The V. Sarajishvili **Thilisi State Conservatoire International** Research **Center for Traditional** Polyphony BULLETIN

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<u>№</u>8

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Introduction

This is volume 1 of the online Bulletin of the International Research Center for

Ttraditional Polyphony. It is the heir of the Center's printed Bulletin and is enumerated as #1 (8).

Two years have passed since the Center's last bulletin #7 was published. The Bulletin was established in 2004 as part of UNESCO project "Safeguarding and Promotion of Georgian Traditional Polyphony" and aimed to satisfy the growing interest to Georgian traditional polyphony in the world. The bilingual Bulletin was published semi annually and wrote about folk concert life in Georgia, the news in Georgian ethnomusicology and about renowned scholars, song masters and performers, as well as about field expeditions, also included interviews with the masters of folk polyphony, etc.

The Bulletin was the only periodical of this type in Georgia.

The main reason why the Bulletin was stopped is the difficulty in raising funds for its publication and distribution.

But as the time passed the necessity of such issue became more and more obvious; we decided to prepare its semi-annual online version, for the updated web site of the Center allows so.

But internet is still unavailable for many people in various parts of Georgia, including those interested in traditional music; so we are planning to prepare a small amount of printed version to be distributed in various regions of Georgia.

Since the publication of the last volume the Center has realized a number of International projects; for this we would like to express our deep gratitude to all, who assisted us. In order to fill up the two-year gap volume 1 of the online bulletin will write about some of the projects realized by the Center during this time.

The first significant project was the updating of the Center's web site www.polyphony.ge with the assistance of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Another noteworthy event was the completion of the project "Echoes from the Past" with the assistance of the Vienna Phonogrammarchiv of Austrian Academy of Sciences. 16 CDs of the unique examples recorded on wax cylinders in 1923-1952 in various parts of Georgia were released in 2007-2009. These will help the practitionerperformers of Georgian song and folk ensembles to enrich their repertoire with lesser known folk examples. The project was realized thanks to the assistance of Dr. Friedrich Schuller Director of Vienna Phonogramarchiv, Franz Lechleitner Phonogrammarchiv's audio engineer and Nona Lomidze our colleague residing in Vienna.

An exceptional event both for the Center and Georgia in general was the 4th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony held on 15-19 September, 2008, a month after the Russo-Georgian war (August, 2008). The arrival of our colleagues: Simha Arom (France), Polo Vallejo (Spain), Taida Lange (Latvia), Zhanna Partlas (Estonia), Daiva Raciunaite (Lithuania), Moya Simpson and John Shortis (Australia), Franz Foedermayr (Austria), Dieter Christensen (USA/Germany), Margery Bray (UK), Ursa Sivic (Slovenai). John Graham (USA) in Tbilisi as symposium participants was the expression of support to the Georgians, for which we are very grateful.

In October, 2008, Tamaz Gabisonia - the employee of the Center presented his paper "The Terminological Priorities of Georgian Traditional Polyphony" at the Scientific Conference organized by the Research Centre for European Multipart Music in Vienna.

Mention should be made of a preliminarily unplanned project in which The Georgian patriarchy and The International Centre for Georgian Folk Song take part together with Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

Nino Razmadze - a third year student of Ethnomusicology Department who became interested in the songs recorded by the French ethnomusicologist Yvette Grimaud in Georgia in 1969. Razmadze contacted the scholar via a French friend Zoe Perret. Mrs. Grimaud expressed her good will and transferred her entire archive of Georgian materials (350 songs recorded in all parts of Georgia and works on Georgian folk music, including manuscripts) to the possession of Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Currently the materials are being prepared for publication. This will be met with surprise and joy, as it is connected with the return of folk treasure to Georgia.

Another international project: with the support of Carl Orff Foundation (Austria) Prof. Polo Vallejo (Spain) – a renowned specialist in African polyphony delivered lectures for the Tbilisi State Conservatoire students on 22-26 March, 2010.

You can familiarize with all 7 volumes of the printed version of the Center's bulletin. We suggest the following headlines in the online bulletin: "The news" - about the events in Georgia's folk life during the past year, including the information on the artistic life of folk ensembles from Tbilisi (concerts, concert tours, compact discs, etc), festivals, scientific conferences, concerts and news in folk studies. In future we will do our best to follow the processes taking place in Georgia's folk life and provide the information every 6 months. "One Georgian Folk Ensemble" tells about male folk choir "Jvaruli" from Khevi, and "Foreign performers of Georgian Folk Song" familiarizes with ensemble "Maspindzeli" from UK. "Multipart Singing Abroad" presents Estonian folk music, in the interview with Polo Vallejo – a Spanish composer and ethnomusicologist, tells about his attitude to Georgian folk music. "The beneficent of Georgian Folk Music" tells about ensemble "Tsinandali" and its leader Levan Abashidze (1957-2009). "Centers of Georgian Culture and Science" writes about Ivane Javakhishvili Institute of History and Ethnology. Round dance - one of the most ancient layers of Georgian folk

music is presented in "Folk Song in Everyday Life", and History of one song tells about *Dala Kojas Khelghvazhle* and presents its notated variant. In short we did our best to make the new bulletin as interesting and diverse as we could.

In conclusion I would like to ask you to share your opinions about the format of our online bulletin and the information you would like to see on its pages.

Rusudan Tsurtsumia

The news

The news in the creative activity of Tbilisi folk ensembles during the past year

30.04.09 Anchiskhati Church Choir performed a solo concert entitled "Mravalzhamier" at the Grand Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

2009 Ensemble "Mtiebi" released a video disc (V) "Georgian Wedding" performed by "Mtiebi" at the Grand Hall of Rustaveli State Academic Theatre on 23 February, 2009.

May, 2009 Ensemble "Jvaruli" released their first compact disc.

May, 2009 Ensemble "Basiani" released their 4th compact disc.

June, 2009 ensemble "Shavnabada" (Dir. Davit Tsintsadze) was invited to France to perform in solo concerts and hold workshops.

25.06.09 Joint concert of ensembles "Didgori" and "Sakhioba" (Dir. Malkhaz Erkvanidze) was held at the Grand Hall of Tbilsi State Conservatoire **20-27.05.09** Ensemble "Mzetamze" participated in the Festival "Caucasian and Balkan Women for Peace" in Holland.

June, 2009 Ensemble "Keria" was created (Dir. Tamaz Gabisonia).

17-30.06.09 Ensemble "Basiani" was on a concert tour on Madeira Island, England and Holland.

8.07.09 Presentation of the compact disc of the Conservatoire Folk Ensemble (Dir. Nato Zumbadze) was held at the Grand hall of the Conservatoire.

July, 2009 women's folk ensembles "Nanina" (Dir. Teah Kasaburi) and men's folk ensemble from Khevi "Jvaruli" (Dir. Nana Valishvili) took part in International Festival of Bourdone Polyphony "Baltica 2009" was held in Riga the capital city of Latvia, in which participated.

July, 2009 Ensemble "Tutarchela" participated in Lörrach "Voices - International Festival" (Germany).

21-26.07.09 Folk groups from Tbilisi "Keria", "Akhalukhlebi", "Nanina", "Jva-ruli" and "Chveneburebi" performed together with regional folk ensembles at "Art-Geni" Folk Festival.

August, 2009 Ensemble "Tutarchela" participated in the Choral Featival of Arhavi (Turkey).

September, 2009 women's folk ensembles "Nanina" (Dir. Teah Kasaburi) and men's folk ensemble from Khevi "Jvaruli" (Dir. Nana Valishvili) took part in the concert dedicated to the Anniversary of Alexandre Kazbegi in Stepantsminda.

October, 2009 Ensemble "Tutarchela" participated in joint concerts together with the singers from Winterthur (Switzerland): October 5 Recital Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire;

October 9 Village of Sarpi October 13 Solo concert at the Hall of Rustavi Art School.

28.10.09 Ensemble "Basiani" gave a solo concert in Zugdidi.

30.11.09 Presentation of Gigi Garakanidze's monograph "Georgian Ethnomusic Theatre and Its Very First Days" was held at Mikheil Tumanishvili Cinema Actors Theatre.

November-December, 2009 – January, 2010 ensemble "Shavnabada" took part in the Festival "Chveneburebi" in England, Georgia and Switzerland.

13-17.11.09 Ensemble "Sakhioba" participated in the International Chant Festival in Kiev.

November, 2009 Ensemble "Keria" participated in the concert dedicated to the art of Josef Ratil at the Czech Embassy in Tbilisi.

13-14.11.09 Concert dedicated to the 40th anniversary of Ensemble "Rustavi" was held at Tbilsi Grand Concert Hall, followed by the opening of the ensemble's star.

November, 2009 Anzor Erkomaishvili published the books: "Georgian Folk song. Ensemble "Rustavi", "Georgian Folk song (First Audio Recordings 1904-1914) and "Georgian Phonogram Recordings Abroad" (catalogue, 1901-1950).

12.12.09 Women's Council and Folklore State Center organized the festival of women's folk groups at Tbilisi Musweum Literature; among the participants were "Sa-thanao", "Nanina", "Mzetamze" from Tbilisi and "Tutarchela" from Rustavi.

14.12.09 Joint concert of E. Garakanidze Theater of Ethnomusic "Mtiebi" and Blue Monastery Children Studio "Amer-Imeri" dedicated to the name-day celebrations of Andrew the first called and St. vakhtang Gorgasali was held at M. Tumanishvili Cinema Actors Theatre.

18.12.09 Ensemble "Sakhioba" gave its 4th solo concert at the Grand hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire, the other participant of the concert was Mama Daviti Church Choir.

December, 2009 Anchiskhati Church Choir released a 2 CD collection: "Gvimgheria", including the songs and chants selected from the Choir's repertoire performed during 22 years; "Sulta Tana" including requiem chants.

2009 Anchiskhati Church Choir realized the project of carrying out divine services in various eparchies of Georgia and performing folk concerts for local population.

6.04.10 The Conservatoire Folk Ensemble participated in the concert held for foreign guests at the Recital Hall of the Conservatoire.

20-23.04.10 Conference "Life via Tourism – Countries, History, Cultural tourism" and a workshop "Georgian Folk Song" (led by N. Zumbadze) was held as part of the International Regional Festival "Quality and Profession".

Georgian Folklore State Center realized a number of interesting projects - http://Folk.ge

Dissertations

The following dissertations for doctoral degree (in ethnomusicology) were defended at V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi state Conservatoire:

2.07.2009 – Tamaz Gabisonia: "The Forms of Georgian Traditional Polyphony"

2.07.2009 – Davit shughliashvili: The System of Octoichos in Georgian Sacred Chant"

8.10.2009 – Nino Kalandadze: "Georgian *Nana* on genre, Semantics and articulation"

12.02.2010 - Maka khardziani: "The Theme of Hunting in Svan Folk Music"

Conferences and Concerts

21-24.10.09 - The Musical faculty of Batumi Institute of Arts hosted The 4th International Festival on Folk and Sacred Music dedicated to the 1000th anniversary of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli. Scientific Conference, concerts with participation of Folk collectives from various parts of Georgia and elsewhere, as well as a photo exhibition "Etudes of Batumi" (Giorgi Nakhutsrishvili), exhibition and sale of cloisonné enamel items were organized as part of the Festival. Among the participants of the Conference were the scholars from the Faculty of Music of Batumi Institute, of Arts P. Tchaikobsky Kiev State Conservatoire and V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire, including Maka Khardziani and Tamaz Gabisonia - the employees of the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony. In the concetrs took part ensembles from Georgia (Tbilisi, Batumi, Kobuleti, Saingilo, Akhalsheni, Keda Tskhmorisi and Khelvachauri) as well as from Turkey, Japan, Basque country.

27.11.09 - the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of Tbilisi state Conservatoire organized **Scientific Conference "Multi-Part Singing: Historical, Theoretical and Ethnomusicological aspects".** The main condition for participation in the Conference was presentation in Power Point. Among the participants were Doctoral and Magistracy students of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

01.12.09. - Scientific Conference dedicated to the 1000th anniversary of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli was held at Tbilisi State Conservatoire, an evening of Georgian chant was held at Berdzenishvili Exhibition Center. Among the participants of the Conference were Holders of Doctoral degree and students of Master's course of the Conservatoire and researchers of the Institute of Manuscripts. Folk Ensembles, choirs of chanters, the choir of Gori Gymnasium and Urushadze Children's studio performed at the Evening of Georgian chant.

11.02.10 Scientific Conference and folk concert dedicated to the 90th Anniversary of Otar Chijavadze was held at Tbilisi State Conservatoire. The holders of Doctoral degree and students of Master's course of the Conservatoire and employees of the Folklore State centre took part in the Conference. Various folk ensembles performed in the concert.

22-26.03.10 Spanish composer and ethnomusicologist Polo Vallejo delivered lectures on African folklore at Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

29-30.04.10 The Conservatoire students' self-government held **The 1st International Conference-Contest in Musicology** with the participation of students from Georgia, Armenia and Belorus. The winner in the folklore nomination was Teona Lomsadze - the 2^{nd} year student of Tbilisi State Conservatoire. It is noteworthy, that the year before the winner in the same nomination was Nino Razmadze – now the 1^{st} year of Magistracy studies.

07.05.10 Georgian Folk music Department of Tbilisi State Conservatoire held **Scientific Conference of Young Scholars under the aegis of CIOFF**.

27.04.10 Nino Razmadze- a first year of Magistracy studies in Ethnomusicology of Tbilisi State Conservatoire organized a **folk concert "Folklore of one village"** with the participation of the performers from the village of Merisi (Keda District, Achara)

World Recognition of a Georgian Ethnomusicologist

On May 27, Joseph Jordania – Head of the Foreign Bureau of the Tbilisi International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony, professor of Melbourne University was awarded Fumio Koizumi Prize in Tokyo. The highest award in ethnomusicology is annually appropriated to the leading scholars of traditional music. This year Georgia and Our Center had this honor.

Jordania's Georgian colleagues are undoubtedly delighted, but not very surprised by his success. We witnessed the development of his scholarly career, which is rich in creative findings and victories. Jordania masterly selects the object for study from virgin material, reveals hidden ties, and ascertains plain and clear conclusions.

Joseph's talent, as of a researcher did not emerge on an infertile spot. His father – Mindia was a renowned musician and folk researcher. He was also distinguished in sharp scholarly views, his mother – Neli Imedashvili is a celebrated piano teacher.

Mindia Jordania was my solfeggio teacher at music school, as well as Joseph himself (later). Mindia Jordania's method with students was to sharpen ear. "According to Mr. ear" – he used to say, when we were writing one out of hundreds of dictations composed by him.

Joseph Jordania started his pedagogical activities in 1979 soon after his father's death. At the conservatoire he had three students in ethnomusicology; now all three of them are Doctors of Musicology, one of them his spouse Nino Tsitsishvili - is a professor at Melbourne University.

Thanks to field expeditions organized by Joseph (to Khevsureti, Kakheti, Gudamaqari, Svaneti, etc.) my colleagues and I got closely familiarized with folk music.

In the beginning the colleagues skeptically regarded Joseph's ideas, just like anything new. Joseph's Doctoral dissertation was followed by an active polemics; the opinions of the musicians divided into two concerning Jordania's interpretation of



polyphony as a significant factor from anthropological standpoint. The representtatives of other disciplines (there was a number of anthropologic and linguistic quests). supported him. I remember, how Rismag Gordeziani - a guest expert characterized Joseph Jordania as the best of his post-graduate students. Malkhaz Abdushelishvili – a renowned anthropologist had the same opinion, none the less the dissertation overcame the barriers after a serious battle.

It is hard to say what made Joseph move to Australia with his newly married wife and a baby son. But it can definitely be said, that this "experiment" has justified itself. Joseph's talent found a wider arena. Thanks to his diligence he could overcome many obstacles (in the beginning both Joseph and his spouse earned their living by giving music lessons). In a few years we found Joseph among the world's leading ethnomusicologists. In 2003 Centenary Medal" instituted by Queen Elisabeth II., Queen of Australia, was awarded to Joseph Jordania "as an accomplished musician …"for contribution made to Australian Society".

Jordania is the author of over 100 scholarly works, 3 books and a large number of scientific and popular articles. He actively participates in Scientific Conferences in various parts of the World, where he is also frequently seen among the organizers. Noteworthy is his contribution to the organization of Scientific Forums on Folk polyphony (distinguished among these is Tbilisi International Symposia on Traditional Polyphony, the 5th Symposium will be held on 4-9 October, 2010).

Traditional polyphony is the most natural characteristic feature of Georgia – Joseph Jordania's home country.

Jordania is always orientated towards solving the problem; He is never scared by the scale of the problem; despite of the fact, that in his young years Jordania used to write science fiction stories, he strictly evaluates each fact and cautiously offers a hypothesis.

From the standpoint of the width of the problem, versatility and scale of theoretical study Jordania's book "Georgian Traditional Polyphony in the International Context of Polyphonic Cultures", published in 1989 before moving to Australia; has no analogue in Georgian musical folkloristics until today. This publication proves the genetic determination of folk polyphony in various peoples. Today, Jordania's opinion that polyphony is man's physiological ability, not the skill acquired with time - is an acknowledged theory in scholarly circles.

No less important is Jordania's another book "Who asked The First Question? The Origins of human choral singing, thinking, language and speech" in which the author presents a substantial theory on the emergence of the phenomenon of singing in more than one voice and playing the instrument on the background of a broad analysis of the hearths of world polyphony. At the moment his new book "Choral Singing in Human culture and Evolution" is in print in Portugal. In general Jordania is particularly interested in the anthropological aspect of human genesis and not only from musical viewpoint.

We congratulate Joseph with the recognition on the world scale, and wish him to suitably present Georgian musical-performance and on the world scientific arena.

Tamaz Gabisonia

One Georgian folk Ensemble

New Georgian Folk Ensemble "Jvaruli"

Male folk ensemble "Jvaruli" was created in 2007. The members of the choir are mostly students from traditional families in Khevi; who temporarily live in Tbilisi. Some of them come to rehearsals from Stepantsminda (the regional center). The choir is directed by Nana Valishvili – a folk scholar, member of women's folk ensemble "Mzetamze", Head of Musical Section of the Folk State Center of Georgia.

The creation of the ensemble was greatly due to the threat of disappearance of folk traditions in Khevi: today practically nobody sings Mokhevian cult, round-dance, work or table songs in Khevi. Small number of these has survived only in field expedition recordings preserved in the archives and few notated examples. In Georgian pop music the songs referred to as "Mountain songs" are in fact contemporary composers' monotonous songs. Fortunately, the young singers from "Jvaruli", distinguished in their human qualities and love to homeland, hold their ancestors in high respect and strive to revive Mokhevian songs.

In the first place "Jvaruli" attracts attenas an authentic collective. Main tion characteristic feature of the ensemble is that none of its members has musical education. This factor has no impact on the ensemble's performance style and manner, which is entirely based on folk traditions. Genetic factor also determines the process of learning songs and the manner of performance. These young people subconsciously carry the genetic code transmitted to them from their ancestors. They learn songs from old recordings, which have preserved the manner of performance peculiar to Khevi. At first their singing of folk songs in traditional manner may seem strange.

The name "Jvaruli" comes from the title of an ancient cult-ritual song, which has not been sung in Khevi for the last 60-70 years.



On 30 April, 2008 "Jvaruli" made its debut at the presentation of the Project "Echoes from the Past" arranged by the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony (IRCTP) in the foyer of Tbilisi State Conservatoire. These old recordings became a strong stimulus and basic source for the ensemble's repertoire. Which also includes Mokhevian songs from the audio archive of Tbilisi State Conservatoire. "Jvaruli" also restores the songs, which have survived only as notated examples.

The Ensemble participated in the concert program of the 4th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony in 2008 and in the Conference and Festival of Traditional Folk and Church Music in 2009, also took part in the International Folk Festival "Baltica-2009" together with ensemble "Nanina"; this was the first time when Mokhevian music was presented on international arena.

In 2009 "Jvaruli" recorded first Compact Disk.

Sofio Kotrikadze

Foreign Performers of Georgian Folk Song

British choir "Maspindzeli"

"Maspindzeli" has been performing Georgian folk music for 10 years.

The Choir's current leaders Tamta Turmanidze and Mark Thomas are telling about its creation and activity.

T.T. I heard the British perform Georgian folk songs at the 3rd International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony, where I participated together with women's group "Irinola". The two groups had a concert on the same day at Tbilisi State Conservatoire. After the concert it was difficult for us to part and we continued singing at a table.

How did the interest to Georgian folk music start in Britain?

In the 1980s there started a movement in England, which aimed to return wide masses of people to singing. A number of amateur choirs were created, where anyone could sing, regardless of age, voice and musical skills in general. Often the repertoire of such choirs included songs from various parts of the world.

In the beginning of the 1990s several distinguished theatrical troupes visited Georgia and returned home enchanted by Georgian polyphony and hospitality. In 1994 the Welsh Centre for Performance Studies invited Edisher Garakanidze and Joseph Jordania. The visit of these teachers and their master-classes attracted many people. In 1996 Edisher garakanidze visited Britain together with ensemble "Mtiebi"; this visit greatly contributed to the growth of interest to Georgian folklore.

Apparently Edisher became well-aware of what the British needed and he did his best to make Georgian song more accessible for them. His handwritten scores of the songs are still valuable for the British interested in Georgian folklore.

After Edisher's death, British musician Helen Chadwick one of Edisher's friends, decided to create a Georgian choir. In a few months the choir gave its first charity concert at one of the churches in London. The choir consisted of foreigners; the only Georgian member was Ketevan Kalandadze. It was her who selected the name "Maspindzeli" for the group. The members of the choir are very proud of the name and they always do their best to host their Georgian guests in the best way possible.

Leaders of the choir

At various times the choir was led by Helen Chadwick, Venice Manley, Sally Davies, Lucy Gibson, and Geoff Burton each of them contributing to the development of the choir leading it according to his/her skills and taste. Since August 2009 Mark Thomas and I have been leading the choir in our manner.

M.T. How did I join Maspindizeli?

My wife went to a Maspindzeli concert and thought, "*I'd like to do that*"! But the next rehearsal coincided with my birthday; what to do? Simple: killing two birds with one stone, she told me that she'd bought me a birthday present - participating in a Georgian choir rehearsal! I found out later that for newcomers to the choir, the first rehearsal was always free, but never mind: 5 years later we're both still singing together and I'm leading the choir along with Tamta, so I guess it turned out to be a pretty good birthday present.

Why do I sing Georgian Music?

I sing Georgian music because I love the expressive quality of the songs, the close untempered harmonies and the singing together with people who become friends



through the singing. I connect with the muscularity of field songs, the joy of table songs (joy even in those which are melancholic), the power and beauty of liturgical songs. For me, Georgian singing is, and should be, a full body experience. As a non-Georgian speaker, the words are less important to me than the sound, though of course I want to pronounce them as well as I can. It's probably not popular for singers to say they're not very interested in words, but that's how it is for me - actually that's true for songs in English as well.

I enjoy trying to get as close as I can to the tonal quality that I hear when I listen to Georgian regional singers. It's not that I want to become a pseudo-Georgian: that would be ridiculous; I'm a New Zealander (not even European) and pleased to be so. But I think there's an experience to be had in exploring soundscapes, timbres, tunings, aesthetics, which are beyond my ordinary and usual existence which, if I stretch my range of possibilities to include and embrace, is hugely satisfying.

Singing closely together with people you love is food for the soul, connecting and uplifting - it also helps that a lot of Georgian song is so closely connected with eating and drinking!

T.T. "Maspindzeli" is a choir of Open society kind. Nobody knows, how many members there are in our choir. About 30 people come to the rehearsals: 4 hours once a month. It is complicated to meet more often as many members of the choir live far from London.

In the choir upper voices are sung by women, bass part – is sung by men.

We work with the principle of an amateur choir. Anyone can become the member, nobody examines their musical skills. Almost every rehearsal is attended by someone new. Those who like it stay in the choir, some come and disappear. In short, anyone can sing in "Maspindzeli". This is very good from human standpoint, but hard and unsatisfactory from the professional position.



I started singing when I lived in Paris. Since 2000 I was the member of the Paris women's choir "Irinola". In 2007 I moved to live in London and some time later became a member of "Maspindzeli". Proceeding from this I am used to Foreigners' singing Georgian songs and probably tolerant to their mistakes and specific Georgian.

"Maspindzeli" choir counts 10 years of its existence. It visited Georgia several times, and hosted a number of Georgian songmasters. This why I think today the difference between its singing 10 years ago and now is obvious. Clearly, nobody expects foreigners to sing like Georgians and they do not want to be pseudo Georgians. But it is possible to develop and revive the choir. "Maspindzeli" never before had a Georgian leader, but now things are going on in a I'm here and much is defferent way. expected from us. This is why I do my best to teach them distinguish songs from various regions, their peculiarities and character.

Method of teaching

Maspindzeli's repertoire is rather impressive. We have studied many songs during 10 years, some from scores, some from recordings, some from Georgian teachers. As I already told you Edisher Garakanidze, "Mtiebi", Joseph Jordania, "Mzetamze", "Nanina" "Anchiskhati", "Basiani", "Shavnabada", visited etc. Britain at various times.

Last Year was exceptional from the viewpoint of visitors. We hosted Malkhaz Erkvanidze, Gigi Garakanidze, Giorgi Donadze, Nana Mzhavanadze, Anzor Erkomaishvili, Dato Tsintsadze. Each teacher brings a new songs. We basically learn by ear, which makes it difficult for those who are more used to notes. But we try to remember correctly and make audio recordings, so that we can work on the same songs on our own. Now we are preparing for the concert the songs we studied last year.

It may be funny, but we start each rehearsal with the pronunciation of Georgian vowels, first saying and then singing. Before starting to work on a song we work on "making sound", we try to sing how to make others hear your voice without shouting or special mobilization of the body. In short we learn alphabet and "The Knight in the Tiger's Skin" at the same time.

Twice a year we give charity concerts. Small donations are sent to Georgia. At the moment we are working on the perfection of the songs we learned last year and are preparing for a concert.

About our future plans

Our aim is to participate in the 5th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony in October, 2010. This is a big responsibility for Mark and Me, as for the new leaders of the choir. "Maspindzeli" like any other foreign group is always warmly welcome in Georgia. We Georgians are delighted to hear foreigners say a few words in Georgian. But when we hear them sing in Georgian we hold them to our heart and praise them.

We have already planned 2-3-day additional rehearsals for those, who intend to go to Georgia and are doing our best to encourage them. We hope that in October "Maspindzeli" will be able to perform in Tbilisi and will gladden Georgian audience.

> **Tamta Turmanidze** London, The Great Britain

Foreigners on Georgian Folk Music

Interview with Polo Vallejo

Spanish composer and ethnomusicologist Polo Vallejo was on a visit at Tbilisi State Conservatoire on March 22-26, 2010. Prof. Vallejo is interested in the study of Georgian polyphony; he actively cooperates with the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony (IRCTP) of the Conservatoire and is a frequent participant of the Symposia held by the Center. In our opinion Prof. Vallejo has interesting views on Georgian folk music; we offer you an interview, recorded by Maka Khardziani a specialist of the IRCTP.

M.K. -- Thank you for your visit and interesting lectures, in general for your attitude to Georgian folk music.

How did you come to know Georgian folk music and what was your first impression?

P.V. – When I was a student in Austria, in Salzburg in the Mozarteum. I went to Munich I was looking for Pelléas et Mélisande by Debussy and I went to a music store, and then I bought one disc, because one song took my attention; it was a compact disk of Rustavi, I was very impressed by the music. I listened to it sometimes, but then I kept it, because I started going to Africa. After 18 years of being in Africa. When I came here for the first time to the symposium to present my works from Africa I saw and heard Georgian music alive it was really a shock for me. I was in company with Simha Arom and I made to him a commentary about this music, the richness, the impact I got, the language, the originality, the complexity. Just after I finished my work in Africa, this was the first impression and it came in a very natural way to start the research we are now involved.

M.K. -- Are any special features of Georgian polyphony reflected in your musical compositions?



P.V. -- Just one vocal composition for Spanish women's choir, I did a piece but they have not performed it yet. I did it last year. Of course, I took all impressions; I've got from the Georgian polyphony. The influence of African music is very clear in my compositions, But I don't want to make a cliché because this is Georgian music. In my pieces I used harmonic impressions from the results I got after analyzing many pieces of Georgian music, that are inside my music, but you can't say, that it is Georgian music. But I've got its influence. for instance, technical way, how to move from the one sound to another in one voice without making intervallic jumps. Relations between three voices (sometimes they are double, they are six) I got also from the Georgian music.

M.K. -- As we know, you were a composer and than you decided to choose ethnomusicology. How did it happen?

P.V. -- I never wanted to be an ethnomusicologist, but I became. In my childhood I thought that music is something huge, you can sing if you want, you can play if you want and so on. It is difficult to classify only one thing in my profile. I recognize that I'm more concentrated on research and musical education. I work with children, with teachers, I like these relationships, but what I use? All these disciplines are connected with traditions. I

use traditions, to make music, to research, to teach, but I'm concentrated on the research.

M.K. -- What kind of musical research are you going to carry out in Georgian folk music?

P.V. -- This is a very difficult question to answer. Georgian polyphony has a unique language in the world. When we listen to this music, we feel it close and at the same time, it's far from us; it's a pharadox. When you hear African music, you can say, it is from "Basiani" Africa. but when sang "Mravalzhamier" in Spain, the audience didn't understand, from where this music was. I think, the richness of the harmony, how the chords are connected one to another, define the originality of Georgian polyphony. We consider we are making first steps. (I speak in plural, because I work together with Simha Arom and we share our opinions). We are trying to recognize, what is going on in Georgia. We are especially interested in musical systems. We want to know, how the music is constructed, especially interesting is harmony of Georgian music. We are very impressed with its harmonic syntax. But when we try to get inside the harmonic structures to get more information, which are different in various regions, in secular and sacred music. We are just trying to get into this system.

M.K. -- In your first article you are basically focused on the musical structures of Georgian folk songs. Are you going to study our folklore in its sociocultural context?

P.V. -- The most significant aspects of social context of music help us understand the system. So we don't dip into history, because, there are a lot of researches and everything has been written in Georgian, is Russian. So it isn't our interest. Ours is to go to the system, which is more universal and we can find similar features in different music. We want to know this characteristics and originality from Georgia.

M.K. -- You write a lot about Georgian church music. What connections do you see between our secular and sacred music?

P.V. -- We are wondering from where this characteristics of polyphony comes, how they are mixed and how they influence each other. As we understand, this is something, what belongs to the history, to the demographic movement. Georgia is a cross point of many aspects of the history from Europe. In music there is something, we can recognize. Western liturgical music and other things, we can say, this is from here. So all these mixed points make us have a lot of questions without answer. In the liturgy we may find more homogeneity, but it depends. The books that are transcribed have some alterations; this is something which is from Georgia you cannot know exactly where is real, authentic, original music, because some could be the transcriptions, some arrangements, and so on. This would make it difficult to work, but what we are thinking now is to take the materials which seem more homogeneous. Next time we will come to Georgia not to the symposium, but to go to the village, for example, to Samegrelo, contact people, stay there for two months, and understand everything about this region. Because, we are interested, what is happening in the village at the moment. We need people, who remember tradition, who sing the songs. This is the work, we did in Africa and we need to do in Georgia.

M.K. – Thank you very much. We hope to meet yiou again in October at the symposium.

P.V. - I'm thrilled by your attention, your interest to our work and I'm very happy to meet such good researchers and to share my experience with them. Thank you.

Interviawed by Maka Khardziani

Multipart singing in Estonia

(Short overview)

Estonian older folk songs, named by the Researchers regilaul, are mainly monodic, sometimes with elements of heterophony. Regilaul belongs to the ancient Baltic-Finnish tradition of the so-called "runic songs", which are characteristic to such peoples as the Finns, the Karelians, the Izhorians, and the Vots. The runic songs (including regilaul) have a number of common features in their structure: they are based on alliterative verse in *Kalevala*-meter (a trochaic tetrameter), lines of the text do not compose strophes, melodies have very few figurative elements (i.e. one syllable of the verse corresponds usually to one note of the melody), and songs are performed responsorially - the chorus repeats the line of the lead singer.

The multipart performing of *regilaul* is only found in two regions of Estonia: the two-part drone singing in Southern Estonia and the Setu multipart song tradition in South-East Estonia. The all known examples of two-part drone singing originate from the time period 1877–1912. Among them there are field transcriptions (Aksel August Borenius-Lähteenkorva, August Kiiss) and phonograph recordings some (1912. Väisänen). The transcriptions of all 19 examples are published in Tampere 1938 (1988). The multipart song tradition of the Setu is, on the contrary, quite viable until nowadays.

The Setu (in the local dialect – *seto*) is a small ethnic group of Estonians living in South-East Estonia and within the adjoining border areas of Russia (Pechory district of Pskov region). The Setu tongue – a Võru-Setu dialect of Estonian – is now spoken by about 5000 people, and belongs to the Finnic subgroup of the Finno-Ugric languages. Unlike most other Estonians the Setu people are Orthodox. The traditional culture of the

Setu differs from the culture of other Estonians also in many other respects.

The Setu multipart singing is obviously of a very old origin and it is characteristic to all genres of songs (work, calendar, wedding, lyrical, lyroepic songs etc.) except solo genres (funeral laments, herding songs, lullabies etc.). The song performers are predominantly women.

The texture of Setu songs is comprised of two functionally different parts – the lower main part (*torrõ* in folk terminology) which is sung heterophonically by a chorus, and the upper subsidiary part (*killõ*) which is sung by a solo voice. The *torrõ* part repeats, usually with extensions and alternations, the leader's melody. The *killõ*'s part functions as an embellishment and moves along the two or three upper degrees of the scale.

There are three principles how the *killõ* voice can be built: (1) syllabic drone on the upper scale degree with resolutions to the tonic in the ends of the phrases (only in ancient songs based on one-three-semitone mode¹); (2) realization of "harmonic rhythm"² of the tune on two or three upper scale degrees (in both older and newer songs); (3) motion in parallel thirds with main melody occurring periodically during the strophe as addition to second principle (mostly in newer diatonic songs).

Sometimes one of the *torrõ* singers sings lower tune variations than others. Ethnomusicologists refer to this part as "the lower *torrõ*", but there is no special folk term for such a voice. In the presence of "lower *torrõ*" the texture of Setu songs approaches functional three-part singing with main melody in the middle voice.

Nowadays the multipart singing is one of the most important symbols of ethnic identity of the Setu. Within last decades the growth of ethnic consciousness of the Setu led to revitalization of the old song tradition. There are many singing groups comprised of younger or/and older people who try to keep alive the tradition of multipart singing. Still one should recognize, that the most ancient and original features of Setu song style are disappearing. The essential changes are observed also in performing situations and the ways of transmission of tradition.

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¹ For more information on the Setu one-three-semitone mode see also Pärtlas 2000, 2006b.

² For more information on the "harmonic rhythm" in Setu folk songs see also Pärtlas 2001, 2006a.

The Centres of Georgian Science and Culture

Ivane Javakhishvili Institute of History and Ethnology

Institute of History and Ethnology is one of the oldest scientific institutions in Georgia. Its history starts in 1917, when at the initiative of Niko Marr Historical Archaeological Institute was founded in Tbilisi. Marr was the director of the Institute where worked the renowned persons, such as Ekvtime Takaishvili (Georgian historian, one of the founders of Tbilisi State University and outstanding public figure) and Giorgi Chubinashvili (the founding father of Georgian History of Arts). After Marr's death in 1934 the Institute was given his name, since 1936 it was called N. Marr Institute of language, History and Material Culture.

Ivane Javaklhishvili was a permanent consultant of the Institute.

The scientific scope of the institute encompassed Caucasian themes, political and social history of the Georgian people, basic problems of culture, the ethno genesis of the Georgians and their their culturalhistorical links with the ancient civilizations of Asia Minor. The Institute organized expeditions in various regions of the country, performed significant studies on the basis of the collected ethnographic material and published them in scholarly periodicals: (Messenger), Masalebi Moambe Sakartvelosa da Kavkasiis Istoriistvis (Materials on the History of Georgia and the Caucasus).

In 1941 the Institute was divided into two independent institutes – of Linguistics and History. The latter was given the name of Ivane Javakhishvili after his death. At various times the institute had sections of history, archaeology, ethnography, philology, philosophy, Georgian folk music and history of Georgian medicine. among the employees were renowned Georgian scholars such as, G. Chitaia, V. Bardavelidze, Al. Robakidze, R. Kharadze, J. Rukhadze, T. Ochiauri, M. Abdushelishvili and others.

In 1945 the Department for musical folklore was established at the Institute, led by Dimitri Arakishvili (1873-1953) - a professor, Doctor of Arts, composer, musicologist and ethnographer, the founder of musical folklore studies in Georgia. The foundation for the study of musical folklore the Institute was laid by Ivane at Javakhishvili by his work "Basic topics of the History of Georgian Music"(1938). The Department carried out active work in the study of Georgian folk music (despite the hard after-war years). As the employees of the Department Professors of Tbilisi State Conservatoire - Grigol Chkhikvadze, Shalva Aslanishvili, Boris Gulisashvili, Vladimer Akhobadze and Tamar Mamaladze were invited. At the same time the post-graduate studies were performed at the Institute. Shalava Aslanishvili - the founder of Music Theory Studies in Georgia defended his dissertation at the Institute. A large number of young historians and ethnographers with music education were prepared here.

In the 1960s the study of musical folklore by means of ethnographic methods started, namely Giorgi Chitaia elaborated a complexintensive method, which regarded musical folklore not only as artistic phenomenon, but as a part of everyday life. Besides, he also drew attention to the early stages of the development of musical thinking, its root language and the process of its dialectal differentiation (N. Maisuradze). Musical instruments have been regarded as elements of traditional culture, stages in the development of instruments have been distinguished (M. Shilakadze).

In 1994 a group dealing with problems, led by N. Maisuradze was created at the Institute. Ethnographic studies of the included in scholars this group (K. Nakashidze, K. Chitanava, A. Petriashvili, N. Bedoshvili) encompassed various fields of Georgian music folklore (ceremonial songs, Megrelian musical dialect, musical culture of East Georgian mountain regions, innovations in folk music), and based on the

materials, collected during field expeditions and individual scientific missions.

An important event in the Institute's life was the publication of eight-volume collection of the essays on Georgian History, and some parts of Georgia's Ethnographic Atlas (1971-1980).

Annual Scientific Sessions and Conferences were held at the Institute on a regular basis, the Institute had contacts with various scientific centers, archives and museums abroad, the employees of the Institute held consultations for the scholars interested in the problems of Kartvelology studies), (Kartvelian as well as for ethnomusicologists from various countries of the world (USA, Holland, Japan, Bulgaria).

Since 2006 it is I. Javakhishvili Institute of History and Ethnology; Today at the institute there are 5 Departments: 1. Ethnography of Georgia, 2. Ethnography of the Caucasus; 3. New and the newest history; 4. History of Medieval Georgia and Source studies; 5. History of Ancient World. But many old and traditional directions, including ethnomusicology have been lost.

At the Institute there is musical-ethnographic archive, where the handwritten works of the Institute employees from all times are preserved (some of these were later published by the authors), as well as material recorded on wax cylinders and magnetic tapes, collections of transcriptions. Musical material preserved at the archive, field expedition diaries and handwritten works not yet published constitute the treasure, which needs to be safeguarded. It should be 2006-2008 mentioned that in the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony published collection of the audio material from wax cylinders on 16 CD with support of Vienna Phonogrammarchiv and Georgian Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sports, which alongside other collections includes that of our Institute.

Manana Shilakadze

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Beneficents of Georgian Folk Song

Levan Abashidze

(1957-2009)

Levan Abashidze - a good connoisseur of Georgian folk music devoted all this life to Kartli-Kakhetian folk music. He sought for, revived and popularized lesser known examples and those that were buried in oblivion. For this purpose Levan created ensemble "Tsinandali" in his home village of Tsinandali. During 20 years of its existence this small group gained popularity and appreciation in Georgia and elsewhere. Levan contributed greatly to this success. "Tsinandali" traveled in the USA and a number of countries of Asia and Europe;



took part in various festivals, where it was awarded prizes. But the pinnacle of the success was Great Britain: "Tsinandali" directed by Levan Abashidze took the first place and was awarded the highest prize at the International Folk Festival in Wales.

Levan had friendly and professional links with experts of Georgian folklore, such as Kukuri Chokhonelidze, Anzor Erkomaishvili, Gomar Sikharulidze, and others. At their request Levan created children's ensemble "Patara Kakhi", which was the crown of his artistic life. The number of children willing to sing in the group was so large, that it became necessary to divide them into three age groups. Thus Levan raised dozens of young singers, who on their part will raise many more supporters of Georgian folk music.

Guram Urchukhishvili

Folk Song in everyday life

Georgian Round Dances

(Eastern Georgia)

In Scholarly studies round dance is considered as a specific genre, the roots of which are lost in the remote past. Round dance is supposed to be incepted in pagan religious activities. It is a syncretic genre, which includes three branches of art: music, poetry and choreography.

In Georgian musical folkloristics there is a number of interesting opinions on round dances. According to some, the intonational formulas of round dances together with work songs and dirges must have been the basis of Georgian musical root language.

According to the surviving data, round dances existed all over Georgia, though this

tradition is lost in many parts of the country. From this viewpoint special mention should be made of Svaneti, where the majority of songs are still performed with round dance. Opposite picture is found in Kartli and Kakheti, where with the consideration of musical data, should have existed a large number of round dances, however only a few dance movements are documented.

There are solely men's (*Lemchili*) and solely women's round dances (*Iavnana*) as well as a large number of round dances for mixed, male-female performance (*Zhuzhuna*, *Dala kojas Khelghvazhale*).

Many round dances are connected with ceremonial, cult activities, such as Perkhisa (in Khevsureti - Perkhisuli), which is an essential part of Khatoba celebration. Perkhisa was performed as a round dance, while walking around the shrine and also when going from a shrine in the mountains to another shrine in the lowlands. Walking this long distance was accompanied with singing Perkhisa; relatively this could last more than an hour. The text for *Perkhisa* has basically mythological or heroic content. The Khevsuretian, Pshavian and Gudamagarian variants of the song are similar. Psrkhisa is mostly two-part, except for Mtiuleti, where it is three-part. Like all Georgian round-dance songs *Perkhisa* is performed antiphonally; second choir repeating the text sung by first choir.

In most parts of East Georgian Mountains it was mandatory to sing the round-dance song *Jvari Tsinasa*, usually when bringing the bride to the groom's house and walking her around the hearth. There are also Kartlian and Kakhetian variants of the song.

Gradually the feet movements of *Perkhisa and Jvari Ttsinasa* sank into oblivion; this was reflected on the musical side of the song as well; the song lost its sharply accentuated meter and rhythm, characteristic of round dance songs.

During *Khatoba* celebration in Tusheti it is mandatory to perform a several storey round dance *Korbeghela*. The scholars are of the opinion that the word "Korbeghela" might mean a two-storey building. During "Khatoba" celebration the two-storey circle had to move from one spot on the slope to another without breaking down. The locals predicted future by "Korbeghela". If the circle broke down it meant something bad, but good performance of the round dance meant bounty and a large number of children.

Several-storey round dances are also documented in other parts of the country; e.g. *Mirmikela* (Svaneti), *Zemqrelo* (Kartli), *Samqrelo* (Meskheti). These round dances are based on the dialogue between upper and lower rows: the dancers in the bottom row threaten to drop those in the upper row. Sometimes obscene words are used in the song. According to some scholars two-storey round dance is somewhat a training before a battle; others link these round dances with the cult of fertility.

Most of the round dances in Eastern Georgia are built on *Iavnana* melody; either the whole melody or only a part of *Iavnana* is used. In East Georgian Mountains this kind of round-dance songs is found only in Khevi.

Some of the songs with the structure of round-dance song are connected with work process, such as *Namgluri* (sung when whetting the sickle) and Mumli Mukhasa, which according to some scholars is the survival of the ancient tree cult.

Noteworthy are Kakhetian women's songs with round dance structure, such as Gonja (begging for weather change), Kartlian Lazare, Cult song Dideba performed when walking around the church. According to some data *Dideba* was sung alternately by male and female choirs. It is noteworthy that East Georgian men's Perkhisa songs and Kakhetian women's Dideba songs are built on the same compositional scheme.

Otar Kapanadze

Dala Kojas Khelghvazhale

Dala Kojas Khelghvazhale is a Svan hunting song. The title is translated as "Dali is giving birth to a child in the rocks. Dali is one of the deities of pagan Georgian pantheon, who is as the protector of rock beasts in Svan mythology. This is why hunters ask her for assistance.

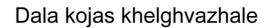
The song tells the story how Dali gives birth to a child in the rocks. She is mother of Amiran – one of the most renowned characters in Georgian folk epos. So, *Dala Kojas Khelghvazhale* describes the episode of Amiran's birth. The newborn falls down from the rock and is carried away by a wolf; a hunter, who accidentally passes by kills the wolf and returns the child to the mother, in return the Deity promises him to have successful hunting.

Scholars believe that *Dala Kojas Khelghvazhale* is part of an ancient folk drama, which once may have been part of the epos about Amiran. According to a Svan hunter Khosha Gherbet (The Almighty) prohibited Dali to have children, apparently because he was aware that her son Amiran would fight against him. This may be the reason why Dali has difficult delivery and crows and ravens guard her from the sky and a wolf guards her at the foot of the rock.

Dali is a seductive character; she enchants hunters, offers them love and promises successful hunting in return, on one condition that the hunter keeps the relationship in secret and is faithful to her. Otherwise he will die, however this motif is absent in the song, and only the Deity's benevolence to people is described.

Dala Kojas Khelghvazhale is one of the most popular songs in Svan folklore; it has many variants, both three-part and solo; with and without instrumental accompaniment, performed by women and men.

Maka Khardziani





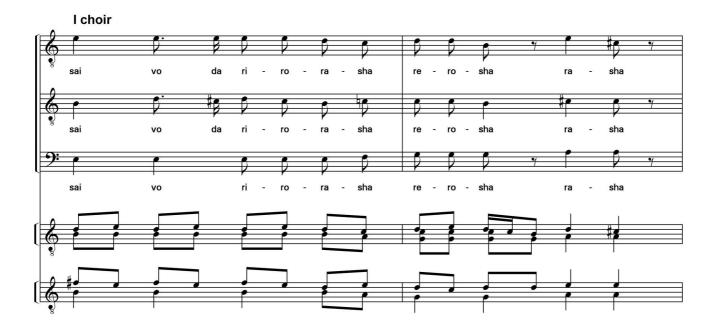














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