Poems of “Faris” Cycle” in Georgian and European poetry

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ABSTRACT
The literary paradigm of Mickiewicz’s “Faris” is revealed in the examples of Georgian and European poetry. The philosophical idea of “Faris” is as follows, the self-sacrificing rider will ride his horse at full speed. On his way he encounters a lot of obstacles, but he never gives up. The rider joined the eternity and dissolved in it. The thought learned the essence, and finally he found his happiness. In 1828, Mickiewicz wrote “Faris”. The poem “Merani” by the Georgian romantic poet Nikoloz Baratashvili and “Pegasus” by the famous Hungarian poet Sandor Petofi were written directly under the influence of “Faris”. We can also consider “Gallop” by Sully-Prudhomme, “Blue Horse” by Vazha-Pshavela as lyrical examples created on the theme of “Faris”. We can combine the lyrical samples created on the theme of “Faris” under one title and name them the poems of “Faris’s Cycle”. We can consider poem by Goethe “To Coachman Chronos”, which he wrote in 1774, as the literary basis of “Faris” Cycle” poems. We think that such an approach to the matter is a novelty for literary studies.

Keywords: Goethe, Mickiewicz, “Faris”, Georgian and European poetry, poetic coincidences.

1 INTRODUCTION
One of the important tasks of the literary studies is to consider parallel motives. With this, we will also find out some sources of national literature. It should be noted that the literary paradigm of “Faris” by Adam Mickiewicz is revealed in the example of the world poetry. Poetic creations carrying this idea can be considered as poems of one Cycle and they can be named “Faris” Cycle” poems.

As far as we know, there are “Napoleonic Cycle” poems in the world poetry, which combines not only poems and odes by Byron on the topic of Napoleon, but also other examples of the world poetry. In the paper, we will also review what can be considered as the literary basis of the “Faris” Cycle” poems.

In 1827, in conversation with Eckermann, Goethe was the first to raise the question of the existence of the world literature. “I therefore like to look about me in foreign nations, and advise everyone to do the same. National literature is now a rather unmeaning term; the epoch of world literature is at hand, and everyone must strive to hasten its approach” (Goethe 1988: 125). It is also significant for us that in the same year, in 1827, Goethe wrote a poem titled “World Literature”. Goethe calls the poets:
“Let all the nations under the same sky
Enjoy the same possessions in good spirits!” (Goethe 1972: 231)

We can say, that “common tendencies can be reflected in the literary process of different peoples independently, or under influence, which have common values” (Vardoshvili 2020: 68), and at the same time, one poetic image may become a literary paradigm.

2 METHOD

We use the method of comparative literature to study and to discuss the issue based on thought of Georgian and European writers.

3 DISCUSSION

The European literary and thinking traditions were repeatedly depicted in Georgian literature of the XIX century. “The essence of the works by Georgian writers in the XIX century was determined by the following factors; the national literary tradition, the socio-political situation in the XIX century, and the European literary and philosophical thought” (Vardoshvili 2022: 27). There can be found a plenty of literary parallels as well. They often have a parallel with “Merani” by the Georgian romantic poet N. Baratashvili and “Faris” by Adam Mickiewicz.

Although Baratashvili is a national poet, with the essence of his work he stands next to the European writers. The study of the common cultural-historical background and prerequisites for creation of these two works is a significant issue for both Georgian and Polish literary studies and history.

In Georgia, “Faris” by Mickiewicz was known, when the poet was still alive. This was facilitated by the circumstance, that after the defeat of the Polish Uprising in 1830, Polish writers and public figures were exiled to Georgia. The translation of “Faris” from Russian into Georgian by Solomon Razmadze was often read at the meetings of 1832 Georgian plot.

In 1829, in Georgia there were two Russian translations of “Faris”, by Manasein and Shchastin. During study at the gymnasium the teacher of Russian language Dementiev often read to Baratashvili Russian translations of Mickiewicz’s “Faris”.

It is believed that “Faris” was one of the sources of inspiration for Baratashvili when he wrote his “Merani”.

Except common cultural and historic background, concrete facts and disposition of the writers, these two poems have a number of poetic coincidences. For example, “Faris” means “a rider” in Arabian, in one of the autobiographical manuscripts of Baratashvili the original title of “Merani” – “Desperate rider” is kept. Baratashvili’s “Merani” (dashing horse) and Mickiewicz’s “Faris” in Georgian and European literature can be connected with the issue of “The Saint rider” the original of which St. Giorgi, who comes from European culture to Georgian Christianity and who is the highest ideal of “Saint Ride”, and in relation to the knightly ideals of the Middle Ages, we
can, from a certain point of view, recall “Knight in the panther’s skin” by Shota Rustaveli or “Knights of the Cross” by Sinkevich” (Vardoshvili 2018: 63).

Philosophical idea of “Faris” is such a self-sacrificing rider goes at full speed on his horse. On his way he encounters a lot of obstacles, but he never gives up. The rider is united with the eternity and dissolved in it, the thought learned the essence, and finally he found his happiness.

Mickiewicz finishes the poem as follows:
“How sweet it is to stretch mine arms thus, thus! that they embrace
The world in friendship - to my breast
I gather it, from east to west!
Across the blue abyss I send my thought in swiftest flight,
Ever higher, higher lifting, to the heavens' farthest height:
And as the bee sends deep her sting and with it sinks her heart,
So I in heaven have sunk my thought, and feel my soul depart” (Mickiewicz 1986: 170).

In “Merani” by Baratashvili, a self-sacrificing rider’s goal is to pave a new untrodden road for his descendants. “The verse is musical and not only due to the alliteration; it conveys thoughts that the word cannot fully comprehend and describe. The black raven is a symbol of an evil spirit that always accompanies one’s evil intentions. The evil spirit is a symbolically classed as black. However, the colour of Merani in the poem is not mentioned as it is not perceived as a physical object. Its colour is the colour of the soul – ethereal and transparent” (Vardoshvili 2018: 65)

In the logical conclusion of “Merani” Baratashvili writes:

“The yearnings of my restless soul will no in vain have glowed,
For, dashing on, my steed has paved a new untrodden road.
He who follows in our wake, a smoother path will find;
During all, his fateful steed shall leave dork fate behind” (Baratashvili 1972: 52).

“Merani” also has a second metalogical conclusion, which leaves us with the feeling of infinity, Baratashvili completes the poem with a leitmotif:

“Speed thee on and onward fly with a gallop that knoweth no bound,
Fling to the winds my stormy thoughts in raging darkness found” (Baratashvili 1972: 52).

The leitmotif of “Faris” by Mickiewicz is as follows:

“Along these paths the wind doth stray
And its own footprints bears away!” (Mickiewicz 1986: 25).

In 1828, Mickiewicz wrote “Faris”, Baratashvili wrote “Merani” in 1842. Researcher Jibladze notes, that “René François Armand created his famous “The Gallop” in two decades after “Merani”, which is very close to genius poem of Baratashvili. We think that the poem by Sully Prudhomme is written on the same topic as the poem by Baratashvili” (Jibladze 1968: 407). Perhaps the French poet was familiar with Mickiewicz’s masterpiece or another similar poetic creation.

In the poem “The Gallop” by René François Armand Sully Prudhomme, the rider appeals to his horse to ride him towards infinity so that he can experience freedom with all its might. The rider is ready
for his dream to even outride dashing of the horse. Therefore, he appeals to his horse to overcome all obstacles in order to visit the unknown territories. We can say that “The Gallop” by René François Armand shows a great similarity not only with “Merani” by Baratashvili but also with “Faris” by Mickiewicz.

From world poetry, our attention was drawn to the poem “Pegasus” (“Az Én Pegasusom”) by the famous Hungarian author Sandor Petofi. Petofi, as a poet and a citizen, stood out with his fighting spirit. He was one of the founders of the Hungarian national liberation movement. In 1848, Polish patriots, who had been actively involved in the Polish uprising in 1830, participated in the Hungarian revolution. We should also pay attention to the fact that Petofi was very well familiar with Mickiewicz’s poetry.

Petofi wrote his “Pegasus” in 1847. “It is noted in the Hungarian scientific literature that the motive of Messianism is so similar in the poems of Mickiewicz and Petofi that the source of influence must have been “Faris” for Hungarian poet” (Vardoshvili 2022: 81).

This is confirmed by the fact that Hidashi writes: “In July 1848, in the Polish newspaper “Demokrata polska” Stanislaw Worcell published a series of letters under the title: “Hungary and Poland”, in which he appealed to Poles and Hungarians to fight together for freedom. The great Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz also addressed the Hungarians with a welcome call” (Hidashi 1961: 278).

Petofi addresses his horse:

“Go, hurry, hurry up
Fly me over the gorge,
Do not let anyone
Be as fast as you are!
When seeing an enemy
Do not shy, attack him!” (Petofi 1978: 52).

With its content, artistic forms, symbolic meaning, we find a number of poetic coincidences between the mentioned poems.

Mickiewicz: “Speed, courser of the silver feet” (Mickiewicz 1986: 167).
Petofi: “Go, onward! Onward! And fly me over the gap” (Petofi 1973: 52).

In general, the image of the dashing horse can be considered as a symbol of the struggle for personal and national freedom, both in the lyrical masterpieces discussed by us, and in the Georgian and European poetry in general.
All poems express the human aspiration for freedom and boundlessness, the poetic icon for poets is image of the dashing horse, they create their masterpieces with a similar artistic feeling. “That the beginning of a new era of the European literature was marked by creation of a lyrical-epic poem. In this genre, the historical content of the era is reflected in a personal prism: a new discovery of the poet’s personality takes place. Instead of the objective picture of the classical poem, the reader is confronted with two objects: the content of the era and the personality of the poet” (Kenchoshvili 1974: 100).

It is worth noting that we see the image of dashing horse in the poem by Lermontov “Hadji-Abrek”. We also find the literary paradigm of “Faris” in the poem “Blue Horse” by the Georgian realist writer Vazha-Pshavela. The poet addresses his horse that he too had feelings like a human being. Its dashing is like a breeze, when it blows from the lowlands towards the mountains. The horse of the poet is rushing even on the rocks, it paves the new untrodden road. It removes sorrow and grief from the poet’s heart. Its dashing gives the poet’s thoughts eagle’s wings. It makes the poet fall in love with a deserted place. The horse is dashing its rider to an unknown place, towards the moonless and sunless space.

In the poem Vazha-Pshavela writes:

“You fly well on the rocks too,
You pave an untrodden road,
You keep me the grief away with your heart,
Grief with thousand wings
You give the eagle’s wings
To my thoughts, with many wings.
You make me love a deserted place.
A sunless and moonless place,
That we call it the sunny” (Vazha-Pshavela 1960: 56).

Here the Faustian paradigm of understanding the world is revealed, that the human mind cannot fully comprehend the laws of nature. The poem, of course, also echoes “Merani” by Baratashvili, is written in 1890, and it presents the idea of aspiration for goodness and infinity, as in other poems of the “Faris” Cycle.

In one of the untitled poems (“Young health returned to me again”), Heinrich Heine writes:

“My young health has returned to me,
My steed is still dashing me away,
Strong desire for battles surrounds me,
I hear my friend’s heartbeat” (Heine 1978: 509).

In this case, the romantic feelings of the poet and the image of his lover merges with the desire of fight and wish. In a certain way, this poem can be attributed to a series of poems created on the topic of “Faris”.

In some cases, the image of the dashing horse is not related to general human tendencies, but to the personal, romantic mood of the poet. In this regard, the poem by Goethe “Welcome and Farewell” is interesting. In the poem, Goethe writes:

“Quick throb’d my heart: to horse! haste, haste
And lo! ’twas done with speed of light;
The evening soon the world embraced,
And o’er the mountains hung the night.
I went—thy gaze to earth first roved;
Thou follow’dst me with tearful eye:
And yet, what rapture to be loved!
And, Gods, to love—what ecstasy!” (Goethe 1952: 22).

All poems express man’s striving for goodness, freedom and infinity. It would be correct if we combine the mentioned poetic creations and call them the poems of “Faris’s” Cycle”.

As we mentioned, Mickiewicz wrote “Faris” in 1828. Mickiewicz, visiting Goethe in 1829, tells the great thinker the story of the creation of “Faris”. “Once, the poet, going home from a party in St. Petersburg, got into bad weather. He jumped up in the carriage and called to the coachman to dash the horses as fast as possible. It turns out that the fast galloping, blowing of the wind, the rustling of the hoofs gave him the idea of “Faris”. Returning home, the writer sat down at the table and has been working all night. Mickiewicz finished writing “Faris” at dawn” (Giorgadze 1996: 12). Undoubtedly, Mickiewicz introduced his masterpiece to Goethe. First, it is significant that Mickiewicz told Goethe the story of the creation of “Faris” and secondly, in 1830, in “Conversations with Eckermann”, Goethe notes, “the idea of the distinction between classical and romantic poetry, which is now spread over the whole world, and occasions so many quarrels and divisions, came originally from Schiller and myself” (Goethe 1988: 213).

When talking about specific niches, this fact is very important for us. Especially if we recall an example of the philosophical lyric “To Coachman Chronos” written by Goethe on October 10, 1774. Goethe wrote the poem while he was returning to Frankfurt, by a coach, where he saw Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock off, who had come to visit him to Karlsruhe two weeks before. Jinoria observes, “This “most beautiful poem” of young Goethe, as Korff considers it – I would say his “Merani” – may in some respects be regarded as classically typical of all Goethe’s lyric poetry” (Jinoria 1981: 77).

We can consider Goethe’s poem “To Coachman Chronos” as the literary basis for the “Faris” Cycle” poems. The poet sitting in the carriage addresses the coachman to hurry up, to stop trotting, mauldering, to go quickly and to dash the carriage in the middle of life. He shall not be afraid of obstacles and ascend. A young lady vivifying gaze catches the coachman’s attention. The poet wishes the lady to give him a kind, curing look. The carriage runs downhill. The sun is sinking. The poet appeals to the coachman to snatch him “through hell’s nocturnal gate.” The poet calls upon the coachman to blow his trumpet, to ride his horse, so that the mighty men stand up before him.
We think the main idea of the poem is given in these stanzas by Goethe:

“Wide, lofty and glorious
is the view around into life;
from mountain range to mountain range
the eternal spirit glides,
bringing promise of eternal life” (Goethe 1975: 92).

The poet wants the coachman to take a view around into life from mountain range to mountain range.

These words show, how Goethe perceives the world. At the same time, it recognizes the eternity and immortality of the soul.

4 CONCLUSION

We can say that the literary paradigms of “Faris” by Mickiewicz are revealed in the samples of Georgian and European poetry. We can combine them under one heading and call them the poems of the “Faris” Cycle”.

Such an approach to the issue, we think, is a novelty in the literary studies. Let us consider Goethe’s poem “To Coachman Chronos” as the literary basis for the poems of the “Faris” Cycle.”
REFERENCES


