

**The
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Tbilisi State
Conservatoire**

**International
Research
Center for
Traditional
Polyphony**

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The Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony

The Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony has been brought to a conclusion and the time for reflection has come. As one of the organizers of this event, I must say that forums like ours are the best means for integration into the international scholarly community and musical research processes; we have indeed advanced in this direction. We will not burden our readers with a long discussion of Symposium themes, but we will present the brief abstracts of all the presentations. I would like to mention that scholars in general enjoy long discussions on certain issues, to get to the heart of the matter at hand, to consider it from various angles, to dialogue on problems of research methodology, etc. I admit that I personally am also in favor of this kind of gathering. From this standpoint our symposia cover broad issues pertaining to polyphonic music. The three symposia have together raised discussion on a large number of issues and represent a broad musical geography. The reason for this is twofold: first, prior to our first symposium we had only minimal knowledge of the musical culture of peoples all over the world and we wanted to present Georgian musical folklore in a world context; second-and no less importantly-we honestly wanted to attract as many scholars from as many countries as possible in order to acquaint them with our own unique musical tradition. Georgian ethnomusicology, or more precisely folklore studies (Georgian scholars tend to work in more of a folkloric than an ethnomusicological paradigm), has only just begun to intro-

duce itself to the world and must make an effort to sustain the momentum that has begun. There is still much work to be done in this direction.

In short, the Symposium was a success despite some tiny glitches. Scholars from 15 countries - Austria, Australia, USA, Bulgaria, Germany, Spain, Japan, Italy, Canada, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, France, Croatia and Georgia - discussed the genesis of polyphony, methods for its documentation, archival recordings, etc. Especially well represented were regional styles of multipart singing in Georgia and other countries, including the Mediterranean, which was represented for the first time.

The opening ceremony of the Symposium was held on September 25 at the Grand Hall of the Tbilisi State Conservatoire, beginning with a short documentary on the completion of the UNESCO three-year project *Safeguarding and Promotion of Georgian Traditional Polyphony*. Many words of gratitude were expressed to UNESCO, for this project pushed the Georgian government to intensify its efforts to safeguard Georgian musical folklore. We are delighted that in 2006 the President of Georgia allotted over one million GEL for the support of Georgian folk song and dance. The Third International Symposium was a beneficiary of this program.

The Symposium concert program featured families of singer-musicians from various parts of Georgia as well as foreign performers of Georgian folk song: *Maspindzeli* from the UK, *Darbazi* and *Zari* from Canada, *Marani* and *Irinola* from France and *Yamashirogumi* from Japan. Special mention should be made of a quartet of Basque singers from France who presented Basque traditional songs for the first time in Georgia.

We deeply appreciate the enthusiasm of foreign ensembles for the performance of Georgian folk music and regard these ensembles as ambassadors of Georgian culture in their home countries. Only love for this music can help to gather the strength and resources for travel to Georgia and performance for Georgian audiences. We va-



Ensemble from Canada *Darbazi*

lue our relations with these ensembles very much.

On September 28 the participating scholars visited Kutaisi and the mayor held a reception in their honor. They visited Gelati Monastery; attended a local ensemble's concert in Vani, and returned to Tbilisi the same evening full of impressions.

A closing gala concert featuring local and visiting ensembles was held on September 29. More Georgian songs were heard at the reception after the concert. Participants were gifted with the latest publications of the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony: the proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony in Georgian and English, a CD of Kakhetian songs recorded by Conservatoire field researchers in 1952, and a new issue of the Bulletin. They were delighted to receive a unique book of transcriptions from the Erkomaishvili family collection - a gift from the International Centre for Georgian Folk Song and Mr. Anzor Erkomaishvili.

As always, upon conclusion the results of the Symposium were evaluated at the Conservatoire. Afterwards we always have a better sense of the event's weaknesses. Some are easily corrected, for example the quality of the Georgian translation of some of the English texts, the need to block incoming light during video projections, certain technical difficulties, etc. Some weaknesses need more thorough reflection, for exam-

ple the relevance of the subject matter addressed. Re-evaluation might reduce the number of participants, but will also certainly increase the time available for discussion. There are other tiny details as well which can hardly be avoided in an event of this scale. In short, there is much to be considered before the next symposium.

Importantly, the Symposium enables us to increase our collaboration with international scholars. Unfortunately, we failed to follow through with one project that was suggested by the American scholar Steven Brown at the First Symposium in 2002. This time Dr. Simha Arom and Dr. Polo Vallejo expressed a desire to host two Tbilisi Conservatoire students in France in order to train them in Dr. Arom's method for recording polyphonic music. We believe this is a very important project, as Dr. Arom's method provides for great accuracy in the transcription of complex musical examples. Georgian song is very rich in examples of this kind, but the existing methods for their transcription are unfortunately still lacking.

In conclusion, I would like to join Prof. Manana Doijashvili, Rector of the Tbilisi State Conservatoire, in expressing our deep gratitude to all faculty and students of the Conservatoire who helped to make the Symposium a success.

The Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony received extensive media coverage. We acknowledge especially the assistance of Georgia Public Broadcasting and the Imedi channel, the Tbilisi municipality, the transport union Universali and Nova Science Publishers in the USA.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the President of Georgia, Mr. Mikheil Saakashvili, for his support for the Symposium, and the Georgian Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport for its financial assistance as part of the President's National Folk Program for safeguarding cultural heritage.

Rusudan Tsurtsumia
Head of IRCTP

Program for the Scientific Sessions of the Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony

Simha Arom (France). Polyphony by Way of Polyrhythmic

Joseph Jordania (Australia). Origin of Rhythm: Beginnings of Choral Polyphony and the Defense Strategy in Human Evolution

Tamaz Gabisonia (Georgia). The Notion *Multipart Singing* and Georgian Folk Music

Nino Pirtskhalava (Georgia). On the Georgian Notion *Mortulebi*, Denoting Musical Harmony, in the Works of Ioane Petritsi

Anna G. Piotrowska (Poland). Folklore as a Source of National Identification in Music

Josko Caleta (Croatia). The Multipart singing of Croatia - Vocal Traditions of the Adriatic Islands

Jaksa Promorac (Croatia). Local Styles in Dalmatian *Klapa* Singing

Mauro Balma (Italy). Two Repertoires, Two Styles of Multipart Singing, Two Repertoires of Liguria (Italy): the *trallalero* of Genoa and the *canto a bordone* of Ceriana (Imperia)

Ruzha Neykova (Bulgaria). The Polyphonic Singing in a Female Ritual of South-Western Bulgaria

Vladimer Gogotishvili (Georgia). Mode-Intonational Peculiarities of *Georgian Cadence* of Type I

Pantxo Etchegoin (France). *Kantuketan* - the World of Basques Traditional Song

Natalia Zumbadze (Georgia). Georgian Songs of the Birth of a Son

Daiva Rachiunaite-Vychiniene (Lithuania). Seeking for Origin of Songs with Refrain *Tumba* and their Interpretation

Teona Rukhadze (Georgia). Acharan-Shavshetian *Maqruli* (Groomsmen's) Songs

Mikahil Lobanov (Russia). Previously Unaccounted Type of Russian Song Polyphony

Gerald Florian Messner (Australia). Multipart Vocal Tradition in Eastern Flores (Indonesia), Bulgaria and Manus Province (PNG): A Comparison

Polo Vallejo (Spain). Music and Logic among the *Wagogo* People from Tanzania: Social Function and Musical Technique

Otar Kapanadze (Georgia). New Archival Recordings - Achara (Western Georgia) 2005

Franz Feudermayr & Werner A. Deutsch (Austria). Examples of Virtual Multipart Music and Their Psycho-Acoustic Foundation

Emi Nishina, Norie Kawai, Manabu Honda, Reiko Yagi, Masako Morimoto, Satoshi Nakamura, Tadao Maekawa, Yoshiharu Yonekura, Hiroshi Shibasaki and Tsutomu Oohashi (Japan). Biological Mechanism of Perception of Inaudible High-Frequency Component Included in Musical Sounds

Nino Tsitsishvili (Australia). Gender and Improvisation in Georgian Polyphonic Singing

Andrea Kuzmich (Canada). Non-Change in Tbilisi Ensembles

Malkhaz Erkvanidze (Georgia). Revival-Reconstruction of Georgian Sacred Hymns - One of the Priorities of Georgian School of Chant

Davit Shughliashvili (Georgia). *Shesvladi* in Georgian Sacred Chant

Manana Shilakadze, Nino Ghambashidze, Giorgi Gotsiridze (Georgia). Liturgical Nature and Sources of Georgian Traditional Banquet. Table Songs, Laudatory Songs and Feast Chants in the Context of Traditional-Domestic Culture

Lauren Ninoshvili (USA). Georgian Polyphony in English: Liturgical Music for the 21st Century

Dieter Christensen (USA). Sound Archives, Technology, Research, State

Susanne Ziegler (Germany). Polyphony in Historical Sound Recordings of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv

Gerda Lechleitner & Nona Lomidze (Austria). Georgian and Bukharian Jews in Vienna

Nona Lomidze (Austria). Georgian Song, Transcription and Computer

Franz Lechleitner (Austria). The Georgian Wax Cylinder Collections - Recording Technology and Recommendations for Restoration

Rusudan Tsurtsunia (Georgia). Georgian Wax Cylinder Collection



At the Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony, 2006

Georgian Traditional Music in 2006

March 3 - April 12. Ensemble *Rustavi* performed 23 concerts in Lithuania, Estonia, Finland and Sweden.

April 25-28. The First International Easter Festival *Amaghleba* (Ascention) was held by the Georgian Patriarchy and Akaki Ramishvili's Fund *Traditsia Da Inovatsia* (Tradition and Innovation). Among the participants were chant choirs, folk ensembles (*Basiani, Kartuli Khmebi, Bediani, Tsminda Sameba* church choir).

May 5-12. Producers' Company *Art-Rustavi* held a festival of Georgian dance and song *Kartuli Suli* (Georgian Soul) at the State Philharmonic Hall in Tbilisi.

May 5. A concert of *Iliko Sukhishvili Georgian National Ballet*.

May 9. An evening of Georgian folk song, *Chakrulo*. Among the participants were folk ensembles *Kartuli Khmebi, Pesvebi, Tbilisi, Alilo, Simi, Batumi* and *Mdzlevari*.

May 27-29. Folk ensemble *Basiani* was on a concert tour in Switzerland. They had two concerts in Neuchatel and Zurich, and a concert at the festival *Naturstimmen*.

June 14. Ensemble *Basiani* performed in a solo concert at the Grand Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

July 14-23. Folk Festival *Art-Geni-2006* was held at Tbilisi Ethnographical Museum. The Festival hosted folk singers and dancers, folk poetry, traditional martial arts, traditional medicine, cuisine; there was a photo-exhibition, demonstration of films and theatrical performances; classical, jazz and folk music concerts. Among the participants of the Festival were folk



**At the Folk Exhibition Festival
Ensemble from Meskheta *Karthli***

groups from all over Georgia: *Gurjaani, Okros Stumrebi, Shavnabada, Iadoni, Tutarchela, Imereti, Khorumi, Didgori, Chveneburebi, Odoia, Lazare, Aidio, Urmuli, Mtiebi, Mapshalia, Zumbaland* as well as individual singers from Racha, Achara, Svaneti and *Bayar Shahin-Gundaridze* from Turkey.

September 16-19. Ensemble *Basiani* had a concert tour in France. They performed at the Festival *D'Île De France* and held a concert of Georgian sacred hymns in Toulon.

September 25-29. The International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony held the Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony Together with Georgian researchers the scholars from France, Germany, Austria, Australia, Bulgaria, Russia, Poland, Croatia, Spain, Lithuania, Japan, Canada and the USA took part in the work of the forum.

Among the participants of the Symposium's concert program were *Anchiskhati* Church Choir, *Basiani, Mzetamze*, students' folk ensemble of Tbilisi State Conservatoire, *Mtiebi, Rustavi, Sakhioba*, singers of the Youth School from Samegrelo, women's chamber choir from Gori (all from Georgia) and visiting ensembles *Iruska, Marani* and *Irinola* (all three from France), ensemble *Darbazi* and trio *Zari* (from Canada), ensemble *Maspindzeli* (UK) and *Geinoh-Yamashirogumi* (Japan).



**At the Folk Exhibition Festival
Koro Katsiashvili**

September 29-October 4. The Union International Festival *Chveneburebi* held the Third International Festival with the blessing of Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia. The Festival program included official meetings, exhibition, presentation, concerts in the town of Rustavi and at Tbilisi State Medical Institute; Gala concert was held at the State Philharmonic Hall in Tbilisi. The Festival hosted ensembles of Georgian song (with Georgian and non-Georgian members) from Greece, Holland, Estonia, France, Turkey, Korea, Russia, Iran and Azerbaijan.

September 30-October 2. Tbilisi Opera House hosted the final round of the National Exhibition-Festival (2005-2006) and the concert with the participation of the laureates. The participants were selected by the jury during local, regional tours of the Festival. This was held with the support of



**International Festival *Chveneburebi*
Ensemble from Saingilo (Azerbaijan)**



International Festival *Chveneburebi* Ensemble from France

Mikheil Saakashvili, the President of Georgia, as part of the *President's National Program for the Support of Folklore*, by the Georgian Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport and the Folklore State Centre of Georgia.

The new, online version of the database of the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony entitled "Georgian Folk Music - Examples" has already been placed as a link of our web site www.polyphony.ge

The link is only in English so far, but can be opened from the homepage of both Georgian and English versions. The database includes selected examples of Georgian folk music collected by various field expeditions and recorded directly from ethnophores - authentic bearers of folk tradition.

The online version will regularly be augmented with additions to the main database.

Prepared by Nino Nakashidze

The online version of the database

New Publications

Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony. 23-27 September, 2004, V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Editors: Rusudan Tsursumia and Joseph Jordania; edition coordinator - Ketevan Bakradze; cover design by Nika Sebiskveradze. Published by the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Tbilisi: *Chokhi* Ltd (in Georgian and English)



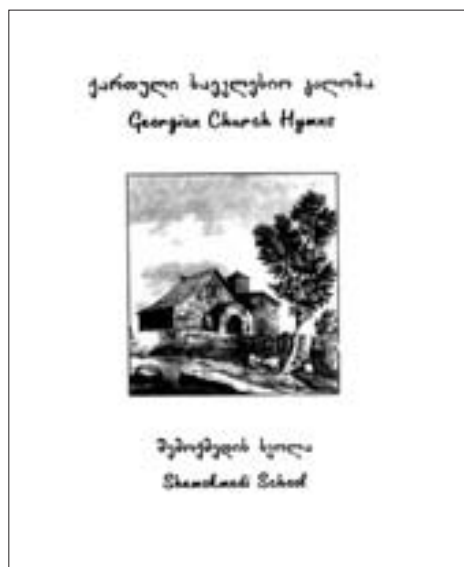
Kartuli Saeklesio Galoba. Shemokmedis Skola. Artem Erkomaishvili's Chanatserebis Mikhedvit (Georgian Church Chant. *Shemokmedi* School. From Artem Erkomaishvili's collection) - a CD of 31 sacred chants recorded by *Anchiskhati* Church choir (direct. Malkhaz Erkvanidze) at Tbilisi Mama Daviti Monastery in 2005. Recording realized by Rafael Antonio Galvez Garcia. Design by Giorgi Bagrationi. The CD is supplied by a booklet with a short introduction and annotation (in Georgian and English)

Guruli Khalkhuri Simgherebi (Gurian Folk Songs) - a collections of transcriptions supplied with audio material (24 songs) on a CD. This publication is dedicated to the memory of Kukuri Chokhanelidze - edi-



tor and author of the introduction to the book. Compiler - Levan Veshapidze; design by Gocha Balavadze; translation - Ketevan Kalandadze and Maia Kachkachishvili; English text edited by John Graham. There are 63 Gurian songs in the collection including six variants of *Khasanbegura* and 6 variants of *Chven Mshvidoba*. Each song is supplied with a short annotation in English. Recommended for publication by Georgian Folk Music Department at V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire (in Georgian and English)

Kartuli Saeklesio Galoba. Shemokmedis Skola. Artem Erkomaishvili's Chanatserebis Mikhedvit (Georgian Church Chant. *Shemokmedi* School. From *Artem Erkomaishvili's* collection) - a collection of transcriptions,



second edition. Compiled, transcribed, introduction and annotation by Davit Shughliashvili; computer services by Levan Veshapidze; design Giorgi Bagrationi; English translation by Ia Iashvili; English text edited by John Graham. The collection includes 118 sacred chants supplied with the English translation of the verses. Prepared for publication by the International Centre for Georgian Folk Song basing on the archival materials of the Georgian Folk Music Department at V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Tbilisi: Iota Ltd (in Georgian and English)

A CD of Basiani - a folk ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchy (leader Giorgi Donadze). The CD includes 17 folk songs and 2 sacred hymns. Sound engineer Mikheil Kilosanidze, annotation by Anzor Erkomaishvili, English text of the annotation by Luarsab Togonidze and John Graham. The publication was sponsored by Tbilisi Municipality and firm *Kaparoli*



Dokumentebi Imeretshi Saeklesio Galobis Istoriisatvis (Documents on the History of Church Chant in Imereti). The work is published by Kutaisi Central State Archive with the financial support of the local administration. It describes the state of church singing in Western Georgia in 1821-1920 and is dedicated to the 900th anniversary of the foundation of Gelati Monastery and 110 years from the publication of Pilimon Koridze's four-volume book *Kartuli Galoba* (Georgian Chant). Compiled and prepared for publication by Merab Kezevadze, director of Kutaisi Central State Archive; editor Ketevan Mamukrlashvili



Chant Center of the Georgian Patriarchy has started publication of a monthly newspaper *Kartuli Galoba* (Georgian Chant). This project has been realized through the financial support of Luarsab Togonidze. Four volumes have already been issued. The newspaper includes the following headlines: News, From the History of Georgian Chant, Masters of Georgian Chant, New Publications, Typikon for Chanters, Advice for Precentors, Explanation of Chant Terminology, Chant Choirs; editor of the publication Tamaz Gabisonia; design by Luarsab Togonidze.

Prepared by Nino Nakashidze



Georgian Ethnomusicologists

Tinatin Zhvania

(1962 - 2006)

On October 15, 2006 the young community of Georgian ethnomusicologists lost one of its most prominent representatives - Tinatin Zhvania, a wonderful researcher of Georgian folk instrumental music and a brilliant teacher and mentor of a new generation of Georgian folk music students. She passed away at the moment of her creative ascent.

Tinatin Zhvania was born 11 October, 1962 in Kutaisi. From 1978-1982 she studied at Kutaisi Music School; there her love for Georgian folk song was clearly revealed. Parallel to her studies she worked as a music teacher in the village of Pereta, in the Vani district. In 1983 Tinatin was accepted in the Department of Musicology at Tbilisi State Conservatoire; she graduated with honors in the discipline of ethnomusicology in 1988. Her senior thesis, *Georgian Folk Woodwind Instruments*, was distinguished for its professional sophistication. After graduation Tinatin began working at the Georgian Folk Music Department, initially as a lab assistant (1988-1992) and later as a researcher and instructor (from 1992).

The focus of Tinatin Zhvania's academic interest was Georgian folk instrumental music. Due to her wide range of activities her publications are not extensive, but the works she produced reveal a high level of professional skill and an extraordinary ability to draw conclusions. Her publications include monographs on the masters of Georgian folk song *Dzuku Lolua* and the *Erkomaishvili* family, published by the International Center for Georgian Folk Song. Unfortunately she was unable to complete her dissertation, *Dialectical Aspects of Georgian Instrumental Music*, but its basic framework is in place.



While still a Conservatoire student, Tinatin Zhvania actively participated in field expeditions to various parts of Georgia. She contributed to projects of the Georgian Folk Music Department and the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony, published articles in Center bulletins, edited publications and took part in scientific forums. Her professional skills were always highly esteemed among her colleagues. Her views were often of decisive significance at scholarly gatherings.

Tinatin Zhvania's pedagogical activities deserve special mention. In the 1990s, she was at the vanguard of a new movement to instruct youth in Georgian folk songs and sacred hymns. Beginning in 1996 she lectured at the State University of Art and Culture; from 1998 she taught at the parochial school of *Sioni* Cathedral in Tbilisi. At the same time she instructed and supervised young ethnomusicologists at the Conservatoire. All of her students without exception were inspired by her extraordinary ability to cultivate an even deeper love for the music. She was also known for expecting a lot from her students.

In the 1980-90s Tinatin Zhvania was among those who responded to the call to revive Georgian sacred hymns and restore them to their proper function in the divine

services. In 1989 she chanted in the women's choir together with her friends at Tbilisi's *Jvris Mama* church; Tinatin was a leading member of the choir, which was distinguished for its high level of performance. She also chanted at *Sioni* Cathedral and *Holy Trinity* Church in Tbilisi from time to time. Tinatin had a high voice of very unique timbre and a remarkable performance style well-suited to Georgian chant and song. The rare recordings of her stage and studio performances with the ensembles *Mzetamze*, *Basiani*, *Lashari*, etc. are of significant value to Georgian folk music performance.

According to Ketevan Zhvania, Tinatin's sister, as a true Christian Tinatin dedicated her life to Georgian folk song and chant and to the care of her family. Even in the last days of her life she laid concerns about her physical condition aside to work on her dissertation and maintain her activities in the life of the church.

Tinatin Zhvania—a wonderful scholar, teacher, singer-chanter and of course a dear friend—will remain alive in the memory of her colleagues.

Tamaz Gabisonia

Tinatin Zhvania's published works:

1. *Sakravis roli sakravieri tankhlebit sasimghero nimushebshi* (The instrument's role in works with instrumental accompaniment). Materials of the International Conference on the 2000-year Anniversary of Christianity and 3000-year Anniversary of Georgian Statehood. 1998.

2. *Sakravis roli sakravieri tankhlebit sasimghero nimushebshi / Panduris tankhlebiani simgherebis magalitze* (The instrument's role in works with instrumental ac-

companiment / Songs with panduri accompaniment). Materials of the International Conference dedicated to the 80th Anniversary of the Tbilisi State Conservatoire. 1999.

3. *Kartuli sakravi da mravalkhmiano-ba / Vokaluri da sakravieri musikis urtiertoba (The role of the instrument in Georgian polyphony / The relations of vocal and instrumental music)*. In *Sasuliero da saero musikis mravalkhmianobis problemebi (Problems of polyphony in sacred and secular music)*. Tbilisi State Conservatoire. 2001.

4. *Dzuku Lolua. Kartuli simgheris ostatebi. Samegrelo (Dzuku Lolua. Masters of Georgian song. Samegrelo)*. Volume I. Tbilisi. The International Centre for Georgian Folk Song. 2003.

5. *Erkomaishvilebi. Kartuli simgheris ostatebi. Guria (The Erkomaishvilis. Masters of Georgian song. Guria)*. Volume II. Tbilisi. The International Centre for Georgian Folk Song. 2004.

6. *Kartuli simgheris vertikaluri da chonguris tsqobebi (The harmony of Georgian song and Chonguri tunings)*. Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony. 2005.

7. *Simghera-galoba - Erkomaishvilebis musikaluri ojakhis tskhovrebis tsesi (Song-Chant - The Way of Life of the Erkomaishvili Family)*. Scientific Conference *One Century of Georgian Chant*. Tbilisi State Conservatoire. 2006.

8. *Sakravis tembri da kartuli musikaluri estetika / Simebiani sakravis magalitze (Instrumental timbre and Georgian musical aesthetics / The string instrument)*. *Journal Kavkasiis matsne*. 2006.

Tinatin Zhvania's field expedition activities:

Svaneti 1985

Khevsureti 1986

Guria 1995

Samegrelo 1996

Samegrelo-Svaneti 1991

Kartli 1992

Tusheti 2003

Guria 2004

Meskheta 2005

Georgian Bowed Instruments

Tinatin Zhvania, 1999

This article aims to continue the theme introduced in previous scholarly works on the general function of instruments in Georgian musical life and to mark out another representative from the Georgian instrument collection - bowed instruments.

The Georgian instrument collection represents all three basic groups of instruments: string, wind and percussion and their varieties (string instruments: a) strummed - *chonguri* and *panduri*; b) bowed: *chianuri*; c) plucking - *changi*. Wind instruments: a) tongueless *salamuri*; b) tongued *salamuri*; c) panpipe; d) *gudastviri* (bagpipe) and its varieties.

If we consider the fact, that music instrumentaria of a number of countries is characterized by the priority of one or another instrument and it is a rare case that all three groups are represented on an equal level, furthermore, it is possible that not all types are represented (except for percussion), Georgian instruments provide a wide spectrum for instrumental interpretation.

When we talk about the application and development of instrumental music in Georgian musical culture, the point of departure is al-

ways Georgian polyphonic singing, the basic determinant of Georgian musical thinking and central cornerstone of Georgian musical art.

In Georgia, instrumental music is relatively modest as compared to that of song, but attention should be paid to increased instrumental activity in recent years. Here we have in mind the East Georgian mountain region, where traditional singing forms are being forgotten and mountain-style contemporary songs are introduced in the repertoire in abundance.

However, it should also be mentioned that Georgian instrumental music is distinguished in its high instrumental thinking and aesthetics. In previous works we made an effort to present instruments as bearers of Georgian musical thinking.

On the example of Georgian wind instruments, we witnessed how closely they kept step with the development of Georgian musical thinking, and how they gained an individual and unchangeable place and function in everyday life. We acknowledged the perfection of instrumental thinking reflected in Georgian wind instruments: the intonational implications of construction in panpipe and tongueless *salamuri*; and complex structure that unites all those primitive instrumental pieces for reed instruments such as the *gudastsviri*, that existed in Georgia since the times immemorial, coming from its far-reaching musical content and unlimited application in Georgian musical life.

In order to emphasize the general aesthetics of stringed instruments, we described all possible variants of application for the *panduri* and *chonguri*. Based on pieces with accompaniment of these instruments, we also tried to reveal both traditional and non-traditional forms of their application and to determine the norm and deviation in their interpretation.

A significant layer in Georgian instrumental music are bowed instruments, known under the name of *chianuri* and *chuniri*.

Chianuri is among the instruments that have elaborated a solid system of national peculiarities. These are *panduri*, *chonguri* and *changi* from string instruments, *larc-*

Ethnomusicology

hem-soinari, *salamuri* and *gudastsviri* from wind instruments.

The basic areas of prevalence for *chianuri* are Racha and Svaneti (Western Georgia) and Tusheti (Eastern Georgia). It is also documented in Khevsureti and other parts of east Georgian mountains, as well as in Imereti and Guria according to some sources. But Racha, Svaneti and Tusheti are the regions where *chianuri* was firmly grounded in local musical cultures.

Chianuri is a three-string instrument (two-string examples are also documented in Racha).

Let us say a few words about its construction and rules of its making. In his book *Basic Aspects from the History of Georgian Music* Ivane Javakhishvili cites the story told by Babuta Tsiklauri from the village of AmghF4: "The body of the *chianuri* is made of wood; this should be a part of an old bowl. The handle is fixed to the body and at the upper end it has *three wooden fingers*. Three horse-hair strings are stretched along the instrument. To make this instrument produce music, a bow is used; it is half-a-meter long and has horse-hair stretched like a bow (weapon. m.k.). To make the *chianuri's* strings make good sound, the instrument player has pine resin for the bow-strings. This is applied to the horse-hair on the bow, then the bow is pulled across the strings and the instrument makes sound."

The story is full of technological information and draws the general picture for making *chianuri* in other areas of its distribution as well. However, the constructional differences in the making the instrument in Svaneti, Racha and Tusheti should be taken into consideration; namely in Svaneti the body of a sieve is used with stretched skin of an animal on one side and with no skin on the other; in Racha the instrument has two strings; in Tusheti the body of *chianuri* is made of whole wood (like *panduri*) and has three strings.

It is doubtless that the difference in the structure is reflected in music too. The above-mentioned types of *chianuri* (Svan, Rachan and Tushetian) have clear schemes of their production, construction, place and fun-

ction in everyday life and, in the first place, of the music played on them.

If we carefully observe Georgian instrumental music repertoire, we will notice, that the implementation of *chianuri* is more regulated as compared to *panduri* and *chonguri*.

When demonstrating the possible variants of *panduri* and *chonguri* we noticed that it is possible to transfer the musical content of *panduri* to other instruments, even to those of non-Georgian origin such as mandolin and *balalaika*. This should be said mostly of Tusheti, where one and the same repertoire is willingly played on *panduri*, mandolin and *balalaika*.

As for *chonguri*, its virtuoso construction with its harmonious particular inclinations and priority of audible correction reflects the musical foundations of Western Georgia fairly well.

I would add, that in the repertoire of *panduri* and *chonguri* we often come across non-traditional musical examples too, which is practically excluded in the case of *chianuri*.

Chianuri is an instrument with specific timbre. The latter is the chief feature which unites all types of Georgian bowed instruments. It determines the musical content of the instrumental pieces for *chianuri* and like instruments.

The group of *chianuri*-like instruments is characterized by a definite timbre of tuning, so to say. From this viewpoint, the name of the instrument itself is remarkable; *chianuri* could be connected with the word for grief and sorrow *chiri*. In Eastern Georgia you will often hear that *chianuri* is an instrument to be played when grieving.

It is very difficult to define when *chianuri* was introduced as the name of an instrument. It should be taken into consideration, that in folk poetry we often come across the term *kamancha* (*kemanche*) meaning a bowed instrument; thus it can be presumed, that the bowed construction was first introduced to Georgia from Persia, and only when the instrument had undergone reconstruction according to Georgian tunings and established its place in Georgian music instrumentarium, it was given the name *chianuri*.



Chuniri and Chianuri

The oldest construction of Georgian bowed instruments is the Racha *chianuri*. It is used for song accompaniment, has two strings, tuned in a major third. It must be said, that the number of vocal performers for the songs to be accompanied by *chianuri* is limited. Usually, this number does not exceed two performers, and so three-part piece is created (*chianuri* duplicates the melody).

It is interesting to compare two variants of the song - one with purely vocal performance and the other vocal part accompanied by *chianuri*.

The vocal variant is performed by two groups of singers. It is a calm song of complex-type polyphony and full sound.

As for the variant with *chianuri* accompaniment, despite the fact that it looks simpler from the standpoint of the musical language, namely harmonious content and structure (bass drone, reasoning from this the complexity characteristic to the songs is masked) it is of no less interesting artistic values.

As far as the timbre of *chianuri* is full, in Racha the verse-songs to be sung with the accompaniment of *stviri* (a kind of bagpipe), are sometimes sung with the accompaniment of *chianuri* instead. This fact is explained by the timbral peculiarities of the instrument, which is in complete accordance with the timbre characteristics of the melody to be played on the *stviri*.

The Svan version of Georgian bowed instrument is a three-stringed *chuniri*, which is tuned in minor third (marginal strings are in unison).

Chuniri is usually used to accompany a song. However, it can be used for solo performance as well. In some examples the song is accompanied both by *chuniri* and *changi*.

Let us first discuss the solo performance on the *chuniri*. Unlike the Rachan *chianuri*, Svan *chuniri* is also a solo instrument.

In Svaneti, as well as in upper Samegrelo and Abkhazia, the ritual of catching the soul of a deceased has been known from the times immemorial.

When a person passes away in an accident or due to some other reason at a distance from his house, the mourners go to place of the accident with a wineskin, a rooster and an instrument. In their understanding the sound of the instrument will attract the soul, which should enter the wineskin. When the wineskin is "full", the rooster will crow, thus indicating that soul is caught. The top of the wineskin is tied and it is brought to the body of the deceased.

It is noteworthy, that a panpipe is used in this ritual in Samegrelo and Abkhazia. Let us recall the use of *gudastviri* (bagpipe) and bowed *chianuri* in Racha.

As for the cases when *chuniri* is used as an accompanying instrument, unlike Rachan examples, the number of performers is not limited here. On the contrary, the songs with *chuniri* accompaniment are fairly diverse from the standpoint of the number of performers. The musical substance of *chuniri* is three-voiced unlike Rachan *chianuri*. The songs performed with the *chuniri* accompaniment can be one-voiced (performed by a single performer), two-voiced (performed by two performers), and three-voiced (performed by a choir, sometimes by two choirs).

When *chuniri* accompanies a one- or two-voiced song, a similar correlation between the vocal part and the instrument is observed as in Rachan songs: this is one inseparable unity. The same cannot be said about the cases when *chuniri* accompanies choir performance; this is typical vigorous Svan

choral style, sometimes with the participation of two choirs, which is not at all documented in Racha.

We might think, that the use of *chuniri* in such cases is absolutely redundant, for the instrument may be drowned out. When listening carefully to the timbre and dynamics of the vocal-instrumental texture, we certainly feel the unique musical color presented in this way.

When speaking about the timbral dynamics of the *chuniri* and its interpretation, we cannot ignore one very important solution: the choir quits pronouncing text, instead humming in order to promote and feature the instrumental sound. At this time the roles are as if switched: *chuniri* becomes a speech, while the choir is only an accompaniment. The best example of this is the song *Lekhviash Mechi Dada* (recorded by Grigol Chkhikvadze's expedition in the village of Tskhumari, Svaneti, 1960; the song is preserved at the archive of the Georgian Folk Music Department at V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire).

As for the Tushetian *chianuri*, this province is considered one of the chief areas of distribution for Georgian bowed instruments. I visited Tusheti 10 years ago and must say without exaggeration, that instrument is the chief attribute of the local everyday life. One cannot find even a single musical example without instrumental participation among the huge material collected by us. In the life the Tushetians, the instrument is present not only at festive occasions (entertainment, feast and leisure), but also in the work process, religious festivals and celebrations. According to the representatives of the old generation, in old times the instrument also participated in rituals begging for or against rainy weather. Elderly ladies still remember, that on the funeral day they would play the *garmoni* (accordion) if the deceased was a young person, or the *panduri* and *chianuri* if the deceased was an old person (expedition by Ketevan Baiashvili, Tusheti, 1989; materials are preserved at the archive of the Georgian Folk Music Department at V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire).

According to Pavle Lagazidze, a *chianuri* player, there existed a mourning instru-

mental piece for *chianuri*; this was not played on the funeral day, but the following days. We should not forget to mention a Svan tradition, which very much reminds of the one still popular in Tsova Tusheti in near past: on the night before the funeral, a male relative would sit and in low voice sing a song in commemoration of the deceased and other relatives who had passed away.

The basic function of Georgian musical instruments - accompaniment to a song or a dance - is well-revealed in Tusheti. However, here we have documented a less common occurrence in Georgian folk-instrumental performance tradition: solo instrumental music. These are instrumental pieces of purely cyclic form, to be performed on *chianuri*, *panduri*, *balalaika* and *mandolin*. It should be noted that the pieces for *panduri* and *balalaika-mandolin* have more dance suite-like character and form.

As for *chianuri*, it truly holds a remarkable place on Tushetian musical folklore. Today it is used only for solo performance. The examples of instrumental pieces played on the *chianuri* from our expedition recordings should be regarded as solo instrumental compositions, which represent variant-compositional development of refrains. For instance, the cycle performed by Pavle Lagazidze consists of a) *Tushuri* (Tushetian), b) and c) *Saberikatso* (Elderly Man's), d) *Satsekvaio* (Dance Melody), e) *Shamilis Khma* (Shamil's Voice), f) *Samgzavro* (Travellers'), g) *Tsiplovana*, h) *Kalis Tirilis Khma* (Women's Weeping) . . .

At the end of each piece the so-called instrumental cadences or *dissonance throw*, bordering two separate pieces, draws attention; this is not characteristic of the oral professional instrumental folklore.

Tushetian *chianuri* is the best example of the tender attitude to an instrument. Traditionally, this instrument is always a property of a good instrumentalist. This kind of attitude contains the signs of true professionalism. It is noteworthy that there has never been a woman among *chianuri* players and that none of *chianuri* players has ever been a singer. The only musical "food: for these people - instrumentalists - is

chianuri, on which they brilliantly play beautiful Tushetian melodies which are rich in harmonious ornaments and are so peculiar to Tushetian polyphony. It must also be said, that this kind of instrumental music, distinguished in high professionalism, is the crown of Tushetian musical life, and it significantly exceeds its modern vocal interpretations.

Proceeding from the above-mentioned, it can be presumed, that *chianuri* is a clear expression of the perfection of instrumental thinking. *Chianuri* is the only bowed instrument in Georgia which represents traditional music and has clearly marked folk nature.

When comparing *chianuri* with *panduri* and *chonguri* - instruments with solid system of national peculiarities - we are ensured, that *chianuri* underwent the influx of "foreign", non-traditional musical performance elements (mass mixed choirs with duplicated voices, duplicated instrumental accompaniment, foreign and low quality melodies) to a lesser extent.

The group of Georgian bowed instruments is notably determined by a pure instrumental peculiarity - timbre, which contains elements of sorrow, age-wisdom, signs of ballad; this significantly draws it close to the world of wind instruments.

It is known, that wind instruments are used in the world's ancient animistic rituals. Participation of *chianuri* in the ritual for "catching" the soul of the deceased in Svaneti, indicates to the animistic interpretation of this instrument - one of the most ancient functions of wind instruments.

Chianuri's closeness with wind instruments is directly indicated by the fact, that the song-texts with *gudastviri* accompaniment are performed with *chianuri* accompaniment, in other words *gudastviri* is substituted by *chianuri*.

In the examples with instrumental accompaniment *chianuri* provokes remarkable personification. That is why, despite the medium-strong sound, *chianuri* and its sound grants unique coloring to the song even when it finds itself in powerful vocal surroundings (Svan two-group songs) and duplicates song melody.

Georgian Folk Groups

Ensemble *Basiani*

Ensemble *Basiani* holds a distinguished place among the performers of Georgian secular and sacred music. This is, undoubtedly, owing to the ensemble's original style.

Basiani is a name of one of the historical provinces in south-west Georgia. This part of the country is now modern Turkey, to the north-east of the town of Erzerum. In 1203 Georgian army fought a battle against Turks. Despite the huge size of the Seljuk army, the Georgians won a famous victory, and thus Georgia strengthened its positions in the Near East.

"In honor of Tamar of Georgia [Queen of the Kingdom of Georgia from 1184-1213, ed.] and in glory of the Georgian spirit we called our group *Basiani*. . . This name brings blessing to us, for Georgian song is a great responsibility, Georgian chant is ever greater," say the members of *Basiani*.

Most of the ensemble's members had their first encounter with Georgian folk song in their childhood, as part of their family tradition. Later they sang in children's folk ensembles of the so-called academic type (*Martve*, *Bichebi* and *Dariali*) and more recently they made up the core of the St. Trinity Cathedral Church Choir performing the medieval Orthodox chants. All this made for the ensemble's particular artistic worth, which is based on the proximity to the traditional performance manner.

St. Trinity Cathedral Church Choir was founded in 1998 with the benediction of Ilia II, the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia; it immediately gained the approval of both listeners and specialists. Kukuri Chokhoneidze wrote: "Georgian chant performance has been enriched by a talented and very



interesting collective with grand prospects". In 2000 the Catholicos-Patriarch gave his blessing to *Basiani* - the folk ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchy.

The artistic director of the ensemble is Giorgi Donadze, now a student of Choir-Conducting Department at Tbilisi State Conservatoire. His first ensemble *Berika*, created in 1996, won first prize at the children's festival *Okros Martve*. In 1999-2000 Donadze, together with Giorgi Ushikishvili, directed the ensemble *Lashari* of Georgian TV and Radio Corporation. Parallel to *Basiani*, Donadze is a precentor of St. Trinity Cathedral Church Choir together with Svimon Jangulashvili.

The members of *Basiani* are: Bezhan Meskhi (upper voice), Paata Tsetskhladze (upper and middle voices), Gela Donadze (middle voice and krimanchuli), Elizbar Khachidze (middle voice and krimanchuli, is studying to play the chiboni), Zura Mekvabishvili (bass), Giorgi Mekvabishvili (bass), Zurab Tskrialashvili (bass, plays the chonguri), Lasha Metreveli (bass), Giorgi Donadze (middle voice and bass, plays the chonguri and changi), Niko Gogoladze (middle voice, plays the doli, is studying to play the gudastviri), Luarsab Togonidze (upper voice), Sergo Urushadze (upper and middle voices, plays the chuniri and chonguri).

Among the members of *Basiani* at various times were Lekso Gremelashvili, Ilia Datuashvili, Zurab Datikashvili, Givi Bakuradze, Zurab Bakuradze, Akaki Kobiashvili, Beso Meparishvili, Pridon Mkervalishvili, Davit Tskhvediani, Zviad Bolkvadze, Giorgi Melikishvili, Mikheil Javakhishvili.

Several of *Basiani's* members are students of Choir-Conducting Department at Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Others are engaged in various fields outside music.

Basiani has performed serious work since its inception. The members of the group consider Georgian ethnomusicologists Anzor Erkomaishvili and Kukuri Chokhonelidze mentors and friends; Giorgi Donadze is especially grateful to Tinatin Zhvania for the improvement of the performance taste of the choir-members.

Together with the St. Trinity Cathedral Church Choir *Basiani* participates in all divine services and pilgrimages of the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia. Together with Ilia II they were in Greece, Cyprus, Russia (Moscow and St. Petersburg), The Netherlands, etc. In 2003 *Basiani* chanted in the liturgy held by the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria and Georgia in the monasteries of Cappadocia and *Tao-Klarjeti* (modern Turkey). In 2004 they chanted Georgian sacred hymns in the divine services at the Monastery of Great Lavra and Iviron Monastery on the Mount Athos.

In 2003 *Basiani* performed in a concert as part of the conference "Dialogues among Civilizations: Caucasus" held in Lithuania under the aegis of UNESCO. In 2006 the ensemble was on a concert tour in Switzerland and France. Apart from this *Basiani* successfully performed in Israel, Turkey, Iran and Ukraine.

The ensemble organizes annual concerts for Georgian listeners, and participates in various symposia and conferences.

The group's repertoire is continuously enriched by folk examples which they study

from Georgian folk song masters from various regions of the country. It must be said, that the music of West Georgia is most prevalent in their repertoire at the moment, but the masterly performance of Kartli-Kakhetian and Tushetian songs testifies to the fact that the young singers will succeed in performing folk treasury from east Georgian regions as well. Together with ceremonial-ritual examples, *Basiani* often sings Soviet and modern-period folklore. Their loyalty to mixed - male-female - performance deserves to be mentioned. The best example of this is that *Basiani* often sang together with Tinatin Zhvania at their concerts; the full and velvety timbre of Tinatin's voice added amazing charm to the ensemble's performance.

Precision and great responsibility, renewal of the repertoire, seeking lesser known folk examples, reviving old transcriptions and archival recordings, striving for mastery of folk instruments and folk dance movements - all this is the guarantee for *Basiani's* further success.

Basiani has already released three compact disks:

1. Georgian Folk Songs. *Basiani*. Folk Ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchy. Artistic Director: Giorgi Donadze. Sponsored by TBC Bank. Tbilisi, 2002

2. Concert Recordings. *Basiani*. Folk Ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchy. Artistic Director: Giorgi Donadze. Sponsored by the Prayer Union of the Georgian Patriarchy. Tbilisi, 2005

3. Georgian Folk Songs. *Basiani*. Folk Ensemble of the Georgian Patriarchy. Artistic Director: Giorgi Donadze. Sponsored by Tbilisi Municipality and Firm *Caparol*. Tbilisi, 2006

Nino Makharadze

Field Expeditions

Field Expedition in Surebi (Guria)

Anyone listening to Gurian polyphonic songs will wonder: what caused such a development of musical thinking among these people? It is very difficult to answer this question, but the interest to understand it again is so great that we arranged another expedition in Guria; this time we chose the Gurian mountains - the village of Surebi in Chokhatauri district. We are well aware that old connoisseurs of Georgian musical treasury pass away with time, but each expedition is full of hope to find something precious and interesting.

The expedition was organized on June 13-17, 2006, and included two employees of the Georgian Folk Music Department of Tbilisi State Conservatoire - Otar Kapanadze and Davit Shughliashvili. To our delight we were joined by Levan Ghlonti, a film director, and Orest Todua, a cameraman. They intended to film our expedition and use it for a short documentary. The youngest member of the expedition - 12 year-old Ivane Ghlonti, turned our journey into a cheerful one. Another advantage of our cinematographer friends was the use of Levan's jeep, which was indispensable.

In the village of Shua Surebi our hosts were Ramiz and Giorgi Ramishvili, a father and a son. They live in a very special spot - two kilometers walk uphill from the main road. Their house, which stands alone in the forest, has an amazing view of magnificently beautiful Gurian mountains.

We started seeking singers next morning with the help of our host Giorgi Ramishvili. First we visited 92-year-old Leo Berishvili.

The same evening we collected old Gurian songs from his neighbors, somewhat younger singers, at Leo's house. These were Ismail, Jemal and Badri Shatirishvili, and Guliver Trapaidze. Unfortunately another singer of Leo's generation Chachia (Mikheil) Trapaidze could not come due to illness.

Everybody looked delighted by our initiative. It turned out, they had not gathered to sing for years now. And this was obvious - they interrupted most of the songs in the middle due to the lack of singing together. We recorded 22 songs in this way - some fully, others in fragments. Together with old Gurian songs such as *Shvidkatsa*, *Nanina*, *Vakhtanguri*, *Shalva Chemo Sikharulo*, *Chven Mshvidoba* and others, these included the songs from the Soviet epoch such as *Lenin Oktombris Belado*, *Simghera Stalinze*, *Bakhmaro*, *Chvens poetebts Mtserlebsa*, etc.

They were displeased with themselves for their forgetfulness and lack of practice. But I remember the words that one of them said, from the bottom of his heart: "God bless you! It's been so long since we have sung in three voices together." And indeed, it was apparent that had they gathered systematically, they would recollect and revive many old songs. That day they aligned their efforts in a way, and agreed to meet again in the following day.



Leo and Bichiko Berishvili



Luba Kikvadze

Next day another singer Bichiko (Shota) Berishvili joined them, and this cheered everybody. They had long "argument" on tuning their voices, but in the end they agreed on an interpretation of a few songs - *Maqruli*, *Lale*, the lesser known ones *Aba Dzmebo Kvlav Shevavsot*, *Mapindzelsa* and others.

We asked them to recollect the famous work song *Surebis Naduri*, also called *Qanuri*. In the beginning they refused, but at our desperate request and after several attempts, where we joined the bass, the tunes of *Qanuri*, or to be more precise its reflection, was heard . . . Here we were obsessed by both joy and regret; we could watch the phantom of a magnificent treasury, the spirits of the ancestors, who created this marvelous music, and the part of whose life was this world-important riches. Our friends documented this on videotape.

We returned to Giorgi's house late that evening, and had a long talk on the past day at supper.

Next day we visited Bichiko Berishvili, who told us about various songs and traditions, sang with the *panduri* accompaniment, recollecting the round-dance song *Partsakuku*, etc. We recorded a mourning song from his neighbor Simona Dolidze.

After the visit at Bichiko's house we went to the village of Zemo Surebi to meet a wo-

man-singer of *krimanchuli*, Luba Chkuase-li-Kikvadze. We knew from the singers in Surebi how good she was at this.

We were heading to the highest village in Guria and each turn of the winding slope opened new colours and stunning views. Our Jeep drove almost impassable roads. Finally we reached Luba's beautiful wooden house. Once again we took pleasure in watching the vineyards and fields stretched on the slopes of the mountains.

Grandmother Luba welcomed us on the staircase with a cigarette in her hand and invited us into the house with her deep voice.

It did not take us long to induce her to sing. She brought a *panduri* and *chonguri* and performed a number of songs. Despite her deep voice she could easily take high notes too. She sang the part of *krimanchuli* in *Acharuli Maqruli*.

Very soon the neighbors Mitusha Kikvadze, Nanuli Ramishvili, Taniel Kekelidze, and Dusu (Ambrosi) Kikvadze, the village mayor, joined our gathering in singing. They had not sung for a long time either, but they recollecting various songs. We recorded *Simghera Datiko Shevardnadzeze*, *Madlobeli*, *Dzveleburu Mravalzhamieri*, *Tsutisoplis Stumrebi Vart*, *Maqruli*, *Nigozi* and others as performed by them. Grandmother Luba laid the table, and served delicious red wine from her cellar.

The impressions from our visit to Guria are indelible for each of us. I am sure that Ivane, the youngest member of our group, was filled with such strong the emotions that he will visit Guria again and again for years to come, and not alone, but together with his friends, in order to enjoy the beauty and open-hearted hospitality of this part of his motherland. But, here the rhetorical question arises as to whether they will still hear the songs we heard from these warm and affectionate old people.

Davit Shughliashvili

Even a Century Ago It Was Extremely Difficult to Find a Genuine Meskhetian Song Here

**Interview with master of
Meskhetian folk song
Shota Altunashvili**

Tinatín Zhvania and Ketevan Matiashvili:
- Batono Shota, please tell us about your artistic life.

Shota Altunashvili: - I was born in Tbilisi in 1933. After graduating from the choral conducting program at Tbilisi State Conservatoire in 1955, I was assigned to work in Akhaltsikhe (the regional center of Meskheti, a historical province of Georgia) where I still carry out my activities; I lead a folk choir. I have been to many Meskhetian villages and recorded many folk songs. Some of them I arranged myself. Many of them have been performed with their corresponding dances at exhibition-festivals of folk art.

Traditionally Meskhetian songs were always accompanied by dance - round dances. Even a century ago it was extremely difficult to find a genuine Meskhetian song here; now the situation is much worse. When we asked elderly Meskhetians to perform a simple Meskhetian song, they would respond by singing a Turkish or Armenian song. Only when we would sing part of *Mamli mukhasa* or *Otkhi tsqaro dis* would they say that they knew these very old songs. This would inspire them to remember other Meskhetian songs, which they would then sing for us. Sometimes we would even dance round dances together.

T.Z.,K.M.- Batono Shota, what can you say about the song *Gegutisa mindorzeda*?

S.A.- This is one of the most distinguished Meskhetian songs to be included in my



ensemble's repertoire. As it turns out there is a second village with the name Geguti near Kutaisi in western Georgia. This village is inhabited by people from Meskheti, but songs like this have not been preserved there. Shalva Mshvelidze recorded this song [editor's note: during his field expedition in Meskheti in the 1930]. Interestingly, the song begins in a low register continues in high tessitura.

T.Z.,K.M.- Which other song would you say is exceptional?

S.A. - I would say *Vardzioba dziobasa*. This song was sung on *Mariamoba* (Feast of the Virgin Mary) on August 28 at Vardzia Monastery. People from all over Georgia used to come to Vardzia to celebrate this day; they would sing, dance and have fun. Women and men, young and old would come barefoot. Many other songs from this part of Georgia were sung on this day by hosts and guests as well. But *Vardzioba dziobasa* was an obligatory ceremonial, ritual song. The feast would end with this song. My ensemble included various songs from this annual feast in its repertoire.

T.Z.,K.M.- Batono Shalva, did musical instruments also play a role in this celebration?

S.A. - Traditionally there have not been many instruments in Meskheti. I remember a bagpipe-*gudastviri*-which is called *chiponi* in Achara. I never played this instrument myself, but I remember seeing it. I

can't remember ever hearing anyone play dance melodies on it here . . . The *panduri* was not common in Meskheta. I don't remember seeing it myself, anyway. There were many instruments in the new system (editor's note: i.e., tuned chromatically) but not traditional ones.

T.Z.,K.M.- Can you recall how the *tulumi* (Meskhetian *chiponi*, *gudastviri*) was constructed, or the number of finger holes it had?

S.A. - Of course I do. It had seven finger holes, and one or sometimes two flutes. I remember someone singing a ballad about Erekle II. This was a song in narrative style which related stories of how the Turks invaded Georgia in those times. This song was accompanied by *gudastviri*.

T.Z.,K.M.- Instrumental music for *gudastviri* was in just one part?

S.A. - No, there were two voices in thirds, like playing two *salamuris* at the same time.

T.Z.,K.M.- Batono Shota, what can you say about three-part singing in Meskhetian musical folklore? We know that authentic three-part song-that is, that which has not been reconstructed-is a rare occurrence here.

S.A. - I agree with you. When we gathered the elderly and asked if they could sing a bass part, they reciprocated the question: "Do you mean *damjdari* [old name of the low voice]?" They could hardly recollect the motive. Of course we recorded everything. These songs have a very beautiful bass part.

Work and table songs were also common. This part of the country was under Turkish rule for 300 years. What could survive? When we asked the elderly to sing old songs for us, one of them answered: "Oh, son, we were hardly in the right frame of mind to sing in those hard times. In the morning we would pray to Christ, and in the evening we were forced to pray to Mohammad."

There are other interesting Meskhetian songs too, such as *Otkhi tsqaro dis* (Four

springs flow). When I recorded this song, the singers explained to me that the four corners of the world - north, south, east and west - are described metaphorically in the text. I think it might be the four Gospels that are referenced. This song survived in pieces, and we put the pieces back together. *Otkhi tsqaro dis* was usually sung after other songs, like *Mravalzhamier*.

Another common song was *Avtandil gadinadira*. This song is also famous in other parts of Georgia, mostly in Kartli and Kakheti. One version is even used in the opera *Abesalom da Eteri*. But in Meskheta this song has different rhythms and coloring than in the Kartli-Kakhetian version.

There were songs such as *Chitis nali mipovnia* that were sung at the feast table, and other comic songs . . . In Meskheta there were not as many sophisticated table songs as in Kartli-Kakheti. We searched for them but 85

T.Z.,K.M.- It seems that in Meskhetian songs rhythm is especially important. . .

S.A. - Yes, and rhythms are frequently syncopated. *Avtandil gadinadira* for example, is syncopated.

T.Z.,K.M.- What can you say about Meskhetian *Mravalzhamier*?

S.A. - That was introduced later in Meskheta . . . we sing it to the melody of *Otkhi tsqaro*.

T.Z.,K.M.- You said that most Meskhetian songs were traditionally accompanied by dance; what about the songs that you mentioned?

S.A. - All of them but *Otkhi tsqaro* were accompanied by dance.

T.Z.,K.M.- You directed choirs in many towns in Meskheta. Is there any difference in performance practice between Adigeni, Aspindza and Atsquri?

S.A. - There are many migrants in Meskheta from various parts of Georgia and from non-Georgian lands as well. In the villages of Ude and Arali I recorded the song *Samqrelo*. This is accompanied by a "three-story"

round dance. I was told that this used to be a reconnaissance song: a group of men would climb on the shoulders of other men that were already in a "two-story" circle to survey the area for signs of the enemy.

T.Z.,K.M.- Batono Shota, in your opinion as a connoisseur of Meskhetian song, what distinguishes Meskhetian song from the songs of other Georgian regions?

S.A. - Rhythmic syncopation. This is a characteristic feature. The fact that the second and third voice parts have been restored is also distinguishing. Of course this does not apply to the solo repertoire, for example cart and ploughing songs.

T.Z.,K.M.- What can you say about sacred hymns?

S.A. - When I was young I sang at *Sioni* Cathedral in Tbilisi. Later, in the 1970s when I moved to Akhaltsikhe, I came under serious pressure from the local commu-

nist party. Nevertheless, I managed to found a choir that chanted sacred hymns from the *Karbelashvilis'* collection I brought from Tbilisi.



T.Z.,K.M.- Who was the choir director then? Was it common to have mixed, male-female choirs at that time?

S.A. - That was in 1953-1955. The director of the choir in Tbilisi was my teacher, Giorgi Khakhnashvili. Later he turned the leadership over to me. At that time men

and women would sing in separate choirs in the church; this was the whole beauty of the performance.

T.Z.,K.M.- Batono Shota, thank you very much for the interesting conversation.

Interview by Tinatin Zhvania and Ketevan Matiashvili

Prepared for publication by Nino Naneishvili

Georgian Folk Song - New Transcription

*transcribed by
Malkhaz Erkvanidze*

აღიღო
Alilo
Christmas song

$\text{♩} = 120$

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves: a vocal line in the treble clef, a piano accompaniment in the treble clef, and a bass line in the bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 120. The lyrics 'ა - ლ - ი - ლ - ი - ბო' are written under the piano staff, and 'აღი - ბო' are written under the vocal staff.

The second system continues the musical score with three staves. The lyrics 'აღი - ბო - ბო - ბო - ბო' are under the piano staff, and 'ღმე - რბო - ღა' are under the vocal staff. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern.

The third system continues the musical score with three staves. The lyrics 'გა - გი - თე - ნოს და' are under the piano staff, and 'ა - ლ - ი - ბო - ბო - ბო' are under the vocal staff. The piano accompaniment continues with eighth notes.

The fourth system concludes the musical score with three staves. The lyrics 'ა - ლ - ი - ბო - ბო - ბო' are under the piano staff, and 'და - ა - ლ - ი - ბო - ბო - ბო' are under the vocal staff. The piano accompaniment continues with eighth notes.

შობის ხალხისადმი
მადლობა ამ დღეს
მეგობრებს / ან თქვენს სიკვდილებს

Shoba-akhal tselitsadi
Ocdakhutsa am tvesa
Inebos ghmertma / ak tkqvni sikockhle