## NINO KALANDADZE-MAKHARADZE

# THE MULTIPART LYRICAL CRADLE SONG IN GEORGIA

The aim of the present paper is to study the artistic features of the Georgian multipart "cradle song" and to determine the bases of its provenance. In my research I have used existing transcriptions, fieldwork and archive audio-materials and also commercially available recording.

Before starting analyzing "the cradle song" (lullaby) I think it useful to draw the reader's attention to a homophonic song meant to lull the baby to sleep. In Georgia this very significant part of folklore songs is known by the name "Nana", and as anywhere else, in this country, too, it is performed by a woman. It is noteworthy that specimens of the same function and of a similar name can be found among many peoples of the Caucasus and the Mediterranean. For example, among Circassians (Adighea) "Nanoured" is the name of a mother's song; in Armenia the cradle song bears the name "Nanik", in Azerbaijan it is "Nenni-bala", or "Nenni-nina"; in Italy and the Basque province in Spain, too, it is called "Nana" (Mamaladze, 1968:81-82). Scholars tend to explain this similarity by pointing to the presence of the ancient cultural traditions, common to this area.

Short phrases, the ostinato character, the rocking rhythm, an unclosed, "open" form (it goes on until the baby falls asleep), unlimited improvisation and simplicity assign a special place to this specimen in the genre system of authentic folklore. I do not call a lullaby a "song" deliberately. People themselves do not perceive it as a complete singing form. During the fieldworks I have heard many a time that "Nana is not a song, it is performed in a low voice, just to yourself, crooning" (Kalandadze, Shvelidze, Zumbadze, 1986). As Elene Lobzhanidze from Racha says "Nana is sung to lull the child to sleep, with "ghughuni" (imitating a dove sound) (Zandukeli, 1977:39).

The tunes of the Georgian lullaby are of two types. The first is characterized by a narrow range, repetitive movement of the melody by tones in secondal cohesion, preserving the same tonic level, moving from one sound to another by sliding, the use of an appeal-exclamation, transferring the voice with the ascending glissando to the highest note (ex. 1, 2). This type of lullaby is comparatively old and is very similar to the melodic formulae of magic incantations. The second type comprises the specimens more highly developed melodically, rhythmically and structurally, and they are chiefly characteristic of the lowland regions (ex. 3).

The repertoire of Georgian women also includes a homophonic or multipart ritual "Iavnana", which has a specific goal – to cure children of infectious diseases. It was

performed by family members or by invited performers who sung and walked around the child's bed or around the room, and quite often their singing was accompanied by playing stringed instruments (*panduri*, *chonguri* [long neck lutes] or bowed *chuniri*), (for more detail about this see Zumbadze, 2005:115-128).

"Nana" (lullaby) and "Iavnana" (healing song) are based on the same melodyformula. The melody, which lulls the child to sleep, is as archaic as "Iavnana". In the traditional folklore of a society with highly developed agriculture, thinking in melodyformulae is a typical phenomenon (Zemtsovsky, 1972:185) and various genres of Georgian musical folklore abound with such intonational formulae (Aslanishvili, 1954:90-169).

The melody starts at the third degree of a scale (the third can be minor, major, or neutral) moves up towards the fifth degree, then descends towards the tonic; it is characterized by a triple metre, soft syncope, the range of fifth, and moderate melodic movements without jumps. It is melodious and has a clearly defined closed form (ex. 4).

The functional difference between "Nana" and "Iavnana" is mainly manifested in verbal texts. The simplest specimens of lullabies are sometimes performed without any words, just on the vowel "a". In some cases the single word "nana" is repeated from beginning to end. In cases of the presence of long poetic texts a baby is asked to go to sleep, the parent is caressing a child; the child's world, his/her happy future, historical, social or patriotic motifs are also accentuated. As for the versions of the healing "Iavnana", their texts are concentrated on pleasing the "Batonebi' ("masters", "lords") who bring a disease to the child, so the song is aimed at gaining their favour. The text of a healing song sometimes also mentions a few mythical symbols, like a gold cradle, flowers, poplar (tree of life), sapphire, wine cellar etc.

I think that the general similarity of the situations of the lullaby and the healing song (baby in bed), and also an indirect semantic connection between them (peaceful sleep is an essential condition for a child's health) result in a general musical-aesthetic similarity, they also underline the resemblance of the intonational and verbal formulae, the proximity of the metric-rhythmic picture, the calm, moderate tempo, and a soft manner of performance. All these features sometimes result in a neglect of the existing differences between these genres and causes confusion between the titles of these two functionally different specimens.

As I have already mentioned above, in Georgia, along with the specimens of monophonic lullabies there are also a multipart lullabies. It is not a genre of traditional devotional folklore, it is not meant to put the child to sleep, it should be grouped with the lyrical songs and may be performed by both men and women, or by mixed ensembles.

It is difficult to say when did the multipart lullaby become a part of the family musical tradition. Unlike the monophonic specimens, which were performed several times each day, multipart lullabies could have been performed only on exceptional occasions, like during childbirth rituals, or when the baby was first put into the cradle. Also, when gathered to do some collective work, it would not have been difficult for the relatives and neighbors to perform a lullaby as a multipart song. Therefore the family musicking may be considered to be one of the ways of facilitating the emergence of the multipart model.

The second way leads us to the choral traditional music concerts which started at the end of the 19th century. This small part of women's traditional folklore, which, as scholars suggest, may be dated to the remote past, was not forgotten or lost by men (in the folklore ensembles of that period only men took part), on the contrary it was preserved in the intonational fund and used in multipart lyrical compositions. Undoubtedly this process was greatly promoted by the national liberation movement, which brought to the foreground the foremost obligation of the Georgian mother – to bring up heroes selflessly devoted to their motherland. In the first official choir of Georgian traditional song, known as "Lado Agniashvili Choir," only men sang (they also had a female group, which performed only once and was disbanded). Multipart male versions of lullabies (Kakhetian "Nana" and Megrelian "Nanina") were included in the program of the choral performance in 1894-1895 (Lekishvili, 1961:50, 57-58). It is noteworthy that the polyphonic lullaby was among the first genres that Georgian men performed on the concert stage.

The first transcribed examples of multipart lullables appeared by the end of the 19th century. In the first issue of the journal "Nobati" in 1884 an example of a three-part lullaby with the text by Ilia Chavchavadze, and recorded from Romanoz Dzamsashvili, was published (Dzamsashvili, 1984: 16). In a songbook of Georgian folk songs, assembled by Zakaria Chkhikvadze for educational purposes, there are two examples of polyphonic lullables, with texts written by Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli (Chkhikvadze, 1896:3,15).

Sometimes the reason for men performing a lullaby was the socio-cultural environment where women lived. In the 1930s a Georgian composer Shalva Mshvelidze recorded a two-part specimen of the Adjarian lullaby (ex. 5) from men in the village of Gurdzavli, because according to local custom he had no right to meet local women (Mshvelidze, 1932:2/35). Over the centuries this region of southwestern Georgia had been under Turkish sway and the Moslem religion forbade women to meet strange men, the more so to sing in their presence.

In different regions the musical language of multipart lullabies is based on the compositional principles of the polyphony characteristic of difference provinces.

In 1919-1921 Giorgi Svanidze recorded specimens of drone diaphony from Kartlian women. The stanzas are separated by spoken phrases based on a melodic jump on the fifth (ex. 6).

A two-part specimen, recorded by M. Jordania in Kakheti, in 1961, is also very interesting; it is very similar to the "Iavnanas to be performed at God's court" (ex. 7).

In the village of Pari in Svaneti in a two-part lullaby, sung by the members of one family (recorded by Sh. Mshvelidze), it is easy to notice a similarity to chordal unit polyphony characteristic of this province (ex. 8). The Svans, settled in Kakheti, members

of "the Zedashe" ensemble perform the three-part lullaby to the accompaniment of the chuniri (bowed lute) and the change (harp) (audio ex. 1). Lately a four-part version of the "Svan nanaila" (nanaila – Svan name for lullaby) also appeared in the repertoire of the ensemble "Pesvebi" (Roots) (ex. 9).

The two-part "nana" recorded by the composer David Toradze in the Racha province, definitely represents a recording of the two upper voices of the three-part version; in the parenthesis I have given the bass sounds (I-VII-I) supposedly to be performed by the bass part. In this version the top part follows the supposed bass part in an octave (ex. 10).

The greater number of polyphonic (three-part) Iullabies occurs in the Samegrelo province, the province where lyricism is the chief characteristic element of musical performance style. The characteristic traits of the Megrelian specimens are the descending type of the melody, which bears affinity to the intonational world of funeral dirges. The multipart Megrelian specimens abound in the features characteristic of secondary, "stage" folklore – the use of dynamic nuances (pianissimo, crescendo, diminuendo, and rittenuto). In Garaqanidze's opinion concentrating attention on the dynamic nuances in the secondary performance may have stemmed from the influence of European choral music (Garaqanidze, 2007:118). There are cases of singing with a closed mouth, and using such a complicated song structure as alternating a trio with a choir.

The three-part lullabies, widely established in choral practice, are present in the recordings of the 1930s. The practice of naming multipart lullabies according to their regional identity, which is very characteristic of stage folklore, must have originated during this very period. The performance of the multipart "nanina" at variety concerts at Soviet art festivals of folklore music, discs with its recordings and its frequent airplay facilitated its popularization; on the other hand this newly found popularity played a negative role as in the repertoires of many different choirs and in family ensembles only one, the most popular variant of lullabies, were established. This similarity is observed even in their notated transcriptions. The three-part lullabies, recorded at different times in Guria by Kote Potskhverashvili, Grigol Chkhikvadze, Anzor Erkomaishvili, Nana Valishvili and in Imereti by Edisher Savitski, bear great similarity to one another (ex. 11-15). In my opinion, they are different interpretations of the same song, based on a traditional foundation and subsequently popularized by means of concerts and the mass media. This is how Vano Mchedlishvili's version of "Kakhetian lullaby", Nino Togonidze's "Kartlian lullaby" became widespread. Avxenti Megrelidze's "Gurian lullaby" became very popular because it was used in Siko Dolidze's early Georgian classic film "Dariko".

Especially interesting is the study of multipart lullabies in Guria, a province well-known for the most contrapuntal polyphonic thinking.

The specimen that has survived as "Guruli nana" (Gurian lullaby) reveals the influence of Avxenti Megrelidze, the great master of Georgian choral art (1877-1953). He arranged a lullaby he had heard from his mother Melinki Bolkvadze for the ensem-

ble of women chonguri-players (Moistsrapishvili, 2005:274).

The ascending movement from the third of the A scale and the range of the fifth attest to its association with devotional-ritual chant. Though an unusual fact for traditional everyday life - playing several chonguris together, the alternating of the solosinger with the duet against the background of the chonguri accompaniment, performing the bass part with a closed mouth, inserting recitative phrases between the stanzas, the cadences resulting from the unison leading of the high voices - all these features reveal the artificial character of the item, specially created for a stage performance of the academic choral program (Megrelidze, 1986: No 1).

In Gurian versions of the multipart Lullaby the verbal text is suitable for the ritual of putting the baby into the cradle for the first time.

"Ilias nana" (Ilia's lullaby) is attested as one of the names of the lyrical multipart cradle song in Guria. In this version the Georgian poet Ilia Chavchavadze's wellknown poem is used as the verbal material. Avxenti Megrelidze reworked this specimen as well on the basis of the lullaby melody performed by Irakli Gujabidze, living in Supsa in the 40s of the last century, but this lullaby is much closer to traditional musical thinking than the above-mentioned "Gurian Nana" remade by the same choirmaster. By the traditional chords present in the three-part choir, with the refined, technically very complicated and elegant accompaniment of the chonguri, this lullaby is acknowledged as a brilliant specimen of patriotic lyrics. (see the notated supplement). The refrain, inserted between every two stanzas, makes it a special form (bars

The lullaby recorded in 1988 by ethnomusicologists Nana Valishvili from the People's Artist<sup>1</sup> of Georgia, the leader of the ensemble "Iadoni" Giorgi Salukvadze (1919-1990), stands apart from other versions. This version (ex. 16) begins with a comparatively long, 8-bar chonguri intro. The middle part of the instrumental texture represents the tune of the Gurian childbirth round-dance song "Mze shina da mze gareta". This song was recorded in 1902 by Dimitri Araqishvili as a lullaby (Araqishvili, 1908, No. 1). The triple metre with a soft syncope reveals the connections with a round dance.

Most of the Gurian multipart lullabies and some Megrelian versions are connected to the choir-master Kitsi Gegechkori, and are performed with the chonguri accompa-

According to Artem Erkomaishvili (1887-1967) in Guria lullabies, like the healing songs, were performed in the old 1st (f-a-c-f) and 2nd (f-a-c-e) tunings. In the specimen recorded from Giorgi Salukvadze the chonguri is in the 3rd (f-g-c-g) tuning.

The manner of performing "Nanina" is indicated as "dasaghighinebeli" (to be performed in a crooning manner, almost humming) (Erkomaishvili, 2005:13). According to Artem Erkomaishvili's information "Nanina" in Guria was performed like other chonguri songs by the first voice, the "modzakhili" voice (voice that follows) and the bass part (ibid). Generally, the traditional authentic performance of men is characterized by singing in a tense, open, full voice. In the multipart lyrical specimens this is replaced

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by a specially softened (possibly imitating women), tender, "sweetened" manner, which, undoubtedly, is conditioned by the specific character of the lullaby genre (mother's emotions, childish images) and lyrical character.

In Artem Erkomaishvili's notated collection "Nana" is presented in two variants. The first is a monophonic performance of the multipart lullaby with a chonguri accompaniment and it coincides with the top voice of Avxenti Megrelidze's "Guruli nana". The other is a quite different song which is closer to the men's joyful "Nanina" which is attested to by the developed melodic line, a rather complicated bass part, and the refrain "ovdelia", alien to lulling songs. The great artist seems to have adjusted the lulling text to "Nanina", which was similar in its mood to the former song.

A very original specimen was added to the multipart Gurian "Nanina" songs by the ensemble "Georgica" (ex.17, audio ex. 2). The complicated voice leading, the complex chords resulting from the linear development, are a vivid example of the improvisation possibilities of the male trio. It is unlikely that this song could reach such a technical level in the women's performance (Tsitsishvili, 2007).

The multipart lyrical "Cradle nana" is distinguished by the simplicity of its musical language, structural laconicism and the simple forms of voice-leading. It has predominantly a homophonic-harmonious texture. It is never polytextual, so the same words are always uttered by the all the voices together. There are no wide ascending or descending voice motions on a same syllable. Quite often singing is accompanied by a musical instrument (panduri, chonguri, chuniri, changi), The role of the accompaniment is chiefly determined by the chordal-harmonic strengthening of the melodic line or texture. Sometimes in the instrumental part the exact doubling of the melodic line or a slight transformation of the melody takes place. The whole intonational material unfolds within the limits of one mode. The modulative plan is undeveloped; if it exists it does not go beyond two tonal centres. The bass part plays the role of a harmonic function. Rhythmic freedom is not allowed. A simple, clear-cut rhythm predominates. Cadences frequently occur in the fifth; the melodic principle, based on moderato voice motions without jumps, leads.

Apart from singing by one ensemble there is also a call and response singing – the solo singer alternating with the choir, or the trio with the choir. The songs consist of stanzas.

In spite of the simple structure these specimens are highly emotional and structurally streamlined. The multipart "Nanina" is an original specimen of lyrical singing.

### Notes

Kalandadze-Makharadze, Nino (compiler). (2002). Akvnis nana (Cradle Nana). Notated Collection. Tbilisi: The Folklore Scientific-Methodological Centre.

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: the title "People's artist" was the highest level of governmental acknowledgement from Soviet officials that artists and sportsmen could have in the USSR

### **Audio Examples**

Example 1: Nanaila. Perf. Ensemble Zedashe. The Rising of Lazarus (2002) SCR, No 5.

Example 2: Guruli Nana. Perf. Ensemble Georgica (1996). V. III, FM 50015, Face Music Switzerland. No 10.

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## **Notated Collections**

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Megrelidze, Avksenti. (2005). Kartuli khalkhuri musika (Georgian Folk Music). Notation Collection. Moistsrapishvili, Nato (compiler). Tbilisi: Sakartvelos matsne (in Georgian).

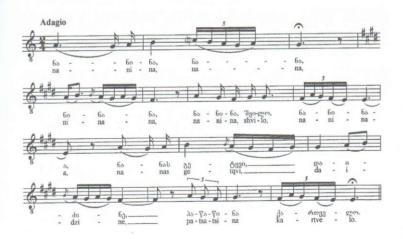
მაგალითი 1. "ნანა" (მოხეური). ჩაწ. მ. ჟორდანიას მიერ 1977 წ. ყაზბეგის რ-ნის სოფ. გარბანში. ნოტირ. ნ. კალანდაძის მიერ **Example 1.** Nana (Khevi). Recorded by M. Jordania. v. Garbani, Qazbegi dist.1977. Transcribed by N. Kalandadze



მაგალითი 2. "ღედო" (მთიულური). ჩაწ. ი. ჟორდანიას მიერ 1984 წ. გუდამაყარში, სოფ. ჩოხში. ნოტირ. ნ. კალანდაძის მიერ **Example 2.** *Dedo* (Mtiuleti).Recorded by M. Jordania. v. Chokhi, Gudamaqari, 1984. Transcribed by N. Kalandadze



მაგალითი 3. "ნანა" (ქართლური). ჩაწ. დ. არაყიშვილის მიერ 1901 წ. გორის მაზრის სოფ. ხოვლეში. იხ. არაყიშვილი 1916 გვ. 83 მაგ. 4 **Example 3.** *Nana* (Kartli). Recorded by D. Araqishvili. v. Khovle. Gori mazra. 1916



მაგალითი 4. "იავნანო" (ქართლ-კახური). ჩაწ. ა. ბენაშვილის მიერ. იხ. "ქართული ხმები"

Example 4. Iavnano (Kartli-Kakheti). Recorded by A. Benashvili, from "Kartuli khmebi"



მაგალითი 5. "ნანა" (აჭარული). ჩაწ. შ. მშეელიძის მიერ ხულოს რ-ნის სოფ. გურძავლში. იხ. ფოლკლორის სახ. ცენტრის არქივი №2/35 **Example 5.** Nana (Achara). Recorded by S. Mshvelidze. v. Gurdzauli, Khulo dist. See archive of Folk Statre Centre #2/35



მაგალითი 4. "იავნანო" (ქართლ-კახური). ჩაწ. ა. ბენაშვილის მიერ. იხ. "ქართული ხმები"

Example 4. Iavnano (Kartli-Kakheti). Recorded by A. Benashvili, from "Kartuli khmebi"



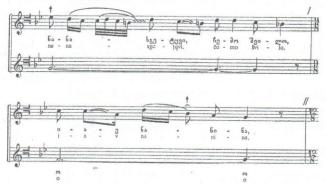
მაგალითი 5. "ნანა" (აჭარული). ჩაწ. შ. მშველიძის მიერ ხულოს რ-ნის სოფ. გურძავლში. იხ. ფოლკლორის სახ. ცენტრის არქივი №2/35 **Example 5.** Nana (Achara). Recorded by S. Mshvelidze. v. Gurdzauli, Khulo dist. See archive of Folk Statre Centre #2/35



ზაგალითი 6. "აკვნის ნანა" (ქართლური). ჩაწ. გ. სვანიძის მიერ ზნაურის რ-ნის სოფ. ძვილეთში. იხ. ფოლკლორის სახ. ცენტრის არქივი №13/36 Example 6. Akvnis Nana (Kartli). Recorded by G. Svanidze. v. Dzvileti, Znauri dist. See archive of Folk Statre Centre #13/36



მაგალითი 7. "ნანა" (კახური). ჩაწ. მ. უორდანიას მიერ ყვარლის რ-ნის სოფ. შილდაში 1962 წ. ნოტირ. ნ. კალანდაძის მიერ Example 7. Nana (Kakheti). Recorded by M. Jordania. v. Shilda, Qvareli dist. 1962. Transcribed by N Kalandadze



მაგალითი 8. "აკვნის ნანა" (სვანური). ჩაწ. ს. მშველიძის მიერ მესტიის რ-ნის სოფ. ფარში. იხ. ფოლკლორის სახ. ცენტრის არქივი №12/71 Example 8. Akvnis Nana (Svaneti). Recorded by S. Mshvelidze. v. Pari, Mestia dist. See archive of Folk Statre Centre #13/36



მაგალითი 9. "ნანაილა" (სვანური). ანსამბლ "ფესვების" ვარიანტი. ნოტირ. მ. ხუხუნაიშვილის მიერ Example 9. Nanaila (Svaneti). Version of ensemble "Pesvebi". Transcribed by M. Khukhunaishvili





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ფარში. იხ. ფოლკლორის სახ. ცენტრის არქივი №12/71 Example 8. Akvnis Nana (Svaneti). Recorded by S. Mshvelidze. v. Pari, Mestia dist. See archive of Folk Statre Centre #13/36



მაგალითი 9. "ნანაილა" (სვანური). ანსამბლ "ფესვების" ვარიანტი. ნოტირ. მ. ხუხუნაიშვილის მიერ Example 9. Nanaila (Svaneti). Version of ensemble "Pesvebi". Transcribed by M. Khukhunaishvili





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მაგალითი 13. "ნანა" (იმერული). ჩაწ. ედ. სავიცკის მიერ 1955 წ. ფოლკლორის სახელმწიფო ცენტრის არქივი №5/177 **Example 13.** Nana (Imereti). Recorded by E. Savitski. From archive of Folk Statre Centre #5/177



მაგალითი 14. "ნანა" (გურული). ჩაწ. ნანა ვალიშვილის მიერ 1988 წ. ოზურგეთში. Example 14. Nana (Guria). Recorded by N. Valishvili. Ozurgeti, 1988



მაგალითი 15. "ნანა" (გურული). დამუშ. ა. მეგრელიძის მიერ. "საქართველოს მაცნე". 2005. გვ.15 **Example 15.** *Nana* (Guria). Arranged by A. Megrelidze. "Sakartvelos Matsne". P. 15



მაგალითი 16. "იავნანა" (გურული). ჩაწ. ნანა ვალიშვილის მიერ 1988 წ. ოზურგეთში Example 16. Iavnana (Guria). Recorded by N. Valishvili. Ozurgeti, 1988



მაგალითი 17. "ნანა" (გურული). ანსამბლ "გეორგიკას" ვარიანტი. ნოტირ. მ. ხუხუნაიშვილის მიერ **Example 17**. *Nana* (Guria). Version of ensemble "Georgica". Transcribed by M. Khukhunaishvili

