

Plot-Compositional Interrelations in Georgian Original and Translated Hagiography of the Genre of *Martyrdoms*

Abstracts: The thesis aims to offer an overview of Georgian original and translated hagiographic works of the genre of *Martyrdoms* from the plot-compositional viewpoint, on the basis of the parallels existing between them, to demonstrate similar and different compositional clichéd elements. In the thesis it is attempted as far as possible to identify the style, plot-compositional devices characteristic of hagiographic works, by which Georgian and translated hagiographic works of the genre of *Martyrdoms* resemble one another. Proceeding from the purpose of the study, much attention has been devoted in the thesis to the description of miracles, in particular, to the identification of typical and original miracles in them.

Key words: plot, composition, original hagiography, translated hagiography, genre of *Martyrdoms*

In the present study Georgian original and translated hagiographic works are considered from the viewpoint of rendering plot compositional devices. Of original and translated works the following are discussed: *The Martyrdom of Shushanik* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1963), *The Martyrdom of Abo of Tiflis* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1963), *The Martyrdom of Eustace of Mtskheta* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1963), *The Martyrdom of Gobron* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1963), *The Martyrdom of Konstanti-Kakhi* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1963), *The Martyrdom of Abibos of Nekresi* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1963), *The Martyrdom of King Archil* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1967) and *The Martyrdom of Children of Kola* (Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic literature: 1963).

As a result of study it has become clear that in Georgian hagiography of the *Martyrdoms* genre the author specifies the date of writing the work and the death of the saint, as well as informs the reader about his own identity. The hagiographer stresses that he is unworthy to describe the martyrdom of saints, to undertake such an important task, due to which he begs forgiveness. The author also wishes to persuade the reader in the truth of his narration. In Georgian hagiographic works of the *Martyrdoms* genre, unlike hagiographic works of the genre of *Lives*, comparatively scarce information is provided concerning the childhood years of martyrs, their inclinations, appearance and other details of life, in general. In the works one finds facts of the conversion to Christianity of persons of a different religion and spiritual friendship between saints. It is typical of saints to refuse earthly glory and devote themselves entirely to God. Father confessors or close persons in advance prepare future martyrs by conversations and advising for their martyrdom, for obtaining the kingdom of heaven through suffering pains of the flesh on earth and saints express their readiness to be martyred out of love for God. During their presence in prison saints are in great spiritual activity, which is manifested in prayer, fasting and endurance of all kinds of pain. When martyrs become renowned, the clergy and laity visit them and ask their blessing. Authors of hagiographic works describe in an impressive manner that the people shed tears when they are bidding farewell and seeing off the saints, as well as how saints offer prayer before death, thank the Lord and ask for His protection. Hagiographers describe the scenes of the martyrdom of saints, their funeral and mourning. Authors glorify the labours of martyrs and compare them to Biblical personages.

Unlike the *Lives* genre, comparatively less attention is devoted to the description of miracles in hagiography of the *Martyrdoms* genre. In the present thesis it has been attempted to describe and characterize miracles and arrange them according to relevant types:

- I. Visions and divine appearances, which unites visions in reality (appearance of the Lord to a saint not in a visible, but in a verbal form) and visions upon the death (miraculous visions after the saint's death).
- II. The effect of saints on human beings, manifested in the healing of sicknesses and the gift of prophesying.
- III. The effect on the world of the deceased. This group unites miracles of tombs and holy relics, namely, the miracle of healing the sick by touching the tomb of a dead saint.
- IV. The effect on the material world, including miracles reflecting the change of properties of natural and physical phenomena and the relationship of a saint with the animal kingdom.

As regards translated hagiographic works of the genre of *Martyrdoms*: *The Martyrdom of Lukianos* (Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena II: 1946), *The Martyrdom of Michael* (Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena I: 1918), *The Martyrdom of Pansophius of Alexandria* (Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena I: 1918), *The Martyrdom of Boa* (Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena II: 1946), *The Martyrdom of Elianos* (Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena II: 1946) and *The Martyrdom of Eugenia* (Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena II: 1946) have been studied specially from the plot-compositional viewpoint. In the above-mentioned compositions attention was focused on the forms of rendering plot-compositional devices, on the basis of which rather numerous similar hagiographic clichés have been demonstrated.

As has been established, in translated hagiography of the *Martyrdoms* genre it is a regular phenomenon that the hagiographer specifies the time of the creation of his work and the death of the saint, and characterizes the period. The author with typical modesty tells the reader his wish to describe the martyrdom of the saint and in order to substantiate the truth of his narration he cites the sources, names the persons from whom he heard about the martyrdom of one or another saint. In translated hagiography of the genre of *Martyrdoms* attention is not focused on the childhood of martyrs. Although the religious belief of martyrs is certain from the outset, in the works under study there are rare cases of the conversion to Christianity of followers of other religion. Martyrs reject earthly honour and adhere firmly to their religious faith unto the end. Clergymen support and prepare martyrs for the expected ordeal beforehand and martyrs, being fully aware of this ordeal, express their absolute readiness for martyrdom. Saints in prison or outside it are actively engaged in divine service. By means of ceaseless prayer, fasting, overcoming temptations, they spiritually temper themselves. The leave-taking of saints with the public is sad as saints know about the impending ordeal and address and console like-minded persons for the last time. Before their martyrdom, saints pray once again and thank the Lord. In the hagiographic works the torture of martyrs, the ritual of their burial and mourning are demonstrated. As hagiographers admire the martyrs' self-sacrifice, they praise them and find parallels for them in Biblical books.

In this work, attention is also focused on the demonstration of the miracle types. As a result of consideration, the following groups have been identified.

- I. The first group unites visions and divine appearances. This group further includes visions in reality, uniting in its turn types of clothing in light not only of the saint but also of the place of his presence, and along with the clergymen, visions of ordinary people as well; visions in sleep and visions at the time of death. In the latter subgroup a fact of a verbal divine appearance to the saint before death is recorded.
- II. The second group unites miracles worked by saints with respect to human beings, namely, cases of the punishment of unbelievers, casting out of devils and the prophesying of events by saints.

- III. The third group includes miracles happening by the will of God without the participation of saints in the form of the wrath of God befalling the wicked and unbelieving and the encouragement shown by the Lord to the saint.
- IV. The fourth group unites miracles linked with the world of the deceased, in which miracles of tombs and holy relics (healing of the sick by touching a saint's tomb or holy relics, punishment of the wicked, casting out unclean spirits and shining forth of the body of a deceased saint) and death of a human being by the wish of a deceased saint have been singled out.

References:

Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature 1963: Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature, Book I (5th-10th cc.), directed and edited by Ilia Abuladze, Tbilisi, Publishing House of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, 1963 (in Georgian)

Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature 1967: Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographic Literature, Book II (XIth –XVth cc.), directed and edited by Ilia Abuladze, Tbilisi, Publishing House of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, 1967 (in Georgian)

Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena I 1918: Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena I, directed and edited by K. Kekelidze, Tbilisi, Publishing House of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, 1918 (in Georgian)

Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena II 1946: Georgian Hagiographical Monuments, Keimena II, directed and edited by K. Kekelidze, Tbilisi, Publishing House of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, 1946 (in Georgian)