

The
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Ethnomusical Life in Georgia

(January-June, 2022)

Festivals, Conferences, Competitions

28.02, 31.03, 25.05.2022 – scientific seminars dedicated to Ekvtime Kereselidze held by the Church Music Laboratory of Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

6.04-16.06.2022 – The Anzor Erkomaishvili Folklore State Center held the first qualifying round of the 2022 Georgian National Folklore Festival throughout Georgia.

3.05.2022 – Master students' scientific conference dedicated to Giorgi Garakanidze was held at Tbilisi State University.

10-13.05.2022 – Baia Zhuzhunadze, a specialist at the IRCTP, made a presentation “Bayar Shahin’s Archive of Traditional Music of the Georgians living in Turkey” at the 8th Southeast European Dance and Music Symposium of the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM) at Istanbul University.

31.05.2022 – Scientific conference of young ethnomusicologists and folk music concert at Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

17-24.06.2022 – Anaklia hosted the festival of choirmaster’s schools “Voices of the Future”.

24.06.2022 – Student scientific conference “Issues of Christian Theology and Musicology” dedicated to Manana Andriadze was held at Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Chanting.

Lectures, Meetings, Master classes, Presentations etc.

14.01.2022 – Traditional *Kalandoba* celebration was held in Rachis Ubani tasting space.

3.03.2022 – Presentation of Amiran Arabuli’s and Eter Tataraidze’s books at the Folklore State Centre.

16.03.2022 – Presentation of Davit Javrishvili's book “Georgian Folk Dance” at the Folklore State Centre.

21.03.2022 – Ozurgeti Folklore Center hosted an event on the occasion of the International Day of Down Syndrome.

23.03.2022 – The meeting “Conversations on Folklore” was held for the students of Ozurgeti Choirmaster’s School.

5.04.2022 – Ethnomusicologist Nana Valishvili held master classes and delivered a lecture at the Kazbegi Municipality Development Center for Education, Culture and Sports.

8.04.2022 – Eter Tataraidze’s public lecture “Dialects – the Streams Flowing into the Mother River” at the Caucasus University bookstore “Librarea”.

14.04.2022 – Joseph Jordania, a Georgian ethnomusicologist working in Australia, was elected an academician of the Georgian Academy of Sciences.

16.04, 26.05.2022 – French ethnomusicologist Zoe Perret held a master class in Georgian folk song at the author’s school #6.

18.04.2022 – Presentation of the audio album of folk ensemble Odoia organized by the Zugdidi Development Center for Arts and Culture.

29.04.2022 – International Dance Day was Celebrated at Ozurgeti Folklore Center.

29.04-1.05.2022 – The specialists of the Folklore Center held master classes for the choirmasters and choreographers working in Achara region, as organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of Achara.

13-15.05.2022 – Master classes in Svan dance at the Folklore State Center.

19.05.2022 – Presentation of the audio album of children’s folk ensemble Binuli at the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia.

25.05.2022 – A Memorandum of mutual cooperation was signed between the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music of Rome and Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Chanting.

29.05.2022 – Presentation of ensemble Ialoni’s audio album at Tumanishvili Theater.

1-10.06.2022 – Ethnomusicologist Nino Naneishvili held master classes as part of the folk tour.

2.06.2022 – Presentation of the book “Kakhetian Choirmasters – Levan Mughalashvili” in Gurjaani.

Concerts, Evenings, Exhibitions, Jubilees.....

- 6.01.2022 – Ensemble Didgori’s New Year concert in Martvili.
- 8.01.2022 – Online Christmas concert of songs and chants at Tbilisi State Conservatoire.
- 12.01.2022 – Folk music concert with the participation of Tbilisi folk ensembles in the “New Year Village” in Orbeliani Square.
- 14.01.2022 – A reporting concert of Ozurgeti Choir-master’s school students at Ozurgeti Folklore Center.
- 1.03.2022 – Charity music marathon “We stand for Ukraine” on the first channel of the Georgian Public Broadcaster.
- 4.03.2022 – The Museum of Georgian Folk Song and Instruments of the Arts Palace hosted the 80th anniversary evening of Gomar Sikharulidze and the presentation of the family instrument exhibition.
- 29.03.2022 – State Academic Ensemble Erisioni’s charity solo concert for Ukraine at Rustaveli Theater.
- 04.05.2022 – Ensemble Sameba held an evening in memory of Lia Salakaya at the Youth Center of the Georgian Patriarchy.
- 12.04.2022 – A charity concert in support of Ukraine, organized by the Music Center of Ilia State University, at Ilia State University.
- 13.04.2022 - A charity concert “Ialoni and Friends for Ukraine” in the hall of the Folklore State Center.
- 8.05.2022 – Concert of traditional song and chant in the village of Khandaki, Kaspi Municipality.
- 14.05.2022-15.05.2022 – Concerts of ensemble Sukhishvilebi in Tbilisi Concert Hall.
- 18.05.2022 – The Museum of Georgian Folk Song and Instruments of the Arts Palace hosted the concert of Bolnisi Municipality ensemble Alilo on the occasion of the International Museum Day.
- 20.05.2022 – An online concert of the revived Pshavian folk examples on the online platform of Facebook, organized by the University of Chanting.
- 22.05.2022 – Ensemble Ialoni’s solo concert of traditional music, in Telavi.
- 27.05.2022 – Anniversary solo concert of the Bolnisi Municipality Ensemble Bolnela at Bolnisi House of Culture.
- 30.05.2022 – Anniversary solo concert of ensemble Kirialesa at the Folklore State Center.
- 4.06.2022-5.06.2022 – The concert “Georgian Legend” of State ensemble Erisioni in the Tbilisi Concert Hall.
- 31.05.2022 – An evening in memory of Anzor Erkomaishvili organized by ensemble Rustavi in Artos Baghi.
- 4.06.2022 – Concert of traditional music with the participation of ensembles Patara Kakhi and Mze Shina in Telavi.
- 5.06.2022 – Solo concert of the choir The Patriarch’s Godchildren at Tbilisi State Conservatoire.
- 11,20,25.06.2022 – Solo concerts of Folklore-ethnographic studio Amer-Imeri in Artos Baghi.
- 13.06.2022 – Concert of Georgian folk polyphony and church chanting organized by the Folklore House in Alvani.
- 13.06.2022 – Solo concert of ensemble Rekheuli at Chokhatauri Municipality House of Culture.
- 14.06.2022 – Concert of children’s folk ensemble Tamarisi at The Museum of Georgian Folk Song and Instruments of the Arts Palace.
- 30.06-1.07.2022 – Ensemble Sukhishvilebi’s solo concerts in Tbilisi Concert Hall.

Concert Tours

- 27.02-15.03.2022 – State Academic Ensemble of Folk Song and Dance Rustavi in Poland.
- 25.05.2022 – Concert of the State Folk Song Ensemble Basiani in Rome.
- 4.06-19.06.2022 – Ensemble Sukhishvilebi in Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova.
- 10.06.2022 – Concert of the State Folk Song Ensemble Basiani in Athens.
- 26.06.2022 – 40 singers of the Holy Trinity Cathedral Choir held a concert in the Sistine Chapel.

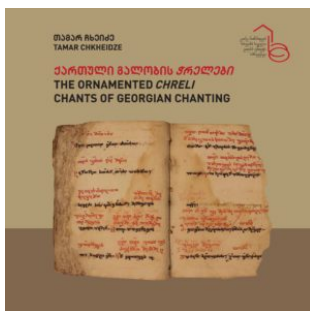
30.06-3.07.2022 – Ensemble Didgori participated in a folk festival in Switzerland.

Expeditions

28.05-5.06.2022 – Ethnomusicologist Giorgi Kravishvili was in expedition to the Laz villages - Hopa, Arhavi, Findikli, Ardeshen, Chamlihemshin in Turkey.

Publications

Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Chanting published Tamar Chkheidze's book "The *Chreli* of Georgian chanting"



Zugdidi Municipality ensemble Odoia released an audio album



Ensemble Ialoni released the audio album "50 Georgian Songs"



Prepared by Sopiko Kotrikadze

For the 80th Anniversary of Gomar Sikharulidze

This year renowned Georgian composer, choirmaster, folklorist, professor, winner of many awards and titles, laureate of international festivals, creator of wonderful film music, singer and teacher, People's Artist of Georgia Gomar Sikharulidze would have turned 80 years old. In connection with the date, Georgian Chanting Foundation decided to publish a monograph about Gomar Sikharulidze and has entrusted this to ethnomusicologist Marina Kvizhinadze. However, before the publication of the monograph, we considered it our duty to honor the memory of Gomar Sikharulidze and, in recognition of the anniversary, briefly tell about his life and work in our bulletin...

Gomar Sikharulidze was born to the family of musicians in Kutaisi on 4 March, 1942. His father - Giorgi Sikharulidze, famous singer and choirmaster, was one of the founders of Kutaisi Opera House; mother – Marina Mdinardze, was considered an unsurpassed folk singer in the city.

According to the family traditions, Gomar played folk instruments since childhood, performed songs from different parts of Georgia, and also directed choirs with the support of his father. After finishing school #2 in Kutaisi, Sikharulidze continued his studies at the choir-conducting department of Kutaisi Music School, and then at Choir-Conducting and Composition Faculty at Tbilisi State Conservatoire.

In 1961, still a Conservatoire student, together with his friends he created ensemble Gordela, which he directed until 1975. Anzor Erkomaishvili, Temur Kevkhishvili, Badri Toidze, Misha Mtsuravishvili, Kukuri Chokhanelidze, Tamaz Pavlov, Abiko Daneliani, Gomar Sikharulidze – the students of the Conservatoire and members of legendary Gordela, worked with great diligence on the restoration of Georgian folk songs and church hymns. They revived and performed on the stage

many folk songs including “Arkhalalo”, “Qanuri”, “Kalospiruli”, “Kalos Khelkhvavi”, “Kalgulo” and contributed to their popularization. Noteworthy is Gordela's merit in the search and restoration of forgotten examples of urban folklore such as “Salami chitunebo”, “Avara var, davdivar”, “Mshveniero, shen getrpi”, “Patara gogo damekarga” and others.



Gomar Sikharulidze

A separate topic of conversation is Georgian church hymn, which, like church chanting was banned at that time. Even the mention of hymn was out of the question! It was Gordela who first dared to perform hymns on the stage, which was a very bold step.

Since they were forbidden to be broadcast on radio and television, we used small tricks and sometimes attributed the hymns to Zakaria Paliashvili, sometimes called them secular – Gomar Sikharulidze recalled.

Gordela's activity not only returned Georgian chants to the stage, but also put them on the path of revival, bringing them to the heart of a Georgian and introduced the charm of Georgian songs and hymns to the listeners in many countries.

The activities of young musicians were supported by the patronage of the Georgian Patriarch. Only a few cathedrals functioned in Georgia at that time. Honorary foreign guests in

Georgia listened to Georgian hymns performed by Gordela while visiting Svetitskhoveli or Jvari Monastery in Mtskheta.

In 1972 Gomar Sikharulidze was awarded the title of Honored Artist of the Republic.

Gomar Sikharulidze was also engaged in pedagogical activities: in 1966-70 he worked at Music School #1 in Tbilisi, in 1970-1977 was director of Music School #5, and from 1977 music director and chief conductor of the Tbilisi Palace of Pioneers.

Deepening into the issues of children's aesthetic education prompted Gomar Sikharulidze to the idea of creating international choirs. He wanted children of different nationalities – Georgian, Russian, Armenian, Greek, Azerbaijani to sing next to each other, learn each other's national songs, share each other's spiritual culture, deepen and strengthen relations and friendship, which, started in childhood, would continue into adulthood. With the help of the Composers' Union and the Ministry of Education of Georgia, the idea came to life – an international choir of 100 children was created in Akhaltsikhe, later, a smaller children's choir – in Sokhumi. Besides, Sikharulidze, as a choirmaster, was also a consultant to the children's choir of Television and Radio Broadcasting Company.

In 1984, Gomar Sikharulidze was appointed Head of the Music Department at Sul Khan-Saba Orbeliani (former A.S. Pushkin) Pedagogical Institute in Tbilisi. It was during this period that he wrote: “What am I doing as a school music teacher? I have almost prepared a textbook for students of music specialization at secondary schools and pedagogical institutes. In the two-year cycle, students will master 30-40 songs that will be useful for their teaching in schools. I have included songs from all parts of the country into the textbook. I did my best to select the examples so that the text was simple, and most importantly, easy to understand and accept for a child. In lower grades, I definitely

consider the necessity of adding elements of game. A child may not sing with precise intonation, but during play, without realizing it, he will open the door of his heart to a folk song and, may no one take this as a loud statement, this is patriotism, love of the motherland.”



Ensemble Gordela.
(Gomar Sikharulidze – second from the left)

The work of composer Gomar Sikharulidze stands out in no less versatility. He is the author of a number of chamber-instrumental works, including piano opuses (sonata, five plays, impromptu, prelude and fugue, concerto, etc.); chamber-vocal compositions (romances for baritone and piano, top voice and piano, etc.); choral pieces, vocal cycles for soloists and male *a capella* choir, as well as for female *a capella* choir; pop songs; music for performances, animation and feature films, including “Chari Rama” (1972), “The fastest in the world” (1985), “Mevlud” (1985), etc.

Gomar Sikharulidze also worked intensively for theater. His music is heard in almost all theaters throughout Georgia – Rustaveli, Marjanishvili, Metekhi, Nodar Dumbadze Performance Art Theatre, Batumi, Kutaisi, Sokhumi, Telavi.

In 2004, Gomar Sikharulidze, full professor at Shota Rustaveli University of Theater and Film, an excellent connoisseur of Georgian folklore, created a female ensemble. To new ensemble he gave name

Kalgulo after the song, which brought recognition to Gordela many years before, the song which he incomparably sang together with Temur Kevkhisvili.

The ensemble is still active today. Its repertoire includes over 70 folk songs and church hymns from different parts of Georgia. Currently, Kalgulo is led by Nino Sikharulidze, Gomar’s daughter, Assistant Professor at Shota Rustaveli State University of Theater and Film.

Along with singing Gomar Sikharulidze excellently played folk instruments and had a large collection (over 50 units), which, after his passing, the family donated to the Museum of Georgian Folk Song and Instruments, on the occasion of his 80th anniversary.

Gomar Sikharulidze passed away on 27 January, 2020. He is interred in the Makhata Mountain Pantheon of Writers and Public Figures in Tbilisi.

Marina Kvizhinadze
ethnomusicologist

About One Ensemble
**Song and Dance State Academic
Ensemble of Abkhazia**

Song and Dance State Academic Ensemble of Abkhazia boasts a history of almost a century. Its creation is connected with the beneficients of Georgian folklore such as Dzuku Lolua, Platon Pantsulaia, Kitsi Gegechkori

The official date of the ensemble’s creation is 1931, but its predecessor – Georgian-Abkhazian ethnographic choir was formed in 1904, when, at the request of the Georgian Literacy Society, Dzuku Lolua (1877-1925) – renowned choirmaster and singer, collector, popularizer and researcher of folk songs, moved to live in Sukhumi. To arouse the national spirit weakened by the Russification policy in Abkhazia, Dzuku Lolua was commissioned to form a large folk choir, which he directed for 15

years. 1904 is considered to be the beginning of choral activity in Abkhazia.



Dzuku Lolua

The Abkhazians, Megrelians, Imeretians, Gurians, Svans sang, danced and played folk instruments side by side in the ensemble. This collective was the first to play Abkhazian musical instruments *apkhyartsa*, *acharpan*, *ayumaa*, and also perform Abkhazian songs “Aqish”, “Azar”, “Song of the wounded”, “Dance song”, “Ghighini”, “Sharatin” and many others on stage. Dzuku Lolua applied theatricalization technique for songs, which was manifested in the performance of extended theatrical compositions on stage. The Abkhazians consider these compositions the beginning of their theater.

In 1930, a music school was opened in Sokhumi, within its walls a new ethnographic choir was formed through the efforts of Kondrate Dzidzaria and Konstantin Kovac. In 1931 Dzuku Lolua’s student Platon Pantsulaia (1908-1938) took over; his name is associated with the creation of the ethnographic choir of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia (later –State Song and Dance Ensemble of Abkhazia). Platon Pantsulaia himself traveled to the villages in different parts of Georgia to collect songs and dances, he also constantly strove to attract singers and dancers. In addition to singing, Platon Pantsulaia was also a master of dance and always thought about its embellishment. The media of the time emphasized high professionalism of the choir

and its leader, as well as their brilliant ability to restore forgotten songs and dances.

In 1938, after Platon Pantsulaia’s tragic death, ethnographic ensemble was directed by Dzuku Lolua’s student Kitsi Gegechkori (1886-1971). However, due to his strong focus on the preservation of authentic traditions, he was dismissed by the Soviet government of Abkhazia the same year and the leadership of the choir was entrusted to his deputy Mikheil Chelidze (1900-1975). Unlike Dzuku Lolua’s other students, Mikeil Chelidze, who studied music at the Conservatoire, was well versed in notes, he “arranged” folk songs and “refined” dynamic nuances, which is why the ethnographic choir gradually distanced from authentic sound and

became more academic. In 1940, Kitsi Gegechkori was again appointed director of the Abkhazian-Georgian choir; he increased the membership up to 130 people. The outbreak of the WWII and general mobilization resulted in the disintegration of the choir and reduction of the membership to 34 singers. Kitsi Gegechkori moved to Zugdidi and returned to Sokhumi only after the end of the war. He again increased the choir to 130 singers. After the war, the group was conferred the title Song and Dance State Ensemble of Abkhazia.



The first Georgian-Abkhazian ethnographic choir created by Dzuku Lolua

From the 1950s there was a tendency of returning from academic performance to the

authentic, restoration of old folk songs and dances had become relevant. In 1955, Razhden Gumba was appointed director and chief conductor of the State Ensemble of Abkhazia, Avksenti Mikava was appointed conductor, Ioseb Tsimakuridze - the choreographer, Shamil Vardania - his assistant, and Babilina Marghania head of the instrumental group. In 1956, Razhden Gumba continued his studies at Tbilisi Conservatoire; he was substituted by Alexei Chichba, a former student of Kitsi Gegechkori. At the time the ensemble consisted of 130 members and a large place in the repertoire was appropriated to the songs and dances of the peoples of the Soviet Union, it also included the songs composed specially for this collective and the arranged variants of Abkhazian songs (Antitsa, White Shirt, Song about Aiba, Song about Sokhumi, etc.).

From 1863 the leadership of the Song and Dance State Ensemble of Abkhazia was as follows: artistic director – K. Akhba, choreographer – Givi Chakhava, choirmaster and conductor – Vasil Tsargush. The latter was assigned to direct the ensemble in 1968, a new wave of return to authenticity is related to this. “Our repertoire is intensively replenished with old songs and archaic dances recorded from elderly people during expeditions. We strive to restore old rituals by combining song and dance and performing them on stage” ... – Vasil Tsargush wrote.

In the 1970s, a wave of extremism swept through Abkhazia, threatening to wash away Georgian songs and dances: both were gradually excluded from the repertoire of the State Ensemble of Abkhazia. The ensemble was slowly becoming Abkhazian from Georgian-Abkhazian. Thus there emerged the idea of creating State Ensemble of Georgian song and dance in Abkhazia, which was implemented in 1977 and Vezden Okujava was appointed artistic director. He formed a choir, which, 10 years later, was joined by dancers; in 1989, the ensemble was conferred the status of Georgian Song and Dance State Ethnographic

Ensemble of Abkhazia. The ensemble was going to continue its activities with a diverse repertoire and serious plans for the future, but this was not destined to come true due to the war in Abkhazia...

After the war in Abkhazia, which took the lives of the ensemble’s two dancers and one singer, the collective continued its life in Tbilisi; its 6-member group took part in a concert held at Tbilisi Philharmonic Hall in 1993. Initially, only a group of dancers gathered in Tbilisi, they rehearsed at the former Officers’ House. However, by 1998, during the ensemble’s first concert tours in France, Switzerland and Poland, it consisted of about 50 members, both singers and dancers, mostly refugees from Abkhazia. Its repertoire was comprised of folk songs and dances from all parts of Georgia.

In 1999- 2021, the ensemble had a number of different choirmasters, choreographers, conductors, artistic directors and directors; these included Vezden Okujava, Vitali Okujava, Zaza Kalandia, Gela Gabichvadze, Jumber Kolbaia, Guram Kurashvili, Shota Gugushvili, Sergo Gegechkori, Anguli Kavtaradze, Edem Arkania, Tengiz Sigua, Sergo Shengelia, Levan Gvinjilia, Tornike Mantskava. In 2021, Bachana Chanturia was appointed the artistic director of the ensemble.



Bachana Chanturia

The ensemble membership periodically changed, but there were many who started working in Sokhumi and did not quit in Tbilisi until 2021. Over the past 20 years, the ensemble toured

extensively to: Germany (2002), Poland (2007), France, Italy, Slovenia and Greece (2008), Switzerland (2009), Spain and France (2012) and Greece. (2013, 2014), Iraq (2014), China (2015), Ukraine (2019).

In 2021 Bachhana Chanturia, a dancer and choreographer of the Sukhishvili Ensemble, was appointed head of the Song and Dance State Ensemble of Abkhazia. With the experience obtained in “Sukhishvilebi”, he came with new ideas to the State Ensemble of Abkhazia and completely changed the program.



Poster for the projet “Choreonicon”

“We did our best to develop both dances and songs. We have created completely new compositions, dances; sewed costumes that are tailored to the new movements. Our direction is completely new; We have complete freedom in music and choreography; we have a band that creates and performs modernized folk compositions as well as electronic music. As for the movements, the current development of our body allows to create compositions constructed on new movements. I don't find it necessary to be stuck in the past. I love innovations and I am not afraid of new challenges, therefore my dances are a completely new direction in choreography...” says Bachana Chanturia. These views were implemented by the ensemble in a new program called “Choreonicon”, or chronicle of choreography. It contains musical-choreographic compositions of different regions, styles and genres in the form of

choreographic chronicles: “Chanba”, “Gani da Gana”, “Panduri”, “Shvante”, “Koo-to” and “Vazha”, the names of which contain references to their origin.

This program is also distinguished in the original synthesis of choreographic and vocal presentations. Several dances are accompanied by Georgian folk songs performed by the ensemble’s choir. Dance compositions are accompanied by a musical band that plays folk, traditional and electronic instruments.

The choir has been directed by Tornike Mantskava for 5 years. The repertoire comprises Abkhazian and Georgian songs from different parts of the country, which the ensemble learns mainly from archival recordings.” When it comes to songs only, we are focused on maintaining the color of the corresponding region. When we accompany dancing with a song, we do not avoid novelty: we make potpourris, collages from the songs of different regions and genres, in accordance with the dance. We also work on the synthesis of folk songs and electronic music, which will soon be offered to our listeners.

Currently, the membership of Apk hazeti is as follows: internally displaced persons from Abkhazia (very few), as well as performers from Tbilisi and different parts of Georgia.

At this stage, the Ensemble is implementing a project, within the framework of which every Friday we perform in solo concerts, in the building of the former Hospital #9 in Chavchavadze Avenue, Tbilisi; the concerts are attended by about 150 people every week.

“We have big plans for the future, but my dream and goal is for the ensemble to continue working in Abkhazia, and to dance in Sokhumi While I am its director,” Bachana Chanturia says.

*The material is prepared by Maka Khardziani
Sources: Personal interviews and the book: Nino Kalandadze, Marina Kvizhinadze “Traditional music in Georgian-Abkhazian dialogue”. Tbilisi, 2021*

Charity Concert of Ukrainian Folk Song at Ilia State University

Russian aggression in Ukraine has provoked great protests in all strata of our society and raised the need for assistance to Ukrainian brothers and sisters. One such initiative was taken by the Student Folk Choir of Ilia State University. A charity concert of Ukrainian folk song, as organized and hosted by the choir, was held at the assembly hall of the University on 12 April, 2022. The participants performed only Ukrainian folk songs at the concert. The University choir, in addition to four Ukrainian songs, performed national anthems of Ukraine and Georgia, as well as the anthem of the European Union with Georgian text. The first impetus for this initiative was the desire of the University choir to learn national anthem of Ukraine and sing it at Embassy of Ukraine, as they did in 2014 during the conflict in Ukraine. Then it was decided to learn a few other songs as well. One of these songs "Oi u Poly Drevo" was still remembered by several members of the choir (this song was also performed years ago at a semester reporting concert).

During these activities, the idea emerged to hold a charity concert with the participation of various folk groups. The idea soon came to fruition – it turned out that some ensembles (Ialoni, Tutarchela, the choir of the Theatre University) had already prepared Ukrainian songs. They were joined by the students of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Chanting and ensemble Mcheli (the only male ensemble at the event).

The concert opened with the national anthem of Ukraine (second-grade pupil Giorgi Natroshvili also sang together with the University choir).

Ensemble Ialoni (dir. Nino Naneishvili) performed two songs: "Tuman yarom" – "Fog in the Valley" (about the love of a Cossack couple) and "Plive kacha po Tisini" (aka "Maidan Requiem" – conversation of a deceased son with his mother). The Chanting University choir presented a

potpourri of Ukrainian songs (compiler of the composition and choirmaster Tatiana Megrelidze). The potpourri was dedicated to the fallen Ukrainian soldiers – the road to the battlefield, grief of a wounded soldier, and the road to eternity.



Ilia University Choir performing at the concert

The choir of the Theater University (dir. Maia Mikaberidze) performed the song "Reve na stogne Dnibr shirokiy" – "The Wide Dnibr roars and groans", which poetically describes the nature of Ukraine.

Ensemble Tutarchela (dir. Tamar Buadze) performed the song "Vilatali Orli" – "Eagles have flown off": You cannot return your youth years; you should have used them better.

Ensemble Mcheli (dir. Ketevan Baiashvili) performed the song "Hey u luzi chervona kalina" – "There is red viburnum on the meadow" together with Ukrainian IDP singer Lilyia Korolyuk and Ilia University student Lekso Modebadze (guitar) – Ukraine is saddened, but her praise-worthy children will delight her with their victories!

Ilia University choir (dir. Tamaz Gabisonia) sang: "Oy, u poli drevo" – "There is a tree in the field", about a Cossack girl worried about her sweetheart who has gone to war; „ A boat is sailing”: ” Cossack girl do not brag with your beautiful jewelry, you will have to sell them to send to your sweetheart in the army! Latvian ethnomusicologist Maara Rosentalē was an ordinary member of all performing groups.

In addition, together with the University choir, Tamar Kokaia director of the Ukrainian

Diaspora Ensemble in Tbilisi, sang the song “Ver-
“Verbovaya doska” – “A box-tree plank”, the
thoughts of enamored Nastechka about the fidelity
of the guys.

The concert ended with the anthems of the
European Union and Georgia.

Despite the then limited regulations of the
university, the hall was full of listeners. The
applause did not subside.

After the concert, the donations from the
participants and listeners were collected in a charity
box standing in the hall, which was handed over to
the Red Cross of Ukraine.

Tamaz Gabisonia

Associate Professor at Ilia State University

One Foreign Ensemble **Ensemble Harira from Canada**

Canada’s Ensemble *Harira* is devoted to the
presentation and study of traditional folk and
liturgical music from the Republic of Georgia and
the surrounding Caucasus. The group is a place of
collaboration and exchange, its members united by
our passion for the beauty and diversity of
traditional music and culture. Many people who
visit Georgia or meet Georgians for the first time do
so through the Supra, an ancient tradition that
celebrates *meeting* and is literally a *feast*, where our
various human senses are acted upon in harmony.
Like Georgian folk music, the Supra is a place of
carefully-crafted social contact, nourishment,
collective memory and harmony. It can be an
unforgettable and mysterious experience that leaves
traces in our bodies and memories long after plates
and glasses are emptied, and friends have parted.
Harira’s founders first encountered Georgian
culture and music in 1997, at a music workshop that
included three Georgian folk songs. The songs felt
in some way completely different, and seemed to

come alive as each voice was added like a puzzle
whose solution provokes connections, meaning, and
memory. At times it was as if we could hear other
voices, delicate and beautiful, present among us like
memories. What followed were many questions,
beautiful songs, and the sharing of thrilling
recordings of men and women singing table songs,
chants, maqruleis, perkuleis and naduris.

The music and voices invoked in each of us
the need to sing. Days and years of discovery
followed. Montie Stethem and Kasia Malec co-
founded *Ensemble Voisa* in 2003, and were its
directors for many years. Our group passionately
explored, performed and organized meetings and
collaborations with many generous teachers and
artists who joyfully shared our journey of discovery
(Kevin Tuite, Alan Gasser, Frank Kane, Carl Linich,
and others).

In 2007 we travelled to Georgia where we met
and performed with wonderful singers and their
families in Upper Svaneti, Guria and Samegrelo, and
were inspired to start our own family upon our
return to Canada.

In 2018 we formed *Harira*, and have since
hosted and participated in meetings, workshops and
concerts with international artists from North
America, Europe, Scandinavia and Georgia,
including Ensemble Didgori, Ialoni and many new
and wonderful friends we have met along the way.



Montie and Kasia Stethem

When a person discovers their place – a community where they feel they belong – it is possible for them to undergo profound and positive change, and personal growth. Ours is a community of friends and artists who share Georgian folk song’s potential as a masterfully crafted catalyst for human contact; as if intended to engage the individual’s sense of self in relationship to family and community, to nature and the divine.

“The speech of an elder in the twilight of his life is not his history but a legacy; he speaks not to describe matter but to demonstrate meaning. He talks of his past for purposes of his future.” (from Divine Horsemen, by Maya Deren).

For more information, please contact us:
harira.ca.hariraensemble@gmail.com.

Montie and Kasia Stethem

Ethnographic letters

Engagement and Marriage in Samegrelo

(part 1)

In Samegrelo, in the past, the marriage of a woman and a man took place only by the decision of the parents and only those who were chosen by the parents got married. Before engagement, first of all, it was necessary to find out the identity of the bride and groom, their parents, marital and property status, and so on. To do so, they chose intermediaries *marebeli*, who were in charge of clarifying this. One of the intermediaries was a woman, the other – a man. Resolution of the case depended on these two. The intermediaries used every means to achieve their goal, to finish the case successfully, for which they received a monetary reward. With the help of intermediaries, first it was found out if there was anything between the woman and the man, e.g. distant family relations, which was strictly prohibited. It was desirable and

accepted for a woman to get married in another village. These rules were strictly followed and those who violated them were severely punished and persecuted. In addition, the family retained the privilege of marriage for a woman and a man according to seniority. The older would marry first, and then – younger ones. Violation of this was a great disgrace for the family. And if the younger married first, the older often remained unmarried because they were considered discredited.



Ethnographer Sergi Makalatia

In ancient times it was common in Samegrelo to engage an infant girl and boy (when they were still of the cradle age). This happened when their parents had respect and love for each other and wanted to intermarry. The boy’s parents would take the child to the girl’s family, put both cradles side by side and say: Be a happy husband and wife; may God grant you aging together like the sun and the moon. Finally, the parents would kiss each other and wish growth and happiness to the newly engaged. In addition, the boy’s parents would hang an adornment on the girl’s cradle as a sign of engagement and from that day the girl was considered to be the boy’s fiancée, then they would get married when they both grew up and became adults. The promise could not be broken or refused,

it would lead to enmity and revenge between the two families.

In the past abduction of a woman was common in Samegrelo. In the case, when the groom and his parents liked the woman, but the woman's family disliked them, the groom, with the help of his comrades, would abduct her and hide somewhere for a year. To prevent the abducted woman from refusing her fiancé and returning to her parents, the groom would force her to have an intimate relationship with him. A year later, the parents would hear from their daughter, but would not reconcile with the groom. The groom and his family would send mediators to the bride's parents and ask for reconciliation. The abductor had to pay a fine: a bull, a horse, money, etc., according to the mediators' decision. If the woman gave birth to a child during the year, the parents were forced to reconcile with the groom. But even after that there was no good relations between them, and the woman's parents considered themselves insulted. In general, abduction of a woman in Samegrelo was name and praise for groom and his family, and humiliating and shameful for bride's family. Because of this, even hand-to-hand fights and bloodshed took place during the abduction of a woman. There were cases when a woman would voluntarily let the man abduct her, but this was also against the wish of the parents and they did not accept the groom for a long time. The bride, abducted by force or voluntarily, held herself proudly in the family such women enjoyed respect and approval in Samegrelo.

Usually, when a girl and a boy became adults, their parents tried to select suitable spouse for them. In this selection a decisive voice and influence belonged to the girl's older brother and her mother's brother (uncle); In the engagement of a young couple a key role was played by their parents, uncle, brother and *marebeli* intermediaries. After their agreement, an "inspection" would be organized for the young couple. In the past

"inspection" mostly took place at night, so that the villagers did not know, as in the case of refusal, the woman would be dishonored, thus this was kept in secret. To the "inspection" the man was accompanied by his parents and uncle.



A Megrelian woman

The beautifully dressed woman sat in a corner of the house, the groom and his people would carefully observe/examine her, then the woman and groom were asked to walk in the room, in order to find out if they had any physical defects. In case of consent, the table was set, the guests were treated and the engagement was decided. Otherwise the groom and his people would immediately leave. After the agreement, they would start talking about the bride's dowry and, appoint the day of the engagement. The case was settled by the intermediary; his share would amount one tenth of the monetary dowry. They would write down the amount of monetary dowry and fix the day of the engagement. After that, the groom and his parents would return home. But the intermediaries frequently visited both families and carried questions and answers to and forth. On the day of engagement, a dinner would be set in the bride's family and via his uncle or brother the groom would send out a nice white garment and jewelry: earrings, rings, bracelets, etc. This was called *shana*.

The bride would be decorated with these, and from that day on she was considered engaged. The engaged bride sometimes stayed at her parental house for up to 1 year, sewing wedding clothes, preparing the dowry. It was impossible to break the promise after the engagement. If the bride's parents broke the promise, *shana* had to be returned. If the groom's family broke the promise, the bride's parents would not return *shana*. This would lead to animosity and confrontation between the families.

In the past, with the purpose of betrothing a woman, groom's father or uncle would throw a hat at her during the dance, and she was considered engaged. If the woman's parents were against, they were fined and told: "She was hit with a hat, but she rejects us." Then they would try to abduct her. The groom's courage and bravery was needed to carry out this intention, which not everyone could boast of.

The material is taken from Sergi Makalatia's book: "History and Ethnography of Samegrelo", Tbilisi, 1941

One Regional Ensemble

Folk Ensemble Musikeli from Samegrelo

*The number of youth folk ensembles in the regions is growing day by day. One of the reasons for this is the desire of the alumni of Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Chanting to use their knowledge and experience gained at the university, create regional ensembles and popularize the songs and hymns of their native regions. A wonderful example of this is folk ensemble Musikeli from Senaki municipality, created by **Dimitri Kakulia**, a graduate of the aforementioned University. It is with him that we talk about the creative principles and goals of the group.*

S.K. – Please tell us how the ensemble was created.

D.K. – Ensemble Musikeli has existed for only three years, but we have much longer experience of singing together. In 2015, ensemble Senaki was

created in Senaki Municipality on the initiative of Bachana Gagaa, later a member of the group. Most of the ensemble members were the members of Musikeli. The ensemble was directed by Salome Berishvili. Ensemble Senaki disbanded three years later. The idea of creating a new ensemble emerged in 2019, and Musikeli is the result of this. We remained almost in the same membership, except for Salome Berishvili and Bachana Gagaa. As for the name of the ensemble, we thought a lot about it, discussed many options, including old Megrelian toponyms. However, in the end, we selected the name suggested by my former lecturer, Mrs. Magda Sukhiashvili. The term *musikeli* is mentioned in one of Ioane Petritsi's manuscripts. It is believed to have been a general term for a singer-chanter, which was well-suited to our core activity – chanting and singing.



Dimitri Kakulia

S.K. – Please introduce the ensemble members.

D.K. – We are currently seven members in the ensemble: two first voices, two second voices and three basses. We are of different professions. Some of us also boast family musical traditions. Iliia Tsomaia (I Voice), a lawyer and journalist by profession, has received elementary musical education. As a child he sang in a folk choir. Irakli Koghua (I voice) is distinguished in family musical

traditions. His grandfather sang in Rema Shelegia's choir. Irakli's mother, Donara Miminoshvili, was one of the founders of Kolkhuri trio. Currently his sister, Eka Koghua is a member of the trio. Irakli, as a boy, sang in a folk choir. Irakli Lafia (II part) – a dentist by profession. He plays the guitar. As a child he sang in the school folk choir. In the ensemble he leads the direction of urban songs. Rati Saria (III voice) studied vocal at music school. His relation with traditional music started with chanting in the church. Ushangi Chilachava (II voice) is a lawyer by profession. A former member of Senaki Municipality ensemble Egrisi. Malkhaz Khuntsaria (III voice) has technical education. His grandfather sang in Rema Shelegia's choir. Malkhaz's first contact with traditional music also started with church chants. I mostly sing second voice. I have technical education. Later I graduated from Giorgi Mtatsmindeli University of Chanting, as a choir master. My relation with music started quite late, at the age of 24, with chanting in the church.

S.K. – What is the repertoire of Musikeli?

D.K. – Our repertoire mainly includes Megrelian songs. We also sing variants of Abkhazian songs. We try to learn Megrelian songs which are not yet known to the wider audience, and at the same time, to give our own interpretation of these recordings. We also have examples from different parts of Georgia in the repertoire. For example, a few months ago we learned a relatively unknown variant of “Imeruli makruli” from the repertoire of ensemble Sanavardo. We also sing urban songs, however, of course, Megrelian songs are our main focus.

S.K. – what is the source for your repertoire and what is the working process like?

D.K. – To learn songs, we actively use the recordings from the website of the Folklore State Center, as well as published musical material. Basically, I am the Initiator to learn new repertoire in the ensemble. Mostly I select variants of songs, but in some cases similar suggestions come from the

other members of the group. Initially, I forward a recording to the ensemble. Rarely, but it happens that the recording is difficult to decipher. When this is the case, I help the ensemble members and offer my own interpretation of the recording. At the rehearsal, we listen to the song-to-study together. Often the process of working on the repertoire segues into a healthy argument. Thus, everyone is involved in the process of learning. Some of us even offer our own variants.

S.K. – What about the ensemble's performance manner?

D.K. – We are free in terms of performance manner, however, we try not to go beyond certain limits. The experience gained from regular listening to old recordings also helps. I think, this border runs along the principles of performance manner. Megrelian songs are characterized by lyricism, joyful performance manner. It is important not to overdo and not to move into the performance manner of adjacent region. I think Musikeli does not yet have its own, original performance style. Even some ensembles with years of experience do not have it. Of course, it takes a lot of time to achieve this. However, the fact that we are all Megrelian naturally contributes to a deep understanding of Megrelian songs and fitting their performance manner.



Ensemble “Musikeli”

S.K. – How active is Musikeli in its creative life?

D.K. – A few months after its creation, Musikeli performed in the first concert together with folk ensemble Odabade at the Museum of Georgian Folk Song and Instruments in Tbilisi. We are active participants of the events organized by the municipality. We have performed several concerts in Senaki, of which I would single out the evening together with Ialoni. Last summer we participated in the festival “Folk evenings” organized by the Folklore State Centre. As part of the Festival we performed two concerts together with ensemble Amaghleba in Chokhatauri and Senaki. In November 2021 we were invited to Batumi International Festival of Folk and Church Music. We have also participated in several TV programs, among which I would mention “Etnopori” at Achara TV. Just a few months ago we participated in the first round of the National Folklore Festival. We hope to perform for listeners in the second round as well.

S.K. – Please tell us about your plans.

D.K. – Musikeli has not held a solo concert in its three years of existence. We think about holding a solo concert for Senaki audience next year. We had invitations from Lithuania and Estonia, but these concert tours were hindered by the world famous events. I, personally, always try to keep in touch with our foreign colleagues and get them interested in Georgian traditional music. We hope soon to have the opportunity to travel abroad and popularize our work. As for the audio album, I see it as a more distant prospect. It is our great desire to fill the repertoire with relatively lesser-known and forgotten variants of Megrelian songs as much as possible; after which we will think about presenting them to the wider audience.

*Interviewed by Sopiko Kotrikadze,
a doctoral student of Ilia University*

Beneficent of Georgian Folk Song
Giorgi Svanidze
(1892-1965)

Composer, choirmaster, folklorist, teacher, doctor, engineer, collector of Georgian (Kartlian) Songs, initiator of Georgian Children’s Opera, Member of the Georgian Composers’ Union and secretary of Music Section at the House of Folk Art (now Folklore State Center), Giorgi Svanidze was born in the village of Sakasheti, near the city of Gori in 1892. His mother Natalia Tsimakuridze sang beautifully; his father - Deacon Dionysus - was a good connoisseur of singing and chanting. As can be seen from various documentary materials, Svanidze learned Georgian songs and chants very well, so well that he even formed a choir of his peers. While studying at the Gymnasium in Tbilisi, he also formed a twenty-member choir of seminary and gymnasium students. This choir provided musical arrangement for the performances of the Georgian Theater in Tbilisi for several years. Later he was a choirmaster of the Georgian Philharmonic Society choir, this was followed by a successful concert at Zubalashvilis’ house in 1915. From then on, the already renowned musician directed numerous children’s and adult choirs at various schools or houses of Culture, at Tbilisi State University, in different years; he traveled to different parts of Georgia and formed choirs from local residents in Gori, Akhalkalaki, Kareli, Surami, Tskhinvali, held concerts, delivered lectures..... From his activity as of a choirmaster especially noteworthy is Gori Song and Dance Ensemble, director of which he was appointed in August 1937. The same year the ensemble’s successful performance at the Republican Olympiad was marked by a special award. With the outbreak of World War II, the ensemble temporarily ceased to exist. After the end of the war, the ensemble was again headed by Giorgi Svanidze.



Giorgi Svanidze

Giorgi Svanidze received classical music education at Tbilisi State Conservatoire (1918-1921, theoretician-composer, horn player). In musical circles he is known as a composer who created many choral works. However, first of all, he is the initiator of children's Opera in Georgia, this fact has not yet been properly recognized in musicology. In January 1920, children's small musical performance "A Cuckoo and a Rooster" was staged at Tbilisi Opera and Ballet Theater and his children's opera "Golden Wheatear", based on Shio Mghvimeli's fairy tale of the same name – in July, 1921. The opera was staged with specially designed costumes and decorations by the female students of Queen Tamar Women's Seminary in Tbilisi. The piano accompaniment was performed by Giorgi Svanidze himself. After the successful premiere, the composer also created an orchestral score. Along with the Opera House, "Golden Wheatear" was staged at various theaters in Tbilisi, as well as in Gori, Tskhinvali, Tsaghveri... The musical language of the opera based on folk musical and lexical material was considered one of the author's main advantages by the contemporaries – simple, native melodies were easily remembered by the listener and were hummed with pleasure. We think that Giorgi Svanidze, as the initiator of Children's Opera, should be given a worthy place in the history of Georgian professional music.

After a long pedagogical activity and accumulation of relevant experience, Giorgi Svanidze also created textbooks. In 1923 he published a textbook in music theory, in 1931 – the alphabet of notes. For visuals in these textbooks he used folk melodies by Zakaria Paliashvili, Dimitri Arakishvili, Ia Kargareli, as well as the ones recorded by himself – easily intelligible and familiar to children. With his multifaceted work Giorgi Svanidze left his mark in many places – "deeds in words, words in deeds". Especially invaluable is the merit of this great beneficient of folk art in finding and documenting the examples of Georgian folk music.

According to the musician's autobiography, Zakaria Paliashvili encouraged him to collect and document folk examples. From 1916, for more than 40 years, Giorgi Svanidze traveled to Kartli and Kakheti, collecting unique folk songs and legends, some of which he published subsequently. In 1951, David Kasradze wrote: "Giorgi Svanidze continued the work of the beneficients of Georgian folk music, he visited Kartli-Kakheti many times, recorded many songs, but he was never satisfied with simply recording folk songs. He also conducted research. The composer described in detail where, under what conditions and how he came across this or that song. He inquired the performers about the "biography" of each song, legend related to it, studied the issue of its origin... when reading these notes, an expressive picture of rural life opens up before your eyes..."

The book "Georgian Folk Songs and the Associated Legends", published in 1957, did a great job at the time. But the correlation between oral and musical examples was violated in it. The 2021 edition of the Folklore Center entitled "Kartlian Songs" serves to fill this "gap", mainly with archival materials of the State Folklore Center – sheet music, photographs, full autobiography; correspondence and various publications.

The author's inscription on the copy of "The Legends"(1957) preserved at the Folklore State Center reads : „Verba Volant, Scribta Manent“. Indeed, to Georgian people and culture Giorgi Svanidze left numerous legends, about one hundred Georgian folk songs, and their variants collected by him.

Thea Kasaburi, Nana Valishvili
Compilers of the collection

About Foreign Polyphony

Heterophonic Polyphony of Q'ero People

Q'ero people live in Peru, South America, near the legendary Cusco architectural ensemble. There is speculation that they are the surviving descendants of the Incas. The Q'eros belong to the Quechua people and are known among ethnomusicologists for keeping their musical traditions more faithfully than other South American Indians.

The Q'eros are especially musically active at animal fertility rituals and carnival ("Puklai taqui" songs). Each domestic animal has its own celebration, ritual and song. In carnival songs, the themes of birds, animals and medicinal plants are also relevant.



Q'ero people

In fertility rituals the Q'eros refer to mountain deities Apus and the spirits of the earth Pachamama, to successfully restore vital forces for

healthy public and cosmological relationships. For the Q'eros it is important to have a balance between the polar opposites of vital forces called "yanantin", which is somewhat similar to the philosophical system of the Chinese "yin and yang".

For the Q'eros ritual songs are the equivalent of a sacrifice to a deity, a gift to the gods, and funeral motifs in singing serve to share grief with others and thus neutralize them by social efforts. Instead, cheerful motifs are frequent in carnival songs.

Ritual songs are sung in sort of "separate" phrases at Palchaska holiday. While singing, singers are allowed to individually express their lyrical feelings, especially those reflecting complaint, as a result we get a polyphonic, heterophonic texture.

Interestingly, the Q'eros do not show the feeling of chord, harmonious vertical when singing. Their polyphony is a time-bound agreement of similar phrases, which finally come in a long unison, which they call *aisariikui* ("stretching"). Songs often end on the same basic tone, accompanied by bourdon – an extended tone. Such songs are called "taki". Sustained sound is also caused by the expectation of a positive response from the deities. Bourdon is sometimes performed by a wind instrument, the sound of which may not match main tone of the song.

Ethnomusicologist Cohen explains the ability to perform this by the fact that Q'ero people can perceive each voice part with distinct independence, especially by expressing this or that phrase in different time (beginning-ending).

However, at the end of the phrase, everyone converges in unison. Sustained unison is needed precisely for everyone to get together.

It should be noted that both women and men sing with such "stratified" phrases. Sometimes a similar sound is achieved through wind instruments. Songs of some genre are sung by Q'ero people in full unison.

Such musicking is used by the Q'eros during some carnival activities, when groups of women perform their own, different songs in one place. In this process, members of one group do not pay attention to the other. Men play the flutes – *pinkullo* and *kanchis sipa*. None of *pinkullo* flutes harmonize with each other because nobody cares about common tuning when making the instrument. This factor is also one of the examples of the Q'eros' "singing separately".

We know the centers of polyphony of a kind of canonical imitation, such as the traditions of the Ainu and Sutartines of the Lithuanians. But here, with the Q'eros, such "horizontal" polyphony is at first glance more spontaneous, but is, in fact, marked with well-thought-out functionality.

Tamaz Gabisonia

Associate professor at Ilia State University

One traditional ritual

Funeral Rite in Pshavi

*"Death is beautified by mourning,
Deceased brother - by sister's lament..."
Vazha-Pshavela*

Funeral rites, respect and reverence for the deceased have always been given great attention in Pshavi. Ancient Pshavians believed, that the souls of the deceased could bring benefit and harm to the living – those who remained in this world, depending on how they treated them in life. From this comes a number of rituals, that have survived to this day: keening, horse racing, constructing a "spring of soul", composing commemoration verses. Of these, the most important sign of respect for the deceased was and still is the tradition of weeping with singing. Pshavian keening is individual for each deceased, is performed impromptu, is a complete improvisation, and its repetition is forbidden. It can be said that keening is almost the

only genre where Pshavian woman is free in both poetry and music. It is a kind of arena where she reveals her artistic talent and creative skills and leaves a lasting impression on the listener.

In Pshavi they say that a good keener "will make even a stone cry". Keening over a brave man is a mandatory, respectable and sacred duty for a woman. This is confirmed by Vazha-Pshavela's words: "grieving over a brave man always adorns a woman".

It is strange, but in some parts of East Georgian mountains, even in Pshavi, it was shameful for a woman to mourn over her husband, so the wife restrained herself and kept grief in her heart. However, it was decent to weep over a brother, with whom Pshavian woman buried her cut hair.

The tradition of keening was, at the same time, a kind of competition of women's poetic-musical talents. The keeners wept alternately, as if competing in good weeping – who would utter more heart-piercing words.

The ritual of weeping in Pshavi was as follows: the keener would take an item belonging to the deceased (a sword or dagger, if he was a man), and on the knees or standing, would walk around even to the deceased, openly told people about pros and cons of the latter; would tell everything about the deceased.

Pshavian lament is characterized in a dynamic performance. The keener gradually enters into excitement, the ability of imagination opens, the voice rises, expression of the timbre enhances, this naturally evokes emotions, both in the keener and the family of the deceased; encourages other keeners, who, at the end of each phrase, join in by saying oho-ho-hoo with sobbing!

Pshavian keening has a strongly defined meter and constitutes a nine-syllable verse without rhythm. For instance:

"I have grown old, and so have my tears,
I have grown old, and so have my words,
Ah, look at my life path,

It is battered by tears!

Keeners alternate. Each of them creates a new, original text. "This funeral ritual was like a theater, they cried with such a voice, I had the feeling that the song itself was crying, tears flowed over every word spoken, as a child I loved to watch and listen to it, I memorized and then repeated it to myself." – from the childhood memories of the ethnophore Tina Nakeuri.

There often are metaphorical images in the texts of laments, which add expressiveness and artistry to the verse, and reveal the entire tragedy of death to the listener.

Death I raised a child, for you!

I'm not like other mothers,

I am very saddened,

I am standing in a pool of blood and tears,

I had been happy until now,

And now I am the sun of grief"...

It is interesting that a Pshavian talks with his deceased even during work, he scythes and distracts himself, this explains frequent insertion of laments in Pshavian scything songs. In Pshavi these songs are called *gvrini*. Women's *gvrini* is called *zuzuni*. It is noteworthy that the song "Ghughuni" performed during scything in mountainous Racha and "Korkali" sung by women during reaping had a similar function. These songs served to gain the goodwill of the souls of the deceased, to lighten the burden of labor, and to dispel grief.

Mother is considered to be main keener in Pshavi. Her weeping is the most heartbreaking. "Nature answers in bass to a weeping mother," – they say in Pshavi.

Dark clouds have gathered

Above Muku (a mountain and a village at its foot in
Pshavi)

Mother will start weeping,

The mountains will respond in bass to her,

So many tears were shed

That the ground was washed away by water"...

In the texts of Pshavian keening, it is customary to talk about the fact that has already happened, been seen and will be experienced in the future.

Good keeners such as: Nino Kistauri, Marta Tselauri, Marta Ghurbelashvili and others are still remembered in Pshavi. Men rarely lament over the deceased in Pshavi, but the names of male keeners have survived: Did mikheili, Khazara and Niko Elizbarashvili, Chrela Udzilauri, etc. Even if a man himself grieved the loss of a child, a brother or an adopted brother, he would still go to another village to mourn over a brave man, to speak out his grief, he would take the weapon of his deceased with him, and would also weep over his deceased when keening.

The sound of male weeping is terrible! Pshavian ethnophore Valiko Tsotskolauri still emotionally recalls Mose Mgelashvili wept over his wife.

During my folklore expedition to the village of Shuapkho in 2019, I found an example of Martha Chokhelashvili's weeping of the betrothed, which I recorded from Tekle Badrishvili. She also told a story: the betrothed woman Martha broke the rule and from the Aragvi of Pshavi she went alone to the Iori of Pshavi to mourn over her fiancé, she also took with her the wreaths intended for wedding, she reached the groom's house at sunrise and immediately started keening:

"The sun has risen and I have come too,

Mother, not mother-in-law,

Here I am the bride, without the groom,

Where is your handsome son?

I want to hand over a horse and a saddle to him."

Then she took the crowns, put one on her head, put the other - on the head of the deceased, swore allegiance until death, and remained faithful to this oath for the rest of her life.

The tradition of keening is still alive in Pshavi. From a few keeners distinguished are: Sanata Machurishvili and Tamar Gorzamauli. I will never

forget Sanata's keening over famous folklorist Tris-Tristan Makhauri in the village of Magharoskari (Pshavi), in 2018.

Pshavian keening is an important genre of funeral poetry, which, together with Pshavian *kapia* (an impromptu satirical-humorous verse), was granted the status of intangible cultural heritage in 2020.

I hope that this indigenous and unique folk tradition of honoring the deceased will live on for a long time to come in Pshavian life mode.

Nino Nakeuri

*a student at Giorgi Mtatsmindeli
University of Chanting*

North Caucasian Musical Folklore

Adyghe Folk Music

The study of the ethnocultural relations between the Georgians and the peoples of the North Caucasus – Abkhazians, Adyghes, Balkars, Vainakhs, Dagestanis, Ossetians – allows to draw important conclusions based on ethnographic and folk music data, which will undoubtedly interest Georgian and foreign ethnomusicologists, ethnologists, musicians and researchers interested in Caucasian studies. Therefore, we have included a new section "North Caucasian Folk Music" in our bulletin. This issue of the Bulletin offers an overview of Adyghe folk music.

At various times Adyghe folk music was studied by A. Balakirev, S. Taneyev, M. Gnesin, A. Grebnev, L. Kanchaveli, G. Chich. The multi-volume edition "Adyghe Folk Songs and Instrumental Melodies" comprises numerous examples of the dialects (Shapsugh, Bzhedukh, Kabardian and Circassian) of Adyghe folk music.

Main type characteristic of Adyghe folk music is drone polyphony. Most of the two-part songs are performed by a soloist-singer against the background of a unison choir. However, there also are three-part songs featuring a beginner singer,

choir and instrument, whose part is more developed than those of the singer and choir.

The peculiarity of Adyghe folk music is diatony and natural major-minor. Harmonic minor, which is more commonly found in instrumental music, is not considered characteristic of Adyghe music. The harmony is based on tonic-dominant functional dependence.

According to genres Adyghe songs can be classified as: labor songs, ritual and family songs, healing songs-spells, historical-heroic songs, "Nart songs". The latter constitutes a solid part of Adyghe folk music and are nurtured by the "epos of the Narts". This is the name for the epos of the peoples of the Caucasus, referring to the local ancient layer of traditional folk art. The term "nart" is the common name for the epos heroes, who form a peculiar group. Nart epos is a work of heroic-adventure genre rich in mythological motifs. It is a multi-plot narrative genre with compositionally bound and solid structure, which conveys heroic adventures of the characters through poetic and prosaic texts.



Adyghe string-bowed folk instrument Shichapshin

Most of the North Caucasian, including Adyghe, songs are inspired by the epos of the Narts. In Adyghe life mode, Nart narratives have been preserved in the form of songs ("Nart Pshinala") and prose ("Nart Khabar"). Nart folk songs "Pshinatli" are performed both with and without the instrumental accompaniment – by a beginner and a

choir, the beginner sings poetic text, which, is followed by the choir's response with as a refrain constructed on glossolalias ("ua", "risa", "ori-ra", etc), after each couplet. G. Chich compares Nart and historical-heroic songs from the stand point of musical expression. According to the author, Nart songs are characterized in recitation, declamation, short musical structures, ostinato melody, choir accompaniment, and for the songs of historical-heroic genre - breadth of melody, high texture, and large leaps (sixth, seventh, which is filled subsequently), tense musical recitative of the soloist and choral accompaniment in unison, fourth or, more often, in fifth. In addition, historical and heroic songs are characterized in the singing of a male choir against the background of a novice singer-narrator, whose role is sometimes played by folk instruments. One of the main features of Adyghe historical and heroic songs is the abundance of fourth intonations, which play an important role in the musical-intonation arrangement. According to Chich the principle of melodic-ornamental variation is characteristic of Adyghe folk song. Ornamentation is common in vocal music, but is more evident in instrumental music.

Adyghe instrumental music is represented by wind, string-bowed and rattle instruments. It should also be noted that vocal music is the leading in Adyghe traditional music, the role of instrument is pronounced in the vocal-instrumental genre. A pipe-like wind instrument *bzhami* is associated with shepherding, and pastoral tunes are played on it.

Rather developed melody of *bzhami* is characterized in trills, complexity of rhythm and variability of meter. According to people, playing *bzhami* had a calming effect on the sheep. There was a tune performed at night after the herd of sheep was housed. "Crying on the Water" which was performed on *bzhami* in the ancient ritual when searching for the corpse of a drowned person.

It is a solo melody consisting of a few simple phrases (the repeated phrases are varied). It has variable meter and a complex, sharp rhythm.

Shichapshin is an Adyghe string-bowed folk instrument, which is used as an accompaniment to the songs of many genres. It accompanies solo songs related to working process: "Bear Head", "Ox-cart Driver's song", "Kabardian". In the latter, the instrumental part sometimes follows the song in unison, and sometimes it is two-part – the bass against the background of an instrumental transcription of the vocal part; it is rhythmically developed and characterized in fourth consonants at the beginning and end of phrases.



Adyghe wind folk instrument Kamyl

A typical Adyghe example is the song "Saint George". This song is an appeal to the patron of hunting, with *shichapshin* accompaniment. It is a two-part song. The instrument joins the choir and follows it in unison.

Nart songs are also accompanied by *shichapshin*. These songs are usually two-part (a beginner and choir). The choir is unison and is constructed on ostinato figuration. *Shichapshin* part is solo and repeats the part of the choir.

"Nart Dance" is performed on *shichapshin*. An interesting example of this instrumental piece is its "Kabardian version". This two-part melody attracts attention for frequent jumps in parallel fourths.

The Adyghe song, which is accompanied by *Shichapshin*, starts with an instrumental introduction, first the choir joins in, and then the

soloist. Introduction contains the musical material which is repeated even after the vocal part joins in the accompaniment. The phrase of the instrumental introduction, in fact, underlies the accompaniment of the whole song. It may be repeated in a varied way. The instrumental prelude, interlude and post-lude of the song are essentially the same musical material. Often the accompaniment emphasizes harmonious support, especially the tonic, as well as the fourth consonance. *Shichapshin* merges with the parts of bass and beginner as a counterpoint.

The Adygs, like the Georgians, are very fond of *Garmon*, which is mainly present at wedding celebrations. Namely, the melody “Bringing out the Bride” (an instrumental piece for the accordion performed when the bride enters the groom's house) is played on it. At this time the accordion melody sounds against the background of a rattle instrument – *Pkhatsich*. The rattle part is a movement with rhythmically equal lengths, while the accordion part is a solo melody dominated by the leaps of fourth intervals.

Pkhatsichi a traditional Circassian Adyghe wooden percussion instrument (idiophone), is a bundle of 5 wooden plates and is played with one hand (in case of one instrument) and with both hands (in case of two), in an ensemble with wind, string instruments or *Garmon*.



Adyghe wooden percussion instrument Pkhatsich

Wind instruments were also widespread in Adygea: *Kamyl*, *Sirin* and *bjem*. Among them, *Kamyl* has been the most popular. Before the

appearance of *Shichapshin*, Circassian dance melodies were performed on *Kamyl*. It is an archaic instrument, and the Circassians attributed magical properties to it due to its mysterious, inspiring timbre.

Ostinato is characteristic not only of the choir part in the song, but also of the accompaniment part – its single-bar ostinato phrase is repeated throughout the song. Most songs are in the meter of two (4/4, 4/2, 2/4). The rhythm is varied: there are syncopes, trioles, quintoles, dotted rhythm. Frequent is the rhythmic move - eighth with two sixteenths, which is very typical for Georgian *chonguri* and *panduri*. The songs are couplet; a couplet is presented as a phrase or sentence. There is a case where a sentence is presented with two phrases, alternately performed by a soloist and the choir.

Interestingly, some Adyghe patterns have an intonational-rhythmic similarity with the Abkhazian. Also similar is the tradition of unison or single-part accompaniment. N. Maisuradze has researched direct connection of certain Adyghe examples with Georgian songs. G. Chich points to the richness of ornamentation in Adyghe music, especially in the accordion part, which indicates the proximity to Tushuri. Adyghe folklore is also similar to Ossetian, which is primarily manifested in Nart songs, the rule and manner of their performance (beginning by a tense voice in a high register), accompaniment of the choir. The abundance of fourth intonations is also similar.

Purely instrumental music is relatively underdeveloped in Adyghe folk music. Such examples are characterized in Aeolian, Phrygian, Mixolydian modes. In many cases, the modes are incomplete (secondal sound is not visible). The tunes for string instruments are usually two-part, with parallel fourths. In some cases, there is an episodic combination of single- and two-part singing. For example, lower voice is periodically eliminated and joins in where fourth or fifth

consonants are formed. Upper voice is mobile and characterized in tertiary movement in cadence. The latter is also typical for the dance tunes performed on accordion. It is noteworthy that dance melody is also performed single-part on the accordion. Variable meter is typical for wind-instrument melodies. Dance melodies are in the meter of two, their form is a recurring variable sentence.

The material prepared by Maka Khardziani basing on M. Shilakadze's work: "Traditional Musical Instruments and Georgian-North Caucasian Ethocultural Relations".
Tbilisi, 2007

One New publication

Giorgi Svanidze. „Kartlian Songs“

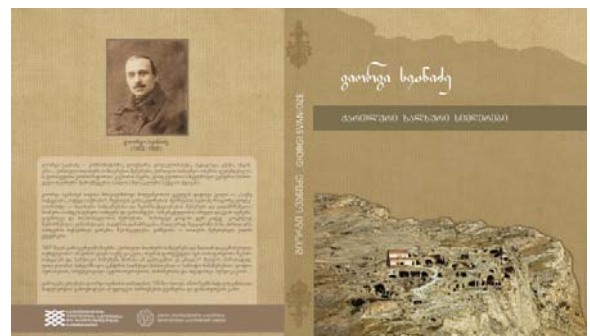
At the end of 2021, the Folklore State Center of Georgia published Giorgi Svanidze's anthological collection – “Kartlian Folk Songs”. Giorgi Svanidze was a composer, choirmaster, folklorist, teacher, doctor, engineer, collector of Georgian (Kartlian) songs, initiator of Children's Opera, a member of the Georgian Composers' Union, secretary of the Music Section at the State Folklore Center (then the House of Folk Art).

For ethnomusicologists Svanidze is especially valuable as a folklorist – collector and savior of folk songs and oral folklore: he recorded about 100 different variants of folk songs, described and preserved them for generations with full observance of syncretism, stratification of ethno music theater, which was still alive at the time, made us actually feel natural environment and tradition of Kartlian song.

G. Svanidze's book “Georgian Folk Songs and Related Legends”, with the notated variants of several folk songs was published in 1957, however, this did not fully reflect musical side of the songs conveyed in the legends. It was to fill this gap that the Folklore State Center decided to publish

Svanidze's musical manuscripts preserved at the Center's archive. As a result, up to 60 completely unique song examples or unknown variants of familiar songs were added to the songs published in 1957. Thus, the collection brought to the light of day unique Kartlian songs preserved in the memory of people and recorded almost a hundred years ago, most of which are no longer encountered in the life mode and are not performed on stage. It is also important that most of the villages where these songs were recorded are currently located on the territory occupied by Russia...

Along with the published and unpublished musical examples and legends, the collection includes Giorgi Svanidze's complete biography, the names of the tradition bearers in Kartli in 1916-1950, as well as various documented information or notes, articles or letters that were scattered in the National Archive of Georgia and various personal collections.



A new publication

The compilers of the collection are Thea Kasaburi and Nana Valishvili, music editors – Nana Valishvili and Levan Veshapidze, literary editor – Baia Asieshvili, computer services – Levan Veshapidze, designer – Nikoloz Gogashvili, translator – Maia Kachkachishvili; the documents and publications preserved in the archives were searched for by Thea Kasaburi, the archival materials of the Folklore Center were processed by Nana Kalandadze. The publication is dedicated to Giorgi Svanidze's 130th anniversary.

History of One Song

Two-story Round Dance Ze-mkrelo

The lyrics of this song were recorded by Giorgi Svanidze from the family of Glakha Dzamelashvili, in the village of Tkviavi (Kartli) in 1916. And the legend – from Dimitri Japaridze in the small town of Tskhinvali the same year. Here is an excerpt from Giorgi Svanidze's book "Georgian Folk Songs":

"The text of 'Ze-Mkrelo' is very old. The analysis suggests that it should have had a rite nature. Similar to the Svan "Murkvamoba", this two-story round dance is a part of the cycle of the spring fertility festival. This might be evidenced by the request for barley and bread, the plea for "Ze-Mkrelo" to come soon and not cause harm, the mention of "sapara wall" in the text, etc.

Unlike other round dances "Ze-Mkrelo", needs fewer participants because it is performed in two floors.

Those in the bottom circle with their hands on each other's shoulders need a lot of effort and knee endurance to support upper circle and keep moving until the song is over. Leading singer in the bottom circle will start with a sort of introduction. He will be joined by the entire bottom circle.

When bottom circle finishes singing, the top one repeats the singing of the bottom one. Finally, when the bottom circle decides, they will signal the upper circle by slowing down the movement and the round dance will be ended jointly.

Not in all villages of Kartli "Ze-Mkrelo" is performed in the same way. Thus, the text is varied. One of the verses is as follows:

Upper circle, come down, If you don't come down by yourself, we'll throw you down by force.

Upper circle responds:

Bottom circle, why do not you come up. If you don't come up by yourself, leave the circle.

Bottom circle:

Upper circle, do not harm us, do not give us fine-grained, barley and wheat...

About this variant of "Ze-mkrelo" I was told that one summer, it snowed during threshing. The villages of Ptsa and Tkotsa in Kartli were covered in snow. People were very scared. Church bells started ringing. Whole village was crying. At that moment the snow began to melt. Before supper they finished threshing, and started winnowing in the evening. Dimitri Japaridze from Tskhinvali had heard this story from his aunt. Dimitri had a friend, an old shop-keeper, who drank a lot, which is why he was nicknamed "clod-swallower". This man was once a good tar-player. Tar was hanging in his dining room, and if some respectable client came to spend time, only then Mikheil (this was his real name) took the tar, played it and sang with hoarse voice. Even though he had no voice, many people still flocked to him. This was facilitated by the fact that he was a good talker. „Clod-swallower" like his senior comrade Dimitri Japaridze, was a bunch of old stories. When Dimitri finished the story, we asked this old man – Mikheil, if he knew or had heard anything about "Ze-mkrelo". He straightened his long beard, ran his fingers over his mustache, after a little thought, he began: sometimes this was added to "Ze-mkrelo":

You are protected by a wall around, you don't need a shield or a sword...

The text of "Ze-mkrelo" sometimes included "protest" (his words), telling about the poverty of peasants, oppression by master, injustice, slavery. In "Ze-mkrelo", – the speaker continued, – a peasant would include a poem with a different idea into the song. If there was no person loyal to the master next to the peasant, in the round dance "Ze-Mkrelo" he would add a poem:

Even if we harvest wheat with large grains, Even if the days are bright and sunny for threshing, The best goes to the rich, Small and crushed grains will be left to peasants...

Here is the song "Ze-mkrelo", recorded By Giorgi Svanidze in Tkviavi in 1916.

ზე-მყრელო
Ze-mqrelo

ზე - მყრე - ლო ძირ - სა და ჩა - მო -
ze - mqre - lo dzir - sa da cha - mo -

ზე - მყრე - ლო ზე - მყრე - ლო ძირ - სა და ჩა - მო -
ze - mqre - lo ze - mqre - lo dzir - sa da cha - mo -

სა - ყრე - ლო ჩა - მო - დი
sa - qre - lo cha - mo - di

სა - ყრე - ლო თუ ჩა - მო - ხვალ და ჩა - მო - დი
sa - qre - lo tu cha - mo - khval da cha - mo - di

თუ ა - რა ძა - ლით ჩა - მოგ - ყრი
tu a - ra dza - lit cha - mog - qri

თუ ა - რა ძა - ლით ჩა - მოგ - ყრი ვა - რა - ლე ბი - ჭო
tu a - ra dza - lit cha - mog - qri va - ra - le bi - ch'o

ვა - რა - ლე ვა - რი ვა - რა - ლი ვა - რა - ლე
 va - ra - le va - ri va - ra - li va - ra - le

ვა - რა - ლე ვა - რი ვა - რა - ლი ვა - რა - ლე ვა - რა - ლე
 va - ra - le va - ri va - ra - li va - ra - le va - ra - le

ვა - რა - ლე ვა - რი ვა - რა - ლი ვა - რა - ლე.
 va - ra - le va - ri va - ra - li va - ra - le.

ბი - ჭო ვა - რა - ლე ვა - რი ვა - რა - ლი ვა - რა - ლე.
 bi - ch'o va - ra - le va - ri va - ra - li va - ra - le.

ზე-მყრელო, ზე-მყრელო,
 ძირსა და ჩამოსაყრელო,
 თუ ჩამოხვალ და ჩამოდი,
 თუ არა, ძალით ჩამოგყრი.

ze-mqrelo, ze-mqrelo,
 dzirsa da chamosaqrelo,
 tu chamokhval da chamodi,
 tu ara, dzalit chamogqri.

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