

**The  
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Tbilisi State  
Conservatoire**

**International  
Research  
Center for  
Traditional  
Polyphony**

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3. A Brief History of the International Forums on Traditional Polyphony
5. New Publications by IRCTP
8. Scientific-Creative Symposium "Brazhnikovskie Chteniya-2006"
9. Interview with Professor Clayton Parr of DePaul University (USA)
11. Ethnomusicology. Distribution of Vocal Polyphony among the World's Musical Cultures
16. Ethnomusicology. A new role for Georgian singing, or the continuation of its ancient function?
20. Georgian ethnomusicologists. Mindia Zhordania
22. Field Exspeditions. Field Expedition in Kakheti
24. Georgian Folk Groups. State Ensemble of Georgian Folk Song and Dance *Rustavi*
26. "You will not hear the songs like ours anywhere..." Interview with a folk performer Ilia Zakaidze
28. Georgian Folk Song - New Transcription. Misdevs Mela lomsa



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# A Brief History of the International Forums on Traditional Polyphony

The Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony is approaching - it will be opened on September 25 at the Grand Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire and during the following 4 days it will host the world's renowned ethnomusicologists and foreign performers of Georgian folk song. Among the scholars, together with new names, are those who have participated in previous Symposia. This is a joyous fact testifying to the prestige and popularity of the Tbilisi forum. We express our gratefulness to Dr. Dieter Christensen, Dr. Izaly Zemtsovsky, Dr. Franz Foedermayr, Dr. Oohashi Tsutomu, Emi Nishina and Norie Kawai, Dr. Susanne Ziegler, Dr. Daiva Raciunaitė-Viciniene, who have been cooperating with the International research Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi State Conservatoire. The geography of the symposium has extended; together with scholars from Austria, Australia, USA, France, Japan, Russia, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Ukraine, Lithuania, Norway and Holland, who participated in previous symposia, the Third Symposium will host representatives from Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy, Poland and Spain. As it shows, our symposium has achieved the most important object - it has drawn the attention of the world ethnomusicological circles to Georgia, unique Georgian polyphony - an inseparable part of the world polyphony; and now, it is up to Georgian ethnomusicologists to develop these international contacts.

There are several scholarly centers for traditional music in the world; many seminars, symposia and conferences, dedicated to the results of this research work, are held in various countries; they play important role in the safeguarding and preservation of the world's cultural diversity. These scientific forums, of course, cover all aspects of ethnomusicological study, including polyphony. But, Tbilisi symposia are dedicated solely to the problems of polyphony as the specific means of musical expression. And so, in my opinion, they hold a distinguished place.

As one of the organizers of these symposia, I became interested in the history of holding scientific forums on polyphony. I was certain, that in the former Soviet Union the first conference dedicated solely to the problems of polyphony and with the participation of ethnomusicologists from the West was first held in 1984 in Georgia, at Tbilisi State Conservatoire. This was followed by the conferences held in Borjomi in 1986 and 1988. Among the participants were Oscar Elschek, Nikolai Kaufman, Barbara Krader, Dunia Rihtman, Dragoslav Devic, Margarita Mazo, Susanne Ziegler, Radmila Petrovic, Izaly Zemtsovsky, Eduard Alexeev and others.

Information on the history of world forums on this subject was forwarded to me by Joseph Jordania, and I want to thank him for this. One of the first conferences of this kind was held in



*At the Second International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony, 2004*

Ghana (Africa), in 1966, by the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM). One of the two themes of the forum was polyphony. By the way, only ten reports on polyphony were presented, including one on Georgian polyphony by Ernst Emsheimer.

In 1972 the folkloric commission of the Soviet Union organized a scientific session entitled "Polyphony in Folk Music" in Western Georgia.

In 1973 ESEM (European Seminar in Ethnomusicology) dedicated one of its annual seminars to "Drone in European Folk Music".

Then come three conferences held in Georgia - in 1984, 1986 and 1988.

In 1991 Simha Arom organized scientific conference "Polyphony in Russian Folk Music" in Paris, and in 1993 the so-called "business reunion" for specialists working on polyphony. Among the participants was Edisher Garaqanidze, who, together with Susanne Ziegler, presented a report on Georgian polyphony.

Two following conferences were held at Tbilisi State Conservatoire in 1998 and 2000; the latter was organized with the support of the foundation "Open Society Georgia" and it was the first, after Georgia's declaration of independence that revived the status of international conferences on polyphony. The International Symposia on Traditional Polyphony in 2002 and 2004 extended the practice.

In 2004 a special conference on polyphony was held at Taiwan University; in 2005 the symposium "European Voices" dedicated to the theme "Polyphonic Singing in the Balkans and Mediterranean" was held in March, 2005, in Vienna.

As we see, conferences on the problems of polyphony, with the exception of those held in Georgia, have been sporadic in their character. A number of new ideas, enriching the already-existing concept of polyphony, were declared in the 1980s, and these were better expressed at the Symposia of 2002 and 2004.

Organization of these symposia and presentation of newer and newer aspects of the study of the phenomenon of polyphony by the scholars from various countries is one of the chief aims of the International Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi State Conservatoire. About forty scholars from the USA, France, Austria, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, Great Britain, Lithuania, Ukraine, Poland, Russia and Australia have taken part in Tbilisi Symposia, in addition to Georgian scholars; representatives from Canada, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria and Croatia are expected at the 2006 Symposium; together with the polyphonies of these countries the participants will be able to familiarize with the polyphony of Jordan, Iraq, Indonesia, Tanzania and Bosnia-Herzegovina - in one word this is the world polyphony, with its amazing diversity and richest forms!

We were very pleased to get familiarized with the information on the Vienna Symposium of 2005 presented in the Newsletter #39 (pp.17-18) of ESEM (European Seminar in Ethnomusicology). It wrote about the idea of establishing the research center of European polyphony. This article was signed by one of the participants of Tbilisi 2004 Symposium, Dr. Ardian Ahmedaja. It is obvious, that Georgian polyphony is considered one of the unique and oldest expressions of European polyphony. Maybe it is not accidental either, that the archaeological excavations in Dmanisi (Kvemo Kartli region of Georgia) presented "first European" couple of hominids *Zeuxa* and *Mzia* to Europe! In my opinion, this means that the new Center will have close contacts with the scholars of Georgian polyphony, that the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi State Conservatoire will have a new partner, and that this partnership will enable them to realize many interesting projects.

**Rusudan Tsurtsumia**



## New Publications by IRCTP

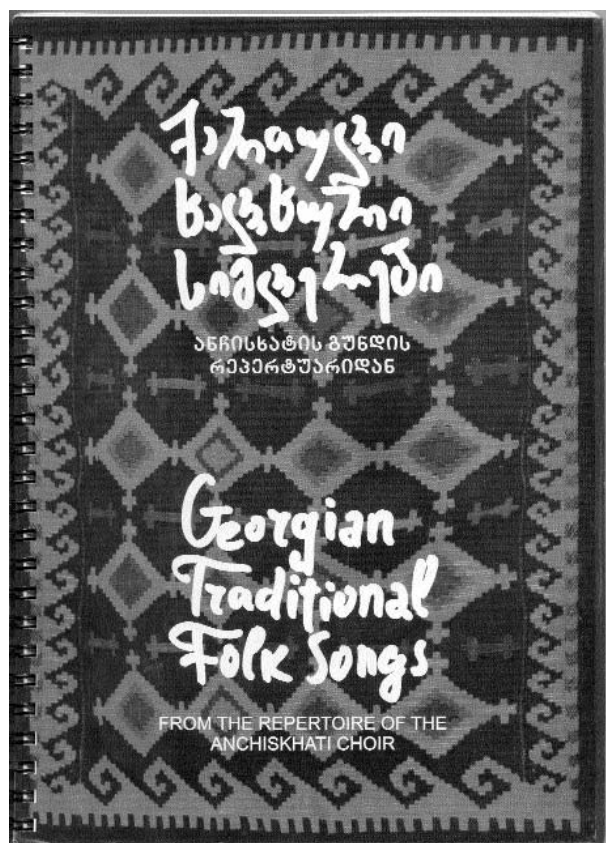
In 2005 IRCTP published a textbook "Georgian Folk Music". The book is supplied with audio material on 2 CDs and corresponding transcriptions, and is intended for performance majors at the Conservatoire. The text of the book is compiled by Tamar Meskhi and Tamaz Gabisonia; bibliography compiled by Nino Nakashidze and Otar Kapanadze; songs were transcribed by all employees of the IRCTP; computer service by Levan Veshapidze and Tamaz Gabisonia; editor Rusudan Tsurtsumia (in Georgian)

International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi State Conservatoire has started publication of the materials recorded by field-work expeditions and preserved at the archive of the Georgian Folk Music Department. "Field Expedition Recordings. Kakheti 1952" is the first CD from this series. This was one of the first expeditions organized by Tbilisi State Conservatoire led by Grigol Chkhikvadze. Other participants of the expedition were Otar Chijavadze, Eduard Savitsky, Tengiz Eristavi, Kakhi Rosebashvili and Alexandre Bukia. The material was recorded in Gurjaani, Telavi and Qvareli districts from the following performers: a choir from Gurjaani directed by Levan Mughalashvili - a famous song-master, singer and chanter; Solomon Chachauri and Giorgi Simashvili from the village of Artana (Telavi district); a choir from Qvareli; Giga Ghviniashvili's family ensemble and Shukuri Gurgenishvili from the village of Velitsikhe (Gurjaani district); Gio Nasqidashvili and Partena Arjevnishvili from the village of Eniseli (Qvareli district). The CD was prepared by Natalia Zumbadze, Ketevan Matiashvili and Tinatin Zhvania of the Georgian Folk Music Department; Archil Kharadze of the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony; annotation translated into English by Maia Kachkachishvili of the IRCTP and Clayton Parr of DePaul University



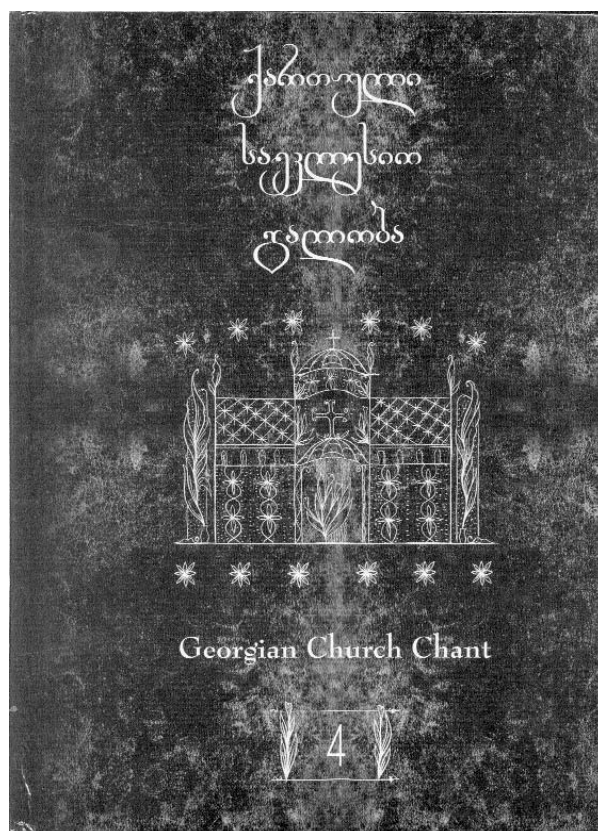
*Kartuli Khalkhuri Simgherebi* (Georgian Folk Songs) - collection of transcriptions from the repertoire of Anchiskhati church choir. The collection includes Megrelian, Svan, Gurian, Kakhetian, Kartlian, Imeretian and town songs from the CD with the same name released in 2000. Compiler, transcriber of the songs and author of the introduction - Davit Shughliashvili; editor - Malkhz Erkvanidze; artist - Tengiz Mirzashvili; editorial working group: Levan





Veshapidze, Giorgi Bagrationi, John Graham and Luarsab Togonidze; song texts translated into English by Elene Paghava and Ia Iashvili; the book provides the list of performers and discography. The collection was published by the financial support of the USA Embassy in Georgia (in Georgian and English)

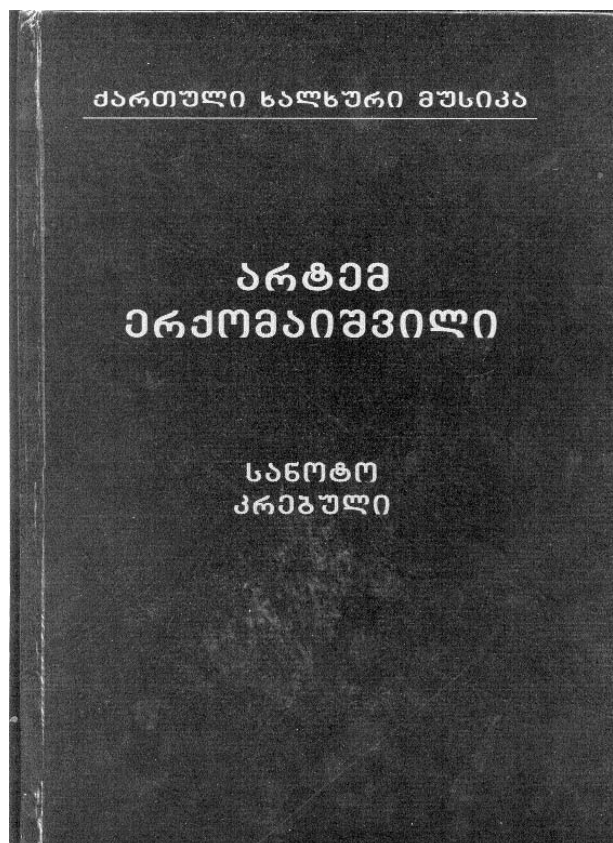
CD of Basiani - folk ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchate. The CD includes several church hymns and Georgian folk songs from Tusheti, Kakheti,



Guria, Samegrelo, Imereti, Svaneti and Lazeti. The annotation of the CD includes short introduction by an ethnomusicologist Nino Kalandadze; annotation translated into English by Maia Kachkachishvili and Carl Linich

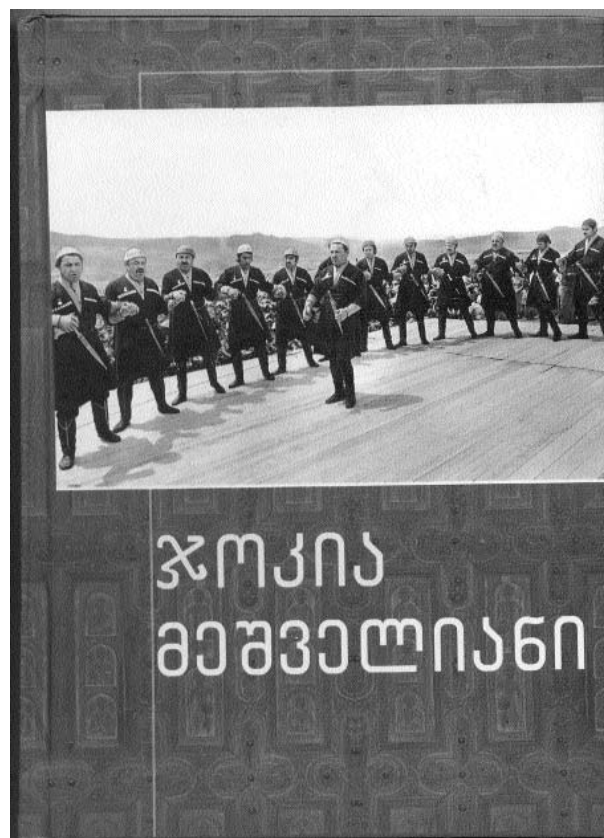
*Kartuli Saeklesio Galoba. Gelatis Skola* (Georgian Church Chant. Gelati School) - collection of transcriptions. The book includes Lenten Triodion and Pentecostarion chants. Compiler and musical editor - Malkhaz Erkvanidze; text and musical examples typed and prepared for publication - Levan Veshapidze; editors: Ekvtime Kochlamazashvili and Ketevan Matiashvili; design - Gocha Balavadze; English translation - Ketevan Eliazishvili; corrector - Magda Sukhiashvili. The collection is published by the Chant Center of the Georgian Patriarchate (in Georgian and English)

Artem Erkomaishvili (collection of transcriptions). This includes songs and sacred hymns from Artem Erkomasihvili's repertoire. The author of the collection is Anzor Erkomaishvili - Artem Erkomaishvili's grandson, renowned Georgian song-master. The collection was prepared by: Vladimer Gogotishvili, Lela



Makarashvili, Vakhtang Rodonaia, Davit Shughliashvili, Nino Nakashidze, Ketevan Matiasvili and Nino Kalandadze; English translation by Maia Kachlachishvili and Carl Linich; design - Vakhtang Rurua and Ivane Kiknadze. The book was published by the International Centre for Georgian Folk Song (in Georgian and English)

“Jokia Meshveliani”. Monograph is dedicated to the memory of Jokia Meshveliani - director of



the Georgian folk song ensemble *Lile* from Lentekhi (Kvemo Svaneti), wonderful Georgian song-master, brilliant performer of Svan song. The author of the monograph - Marina Kvizhinadze; the book was prepared by Tamar Kevlishvili and Natela Tukhareli. The book is published by the International Centre for Georgian Folk Song with the support of Jokia Meshveliani Foundation (in Georgian)

The International Centre for Georgian Folk Song released a 2-CD set of unique recordings made in the 1930s entitled "Georgian and Abkhazian Folk Songs". It includes songs from Svaneti, Guria, Samegrelo, Kartli, Kakheti and Abkhazia. The CD was prepared by: Anzor Erkomaishvili, Mikheil Kilosanidze, Giorgi Shengelia, Vakhtang Rodonaia, Temur Gvantseladze, Nodar Malazonia, Nika Kuprashvili, Maia Kachkachishvili and Carl Linich. Georgian text of the annotation by a Georgian ethnomusicologist, now deceased, Kukuri Chokhonelidze. (annotation in Georgian, English and Russian)



**Nino Nakashidze**

# Scientific-Creative Symposium *Brazhnikovskie Chteniya-2006*

On April 1, 1974, N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov Leningrad Conservatory hosted the first conference dedicated to the traditional Russian chant and memory of famous Russian scholar, composer and teacher Maxim Brazhnikov - the founder of modern Russian medieval scientific school.

*Brazhnikovskie Chteniya* is a very important event in the history of the study of Orthodox church hymn in Russia; formation of the new generation of scholars-medievalists takes place in the framework of this symposium. It should be mentioned, that *Brazhnikovskie Chteniya* is the first scientific-creative symposium in Russia, which is dedicated to the study of church-chant traditions of various nations, church-composition practice and modern church concert music. The symposium unites experts both from Russia and elsewhere. There are no restrictions for young scientists (the begin-

ners) to participate in the event together with renowned scholars. The symposium is followed by the publication of the book of proceedings. The first volumes of the collections of scholarly works were issued at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s. The research area of the symposium has gradually expanded. If at first great attention was paid to the study of sources and texts, later the following subjects were investigated: poetics, historical-cultural problems, theory, performance and comparative study of medieval chant traditions.

From 1977 one of the important component parts of the symposium is the exhibition of manuscripts, which is organized at the manuscript section of the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg. Today, together with St. Petersburg State Conservatoire, the participants of the symposium are the National Library of Russia, Center of Folklore and Sheremetev Palace. Besides all above-mentioned the symposium includes concert program. This year's symposium was distinguished for the number of performers and diversity of concert program. The official opening ceremony took place on April 3, which was followed by the concert of Orthodox traditional chant *Se Vesna Dukhovnaya...* (This Spiritual Spring) at A. K. Glazunov Hall of the Conservatory.

Among the performers were: men's choir from Optina Pustin, ensembles of old Russian professional music *Znamenye* and *Kliuch Razumeniya*, chanters from St. Petersburg Georgian church of the Virgin - Giorgi Gerliani, Giorgi Shioshvili, Davit Megrelishvili and Ekaterine Diasamidze; the latter is also a member of the ensemble *Kliuch Razumeniya* and participated in the scientific part of the symposium.

It should be mentioned that the concert was sold out. Beside the aforementioned renowned ensembles, the joint Georgian-Russian item won the sym-



*Georgian chanters with Russian colleagues*



thy of the audience; according to the ensemble's wish, Natalia Mosiagina - director of *Kliuch Razumeniya*, as well as all members of the ensemble studied several Georgian church hymns. Their performance of Byzantine, Georgian, Serbian and Russian hymns was followed by the performance of Georgian chants and a folk song *Mravalzhamier* by Georgian participants. The final turn of the concert was the joint performance of Zakaria Paliashvili's *Shen Khar Venakhi* by Georgians and Russians. An indescribable atmosphere reigned in the hall. *Kliuch Razumeniya* and their Georgian colleagues were called encore several times; first Russian and then Georgian "Long Life" was sung for the first encore, and the second one was crowned by Georgian *Mravalzhamier*.

**Ekaterine Diasamidze**

## Interview with Professor Clayton Parr of DePaul University (USA)

**Dr. Parr, what can you say about your main activities and the institution where you work now?**

I am on the faculty at DePaul University School of Music in Chicago. DePaul is the largest Catholic university in America, with over 20,000 students, and we have about 400 students in the School of Music. As Director of Choral Activities, I conduct choirs, teach courses in choral literature, conducting and music education. In addition, I am active as a performer in the Chicago area. In the 2005-2006 academic year I was a Fulbright scholar in Tbilisi, teaching and doing research on Georgian music at the Conservatoire.

**How much interest is there in the USA in the traditional musical culture of America and other countries?**

There is currently a great deal of interest, from scholars, performers and listeners, in all kinds of traditional music from around the world. Many schools of music are adding ethnomusicologists to their faculties, and choirs are including multicultural music in their concert repertoires. As far as our own American traditional musical culture is concerned, genres such as spirituals, gospel and jazz have of course long had an important place in academic study in the US, and there is increased interest and study of Native American [Indian] music. We have been slower to recognize the traditional musical contributions of other segments of American society, but this too is changing.

The recent increase in CD sales of world music in the US is very interesting, creating a popular market here for traditional music that is much larger than it was. Some traditional musicians are making a lot of money selling CDs here. However, as you know, the best-selling recordings are not necessarily those that are most authentically done. Many of the best-selling "folk" groups are producing music that is popularized or urbanized in a similar manner to some of the urbanized Georgian music heard in Tbilisi today.

**How did you get acquainted with Georgian traditional music?**

The pianist Eteri Andjaparidze is my colleague at DePaul, and in 2002, Manana Doijashvili and Ia Khurtsidze visited her at our campus to discuss academic exchanges with the Tbilisi Conservatoire. When I met them they invited me to Tbilisi to visit, and later I made contact with Patty Cuyler and Larry Gordon from the American group Village Harmony, which was offering a singing performance tour of Georgia led by Carl Linich. In my first visit I was able to spend some time at the Conservatoire and some time touring the countryside singing Georgian music with Village Harmony, and this combination of academic activity and folk music has led me back to Georgia each year since then.

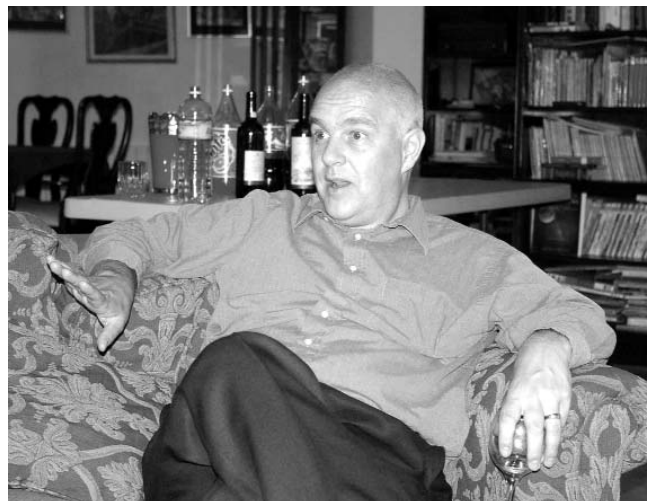
### **How difficult was it for you to study the Georgian language?**

As you know, Georgian is considered a difficult language for foreigners, but since I planned to study Georgian songs, I felt study of Georgian was important for understanding of the lyrics. As a singer and conductor, I've now had professional experience performing in almost 40 languages, and Georgian is one of the best ones to sing in. The cadence of the language is naturally musical, the five vowel sounds are open resonant and straightforward, and while some of the consonant sounds can be tricky at first, Georgian does not have the complications of syllabic emphasis and its musical implications that one encounters in many other languages, Russian for example.

My study of Georgian was complicated by the scarcity of good published reference materials, but was made much easier by excellent teachers: Giorgi Khelashvili here in Chicago before my departure, Shalva Mindorashvili in Signaghi, and especially Manana Tabidze and Maia Kachkachishvili at the Conservatoire, who helped me so much, working through translations and answering so many questions. I am also indebted to the many students, faculty and staff at the Conservatoire, who were so patient and friendly with me as I struggled through conversations and learned to communicate and even do some lecturing in Georgian. My communication with the choral conducting faculty was done with the help of Archiko Ushveridze, with whom I spoke in a combination of German and Georgian. My 14-year old son, Cullen, studied Georgian while he was here with me, and I often relied on his youthful linguistic talent to correct my mistakes.

### **What is the purpose of your visit to Georgia and how successfully has it been realized?**

My purpose was twofold: to share information about American choral and vocal music with colleagues and students at the Conservatoire, and to learn



more about Georgian choral music so that I could share that knowledge with the American choral community on my return. I hope I have been successful on both counts. I was able to do some teaching at the Conservatoire, and left a library of scores and books to the Conservatoire's library, mostly on American music but also including music from Canada and Latin America. The first important publication is an issue of the International Choral Bulletin devoted to Georgian music, for which I was guest editor. This issue is scheduled for release in October 2006. I have completed a large number of transcriptions of Georgian professional choral pieces, and am working with Georgian composers to get these pieces published in the US.

### **How much does the performance manner of Georgian choral songs differ from general academic manner?**

The technique appears to be quite different, in terms of articulation, position of the larynx, movement of the mouth, etc. But as one might expect, Georgians appear to come to this technique naturally, rather than thinking about folk vocal technique in mechanistic terms. There is a marked difference between folk singing manner and academic choral manner as practiced at the Tbilisi Conservatoire, but I still detect a resemblance, especially when they sing Georgian compositions that show some folk influence, from composers such as Zakaria Paliashvili or Shalva Mshvelidze.

What made the strongest musical impression on you during your stay in Tbilisi or what was the most important discovery (not necessarily musical) during your stay in Tbilisi?

I was struck by the way that singing is still so closely connected with everyday life for many Georgians. At meals, other social events, in the city and the countryside, people sing here. It's not always Georgian folk music, and it doesn't always meet musicological standards of authenticity, but it's free, spontaneous, and from the heart. Professional musicians are sometimes so focused on peak performance that this type of spontaneity is difficult for them. But even at the Conservatoire, I heard students singing folk songs in the hallway almost every day. It's wonderful, I think, and keeps the "amateur" feeling in the music. I'm thinking of the root of the word "amateur" here, the feeling of love that is in all good music, whether we're paid for doing it or not.

**What are your future plans connected with Georgian musical culture?**

As I mentioned above, I'll be working to let people here in the US have access to Georgian music, by publishing, presenting at conferences, and performing the music here. While I don't yet have definite plans to return to Georgia, I'm sure I'll be back for future projects or exchanges.

**What would you wish for Georgian musicians and musicologists?**

I would wish them the material support they need to carry out their work, the wisdom they need to uphold standards and traditions, and the openness they need to communicate their work to the world, and the heart to do all this with joy. Gagimarjot!

**Tamaz Gabisonia**

# **Distribution of Vocal Polyphony among the World's Musical Cultures**

**Ioseph Jordania**

**The University of Melbourne,  
Australia**

*Continued. See the beginning in Bulletin 3.*

A F R I C A. Starting with Africa is justified by the fact, that African continent represents the biggest and the most active region of the distribution of traditional forms of vocal polyphony.

African continent is traditionally divided into two big regions: (1) North Africa and (2) Sub-Saharan Africa. This division has its merits for understanding of the distribution of vocal polyphony in Africa, although the distribution of traditions of polyphonic and monophonic styles makes good sense to actually distinguish three big regions in Africa: (1) sub-Saharan Africa, (2) North Africa, and (3) Sahara.

Sub-Saharan Africa represents arguably the largest region of distribution of vocal polyphony in the world. Representatives of all language families in Africa enjoy singing in groups. Responsorial singing is ubiquitous. The main compositional principle used in African polyphony is parallel movement of parts. Parallel movements of parts in African polyphony are obviously connected to the tone character of African languages. According to the influential work of Gerhard Kubik, the main principle of traditional polyphony in Central and East Africa is parallel movement of parts together with the principle of

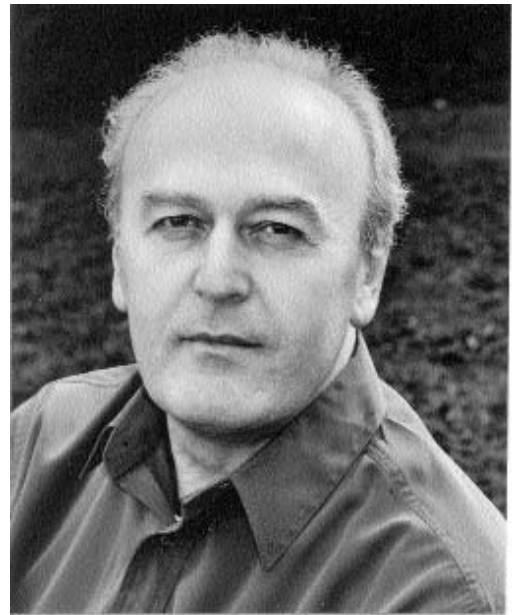
"skipping the neighboring note". So in case of the full diatonic scale we will have parallel thirds all the time. In case of the hexatonic scale (and in its most popular version - major scale without the 7th grade) we will have mostly parallel thirds with occasional fourths, and in case of pentatonic scale we will have mostly parallel fourths with an occasional third. Consonants (particularly thirds and triads) are the basis of the vertical coordination of different parts, and the drone is almost completely absent in sub-Saharan African polyphonic traditions.

Crucial importance of the polyphony and harmony for the African music led one of the first native African musicologist George Balanta to declare famously (and rather controversially) that "All African melodies are constructed upon harmonic background..."

African traditional music is among the best recorded of the World. This led Alan Lomax to declare that Africa was "the best recorded of the continents". Hugh Tracey, who valued African music primarily for its esthetical value, arguably did the largest number of recordings of African music.

One of the most important and influential polyphonic traditions in Africa comes from Central African Pygmies and San from South Africa. Tradition of yodeling is extremely developed among San and particularly among pygmies (reaching sometimes the complexity of eight different yodeling parts singing in interlocking texture). Ethnomusicologists agree that music of large number of Central and southern African tribes were strongly influenced by Pygmy polyphony. Some scholars (Grimaud, Rouget, Lomax) suggested that Pygmy and San music (particularly their traditions of vocal polyphony) have common roots.

Solo polyphony (overtone singing) is also present in Africa in two isolated cultures: among Xhosa in South Africa and Wagogo in Central Tanzania.



*Ioseph Jordania*

New African music, based on the use of European musical instruments and the elements of tonal harmony together with the traditional forms of polyphony and principles of the vertical coordination of the parts (including the prevalence of the parallel thirds) is developing dynamically. After the first isolated attempt of Rycroft in 1958, the study of popular music in Africa gained momentum after the 1980s.

African component played a crucial role in the development of many musical cultures in North, Central and South Americas. Brought as slaves during the 17th-19th centuries mostly from the west coast of the sub-Saharan Africa, African populations brought the active tradition of multi-part singing together with them to their new countries, often becoming the leading element of the newly established musical culture.

North Africa consists mostly of so called "monophonic cultures". Culturally and linguistically they are part of the bigger Arabic world and have close relationship with the cultures of the Near East. North Africa is one of the most monophonic regions of the World, with the highly developed traditions of solo professional musicians, wonderfully developed musical instruments and well established the-



oretical knowledge about the system of modes.

Sahara. Although this region culturally and geographically is sometimes perceived as a part of the North Africa, musically is quite distinct from both North Africa and from sub-Saharan Africa. This region is very sparsely populated due to the harsh environment of the World's biggest desert and mountains. Sahara is the home of indigenous Tuareg and Berber tribes who once were covering the most of the North Africa up to the Mediterranean Sea. Pushed southwards into the desert and mountainous regions by the invasions of Arabs, Berbers and Tuaregs preserved many unique features of their culture. Tradition of vocal polyphony is one of the most important features of Berber-Tuareg musical culture.

Vocal polyphony of Berbers and Tuaregs do not have close relationships with the rich polyphonic traditions of sub-Saharan African populations. On the other hand, traditional polyphony of Berbers and Tuaregs demonstrates links with the polyphonic traditions of northern (European) side of the Mediterranean Sea. Wide use of the drone both in European Mediterranean polyphonic traditions and among Berbers and Tuaregs is the most salient feature shared in both regions.

Musical culture of the Ancient Egypt does not offer as much historical and archaeological evidence as ancient civilizations of the Middle East of North Europe, but there are interesting indications that polyphony was not alien to the musical culture of Egypt. In his attempt to interpret hieroglyphic musical signs, Hickmann suggested that Ancient Egypt had two-part polyphonic music based on drone. This suggestion is supported by the richness of polyphonic traditions of Mediterranean peoples and the earliest population of North Africa - Tuaregs and Berbers (mostly based on drone).

**E U R O P E.** Europe is another very important region of the distribution of vocal polyphonic

traditions. Unlike sub-Saharan Africa, Europe does not represent a single and almost unbroken region of distribution of vocal polyphony. On the contrary, quick glance at the regions of the distribution of vocal polyphony in Europe reveals that polyphonic cultures are clustered here in few isolated geographic areas.

Mediterranean Region with the adjacent territories comprise major part of European polyphonic cultures. Most of the polyphonic cultures are concentrated around two types of natural environment in Europe - mountains and islands. Corsica and Sardinia have particularly rich polyphonic traditions among the islands of the Mediterranean. All the mountain ranges from the Pyrenean Apennines through to Alps, Balkans and Caucasia represent chain of isolated regions of distribution of traditional forms of vocal polyphony.

Most of the European traditions of polyphony have obvious traces of the influence of European professional music, with its system of harmonic progressions, chord structures and melodic development. Even all those regions which regained their older forms of traditional polyphony - Balkans, Caucasia, and to some extent - Alps, still have the more recent layers of vocal polyphony based on the influence of European professional music and harmonic system.

Despite the large number of isolated regional styles of vocal polyphony, earlier layers of European traditions of vocal polyphony have few important shared features. Two of the most salient features are (1) wide use of drone, and (2) coordination of vocal parts on dissonant intervals.

The same features are represented in most part-singing traditions of East and North Europe. To name only the few, these traditions include: Latvian drone singing with the small range repetitive melodies, unique Lithuanian Sutartines with the chains of seconds, Balkan part-singing with the inventive use of

seconds and fourths, Polesye and other Slavic regions with long drones and small range melodies, Mordovian wide range drone-based polyphony and Caucasian two- three-four part polyphony (the latter is found only in Georgia) also based on drone.

Regions of North Europe from Scandinavia to Iceland through British islands and array of other smaller islands are known as another important region of distribution of vocal polyphony, although some of these polyphonic traditions are known to us more from the historical sources than contemporary ethnomusicological recordings. These sources include the written monuments from the Icelandic Sagas to the medieval manuscripts, describing in detail (including the names of the parts) the existing North European tradition of singing in different parts.

A S I A. The largest continent, comprising two thirds of the World human population, with the immense geographic, climatic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, Asia is traditionally divided into several sub-regions. Major parts of Asian musical traditions belong to monophonic cultures, traditions of vocal polyphony are represented in several regions of this huge continent.

One of the largest areas of distribution of vocal polyphony in Asia is South-East Asia. This region does not represent the uninterrupted region of vocal polyphony, but rather many isolated regions (mostly in mountains) where part-singing is still practiced. These regions include up to 25 Chinese ethnic minorities from the southwest of China through to the ethnic minorities in Central and North Vietnam mountains. Polyphonic traditions are also present in several of Indonesia's islands (particularly on Flores). Taiwan aboriginal tribes Ami, Bunun, and Paiwan are another very important part of polyphonic cultures of this region.

Polyphonic singing of Ainus, the first inhabitants of Japanese islands, living today in North regions of

Japan and in adjacent territories of Sakhalin and Kuril Islands, is possibly the most isolated part-singing tradition in the world. Ainu polyphony is often based on extensive use of canons.

Isolated vocal polyphonic traditions are also distributed in different parts of India - most notably in the Northeast region (Asam) and among South Indian tribal populations, as well as in small pockets in mountainous regions of Jammu and Kashmir. Dwellers of the eastern Afghanistan - Nuristanians are another interesting isolated region with interesting forms of vocal polyphony.

Unique solo polyphonic singing style of Central Asian peoples is often called "overtone singing". The original Mongolian name for this style of singing - *khoomii* translates as "throat" (hence the ambiguous English term "throat singing"). In overtone singing singer produces a specific tense drone, and using it as a fundamental pitch, on top of the drone produces a melody using the selected series of overtones, avoiding non-pentatonic overtones. This singing style (actually, consisting of several different techniques of voice-production) is particularly widely spread in western part of Tyva (or Tuva), in western Mongolia and adjacent territories (particularly - Altay mountain ranges), Khakassia, Bashkiria, Uzbekistan. Distantly resembling although different singing techniques (using overtones) is also known to exist in Tibetan Buddhist chant, among the Khosa in South Africa and Wagogo in Central Tanzania. Specific "vocal games", making use of overtones (although this style involves two performers, both women, using each-others mouth cavities) are distributed among Ainus in Japan and Sakhalin and Inuit in northeast Canada.

Elements of vocal polyphony are also found in isolated regions of Anatolia in Turkey, as well as among fisherman of the Persian Gulf and Marsh Arabs of Iraq. These later traditions are particular-

ly interesting in the context of the rich historical and archaeological information about the musical life of ancient civilizations of the Middle East (particularly Sumerians and Hittites). Polyphonic double blown instruments with two pipes with clearly different functions (often consisting of one drone and one melodic pipes), existence of the temple choirs (Nar-Nari) and lots of figures of 'singing heads' in Sumerian temples, and even the first alphabetical musical recordings of two and three-part music from Sumer and Hittites suggest that cultures of the ancient Middle East were familiar with the vocal forms of polyphony some 4000-5000 years ago.

Very interesting three-part-drone singing still exists among Nuristani in Eastern Afghanistan.

**NORTH & SOUTH AMERICA.** Both North and South Americas mostly represent monophonic cultures with few isolated regions of distribution of vocal forms of polyphony. In North America the most important region of distribution of vocal polyphony is British Columbia in South-West Canada, and California in the USA. Tribes Nootka, Kwakiutli, Selish in British Columbia have interesting forms of vocal polyphony. North-West and North-Central California are another important regions with elements of vocal polyphony. According to the historical sources, vocal forms of polyphony were also spread in southern California

As for the other regions of North American Indian musical cultures, unison singing (particularly between the soloist and the responding unison chorus) is widespread.

In South America polyphonic traditions are spread geographically wider than in North America, and major part of these traditions (particularly among Amazon rainforest Indian tribes and in Andes) is based on group singing with free heterophonic texture. Elements of canonic polyphonic singing also exist

in isolated regions of the Indians of Amazon Peru and Venezuela. In musical traditions of the tribe Q'ero in Peru (they live in high mountains east of Cusco) polyphonic tradition with some unique features is found (particularly interesting are elements of drone, unique for South American Indian music).

The picture of distribution of polyphonic traditions would not be complete without mentioning the polyphonic musical instruments from the ancient civilizations of Central America. Array of double, triple and even quadruple flutes were found in the archaeological cultures of this region. The construction of these instruments suggests that two, three and four part music was played on these instruments, and the use of drone (or even double drones) was widely spread. There is an interesting evidence of the use of parallel seconds as well in some instruments. As polyphonic blown instruments show promising parallels with vocal traditions, there is a possibility that a tradition of vocal polyphony based on drone and use of some dissonances was present in ancient civilizations of Central America.

Among contemporary populations of Central and South America (particularly in the cities), representing a mixture of Indian, European and African populations, polyphonic singing is widely spread. These traditions are particularly rich in the regions with major African populations. Contemporary polyphonic singing is mostly based on European harmonies with parallel thirds.

**AUSTRALIA.** Traditional musical culture of Australian aborigines is mostly monophonic, although singing in unison-heterophonic style is widely spread (particularly among Central and South Australian tribes). Musical cultures of the North Australian tribes have clear links with the nearby island cultures. Singing together with the didgeridoo (arguably the deepest drone instrument of the

world, thought to be initially introduced from the island cultures) creates interesting vocal-instrumental drone polyphony.

O C E A N I A. Oceania is another very important region of distribution of different forms of vocal polyphony. Vocal polyphony is spread on all three big groups of the islands of the Pacific, although to a very different extend. Micronesia mostly has monophonic singing traditions (although group singing is widely spread here) with some elements of polyphony. Melanesian islands have diverse forms of traditional polyphony, including parallel polyphony and polyphony based on drone and dissonant harmonies. The richest traditions of vocal polyphony are distributed on the vast distances of the Polynesian Islands. Apart from New Zealand Maori almost the whole Polynesia represents the unbroken region of distribution of vocal polyphonic traditions. Part singing in Polynesia unites all strata (genders, ages) of Polynesian population and is one of the central elements of traditional cultural and social life. Polynesian traditional music and polyphony was strongly influenced by the European music brought by Christian missionaries during the last couple of centuries.

For the further reading about the distribution of vocal polyphony in different regions and cultures of the world, 'Garland Encyclopedia of world Music' would be a good starting point to look at the general picture and to find the available publications. Two existing books that summarize the available information on world polyphonic cultures for the time of their publication ('History of Polyphony' by Marius Schneider, 1934-1945, second edition 1969, and 'Georgian Traditional Polyphony in an International Context of Polyphonic Cultures: The Problem of the Origins of Polyphony' by Joseph Jordania, published in 1989) are not available in English.

## A new role for Georgian singing, or the continuation of its ancient function?

By Frank Kane and Madge Bray

### *What Trauma Has Destroyed, Conscious Vibration Can Rebuild*

Georgians speak with pride of their success at maintaining their culture and their values despite the many invasions and other conflicts that the country has faced throughout its history.

Foreigners who come to Georgia are touched by the strong fabric of its society. They often observe that the concepts of family, community and national identity are healthy and strong, and central to the existence of the average Georgian. They compare this to a weaker sense of belonging in their own society.

As a key element of Georgian culture, which all Georgians point to with great pride, folk song seems to have played an important role throughout history in strengthening human connection in the country. This is sometimes stated very explicitly within the songs themselves [Chakrulo: "bevr jer vqopilvar am dgheshi magram ar damikvnesia" I've been in these straits many times, but I didn't moan and groan about it.].

In a 1886 article in which he expresses his impressions of hearing a concert of Georgian folk songs, Ilya Chavchavadze uses language which perhaps explains how folk song has operated in Georgia. "Here, in song and chanting," he writes, "harmonious sound supports poetry and vice versa, so that a human being might fully and completely express the motion of his soul and the beating of his heart. More often than not, voice and word are separate-





evoking from the depths of the human heart the large and small pearls with which it is filled, when grief and sorrow or joy strike the diving chords of man's spirituality. In this respect, song is the same tear which appears when the heart is rung by sorrow and also when it is visited by great joy." Ilya Chavchavadze thus speaks of the capacity of song to let people express grief and sorrow.

Innovative researchers working in the field of psychology in the United States and other countries are now coming to understand how human beings and animals process traumatic experiences. Some people and animals who suffer trauma emerge strengthened while others suffer physical and psychological damage which may last a lifetime. What factors determine who will emerge healthy and who will suffer further? According to psychologist Peter Levine, among others, it is the processing of a traumatic event to completion - in the moment when it occurs or later - which keeps the human or animal healthy. In a traumatic situation an animal or human may go into "fight" or "flight" but may also involuntarily "freeze", entering a state of physical immobility, and then, through a process of shaking and vibrating, discharge the traumatic energy from the organism. An impala caught by a cheetah may go into a "freeze" or immobility response. If it manages to escape, it usually goes through a period of shaking and vibrating and then continues to live in

good health. If this vibrating does not take place, the impala may become ill or even die.

An organism that has a mechanism to process trauma to completion is thus likely to be a healthier organism. In the same way, a society that has a mechanism to process traumatic events should be a healthier society than one which lacks these tools. Could it be that Georgian folk song and the rituals and practices connected to it have provided the Georgians with opportunities to release the traumas of their history and thus keep them in good health?

Singing is of course a form of vibration and its power to touch the human heart has been mentioned by poets throughout human history. In Georgia we find songs that speak directly of traumatic events and it appears that these songs are part of the "healing" process, i.e. they acknowledge the events and allow them to be processed. There is for example "Dachrilis simghera" (kldis simghera) or one of the versions of "Lale".

Lale, Ratom ar chamoiare, tsremlits bevri vghare.  
Lale, Ghamis t'ormet saat'amde, lampa vaparpare.  
Lale, Tsavida da nughar mova, is tsqeuli ghamе.

"Why didn't you come? I shed many tears.  
I kept the lamp burning until midnight. (S)he left  
and won't come again, O that terrible night."

It is interesting that this song, which evokes abandonment and loss, became one of the emblematic songs sung by children at the Dzegvi children's home. This innovative center, founded by Gia Razmadze and others in the early 1990's near Mtskheta, took on the task of working with abandoned or orphaned children, many of whom were victims of sexual, physical or psychological abuse, while all had faced some mixture of rejection, abandonment, denial and betrayal in their lives. Speaking of the early days of Dzegvi, Gia Razmadze said that no one had any experience in working with abused children. At the outset, the method was simple: they would go walking in the woods with the children and spend the whole day singing.

A simple approach very much in keeping with Georgian values: love and appreciation of nature and human connection expressed through words and song. But underlying that simplicity, according to Gia Razmadze, lies all of the implicit and non-verbalized intelligence about how to build, maintain and repair human connection, which is indeed the real essence of what was at work at Dzegvi and in Georgia as a whole throughout its history. By introducing songs such as *Lale*, Gia Razmadze and his colleagues allowed the children to acknowledge and sing through their traumatic experiences.

This singing and walking could play the role of the "shaking and vibration" that psychologists speak of that is needed to process trauma and to allow for the release of nervous energy from the organism. There is however one very important difference compared with the case of the impala mentioned above: in the process of singing together we are not alone. The impala shakes itself, releases the trauma, and rejoins the herd. As human beings, we have the possibility of consciously "vibrating" together through sound and singing, and in this way we can work simultaneously on our various individual traumas and provide support to others in this process, and even address the traumatic experiences shared by a community (military attack, natural disaster, etc.).

The use of conscious vibration and Georgian singing with trauma survivors in Great Britain

The work that we have been doing in Great Britain over the past year seems to confirm the power of vibration, sound and group singing of Georgian folk songs to help process traumatic events and to release trapped nervous energy from the body.

At the end of 2004 we began working with adults who are survivors of sexual abuse suffered during childhood. This involved a series of workshop organized in cooperation with the Scottish association "Survivors United" led by Helen Gille. Helen attended a workshop for the general public and was astounded by the physical and psychological changes that she felt after this experience. She decided to encourage other survivors of sexual abuse to do work with the voice and with Georgian singing.

These workshops involve exercises using consciousness vibration (for example, humming), leading up to learning and singing Georgian folk songs together. The people who attend all suffered extreme forms of sexual, physical and emotional abuse during their childhoods and many have had severe problems throughout their lives: depression, eating disorders, alcoholism, drug addiction, suicide attempts, admissions to psychiatric hospitals, etc. As a result of their childhood experiences they often fear contact with other people, both physically (through touching) and with the spoken word.

During these workshops, the participants have been able to make unexpected breakthroughs in resolving their trauma, and the words they use to describe their experiences sound very similar to the words that Georgians (including Ilya Chavchavadze) use to speak of their songs:

T. : "My first workshop was good, I actually broke through a barrier and allowed myself to cry. I wasn't ready for the singing then, but I experimented with sound and vibration. It absolutely works. My body was charged with energy that made me feel more of who I really was. I couldn't wait for the second workshop. This time, again through sound and vibrational work, I took myself further, I connected with the inner child and felt all of her pain, anguish, sadness. Then, as I continued to sound through it all, I felt great relief and then more tears, but this time tears of joy. I feel great today and look forward to the next workshop where I will be singing the beautiful Georgian songs that I've heard others singing but I was too shy to sing out loud."

Another comment expresses the physical sensations that many people discover in singing Georgian songs:

J. "I love it when I stand next to the bass singers and we sing notes that are so close they brush up against each other deep in your viscera, and feel like they are massaging your insides - reaching the deep muscles in your body that even my yoga practice can't reach ... gently bringing them out and loving them, gently letting my body know I'm not the first or last to experience these harmonies - a natural part of being human (albeit a trauma-

tized one!)."

This is a very significant part of the singing experience for many people, and particularly survivors of sexual abuse. They feel that through vibration and singing a very strong connection is made. They feel other people's vibrations going into their bodies, but this contact is not threatening: to most people it feels very good. In this way, people who have spent much of their lives feeling alienated from and scared of other people find their way back to deep human connection which is safe and satisfying.

As another participant expresses it:

A. "I've had many highs through drinking, cocaine, speed, ecstasy, alcohol to oblivion, but I've never had a high like that! Inside my body it's like a warm glow, a light being on dim, which gets brighter and brighter when the vibration comes through. It's belonging. It's what belonging is about!"

Indeed, so much of Georgian culture seems designed to reinforce the idea of belonging and to overcome alienation. At a Georgian supra, people take to time reconnect with each other and with their deepest values, and this joy nourishes them and heals them ("gavtsotskhdli sheni nakhvita me didad gavekhareo..." I come to life when I see you, I feel so happy "Ghmerto nuras nu moushli, rats rom hqvades saqvarlebi" O God, don't let us be disturbed during this time with the people we love). Georgian healing songs such as "Batonebo" do not aim to chase away the spirits that provoke illnesses but rather to embrace them and to communicate with them, just as one would with honored guests.

The past fifteen years have brought independence to Georgia but also fragmentation of its society, new social problems, and the largest immigration in all of Georgian history. In the midst of these challenges - which Georgia now shares more and more with the rest of our planet - it seems wise to keep in mind the incredible talent for social cohesion and connection that the Georgian people have and which is so loved by their foreign guests.

This seems to us the greatest gift that Georgia can offer the rest of our world. Just as the Georgians sometimes call their supra an "academy" or school of human relationships, so Georgia itself can be - for the whole world - an example of how human connection is maintained through conscious vibration: through the spoken word and most importantly singing as tools to hold families, communities and the whole society together and to offer a context for the resolution of trauma which is an inevitable - but not necessarily crippling - part of human existence.

Georgian singing is already playing an important role in transforming the lives of survivors of extreme trauma in Great Britain, bringing them inner peace that many thought was unattainable. We believe that it has the potential to heal and enrich many other lives - throughout the world and of course in Georgia itself.

"Rats mtrobas daungrevia, siqvaruls ushenebia"  
What hatred has destroyed, love can rebuild.

The Loving Harmony Initiative began in June 2005, affiliated to a small UK charitable trust. It seeks to support those who have suffered in silence through the woundedness of others and who are now committed to finding peace within themselves, and power and clarity in their voices. The Loving Harmony Initiative is run by Frank Kane and Madge Bray and provides a range of experiences including Vibration in Human Harmony workshops together with outreach programmes.

**Madge Bray** has worked in the field of trauma resolution, designing and implementing innovative services for severely abused children.

**Frank Kane** has been exploring the power of vibration and its role in the building of human harmony since his first encounter with the Georgian folk traditions in 1983.

## Mindia Zhordania

### (1929-1978)

Mindia Zhordania was born in the village of Likhauri (Ozurgeti district, province of Guria) in 1929. His father Alexandre was an accountant at the printing plant in Khulo regional center. He became a victim of communist terror of 1937, most probably for being a relative to Noe Zhordania - President of Independent Georgia in 1918-1921. Years later Alexandre's family received the documents confirming his innocence, but in those hard times the burden of family life lay on his wife Tekla's shoulders. Maybe then young Mindia learned love for work and strong feeling of responsibility.

Still a young boy, Mindia Zhordania revealed his love of music and chose it as his profession, though music was not traditional in his family. After finishing Batumi musical school, he became a student at Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Here is how remembers his first days as a student: "When I came to the Conservatoire I had a very vague idea about the demands there. I remember, that at the exam in piano playing I played Kokeladze's chorale instead of Bach's prelude and fugue. The commission became worried, maybe because they felt sorry for me and in order not to fail me, they asked if I could play scales. I said I could and played very well. They sighed with relief and put a good mark." At the Conservatoire, his motivation to study national musical folklore was better revealed under supervision of his scientific instructor Grigol Chkhikvadze. After completing post-graduate studies, Mindia Zhordania was enlisted as a faculty member at the Conservatoire's Georgian Folk Music Department. Here, together with his young colleagues Evsevi (Kukuri) Chokhonelidze, Otar Chijavadze and Kakhi Rosebashvili, he self-



lessly strove for documentation and study of national folklore.

Mindia Zhordania's scholarly interest was basically in Georgian folk musical modes. His works on the existence of pentatonics, tetratonics, Locrian mode and alliterative mode in Georgian song gave new direction to Georgian folkloristics. No less noteworthy is Zhordania's contribution to the study of Georgian folk multi-voiced singing. From this standpoint, the most significant is his work "The Functions of *Mtkmeli* and *Modzakhili* in Georgian Folk Song and Sacred Chant."

Zhordania had a good knowledge of native folk musical culture. He took part in many field-work expeditions. The most noteworthy are expeditions organized under his guidance in Gudamaqari, Taineti, Khevi, Mtiuleti, Racha, Lechkhumi, Kakheti, Guria, Racha and Achara. His attitude to the bearers of folk tradition is also worth mentioning. He was never interested in recording complex "concert" repertoire; on the contrary, he always appreciated simple, but truly ancient examples of lullaby, work and ritual songs.

Mindia Zhordania was distinguished for his pedagogical activity. During 20 years he taught



Georgian folk music at Tbilisi State Conservatoire. He prepared the first and most complete program in this subject. But his main legacy in this field is rearing a whole generation of young musicians-folklorists, including Natalia Zumbadze, Nino Kalandadze, Davit Shughliashvili, Nino Shvelidze, Ketevan Baiashvili, Nana Valishvili, Ketevan Nikoladze, Marina Kvizhinadze, Ketevan Manjgaladze, and his son, Joseph Jordania (D.A, professor, now residing in Australia). I would like to humbly mention that my own career choice was greatly influenced by Mindia Zhordania's brilliant example.

Mindia Zhordania was famous as unparalleled teacher of solfeggio at Tbilisi music school #1, where he worked from 1963 until his death. He is the author of the collection of methodologically strictly systematized 600 one-, two- and three-voiced dictations of Georgian and European style (manuscript). This work presents its author as truly talented composer of musical miniatures.

Together with other talents, Mindia Zhordania was a gifted chess player and chess exercise maker. When Mikhail Tal, world chess champion of those times, organized a chess session at Tbilisi State Conservatoire, the only game he lost was with Mindia Zhordania. "I remember how happy father was" - recalls Joseph, Mindia Zhordania's son, "when years later he met Mikhail Tal in Moscow and learned that the world champion remembered the game he played (and lost) at the Conservatoire by heart. His mathematical talent was legendary.

"Work enables a man to earn his living, and to feel supreme happiness" - Mindia Zhordania wrote in one of his letters. His students remember him exactly like that: always meticulous, benevolent, intercessor of Georgian musical culture. If not for his unexpected and early death, he would have left more works of larger scientific importance.

**Tamaz Gabisonia**

## **Theses of Mindia Zhordania's reports:**

1. Georgian Super-Multi-Voiced (6-8-voiced) Church Hymns and Their Place in Old Georgian Professional Music. Scientific session dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the October revolution, 1967 (in Georgian);
2. Modes of Georgian Cart-Men's Songs. Academy of Science of Georgian SSR, Institute of History of Literature, 1972 (in Russian);
3. One of the Most Ancient Modes, the Remnant of Archaic Musical Thinking - tetratonics MCS 1972 (in Russian);
4. Forms of Modulation in the Work Song *Orovela*. Scientific session dedicate to the 50th anniversary of the Soviet Union at Tbilisi State Conservatoire, 1972 (in Georgian);
5. On the Modal Basis of Georgian Single-Voiced Work Songs - *Orovela*. Jubilee session dedicated to the 50th anniversary of Uzeir Gajibekov Azerbaijan State Conservatoire, 1972 (in Russian);
6. *Urmuli* from Samtavisi. Musical-choreographic society, Tbilisi, 1976 (in Russian);

## **Manuscripts of Mindia Zhordania's works (in Georgian):**

1. Forms of Modulation in Cart-Men's Songs;
2. Modal Basis of *Urmuli*;
3. Super-Octave Modes in Georgian Folk Music;
4. On Pentatonics in Georgian Folk Music;
5. On *Mekhuri* and *Mekhele*;
6. On the Origin of Georgian Professional Music;
7. Georgian Professional Chant (*Mekhuri*);
8. Specific Forms of Old Georgian Professional Music (Super-Polyphony);
9. Gurian Musical Dialect;
10. Khevsuretian Music (diploma work);
11. Functions of *Mtkmeli* and *Modzakhili* in Georgian Folk Song and Sacred Chant, 1971-1972;

## **Mindia Zhordania's articles for magazines:**

1. Kote Potskhverashvili. *Sabchota Khelovneba*, #1, 1957 (in Georgian);

2. Two Sources of Georgian Choral Music. *Sabchota Khelovneba*, #4, 1958 (in Georgian);
3. Zakaria Paliashvili's Operas on the Stages of the Soviet Union. *Sabchota Khelovneba*, #11, 1958 (in Georgian);
4. Outstanding Representative of Georgian Choral Music (Kirile Pachkoria). *Sabchota Khelovneba*, #1, 1960 (in Georgian);

### Mindia Zhordania's published works:

1. Locrian Mode in Georgian Folk Music. *Sabchota Khelovneba*, #8 and #9, 1971 (in Georgian);
2. Program for the course "Georgian Folk Music" for musical schools. 1972 (in Georgian);
3. On *Modzakhili - Maghali Bani*. In the collection: Shaverzashvili, Alexandre; Tumanishvili, Ketevan et al., (editorial board). Scientific works. pp. 103-126. Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatoire, 1973 (in Georgian);
4. Zhordania, M.K. Modes of Georgian Cart-Men's Songs *Urmuli*. Collection of articles LSIMC: "Problems of Musical Folklore of the Peoples of the USSR", 1973 (in Russian);
5. Modal Bases of *Urmuli*. *Sabchota Khelovneba*, #9, 1975 (in Georgian);
6. Alliterative Mode in Georgian Folk Music. *Sabchota Khelovneba*, #5, 1979 (in Georgian).

### Mindia Zhordania's field expedition activities:

Field expedition in Gudamaqari, 1958;  
 Field expedition in Tianeti district, 1959;  
 Field expedition in Khevi, 1960;  
 Field expedition in Khevsureti, 1960;  
 Field expedition in Mtiuleti, 1961;  
 Field expedition in Racha, 1962;  
 Field expedition in Kakheti, 1962;  
 Field expedition in Kakheti, 1963;  
 Field expedition in Lechkhumi, 1965;  
 Field expedition in Svaneti, 1967;  
 Field expedition in Achara, 1971;  
 A number of expeditions in his native province of Guria

### Field Expeditions

## Field Expedition in Kakheti

This year the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony begins publication of the materials preserved at the Georgian Folk Music Department under the series "From the Archive of the Georgian Folk Music Laboratory". The first compact disk of the series includes material from the field expeditions organized in Kakheti in 1952. This was one of the first scientific expeditions from Tbilisi State Conservatoire, which was led by Grigol Chkhikvadze in Gurjaani, Telavi and Qvareli districts. It goes without saying, that after 53 years much data had to be recovered, such as the names of performers, their personal data, photos, etc. This was the aim of our visit to Kakheti last October.

In the first place we had to find the descendants of the singers. In the village of Velistsikhe we visited Tamar Ghviniashvili-Gabruashvili, Giga Ghviniashvili's daughter. She provided us with the information on her father, her sisters who were singers too, and her cousin Grisha Rikiashvili, who was a permanent member of their family ensemble. It turned out that Rikiashvili, too, participated in the recording of 1952, but there was no information about this in our data.

81-year-old Shukuri Gurgenishvili is the only person alive out of those who were recorded in Velistsikhe in 1952. Due to his ill health we couldn't meet him. Instead we visited his brother Shinagi Gurgenishvili, who still has his brother's *panduri*; this is the very instrument that Shukuri played as the accompaniment to his song *Garet Tsiva Kris Kari* fifty-four years ago. Shinagi also told us about his father Ia Gurgenishvili, who had been a leader of Velistsikhe choir for years.



*Levan Mughalashvili's choir, 1922.*

In Gurjaani we met elderly singers: 81-year-old Giorgi Gogolashvili, one of the few surviving singers of Levan Mughalashvili's choir, and 80-year-old Vakhtang Kachlishvili. Together with very interesting conversation, we recorded some of their songs too. We recommend a return visit to record these people in the future. Giorgi Gogolashvili helped us find Levan Mughalashvili's grave. At Gurjaani Regional Museum we got familiarized with Mughalashvili's personal archive and took about 158 photos of important documents. We also obtained 46 photos from family albums.

In the village of Artana our host was a renowned song-master Andro Simashvili, son of Giorgi Simashvili (you can find the interesting interview with him in our Bulletin's section "Georgian Song-Masters").

In order to specify the information on Qvareli choir we had to knock on many doors. Among the people we met were Pelagia Papuashvili, Dodo Gelashvili, Ilia and Robinson Gubeladze, Suliko Matiashvili, Zaur Ghviniashvili, Sopiko Nasqidashvili from the village of Eniseli and many others. There are many others to whom we are indebted for their valuable help.

It should be said that the aim of the expedition - obtaining more specific information on those who had died long before - turned out to be harder



*Giorgi Simashvili with family*

than we expected. Making inquiries often gave no results; half-a-century's time has left a heavy trace on both life and peoples' memory . . . Despite many attempts, we failed to get Solomon Chachauri's photo or any information on Partena Arjevnishvili; the name of the singer from the village of Kardenakhi who sang *Urmuli* remains unknown. Nevertheless, we believe our expedition was successful; the recorded material amounts to 5 minidisks (about 9 hours in length) and about 500 photos.

For their assistance we are indebted to all those who gave us help; these are Tinatin Zardiashvili - Head of Gurjaani Department of Culture, Natela Razmadze - head of funds at Gurjaani Regional Museum, Nino Mindorashvili - secretary of Velistsikhe village council, Levan Abashidze - director of the Ensemble Tsinandali, Marina Aladashvili - chanter of Ghvtaeba church, Maia Mamulashvili - from Qvareli House of Culture, Asmat Qipshidze - music school teacher, the State Center of Georgian Folklore and Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature of the Georgian Academy of Sciences.

If the issuance of expedition materials continues and turns into serial publication, we believe the information database of Georgian folk music will be supplemented with valuable examples.

**Ketevan Matiashvili**

## State Ensemble of Georgian Folk Song and Dance *Rustavi*

The State Ensemble of Georgian Folk Song and Dance *Rustavi* holds a distinguished place among many other Georgian ensembles that carefully preserve and develop folk artistic traditions.

Ensemble *Rustavi* was created in 1968 in the town of Rustavi. It soon became popular and ever since there has been no important event in the country where Rustavi did not take part.

The leaders of Rustavi are the People's Artists of Georgia Anzor Erkomaishvili and Pridon Sulaberidze (choreographer); the choirmaster of the ensemble is People's Artist of Georgia Badri Toidze.

Anzor Erkomaishvili represents the seventh generation of the three-century-old dynasty of singers. His ancestors were among the best singers and song-masters. Georgian folk song is his holy shrine; his ancestors also prayed in front of this icon of song. Here is what Anzor's grandfather Artem Erkomaishvili, a famous song-master, used to say to his grandson: "Anzor, sonny, you are carrying the torch as the seventh generation of singers in our family... Our songs need someone to keep them alive and preserve them... This musical treasure has more value than gold... If something should happen to me, then that which I have will be lost forever. This would be a great sin for us both."

The tradition had to be continued and it was continued.

When still a student at Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Anzor Erkomaishvili took active part in the creation and work of the men's ensemble *Gordela*. Other members of the ensemble were Gomar Sikharulidze,



Temur Kevkhishvili, Badri Toidze, Tamaz Andghuladze, Misha Mtsuravishvili and Kukuri Chokhonelidze. The audience would, in any case, remember *Gordela* for its traditional manner of performance, but church hymns performed with new intonation were a remarkable phenomenon in Georgia's musical life of those times.

In 1968 *Gordela* won the gold medal at the World Festival in Sofia (Bulgaria).

*Gordela* was one of the foundations on which ensemble Rustavi originated.

Besides being *Rustavi*'s leader, Anzor Erkomaishvili has been seeking for old folk songs and church hymns in various parts of Georgia and restoring them, as well as finding audio recordings of Georgian folk songs in different countries of the world for many years. He is an untiring advocate for Georgian musical folklore and author of many interesting scientific works.

Pridon Sulaberidze, chief choreographer of *Rustavi*, was a leading dancer-soloist of Georgian National Ballet; he is still considered one of the best dancers of all times in Georgia. Sulaberidze is a highly estimated professional. He strives for restoration of the ancient elements of folk dance and maintenance of its local provincial colouring. The dances, staged by Sulaberidze, are performed accompanied by songs and instruments from the original region. He skillfully adjusts dances, songs and folk instru-



ments, and thus reinforces the local colouring of the dance.

Members of *Rustavi* come from various parts of Georgia. They bear not only the songs of their native province, but deep knowledge of these songs, soul of the native province, performing tradition and peculiar performance manner.

The ensemble does its best to maintain the features of authentic folklore, so that the examples of folk music are not deprived of their primary ethnic nature, and that the songs in *Rustavi*'s performance still bear the scent of motherland.

From the early days *Rustavi* aimed at restoration and promotion of "forgotten" Georgian folk songs and church hymns; they have inculcated their own manner of performance, which differs from the folk manner and is more academic and perfected.

The members of *Rustavi* are good at playing traditional instruments. They skillfully play the *pan-duri*, *chonguri*, *changi* and *salamuri*. This significantly expands and enriches the ensemble's repertoire. The folk instrumental trio, consisting of Davit Qipiani, Giorgi (Gogita) Bugianishvili and Zurab Bakuradze, is a big success at *Rustavi*'s concerts.

Today *Rustavi* counts the fourth generation of its singers. Unfortunately such wonderful performers as Hamlet Gonashvili, Anzor Tughushi, Gaioz Asabashvili and Vladimer Tsivtsivadze have passed away. The most distinguished of these was Hamlet Gonashvili - a singer with unique voice whose recordings are still very popular among Georgian people. Now the majority of *Rustavi*'s members are young people (former members of children's folk ensembles, including the children's choir Martve, directed by Anzor Erkomaishvili, in the 1970s): Giorgi (Gogita) Bugianishvili, Davit Kaliashvili, Vladimer Tandilashvili, Dato Gvelesiani, Tariel



*Anzor Erkomaishvili*

Onashvili, Davit Qipiani, Zurab Bakuradze, Giorgi Natroshvili, Ilo Qurashvili, Amiran Mamaladze and Saliver Vadachkoria.

During its history *Rustavi* has participated in more than 3000 concerts in the world's most famous concert halls such as Albert Hall, Covent Garden, Player Theatre, Olympia, etc. The ensemble has visited more than 60 countries of the world including

almost all countries of Europe - Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, France, Italy, Great Britain, Spain, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Holland, Finland and Baltic countries. They have held many concerts in Russia. In the 1990s *Rustavi* had a four-month tour in America, Canada, Asia - Japan and Syria, two African countries - Algeria and Tunisia. Foreign audiences were always amazed by *Rustavi*'s performance.

*Rustavi* has recorded more than 600 Georgian folk songs on LPs and CDs. Second generation of the ensemble recorded 60, and later 100 folk songs at Melodiya sound recording studio. Many of these songs are performed by Hamlet Gonashvili (these recordings were used by Taiwan Ballet in their performance).

In 1995-2000 the third and fourth generations of the ensemble recorded 318 folk songs, most of these being the most well-known examples of Georgian folk art. This hard work resulted in the release of 7 CDs; 5 more are yet to come out (12 discs altogether). These are being successfully sold in Europe.

Out of 160 songs as performed by *Rustavi* and recorded by Melodiya, 5 CDs have been released in Georgia. Soon there will be the 6 CD of lesser or unknown versions of folk songs.

**Nino Chalisuri**

## You will not hear the songs like ours anywhere...

*Interview with Ilia Zakaidze - a brilliant performer of Kartli-Kakhetian songs, perennial soloist of the State Ensemble of Georgian Folk Song and Dance, People's Artist of Georgia. Dusheti, May 28, 2006.*

**Ilia Zakaidze:** - My family was not native to Dusheti. My great grandfather and grandfather were from the village of Zakati (Mtiuleti). The village still exists, but we do not have a house there any more. My great-grandfather was a blacksmith. After moving to Dusheti he bought a smithy and continued making arms and ploughs. My family members all sang; my father sang, and my mother too; we all sang songs like *Morbis Aragvi*, *Tavo Chemo*, *Suliko*, etc. I remember that when I was still a little boy, neighbours and relatives would gather at our house to feast and they would make me sing; I had a beautiful voice and they liked my singing.

When I was eighteen, I was taken to the army, where I spent 6 years. My *panduri*, which I took with me, helped me a lot. In the evening I would sit with other soldiers, my friends, and sing under its accompaniment. After World War II, I returned to Dusheti, and started singing in the local choir directed by Valiko Chumburidze. Our songs were recorded by Georgian State Radio, and I became more and more popular.

Soon I was summoned to Tbilisi and was told that I had to go Moscow and participate in the decade of Georgian culture in Moscow. Composer Valiko Tsagareishvili told me: "We (State Ensemble of Georgia) are busy preparing for Moscow, and you must come with us." Of course I agreed. We showed good results in Moscow, recorded some songs. After this I stayed in the ensemble.



**Otar Kapanadze:** - Batono Ilia, What kind of songs did you sing then?

- We sang a lot of songs, such as *Arkhalalo*, *Shen Bicho Anagurelo*, *Kalospiruli*, *Diambego*, *Metiuri*, *Chakrulo*, *Kakhuri Grdzeli Mravalzhamieri*. I sang first voice, and Kako Landia sang second voice. Sometimes my singing partner was Hamlet Gonashvili. I preferred singing with Gonashvili; he had a colourful, pure voice.

**- Did you know these songs before joining the State Ensemble?**

- Yes, I did, because I had heard them on the radio. Ma family members would sing them at home. We also had recordings of the State Ensemble. When I joined them I learned their repertoire quickly. Thanks to Bichiko Gvelesiani I was soon very good in both Western and Eastern Georgian songs.

**- Batono Ilia, you have sung together with many singers, who would you say is distinguished among them?**

- Hamlet Gonashvili. He was a very nice man, educated and cultural. He would never harm or insult anybody, and always was in good voice; he would never refuse to sing when asked.

Gonashvili never sang solos at the State Ensemble; he was never permitted to by the choir director. The soloists were Kovziridze and Sarajishvili. Gonashvili would only sing *Daigvianes* and *Tsintsqaro*. Then he left the State Ensemble; he joined the newly established ensemble by Anzor Erkomaishvili, and Anzor invited him there. Later Gonashvili and I sang *Chona* and *Mravalzhamier* together. Nobody ever sang that *Mravalzhamier* like we did since then.

**- Batono Ilia, did you often improvise when singing?**

- Folk song gives you opportunity to improvise. A lot depends on the throat, and how it allows you to twist your voice, and please the ear of the listener. You must beautify the song as much as you can. I was never told by Anzor Kavsadze (then the director of the State Ensemble) that I had overdone it.

**- Which other performers of Kartli-Kakhetian songs would you remember?**

- Vano Mchedlishvili. He was a good connoisseur of Kartli-Kakhetian songs, a good conductor and singer. He was from the village of Kakabeti (Kakheti), second tenor. When singing he was "drawing" songs. He was an incomparable singer of folk songs. Mchedlishvili had a higher voice than Gonashvili. Each was as good as the other in making ornamentations in Kartli-Kakhetian songs. Maybe Mchedlishvili was slightly better, for he sang in a higher voice. Gonashvili could not sing some songs like *Garekakhuri Sachidao* (Ilia Zakaidze sings the a fragment of the song) as high as Mchedlishvili. And this is when Mchedlishvili was better. Of course they were both great singers, what else can I say.

**- Batono Ilia, as I know you also used to sing with the group of *duduki* players...**

Yes, with *duduki* accompaniment I sang *Gamarjoba Chemo Tbilis Kalako*, *Tsiv Zamtarshi*, *Daigvianes*. The Ksovrelis (this is the family name of very popular *duduki* players) would tell me that nobody could sing with *duduki* like me. Some singers tried, but they were not as good as I was.

**- Batono Ilia, which is your favorite song, if there is any?**

- *Vepkhisa Da Moqmis Balada*. I was asked to prepare this song for the IX republican folk music competition. I promised, I did and then was awarded with a gold watch for it. The text is sung on a Kakhetian melody; I studied it from Vano Javakhishvili, an actor at Tbilisi Rustaveli Theatre. Then people would tell me my singing was better, but that is not true; Javakhishvili was an actor and he could better manipulate with his voice.

**- Batono Ilia, what do you think about the today's condition of Georgian folk song?**

- I have a bad opinion about this, because only Western songs are heard on TV. Why do not they show my performance? Is there any better song than *Kakhuri Mravalzhamieri*, *Chakrulo*, *Metiuri*, *Zamtari*? I have a choir at school, and teach folk songs to my pupils. Sometimes they come to the lesson, sometimes they do not. I could not make them interested in folk songs; they can nowhere find songs like ours...

**P.S.** Ilia Zakaidze sang a number of songs with *panduri* accompaniment for us, and indeed gave us great pleasure. I would like to wish health and long life to this honoured person, who is the pride of our people and for whom, despite the death of his three children, singing is still an essential part of his life.

Otar Kapanadze

transcribed by  
Tinatin Zhvania

მისდევს მელა ღომსა  
Misdevs Mela Lomsa

მი-სდევს მე-ლა ღომსა - ლა და ტუ-რა მელ-სა ჩი-ტი ღომსა - ლა და

Mi-sdevs mo-la lom-sa da tu-ra mel-sa chi-ti lom-sa da

მეღო - რი ადევ - დოვს მი-მა-ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა

megho - ri adev-dovs mi-ma-no-xa, no-xa, no-xa, no-xa, no-xa, no-xa

როს ა-კლე-მი თა-სა ზო - ბდას და როს ა-კლე-მი თა-სა ზო - ბდას და

Ros a-kle-mi ta-sa zo-bdas da ros a-kle-mi ta-sa zo-bdas da

ზა - კმა სი-ბოძნო ი - ძი-ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა, ნო - ხა

za-kma si-bodno i-dhi-no-xa, no-xa, no-xa, no-xa, no-xa, no-xa

დავსი მგელისადა ვაქსი მგელისადა  
დავსი მგელისადა ვაქსი მგელისადა

Dasvi mgvelisadas vaxsi mgvelisadas  
dasvi mgvelisadas vaxsi mgvelisadas

მისდა მგელისადა ვაქსი მგელისადა  
მისდა მგელისადა ვაქსი მგელისადა

Misdevs mgvelisadas vaxsi mgvelisadas  
misdevs mgvelisadas vaxsi mgvelisadas