Tskhovrebani" (Lives). It is also important to consider related ethnic, religious and gender issues. First of all, it should be noted that the leading characters of "Tskhovrebani" and "Tsamebani" are both ethnic Georgians and foreigners. For example, the Georgians are Hilarion the Georgian, Grigol of Khandzta, Ioane and Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli, Giorgi Mtatsmindeli and others. Among foreigners, Saint Nino, Eustathius of Mtskheta, the Thirteen Assyrian Fathers, Abo of Tiflis and others can be cited.

In the case of a gender-based grouping in the Georgian hagiography, both the "Tskhovrebani" (Lives) and "Tsamebani" (Martyrdom) genres describe the life and martyrdom of male and female saints and martyrs. At the same time, according to gender and ethnic groups, we can talk about both the "Tskhovrebani" (Lives) and "Tsamebani" (Martyrdom) as genres of Georgian hagiography.

In the martyrdom genre, we can discuss the ethnic origin of the hero, as well as the confessional issues, in particular, Christians from the very birth and other heroes recently converted to Christianity. Georgian hagiography can be grouped taking into account both genre and thematic paradigms, such as "Tskhovrebani" (Lives) and "Tsamebani" (Martyrdom), and according to ethnic, religious confessional and gender aspects. The genre and thematic composition of hagiographic works reflect both general, hagiographic and specific, national themes and motives. The observation regarding the Georgian hagiography reveals that standing at the beginning of the works of Georgian literature that have reached us, it reflects the peculiarities of the folklore and mythical worldview and the development and standardization of linguistic norms. On the other hand, Georgian hagiography depicts the relationships with Eastern or Byzantine early Christian literature, and general Christian and national models of the hagiographic paradigmatic system. Among them are the peculiarities of the reflection of the foreigners' proselytism, which create a national peculiarity in the existing model of hagiography and are based on the socio-political situation.

Keywords: *Georgian Hagiography, Genre of Hagiography, Paradigmatic System of Hagiography.*

Georgian literature has developed as a tradition for many centuries and was preceded by folklore, and mythical thinking and worldview. The ancient mythical culture was conditioned by the system of the pagan pantheon, which is confirmed in Georgian history and folklore of the Antique period: the deities of the sun and moon, the god of fire, the chained hero, the aesthetics of a physically strong hero, female deities, etc. Mythological layers and the order of thinking are manifested in many places, both in diverse Georgian folklore and in Georgian literature, and not only in Christian, but also in Georgian literature of the period following the Christian epoch. Literary traditions and literary language often exist in the form of oral literature for a long period of time [7, pp. 200-201]. Ancient Georgian writings reveal the integrity of the form, content and linguistic expression of the literary text. "The first Georgian written monuments were created in a strictly standardized language from the 5th century AD. Standardization is typical for written monuments created both in Georgia and abroad" [6, p. 63]. By that time, since when we have obtained Georgian literary monuments, the Georgian language is already a well-established written language, which fully reflects artistic characters, literary archetypes and models.

The formation of the Georgian literary language is directly related to the development of Georgian literature. The fact that the monuments of the ancient Georgian literature already show the structural properties of linguistic and literary norms, indicate that the Georgian literary language was formed in ancient times. "Georgian writing from the very beginning, in ancient relics, reveals to us a developed literary language. Obviously, ecclesiastical writing did not create it. The Georgian literary language had to be developed before Christianity, and Christian writing was to develop it only in the part that was interesting for itself" (N. Marr) [11].

The high development of Georgian literature may be the result of a deep connection of the Georgian language with international languages [8]. In the European studies of the history of literature, as early as in the 19th century it was noted that Georgian literature was

closely connected with the literatures of the West and the East, including in the ancient period and the early Middle Ages, with the Greek literature. In a universal dictionary published in 1859 in Germany, it is noted that “Georgian literature is quite rich, although in its development one can notice the influence of Byzantine, Greek, and then Armenian, Persian, as well as Western literature of modern times. Science and poetic art are highly respected in Georgia; similar to the Byzantine nobility, literary activity was considered honorable among Georgian princes and noblemen” [3, pp. 209-210].

Georgian-Byzantine relations were expressed in many aspects regarding political, cultural, social and, of course, literary relations. “Byzantine-Georgian literary relations have a long history. Both Georgian literature and culture were developed in close contacts with the great Byzantine literature from the 5th century until the fall of the Byzantine Empire. The best part of Byzantine literature was intensively translated from Greek into Georgian” [15, p. 7]. These relations were also reflected in hagiography, as in the literature of a solid structure and model, translation, including literal or loose translation, editing, reducing and extending of which did not violate hagiographic norms, since the models of the hagiographic genre invariably have been passed from language to language, from a short edition to a wide edition and vice versa. Such examples of literary relations can be found in many Georgian-Greek hagiographies, including in the part of translations, the originals of which are lost and preserved only in the translated hagiography.

The first texts of Georgian literature are complete literary works, which possess their own structure, peculiarities of reflection, models and paradigms, that respect and reflect the basic principles of the hagiographic genre. When studying the hagiographic model, it should also be noted that in hagiography both the models and the language of a writer are standardized and normed, as both the plot development and the language expression are established and normed. The storyline of the piece of writing develops in it with specific formulations and linguistic clichés that have become stereotypes, and the leading character’s type is also outlined. The

standardized language of hagiography serves to reflect hagiographic models, although the language of artistic or poetic expression is completely individual and free, including in hagiographic works.

There are diverse views on the peculiarities of the reflection of a hagiographic work in the Georgian scientific space. In this regard, the works by K. Kekelidze, Al. Baramidze, L. Menabde, E. Khintibidze, R. Siradze, R. Baramidze, G. Parulava, L. Grigolashvili, B. Kilanova, S. Sigua, D. Menabde, M. Elbakidze, G. Alibegashvili, I. Amirkhanashvili, L. Grigola-shvili, N. Sulava, Kh. Zaridze, N. Gonjilashvili, S. Metreveli, G. Kuchukhidze and others should be noted.

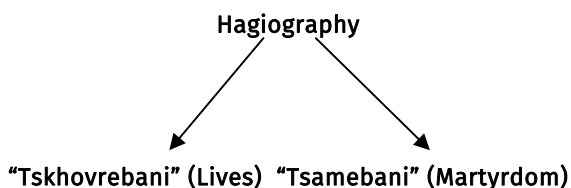
According to K. Kekelidze, "Georgian hagiography in the initial period was mainly worked over in Palestine. This is manifested, first of all, in the fact that in the ancient hagiographic monuments we have one and the same mineological type or order of placement-arrangement of the mention of saints, namely Jerusalem-Palestinian type. Then, till our time, the translation of the so-called Palestinian patericon has been preserved" [10, 1980]. Jerusalem-Palestinian liturgical and theological books are the earliest and precede the Byzantine and Roman church and liturgical typicons. Regarding the model of Georgian hagiography, it is also noted that "the literary model, which was created by the Georgian ecclesiastical literature, is peculiar, highlighted by specificity of the proper worldview [14, 4].

Hagiography researcher Kh. Zaridze notes: "Hagiography researchers have long held the view that the personality was not reflected in this genre. For him there existed the common type of a specifically intelligent person" [9, p. 15]. Hagiography, as a system of a solid model "becomes stenciled," stylistic decorations are created that become clichés [16, p. 162]. Hagiography is assigned a "utilitarian function" [4, p. 8]. And in the case of hagiographic characters, we are faced with a "lowered personality" [1, p. 51], where it is almost impossible to feel the human character, even the demise of the heroes is sublime and heroic.

The main accents in depicting a hagiographic hero are not placed on an individual, but on a general scheme "in the person of a hero corresponding to the ideal of a man of that time" [13, p. 101].

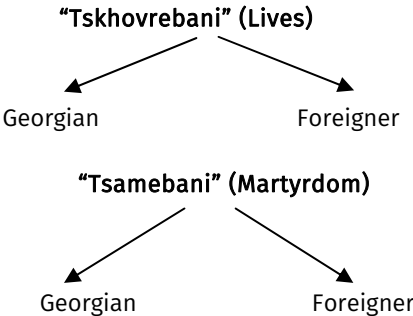
In one case, the hero of the hagiographic work was a Christian, since childhood “God-fearing” (Jacob of Tsurtavi), or, moreover, “from the womb he was dedicated to God's service” (Giorgi Merchule). In the second case, the hero had nothing to do with ethnic Georgian, confessionally was “scolding our faith” (Ioane Sabanisdze), that is, he represented the religion that at that time was opposed to Christianity in Georgia. Along with faith, an ethnic factor is also implied. Accordingly, it should be emphasized that such a model of character depiction provided for religious and ethnic confrontation. According to the further stage of the model development, the character rejects his religion, he is martyred for Christianity, and the Georgian church canonizes him. “If we simultaneously consider Christian saints, we will note that there is single and consistent paradigm. At the beginning of the traditional chain, the life of the early Christian martyrs consisted of the aspirations and destinies of biblical martyrs, primarily those of Jesus of Nazareth” [2, p. 35].

When discussing the model of Georgian hagiographic writing, two definitions were mainly used: “Martyrdom” or “Tsamebani” (Martyrdom) and “Life of Saints” or “Tskhovrebani” (Lives). This paradigm can be expressed as follows:

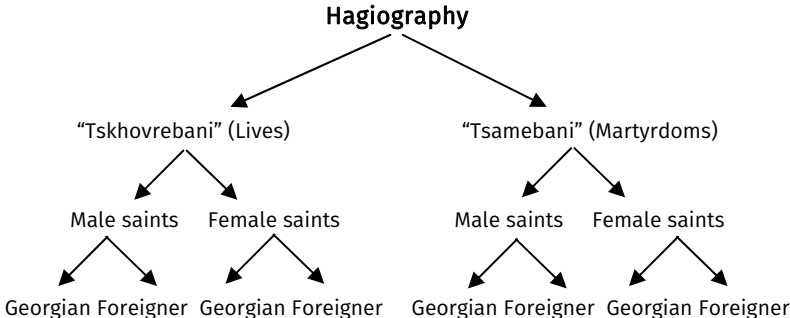


When studying the model of Georgian hagiography, it is also important to consider ethnic, religious and gender issues. First of all, it should be noted that the leading characters of “Tskhovrebani” (Lives) and “Tsamebani” (Martyrdom) are both ethnic Georgians and foreigners. For example, the Georgians are Hilarion the Georgian, Grigol of Khandzta, Ioane and Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli, Giorgi Mtatsmindeli and others. Among foreigners Saint Nino, Eustathius of

Mtskheta, the Thirteen Assyrian Fathers, Abo of Tiflis and others can be cited. This can be graphically expressed as follows:



In the case of gender-based grouping, it should be noted that the Georgian hagiography, both the “Tskhovrebani” (Lives) and “Tsamebani” (Martyrdom) genres, describe the life and martyrdom of male and female saints and martyrs. At the same time, according to gender and ethnic groups, we can judge both the “Tskhovrebani” (Lives) and “Tsamebani” (Martyrdom) genres of Georgian hagiography. This can be expressed as follows:



In the martyrdom genre, we can discuss the ethnic origin of the hero, as well as the confessional issue, in particular, Christians from birth and other heroes recently baptized from other faiths.

The characters of one part of the old Georgian hagiographic works are proselytes. In particular, one part of them are ethnically Georgians (9 Martyred Brothers of Kola), and the other part are foreigners. For example, Razhden the Protomartyr is Persian, Eustathius of Mtskheta is Persian as well, and Abo of Tiflis is Arab. When creating a hagiographic work on proselytes, the authors' motivation should be emphasized in two ways: on the one hand, the description of the lives of martyrs is important from a Christian point of view, and on the other hand, the description of the religious merits of foreign proselytes is important from a national point of view. It should also be noted that foreign proselytes of Georgian hagiography, who are martyrs, belong to the same ethnic group that martyrs the hero. Consideration should also be given to the fact that this type of proselytism, proselytism and martyr death of a foreigner, of another ethnos, is very rare in the Christian faith, and this is created by the Georgian political environment. As it is known, at the end of BCE, the Roman Empire expanded towards the South Caucasus, entered into a truce with Western Georgia, with the then kingdom of Egrisi and conquered it, and Eastern Georgia or the Kingdom of Iberia was a vassal of the Roman Empire until its weakening, and then came under the influence of Persia. In the 4th century, when the Persians abolished the kingship, they appointed their officials as rulers. "The Sasanian Empire of Iran

could not reconcile with the Roman expansion to the east. From the second half of the 4th century, it progressively strengthened and attacked Rome, which retreated. The political situation in the Middle East in the 60s was marked by a truce at the end of the 4th century, as a result of which a demarcation line was drawn between the two warring empires; this also affected the South Caucasus. Most of Armenia was transferred to the ownership of Iran. The kingdom of Kartli was also divided into two parts, and the struggle for the division of spheres of influence in Eastern Georgia did not stop until the final overthrow of the Arabs of Sasanian Iran" [12, p. 3].

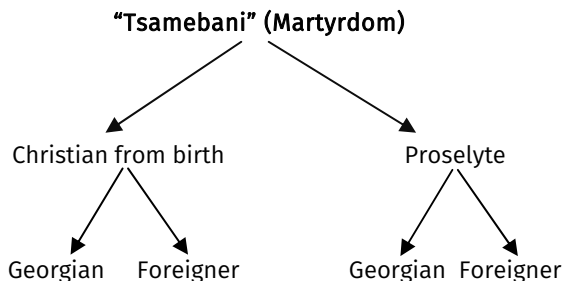
During the martyric death of the Persian Razhden the Proto-martyr and Eustathius of Mtskheta, Kartli was under the influence of the Persians. During the martyric death of Arab Abo, the kingship in Kartli was abolished, and the Arab emir managed the domestic political and socio-economic situation in the country. Christianity was established in Kartli, churches and monasteries were functioning, baptism was allowed and not punished. At the same time, since Kartli was Christianized, there was no need for proselytism, but due to the political situation in Kartli, since the domestic political governance was headed by Persians, and then the Arabs, the change of religion by a foreigner, including a representative of their ethnos, that is proselytism, becomes the reason for the punishment, and for the hagiographic author – the reason for describing the martyric death of the saint. We think that it is precisely because of these goals that hagiographic works about foreign proselytes are created, where the character is generalized in the paradigm of the

hagiographic model, which condition the creation of a model for depicting the character of a foreign ethnos. This is an additional paradigm, at a new stage of the formation of Christianity, the formation and development of the hagiographic genre, where the need for proselytism is determined not for the spread of Christianity, but for the preservation of Christianity. At the same time, proselytism, as a fact, is noted among representatives of a foreign ethnos, including representatives of the ruling power in Kartli, to which additional political, cultural, social, as well as literary significance is assigned. We believe that this peculiarity of proselytism can also be named a national peculiarity of Georgian hagiography. It should also be noted that Georgian, national problems were reflected in Georgian hagiography from the very beginning. In this regard, we can say that hagiography as a universal model implies and includes a national component, the principle of “national historicism” [5, p. 10], which is reflected in national history, cultural heritage, traditions and has additional or supplemental functions in hagiographic works. K. Kekelidze notes the existence of a national component in Georgian hagiography

from the 8th and 10th centuries and calls this period “National Age”. In Georgian hagiographic, as well as in church and Christian practice in general, we find national elements, original writing was developed, national hagiography was worked out, days of remembrance of Georgian saints were introduced, “Holy Georgian Feasts” were established to honor national saints and to celebrate various national dates. New holidays are reflected in calendars and lectionaries-canon” [15, p. 96]. However, it should also be noted that Christian standardization and models are preserved under the conditions of both hagiography and church services.

Observations of martyric hagiography show that the oppositional couple: a hero and an antihero are schematized and normed types. This scheme is completely common for works of martyrdom genres, although thematic issues, such as the nationality of the hero or different religions, supplement the hagiographic model with additional components, and in some cases change the paradigm and intensify the existing model with expressive elements.

As already mentioned, the martyric genre consists of two main thematic genres: a Christian from birth of and proselyte, both thematic genres, in turn, include two thematic genres according to ethnicity: the Georgian martyr and foreign martyr, as well as in the case of proselyte, Georgian proselytize martyr and foreign proselyte martyr. These models can be graphically expressed as follows:



In conclusion, it is necessary to say the following: Georgian hagiography can be grouped both taking into account genre and thematic paradigms, such as “Tskhovrebani” (Lives) and “Tsamebani” (Martyrdom), and according to ethnic, religious confessional

and gender aspects. The genre and thematic composition of hagiographic works reflect both general hagiographic and national themes and motives. Observation of Georgian hagiography shows that it, as the beginning of Georgian literature that has come down to us, reveals the peculiarities of the folklore and mythical worldview, as well as the development and standardization of linguistic norms, while Georgian hagiography reflects the experience of relations with Eastern or Byzantine early Christian literature, general Christian and national models of the hagiographic paradigmatic system. Among them are the peculiarities of the reflection of the foreigners' proselytism, which creates a national peculiarity in the existing model of hagiography and is based on the socio-political situation.

Bibliography

1. Aland, B., *Literarische Konstituierung von Identifikationsfiguren in der Antike*, hrsg. von Barbara Aland, 2003.
2. Galley, S. *Jüdische und christliche Heilige – Ein Vergleich. Zeitschrift Für Religions – Und Geistesgeschichte*, 57 (1), 2005. 29-47: www.jstor.org/stable/23898707
3. *Pierer's Universal-Lexikon*, Band 7. Altenburg 1859
4. Amirkhanashvili I., "Questions of Hagiographical Style (Theoretical Remarks)": *Sjani*, #13, 212, p. 8-14 / ამირხანაშვილი ი., „აგიოგრაფიის სტილის საკითხები (თეორიული შენიშვნები)“: *სჯანი*, #13, 212, გვ. 8-14.
5. Amirkhanashvili I., "Composition of the Situation in Hagiography": *Sjani*, #12. 2011, p. 9-15 / ამირხანაშვილი ი., „სიტუაციის კომპოზიცია აგიოგრაფიაში“: *სჯანი*, #12. 2011, გვ. 9-15
6. Bolkvadze T., "Language Standardization and Dialects". In the collection: *Kartvelian Heritage VII*, 2003, p. 63-72 / ბოლქვაძე თ., „ენის სტანდარტიზაცია და დიალექტები“. კრებულში: *ქახთველური მემკვიდრეობა VII*, 2003, გვ. 63-72
7. Gamkrelidze T., *Alphabetic Writing System and the Old Georgian Script – A Typology and Provenience of Alphabetic Writing*, Tb. 1990. / გამყრელიძე თ., *წეხის ანბანური სისტემა და ძველი ქათული დამწერლობა – ანბანური წეხის გიპოლოგია და წახმომადგობა*, თბ. 1990

8. Gordeziani R., *The Problem of the Formation of the Georgian Self-Consciousness.*, Tb. 1993 / გორდეზიანი რ., *ქართული თვითშეგნების ჩამოყალიბების პრობლემა*, თბ. 1993
9. Zaridze Kh., "And Blessed Eustathius Smiled", newspaper: *Literaturuli Sakartvelo (Literary Georgia)*, Tb. 1985, 14. 06 / ზარიძე ხ., „ხოლო ნეტარმან ევსტათი განიცინა“, გაზ. *ლიტერატურული საქართველო*, თბ. 1985, 14. 06
10. Kekelidze K., *History of Old Georgian Literature*, Tbilisi, Science publishing house, 1980 / კეკელიძე კ., *ძველი ქართული ლიტერატურის ისტორია*, გამომც. „მეცნიერება“, თბ. 1980.
11. Marr N., *Georgian in Linguistics* (lecture delivered in Paris, at the National School of Oriental Living Languages), published by I. Megrelishvili and A. Glonti, *TSU works, VI, First Series, Social Sciences*, Tb. 1938 / მარი ნ., *ქართული ენათმეცნიერებაში* (ლექცია წაკითხული პარიზში, აღმოსავლურ ცოცხალ ენათა ნაციონალურ სკოლაში), გამოაქვეყნეს ი. მეგრელიძემ და ალ. ლლონტმა, *თსუ შრომები, VI*, პირველი სერია, საზოგადოებათმეცნიერებანი, თბ. 1938.
12. Muskhelishvili D., Japaridze O., Melikishvili G., Apakidze A., Lortkipanidze M., Metreveli R., Samsonadze M., Asatiani N., Jamburia G., Otkhmevuri G., Natmeladze M., Bendianishvili A., Daushvili A., *History of Georgia, Vol. 2*. Tb. Palitra L publishing house, 2012 / მუსხელიშვილი დ., ჯაფარიძე ო., მელიქიშვილი გ., აფაქიძე ა., ლორთქიფანიძე მ., მეტრეველი რ., სამსონაძე მ., ასათიანი ნ., ჯამბურია გ., ოთხმეზური გ., ნათმელაძე მ., ბენდიანიშვილი ალ., დაუშვილი ალ., *საქართველოს ისტორია, ტ. 2*. თბ. გამომც. პალიტრა L, 2012.
13. Siradze, R., *Questions of Old Georgian Theoretical Literary Thought*, Tb. 1975 / სირაძე რ., *ძველი ქართული თეორიულ-ლიტერატურული აზროვნების საკითხები*, თბ. 1975
14. Parulava G., *Toward the Nature of the Artistic Image in Old Georgian Prose*, Tb. 1982 / ფარულავა გ., *მხატვრული სახის ბუნებისათვის ძველ ქართულ პროზაში*, თბ. 1982
15. Khintibidze E., *Byzantine-Georgian Literary Relations*, Tbilisi University Publishing House, 1969 / ხინთიბიძე ე., *ბიზანტიურ-ქართული ლიტერატურული ურთიერთობები*, თბილისის უნივერსიტეტის გამომცემლობა, 1969
16. Khintibidze E., *Toward the History of the Georgian-Byzantine Relations*, Tbilisi University Publishing House, 1982. / ხინთიბიძე ე., *ქართულ-ბიზანტიური ურთიერთობების ისტორიისთვის*, თბილისის უნივერსიტეტის გამომცემლობა, 1982.