THE IMPACT OF THE INDIVIDUAL ON GEORGIAN MUSICAL TRADITION

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Abstract: The information on the development of Georgian traditional music dates to the 19th and 20th centuries. We can only presume how the activity of Davit Aghmashenebeli, Giorgi Mtatsmindeli, Sayatnova, Catholic missionaries and others could have influenced Georgian traditional music before that time. However, when studying the texts of Georgian traditional music we notice some fragments, pointing to the "mutation" of personal origin.

The transformation of the Georgian folk song or church hymn texts, more precisely the transformation of performance norms is observed in the first half of the Soviet epoch; this is related to the presentation of mass character of folk art and its "packing" for stage performances. Moreover, the variants of distinct personal interferences into the texts of Georgian traditional music can be presented as follows:

1. Composed songs in traditional manner (e.g. by Varlam Simonishvili)
2. Composed songs in non-traditional manner (by Giorgi Iobishvili)
3. "Georgianization" of foreign songs (Josef Ratil)
4. Addition of a vocal part to a song (Dzuku Lolua)

5. Combination of various songs as one contaminated song (Dzuku Lolua)
6. Separate vocal parts (Vladimer Berdzenishvili)
7. Polyphonic development of a song (Samuel Chavleishvili)
8. Separate modal variations, e.g. the avoid of the augmented second (Vano Mchedlishvili)
9. Inculcation of European norms of harmony (Zakaria Paliashvili)

An interesting (and somewhat disputable) example of the interference of music scholars in folk performance is the initiative of state organizations to return to the traditional performance manner of regional folk choirs (the author also participated in some of these projects). In general, the problem of "authenticity" is rather current among Georgian musicians. In conclusion it can be said, that the influence of an educated person on the examples of Georgian traditional music is less noticeable than those of the so-called "folk-professionals".

On account of various historical, genetic, religious and other factors, the collaborative nature of Georgian traditional music has shaped its evolution in crucial ways. Here, in addition to its stylistic role, vocal polyphony has a powerful communicative function. In folk music performance, the ensemble clearly dominates the soloist, while in sacred chant the three-part texture is strictly maintained. How do these constraints impact individual and collective performance?

As is well known, the author of a polyphonic folk song is neither anonymous, nor a homogeneous "folk." The folk song is created over time and is still living today – that is, it is constantly evolving – though it still implies some sort of inception, intermediate stage, and end point consistent with its contemporary form. Each stage of this "creative and aesthetic formalization"[1] is associated with the individual. The individual is a kind of skeleton on which the collective body "grows flesh."

According to Nettl, ethnomusicologists tend to underemphasize the role of the individual, and to portray the music of non-European people espe-

1 Yadrishnikova 2008: 13.

cially as a single, monolithic, stable, archaic phenomenon. In fact, this is not the case.[2] This idea might even be held with respect to Georgian musicology, if only because no particular attention has been paid yet to the correlation between the individual and the collective in the creation of folk music.

Binary models – "people-individual," "secular-professional/ecclesiastical," "tradition-innovation" – presume a chaotic, unpredictable mode of existence. But they still entail a specific system based on a sequence of "author-method-result." We might transform these parallel models into a single concept: "sharing-initiating." Sharing would be interpreted as both an individual and a collective choice; initiating, on the other hand, would be an exclusively individual act.

~ THE INDIVIDUAL WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE TRADITIONAL MUSIC ENSEMBLE

The act of initiating is different when performed in a solo versus ensemble context. In the practice of polyphony, innovation is the prerogative of the ensemble leader (in Georgian, *tavkatsi*/*tavkali*, or in folk terminology, the master, or *ostati*). It is true that in Georgian singing, the leader's main function is to execute the "opening" or *damtsqebi* voice, which is typically the middle part, less frequently the upper part, and only in exceptional circumstances, the low part. (Music 1) But a "functional initiative"[3] can also be taken by voices other than the *damtsqebi*.

Still, a strong individual can compromise the leader's function. Particularly the voices in free-contrasting-style polyphony can equalize the parts, for example in Gurian trio songs and richly ornamented Western Georgian chants. In terms of the present discussion, we would call this phenomenon "collective individualism," which works with the already accepted notion of "polyphonic melody." (Music 2)

The difference between the usual collectivism and this kind of "collective individualism" is expressed well in the following narrative from Grigol Kokeladze. Kokeladze heard the trio from Rema Shelegia's ensemble – which

2 Nettl 2005: 172.

3 Gabisonia's term (1994).

consisted of Gabelia, Abshilava, and Shelegia – and was astonished by their masterful improvisatory performance when heard apart from the other singers. When he asked why they did not sing like that in the group, Shelegia responded discontented, "the ensemble can't sing this."[4]

Among those singers who could establish new variations by adopting an improvisatory stance toward their own voice part, the most outstanding were the Gurian Samuel Chavleishvili, Vladimer Berdzenishvili, Artem Erkomaishvili, KakhetianVano Mchedlishvili, Megrelians Dzuku Lolua, Noko Khurtsia and Polykarpe Khubulava.

In general, concerning the limits of the improvisatory freedom of an individual part, the following forms of traditional Georgian collective performance might be listed in order of increasing constraint: free-contrasting polyphony, drone polyphony, ostinato polyphony, synchronic (chordal) polyphony, and unison-heterophonic singing.

In Georgia, solo performance takes place in the following genres: vocal solo – laments, solo work songs (*mtibluri, korkali, urmuli, orovela, hegioga*, and others), cradle songs (called *nana*); accompanied vocal solos – love songs and thematic repertoire with *chonguri, panduri, gudastviri,* and *chunir/chianuri* accompaniment; and solo instrumental music for *chonguri, panduri, chiboni, salamuri, gudastviri, chianuri, larchem-soinari* and *doli*. This list is also given in the order of increasing limits of improvisation, though the sequence is admittedly highly subjective.

Interestingly, we encounter one of the earliest remarks on Georgian solo songs (love and heroic songs) in the account of the Flemish diplomat (in the service of Austria) Augier Ghislain de Busbecq (1522–1592).[5]

At first glance, the role of the individual would seem likely to bring more innovation to collective than to solo performance. But the fact that, in Georgian practice, solo songs are predominantly associated with archaic genres complicates the comparison as far as individual initiative is concerned.

As the author of his own part, the solo performer has greater initiatory potential than the ensemble leader. Frequently, he is a master – semi-

4 Kokoladze 1979: 8.

5 Tardy 1980: 87–88. See also http://www.britannica.com/biography/Augier-Ghislain-de-Busbecq.

professional or professional, or an itinerant musician (the *chiboni* player Kochakhela, the bagpipe *[gudastviri]* players Burdiladze, Eradze, and others). In a traditionally polyphonic environment, authorship rarely pertains to an entire song, since here the master/leader is responsible for just one voice part. As such, in polyphony the issue of "copyright" is less relevant than in solo performance. In Georgia, songs by individual composers first appeared in the 1880s, during the "epoch of choral directing," and have persisted up to the present day. The institution of the "director-choir" – a constraining innovation that presented the folk song with a new model of development – began taking shape in this era.

A conflict emerges between the teaching of a choir director of a prepared song and the traditional method of "non-purposeful" study – that is, listening.[6] Traditionally, of course, people "learned songs through life's 'self-teaching.'"[7] A new song – rather than a new version – was transmitted by the individual director rather than by an ensemble's multiple listenings. Let's recall how the Gurians Erkomashvili, Babilodze, and Samuel Iobishvili "stole" the three-part song "Alipasha" from the Acharian village of Kekuti: they heard it at a wedding and memorized their respective parts.[8] (Music 3) This practice fits within traditional usage. As Edisher Garaqanidze observes, singers in ensembles without a designated leader tended to improvise better, and every individual knew all three parts.[9]

A new song or version was frequently worked out in parts by a "learned" individual, rather than by a semi-professional in a folk or popular environment. For this reason, the role of the individual in folk performance was related to "the epistemological influence of various forms of social consciousness."[10] Presuming an equivalent musical talent, the educated individual had a greater ability to: a) develop new versions in a precise manner; b) assist the group in mastering a song; c) systematically direct a performance. The Czech Iozef Ratil, who created Georgian versions of

6 Garaqanidze 2007a: 74.
7 Garaqanidze 2007a: 29.
8 Garaqanidze 2007b: 38.
9 Garaqanidze 2007b: 72.
10 Berezovchuk 1986: 15.

foreign tunes for Lado Aghniashvili's "Georgian Choir" in the 1880s and became a successful choral director, is an example of such an individual (Figure 1). (Ratil's original songs are less well known.) In the same period, the highly trained Pilimon Koridze (1829–1911) (Figure 2) and Meliton Balanchivadze (1863–1937) (Figure 3) formed folk choirs but they did not alter the compositional structure of any folk songs. (Balanchivadze helped to establish Georgian classical composition in this period.) Unlike Ratil, they transcribed traditional songs to Western notation.

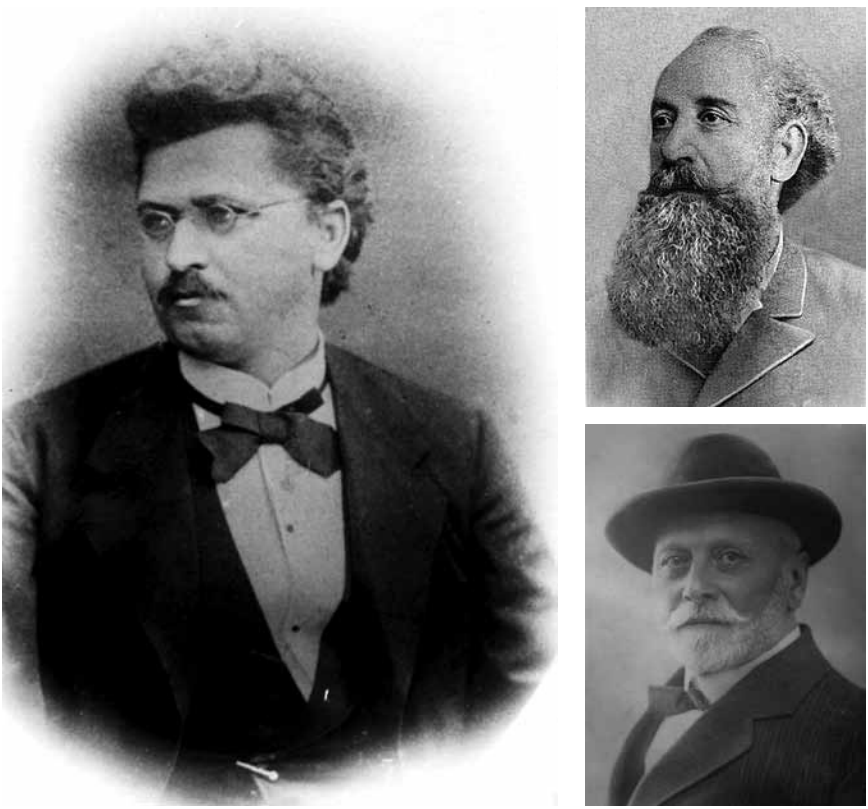

Figure 1–3. Iozef Ratil (left), Pilimon Koridze (top right)
Meliton Balanchivadze (bottom right)

~ "MUTATIONS"

Folk music evolves idiosyncratically, on account of natural selection, legacies, catastrophes, and the development of reflexes. Here, too, there are "mutations" – that is, observable changes in "genetic" features – which result from both internal changes and environmental influences.

In general, "mutation," like innovation (here my use of "mutation" is distinct from the term associated with the early polyphonic phenomenon), originates in the act of an individual. In complex three–part "trio" songs – even where there are multiple improvised lines – the improvisers cannot maintain that momentary musical result; they cannot repeat it.

Let us distinguish between "mutations" resulting from internal and external conditions. An "internal mutation" is always a possibility, a result of internal development. It uses a traditional musical language and follows general conventions of musical development along a uniquely local path. An example of this type of mutation is the substitution, in Svanetian song, of the tonic in the low voice *(bani)* part with the pitch a fifth below, which expands the range of the low voice part.

Heuristic and interpretative creativity is another varying factor concerning improvisation in the musicians' performances of folk songs. For this reason, mutation is most readily observable in polyphonic songs separating the soloists from the accompanying ensemble. Against a background accompaniment, the leader has more control over the soloist's place in the overall sound and changes are achieved more easily, though any variation is still within the formal constraints of that particular style. Alternatively, the change might not get the popular audience, and the "mutation" is blocked.

Davit Shughliashvili has addressed some of the "more unusual moments in Georgian songs" – for example, Almaskhan Khukhunaishvili's special "crowing" effect in the upper voice's "krimanchuli" [yodel] part in "Khasanbegura."[11] It must be kept in mind, however, that the majority of these unusual events were documented in 20th-century sound recordings. In this form, they were captured for posterity, but not necessarily recognized as a tradition.

11 Shughliashvili 2009: 301.


Figure 4–5. Samuel Chavleishvili; Vano Mchedlishvili

As far as recognized innovations are concerned, the original variations performed by Gurian singers are especially worthy of note. I have in mind here Vladimer Berdzenishvili, Artem Erkomaishvili and – in particular – Samuel Chavleishvili (called the "Gurian nightingale") who, in the opinion of many, completely transformed Gurian singing (Figure 4). Another example is the ensemble Shvidkatsa's reharmonization of the Imeretian horse-riding song "Tskhenosnuri" in the 1950s and '60s (despite the fact that modulation is not uncommon in Georgian traditional music). (Music 4) Here Jansugh Kakhidze's solo middle voice deserves special mention.[12]

Regarding the circumstances of "outer mutation," to continue the biological metaphor, here we have a kind of "cross-breeding." When cultures are in dynamic relation, elements of various styles may be absorbed. Outer mutations take the form of innovations, which we frequently call "influences" or "borrowings."

12 Garaqanidze 2007a: 27.

Georgian population has found itself in encounters in the early historical times with many ethnic, religious, and social-cultural groups – among them, Assyrians, Romans, Armenians, Arabs, Ossetians, Abkhazians, Vainakhs, Persians, Turks, Russians, and even Hungarians[13], Savirs and Dominican missionaries in the 13th century. Relationships with neighboring cultures were especially productive. There are hypotheses about parallels between Georgian and neighboring musical cultures, as well as about mutual influences (Nadel, Zhordania, Tsitsishvili). Joseph Zhordania has examined Georgian musical tradition in a global context. Nino Tsitsishvili makes a formal comparison by relating Kartl-Kakhetian work songs with elements of monodic development, on the one hand, and with work songs of the Asia Minor region, on the other hand.[14]

That said, we should acknowledge that comparisons of this sort have yet to be treated at length in a monograph. The primary reason for this is the lack of factual data. Sources addressing the status of music in Georgia date only as far back as the 17th century. Let us identify some of the conditions that may have generated "mutation" in Georgian folk music, and possibly promoted individual factor, in this period.

~ THE ORIENTAL INFLUENCE

Persians, Arabs, and other Asian ethnic groups always held an important place in the population of Tbilisi, though sources tend to emphasize the oriental influence in the late medieval period. 19th-century Georgian authors (for example Jambakur-Orbeliani)[15] relate the establishment of the oriental (Persian) musical style in Tbilisi and, in general, in aristocratic circles, to the Islamified Georgian king Rostom Khan.

Today, we talk more about the import of oriental music than about its impact on Georgian music. Oriental instruments – *duduki* (sometimes substituted with clarinet), *zurna*, *daira*, and *doli* (and, less commonly, *kemancha* and *saz*) – and monodic, hemiola-saturated melismatic music

13 Tardy 1980: 38–39.

14 Tsitsishvili 2010: 55.

15 Bakhtadze 1986: 99.

Figure 6. Ietim Gurji

remain popular today in the valleys of Eastern Georgia. Still, it is difficult to talk about specific indicators of mutual influence between "Asian" and Georgian polyphonic musical systems. Mostly, discussion is limited to the augmented second, which can be heard on some early recordings of Kakhetian solo songs. (Other recordings from the same period do not reveal this stylistic feature.) Tsitsishvili, however, links a similar style to a more distant past. According to unverified data, the famous Kakhetian singer, Vano Mchedlishvili, played a large role in the "rejection" of the augmented second (today it is impossible to hear it in the same context as on the early recordings). Indeed, the augmented second cannot be heard anywhere on Mchedlishvili's audio recordings (Figure 5).

The Georgian musical influence on oriental styles is also interesting, though I have in mind here structural rather than modality- or pitch-related features. The three-part oriental instrumental ensembles – *duduki* ensembles in particular – are evidence of this influence, as they are formally arranged like in Georgian three-part pieces. Among these the vocal-instrumental ensemble "Ksovrelebi" [The Weavers] is popular today; their song "The Kvosrelebi Sing" was quickly "folkified" in the "anti-oriental environment" that is Tbilisi today. (Music 5)

From the perspective of oriental influence on Georgian musical culture, Saiatnova from the 18th century must be mentioned. Sayatnova was a bard of Armenian descent who served in the court of Georgian king Erekle II. He wrote songs in three languages – Georgian, Armenian and Azeri – and is credited with establishing a new lyrical style called "mukhambazi."[16] Many songs attributed to Saiatnova continue to be sung today.

Also noteworthy, from the same period, is the work of Georgian poet Besiki, whose works were popular and spread in the form of songs. It is believed that Besiki himself also set to music his own words.

Today the oriental-style songs (commonly known as "baiat") of Tbilisian bard Ietim Gurji (Ietim Dabghishvili, 1875–1940) (Figure 6) are very popular, though this popularity is largely due to the efforts of the famous poet Grishashvili, as well as the technologies of radio and gramophone recording. Interestingly, Ietim Gurji was descended from ethnic Georgians who had been displaced to Turkey and converted to Islam.

~ GEORGIAN CHANT AND POSSIBLE FOREIGN INFLUENCE

Approximately fifteen years ago, the parishioners of a certain Tbilisi church began claiming that only monophonic chant is canonical in the Orthodox Church and that, by extension, today Georgian three-part chant is non-canonical. These individuals recognize only contemporary Byzantine chant with Georgian words as "legitimate." According to them, polyphonic setting of "true Christian" chants in the Georgian manner is relatively recent, possibly as a result of Catholic or Russian influence. We will not concern ourselves with the details of the heated and enduring debate on this topic. I will only point out that none of the parties responsible for the "Byzantine-Georgian" hypothesis have formal academic credentials.

Very few dispute the fact that, from the beginning, Georgian Christian chant replicated the Byzantine style. But, like the literary language, the musical language was "translated" into Georgian polyphony. Despite this, even today the top leading voice in Georgian traditional sacred po-

16 Kavtaradze 2002: 519.

lyphony reveals melodic influences from the Byzantine style. But other aspects of Byzantine chant, like monody over a drone *(ison)* and the heavy use of melisma, are foreign to the Georgian style. It is worth mentioning, however, that drone polyphony is one of the main distinguishing features of Kartl-Kakhetian folk song. In stylistic terms, today Georgian chant is clearly one of the three original Orthodox chant traditions (along with Byzantine and Russian).

How appropriate is it to assume a Catholic influence on Georgian music? We know that in 1589, the princess Mariam of Samegrelo attended the liturgy of Theatine missionaries.[17] There is no evidence that the Theatines taught chant or that Catholic musical motives made any lasting impression on Georgian song or chant. Obviously, there was contact between Catholic and Georgian music but we have no sources to attest it. Akaki Tsereteli's mention of the *gamodzakhili* voice in a French song in the village of Khizabavra, which was settled by Catholic Georgians (Jadognishvili), suggests that new motives may have been incorporated into Catholic sacred practice, but not into canonical Orthodox music. Notably, a four-part setting of the Georgian Orthodox liturgy is attributed to Zakaria Paliashvili – a Catholic who is considered the founder of Georgian classical music. Today less than one percent of the Georgian population is Catholic.

According to a 19th-century Russian source, "The sacred chant of the Georgians is similar to the Russian, since they took our model in the 18th century, at the time we were incorporated politically."[18] But many other sources suggest that this statement is unfounded, including the 17th-century Russian monk Sukhanov.[19] Furthermore, by the 18th century the Russian church had already been singing partes chant for a long time[20], which is completely unrelated to Georgian chant.

17 Pavliashvili 1994: 72.

18 Bakhtadze 1986: 71–72.

19 Sukhiashvili 2002.

20 "Partes" chanting style in old Russia see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Part_song.

~ THE IMPACT OF SACRED CHANT ON FOLK MUSIC

Despite specific indicators of Georgian folk identity, the tradition of Georgian sacred chant is characterized by elements of professionalism, which are revealed, above all, in the striving for establishment as tradition and the systematic means of transmission. The reason for this, too, may be that Georgian sacred chant and folk song are stylistically distinct phenomena[21], despite the fact that, as recently as the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, the same individuals were considered masters of both sacred chant and folk song.

Georgian chant was seriously threatened by Russia, which abolished the independence of the Georgian Church (1801) and forbade the singing of Georgian chant in churches. In schools, Russian instructors persecuted students not only for chanting, but for singing Georgian songs. Their motive was the following: "Georgian language is so ugly that good melodies cannot be created to suit it."[22] The situation motivated Georgians to transcribe Georgian chant into notation and, in this way, to preserve it, at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

There are many individuals who had a significant influence on the practice of Georgian chant. Listing their achievements would take us far from the topic at hand, so I will only mention a few of the most outstanding here: Grigol Khandzteli (8–9th century), Mikael Modrekili (10th century), Giorgi Mtatsmindeli (11st century), Ambros Nekreseli (18–19th century), Anton Dumbadze (19th century), the Brothers Karbelashvili (Figure 7), Razhden Khundadze and Ekvtime Kereselidze (19–20th century) (Figure 8), Artem Erkomaishvili (20th century) The contributions of the latter pertain to the oral tradition: in 1966, after a 30-year silence, the 78-year-old Artem Erkomaishvili (Figure 9) recorded 108 Shemokmedi School chants from memory, all of them three-part. The recordings were made at the Tbilisi Conservatory, with two tape recorders and neumes he had marked himself.

Georgian sacred chant strictly maintains the three-voice texture – a fact which strongly supports the claim that Georgian chant exerted a greater in-

21 Gabisonia 2001.

22 Bakhtadze 1986: 70.

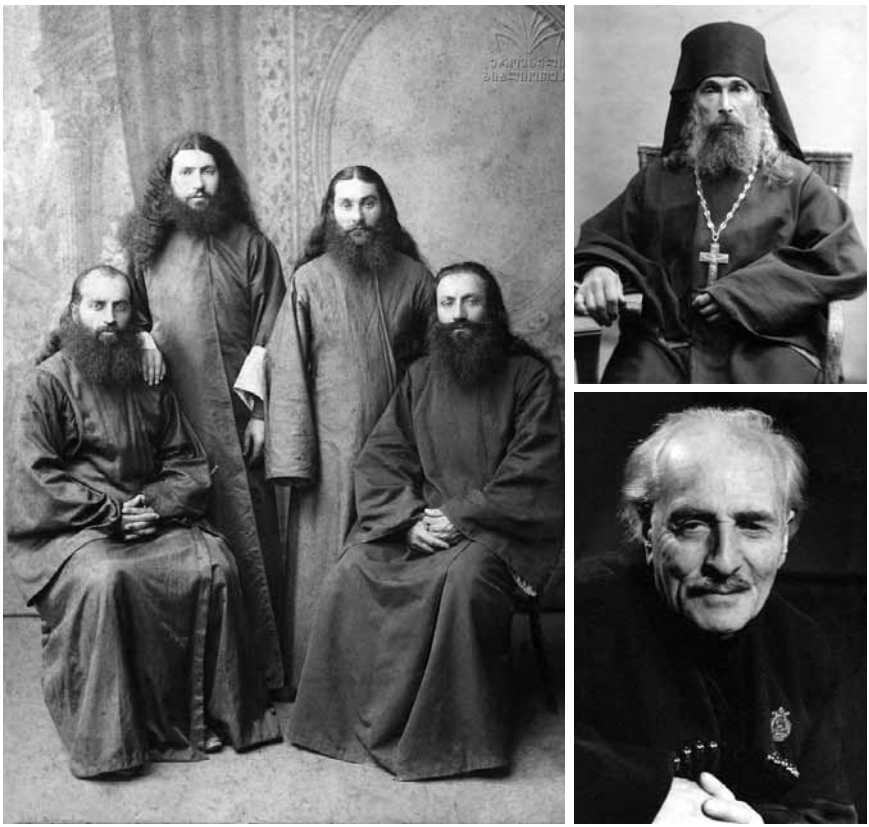

Figure 7–9. Brothers Karbelashvili (left);
Ekvtime Kereselidze (top right); Artem Erkomaishvili (bottom left)

fluence on Georgian song than the reverse. For example, the hypothesis that chant provides the structural foundation for Svanetian praisesongs seems highly plausible.[23] The improvisational style chanters call *gamshveneba* [ornamentation, embellishment] made its way into folk song performance as a method of creative embellishment. This is particularly true of Gurian *ghighini*-type [sung softly] songs (less so of Imeretian, Acharian, and Megrelian) performed by a trio. In this way, mastery of sacred chant became a means by which a singer could enrich his performance of folk songs.

23 Gabisonia 2012.

~ THE WESTERN INFLUENCE

Georgia's contact with European music intensified after it was annexed by the Russian Empire. In the mid-19th century, the arrival of Italian opera in Tbilisi was greeted with tremendous enthusiasm. The official Russian press remarked on how the people had taken to European music, and how average people in the streets could be heard singing the music of Rossini, Bellini and Verdi. This kind of reception was less common in the villages. In the opinion of some, in addition to opera, traditional urban culture was also transformed by a new emphasis on the individual – that is, a preference for "'I' over 'we.'"[24]

As far as concrete Russian musical influences are concerned, we need mention only the appearance of soldiers' songs and elements of Russian Gypsy romances in Georgian urban songs and instrumental music.[25] Despite the fact that, in addition to Russian chant, Russian and Ukrainian folk songs were taught in some schools in the 19th century[26], there is no indication that they had any lasting effect on Georgian folk song.

In the 19th century, European melodies and functional harmony began to be adopted, especially in Kutaisi. Unlike Tbilisi, the large majority of the population of Kutaisi was ethnically Georgian. It is a fact that Georgian polyphony was adapted more easily to European harmony than oriental monody.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the adoption of functional harmony was one element of Georgia's striving toward European civilization. According to Piotrovska, "Traditional musical forms are frequently perceived as archaic by their performers. Their adaptation to Western paradigms leads to hybridization which, of course, takes place at the expense of traditional features."[27]

In Russia, the idealization of European culture was directed by individuals, "enlighteners." For many of them, the European musical paradigm was an axiomatic absolute. It was precisely for this reason that observers

24 Obukhov 2006: 219.

25 Mshvelidze 1976.

26 Sarukhanova 1985: 13.

27 Piotrovska 2009: 585.

of Lado Aghniashvili's ensemble remarked that their performance practice was traditional save for the fact that they sang three-part songs in four voices, as this was simply the more "civilized" manner and required no further discussion.

European musical influence is mainly evident in the shift of emphasis from the linear to the vertical dimension, and the corresponding use of parallel melodies and harmonic-functional contrast in the upper voices (as opposed to functional contrasts between the voices as a formal structuring principle). The clearest illusration of this tendency can be found in the leap from the dominant to the tonic in the low *(bani)* voice at a cadence, and the upper parts' resolution in thirds. It should be noted that "hybridized" vertical pitch relations can also be found in some Georgian folk songs, where the dominant-tonic leap is filled in stepwise ("Brolis qelsa," "Arti vardi").

The list of individuals who played a foundational role in the "Europeanization" of Georgian song would necessarily include Korneli Maghradze, Kote Potskhverashvili, Mikheil and Nikoloz Sharabidze, Ivane Sarajishvili and – again – Iosef Ratil. Still, we have more secondary sources than concrete musical materials as evidence of their accomplishments.

~ POLYPHONIC SETTING

It is possible to make the case that individuals have had the clearest impact on Georgian traditional music not as melodic innovators, but as arrangers of voices in the vertical dimension. Polyphonic setting can take the following forms: a) the attempt to reconstruct a song; b) "Europeanization"; c) "Georgianization"; d) the simple addition of a voice. Let us consider some of the more noteworthy examples of how these methods work in practice:

- In terms of reconstruction, the outstanding composer Valerian Maghradze must be mentioned. From the 1960s to the 1980s Maghradze carried out several expeditions in the Southern Georgian region of Meskheti, which was subjected to Turkish influence for centuries. He recorded sources, songs, and fragments of separate voices that had nearly been lost, then tried to piece the latter in a three-part structure. His efforts are documented in his scholarly writings, in the

collection "Meskhetian Folk Songs" (1987) and in the male folklore ensemble "Meskheti." Even today, this ensemble continues to sing three-part Meskhetian songs, along with many other ensembles. Maghradze had his reconstructed songs checked first-hand by ethnographers. (Music 6)

- The efforts to set monophonic Laz songs polyphonically, led by the female folklore ensemble Tutarchela under the direction of Tamar Buadze, are also interesting. The Laz are a traditional Georgian ethnic group living now predominantly in Turkey. Their language belongs to the Kartvelian language family, and is closely related to the Megrelian dialect. Laz songs are traditionally monophonic; unlike in the Meskhetian case, we have no evidence to suggest that they were sung polyphonically at any time in the past. So, the experiments of Tutarchela and other ensembles should be considered more of a creative effort than an attempt to recover the music of an authentic past. In general, the presence of similar melodic features in both Megrelian and Laz songs helps to ensure that the three-part settings of Laz songs are at least somewhat plausible from the standpoint of style. (Music 7). The three-part setting of oriental melodic motives for *zurna* and *duduk* ensembles should also be mentioned, along with the setting of the same motives for three-part vocal performance. Here, conventions of Georgian performance are maintained, but not the specific Georgian musical language.
- The songs "Georgianized" by Ratil should be mentioned separately: the Finnish march "Rise, Hero of Heroes," the Swedish "It Came Running Down Softly," the Czech "On the Azure Sky," Mendelssohn's "The Ship is Leaving," and others.[28]
- Foreign melodic motives are transformed in the fabric of urban songs – among them songs on revolutionary themes. Here, the three-part "Marseillaise" is particularly interesting as the Georgian version contains only vocables and incorporates motives from the beginning of the national march.[29]

28 Nakashidze (ed.) 2011: 53.

29 Chkhikvadze 1961: 6.

› At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries four-part choral settings following European conventions became popular. Following the Russian model, Georgians also made four-part settings of sacred chants (Mrevlishvili, Korneli Maghradze, Paliashvili) and folk songs (Paliashvili, K. Maghradze, K. Potskhverashvili.[30] DzukuLolua – "Makha") that maintained Georgian melodic features.
› The second half of the 20th century witnessed the emergence of "a new form of Tushetian song" (Sh. Aslanishvili's term), which set traditionally monophonic or two-part (with a solo low *[bani]* voice) Tushetian songs for three voices in parallel triads. (Music 8)
› The practice of setting Abkhazian songs in three parts should be mentioned separately, as should Megrelian song settings. According to tradition, Razhden Gumba was the first to add a third voice to the existing two – in the "Song of the Wounded."[31] Significant accomplishments in this area are also attributed to Dzuku Lolua, who directed an Abkhazian ethnographic choir at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

~ REGULATION

It is not uncommon in the Christian world that forms of expression associated with folk and itinerant musicians are treated hosilly or antagonistically. Administrative rules have condemned "lawless acts, unpleasing to God." Such a law was delivered by King David the Builder in eleventh- and twelfth-century Georgia: "Evil songs must be rooted out from among soldiers"[32] As we can see, this law was addressed to the army, suggesting that it was not necessarily spread among the general population. And it is difficult to imagine what genre would have been intended by the designation "evil" if not music for entertainment and festivity.

Likewise, it makes sense to address one particular event connected with King Erekle II (18th century): he excommunicated the famous priest Zakaria Gabashvili (father of the bard Besiki, mentioned above) because,

30 Sarukhanova 1985: 81.

31 Gegechkori 1954: 38.

32 Qaukhchishvili 1995: 352.

while singing a Georgian chant "he made a mistake in the melody [and, as a result, the words] and tried to correct himself by singing Persian words."[33] This is somewhat surprising, as the king was relatively tolerant towards oriental secular music, as attested by his invitation to the bard Saiatnova to serve at his court.

The act called "Rules for Making Music" is also interesting (though we cannot be sure of its authors' intentions): for several years during the 1880s the playing of the *zurna* was prohibited in Tbilisi and Kutaisi.[34] It is possible that the reason was the instrument's loud, squeaky, wearying sound quality or that the *zurna* is traditionally a public instrument, not intended for domestical use.

It was rather the tightening than the loosening of control that American ethnomusicologist Lauren Ninoshvili was striving for when she proposed that Georgian chant should be sung with texts in the local languages of Orthodox churches abroad, in a paper given at the Third International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony in Tbilisi in 2006. The primary function of the chant – its translation to aid in prayer according to Orthodox practice – was completely legitimate but Georgian academics rejected the idea, citing the problem of stylistic eclecticism.

~ SOVIET REGULATION

The Soviet era marked the period of the greatest official intervention in the life of Georgian folk music. The "government of the people" seized complete control of the people's expressive practices. It instilled a culture of "amateur performance" *(samodeitel'nost')*, which in the Georgian case developed in two directions simultaneously: a) the traditional, as the progress of an existing folk heritage against the background of elite music; and b) the establishment of the new as an "enrichment" of existing tradition. In general, the notion of "amateur performance" relies on individual initiative, unlike the collective approach of folklore.[35] But at the beginning

33 Bakhtadze 1986: 99.

34 Bakhtadze 1986: 69.

35 Yadrishnikova 2008: 22.

of the 20th century, Soviet "amateur performance" was confronted with a well-established institution of choral conducting and all of its correlated conditions in Georgia. A new innovator-perfectionist without a past had no chance of establishing roots on this soil. So, in this period it is impossible to name a choral director who dedicated himself more to the "promise of new life" than to the traditional repertoire.

But amateur performance, even if it has roots in tradition, works in favor of the individual. The leader must help society adjust to new realities, which may entail concerts and the formalization of audiences and concepts of artistry. The leader is responsible not only for the success of certain crucial moments in song but for overseeing the process of vocal performance at all its many levels. For this reason he frequently does not sing with the ensemble but focuses on preparing and directing the performers. As a result of the leader's separation from the rest of the ensemble, the group appears as a mighty, leaderless mass – a powerful symbol of "the Soviet people." And so, the number of participants in the ensemble grows, and frequently surpasses one hundred. Accordingly, the leader becomes a kind of supreme commander/ideologue expected to set the group on a new political course and to meet the demands of a new set of listeners.

~ POST-SOVIET "PURISM" AND "ACADEMICISM"

At the end of the Soviet era, the development of folk music in Georgia was moving in two main directions: the "academic" and the "purist." There is no ironic subtext to my choice of terms here.

Still, prior to the consolidation of the purist position, in the 1980s three crucial events took place which shifted Georgian traditional music practice in the direction of folk authenticity. Young ethnomusicologist Edisher Garaqanidze contributed immensely to this effort in 1980, when he founded the "Mtiebi" ensemble, which reproduced the songs of the peasants with remarkable accuracy. In retrospect, the entire purist movement has roots in his work. Soon after, in 1986, a group of folklorists from the Tbilisi Conservatory founded a female ensemble, called "Mzetamze" (without a designated leader, in accordance with tradition), which

brought to light a body of female folklore that had previously only existed in the shadows of the male traditions. In 1988 Anchiskhati Church Choir (Figure 10), under the direction of Malkhaz Erkvanidze, revived Georgian sacred chants that had not been heard in church for nearly a century, some of which had been criticized by upholders of Russified and Europeanized chant and composed sacred music for their "incorrect indications" and "strange sounds."

Figure 10. Anchiskhati Church Choir

The "purist" position relies precisely on a quest for this revival of authenticity, though it is sometimes excessively controlling. It is true that purists of this type are relatively few in number, but their demands are symptomatic of a broader trend. They are strictly committed to such traditional performance practices as the execution of the upper parts by soloists, the strict separation of female and male repertoire, and singing with an unrefined, peasant-like articulation; I agree with all of these. But I would also emphasize that purists tend to overlook the value of contemporary, innovative projects which are less ethnically marked as Georgian.

Sometimes purists justify their own authority. For example, E. Garaqanidze writes that "[t]he true folk song is a village song, created by a Geor-

gian peasant."[36] We might say that the aim of their folklore resembles that of Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály, though here the key issue is the extent to which ethnic elements are present in a specific performance, not an ethical judgment.

Followers of "academicism" (a relatively older generation) sometimes seem to have the same inertia as the Soviets. They are concerned primarily with "packaging worthy songs for the stage," and as a result tend to be critical of the "sonic aesthetics" of the purists. For the academic, the most important is the final creative product, not the ethnographic portrait. One of my personal objections to the academic's tenets is the notion of a "correct version" of a song (though this is also an objection raised by some purists).

Edisher Garaqanidze refers to academic choir directors' method of working with notation and at the piano as "a broken telephone."[37] I might add the tuning fork to this arsenal, as well as other pieces of "equipment," like costumes. Then again, without "situation" and "context"[38], music intended for the stage calls for other compromises.

~ MASTER CLASSES

This kind of regulation of folklore might be called an "enforced return to tradition." In 2006–2007, under the guise of the "Presidential Support for Folklore Program," four ethnomusicologists – including the author of the present study – conducted master classes for folklore ensembles in nearly every Georgian region. We taught them how to sing in a more "folklike" manner. The drawbacks of such an approach should be clear, so we will focus on the benefits here:

- remarks took the form of recommendations
- by drawing on archival recordings, we were able to point out practices inconsistent with those of traditional performance (the performance of antiphonal songs in an undivided ensemble, the singing of a solo line by multiple singers, conducting, etc.)

36 Garaqanidze 2007: 41.

37 Garaqanidze 2007: 36.

38 Alekseev 1988: 60.

› we identified the distinguishing musical features of the ensemble's home region
› we explained the importance of songs they had deemed unworthy of the stage. The vast majority of ensemble members were pleased with the master classes; exceptions came predominantly from ensemble leaders.

This kind of practical work is continued even today but it is being carried out by specialists associated with the State Center for Georgian Folklore rather than the Folklore Department of the Conservatory. A similar approach is taken in folklore exhibtion-festivals, with recommendations frequently interpreted as directives. Evaluations of authenticity, "secondary" folklore and non-folklore are key concerns for today's Georgian folk music enthusiasts.

~ COMPOSED FOLK SONGS

We will address composed folk songs in more concrete terms. Careful observation of songs authored by choral directors suggests that the vast majority relies on a new, European musical lexicon – or, minimally, inincorporates certain of its features. Examples might include Dzuku Lolua's "Arti Vardi" (Music 9), "Makha," and "Erekheli," as well as V. Simonishvili's *"Dila"* (Morning), which is based on European functional harmony. Lolua's "Chela" and Simonishvili's *"Marto Vzivar"* (I sit alone) (Music 10) are clearly derived from traditional prototypes, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

Vano Mchedlishvili, the composer of songs like "Tsintsqaro," (Music 11) "Shen Bicho Anagurelo," and "Kalospiruli," is always included among the established figures in Eastern Georgian traditional music. The presence of the composer is hardly even felt in these works. Likewise, Anzor Erkomaishvili remains loyal to the traditional musical language in songs like "Mival Guriashi" and "Khareba da Gogia," which are very well known among the general public. Still, Erkomaishvili's authorship is practically unknown, and he prefers it that way. In contrasting cases, Temur Kevkhishvili, Piruz Makhatelashvili and others (including A. Erkomaishvili, in

his rather exceptional "Khokhbis qelivit") have composed in a manner that is stylistically Georgian in a general sense but clearly departs from the traditional repertoire. There are also cases of borrowing of foreign musical motives, for example Kote Potskhverashvili's "Me var Arsena Jorjiashvili," which is based on "Moldoveniaska."[39]

The songs of some lesser known contemporary composers imitate folk style and have quickly become the stuff of folklore, for example: Nineli Tsintsadze's "Kalo Narinjiano," Sadradze's "Tsqals napotshi chamohkonda," as well the repertoires of the Kolkhuri Trio (1970–80) and Tsisperi Trio (1970–80). The latter primarily performed composed works, but their style was so rooted in the urban manner of performance that their songs are considered a part of urban folklore today. (Music 12)

Figure 11. Varinka Machavariani-Tsereteli

39 Sarukhanova 1985: 101.

Also worthy of note are some of the chants composed in the 1980s, which offered an attractive alternative to Russian chant in conditions where the traditional Georgian repertoire was nearly forgotten. These efforts are primarily associated with the names of Pavle Berishvili and Ekvtime Kochlamazashvili (the ethnomusicologist Edisher Garakanidze also composed a few chants). In the mid-20th century, composer and Tbilisi Conservatory professor Vladimir Danovskiialso contributed significantly to composing new chants in a more Russian idiom.

Among the most enduring composed works which have entered the folk canon, whose stylistic foundations are neither Georgian nor foreign traditional, Barbare (Varinka) Machavariani-Tsereteli's (Figure 11) "Suliko" deserves special mention, as it is quite possibly the most famous Georgian song both in Georgia and abroad. (Music 13)

In conclusion, we can posit the following facets informing the individual's role in Georgian musical tradition:

- Folk and sacred traditional music
- Preservation and development
- Administrative intervention (regulation and direction)
- Academically trained and self-taught leaders
- Internal (within traditional conventions) and external (owing to the influence of foreign ethnic, religious, and academic styles) "mutations"
- Composed and modified works
- Transformation by means of polyphonic setting or melodic development

There is significant overlap among these categories. For example, there is a strong correlation between the academically trained musician and the composed work, as between the self-taught practitioner and the unwritten arrangement.

As we can see, Georgian folk song and chant are built significantly on the efforts of both formally trained musicians and individuals whose knowledges derive from folk roots. But we can also observe that individual contribution to Georgian traditional music is relatively insignificant as far as numbers are concerned: from thousands of songs, only twenty or thirty are the work of individuals. For the most part, these fit into the banquet song, love song, and festive song genres. The stability of songs

in the "authorless" tradition is underscored by the astonishing coordination audible on the recordings of a spontaneously gathered ensemble of Georgian prisoners made in 1918.[40] As for songs in a traditional style with a known composer ("Tsintsqaro," for example), Georgian ethnomusicologists themselves treat them as part of the folk canon.

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40 Ziegler 2007: 560.

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