

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

Tbilisi, December, 2021

№31

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## Ethnomusicological Life in Georgia (July-December, 2021)

### *Festivals, Conferences, Competitions, etc.*

As part of the Folklore State Center Festival “Folk Evenings”, folk ensembles held concerts in different regions of Georgia:

3.07.2021 – Ensemble Chveneburebi in Oni;

11.07.2021 – Ensemble Anchiskhati in the village of Nikozi, Gori district;

17.07.2021 – Ensemble Didgori in the village of Chanieti, Ozurgeti district;

18.07.2021 – Ensemble Anchiskhati in the village of Martkopi, Gardabani district;

18.07.2021 – Ensemble Didgori in the village of Shemokmedi, Ozurgeti district;

19.07.2021 – Gurian family ensembles at Ozurgeti Folklore Center;

20.07.2021 – Tbilisi family ensembles at the Georgian Folklore State Center;

21.07.2021 – Ensembles Odoia and Naduri in the village of Chunesi, Tskaltubo district;

22.07.2021 – Ensembles Musikeli and Amagleba in the village of Khidistavi, Chokhatauri district;

24.07.2021 – Ensembles Patara Kakhi and Dziriani in the village of Artana, Telavi district;

25.07.2021 – Ensemble Sakhioba in Tsalka;

29.07.2021 – Ensembles Amaghleba and Musikeli in the village of Nokalakevi, Senaki district;

2.08.2021 – Ensembles Odoia and Naduri in ethno village Sisatura located in the village of Chkhorla, Zugdidi district;

3.08.2021 – Ensemble Sakhioba in Abastumani;

10.08.2021 – Ensemble Gorda and the Turmanidze family in the village of Merisi, Keda district;

23.10.2021 – Ensemble Adilei in the village of Zemo Surebi, Chokhatauri district;

24.10.2021 – Ensembles Adilei and Shemokmedi in the village of Chochkhati, Lanchkhuti district;

29.10.2021 – The closing concert of “Folk Evenings” at the Folklore State Center

16.07.2021, 18.07.2021; 23.07.2021-25.07.2021 – Open-air “Art-Geni” Folk festival at the Ethnographic Museum.

24.07.2021-22.11.2021 – Competition for family ensembles organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazeti.

31.07.2021 – Closing concert of the “Art-Geni” Festival on Lake Pantiani.

4.11.2021-6.11.2021 – Giorgi Garakanidze 16<sup>th</sup> International Festival of Folk and Church Music in Batumi.

4-11.11.2021 – Tbilisi 11<sup>th</sup> International Festival of Choral Music.

4.11.2021 – Ethnomusicologist Baia Zhuzhunadze delivered a paper at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the ICTM Study Group on Historical Sources.

10.11-8.12.2021 – The 7<sup>th</sup> “Baroque Festival” in Tbilisi.

16.11.2021 – Georgian Chanting Foundation awarded the winners of Artem Erkomaishvili Competition of Georgian Chanters and Researchers for 2021.

19-26.12.2021 – 24<sup>th</sup> International Festival “New Year Music Meetings” at the Grand Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

### *Lectures, Meetings, Master classes, Presentations, etc.*

11.07.2021 – German-Georgian music master class by Professor Manfred Bründl of the University of Music Weimar and Zaza Miminoshvili a Georgian guitarist and composer in the courtyard of the Folklore Center, with the support of German Ministry of Foreign Affairs

30.07.2021 – Ethnomusicologist Gia Baghashvili’s lecture “The Cradle of Wine and Polyphony” at Chokhatauri Center of Culture.

5.11.2021 – Presentation of ensemble Margalit’s audio album at the Folklore State Center.

15.11.2021 – Zurab Tskrialashvili’s public lecture “Forms of Polyphony in Georgian Traditional

Singing and Chanting” as part of the Tbilisi Baroque Festival.

15.11.2021-17.11.2021 – Master classes in Abkhazian dance by the dancers and choreographers of Abkhazian ensemble Sharatin at the hall of the Folklore State Center.

18.11.2021 – Presentation of the audio albums of ensembles Dideba and Eroba at Kazbegi Municipality Center of Culture.

6.12.2021 – Presentation of ensemble Chveneburebi’s audio album at Liberty Theater Tbilisi.

14.12.2021 – Presentation of ensemble Dziriani’s audio album at the hall of the Folklore Center.

15.12.2021-16.12.2021 – Nino Naneishvili’s master classes in Budapest.

23.12.2021 – The evening dedicated to Zakaria Paliashvili’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and presentation of the second edition of his collection “Georgian Chants. The Liturgy of John Chrysostom” at the Grand Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire within the framework of the festival “New Year Musical Meetings”

21.12.2021 – Presentation of Grigol Chkhikvadze’s and Valerian Maghradze’s archival sound recordings at the Recital Hall of Tbilisi State Conservatoire

***Concerts, Evenings, Exhibitions, Anniversaries, etc.***

1.07.2021 – Ensemble Ialoni’s solo concert in Borjomi for the students of Tbilisi School of Political Studies.

4.07.2021 – An event dedicated to Jumber Dundua’s 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Ozurgeti Theater.

13.07.2021 – An evening of poetry and music “Voices and Words” at the Folklore State Center of Georgia.

25.07.2021 – Pilimon Koridze’s commemoration event "Pilimonologia" in Ozurgeti

25.07.2021 – A concert dedicated to Pilimonoba in the village of Vardisubani.

27.07.2021 – Ensemble Sakhioba’s solo concert in Dmanisi.

19.09.2021 – Ensemble Ialoni’s video concert of urban music.

Ensemble Didgori’s solo concerts in Samegrelo:

13.10.2021 – Khobi

14.10.2021 – Tsalenjikha

14.10. 2021 – Zugdidi

15.10.2021 – Chkhorotsku

16.10.2021 – Abasha

16.10.2021 – Poti

17.10.2021 – Martvili

17.10.2021 – Senaki

Concerts of State Folk Song and Dance Ensemble Erisioni in different regions of Georgia:

14.10.2021 – Ozurgeti

16.10.2021 – Mestia

20.10.2021 – Akhaltsikhe

22.10.2021 – Kutaisi

24.10.2021 – Zugdidi

17.01.2021 – Ensemble Margaliti’s solo concerts in the village of Tserovani

2.11.2021 – Ensemble Shavnabada’s solo concert on the territory of Rukhi Fortress.

10.11.2021 – Anniversary evening of Candid Merlani, the choreographer of ensemble Riho, at the Tbilisi Opera and Ballet Theater.

13.11.2021 – International Day of the Blind was celebrated at the Folklore State Center of Georgian, with the participation of folk ensembles.

29.11.2021 – Concert of Khoni and Kaspi choir-master’s schools at the Folklore State Center of Georgia

3.12.2021 – Ensemble Ialoni’s evening of Georgian traditional and urban music at the Folklore State Center.

8.12.2021 – The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary evening of famous Georgian dancer Pridon Sulaberidze at Tbilisi Opera and Ballet Theater.

10.12.2021 – A jubilee solo concert dedicated to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ensemble Basiani at the Recital Hall of Rustaveli Theater.

15.12.2021 – A concert in honor of the Polish delegation at Ozurgeti Folklore Center.

16.12.2021 – An online concert dedicated to the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shalva Aslanishvili and 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Manana Andriadze at Tbilisi State Conservatoire

17-18.12.2021 – Concerts of ensemble Rustavi at Tbilisi Concert Hall.

20.12.2021 – Evening of folk poetry “Verse, you won’t be lost!” at Vaso Abashidze Theater

23.12.2021 – Evening in memory of Zurab Bakuradze, soloist of ensemble Kartuli khmebi, at Vakhtang Salaridze Concert Hall.

25.12.2021 – Solo concert of ensemble Basiani, dedicated to the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enthronement of Ilia II the Catholicos-Patriarch of Georgia at the hall of the Folklore State Center

26-28.12.2021 – Abkhazian State Academic Ensemble of Song and Dance Abkhazia presented the premiere of a new program “Choreonikon” at Shota Rustaveli Drama Theater.

### ***Expeditions***

28.07.2021-11.08.2021 – Expedition of the Folklore Center to Upper Svaneti.

3.09.2021-6.09.2021 – Members of ensemble Ialoni were on expedition to Upper Svaneti.

10.10.2021-12.10.2021 – Expedition of the Folklore Center to Lower Svaneti.

Mariam Dumbadze, a student of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Church Chanting, was on expedition to the villages of Ozurgeti district:

1.08.2021 – Ozurgeti

2.08.2021 – Makvaneti

8.08.2021; 12.08.2021 – Tskhemliskhidi

23.09.2021 – Likhauri

Maia Gelashvili, Head of Music Department at Ozurgeti Folklore Center, was on expedition to:

1.08.2021 –Khashuri

4.09.2021 –Zestaponi

28.09.2021 –Lanchkhuti

6.10.2021 – Chanieti

24.11.2021 –Shemokmedi

Lika Liparteliani, a student of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Church Chanting, was on expedition to the villages of Lower and Upper Svaneti:

24.07.2021; 28.07.2021 – Lentekhi

25.07.2021-26.07.2021 – Kheledi

05.08.2021 – Rtskhmeluri

06.08.2021 – Sasa

07.08.2021 – Zhakhunderi

13.08.2021; 15.08.2021 – Lentekhi

21.08.2021-23.08.2021;25.08.2021 – Ushguli

26.08.2021 – Latali.

### ***Concert Tours***

3.07.2021-9.07.2021 – the tour of ensemble Amagleba of Chokhatauri Municipality in the city of Lezajsk, Poland.

11-19.08.2021 – Ensemble Adilei’s solo concerts within the framework of the European concert tour: in Innsbruck (Austria), the cities of Langhirano and Gorizia (Italy).

22.08.2021 – Ensemble Rustavi participated in the International Art Festival in Sion, Switzerland.

2.10.2021-31.10.2021 – Ensemble Rustavi’s tour in Ukraine

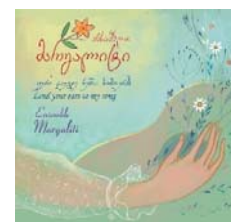
### ***Publications***

Audio albums were released by the ensembles:

Ialoni - “Urban Songs”



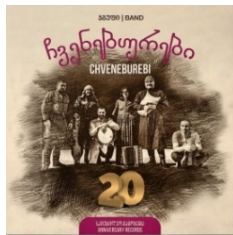
Margaliti - first audio album



the first audio albums of the ensembles  
Eroba and Didebai (Kazbegi municipality)



Chveneburebi - 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary audio album



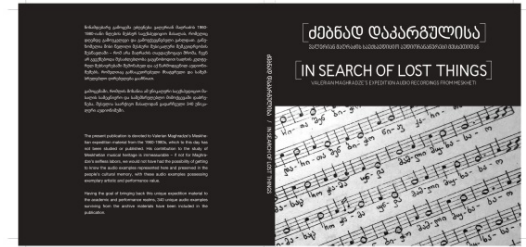
Dziriani – 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary audio album



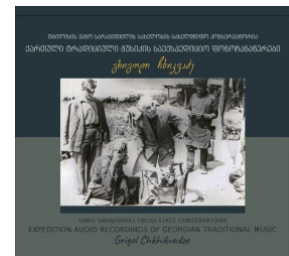
the first audio album of the  
children's folk ensemble Binuli



*Publications of Tbilisi State Conservatoire:*  
“Valerian Maghradze’s Expedition  
Audio Recordings from Meskheti”



Grigol Chkhikvadze’s expedition recordings of  
Georgian traditional music



Manana Andriadze's book  
“Genres of Chants and the Tradition of Neumation  
According to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Georgian Manu-  
scripts”



***Publication of Tbilisi State Conservatoire and the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia***  
 Zakaria Paliashvili “Georgian Chants. The Liturgy of John Chrysostom” (second edition)



***Publication of Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film Georgia State University and Gurjaani municipality***  
 The monograph “Levan Mughalashvili”

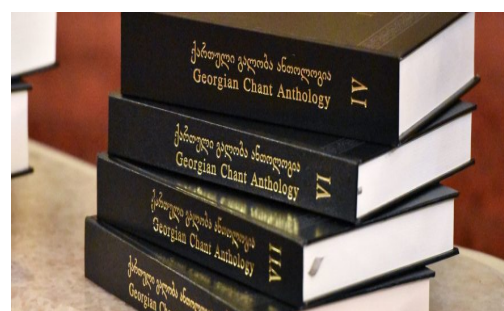


***Publication of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of the Autonomous Republic of Achara***  
 “Folk Audio Recordings – Archive of Radio Achara”



***Publications of the Folklore State Centre of Georgia***

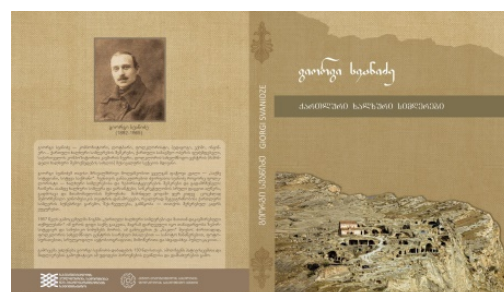
Volumes XVIII-XXI of the anthology of Georgian chanting



***Publications of Georgian Chanting Foundation***  
 Collection of Lechkhumian folk music

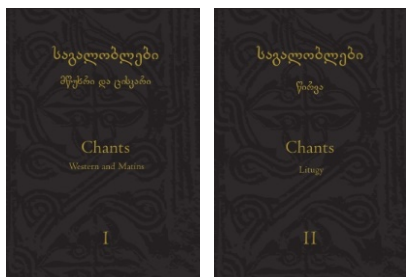


“Giorgi Svanidze - Kartlian Folk Songs”



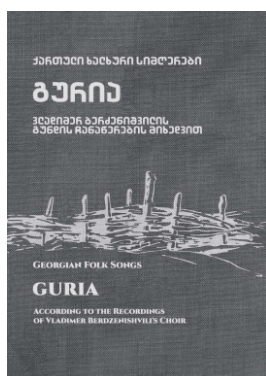


The two-volume collection for practical chanting entitled “Chants”, containing the chants necessary for today’s liturgical practice, compiled from volumes I, V, XII-XXI of the Anthology of Georgian Chanting



***The state ensemble Basiani published***

Music collection of Gurian songs: “Georgian folk songs. Guria. According to the recordings of Vladimir Berdzenishvili’s choir (1935-1937)”



*Prepared by* **Sopiko Kotrikadze**

**In Memory of Lia Salakaya**

*In 2021, Georgian Music Society, ecclesiastical and choral circles suffered a great loss. Lia Salakaya, everyone’s beloved person, a choirmaster, to who all referred as teacher Lia, passed away. For decades she, a musician by profession, choir conductor, tirelessly worked to disseminate Georgian chanting. Here is a recollection by Tamar Tolordava, about the merited choirmaster.*



**Lia Salakaya**

I met Lia Salakaya in the late 1980s, in the time when national movement was gaining strength in Georgia, and everything national acquired great importance. It is not accidental that the awakening of Georgian, traditional chanting coincides with this period. The melodies dormant in musical notations during a century came to life at Anchiskhati and Jvaris mama churches. Lia Salakaya, a chanter having 10-11 years of experience at the time, with absolute readiness and self-sacrifice got involved in the revival of Georgian chanting; and tirelessly served it for the rest of her life, literally five decades. She taught all the interested, big and small, women and men, musicians and amateurs, sick and healthy, even prisoners. She went everywhere and to everyone, offering kindness, love and consolation; chanting helped her find the way to the hearts of people. The groups for teaching

children Georgian chanting, created on her initiative, eventually turned into a parish school at Sioni Church. There is no place, a town or a village in Georgia's highland or lowland regions, where Lia did not teach chanting and preach love. And this was a real work for public good, as she raised generations of Georgian chanters and singers during the last decades. Her students are active in all regions of Georgia, including Samachablo, Abkhazia and Hereti (Saingilo).

Lia Salakaya without regret gave everything she had; she lived in the building of the parish school, worked from dawn to dusk and always smiled until the last day. Her enormous personal charm, sharp mind, sense of humor, wisdom, manner of faith-saturated narration, attracted people, changed their worldview and left a deep imprint on their consciousness. Relation with Lia, was happiness that continues in us even after her passing.

In 2014, for her contribution to the promotion of Georgian chanting, Georgian Chanting Foundation awarded Lia Salakaya the status "Beneficent of Georgian Chanting", In 2019, Ilia II the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, awarded her the Order of St. George – the highest award of the Georgian Church, for her special contribution to the revival of church chanting and folk singing in Georgia. For me personally, it was a great honor to be Lia Salakaya's friend, stand by her side, make, together with her my small contribution to the great thing such as serving Georgian traditional chanting. Lia Salakaya was the assistant and leader of a huge army of chanters during her lifetime, she will forever remain our guardian and protector.

**Tamar Tolordava**

*Singer- chanter, a teacher at Giorgi Mtatsmindeli  
Higher Educational Institution of Ecclesiastical  
Chant and Parish school*

*Here are some excerpts from the posts on Lia Salakaya's passing in social media.*

Lia was one of the first to reasonably agree with the restoration of canonical chanting and immediately got involved in its dissemination. She promoted chanting all over Georgia and sowed great love everywhere.

**Malkhaz Erkvanidze**

*Ethnomusicologist*

Lia made everyone fall in love with medieval church music, the perception of which, for various reasons, was initially difficult for everyone. She lived for people, for chanting, for Georgian music, for the church, she lived for her motherland, for the universe, she lived for the God...

**Svimon Jangulashvili**

*Ethnomusicologist*

In one sentence I can only say that he was a saint walking among us. Just as Lia Salakaya served Georgian chanting, youth, motherland and Christianity, I do not know if there are any like her in our times... Lia Salakaya will inherit a place in paradise and now I pray to her for our souls and our motherland.

**Nikoloz Rachveli**

*Composer, conductor and pianist*

I called her Nena (in Gurian way). His Holiness invited us to the repast, I was sitting next to her, the Patriarch made a toast: "There are people who serve the God, there are people who serve their nation and there are people who serve their motherland. I want to drink a toast to Lia, who does all the three, she serves the God, her nation and motherland!" I held my breath, at the moment I did realize how big my Nena was! Her eyes filled with tears and she kissed the hand of His Holiness.

**Vakhtang Vashakmadze**

*A member of ensemble Shemokmedi*



## *Georgian Ethnomusicologists*

### **Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze**

In 2021 Georgian ethnomusicology suffered a great loss. Nino Kalandadze, one of the leading researchers of Georgian folk music of all times, passed away on 6 September; her scientific, pedagogical, performing, public merits have forever been established in Georgian culture as a treasure of high value.

Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze was born in Lanchkhuti district on 12 July, 1957. She finished Tbilisi music school #1 in 1976, where she became seriously interested in Georgian folk music, thanks to Mindia Jordania – renowned folklorist and teacher.

In 1983, Nino graduated from Tbilisi State Conservatoire as a musician-folklorist. Here, her scientific supervisor was Evsevi (Kukuri) Chokhanelidze, Head of Georgian Folk Music Department. To his care expended on her, Nino responded with annual anniversary edition dedicated to Chokhanelidze, where she, as usual, appeared as editor

During her years at the Conservatoire and after graduation Nino actively participated in field expeditions together with Edisher Garakanidze, most often with Joseph Jordania, as well as with other friends and colleagues. Later she herself led similar expeditions as an expert of the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony of the Conservatoire and as head of the ethnomusicological research group at Ilia State University.

In 1986, Nino started working as a research assistant at Georgian Folk Music Department of the Conservatoire and, at the same time, as a methodologist at the House of Georgian Folk Art (now the Folklore State Center). Despite all the difficulties, Nino Kalandadze selflessly devoted her talent and energy to the study and popularization of Georgian folk music; participated in various

events as a specialist, teacher, organizer, which eventually led to her formation as a professional ethnomusicologist.



**Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze**

In 1988, Kalandadze and her fellow colleagues created women's folk ensemble Mzetamze, which aimed at reviving Georgian traditional female folklore and fulfilled this mission with great success. It should be noted that before that Nino Kalandadze was a member of the conservatoire women's choir directed by Shalva Mosidze. Her experience played an important role in this landmark undertaking of Georgian folklore. During 35 years, together with Mzetamze Nino Kalandadze performed female repertoire in Georgia and many countries of the world (GB, France, Italy, Holland, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Basque Country, Corsica, Slovenia, Russia, Belgium, Finland...), where, parallel to concerts, she held workshops and delivered lectures on Georgian folk music.

At various times Nino Kalandadze, worked as a professor and teacher, at Batumi State Conservatory, the State Institute of Culture (now Theater University), at Guram Ramishvili Author School #6, where she also directed girls' group of folk ensemble Georgika; was a folk-music teacher at the children's studio of Chokhanelidze sisters and a consultant for Acharan women's ensemble Aidio.



women's folk ensemble Mzetamze

Along with her pedagogical activity, Nino Kalandadze was a researcher at the Museum of Folk Song and Instruments, a researcher at Comprehensive Folklore Research Laboratory of Ekvtime Takaishvili University of Culture and Arts, Music expert at the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the National Center for Examinations, a trainer of the Teacher Professional Development Center (module "Georgian Music"), a consultant of the encyclopedia "Georgia", a member of the Creative Union of Georgian Composers and Musicologists.

In 2009 Nino Kalandadze defended her doctoral dissertation "Georgian Nana: Issues of Genre, Semantics and Articulation", and since 2011 she has been an associate professor at Ilia State University, here she led 7 lecture and practical courses on Georgian traditional music. She was scientific supervisor of several doctoral theses, regularly held public lectures. Nino also delivered public lectures at Giorgi Mtatsmindeli Chanting University, the Museum of Folk Song and Instruments, and the Conservatoire; for her students she systematically arranged meetings with folk ensembles; organized musical events (including the Festival of Kakhetian Song in 2014); created an electronic database of Georgian folk music examples, in connection with which she had extensive experience at the conservatoire. Along with her work at Ilia State University, Kalandadze continued to

work as a specialist at the Department of Ethnomusicology of Tbilisi State Conservatoire, organized and updated old recordings, systematized and cataloged them, participated in editorial and coordination activities...

Nino Kalandadze participated in many local and international conferences and symposia, she is the author of over 40 scientific works, including music collections and books. In 2015, her monograph "Hommo-Polyphonicus – Polikarpe Khubulava" was recognized the best musicological work of the year by the Ministry of Culture. Also significant is her merit as an editor of various books, collections, magazines, websites, audio albums. It can be said that Nino Kalandadze has no equal in Georgian ethnomusicology for the work done in this direction. Nino assiduously provided assistance to anyone who needed her competence as a consultant, editor, expert.

Nino unhesitatingly provided assistance to anyone who needed her competence as a consultant, editor, expert. In addition, thanks to her virtuous nature, working with Nino was very comfortable for everyone. Especially fruitful was her cooperation with Anzor Erkomaishvili. It can be said that in popular scientific publications Nino was Anzor's right hand. Unfortunately, Nino did not live to see the publication of the fundamental work on Georgian folk music – a grand project prepared under her editorship and Anzor Erkomaishvili's direction.

The sphere of Nino Kalandadze's scientific interests was multifaceted: lullabies and songs for a son's birth (exemplary editions of music-scientific collections of this content), generally, Georgian women's and children's folklore, issues of the relation between poetic and musical text, articulation features of vocal speech, examples on funeral theme, ethnographic environment of Georgian folk music, historical overview of Georgian choir-masters' activities (Rema Shelegia, Varlam Simoniashvili, Polikarpe Khubulava, Dzuku Lolua and

others), folk music of the Caucasus (the book “Traditional Music in Georgian-Abkhazian Dialogue”), etc.



**Nino Kalandadze-Makharadze and Anzor Erkomaishvili in Guria expedition, 2020**

But all the work that Nino Kalandadze, as an ethnomusicologist, conducted for her country, Georgian folk music, students or colleagues, was overshadowed by her character and amazing ability to communicate with people. Nino was the embodiment of a cultured, humane person; no one can remember a harsh word from her, although not infrequently she was an unjust victim. She was an exceptionally loving and caring mother, daughter, wife and grandmother. She showed remarkable tactfulness towards young generation; any of her colleagues enjoyed working with her – because of her complaisance, tireless support, ability to listen to and understand others’ opinion. That’s why her passing left a large, unfilled void for her friends and colleagues.

With her life and activity, Nino Kalandadze is a bright page of Georgian folk music and ethnomusicology. I will not hesitate saying that she was “a citizen of the heaven and an angel of the earth.”

**Tamaz Gabisonia**  
*Ethnomusicologist,*  
*Associate Professor of Ilia State University*

## ***One New Ensemble***

### **Ensemble Margaliti**

*On 5 October, 2020, the hall of the Folklore State Center hosted presentation of the first audio album of women's ensemble Margaliti. This was one of the first events in live format during the pandemic in almost two years, so it was full of interest and emotion... Especially since the ensemble Margaliti was created only a few months ago and this was its debut. One of its members, Mariam Zarnadze, tells in more detail about the ensemble’s creative life.*



**Ensemble Margaliti**

Ensemble Margaliti (lit. pearl) was created in 2020. This was the year of important decisions, changes, new musical beginnings in our creative life. The members of the ensemble have 9-10 years of experience in singing together. We have performed for the audience with an unchanged membership for many years. The goal is invariable - to serve the most important sphere of Georgian culture for as long and better as possible, to give a new life and people’s love to old folk or church examples, neglected for many years and which are awaited on the stage. We want as many people as possible to love, appreciate and share Georgian folk art both in Georgia and elsewhere.

We think that the name of the ensemble ‘pearl’ perfectly describes our feelings, attitudes,



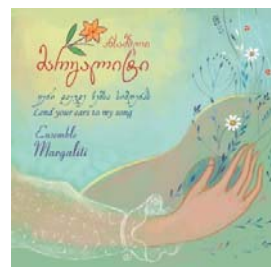
relations with the examples that we work on for days, weeks to revive them and create variants close to the original. All of this is amazing and invaluable to us, our musical examples – original pearls, created by our ancestors with their thoughts, feelings, under the influence of time and circumstances, are the carriers of emotions, sadness or joy. For us Margaliti is epochs, change of generations, history, the synthesis of personal freedom and depth.

Artistic director of the ensemble is Natia Bedenashvili. First of all, Natia is the symbol of the collective's unity, strength and freedom of thought. Main issue in the formation of the ensemble was to choose a leader and assign this status to one of us. Natia is the example of justness and professionalism for the entire group. She has the skills and knowledge that have taken the ensemble to an even higher level of performance technique, each member of the ensemble feels equality and significance, that the unity of each of them forms the ensemble. Main responsibility of the artistic director is to select the repertoire, arrange it, distribute the songs and, if necessary, share musical knowledge with each member.

The ensemble is diverse and interesting in this regard as well. The youngest members of the ensemble are 22-23 years old, the older generation is 36-37. Most of the members have musical education, we also have members without musical education. Age and professional differences lead to a multifaceted approach to important issues, judgment, decision. Our ensemble has an organizational structure, we have departments in which the ensemble members are distributed and everyone has personal responsibility to the collective. By idealizing all this, we best keep up with modern trends, try to present ourselves to the listener with the most interesting foreign visual effects or repertoire, and participate in all kinds of exciting activities that help to represent our culture at a high level.

Our repertoire comprises urban and rural folklore, composers' pieces, hymns. Considering the ensemble's musical education, performance technique and readiness, we are planning other interesting experiments as well. We select folk repertoire mainly from archival recordings, there are collections of hymns, composers' pieces, we try to acquire our own hue.

Ecclesiastical chanting is one of the most precious and important for us. Not so long ago, the tradition of chanting canonical hymns was restored in the churches. As you know, our great chanters have left us enormous material, some of which has been transcribed and some are awaiting to be published. We consider it our direct duty to chant and popularize hymns. Chanting should be restored in the churches in the form and spirit they were created. Some of our members regularly chant in the church. For the entire ensemble's activity in this field, we want to introduce the tradition of joint antiphonal chanting during church services at certain intervals.



**The first audio album of the ensemble Margaliti**

Every member of the ensemble loves Georgian songs and music, at the time when we were taking our first steps in this field, we quite wisely chose this direction. We still invariably continue our creative activity, musical direction is the same, but the ways of approaching, mastering, performing each example have significantly increased, which is reflected in every song we perform.

Margaliti was created during the pandemic. It is a hindering factor for the ensemble, it makes us face fairly difficult conditions and challenges.

Margaliti has more resources, ideas, plans than one can see, and we are implementing. With the help of the educational-research Centre of Ecclesiastical chant at the Patriarchate of Georgia, we managed to record our first CD album. We have also won two competitions announced by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth of Georgia, in the framework of which we bought instruments and visited the Tserovani IDP settlement with a solo concert. With the help of the Folklore State Center, we officially presented ourselves to the audience as ensemble Margaliti and held the presentation of our first CD.

The presentation of our first CD is unforgettable. More than a year later, we went on stage for the first time. Naturally there was anxiety, fear of the stage, of how the listener would receive us, how well we would deliver our message and singing to the audience, how professionals would evaluate our repertoire and quality of performance. At the presentation, we presented the samples of urban folklore and composer works. The result exceeded all expectations, we could not believe what was happening in the hall or online space in those minutes. Unbelievable and unforgettable emotions reigned in the hall at that moment, people cried with joy, love, longing ... The online concert had about 4,000 views, a record for our industry. The online concert had about 4000 views, which is a record in our field. Positive estimates of Mr. Giorgi Donadze and readiness that the ensemble will have maximum support fills us with joy and responsibility.

Currently we are working on Christmas repertoire and hope to make Christmas and New Year's eve even more beautiful for our Georgia. Regarding the long-term plans, we want wider community to have access to information, access, professional and amateur touch with the pearls of our culture, we plan to revive songs with the accompaniment of rare instruments, and also forgotten round-dance examples.

## The 16<sup>th</sup> International Festival of Folk and Church Music in Batumi

On 4-6 November, 2021 Batumi University of Arts hosted the 16<sup>th</sup> Giorgi Garakanidze International Festival of Folk and Church Music, and Scientific Conference.

The festival was founded in 2005, since 2012, it has been named after Giorgi Garakanidze, an ethnomusicologist and head of the ethnomusic theater “Mtiebi”. The festival is held annually and is aimed at preservation and promotion of traditional cultural heritage.



Poster of the Batumi Festival

The festival, traditionally, comprised scientific sessions and concerts. The conference on the problems of folk and church music was held on November 5, 6, and was accompanied by the evening concerts of folk and church music.

Last year the 15<sup>th</sup> festival was held online, on the Zoom platform, this year the participants were allowed to meet directly and hold the festival in live format, naturally, in full compliance with the regulations specific to the epidemiological situation. Thus, the 16<sup>th</sup> International Festival traditionally hosted ethnomusicologists and choirs from different countries in Batumi.

Among the Conference participants were: Abdullah Akat, Gamze Tanrıvermiş, Uğur Aslan and Songül Karahasanoğlu from Turkey; Anita Wojcinowicz (Poland); Zane Šmite (Latvia); Loreta

Sungalliene (Lietuva); and Georgian ethnomusicologists: Tamaz Gabisonia, Tamar Chkhaidze, nun Nino Samkharadze, Ekaterine Oniani, Nana Valishvili, Thea Kasaburi, Sopiko Kotrikadze and Maia Gelashvili. The conference program was full of diverse interesting topics.

Traditionally, the framework of the festival included representation of films. This year these were: "Voices of the Ancestors" (creative group: Susan Thompson, Holy Taylor, Phil Thompson, Magda Kevlishvili, Tamar Vepkhvadze), "Batonebi" (directed by Ana Japaridze), and "Mystery" (directed by David Lynx-Potskhishvili).

All three evenings of the festival were dedicated to the concerts of Georgian and foreign traditional ensembles. It should be noted that of the Georgian ensembles priority was given to regional collectives. Such as: ensemble Musikeli from Senaki, trio Shemokmedi and Andghuladze family ensemble from Ozurgeti, ensemble Chona from Kutaisi. Among foreign folk groups were: folk ensemble *Suitu dudenieki un Suitu sievas* from Latvia and Telshay Drama Theater the Rosary of Colorful Buttons from Lithuania.

The annual Batumi Festival has already become a part of the life of many Georgian and foreign musicologists and performers. Participation in it is interesting, useful and nice. This is, first of all, the merit of Khatuna Managadze, the inspirer and organizer of the festival, associate professor of Batumi University of Arts, who, with the support of the Batumi City Hall, manages to hold the event at a high professional level every year, despite many difficulties.

**Maia Gelashvili**  
*Ethnomusicologist,*  
*participant of the festival*

## *One Foreign Ensemble*

### **Suiti Cultural Space and Specific Type of Drone or Burdon Singing of Suiti Women in Latvia**

Suiti is a small (2500 inhabitants) catholic community (currently consisting of three villages - Alsunga, Jūrkalne and Gudenieki) in Lutheran western part of Latvia, which, because of the religion difference, are sometimes referred to as a Catholic island. In this religious isolation a distinct identity has survived throughout centuries. The formation history of the formation of Suiti culture goes back to the events of the 17th century.



**Suite procession during a religious holiday**

The Suiti cultural space is characterized by a number of distinct features, including vocal drone (Burdon) singing performed by Suiti women, wedding traditions, colourful traditional costumes, the Suiti language, local cuisine, religious traditions, celebrations of the annual cycle, and a remarkable number of folk songs, dances and melodies recorded in this community. Older forms of extended family structures are still common here, and such families, where the transfer of skills from generation to generation takes place, are important bastions of Suiti cultural heritage. The Suiti people are very proud of their distinct identity and character.



Since 2009 Suiti Cultural Space is included in UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

Historically, in the Suiti community two different types of singing were practised. The men generally were singing so called long songs with several thematically related couplets. It did not matter, whether the song was composed by a known author or it was a folk song.

Women, on the other hand, were singing in the manner of the vocal drone, which men were not. Singing generally was more a female domain. They were singing a lot, and their songs could be about any imaginable topic, usually created on site, while performing – according to current circumstances. This singing of ritual teasing verses are called *apdziedāšanās* (singing against each other). Many different bourdon polyphonic melodies with variations have the history of Suiti culture goes back to the events of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The Suiti cultural space is characterized by a number of distinct features, including vocal drone (Burdon) singing performed by Suiti women, wedding traditions, colourful traditional costumes, the Suiti language, local cuisine, religious traditions, celebrations of the annual cycle, and a remarkable number of folk songs, dances and melodies recorded in this community. Older forms of extended family structures are still common here, and such families, where the transmission of skills from generation to generation takes place, are important bastions of Suiti cultural heritage. The Suiti people are very proud of their distinct identity and character.

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whether the song was composed by a known author or was a folk example.

Women, on the other hand, sang in the manner of vocal drone, unlike men. Singing, generally, was more a female domain. They sang much, and their songs could be about any imaginable topic, usually created on the site, while performing – according to current circumstances. This singing of ritual teasing verses is called *apdziedāšanās* (singing against each other). Many different bourdon polyphonic melodies with variations have been recorded in the Suiti region.



Suiti ethnographic ensemble

To perform a female vocal drone song, usually several women are needed. The first (lead) singer starts out alone singing (or rather reciting) the first two lines. Then she stops and another singer repeats the same text with the same or different melody once again, while the rest of the group perform the long eeeooo (in some songs – only eeeee) drone sound. Usually the end of the song is completed by all the singers on one note (except for more complex polyphonic variants). Then the whole process starts all over again with the next two lines. Sometimes the first singer was also helping in the repeating part. Good lead singers were highly respected in the community and they were often invited to wedding parties, even if they were not relatives of the newlyweds.

“In a recited song the main thing is the word. There is no such thing as an unsingable text. The melody of a recited song, or drone song, as Suiti call it, consists of four or, less commonly, five tones; in addition, these four/ five tones only serve as raw material from which to build the words/ text. The melody attentively responds to the stress and emphasis of the words, highlighting the main idea of the text. It is therefore difficult to find an appropriate text for a recited song’s melody if it is only written down in musical notation.”

Such singing style at first glance may seem boring and monotonous. But it is not. As the actual performance combines melody, text and also some action, such as movements, facial expressions, gestures, etc. Altogether over 52 thousand folk songs (including variations) have been recorded in the Suiti community.

Nowadays the Suiti have established various ethnographic ensembles who perform in concerts, at various festivals and also are available to anyone who wishes to have their wedding ceremonies enriched with these traditions. The wedding ceremonies of the Suiti are a symbol of the local identity of this region.

Another unique element of Suiti culture is bagpipe playing, which has been preserved in this region of Latvia the longest.

The most popular and oldest of Suiti ethnographic ensembles is the wife's ensemble in Alsunga – “Suitu sievas” (“The Suiti wives”), founded in 1955, which actively preserves and promotes the Suiti musical heritage both in Latvia and abroad.

*More information about Suiti Cultural Space:*

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/suiti-cultural-space-00314>

[www.suitunovads.lv](http://www.suitunovads.lv)

[www.suiti.lv](http://www.suiti.lv)

### **Māra Rozentāle**

*Project Coordinator of NGOs “Suiti Cultural Heritage” and “Ethnic Culture Centre “Suiti””, singer and musician of Suiti folk groups*

## **Ensemble Elesa from Achara**

*Male folk ensemble Elesa at Keda Municipality Center of Cultural seeks for, restores and revives Acharan folk songs. The name of the ensemble is connected with Gurian-Acharan labor song Elesa. Irakli Sirabidze director of Elesa tells about the ensemble’s goals and principles of work:*

**S.K.** – When was Elesa created?

**I.S.** – Elesa was created by late Taniel Mamaladze, who directed the group over years. In 2021, Elesa celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, however, it should be noted that creation of the ensemble started much earlier. In 1987, before the concert tour in Estonia, Taniel Mamaladze selected eight men from the mixed female-male choir at Keda House of Culture. This membership can be considered the predecessor of today’s Elesa. This name was given to the group later, in 1996-97.



**Irakli Sirabidze**

I, personally, have been in the ensemble since 2003. Initially I was a regular member. Following the reorganization at the Centre of Culture in 2007, the Centre’s administration assigned me to lead the group. At first I did not even think of being a choirmaster, I only helped the ensemble

with technical issues. Later, I decided to revive Acharan folk songs. At the time, the ensemble, directed by Tariel Mamaladze, had a fairly extensive repertoire of songs from different parts of Georgia. Then Tariel told me that, if I wanted, I could work on reviving Acharan songs with the young membership. Young Elesa first performed the updated repertoire for the wide audience at Batumi Festival of folk and Church Music in 2008. We were a total of six young members then. Today, most of the ensemble are young people.

**S.K.** – Who are the members of the ensemble and what do they do?

**I.S.** – The members of Elesa are of different professions: we have a lawyer, a foreign language specialist, a historian, etc. Some are actively involved in farming. None of us have musical education. Currently Elesa counts 14 members: Mindia Beridze, Mamuka Surmanidze, Ruslan Kontselidze, Badri Turmanidze, Zaza Gogitidze, Zviad Gorgadze, Ramaz Gorgiladze, Giorgi Partenadze, Irakli Sirabidze, Murad Sharadze, Nodar Gorgadze, Rostom Beridze, Nodar Kakhidze, Giga Turmanidze.

**S.K.** – What is Elesas repertoire and from what sources do you learn songs?

**I.S.** – 80 percent of the ensemble's repertoire has been taken from old recordings. We revived several songs from sheet music as there were no audio recordings. These were old and interesting variants of songs from Upper Achara. In general, it should be said that we have audio recordings of Acharan songs from the 1930s recorded by Shalva Mshvelidze, Tamar Mamaladze, Vladimer Akhobadze and some unknown recorders. We have also learned old Acharan songs from the archives of the Acharan Radio. These are old recordings that we are focused on and have already released three audio albums. I would especially like to highlight the third album recorded together with ensemble Moqvare, which serves educational purposes; and which, among others in-

cludes the examples recorded by Peter Gold in 1969.

Naturally, in addition to Acharan songs, our repertoire includes about 70 examples from different parts of Georgia: Imereti, Samegrelo, Guria, Kakheti, Svaneti ... These songs were arranged in the ensemble, at different times by Tariel Mamaladze – the founder and choir master of Elesa. We also have a few examples of urban songs.

**S.K.** – Please tell about the working process on the songs

**I.S.** – Later we started learning songs independently from the recordings. At first I gave old recordings to each member of the ensemble. Having listened on our own, we got together and analyzed new songs. Listening to the old recording, you already know who will sing this or that voice-part. When you know the capabilities, timbre and performance manner of your ensemble members, the potential of the ensemble as a whole, it is not difficult at all.

It should be noted that old recordings are often quite difficult to understand. In such cases, the ensemble members also help me to figure out the songs. I would especially like to single out Mamuka Surmanidze, who regularly listens to old recordings. We also pay special attention to the lyrics. We do our best not to change the verses and sing them as they are in the recordings.

**S.K.** – How free are you in terms of performance manner?

**I.S.** – Let me tell you that everyday life of each ensemble member is a part of Acharan life mode – they are “ordinary” guys. They have daily relations with village, villagers... It can be said that they fully represent their region.

Therefore, there is no need for special work on performance manner with them. The performance manner of Elesa members is free and natural. I do not limit them in terms of performance and give maximum freedom. If a song allows for improvisation, we do not avoid this either.

**S.K.** – How active is Elesa’s creative life?

**I.S.** – First of all, I would like to note that Elesa has released three audio albums. We think this is a big achievement for a municipal ensemble. In addition, I would like to express gratitude to all the people and organizations who saw our work and appreciated it. This can be said about the Folklore State Center of Georgia, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of the Autonomous Republic of Achara, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth of Georgia, etc. We are holders of state prizes in folklore: laureates of Tsinandali Prize, winners of the National Folklore Festival (third place), the Georgian Chanting Foundation awarded us a special prize for our contribution in the revival of traditional song in Achara. These three awards are really special for our ensemble.



**Ensemble Elesa**

In addition, we regularly participate in various festivals and concerts: festival ArtGeni, the symposia of traditional polyphony, Batumi festival of folk and church music ... We have held a number of concerts in Tbilisi and Batumi; of them I would like to especially note presentation of our audio album at the Folklore State Center of Georgia. We have also performed in different countries: Turkey, Ukraine, Latvia, Poland, Estonia, Cyprus, etc.

**S.K.** – What are your plans for future?

**I.S.** – Sadly, the pandemic has hindered us no less than the whole world. For two years, we have

practically not offered anything new to our listeners. As an exception, I would like to note the *live concert* within the framework of the project “Folk Evenings” of the Museum of Georgian Folk Song and Instruments of the Arts Palace, which was held at Keda Centre of Culture.

As for future plans, we plan learning archival materials of Acharan Radio. As far as we know, the work to publish these materials is currently underway. We hope to be able to offer some new Acharan songs to our listeners at the presentation of the project and then we will think about releasing the fourth album.

**S.K.** – We wish you success!

*Interviewed by*  
**Sopiko Kotrikadze**

### *One New Publication*

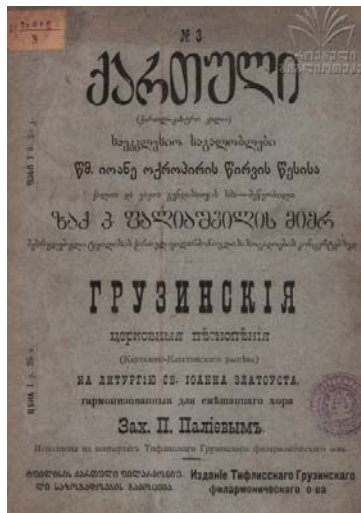
#### **Zakaria Paliashvili.** **“Georgian Chants.** **The Liturgy of John Chrysostom”**

Tbilisi State Conservatoire and the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia dedicated an important edition to the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of great Georgian composer Zakaria Paliashvili. This is the second, expanded edition of the 1909 music collection “Georgian (Kartli-Kakhetian Mode) Church Hymns of St. John Chrysostom Liturgy adjusted for a female-male choir by Zakaria Paliashvili.”

More than a century separates us from the first publication of the chants of John Chrysostom liturgy, arranged by the composer. In Paliashvili's version, the three-part Georgian chant is adapted for a mixed female-male choir. At the same time, the composer himself indicated the possibility of returning the hymns to three-part variants, which was implemented in the new publishing project.



The second edition of “Georgian Chants” includes the author’s versions of the chants for a large mixed choir and their three-part variants.



The first edition of the book, 1909

The transcriptions are preceded by Paliashvili’s foreword from the first edition and new letters with research content in Georgian and English. The appendix presents English translation of the chant texts.

The publication is enclosed with an audio CD of the selected chants performed by the Conservatoire student choir, ensemble Anchiskhati, and Kashueti church choir.

The publication was prepared by the editorial board consisting of Nana Sharikadze, Giorgi Kekelidze, Davit Shugliashvili (music editor), Marina Kavtaradze (editor), Rusudan Tsurtssumia (author of the foreword), Ketevan Bakradze (project coordinator); Manana Tabidze (literary editor), Eiric Halvorson (translator). Digital version of the musical text: Levan Veshapidze and Giorgi Bagrationi; Maka Tsomaya designer of the edition and CD. Sound engineers: Pavle Kvachadze and Giorgi Gvarjaladze.

Three-part variants of the chants were recorded in “Leno Records”.

Presentation of the new edition took place on 23 December, in the Grand Hall of the Conservatoire, at the evening dedicated to Zakaria Paliashvili’ 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, held as part of the traditional international festival, “New Year Musical Meetings”.



The second edition of the book with CD

The evening saw the first performance of Z. Paliashvili's Mass. It should be noted that this example of the genre is the first and only one in Georgian professional music and was first published this year by Z. Paliashvili Museum and Tbilisi State Conservatoire. The Mass was performed by the Conservatoire student choir led and conducted by Liana Chonishvili; soloists: Natia Ivaniashvili (soprano), Nino Chikovani (mezzo soprano), Shota Kutidze (tenor), Akaki Gugushvili (baritone). Organ: Lia Baidoshvili.

Ensemble Anchiskhati and Kashueti Church choir performed the selected chants from “St. John Chrysostom Liturgy”.

The foyer of the hall hosted photo exhibition - Zakaria Paliashvili 150.

**Davit Shugliashvili**

*Ethnomusicologist, Musical editor  
of the 2<sup>nd</sup> second publication*

## *Beneficents of Georgian Chants*

### **Karbelashvili Brothers**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as Georgia was subsumed into the cultural and political arena of the expanding Russian Empire, various traditional art forms began to be forgotten amidst increasing urbanization, social upheaval, and, in some cases, direct suppression. One of the most fragile of these indigenous art forms was Georgian ecclesiastical chant, the practice of singing the service texts of the Orthodox Church in three-voiced polyphony. The knowledge of these chants relied upon rigorous multi-year training with master chanters in various centers throughout Georgia, but as seminaries and other institutions became increasingly Russified in the early nineteenth century, these processes of oral transmission were broken. By the later part of the nineteenth century, only a few rural singing families such as the Karbelashvili family maintained knowledge of the more complex chant systems for the entire calendar year including the *heirmoi* for the celebratory feast days such as Nativity and Pascha.

The Karbelashvili family are the most famous of the chanters that transmitted their oral tradition of polyphonic chant into written music notation at the end of the nineteenth century. The system of eastern Georgian chant preserved by the Karbelashvili brothers has direct links with the great wealth of scholastic knowledge kept by the monks of Svetitskhoveli cathedral, where Petre of Karbela (1754-1848) studied chant in the mid-eighteenth century. Of Petre's descendents, Grigol (1812-1880) had five sons to whom he imparted his father's chant repertory: of these Polievktos and Vasil were particularly active in promoting traditional chant through their public activism on issues of Church independence and knowledge of chant, as well as their prolific published and un-

published letters, historical treatises, and collections of notation.

Together with their three brothers Pilimon, Andria, and Petre, and other students of their father, they were successful in preserving the East Georgian chant repertory, especially the published chants for Matins-Vespers (1898), and the Divine Liturgy (1899). In 2005, the Anchiskhati Church Choir republished selections of these chants, allowing choirs around the country to renew this repertory for the first time in over a century. Hundreds of pages of additional unpublished Karbelashvili transcriptions survive in state archives, despite Soviet suppression of the performance of this music, and have only been comprehensively edited and published in recent years as part of the Georgian Chant Anthology project.



**Karbelashvili brothers and friends (1885)**

The music preserved by the Karbelashvili family is particularly beloved by the Georgian public. Various arrangements popularized by famous singing choirs such as the Rustavi Ensemble have become informal national anthems, such as the theotokion commonly sung at weddings, *Shen khar venakhi* (you are the vineyard). The Karbelashvili archives reveal that there were several variants of this hymn (and many others), as the oral tradition permitted and even encouraged improvisation and ornamentation of the fundamental melodic lines. These have recently been published in a separate publication called *Shen khar venakhi*.





Theotokion chant, *shen khar venakhi*. Vasil Karbelashvili publication "Mtsukhri," 1898.

The chants throughout Georgia share a fundamental melodic line, sung by the top voice part, and transmitted for centuries by master chanters. The musical differences between various regional styles occurs most noticeably in the ways that these melodic lines are harmonized into three-voices (by adding two lower voice parts), and particularly in the ornamentation practices employed by singers in each region. The East Georgian chant preserved in the Karbelashvili sources shows simple and consistent bass harmonization of the melody with intervals of a fifth or octave at important moments. The ends of phrases are almost always harmonized with a lower fifth in medial cadences and in a unison for the final cadence. The bass voice is only rarely ornamented, perhaps a connection to the predominance of bass drones in the folk polyphony of Eastern Georgia. Meanwhile, the middle voice may be extraordinarily ornamented, much more so than in the chant styles of West Georgia. In its basic form, the middle voice parallels the melody at the interval of a third below. But in the sources of Vasil Karbelashvili, in particular, we discover the possibilities for ornamenting this basic parallelism with the addition of complex passages of upper-lower neighbor note groupings, which allow also for more complex chord structures (see Figure 2).

The family suffered during the Soviet period. Brothers Andria and Petre were murdered in

1924 by state officials, for no apparent reason except that they wore priests robes, and the two sons of Vasil were murdered in the purges of 1937. The five sons of Grigol Karbelashvili were all named saints of the Georgian Orthodox Church, by decision of the Holy Synod on December 20th, 2011, for their "unselfish and exemplary activity" on behalf of Church arts. Their feast day is celebrated on September 6th.

To read more about the remarkable legacy of this singing family see: [www.GeorgianChant.org/karbelashvili-history/](http://www.GeorgianChant.org/karbelashvili-history/) as well as items from the selected bibliography below:

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**John A. Graham**

*PhD, an independent scholar*

## Acharan Dances

In 1958-1960, Batumi Scientific-Research Institute organized folk-music expeditions to the regions of Achara, during which about 150 songs (with variants) and up to 20 dance tunes were recorded.

Along with recording dance music, it became necessary to describe folk dances – “Khorumi” (“Khuroni”), “Gadakhveuli khorumi”, “Chamorebuli”, “Gandagana”, Laz mass dance (“Lazepesh okhoronu”), as well as old ritual dances “Ohoi nano” and “Padiko” (“Patiko”).

As it is known, “Khorumi” and “Gandagana” have long been established as classical dances in Georgian choreographic art. Therefore, before discussing the issue itself, let us briefly touch upon the peculiarities of Acharan folk dances. Acharan choreographic art comprises the examples of martial, satirical, labor and domestic genres which are performed to the accompaniment of instruments (*doli*, *chiboni*, etc.) or songs; and also ancient ritual dances.



Khorumi

“Khorumi”, which is encountered as different variants in almost all districts of Achara, segues into “Gadakhveuli khorumi” (mainly in

Kobuleti, Batumi and Keda districts), and the latter – into “Chamorebuli”, which is similar to “Davluri” and is mainly performed by one person or two. This is an interesting sequential choreographic expression of the battle with enemy and a victory-celebration at the end.

In our opinion, today’s “Gandagana” or “Gandagan” is a combination of ancient dances of various function and character, which has taken the best classical form today. It is currently known outside our country as well. First part of “Gandagana” was performed at a celebration, wedding, in the work process, by a woman and man, or only by women (during thread spinning), which often ended only with a song (“Nani da Nano”, “Khertlis nadi” and other songs of this type) and predominantly was of lyrical-satirical character. This is a pair dance, and in this it resembles “Kartuli”. The second, accelerated part of “Gandagana” is, on the one hand, a highly temperamental, male dance (“Mkharuli”) and in this respect it can be compared, for example, with “Mtiuluri”. But in this part of “Gandagana” there are other elements as well, by which it differs from the previous part in performance technique, body movements, facial expressions and humorous character. The accelerated part of “Gandagana” was performed only by men. We do not consider female performance of this part expedient, as, in our opinion, it does not correspond to the function assigned to a woman in Georgian dances.

“Gandagana” is distinguished in the variety of performance in the districts (Khulo, Shuakhevi, Keda) of Acharis tsqali Gorge, often depending on the performer’s mastery. In some places it is sometimes called “Mkharuli”, because it has peculiar rhythmic movement of shoulders and arms; elsewhere it is encountered under other names. “Gandagana” is characterized by moving sidewise and performing movements by feet (mostly right foot), which distinguishes it from other Georgian dances. But this does not mean that the other foot

is dormant in the process. While dancing, the dancer's body rests on the other leg and the movements back and forth or making a circle mainly depend on the other, "inactive" leg. All the afore-mentioned suggests that "Gandagana" complex contains the components of ancient, highly complicated dances, some of which also have the imprint of ancient pagan, cult-ritual dances and it reflects the respect for the cult of fertility, thereby increasing the significance of this dance for the history of Georgian culture.

As for "Padiko" (Patiko), it is one of the ancient spectacles, with ritual function, similar to "Berikaoba", widely spread in different parts of Georgia, which resembles the games associated with the cult of Dionysus and Demeter.

Interestingly, the mass dance "Ohoy nano", encountered in Khulo district, finds an analogue in Laz dance, where the lead dancer uses "Vahahai" instead of "Ohoi" as a refrain, the dance group responds *Nano*. "Ohoy Nano" and "Vahahai Nano" are definitely different in terms of performance, but with good observation, we can see that both are varieties of the same dance, and convey working process. This is also evidenced by the refrain in Chan. In Laz dance, first the leader says and then the chorus repeats in the following order: *vahahai nano – vahahai asho mokhtit* (come here), *vahahai dingish kele* (to the wicker threshing board), *vahahai mani-mani* (hurry, hurry) and so on. In Chan language *dingi* means a part of a threshing board, which flails the grain. Saying these words in such a sequence by the leader and collective while dancing may be the oldest form of depicting the labor process through dance: "Let's hurry to the threshing board" and so on. The same happens in Acharan "Ohoy nano", where the leader leads the dancers to the destination, beating them with a stick, and accompanying this process with exclamations. Other layers can also be found in these dances; as well as in Acharan and Laz Khorumi, in addition to having combat nature

these dances reflect the ritual associated with the cult of the fertility deity. The same can be said of the Laz dance "Lazepesh okhorunu", which resembles Khorumi, but in addition to the combat nature, the activities of fishermen and boatmen can also be seen in it.



Gandagana

In connection with Acharan dances, our attention is drawn to the terms *sama* and *khorumi*. *Sama* (hence the verb forms: *samobs*, *isama*, *isamebs*) is a general term denoting dance in Acharan dialect. For example: "There was *sama* (lit. dance) at the wedding" or *Khorumi isama* (lit. he danced Khorumi), *Gandaganas samobs* (lit. he dances Gandagana), etc. It is known that in the past *sama* was frequently used along with *tsekva* (dance) in Georgian language, currently it is well preserved in Acharan dialect. Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani interprets *rokva* as follows: "*Sama*, *tsekva* and like". On the basis of Acharan material, it is even more interesting to associate *sama* with famous dance "Samaia".

As for the term *khorumi*, it came into use in the 1930s. Before that, *khoroni* was used in Achara. When collecting the material, the attention was drawn to *okhoroni* in Chan language, which here implies not one of the dances, but dance in general, just like *sama* in Acharan dialect. Here we do not touch upon the origin of *khor* – the root of the term. However, Svan *lakhori*, the same as *lalkhori* (assembly),

Chan-Megrelian *okhori*, Megrelian *khorga*, Acharan *khoragi* are the terms expressing certain social unity, similar to many other words with *khoroni* and *khor* as the root, which mostly denote a group of people or objects, quantity in general, encountered in Kartvelian languages from ancient times. As for the advantage of the term *khoroni* over *khorumi*, it should be explained by the Megrelian-Chan suffix "on", which corresponds to the Georgian suffix "ian".

Thus, in common Georgian choreographic culture, Acharan dances are interesting in their variety and content, therefore they deserve an in-depth study.

Processed by **Maka Khardziani**

*from the book:*

*A. Inaishvili, J. Noghaidei, Gr. Chkhivadze*  
*"Materials from Acharan Folk Music".*  
*Tbilisi, 1961*

## Oriental Instruments in Georgia

Muslim migration to Georgia in the 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, was followed by the introduction of Ashugh tradition, which gave rise to the so-called "Eastern branch" of Georgian urban folk music and oriental-style monodic singing. At the same time, non-Georgian instruments were also widely disseminated. Along with the songs of the Eastern branch, *tar*, *saz*, *kemenche*, *zurna*, *duduk*, *garmoni*, barrel organ became very popular ...

Especially popular were *saz*, *tar*, *kemanche*, *zurna* and *duduk* introduced from Persia. Over the centuries, these instruments gained a foothold in Georgia, particularly in Tbilisi, and were especially popular among ashug-poets. However, over time they underwent certain changes in the Georgian environment.

*Saz* and *tar* are ancient oriental folk string instruments. (For information see Bulletin # 29 and # 30).

*Kemanche* is a three-string folk musical instrument introduced from Persia. It is mentioned in Georgian written sources in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In his work, Teimuraz I mentions *kemanche* among the instruments at the king's feast.



**Kemanche**

*Kemanche* is widely spread in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Near and Middle East countries. It can have two, three or four strings. It is noteworthy, that four-string *kemanche* spread in Georgia was designed by Alexander (Sasha) Ohanezashvili, a famous musician – *chuniri* player. Its body has the shape of a coconut, the sounding board is made of snake or fish skin; The neck is of a long piece of wood. When played the instrument rests on the performer's knee or on the floor. *Kemanche* is used in solo, ensemble and orchestra performances.

*Zurna*, according to Ivane Javakhishvili, was one of the most popular oriental instruments in our country from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In Georgia, it is mainly made of apricot or walnut tree. Zurna has 7-8 finger holes on the front, and one finger hole on the back. The pipe has a wider end. Each finger hole of zurna has its name. Zurna was a necessary participant in everyday rituals – weddings, engagements and public holidays – wrestling, Qeenoba, Berikaoba. Due to harsh sound, zurna is mostly played outdoors. It is widespread



throughout the Caucasus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, also in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and other countries of the East.

*Duduki*, unlike *zurna*, has a gentle, soft sound. It is mainly made of apricot tree, also mulberry tree and boxwood. The instrument consists of a pipe, lid and regulator. The pipe has eight finger holes on the front and one finger hole on the back. A flat reed double tube is inserted into the pipe. The sound scale of *duduki* is diatonic. This instrument is mainly used in urban folk music. *Duduki*, as a solo instrument, was often heard at parties. It necessarily accompanied celebrations, games, weddings.



Duduki

Ensemble of wind instruments – *dasta* – comprised of two *zurnas* or two *dudukis* and one *doli* was introduced to Georgia from the East in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. First *zurna* (or *duduki*) player – *usta* or master – played the melody, the second *zurna* (or *duduki*) player – *damkashi* – followed with sustained bass. *Doli* player sang along with playing. The repertoire of *dasta* was mainly comprised of every-day, lyrical-love, entertaining and dance music.

*Dasta* accompanied the pastimes of the craftsmen and Georgian aristocracy. Its repertoire was developed and enriched in Tbilisi. *Dasta* became particularly popular in the 1930s, when singer Anna Vardiashvili added a third *duduki* to the traditional *duduki* duet. From then on, she started performing three-part Georgian songs on

*duduki* and gained great popularity. Thus *duduki* was “Georgianized”.



Zurna

In Tbilisi (and everywhere where the tradition of the *dasta* was common) the beginning of wedding – coming of the “king” (groom) was celebrated by playing the *zurna*. At night, during the wedding party, *zurna* was no longer played, but in the morning “Dilis saari” was to be definitely performed. Bringing the dowry to the bride’s new family was accompanied by playing a special melody “Sakortsilo” (wedding) on *zurna*. Participation of instrumentalists in the wedding is also confirmed by Jean Chardin.

On the second day of the wedding in some villages of Tbilisi and Shida Kartli (Tskhinvali and Liakhvi gorge), *dasta* was a necessary participant to accompany the procession of the groom and his men to the grave of ancestors with playing special melody “Samgzavro” (travellers), to which the “mepe” (groom) was supposed to dance. Sometimes wrestling was arranged. Dance and wrestling melodies had to be performed at this time. On the way back, the dance tune was performed again. Sometimes they arranged wrestling. Dance and wrestling melodies were performed at this time. On the way back, dance tune was played again. *Dasta* was also present in the rituals associated with the cult of deceased. In Tbilisi, it was common to invite *dasta* (mostly *zurna* players) to the memorial service, to perform special repertoire for

this occasion. According to Chardin “what they sang for the deceased, was never sung at the party, each occasion had its own songs”. After interring the corpse, they would play special funeral melody – masrapi.

Hence in Georgian reality, under the influence of urban folklore, the aforementioned oriental instruments became “Tbilisian”, thus distancing from their original form. In this regard, poet-academician Ioseb Grishashvili rightly noted: “*Duduki* may be Arabic, but today it has so strongly been transformed into Tbilisian that it hardly has anything Arabic... not a single Arab today considers the Tbilisi *duduki* as his own, he certainly regards it as alien.

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### ***One Traditional Ritual***

#### **Tanghiloba Celebration in Svaneti**

The church of Tanghili Archangel Michael is located in the village of Lakhushdi, Latali community. It was constructed in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, its mural painting dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Tanghiloba (*litnaghil* in Svan) is celebrated twice a year. Besides, the rituals were performed as part of a larger cycle of celebration to pray to the Archangel Michael church of Tanghili, or *Tanghi mkem taringzel*. Ethnographic sources confirm that, in Svaneti, every day of the week is related to the name of this or that saint. Monday is the day of the Archangel Michael, or *Mkem taringzel*. According to famous Georgian ethnologist, Vera Bardavelidze, on Monday of the week between Christmas and New Year, women would go to the

Tangil church of Archangel and ask the saint to grant them the ability of childbearing.

However, as we have mentioned, the feast of the church was celebrated twice a year. First – on Monday of the second week after the Meat Fare Week, second – the day after the Sunday of Thomas, Monday of *uplishi* week.



**The church of Tanghili Archangel Michael**

The eve of *Litnagili* is dedicated to the collection of products. The community of Latali comprises 9 villages and each village has a particular function: Matskhvarishi is responsible for collecting meat, Ipkhi and Sidianari – for collecting *rakhi* (wheat vodka, because fruit vodka is never used for praying). Other villages collect flour. The celebration is hosted by Lakhushdi, which means that only the residents of this village participate in the preparation and offer prayers. The duty of the other villages of the community is to supply food and go to the church. Worshipers, especially childless couples, often come from other communities.

The holiday consists of several stages: preparation begins with the sacrifice: the offering is prepared – the cattle is slaughtered (it should be noted that this is never done in the vicinity of the church), the haslet is laid out on skewers and blessed, at dawn minced meat and kneaded dough are brought to ladbashi/ a roofed kitchen adjoining the church) at the Mkem Taringzel church on



Mount Tanghili, where women bake *lemziri* (the blessed bread) and *kubdari* for the guests.

Prayer includes the service performed by the elders of the host village, during which sacrificial gift - vodka and *lemziri* or bread are blessed. A certain number of cult servants (three or seven) gather in front of the altar and offer prayers on behalf of each household. They also bless the "holy gift" (vodka and *lemziri*), which are served to the worshippers. Each participant of the celebration, who has donated for sacrifice, should eat a small amount of the gift. Essential component of the worship in the church is two types of prayer: 1. Group prayer and 2. Hymn chanting. The duration of group prayer depends on the number of worshippers, as each household and guest in the community tries to pray to Tangi Taringzel for himself and his family. Group prayer is periodically replaced by three hymns: 1. "Kriste aghdga" (chanted only at spring *tanghiloba*), which is performed on the canonical text of the Christian Easter Troparion; 2. The festive variant of "Tsmidao ghmerto" 3. "Upalo shegvitskale" - the canonical Christian prayer (ekteny). Its melody is similar to that of the festive "Tsmidao ghmerto".



round dancers in the courtyard of the church

At the end of the prayer procession, cult servants leave the church, stand outside, at the en-

trance of the church, facing the altar, and begin singing "Diadeb". This song, along with other songs related to Christian saints and the churches named after them ("Jgrag", "Riho", "Barbal Dolash", "Elia Lrde" and others), are referred to as song-hymns by the Svans. It is the praise of *tanghi taringzel* and prayer for Lakhushdi.

After the service, both the people and clergy perform round dances in the courtyard of the church; there are seven round dances altogether, the first three of these are mandatory, and the rest are optional; first round dance is "Lazhghvash", it is called the Head of round dances; second – "Dideba taia" (taia – a short form of Tarinzel) – praise of the Archangel; third – "Lagusheda"; fourth – "Shisha and Gergil" (hunters' round dance); fifth – "Murzabeg si" (the round dance with historical content); sixth – "Bail-betkil" (hunters' round dance) and seventh – "Iav kaltid" (round dance with humorous content). The other two mandatory round dances "Dideba Taia" and "Lagusheda" are especially close to "Lajghvash" in terms of content. According to ethnomusicologist Nana Mzhavanadze, "Lazhghvash" is a kind of quintessence of round dances, and its features can be considered typical for other similar dances. Perhaps this is why "Lazhghvash" is considered the Head of round dances.

People are actively involved in the round-dance part of the ritual. The first six songs-round dances are in Svan language and they are performed in the church yard. The last round dance, actually performed after the repast, in the fourth part of the ritual, is Georgian-Svan, with an obscene text, so before its performance women step aside, and men dance it a little further from the church. According to the locals, this song is related to the cult of reproduction and fertilization, and is also performed at *Tanghiloba*, as the archangel is the protector of the childless.

**Repast.** Final part of the ritual is a feast. There are as many tables laid in the vicinity, in the

church yard, as there are villages in Latali community. Every village knows where its place is. Traditionally, the representative of Matskhvarishi is the *tamada* (toastmaster) at the feast. This is explained by the fact that this village was first to donate a gift during the construction of Tangili church. The hosts i.e. residents of Lakhushdi sit at the end of the table, as they are responsible for pouring wine and taking care of the guests.



The feast

The feast is headed by the *tamada*, who strictly adheres to the established sequence of toasts. The order of the toasts is as follows: the first toast is to the high god/ *khosha ghermet* in Svan; it is followed by the toast to *Mkem taringzel*, in which the archangel is asked for reproduction and to which the hymn “Tskhau Chrisdeshi” is chanted; third toast is definitely dedicated to Jgrag (St. George). At this time, all the men (who wear hat) are being blessed, and St. George is entreated for their protection. The toast is definitely followed by “Jgragish” – laudation of St. George, which is performed with great trepidation by standing capless men; the fourth toast is called “Saruash-Saqan” (forgiveness-reconciliation), which is drunk

Bruderschaft. Its original goal was to reconcile offended people. The toast should be drunk in pairs. It tells about the mythological hero Kakhan, who killed a dragon in the mountains of Haarash and saved the residents of Latali and Lenjeri.

During the toasting process, the participants of the table sing encouraging songs “Nom jazharkh mesqaniela” and “Khairili”. This completes the cycle of obligatory toasts, and the toastmaster is allowed to have dinner at will. In old times, after these four toasts, the feast was considered over and the last obligatory round dance “Iav kaltid” was performed.

In ancient times, on the eve of the winter solstice, a snow tower with a wooden cross on top was built on the village hill. After the repast, a group of young people would separate from the worshippers returning home and hold a competition to conquer the tower. The village whose representative was the first to remove the cross erected on top of the tower, was considered the winner. People believed that the victorious village would have a prosperous year.

**Madona Chamgeliani**  
*Ethnologist*

*Here is one of the obligatory round dances  
“Didebata” performed at Litnaghili*

## Didebata

Notated by Levan Veshapidze

I choir

ba - ta - ia ri - li - gva - ia she - da vo oi di vo re ra

vo di di - de - i - ba - ta - ia ri - li - gva - ia she - da vo ho oi di vo re ra

II choir

vo di di de ba - ta - ia ri - li - gva - ia she - da vo oi di vo re ra

vo di di de ba - ta - ia ri - li - gva - ia she - da vo ho i oi di vo re ra

I choir

vo di la - l - kh - ra - le - d li - she - ds gu - sh - gvei vo oi di vo re ra vo di la - l -

vo di la - l - kh - i - ra - le - d li - she - ds gu - sh - gvei vo ho oi di vo re ra vo di la - l -

II choir

khra - le - d li - she - ds gu - sh - gvei vo oi di vo re ra oi di vo re ra o

khra - le - d li - she - ds gu - sh - gvei vo ho i oi di vo re ra oi di vo re ra o

dideba taiariligvaiasheda  
 lalkhraled lisheds gushgvei  
 okurash samk'aiariligvaiasheda  
 khainar jirdakh sgashlalgena  
 much'var khagankh chid vokurashi  
 gitsral jirdakh sgashlalgena

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Tbilisi State Conservatoire, 2021.

eISSN 2346-7614

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Next issue will be published in June, 2022