THE TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSMISSION OF
GEORGIAN LITURGICAL CHANT

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Dedicated to:

*Philip Bruce Graham*

1949 - 2004
Abstract

In 1936, several box-loads of manuscripts containing some five thousand pages of music notation were secretly inventoried at the University Museum in Tbilisi, Georgia. Dimitri Shevernadze, then curator of the museum archive, secured the donation from the aging monk, Ekvtime K'ereselidze. Though Shevernadze was shot in the purges of 1937, the manuscripts remained secure, and today represent the majority of source materials for the medieval chant tradition of the Georgian Orthodox Church, as inherited and notated at the end of the nineteenth century. These sources form the basis for the current work on the transmission and transcription of Georgian liturgical chant, as organized and presented in eleven chapters (for broader summarization, see the Chapter Review).

In order to understand the breadth of Georgian chant studies, the dissertation offers a wide-ranging introduction to the field in the form of two introductory chapters on issues pertaining to the study of medieval Georgian hymnography, terminology, neumatic notation, and ecclesiastical history within the broader Byzantine sphere of influence. Social-political forces led to the decline of the oral tradition in the early nineteenth century (Chapter III), prompting the earliest transcription efforts to preserve it in written form (Chapter IV).

The bulk of the existing transcriptions, which were notated between 1885-1908, pose complex issues of interpretation and analysis. The historical and musical details of each major project are detailed in Chapter V-VI, while Chapter VII examines broader questions on the problems encountered when transcribing polyphonic chant sung in a non-diatonic tuning system. Several thousand transcriptions remained incomplete, however, until a specific editing project attempted to remedy this critical gap in the notated record of Georgian chant in the years, 1912-1915 (Chapter VIII).

Alternative notation systems including unique neume notation dating from the eighteenth to twentieth century period is examined and presented with examples (Chapter IX). Two chapters are dedicated to an analysis of the model melody system that forms the basis for the Georgian eight-modes, and the harmonic grammar of Georgian chant as inherited in three distinct regional centers (Chapters X, XI). An epilogue examines issues of chant transmission through the twentieth century and into the revival of Georgian traditional chant in the Post-Soviet era (Chapter XII).
Methodological avenues of inquiry include the study of oral transmission as informed by the cognition of memory, the study of graphology and paleography in original manuscripts, the study of transcription issues as they relate to the sounded reality of chant in the oral tradition, and an analysis of the harmonic, melodic, improvisational, and structural elements of Georgian chant.
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Figure 152. *Jvarsa shensa*, Gelati simple style, first phrase

Figure 153. *Jvarsa shensa*, Gelati ornamental style, first phrase

Figure 154. *Movedit da vsvat*, Gelati simple style, first phrase

Figure 155. *Movedit da vsvat*, Gelati ornamental style, first phrase

Figure 156. *Shen khari venaakhi* [You are the Vineyard], Vasil K'arbelashvili, 1898

Figure 157. *Shen khari venaakhi* [You are the Vineyard], Rustavi Ensemble, 1996

Figure 158. *Shen khari venaakhi* [You are the Vineyard], Zakaria Paliashvili, 1909

Figure 159. Chavleishvili Trio, Recording Session, 1909
Use of Terms, Abbreviations, Transliteration

The name “Georgia” is used throughout the dissertation to refer to the country of Sakartvelo (საქართველო). Geographical regions within the country are referred to either as “East,” “Central,” “West,” or by their specific regional names (Kartli, K’akheti, Imereti, Samegrelo, Rach’a, Svaneti, Guria, etc.). In general, historical names are retained when discussing specific sources (T’pilisi), while general usage retains the modern name (Tbilisi). As modern Georgian does not have capital letters, the names of chants in Georgian are written with lower case letters, while the English translations capitalize as appropriate.

Abbreviations
NCF - National Center of Folklore, Tbilisi, Georgia
NCM - National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, Georgia
KSM - Kutaisi State Museum, Kutaisi, Georgia
MNM - Mestia National Museum, Georgia

Transliteration and Pronunciation

The transliteration system used in this dissertation is a romanization of the modern Georgian alphabet (mkhedruli), and the Classical Georgian alphabets (asomtavruli and nuskhuri). This is the official national system of transliteration, as adopted in 2002 by the State Department of Geodesy and Cartography of Georgia, and the Institute of Linguistics of the Georgian Academy of Sciences.\(^1\) It differs from other systems, such as the American Library Association of the Library of Congress (ALA-LC).\(^2\) Geographical names follow the United Nations published standard.\(^3\)

\(^2\) The Library of Congress uses a different romanization system for Georgian that features the use of apostrophes for aspirated consonants. Linguists use apostrophes for unaspirated consonants, as in the Georgian National System. See http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/romanization/georgian.pdf
**Figure 1. Transliteration Chart**

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Acknowledgements

It is with pleasure that I acknowledge everyone who has assisted the completion of this dissertation project. There are so many of you, I am blessed. I am indebted for the financial support of the Princeton Music Department, the Princeton Institute of International and Regional Studies, the department of Hellenic Studies at Princeton, and the Fulbright Association.

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Hermansen, Nika and Keti Diasamidze, and my extended families in America, Holland, and Georgia. And for my father, Philip B. Graham...rest in peace. I would have never had the courage to pursue a topic of this obscurity without the example of your life-long intellectual curiosity; this dissertation is dedicated to you. In the final stages of this project, I have been blessed and nurtured by the love, inspiration, and encouragement of my beautiful wife Ek’at'erine Diasamidze-Graham. Your long-suffering belief in me has helped us achieve this academic milestone together.
Introduction

The music of the Georgian Orthodox church remains one of the least understood music systems of the medieval Christian world. Georgian hymnographic sources from the fifth to twelfth centuries have yet to be properly contextualized within the wider context of Byzantine cultural influence. Despite increasing academic activity in the past twenty years, many sources are virtually unknown to international scholarship and accessibility remains an issue. The comparative study of the Georgian liturgical repertory promises to broaden our understanding of the processes that shaped the earliest Christian chant traditions, augmenting our knowledge of their oral transmission.

Located at the crossroads of the Byzantine, Persian and Ottoman Empires, the political and ecclesiastical institutions of the Georgian aristocracy were frequently destroyed. Despite this fragility, the polyphonic vocal chant tradition of the Orthodox Church managed to survive through centuries of oral transmission in remote monasteries throughout the South Caucasus. Their regional separation resulted in a rich musical heterogeneity, while their reliance on a common transmission system based on the principle of discrete model melodies manifested in three-voiced harmony demonstrates a regional homogeneity.

Abundant sources collected in the nineteenth century from master chanters of the oral tradition do not reflect a monophonic chant system—as might be expected from an Eastern Orthodox chant tradition with medieval antecedents—but rather a polyphonic vocal tradition of unparalleled richness. The advent of such a polyphonic music culture in a relatively isolated Eastern Orthodox Church is surprising given the relative isolation of the Georgian monastic centers where this music flourished. No influence from European or Russian polyphony can be detected. Rather, Georgian chant resembles the three-voiced folk polyphony that is widespread throughout the geographically and politically disjointed regions of the rugged mountains of the Caucasus. Deciphering the origin of the Georgian liturgical polyphonic tradition must take into account the wider pre-Christian folk traditions that are ubiquitous among multiple ethnic and linguistic groups in the wider South Caucasus geo-societal region.
Scholarly Contribution

This dissertation offers unique insight and analysis of materials that have previously been unknown to much of the international musicological community. The content of this work is a deliberate attempt to be as comprehensive as possible to subjects of importance in Georgian chant studies. As such, hundreds of Georgian scholarly works have been consulted and cited to provide a strong introductory basis for international scholarship. But the work cannot be entirely exhaustive, because that is beyond the scope of a single dissertation. Materials presented on Georgian medieval sources, the notated transcriptions, and the Georgian model melody system, have deep relevance to discussions that should interest all medieval musicologists. Among other things, such a study will make possible future comparative work with Byzantine, Armenian, Hagiopolite, Latin, and other Christian music traditions.

The primary focus of the dissertation is the comprehensive presentation of relevant source materials within their historical context. These include some twenty thousand pages of transcriptions in European notation, dozens of newspaper articles that provide the social and political context for this transcription work, and audio recordings of master singers dating to the late nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century. Various experimentations with alternative notational styles proved to be short-lived, however, as no single system of notation could be agreed upon. On this topic, a discussion of the Georgian medieval neume notational system (in Chapter II) is complemented by a presentation of original research on the nineteenth and twentieth century Georgian neume system (in Chapter IX).

The original contribution focuses on a detailed history of the transcription of Georgian chant into European notation between 1880-1910, a period of intense engagement with the last master singers of the liturgical chant tradition as inherited through oral tradition. The transcription of the non-tempered tuning of the Georgian singers proved problematic, as did the improvisatory nature of their performances. As such, the manuscripts they were often edited, with disagreements on harmonization style playing out in heated discussions written into the marginalia of several mss. These transcriptions, numbering approximately twenty thousand pages, were almost destroyed on several occasions during the turbulent political decades surrounding the demise of the Tsarist Empire and the Bolshevik annexation of Georgia into the Soviet Union. The transmission of the manuscripts themselves also becomes a fascinating story of survival.
The central discussion on the transcription of Georgian chant (Chapters III-VII) is book-ended by two introductory chapters on the medieval sources for Georgian chant (Chapters I-II), and one analytical chapter that frames the critical model melody system and regional harmonization, raising critical questions of transmission and the musical structure of the Georgian chant system (Chapter X). The editing of the transcriptions in 1912-1915, as well their narrow survival through the decade of the 1920s, is the subject of Chapter VIII.

When looking at the available sources for the study of Georgian liturgical chant, key questions become apparent. First, what were the mechanisms of organization for the oral transmission of such a large and highly complex repertory, reported by chanters as numbering more than 3500 individual chants? Second, what social and political forces led to the disappearance of the oral tradition in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, prompting the urgent need for its transcription into European notation? Third, how did the process of writing and editing transcriptions in European notation impact the performance of chant both then, and as it is being reconstructed in the modern era? And fourth, to what extent do these sources reflect or interact with the medieval tradition of Georgian chant as evidenced in manuscript sources from the ninth to twelfth centuries? Such questions are of interest to musicologists in all fields, and particularly those for whom the study of written and oral processes of liturgical and folk music holds specific research value.

The field of Georgian chant studies has received remarkably little international scholarly attention, perhaps due to the difficulty of the Georgian language, one of four languages in the Kartvelian family of the Caucasian language group (non Indo-European). Hymnographic texts translated in the medieval period remain exclusively in Classical Georgian, which features 38 letters and is written in three unique alphabets. Source materials housed in Soviet-era archives were insulated from even the most qualified international specialists, and in many cases, even Georgian specialists. But Georgian sources will prove very influential in coming decades. According to Peter Jeffery, “Georgian chant is in some respects our most direct witness to the period and the processes in which all medieval Christian liturgical chant was formed… the thorough investigation of the Georgian sources will be indispensable to solving the most important problems of modern chant scholarship.”
Transmission

Questions of transmission and notation form the guiding principles of this study, and while of interest particularly to chant scholars, the chronological period of study is not confined to the medieval era; indeed, the last master chanter of the Georgian liturgical repertory lived until 1967. The major sources for Georgian chant include medieval hymnographical texts, early twentieth-century audio recordings, and an astonishing twenty thousand pages of transcriptions in European notation transcribed between 1880-1930, now housed in various archival institutions in Tbilisi, Georgia. Other significant sources include more than five hundred newspaper articles published on the subject of chant between the years 1860-1920. These sources testify to an extensive oral tradition that thrived in medieval Georgia and persisted through centuries of political persecution and cultural degradation into the modern era. The manner and processes of this transmission, as analyzed in the extant sources, forms the foundation for the present work.

This dissertation examines the relationship between the written and oral means of transmission of Georgian liturgical chant. An astonishing fifteen thousand pages of transcriptions from the turn of the last century testify to an extensive oral tradition of chant that once thrived throughout medieval Georgia. These manuscripts, housed in the National Centre of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Georgia, represent the source material for the current revival of three-voiced polyphonic traditional chant in the Georgian Orthodox Church, a performance repertory that was entirely suppressed during the Soviet era.

Yet beneath the much-heralded recovery of Georgian traditional chant, certain inconsistencies underscore several paradoxes in current performance practice. For example, improvisation seems to have been an essential element of the oral tradition, as described by contemporaries and as evidenced by wide variance in the manuscript record, yet modern choirs sing verbatim from newly published chantbooks. Furthermore, audio recordings from the pre-Bolshevik era convincingly indicate that Georgian chant was performed in a unique, non-diatonic tuning system, yet most modern choirs performing from staff notation sing in tempered tuning.

These discrepancies in performance practice underscore a series of historical and musical problems whose unraveling will require many years of study. My work begins from a series of fundamental questions. What were the social and political forces that led to the demise of the oral transmission of Georgian chant? Second, how can we critically evaluate the notated
transcriptions that were created in response to this decline? And third, how can chant analysis provide clues to processes of mnemonic retention and transmission of such a large and complex polyphonic chant system?

**Polyphony**

The musical distinction between monophony and polyphony is a significant marker of difference not only among the various early Christian chant systems, but throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, Anatolian, and Caspian region, where highly ornamented monophonic modal melodies dominate local music systems. But, in an evolution that confounds scholars to this day, harmony became the dominant form of musical expression in the folk traditions of the Georgian-speaking tribes of the South Caucasus, thus providing the artistic and cultural basis for the syncretism of Palestinian-Byzantine Christian modal melodies with the harmony, improvisation, and musical awareness of the multi-voiced singing traditions of the vernacular music.

The origin and development of polyphony in Georgia is a complex issue; its study is essential for understanding the global context of this repertory. Polyphony is the dominant form of music making in the various ethno-linguistic areas of the South Caucasus populated by groups speaking one of four Kartvelian languages. At some point, the performance of liturgical texts in the Orthodox Church of Georgia became polyphonic. Its similarity to local folk polyphony raises a number of issues explored in this dissertation, such as the extent of their mutual influence, and the chronology of this interaction and musical evolution.

**Hymnography**

Ninth and tenth century sources reveal a period of intensive hymnography as texts were translated from Greek and set to original melodies in a flourishing three-way exchange between Georgian monasteries situated on Mount Athos, Greece, in Jerusalem, and in the Georgian principality of T’ao-Klarjeti (NE Turkey). Monastic schools in these locations perfected the art

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4 The four Kartvelian languages are: Kartuli (Georgian), Megrelian, Svan, and Laz. Polyphony is also evident among non-Kartvelian groups such as the North Caucasian Kists, Chechnyans, Adygheans, and others. See Joseph Jordania, *Who Asked the First Question: The Origins of Human Choral Singing, Intelligence, Language and Speech*, Tbilisi: Logos Publishing, 2006.

5 The Orthodox Church of Georgia was founded in AD 326 with the conversion of King Mirian and Queen Nana of the kingdom of Iberia (East Georgia).
of syllabic-translation and hymn-tune setting of new Greek heirmoi texts, and several large heirmologia, such as that completed by Mikael Modrek’ili in the year 988, testify to extensive engagement with Greek sources.

The first two chapters of this dissertation present a comprehensive review of the relevant Georgian literature on hymnographic subjects, a history of the field of Georgian chant studies, and engages with critical musicological questions. Though much of this material is presented for the first time in a non-Georgian language, it is necessary to acknowledge the breadth of existing research produced over the past century by Georgian scholars. This dissertation aims to honor the impressive collective body of knowledge (via thorough citation of relevant sources), while offering new analytical approaches to key areas of inquiry.

**Transcription**

By the end of the nineteenth century, the revival of the inherited oral tradition of Georgian chant proved unlikely. The only means left to popularize the tradition seemed to rely on transcribing and publishing chants. A dominant theme of this dissertation is the eventual transcription of the oral tradition of Georgian chant into European five line staff notation. A series of transcription projects in the decades between 1880-1910 yielded some twenty thousand pages of notation, yet these likely represent only a fraction of the chants sung during the nineteenth century. Entire schools of chant were never transcribed and can only be reconstructed based on conjecture.

The received tradition of Georgian chant in the late nineteenth century included a diverse repertory of melodies harmonized in many different ways and displaying many different variations. Many chants were transcribed into western notation in complete, three-voiced form, while others were transcribed only in the melodic voice. The one-voiced chants are not monophonic versions, but rather incomplete transcriptions.
Chapter Review

Chapter I: Georgian Hymnography (Part 1)

Citations relevant to the early medieval history of Georgian chant are already attested in the writings of St. Saba (fifth century). A textual chronology of Georgian sources allows the reader to understand the antiquity of the musical tradition inherited through oral transmission and analyzed in the following chapters. A pivotal period in the history of Georgian hymnography began in the eighth century, spurred by a monastic revival in the mountainous canyon-lands of the T'ao-Klarjeti region in northeast Anatolia. From here, Georgian monks such as Grigol of Khandzta began collating the Georgian translations of hagiopolite Greek texts into hymnographic collections called iadgari.

A transition is observed in texts created progressively throughout the tenth century, marked by the relatively sudden omission of Greek incipit texts, and the equally sudden appearance of a unique form of Georgian neumatic notation. This transition is accompanied by the use of new terms denoting the expansion and specialization of professional hymnographers such as, dasdeblis metsniereba [science of the troparion], mekhelni [master of tunes], and mekhurni iadgari [chantbook with neumes].

A unique form of Georgian neume notation, first seen in tenth century Georgian sources originating in Jerusalem, displays unique characteristics such as being written both above and below the text. By examining select pages from the neumed iadgari (heirmologian) of Mikael Modrek'ili (dated 978-988), this section establishes the basis for current and future research on these MSS. Critical editions and secondary literature are cited according to their relevance.

Greek-Byzantine influence on the Georgian hymnographic tradition in the tenth century is a subject for much debate and merits extensive further research. Specific elements of Georgian manuscripts such as their organization, the presence of translated Greek incipit texts, and other concordances suggest a rich inter-textual interaction. However, it is also clear that especially in the tenth century, the composition of unique melodies, set to neume notation, and collated in original manuscripts attest to the expansive growth of an independent school of hymnography in Georgia.
Chapter II. Hymnography (Part 2)

Chapter II proceeds from topics raised in the first chapter with a discussion of the following topics: The role of the eleventh-century Athonite Fathers—Giorgi Mtats'mindeli and Ekvtime Mtats'mindeli—in the translation, text-setting, and composition of new melodies; the philological exegesis of eleventh and twelfth century texts; and a review of the debates on the origin of medieval polyphony.

Two successive abbots of the Iviron (Georgian) Monastery on Mount Athos, Greece, dominate the hymnography of the eleventh century. Ekvtime and Giorgi translated the Gospels, the Menaian, the Heirmologion, and numerous other texts. Many sources attest to an active musical setting of newly translated hymn texts, using melodies that Giorgi Mtats'mindeli described as, "being known already for four hundred years." In this section, we review all of the available evidence for the use of known Georgian melodies, the adaption of existing Greek melodies, and the composition of new "Georgian" melodies for the Athonite translations. The introduction of Greek ekphonetic notation, contained in manuscripts associated with Giorgi Mtats'mindeli, is also the subject of one section of this chapter.

The inherited tradition of Georgian Orthodox chant is polyphonic. The origins of this polyphonic realization of what were once monophonic melodies is the subject of enduring debate in Georgian scholarly circles and of immense interest to the international musicology community. This chapter reviews all of the available evidence for the medieval origins of polyphony, citing relevant secondary literature from the past century of research on this subject. The primary sources for the theory of the medieval origin of polyphony in Georgia are the writings of the eleventh century theologian, Ioane P’et’rits’i. The philological exegesis of various terms in his collected volumes, as examined in the scholarly literature, forms the review aspect of this section. To further contextualize this debate for English readers, I offer a discussion on the inherited polyphonic folk tradition in Georgia and a glossary of medieval and modern musical terms in Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music.

Chapter III: Revival and Decline (1764-1880)

In the nineteenth century, Georgian polyphonic folk and sacred music were set in opposition to the monophonic music of Armenia, Persia, and surrounding cultures as a means to show originality, uniqueness, and creativity, themes that continue to resonate among Georgian
nationalists even in the first decades of the twenty-first century. The birth of this sentiment finds its roots in the revival of the Georgian Church in the mid-eighteenth century, its progressive decline over the next century, culminating in an eleventh-hour rescue effort in the final decades of the nineteenth century when many chants were transcribed from the last living masters of the inherited oral tradition.

Chapter III introduces the social and political contexts for the decline of Georgian chant, a process that precipitated actions to preserve the tradition through writing in European notation. The chapter begins with a discussion of the revival of Georgian Orthodox art forms in the second half of the eighteenth century. But with the arrival of the Russian military in 1801, and the attendant colonization of civic and religious institutions in Georgia, the institutionally supported chant tradition went into decline. In place of Georgian traditional chant, Russian Slavonic chant was taught in Georgian seminaries. Funding for the study of Georgian chant was withheld from the Svet'itskhoveli Seminary and other centralized institutions in East Georgia, dealing a serious blow to the institutional transmission of chant for the whole region. Similar processes in West Georgia had less overall effect due to the decentralized economies of the Church, and the relative strength of the chanting families, who preserved their respective chant traditions through oral transmission.

In Tbilisi, the decades of the 1860s and 1870s were engrossed in an ideological battle for national independence and state building. In Georgia, radicalized sons of aristocrats returning home from education abroad in Russia and Europe enlivened debates on serfdom, authoritarianism, and the question of national identity. Georgian language newspapers such as the Iberia and Droeba competed for the attention of thousands of newly urbanized Georgian peasants, seeking to galvanize support for the Georgian Royalists, Mensheviks, Bolsheviks, and other parties. Figures such as Noe Jordania, Joseph Djgulashvili, and Lavrent Beria would play a key role in defining Caucasian politics into the twentieth century. But in the 1880s, these names were relatively unknown next to major figures such as Ilia Ch’avch’avadze, Dimit’ri Qipiani, and Ak’ak’i Ts'ereteli, the leaders of the Georgian nationalist movement. This group, called the tergdaleulni, were landed gentry with monetary resources and media connections,

which they used to generate sympathy and interest in Georgian nationalist circles, fomenting an anti-Tsarist rhetoric that in many ways led to major events such as the Gurian revolution of 1905.

This movement was led by returning Georgian aristocrats, educated in Europe and Russia, who championed the revival of Georgian cultural heritage upon which to base the future state. Ilia Ch’avch’avadze, an influential statesman and editor of the Georgian language newspaper *Iberia*, championed liturgical chant as an essential element of pre-Russian Georgian culture. Among his many initiatives, his printing press at the offices of the Iberia newspaper became the first to publish transcriptions of Georgian church chant. Several members of his press were key actors in the preservation movement of Georgian chant, including Maksime Sharadze and Ekvtime K'ereselidze. The transcription and publication of Georgian chant was not just a dispassionate process of simple archival preservation, but came to represent the larger ideological struggle of the Georgian nationalists battling for the rights to a national destiny distinct from the Russian Tsarist Empire.

The master-chanter tradition in Georgia was already in serious decline by the mid-nineteenth century due to drastic cultural shifts associated with the displacement of large segments of the population to urban centers and years of Tsarist-directed Russification programs aimed at de-legitimizing Georgian traditions. Many master-chanters lost their livelihood and their students, so the quality and diversity of the chant tradition was gradually lost. Only a few families preserved the masters-level tradition of Georgian chant. Parish church choirs, especially in rural locations, continued to sing the basic chants of the weekly Divine Liturgy services, but hardly anyone could sing the hundreds of additional *troparia*, *kondakia*, *heirmoi*, and other genre chants that beautified the special feastday services such as Nativity, Pascha, Annunciation, St. George's Feastday, and other significant services of the Orthodox calendar year. These chants were only known by those who had studied with master chanters for at least four to six years, an instructional period that provided the basis for learning the arts of the chanter: memorizing the model melody system, the practice of harmonization in three voices, and the practice of advanced ornamentation.

In East Georgia, the K'arbelashvili family preserved the chant tradition through the nineteenth century. Two brothers, Vasil and P'olievkt'os K'arbelashvili, were responsible for performing and transcribing the bulk of existing East Georgian chant that was notated at the end
of the nineteenth century. Other schools of chant that may have existed in East Georgia were never transcribed.

In West Georgia, the knowledge of how to perform chant was preserved via several 'singing' families who, despite Russian control, continued to be affiliated with monasteries that had historically strong chanting traditions. At the Shemokmedi Monastery in the province of Guria, four or five generations of chanters from the Dumbadze family preserved a unique school of chant. At the Mart'vili Monastery, the Ch'alaganidze family taught and sang traditional chant. In Kutaisi and at the Gelati Monastery, the K'andelaki family preserved chant, and at the Khoni Monastery, the Kutateladze family were known as masters of their own local tradition. In this section, we discuss the details of this family-oriented transmission of chant, which, in the face of increasing suppression of the Georgian Church during the nineteenth century, helped to preserve the tradition of three-voiced polyphonic chant. By the end of the century, however, the oral transmission of chant even in these dynastic chant families had declined to the point where the children no longer knew the tradition.

Chapter IV: Urban Politics and the Early Transcriptions

From 1860 to 1880, new initiatives to preserve the declining oral chant tradition began to focus on the possibility of written notation. Alexander Okrop'iridze, a Georgian Orthodox bishop sympathetic to Georgian nationalists, acted on his growing unease about the lack of institutional support for the few remaining master chanters by forming the public committee called, the Committee to Preserve Georgian Church Chant. The Committee attempted to focus public attention on the declining tradition through published articles and organized events. They offered cash prizes for the successful transcription of Georgian traditional chant into European staff notation. Several people attempted to transcribe chant, including the Russian composer, Mikael Ippolitov-Ivanov, but most attempts were short-lived. Frustrated with a lack of enthusiasm and substantive results, Bishop Okrop'iridze offered a five hundred Ruble guarantee to anyone who could successfully and seriously transcribe chant.

By the late 1870s, the increasing fragility of the oral chant tradition created a sense of urgency among members of the Preservation Committee. In 1878, Bishop Okrop'iridze organized a competition between the last of the chant choirs from East and West Georgia. This event proved fortuitous, as it brought together the most prestigious chanters with benefactors from the
Aristocratic class who could assist in future preservation efforts. But public and private criticism of the budgetary priorities of the Preservation Committee were also voiced in various anonymous letters published in Tbilisi newspapers, causing problems with the Russian Exarch and others.

Otherwise, chant was perceived as a dying tradition, as the Russian church increasingly banned Georgian chant from public performance in worship services, and young musicians turned towards the music of the West. The opening of the Opera House on Rustaveli Avenue in Tbilisi in 1845 and the opening of the Eristavi theater in 1850 created demand for young performers, voice teachers, and musicians. Bishop Alexander Okrop'iridze, a highly-educated Georgian Orthodox bishop who recognized the threat to traditional forms of chant transmission from both the imperialist church policies and the colonial cultural influence, acted on his growing unease first by forming the Commission to Preserve Georgian Church Chant.

The Commission attempted to focus public attention on the declining tradition through articles and conferences, and sponsored the first transcription efforts of Georgian chant into western five-line staff notation. Several prominent Russian composers attempted the task with varying degrees of success, most notably Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov, who eventually published a short book of Eastern Georgian liturgy chants in 1899. But others had less success, failing to mitigate the incongruities of the oral tradition such as singing in a non-diatonic tuning system and the prevalence of variation. Despite the belief of Bishop Alexander (Okrop'iridze) that notating chant was the only real path to preserving Georgian chant, traditional singers had come to associate “Russian notation” with the music of the opera and theater, and did not share the bishop’s optimism that such notation could capture the nuances of traditional music.

The history of the early efforts to transcribe Georgian chant involves several groups, including those involved with transcription and publishing, the leaders of the Georgian Nationalist movement, and master singers. Unlike nineteenth century transcription efforts in sub-Saharan Africa or North America, transcription issues in Georgia did not revolve around what Ter Ellingson calls “European standards of measurement, notation, and universalist assumptions.” Rather, native Georgian transcribers such as Pilimon Koridze, Razhden Khundadze, and Vasil K'arbelashvili were able to bypass cultural misinterpretation and European musical bias in order to arrive at a closer rendition of the salient features of Georgian chant. The

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concentration of the Committee shifted from an effort at rejuvenation to one of preservation. From this point forward, their focus would be on finding ways to preserve chant in European notation.

Chapter V: Transcription Projects: West Georgia (1883-1886)

This chapter narrows the social-political history presented in Chapter IV, focusing specifically on the first major transcription projects of West Georgian chant carried out by Pilimon Koridze. These transcriptions form the bulk of the source material for the current revival of tradition chant in the Georgian Orthodox church, as they are being studied, republished, and recorded by Tbilisi-based scholars and performance ensembles. The Koridze transcriptions, and the edited copies by his successor Ekvtime K'ereselidze, form the basis for the following four chapters.

Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze, one of the singers of the West Georgian choir that came to Tbilisi in 1878, became the first master chanters to work with opera singer Pilimon Koridze to transcribe chant into European staff notation. Their project, which started in 1883, led to an invitation from the Bishop of Kutaisi (West Georgia) to give a public performance of chant sung from the 'Russian notes'. The reception and reaction to this performance, in early 1884, illustrates the transition from oral to written conceptions of preserving the chant tradition, a significant turning point in the history of chant and the discussions presented in this dissertation.

Following the 1884 performance, Bishop Gabriel Kikodze of Kutaisi commissioned the transcription of some five hundred chants. This two-year project represented the first systematic approach to notating every chant needed for the performance of the three liturgy services, Matins, Vespers, funerals, weddings, ordinations, and feast-days. The successful notation of the semi-improvisatory tradition of Georgian liturgical chant is necessarily heralded as a major event in the history of writing music.

Chapter VI: Publication and Transcription (1891-1911)

In 1891, the first music type was imported to Tbilisi from Moscow. The primary aim of the publishing group that acquired the type (led by Maksime Sharadze) was the publication of the chant transcriptions. In 1895, the release of the first publication of chant signalled a major break-through in the decades-long effort to protect the fragile oral tradition of chant. During
these years, Maksime Sharadze and his assistants became the primary actors not only in publishing, but also in the continuing effort to commission the further transcriptions.

Three major transcription projects were commissioned. In 1893, Pilimon Koridze was sent to transcribe rare *heirmoi* chants from the aging master, Ant'on Dumbadze, in the far West Georgian province of Guria. Following a setback in 1901 (Russian censors revoked their publishing license), Pilimon Koridze was financed for a two-year project transcribing further *heirmoi* chants from Arist'ovle Kutateladze. In 1906, Koridze returned to the province of Guria to transcribe more chants from Dumbadze and his students. These projects are described in this chapter, with music examples to illustrate the salient events and challenges of each project.

Sharadze and others in Tbilisi believed that given the melody, Georgian chant could easily be completed in three-voiced harmony. So in the interest of time, he asked Pilimon Koridze to transcribe only the first-voice melodies for these transcription projects. He planned to pay a master chanter to complete the transcriptions before publishing them, but died before this project could be completed. As a result, thousands of chant transcriptions remained incomplete following Sharadze's death in 1908. Ekvtime K'ereselidze, one of the press workers, inherited these transcriptions, and was able to complete their harmonization and editing in a project lasting from 1912-1915, a project described in detail in Chapter VIII.

The advent of musical type in the hands of Maksime Sharadze yielded about a dozen publications of chant between the years 1895-1911. These first-edition chant books, though few in number, form the basis for the modern revival of the performance practice of traditional chant.

Chapter VII: Transcription Issues

The transcription of the Georgian chant into European notation created, for the first time, a comprehensive written record of the oral tradition of liturgical chant. This written record, however, was deeply flawed. As relatively inexperienced users of western notation, transcribers were forced to compromise when determining how to notate extra-musical aspects of performance practice such as breathing, tempo, stress, and accentuation. Furthermore, accurate representation of musical features such as the Georgian non-diatomic scale, free improvisation technique, and the ornamentation of model melodies beyond recognition proved to be nearly impossible.
Matching the tuning of three-part Georgian chant to the European staff proved particularly thorny. Writing in the early twentieth century, ethnomusicologist Dimit'ri Araqishvili lamented: “The great majority of our chants are based on a natural scale, as opposed to a tempered one, and as a result we do not have the means to transcribe them with great precision.” In this section, I introduce the various existing theories of Georgian tuning as a starting point for understanding issues and challenges of the transcription process. Various theories propose that the interval of a half step is not present in the Georgian tuning system, but is based rather on "three-quarter" intervals, each measuring between 150-200 cents. The theories differ on the size, arrangement, and precision of these “three-quarter” steps in the Georgian scale. Suffice to say here that the intervals of the third, sixth, and seventh remain neutral, while the fifth consistently forms the most stable interval. Though I have researched this issue, and learned to sing in Georgian traditional tuning for research purposes, a thorough investigation of this critical issue is not the focus of the present dissertation. I intend to publish on these subjects in the future.

The Georgian tuning system presented numerous problems for Pilimon Koridze and the other transcribers of traditional chant. These issues are manifested in the key signatures of chants, which were often emended during the transcription period, as well as in editing processes after transcription. A series of case studies that present these issues are discussed, using copies of the original transcriptions.

To begin to comprehend the music of the Georgian oral chant tradition, it is critical to approach the nineteenth transcriptions not as prescriptive musical manuscripts, but as texts that hold insightful clues to the deeper systems of the tradition such as memorization, harmonization, variation practice, and text-music relationships. Like all notation, there are essential flaws that must be understood, such as the inability to avoid tritone intervals. These elements become easier to perceive when we look at transcription texts as mirrors of oral transmission, and look for patterns of fixed structures and surface formulaic patterns common to oral transmission around the globe.

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Chapter VIII: Completing the Transcriptions

Despite the successful transcription of many chants, a good proportion of the transcriptions remained incomplete. Thousands of chants were notated only in the first voice, not in the completed three-voiced version in which they were performed and transmitted. After the dissolution of the Sharadze & Friends Press in 1910, Ekvtime K'erelidze resolved to resolve the issue of the incomplete transcriptions. In 1912, he hired Razhden Khundadze to harmonize the notated melodies in the style of the Gelati Monastery school of chant. But the results were less than satisfactory. Many dialogues, written directly into the scores, attest to a stylistic tension between K'erelidze and Khundadze. On the one hand, K'erelidze wanted the ornamental harmonizations, while on the other, Khundadze believed that the simplest harmonizations possible were the most likely to be performed by future generations of chanters. This conflict was never resolved, but represents a significant window in which to understand the motivations and personalities of these two decisive figures in the preservation of chant.

A number of the manuscripts discussed in this chapter show signs of further editing. I argue that a relatively unknown chanter, Ivliane Nik'oladze, made a significant contribution to the emendation of the Khundadze harmonizations, and even harmonized many of them himself. This theory has not been established by Georgian scholars, and offers an advance in our collective knowledge of the aesthetic preferences of key actors in the transcription, preservation, and harmonization of Georgian traditional chant.

Ekvtime K'erelidze (1865-1944) safeguarded the majority of Georgian chant transcriptions through the decades preceding and following the Bolshevik revolution, a period of extreme violence and destruction for those associated with the Orthodox Church. A postscript on some of his activities during these years forms the final section of this chapter, but in reality deserves an entire monograph.

Chapter IX: Other Notational Systems

As an addendum to the section on Georgian medieval neume notation in Chapter I, this chapter offers readers an introductory analysis of other unique notational systems in Georgia. These include a proposed alphabetic system that was never utilized in any music manuscripts, an indexing system for model melodies called ch'reli [colorful], and several variants nishnebi
neume notation extant in more than a dozen manuscripts of the eighteenth to twentieth century period.

The importance of these notational systems is twofold: 1) they present unique case studies in the history of graphic representations of sound, and, 2) they reflect an active interaction with the oral transmission of polyphonic Georgian liturgical chant. The nishnebi neume system is particularly intriguing because the authors of the neumed sources are often well known to history as expert singers of three-voiced chant. Yet their neume notation only depicts the top voice melody. This presents a number of intriguing questions addressed in this chapter: what was the function of the first-voice melody in the transmission of chant? Are the neumes decipherable? For several specific chant examples, I have been able to locate European staff notation and nishnebi neume notation as sung by the same singer. The comparison of these sources remains a massive project that will take many years to complete.

Chapter X: Georgian Chant Harmony

Within the field of semiotics as it pertains to musical analysis, several methodologies have been employed to approach the melodic and harmonic content of selected Georgian chants. As Harold Powers has argued, a semiological approach may open avenues of inquiry into world music repertoires that defy conventional analysis techniques developed in conjunction with instrumental and vocal repertoire from western Europe, “…modern analytical theorists of Western music can do worse than reflect on theories and studies of other musical practices.” The study of the manner in which Georgian chant was transmitted in a highly improvisatory musical environment may contribute to our knowledge of other music systems.

In this chapter, I offer a basic chart on the various harmony types found in the regional centers of Georgia. Taking the familiar chant example, aghdgomasa shensa [To your Resurrection], I analyze several regional variants of the chant and compare them to sample folk songs from each region. Chord types from each region are presented, as well as other harmonic and ornamental characteristics that are common to the folk and liturgical music of each region.

Chapter XI: Model Melodies and Ornamentation

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The presence of formulaic constructions in many oral traditions (both musical and poetic) has generated considerable debate on the intersections of orality, written tradition, and memory. Theories of re-composition and re-creation will likely apply to the types of oral transmission found in Georgia, in which model melodies of phrase length are ornamented and varied according to performance context. But in Parry & Lord’s classic formulaic structures model, the claim that fixed variants do not exist is problematic: observations of Georgian chant through extensive cross-comparison between variants from regional schools reveal systematic adherence to the principles of defined model melodies. The manifestation of these melodies in the semi-improvisatory performance practice, however, suggests that variation and ornamentation were extremely common.

The organization of Georgian liturgical chant is based on a model melody system employing hundreds of unique, phrase-length motives. Each motive is associated with a particular genre of chant and tone, and is not sung in other contexts. Thus, a melody heard in a particular genre—say, a troparion in Tone 6—will not be heard in any other genre or tone. In this chapter, we describe this system using examples to clarify how the model melody system functioned in the oral transmission of chant.

The final section deals with the advanced ornamentation technique of *gadajvaredineba* [voice crossing] in all of its manifestations. The most radical form of this ornamentation results in the omission of the 'referent' or model melody altogether: in these cases, all three voices improvise towards a known cadential point without reference to the unsounded referent melody.

Chapter XII: Epilogue

In the twentieth century, liturgical chant was mostly suppressed by the Soviet regime. Despite these conditions, certain chants continued to be performed, especially during the 1950s and 1960s. Tracing the history of one chant, *shen khar venakhi* [You are the Vineyard], this chapter offers an analysis of the transmission of chant through the Soviet period and into the

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modern era. The issue of performance practice is raised, as European classical choral traditions became the standard aesthetic of Soviet vocal ensembles.

Meanwhile, in the post-Soviet space, folk singers have initiated the revival of traditional chant found in the sources described in this dissertation. The performance of the same chant repertory, especially 'cross-over' chants such as *shen khar venakhi* that inhabit both the realms of the civil stage repertory and the religious service, by classical singers and folk singers provides another fascinating case study for how the oral transmission of performative elements of chant continu in Georgia today.

Personal Experience

The decision to pursue the historical study of Georgian chant would never have been possible without a series of profound life-changing personal experiences. These experiences have shaped the intellectual course of this thesis, and present a significant dimension of the methodology and insight contained herein. I offer several vignettes of my experience to help explain why Georgian music has become my passion, and how learning to perform chant like Georgians—in timbre, tuning, improvisation, and attitude—has profoundly influenced my understanding of this music system.

1. October 5th, 2003

The cathedral of Alaverdi—a majestic building with Romanesque arches—towers above its surroundings: rows upon rows of carefully cultivated vineyards. The first time I visited, a service was already in progress. I stood riveted to the ceramic tile floor, two steps inside the massive wooden doors, wedged solidly into the West end walls under a twelfth-century fresco of St. George. It was my first time inside a Georgian cathedral, but more impressionably, my first time hearing Georgian liturgical chant in a space in which it had evolved for more than a thousand years. A choir was singing somewhere in the cathedral, out of sight, their voices surrounding my ears in warm waves from each of the distant apses. They were singing the chant *jvarsa shensa*, the troparion for the feast of the cross... a chant that I had learned, transcribed, and taught my choir at Wesleyan University the previous spring, and whose enduring fascination had
led me to travel to Georgia to explore the cultural background of this music. I knew every phrase, syllable, and harmony, yet I had never heard it sung this effortlessly. No recording could capture what I was hearing in that moment, the intricacies of the close harmony perfectly steadied by the live acoustics of the fifty-meter interior walls, arched frescoed ceilings, and massive stone pillars. I heard each note clearly, the product of a clarity of tone and timbre that seemed to me to reflect the simplicity of the brush strokes in the icons around the cathedral, dotting the walls at head height in long rows of contemplative faces peering from ornate frames. If they were praying, I thought, it was certainly in tune with the deliberated confidence of the blended voices uttering their chant texts in a harmony unlike anything else I had heard.


While routinely browsing the audio recordings on the third floor of the Olin Library at Wesleyan University, I came across a recording of the Rustavi State Ensemble of Georgia. The first track that I listened to was the trisagion hymn, t's'mindao ghmerto (Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #1). I couldn't stop listening to it. I kept playing this one track over and over. At first, the entire ethos of the piece overwhelmed me, later I started paying attention to details like the quality of their vocal timbre, the dissonant harmony that sounded so effortless and peaceful, and the chant quality of the relaxed harmonic rhythm. I had the feeling that I had discovered a masterpiece, that I was hovering in a perfectly symmetrical geometrical space, that I was witnessing the creation of a precious gem... a pearl in the treasure chest that is our collective vocal expression.

The timbre of the voices was full-throated and full of overtones; entirely unlike the vocal production of other world music with which I was familiar, even the Corsicans and Bulgarians. How could I describe it? I jotted down a list of seemingly paradoxical first-impressions: deliberate, unfiltered, unemotional, melodious, expressivity, complex-harmony, meditative, reverent, focused, ancient. In a strange way, I felt like I was listening to the voices of my own ancestors, which, as a descendent of Scottish and Swedish immigrants, seems highly unlikely. Nevertheless the feeling persisted, preventing me from doing anything else in that heightened listening space. After perhaps the twentieth or thirtieth time listening to this single two-minute chant, I pulled pencil and paper from my pack and wrote down my first transcription of Georgian chant.
3. September, 2004

I am in a resort town on the Black Sea coast, dressed in a full-length white tunic—the chokha—with a ceremonial dagger hanging from an exterior belt. Underneath the tunic, my black pants are tucked into knee-high black leather boots. I am holding hands with a group of older men—dressed similarly except for the red color of their tunics—dancing with measured steps in a closed circle. We are singing an ancient ritual song from the remote mountain valleys of Svaneti, singing antiphonally in two groups across the circle. The singing is so deafening that I can't hear my own voice with my ears, I only feel the vibration of my throat as I follow the simple three-note bass voice. I concentrate on mimicking the footwork of my compatriots, looking across the circle so as not to embarrass myself starting down. Each time through the verse, the soloists of the first choir pull the pitch higher, like a skin being stretched over a drum, so that by the time my choir enters, we are forced to enter at a higher pitch than before. The stretched intervals make the hair on my arms and neck stand up, and the entire choir is buzzing with overtones and non-Pythagorean intervals. The sound fills my ears, I feel the vibration in my voice, and as the music propels us faster and faster, it becomes impossible to maintain the same footwork patterns. The circle opens: individual dancers launch themselves into the vortex of sound within our semi-circle, jittering and stomping on their toes, their legs and feet executing precise spins, their heads and torsos held perfectly erect. This is far from a frenzied dance-off, this is the definition of poised, martial, body control. I am pushed into the center.

4. April, 2005

I have been living for a week in the remote monastery of Betania in the forests of East Georgia. It is Holy Week, and the monks—including my acquaintance from Alabama, Fr. Theodore—are preparing themselves for the feast of the Resurrection through strict fasting and prayer. It took me four hours to find the Betania Monastery, hiking from the road through hornbeam forests and dew-laden meadows in the overcast gloom, occasionally asking a cowherd for directions. On that first day, after arriving a week ago, I tried to force myself to sleep after the 9pm prayer, knowing that the monks planned to wake at 2:30am to read the Gospels aloud. In the tiny stone room that I shared with Fr. Theodore, which opened up directly onto the yard in front of the twelfth-century cathedral, I was amazed to learn a small travel organ standing in the corner
was the very same one used by Pilimon Koridze, the opera singer responsible for notating the bulk of the surviving chant more than one hundred years ago. I had recently learned about this from presenting a paper on the history of Maksime Sharadze, the publisher that purchased this very organ for Koridze in 1893 (see, 6.2 The Dumbadze Transcription Project, 1893).

In the middle of the night, a loud clapping sound erupted through the silence of the forest: the wooden semantron being beaten by a monk calling the community to prayer. We stumbled through the rain in the unlit yard to a tiny chapel that stands adjacent to the twelfth century monastery church. The chapel, which also dates from the twelfth century, is small and bare except for a set of elaborate ornamental carvings etched into the white sandstone around the exterior of the single door.

Inside, six or seven men stand facing the small iconostasis in the tiny room, their faces flickering from the light of three candles in a jar on a reading podium in the back corner. Each man shifts from foot to foot, their heavy winter jackets hiding their black robes, their breath visible like the fog hanging on the treetops at the edges of the monastery yard. There is no acknowledgement of one another; each is lost in their own thoughts, brought together for the purpose of listening to the Gospels. After an initial prayer from the priest, followed by our collective "Amen," an elderly monk begins the reading. His pronunciation is completely incomprehensible, and I can't fathom how anyone understands him, even those knowledgeable in the peculiarities of Classical Georgian. I realize the monk doesn't have any teeth, he is simply mumbling the readings. This fazes no one. I can't understand, they can't understand, I come to peace with it. So we stand and meditate on being in this place at this time. We stand and listen to the mumbled Gospels through the night. No one sits, but sometimes, someone discreetly exits, only to return a few minutes later. When I can't stand any longer, I go outside and sit in the south entrance of the cathedral, shivering in the rain, watching the trees emerge and disappear in the mist of the early morning gloom. After a couple of minutes, I return to the warmth of the candlelight inside the tiny chapel, to the group of solitary men engaged in solitary thoughts, listening to the mumbled Gospel. The solemnity of the event carries an ancient appeal: I feel challenged to push away sleeplessness and endure the challenges of the monastic rule. Being a disciple of God is not supposed to be easy, I learn, at least not in the Orthodox path. We are humble servants trying to atone for the sins of our souls and the sins of the world. Standing here
in the middle of the night is part of a cleansing of the soul, I imagine, an initiation for the honor of singing the all night Paschal vigil.

I am at the Betania Monastery. I came here for Holy Week because I have been invited to sing the Paschal all-night vigil service, the most celebrated feastday of the year and the culmination of the Orthodox fasting period. And I came to pray. There will only be four chanter, and I will be singing the middle voice by myself for the projected seven-hour service. I spend the hours between services studying the complex heirmoi of the Paschal canon, which feature complex voice-crossings. These are actually easier for me to learn than texts such as the Creed and the Lords Prayer, which are sung in a fast-paced recitative. The pronunciation of Georgian consonant clusters (even with a full mouth of teeth) is nearly impossible without extensive repetition, and achieving a level of competency to sing the text requires ear memorization.

By Holy Saturday, the weather had cleared. More than one hundred people found their way to the monastery for the service, arriving by foot or four-wheel drive jeep in the evening hours carrying special sweet breads to be blessed. Luarsab T'ogonidze, my fellow singer, arrived with two basses, and we quickly found a corner to begin practicing some of the chants I had been studying all week. By 11pm, when the bells began ringing, we were inside the large church, which was lit with dozens of candles at the base of every icon along the walls. I felt completely at home in this church, this monastery, removed from time and place, removed from anything that I had ever experienced in my life before. The excitement of performing my first Paschal vigil overwhelmed me and I sat down on a small wooden bench and stared up at the barely visible frescoes on the walls. There was Queen Tamar, one of the only known portraits of this most famous twelfth century monarch. And there was the figure of Christ, peering down at us, as at so many generations of chanters that had filled this space with polyphony.

When the readings had finished and the priest, Fr. Iakob, emerged to begin the service, my daydreaming came to an abrupt end. Luarsab, our small ensemble's lead voice, peeled forth the exclamation, "Amen", immediately joined by the basses at the interval of a perfect fifth below. For a fraction of a second, I listened to that most perfect of intervals resonating back from the arched ceilings that stretched beyond the quivering gleam of the candlelight. The chanters looked at me without fear. I sang the middle note for the long sustained chord, and even as we stopped, the cathedral took the chord and played with it for another couple of the seconds. The
5. January, 2005

I began singing in the Jvartan Maghleba church in Tbilisi in January, 2005. There were four of us: a tenor, two basses, and me: the only second-voice singer. We were directed by a fifth person, unusually, an older woman named Ant'onina. Though well intentioned, Ant'onina would often give pitches far too high for us to sing, straining our first tenor beyond his tessitura and drawing cringing looks from the assembled parish. In these moments, she would inevitably substitute herself into the chant as the lead singer to salvage, for a moment at least, the embarrassment of sounding awful in a public worship context. Ant'onina was a dear lady (bless her heart), but prayerful contemplation was not her natural disposition. During services, she often stamped her foot and glared at us, whispering hoarsely, “that’s not allowed!” She had any number of reasons for this admonition—fidgeting, looking at cell phones, singing the wrong notes, or mispronouncing a text—so we became used to her scarcely concealed tirades which were delivered at least a dozen times a service. But I hardly remember these. What became an enduring memory, and indeed a formative learning experience, was her crisp denunciation of even the slightest deviation from the written notation. In thinking about why Ant'onina was bothered by even the simplest of ornamentations—ones that are common in many Georgian chants—I learned a valuable lesson on literate versus oral learning.

During services, Ant'onina often pulled out a piece of hand-written chant notation that I had never seen before, and almost as an afterthought, whispered hoarsely to ask if I 'knew' it. As if there was any option—because we were about to sing the chant in ten seconds—I nodded in affirmative. At the time, however, I had only just begun studying the Georgian language: I stared apprehensively at the scribbled texts. The other singers, who didn’t read notation well, worried about the length of notes and intervals. But for me, reading the Georgian alphabet while singing at tempo was my greatest challenge. While they were busy scrutinizing the notes while singing a memorized text, I was busy scrutinizing hand-written Georgian texts while easily following the musical notation. Under these conditions, improvisation on the basic melodies came easily to me, but not to them.
This experience led me to the observation that, regardless of fluency with the text, singers are more capable of improvising when their musical idiom is being performed from a place of previously learned, memorized material. This may seem like an obvious point, but the opposite was less obvious. Singers that had memorized texts, but not the music, were less able to improvise. Ant'onina only wanted us to sing what was on the written page. This impulse represented the antithesis of the improvisational models of performance that I was studying, the oral tradition of Georgian chant.

I became very interested in this question, and intensively compared the manner in which chanters improvised upon common melodies. I compared dozens of chant texts set to the same melodies in for example, Tone 4 troparia, and Tone 8 troparia. I began comparing the improvisational possibilities for ornamenting particular model melodies in all three voices, and then experimenting with these ornamental styles in other chants of the same genre. It became clear that many ornamental possibilities existed for each phrase-length referent melody, and that the choice of which ornamental style to choose from depended only on the skills and whims of the chanter. It became clear that this was how chant had been performed in the oral tradition, and influenced my thinking on the pedagogical principles of the oral transmission of Georgian chant.

6. May, 2015

Back in Tbilisi, Georgia, a few questions about the chant transcriptions remain unanswered. I make the familiar commute through the post-Soviet maze of haphazard apartment buildings behind the Sports Complex to find the National Centre of Manuscripts, a nondescript building in the center of a small complex of academic buildings built in the 1950s. Directions to this place would be impossible to deliver, as old roads have become parking lots in the unregulated construction boom that now dominates every inch of the hilltop. Inside the NCM, I am greeted by the familiar but immediately apologetic secretary, who informs me that the study room is closed for renovations. Later, I learn that the longtime director of the NCM has been sacked, and the turmoil of this leadership turnover has led to a stalemate among staff members. I will be unable to study any chant manuscripts for the entire summer. Unfortunately, this situation is far from surprising. Research conditions have been far from ideal over the years, a reality that perhaps deserves an extended comment.
After years of studying and living in Georgia, returning in the summers between graduate study, my studies shifted from the practical singing and teaching of chant and folk music to the analysis of the source manuscripts in the National Centre of Manuscripts. This signaled a shift from an overtly performative to an intensely solitary engagement with Georgian chant, as the source transcriptions demanded my complete attention. This shift into a more “serious” mode of study brought other challenges. Georgian scholars in some cases were less willing to share their own research with me, and straightforward questions were often met with hesitation, or promises to themselves publish on the subject. Despite my overtures to the contrary, I increasingly found myself in situations where I was perceived not as a student, but as a competitor for academic knowledge.

The staff at the National Centre of Manuscripts could not have been more helpful, but they worked within the confines of a Soviet-style bureaucracy. Thus, a maximum of only two manuscripts can be viewed per day, and these only in the often-unheated reading room of the old archival building. Still, the warmth and helpfulness of the staff made up for the lack of infrastructure. The daily limit on manuscript requests was particularly difficult to work around because the comparative work I wished to accomplish. My study of the drafting, copying, and editing of the transcriptions deals with particular chants as found in up to five or six separate collections. Similar but slightly better conditions existed at the National Library, where copies of nineteenth century newspapers are housed in large collated collections.

Physical challenges notwithstanding, the chance to work with archival sources proved to be truly inspiring. The aspirations and hopes of the men working to preserve Georgian chant are evident in the care of the notation, the small ornamental headings for new sections, and in remarks written directly into the manuscript pages. It was necessary for me to acquire the ability to read different sets of hand-writing, some more legible than others, and also to distinguish the handwriting of the various authors that contributed musical notation to the edited manuscripts. In order to understand the history of each manuscript, I set about the lengthy process of viewing the approximately fifty collections of transcriptions in the National Center of Manuscripts. Having seen every collection, I began to amass a practical knowledge of which collections were rough drafts for other collections, which manuscripts had been edited and which ones had not, and other details such as the authorship, date and location of transcription, and the names of the master chanters. Some of this information is contained in the well-indexed table of contents.
written by Ekvtime K'ereselidze about the thirty-five manuscripts in his possession in 1936. Yet even here, many of the page and manuscript numbers were changed by the cataloguers in the Tbilisi University Museum and later, the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi.

My original passion for singing, learning, and teaching Georgian chant has contributed significantly to the discussions in this dissertation. Singing with Georgians, in particular, has helped me to understand the aesthetic pleasure in choosing close-harmony intervals in favor of triad harmony. It has helped me to appreciate the incredible power of singing a drone in a group (in Eastern Georgian folk-songs), while two soloists sing the upper-voice melodies. The soloists manifest the intertwining melodies that all of us have in our ears in such a way that drone singers actually feel that they are singing the melodies themselves. Because of this special experience, I also began to understand the playfulness of variation, as each singer seeks to put his own twist on the melodies and harmonies that we all know by heart. This is an internal game that singers play, and one that only Georgian singers fully appreciate.

My introduction to Georgian chant in 2002-2003 was the beginning of an enduring fascination with this repertory. What I couldn’t have known then is that the entire system was almost completely lost one hundred years ago when the oral transmission of chant went extinct after a century of decline. Efforts to transcribe that tradition into western notation were largely successful, however, though limited in scope, but the anti-church policies of the Soviet state stymied their dispersal or use. Thus, Georgian chant was saved from oblivion through written records, yet these were sequestered in Soviet archives, unavailable and unknown to the public. Effectively, the traditional chant of the Georgian Orthodox Church, which had been passed through oral tradition for centuries, ceased to exist as a living tradition in the twentieth century.

Through years of performance and interaction with Georgian singers and scholars, certain questions have emerged. The most intriguing to me has been the discussion on how to perform Georgian chant now in the post-Soviet revival of the Georgian Orthodox Church. This debate is multi-layered as evidenced by the complexity of revivals worldwide. Purists contend that contemporary choirs should emulate in every detail the known performance techniques of past masters (a knowledge gleaned mostly from turn of the century wax cylinder audio recordings). Others feel freer to experiment with the repertory, or to respond to parish or hierarch aesthetic interests, which vary widely.
My own interest in this debate stems from the more musically technical questions. For example, it is clear that Georgian master chanter, and folk singers, sang in a unique tuning system not related to the tempered of Pythagorean scale systems that have become ubiquitous in the twentieth century West. The Georgian liturgical scale can be roughly described as an equidistant heptatonic scale where the octave is divided into seven similarly spaced intervals. This raises all kinds of questions concerning the placement of ficta, such as whether to sing particular chords with major or minor thirds, sixths, or seventh degree intervals. Such decisions have been taken, in a divisive way, by the editors of competing publications of Church Chant compiled from the now accessible turn of the century transcriptions housed in the National Centre of Manuscripts in the capital city of Georgia, Tbilisi.

Besides the question of original Georgian tuning and the resulting ficta decisions that need to be made to enable choirs to sing in tempered tuning from published scores in western notation, the deeper mystery of the lost oral transmission of Georgian chant is really the issue that drives the research contained in this dissertation. The last master of the oral tradition, Art'em Erkomaishvili, did not know how to write or read in Western notation, but confessed to being able to sing more than 2500 chants from memory. He lived until 1967, and recorded more than one hundred chants in all three voice parts just before his death at the age of eighty years old. To hear these recordings is an entirely different experience than listening to a modern Georgian church choir, and made me question the very nature of the debate about modern performance practice.

To listen to these recordings, one hears that Erkomaishvili is humming along to a tune that is entirely familiar to him. So familiar that he doesn’t mind taking an extra breath here and there (he was an old man), skipping a note or two, or improvising entire passages only to arrive at the cadence perfectly on time. Because he recorded the top voice first, and then the lower two voices while listening to a recording of himself, the moments of improvisation all seem to line up together, the cadences all in line together. One begins to wonder how three singers, improvising in this manner, could have sung together like this. But all evidence points to the fact that they did, and did so expertly. This dissertation is inspired by a fascination with the oral tradition of Georgian chant, as inherited through the medieval period, and as performed today.
Discussion of terms

The study of the Georgian lexicon as it relates to music provides a glimpse into the musical vocabulary prevalent among Georgian singers. More than sixty terms describe various vocal timbre types, vocal ranges, and harmonic or melodic voice types (Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music). Despite geographical, cultural, linguistic, and religious differences among the various Kartvelian ethnic groups in the South Caucasus, music remains a strong indicator of a common sphere of influence. In particular, researchers consider the rich vocabulary that accompanies the classification of vocal music a reflection of a common “polyphonic consciousness.”\(^\text{11}\) The oldest sources for musical vocabulary dates to the writings of Ioane P'et'rits'i, an eleventh century philosopher (see, 2.5 Medieval References to Polyphony). Another key source is an early eighteenth-century dictionary (Sit’qvis k’ona) compiled by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani (1658-1725).\(^\text{12}\) The philological exegesis of historical musical terminology is of great interest, especially in its possible reflection of medieval polyphonic practice.\(^\text{13}\)

The following is a short description of the most significant musical terms for understanding liturgical polyphony in Georgia (for a full list, see Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music). The general word for song, mghera or simghera, which evolved from a medieval usage meaning “to play” and now generally referring to folk singing, can be distinguished from the more specific term galoba or sagalobeli (chant), or verb form igalobon (to chant). In the medieval era, the cognate, galobani, was a noun used to refer to the odes of a kanon, and not used as a verb. Musicologist Manana Andriadze writes: “in old liturgical documents the [verbal] form igalobon (to chant) almost never occurs; instead the words


aghignon (to open one's mouth), tkuan (to say), or itqodian (to utter) are used.\textsuperscript{14} These verbs were gradually replaced with the verbal form of \textit{i-galob-on}. According to the philological analysis by Javakhishvili, the medieval usage of galoba referred to any “continuous musical sound,” which by the eighteenth century had acquired the much more specific meaning of: “the praising of God by Orthodox believers.”\textsuperscript{15} From this word comes mgalobeli (singer of chants), and sruli-mgalobeli (master chanter).

The term \textit{khma} (voice) in medieval sources expresses different meanings such as ‘noise’ (as in a shout or loud call), as well as ‘story,’ ‘word,’ and in a musical sense ‘sound,’ and ‘tone’ (in reference to the Oktoechos designation).\textsuperscript{16} To avoid confusion, this dissertation uses the term “Tone” when referring to the eight tones of the Oktoechos. In this dissertation, the term \textit{khma} is used for ‘voice part’—as in \textit{p’irveli khma} (first or top voice)—and ‘tone’ as in \textit{khma d} (Tone 4). The term \textit{k’ilo} is used primarily to refer to levels of complexity and ornamentation that fall into three categories: \textit{sada k’ilo} (simple style), \textit{namdvili k’ilo} (true style), and \textit{gamshvenebuli k’ilo} (ornamental style). These ornamentation categories are discussed in Chapter X (Figure 142).

The term \textit{k’ilo} is used for a variety of musical processes and doesn’t have a single definition even today. A great deal of interpretation must be applied to its use in historical sources, where it may mean melody, modulation, system of organization by tone, timbre, ornamentation level, regional style, or regional spoken dialect. According to the Orbeliani dictionary: “\textit{k’ilo} is a system of organization for songs and sounds.”\textsuperscript{17} Ivane Javakhishvili states: “\textit{Mok’azmuli} is probably a term that denotes a chant adorned with a tune, while the tune itself is called \textit{k’ilo}.”\textsuperscript{18}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} Manana Andriadze, “Sagalobeli kartuli...” (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2004), reprinted in English in: Musicology Today, #20 (Bucharest: Journal of Music of the National University of Bucharest, 2014), 3.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ivane Javakhishvili, Kartuli musik’is ist’oriis dziritadi sak’itkhebi, 1938. Cited in the Introduction to Kartuli khalkhuri simghera: p’irveli ponochanats’erebi, 1901-1914 [Georgian Folk Song: the First Sound Recordings, 1901-1914], edited by Anzor Erkomaishvili and Vakht’ang Rodonaia (Tbilisi: The International Center for Georgian Folk Song, 2006), 28.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Many adjectives for qualities of voice were formed from the word \textit{khma}, such as \textit{khmamshvenieri} (beautiful voice), \textit{khmaneloba} (charming voice), \textit{khmatsulili} (thin voice), \textit{khmamshkhi} (deep voice).
\item \textsuperscript{17} The full definition in the Orbeliani dictionary is as follows: “\textit{k’ilod itkmis galobata da khmovanebata mimoktsevis mukhli}.” Transliteration: “k’ilod itkmis galobata da khmovanebata mimoktsevis mukhli.” Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, Lekisikoni Kartuli (Georgian Dictionary), Vol. 1 (Tbilisi, 1991).
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ivane Javakhishvili, Kartuli musik’is ist’oriis dziritadi sak’itkhebi, 1938. Cited in the Introduction to Kartuli khalkhuri simghera: p’irveli ponochanats’erebi, 1901-1914 [Georgian Folk Song: the First Sound Recordings, 1901-1914], edited by Artem Erkomaishvili and Vakht’ang Rodonaia (Tbilisi: The International Center for Georgian Folk Song, 2006): 29.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Many terms also exist to describe various voice types and functions in folk and liturgical polyphony.\(^{19}\) The middle voice in folk songs, for example, is often referred to as *modzakhili* (lit, “the one who follows the call”), or *mtkmeli* (one who speaks) because it is expected to lead the song by singing the primary melody and articulating the text. Such designations make sense when considering that in many folk songs, especially in West Georgia, the outer voices improvise on vocables while the middle voice states the text.\(^{20}\) Therefore, it is somewhat surprising that in liturgical music, where all three voices state the text homophonically, the designation *mtkmeli* refers to the singer of the top voice. Why would the top voice be called the "one who speaks" if all three voice parts sing the text? The names of the lower voice parts may offer the answer: the lower voice parts in liturgical chant carry names that demonstrate their dependent, harmonizing role. The lowest voice is called *bani* ('accompaniment' or 'bass'), while the middle voice is called *maghali bani* ('high accompaniment' or 'high bass').\(^{21}\) The hierarchy of the voice-parts in liturgical chant is visible in the names, a point we return to in discussing model melodies (see, 11.1 Georgian Model Melodies).

The name 'Georgia' has a complex history. Georgians call themselves 'Kart' and their land, 'Sakartvelo'.\(^{22}\) The root of this eponym—Kart—can be modified in the following ways: *kartuli* = a thing that is Georgian; *kartveli* = a person that is Georgian; and *sa-kartvel-o* = land of the Kart people. The exonym 'Georgia' may have originated from Greek traders plying the Black Sea coast in the Classical era ('Georgia' may be etymologically related to the Gk. *giorgos* [tiller of the land]).\(^{23}\) Other exonyms include variations on Grúziya (Russian) and Gurjistan (Persian, Arabic, Turkish). These names originate from the Persian word *gurğān* meaning 'land of wolves

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\(^{19}\) Joseph Jordania and others have identified more than twenty different names for the top voice in folk polyphony, and a dozen names for the middle voice, depending on what style and region the folksong originates (see Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music). Folk polyphony in Georgia is generally three-part harmony. There are solo songs, but a drone is implied. Two-part songs are common in the Northeast mountainous regions, while some examples of four-part polyphony occur in West Georgian work songs, where an extra ‘high drone’ (*shemkhmobari*) is added to the three-part structure.

\(^{20}\) The root of the word *mtkmeli* [one who speaks] is *tkma* [to speak; to say].

\(^{21}\) Both of these terms come from the verb *shebaneba* [to ornament].

\(^{22}\) Sakartvelo as an eponym is first encountered in the early ninth century, relating to the Kart people that lived in East Georgia. In later centuries, it came to means all Georgians unified under the king, a concept that persisted even when the unified kingdom fell apart in the fourteenth century. In Georgian-related languages, the eponym is slightly different: 'Sakortuo' in the Megrelian language, 'Oktura' in the Laz language, and also 'Sakartvelo' in the Svan language.

\(^{23}\) The origin of the name Georgia from *gurj* (Persian-Arabic) is also a popular theory. For a broader discussion, see Stephen H. Rapp, "Introduction," *The Sasanian World Through Georgian Eyes: Caucasia and the Iranian Commonwealth in Late Antique Georgian Literature* (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2014).
(itself a derivation from the Middle Iranian varkāna), a meaning that is also reflected in the Armenian designation for its northerly neighbor, Virk or Vrastan.

The various regions of Georgia exhibit a wide range of cultural, political, and linguistic diversity. Historically, the geography of the South Caucasus separated feudal states: Eastern Georgia was known as Iberia; Western Georgia as Colchis, Egrisi, and Lazeti; Southern Georgia as Samtskhe-Javakheti, etc. Traditional chant, as transmitted in oral tradition and inherited in the nineteenth century, can be stylistically divided between two general regions: East and West. Therefore, for purposes of narrowing the geographical jargon, I use the designation 'East Georgia' to refer to chant traditions originating in the regions of Kartli, K'akheti, Lower Kartli, and Samtskhe (formerly Iberia), and 'West Georgia' for those chant traditions originating in the regions of Imereti, Samegrelo, Racha, Guria, and Adjaria (see Map of Georgia, Figure 14).

Finally, something must be said about the use of English-language musical terminology in this dissertation. The word 'harmony' refers to subservient voice parts that parallel the melody. The term 'counterpoint' is not a reference to European music theory, but a reference to the idea of creating point-against-point harmony, the antonym of parallel harmony. The term 'modal' is a translation of the problematic word k'ilo (see above), which means local dialect, tuning, or phrasing. The term 'scale' is used in the sense of a collection of pitches in a gamut, ie. "it was difficult to transcribe the Georgian modal scale to the European staff." Note: modal scale in this case does not refer to various arrangements of tones and semitones (as in Byzantine and Latin chant), but rather to the arrangement of pitches in the unique Georgian tuning system (see, 7.1 Georgian Traditional Tuning). The word 'tone' refers only to the eight tones of the rva-khma system (Oktoechos) as in, "the text was set to the melodies of troparia, tone 4." To refer to the practice of multi-voiced singing, whether folk or liturgical, the term 'polyphony' is used in a general sense. The term 'homophony', on the other hand, is used in a more specific way to refer to the performance of the simple style of Georgian chant, which is sung in parallel harmony with the text is stated synchronously by all three voices.

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24 Northern Georgia does not exist as a regional entity because the allied tribes of the high mountain valleys of the Great Caucasus range (which border all of Georgia to the north) typically maintained political-cultural ties with their lowland neighbors, as opposed to forming a pan-Caucasian kingdom. Thus, East Georgia and West Georgia have both lowland and highland regions that demonstrate a wide range of linguistic, musical, and cultural diversity.
Chapter I: Georgian Hymnography (Part 1)

Among the musical traditions influenced by Byzantine-Greek culture, the music of the Georgian Orthodox Church is the least understood. Much of its history remains unknown. For musical scholarship, there are three areas of particular interest. First, the hymn texts and liturgical books have a written history that goes back to the early Greek chant repertory of Jerusalem and the monasteries of Palestine, which were in use between the fifth and eighth centuries. Second, Georgian manuscripts beginning in the tenth century exhibit a neumatic notation that we cannot now decipher, but which has unique characteristics that distinguish it from the better-known neumatic notations preserved in medieval Greek, Latin, Slavonic, and Armenian manuscripts. Third, Georgian chant is not monophonic, unlike the preserved chant traditions of the Latin West, the Slavic north, the Egyptian Coptic south, or even the Armenian and Syriac traditions of the East. Rather, it displays an unparalleled richness of multi-voiced singing that defies conventional definitions of chant distribution and transmission in the region.

In each of these three areas, the known historical facts can be arranged into a kind of chronological framework, which helps to define the very large gaps in our knowledge. Investigations into each area very quickly run into the problem of transmission: How oral processes like teaching, performance, and memorization interacted with written media to produce the chant repertory we find in the latest sources: transcriptions into modern five-line-staff notation that were made by Georgian singers and scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A significant milestone in Georgian religious history was reached during the reign of King Vakhtang I (446-499), when the Georgian Orthodox Church was granted ecclesiastical autonomy from the diocese of Antioch, and thus became an independent church led by a Patriarch-Catholicos-Patriarch.\(^{25}\) At the ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451, the Georgian Church, like the Armenian and Syrian, sided with those espousing the ‘monophysite’ theology that the Council condemned. Later, however, under Catholicos-Patriarch Kirion I (595-610), the

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\(^{25}\) For this and what follows, see Stephen H. Rapp, “Georgian Christianity,” *Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, ed. Ken Parry (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 137-155. While the Georgian Orthodox Church claims autocephaly from the sixth century, I use the term autonomy to indicate the lack of definitive historical clarity on this issue.
Georgian Church reversed its position to Chalcedonian Orthodoxy, thereby realigning itself with the Byzantine emperor. As a result, the Georgian Church is part of the Eastern Orthodox Church, unlike the Syrian and Armenian churches that remain independent and “non-Chalcedonian.”

Monasteries served a critical function in the spread of Christian education throughout Georgia. Georgian kings established and sponsored monasteries in Jerusalem as early as the fifth-sixth centuries. During this period, inscriptions in a unique Georgian alphabet attest to the translation of the Christian Gospels into the Georgian vernacular language.26 The educational function of Georgian monasteries abroad gave rise to some of the most brilliant hymnographers in Georgian medieval history, including (among those whose names survive) Ioane-Zosime, Giorgi-Prokhore, and Ilarion Kartveli.27 These figures were involved with translating, illuminating, and notating major collections of hymns. Many of these originate from the monastery of St. Saba (see map of Georgian hymnographic centers, Figure 2).

26 The first extant source for the Georgian asomtavruli alphabet dates from 433 AD. The inscription is preserved in a mosaic panel in Jerusalem. A second inscription dating from 494 appears on the Bolnisi Church in Southeast Georgia. Tamara Grdzelidze, “Orthodox Church of Georgia,” Encyclopaedia of Eastern Orthodox Christianity, edited by John Anthony McGuckin (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 269.

27 For more on these figures, particularly Ilarion Kartveli, see Manana Dolakidze, Ilarion kartvelis tskhovrebis dzveli redaktsiebi [The older redactions of Ilarion Kartveli’s Life] (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1974). Also Stig Simeon R. Frøyshov, L’horologe “géorgien” du Sinaiticus ibericus 34 (in French), (PhD diss., Institut catholique de Paris, Université Paris-Sorbonne Lille: Atelier national de Reproduction des Thèses, 2004). Giorgi Prokhore (d. 1066) was responsible for building the Holy Cross Monastery in Jerusalem, which became a center of Georgian ecclesiastical life in Jerusalem. See Michael Tarchnishvili, K’orneli K’ek elidze, and Julius Assfal, Geschichte der kirchlichen georgischen Literatur auf Grund des ersten Bandes der georgischen Literaturgeschichte (Vatican City: Citta del vaticano, 1955), 75.
Figure 2. Medieval Georgian Hymnographic Centers

Monasteries:
(1) Iviron (980)
(2) Petritsoni (1083)
(3) Ghalia (10th c.)
(4) Black Mountain (1030)
(5) Great Lavra (5th c.)
(6) Holy Cross (1050)
(7) Mar Saba (483)
(8) St. Catherine’s (548)
(9) Oshki (970)
(10) Shatberdi (9th c.)
(11) Martvili (7th c.)
(12) Gelati (1106)
(13) Shio-Mghvime (6th c.)
(14) Alaverdi (6th c.)
(15) Davit Gareji (6th c.)
1.1 The Textual Chronology

The earliest reference to liturgical singing in the Georgian language comes from a letter of St. Saba the Sanctified (d. 532), who founded a monastery in Palestine that still exists and for many centuries has borne his name.

The Iberians [Georgians] and the Syrians shall not be permitted to conduct a complete prayer service in their churches; rather, they will gather in them to chant the liturgical hours and the daily kanon and will read the (Epistles) of the Apostle and the Gospels in their own language, and afterwards they will come into the great church and participate in the pure, life-giving Divine mysteries together with the entire brotherhood.28

The passage seems to indicate that the Georgian monks sang most of the liturgy in their own language. The big exception was the second half of the Mass or Eucharist, which all the monks evidently celebrated together. Presumably this celebration took place in Greek, though the passage does not explicitly say so. It does clearly state that the first half of the Eucharistic service, which feature the epistles and the gospel, was celebrated individually by each language group, and thus in Georgian by the Georgians.

It seems to have been in the Georgian-speaking monasteries of Palestine and elsewhere that the first Georgian hymns were composed or translated from Greek. We find some hymns of this kind in the earliest Georgian lectionaries, which reproduce the annual sequence of Bible passages that were read in Greek in the church of Jerusalem. Most manuscripts containing the Georgian translation represent a seventh-century state of development, though one fragment reproduces a fifth-century state (that is also fully preserved in the oldest Armenian lectionary).29

Over the course of the Middle Ages, however, the Greek liturgy of Jerusalem ceased to be practiced, and was supplanted by the Byzantine rite, a hybrid of monastic and Constantinopolitan practices. The liturgy of the Georgian church also moved away from Jerusalem models and was brought closer to the Byzantine tradition. Little is known about the Georgian process, however.


1.1.1 The Iadgari

More significant are the hymn collections, of which there are two types. The iadgari contains all the texts of the proper hymns (i.e. those that are assigned to a specific day), arranged in the order of the liturgical year.\(^{30}\) It may have been translated directly from a Greek book, though no such book survives in Greek.\(^{31}\) The other type, the dzlisp’irni, is associated with a specific hymnodic genre, the kanon.\(^{32}\) The kanon is associated with the nine odes or canticles: Biblical texts which, like the song of Moses (Exodus 15: 1-17) or the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) have a psalm-like character but are not found in the book of Psalms. For each ode there is a series of stanzas based on a common model stanza, known in Greek as a heirmos. Since it was the heirmos that provided the melody, these model stanzas were collected in a book of their own, known in Greek as the heirmologion, which was organized according to the eight musical modes. The Georgian collections of dzlisp’irni do not seem to be direct translations of Greek heirmologia, but independent collections of Georgian stanzas that were translated individually from Greek heirmoi. Thus the relationship of the Georgian dzlisp’irni to the melodies of the Greek heirmoi is one area of uncertainty.\(^{33}\)

\(^{30}\) According to philologist Nest'an Sulava, the term iadgari apparently came into Georgian from Middle Persian, meaning memory, reminiscence, recollection, and its introduction was based on the fact of knowing the chant repertory by memory. Here it refers to a collection of chants that commemorate the saints. Among Greek manuscripts this type of hymn collection is known as a tropologion (“collection of troparia”) or menaion (“of the month”). See Nest'an Sulava, XI-XIII sauk’uncebis kartuli himnograpia [Georgian hymnography of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries] (Tbilisi, 2003). Also discussed in Edisher Ch’elidze, Dzveli kartuli saek’lesio lit’erat’ura [Old Georgian Church Literature], Vol. I, (Tbilisi, 2005). And in Magda Sukhiashvili, "Zogierti dzveli kartuli samusîk’o t’erminis gammart’ebisatvis (mortuleba, shets’qoba)" [An explanation of some old Georgian musical terms (mortuleba, shets’qoba)], Volume of Academic Works, Taqaishvili State University of Culture and Art, (Tbilisi: Metsniereba Press, 2003).

\(^{31}\) There are four copies of the Old Iadgari. Manuscript H-2123 is located in the National Center of Manuscripts (Tbilisi); manuscripts Sin #18, Sin #40, Sin #41 are located in the library of St. Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt. Of these, the most elaborate is the Ch’il-Et’rat’i iadgari (H-2123), which contains the early forms of chants lated contained in the Menaion, Triodion, Pentecostarion and Octoechos. According to twentieth-century scholar K’orneli K’ek’elidze: “In this manuscript we have the only existing evidence of the book which exclusively served the liturgical needs of the eighth and ninth centuries, since it contains all those large books that are essential for use in the church.” See K’orneli K’ek’elidze, “Akhali Sagaloblebi Abo Tbilelis” [New chants of Abo of Tbilisi], Et’udebi Dzveli Kartuli Lit’erat’uris Ist’orii [Studies in early Georgian literature], Essay #18, Vol. VI (Tbilisi: St’alinis Sakhelobis Tbilisis Sakhelmts’ipo Universit’et’is Gamomtsemloba, 1960), 418-420.


\(^{33}\) Work on these manuscripts has been ongoing in Georgian scholarly circles for more than a century. Recently new articles have appeared in other languages as well. See Peter Jeffery, “The Earliest Chant Repertory Recovered: the Georgian Witnesses to Jerusalem Chant,” Journal of the American Musicological Society 47, no. 1 (1994): 1-38.
The Georgian iadgari manuscripts represent two stages of development: The manuscripts representing the later stage (still unpublished) include the hymns of the well known Sophronius of Jerusalem (died 638), John of Damascus (died 749) and Cosmas of Maiuma (8th century). These manuscripts representing the earlier stage seem to represent a Greek archetype dating from before the seventh century. These earlier segments, reflecting fifth century practice, contain mostly responsorial psalms, while the segments representing seventh century texts detail the development of antiphonal chant singing. Musicologist Magda Sukhiashvili argues that this latter section also shows an evolving performance practice of New Testament texts that were increasingly sung as hymns unattached to psalm verses.

The origin of the four extant udzelesi iadgari [oldest iadgari] manuscripts is still contested, with some scholars contending that they were created in Jerusalem while others argue that these poet-composers are credited with the plethora of new texts composed during the eighth century and associated with the new Oktoechos classification system. See Peter Jeffery, “Jerusalem and Rome (and Constantinople): The Heritage of Two Great Cities in the Formation of the Medieval Chant Traditions,” Cantus Planus: Papers Read at the Fourth Meeting, Pécs, Hungary 3–8 September 1990 (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Musicology, 1992), 163–74.


35 Published in udzelesi iadgari (ed. Me'reveli, et. al.). On the dating see Froshov, “Early Development” 143–44.

36 The Georgian term for antiphonal chanting used in the manuscript is hmata mimogdeba, meaning the “tossing back and forth of voices.” The word khma in modern Georgian means “voice;” hmata and khmata are cognate. The Jamni (Hours) and the Samkhrisai (midday prayers) that contained psalmic verses for choir represent the older layer of chant texts. The hymnographic material in the Khanmeti Lectionary is comprised exclusively of psalmody and several hymns believed to represent the very earliest stage of Christian worship (“Gladsome Light,” for example). See Ak'ak'i Shanidze, Khanmet'i lektsionari [The lectionary in the khanmeti alphabet], Dzveli kartuli enis dzeqlebi [Monuments of the old Georgian language] (Tbilisi: Sak. SSR Metsnierebata Ak'ademiis Gamomtssemloba, 1944).

37 Magda Sukhiashvili and Ek'aterine Oniani, “The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant,” Georgia: History-Culture-Ethnography, Vol. I. (New York: Nova Science Publishers, forthcoming, 2015). According to Sukhiashvili, the iadgari contains evidence of one of the oldest forms of chant—the responsorial psalmody in which a chanter and the congregation sing in alternation. In responsorial practice, the chanter delivers the psalm in complete or near-complete form, while the congregation sings a refrain consisting of one brief verse from the same psalm. Each new hymn was attached to a chanted psalm to yield a two-part musical composition (the Georgian term dasdebeli, or “hymn sung after a psalm,” derives from this practice). The Jerusalem Lectionary does not give examples of original Georgian hymnography. It does, however, include praises to Georgian saints such as Kozmas, Catholico-Patriarch Pamas, and All the Holy Martyrs of Kartli. It also commemorates the feast of the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Mtskheta, Georgia.
that at least one originates in Georgia (described by the medieval historians Elene Met'reveli, Edisher Ch’elidze, and others). A point of dispute centers around the inclusion of chant texts dedicated to specifically Georgian saints such as St. Abo of Tbilisi, which is seen as an significant innovation in the *Ch’il-Et’rat’i iadgari*. Such texts for localized Georgian saints demonstrate that, by at least the sixth century, Georgian hymnographers were no longer just translators of Greek texts, but also composers of unique hymn texts.

The importance of these manuscripts cannot be over-estimated, both for Georgian liturgical history, and the international field of comparative liturgics. Jeffery characterizes the *udzelesi iadgari* as the “earliest complete repertory to survive from any medieval chant tradition, as well as the earliest substantial witness to the eight modes.” Indeed, many of these sources remain our only access to the early Christian chant tradition, as the originals have been lost.

1.2 T’ao-Klarjeti Period (9th-11th Centuries)

A new stage in the development of Georgian hymnography began in the ninth century, in the region of T’ao-Klarjeti in southwest Georgia (current NE Turkey). The topography of this region includes high-altitude, forested mountains and deep arid river gorges that run through

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38 Scholarly opinions are divided over the origin and precise dating of the oldest *iadgari*. According to one opinion, the first Georgian *iadgari* is of Palestinian origin and was translated in the seventh or mid-eighth century. This same opinion holds that the iadgari developed as a separate collection on the basis of the Lectionary—that is, the hymnographic material contained in the Lectionary was first duplicated in the *iadgari*, with other translated and original hymns added later according to the necessities of the time (Met’reveli et al., 1980). According to a second opinion, the *iadgari* manuscripts were created not only in Jerusalem, but in Georgia. For example, the ninth-century *Satselitsdo* (Annual) *iadgari* attributed to St. Grigol of Khandzta is thought to have been copied in the T’ao-Klarjeti region of Georgia. It is estimated that work on the *Satselitsdo iadgari* began in the 830-40s and continued as late as the mid-tenth century (see Edisher Ch’elidze, Tbilisi, 2005).


deep canyons for more than a hundred kilometers before emptying into the subtropical forests on the immediate coast of the Black Sea (see Map, Figure 2). The severity of the terrain made it difficult to attack, and lended itself to the construction of austere fortifications and remote monasteries. Hymnographers such as Grigol Khandzta, Ioane Minchkhi, Iordane, Mikael Modrek’ili, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, and others translated, compiled, and notated chant manuscripts in the scriptoria of these monasteries.

Starting in the eighth and ninth centuries, the region of T’ao-Klarjeti was ruled by the Bagrat’ioni dynastic family. According to Stephen Rapp, members of this clan consolidated power and formed "Neo-Kartli" (new Georgia) when they discontinued their tribute to the Abbasid Arab caliphate in Tbilisi. King Ashot I (died 830) allied himself with the Byzantine Emperor, receiving the title of kouropalates. The relative peace that ensued enabled a historic advance in medieval Georgian culture, as evidenced by the building of some three hundred churches, cathedrals, and monasteries in the ninth and tenth centuries, and the activity of their scriptoria.

1.2.1 The Monastic Revival of Grigol Khandzta

The monastic revival in T’ao-Klarjeti was initiated by St. Grigol of Khandzta (759-861 CE), an influential monastic who trained a generation of productive scholar-monks. According to his hagiography, St. Grigol was a learned elder who established several notable monasteries: Khandzta and Shat’berdi monasteries in the region of Klarjeti, and also the Ubisa monastery in central Georgia. At least thirty major monastic complexes were built in the T’ao-Klarjeti region between the years 850-1050, in addition to hundreds of parish churches in the town centers.

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42 Little is known about Iordane except that the manuscript has several colophons mentioning a “monk Iordane,” and sometimes “monk Iordane-Ioane.” It is unclear which monastery he worked in, or whether he is the author of the neume notation in the manuscript. Scholar Edisher Ch’elidze postulates that the manuscript is from the turn of the tenth-eleventh centuries, probably written in one of the T’ao-Klarjeti monasteries, noting that the manuscript contains heirmoi from both the Modrek’ili heirmologia and the heirmologia on Mount Sinai.


44 Giorgi Merchule, “Grigol Khandztelis Tskhovreba” [Life of Grigol of Khandzta], in Kartuli Mts’erobis Saunje [Treasure of Georgian Writings], Vol. II (Tbilisi: Bakur Sulakauri Publishing, 2011), 7-144. Also in Dzveli kartuli agiografiuli literaturis dzeglebi [Monuments of old Georgian hagiographical literature], edited by Ilia Abuladze and Mzekala Shanidze (Tbilisi: Sakartvelos SSR Metsnierebata akademiis gamomtsemloba), 1963. Note that the hagiography of St. Grigol of Khandzta is known to scholars through an eleventh century copy housed in the
St. Grigol and his many students were instrumental in reviving not only the Orthodox monastic tradition, but also the hymnographic arts: “our blessed Father Grigol went back and forth between Khandztza and Shat’berdi, the two monasteries that he built. To his pupils he was not only an instructor of theological wisdom, but a teacher of the hymns of the Holy Catholic Church….“46 The hagiography, which has been dated to the year 951, some ninety years after the saint's death in 861, highlights the importance of the saint's role in promoting the musical aspect of worship. While St. Grigol may have inherited Georgian melodies from the existing traditions in East and West Georgia, his reputation as a chant teacher also suggests that he possibly created his own chant melodies.

According to the hagiography of Grigol of Khandztza, he authored hymnographical texts, specifically an iadgari that was, “…written by his own hand, and by the Holy Spirit.”47 Evidence from Giorgi Mtats'mindeli in eleventh century sources suggests that Grigol of Khandztza was among the first of the mekhelni, a class of hymnographer trained in the arts of text setting and the composition of new melodies.48 Some scholars have even suggested that the polyphonic performance of Georgian hymns should be attributed to the Orthodox cultural revival advanced by Grigol of Khandztza in ninth-century T’ao-Klarjeti.49

Jerusalem Patriarchate library, which was rediscovered by Niko Chubinashvili in 1845 and published by Niko Marr in Georgia in 1911: Тексты и разыскания по армяно-грузинской филологии, VIII, СПб., 1911.

45 In addition to the Khandztza and Shat’berdi monasteries founded by Grigol of Khandztza, the monasteries of Opiza, Khakhuli, Okhta, P’arkhali, T’beti, Oshki, Bana, Ishkhani, Dolisqana, and others represent just a sampling of the many impressive monasteries founded during the ninth to eleventh century period in T’ao-Klarjeti. I have personally traveled to the monasteries of T’ao-Klarjeti, and led specialized tours for culture tourists to these important historical sites. The Khandztza monastery is so secretively located, in a nearly inaccessible crevasse half way up a 3000 foot cliff, that it poses an extreme challenge to visit even today, as pilgrims must traverse cliff-side trails to reach the monastery. The nearby fortress of Aranuji, built by King Ashot in the early ninth century on a naturally occurring mesa in the middle of a steep river gorge, represents one of most impregnable medieval fortresses that I have ever witnessed.


47 ibid.

48 Later these same mekhelni would become associated with the notation of chant melodies, creating an employing a unique form of Georgian neumatic notation. See section, 1.3.2 The Importance of the term Mekhurni.

1.2.2 Medieval Chant Pedagogy

The pedagogy of chant in medieval Georgia was called *khmita sasts ’avleli sts ’avlay saek’lesiyo* [the liturgical study of learned-voices], first attested in the tenth century hagiography of Grigol of Khandzta.\(^{50}\) The performance of chant in this period, as far as can be determined, included the singing of texts such as psalm verses to adaptable model melodies. Later, certain melodies took on a fixed character, such as those for specific texts in the Eucharist service, while others retained their flexibility. Melodies in this latter group were assigned specific tones within the *rva-khma* (Octoechos) system for specific chant genres (such as a troparion), or assigned to a particular set of texts such as a kanon. This process likely happened gradually, but by the tenth century, the Modrek’ili *iaadgari* demonstrates that these melodic associations were already well defined. This is clear because of the modal assignments given in the rubrics for each grouping of chant, and the similarity in neume patterns for texts within each modal setting (see examples, Figure 6 and Figure 8).\(^{51}\)

The relative isolation of the T’ao-Klarjeti monasteries during St. Grigol’s period changed dramatically in the mid-ninth century. Travel to the Holy Land increased, and new alliances with Constantinople presented further opportunities for economic and political influence in the region. Major hymnographers of the tenth-century were not only monastics but the educated elite of the day, serving as ambassadors and emissaries for their political leaders to these centers of urban life. New Georgian monasteries were opened throughout Byzantium, most famously the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos, near Thessaloniki, Greece, as well as several monasteries on the "Black Mountain" near Antioch, and on the Isle of Cyprus (refer to Map, Figure 2).

1.3 Melody and Notation

There is considerable debate concerning the issue of when specifically Georgian melodies became common practice in the Georgian liturgy. Some scholars cite the inclusion of

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\(^{50}\) The root of the word *sts ‘avlay* is the verb ‘to study’. But with the adjectival prefix modifier, *sa-*, and the genitive plural suffix indicating a modifying relationship with the word *khmita* [voices], these two terms can be translated as ‘learned-voices,’ ‘study-voices,’ or ‘learned-tunes’. This phrase is found in the hagiography: *Grigol Khandztelis Tskhovreba* (2011).

\(^{51}\) Note that more common liturgy chants were not notated in medieval manuscripts, presumably because these chant were already well known.
unique Georgian texts praising Georgian or other saints as an indicator of unique melodies. But these unique texts could just as easily have been sung to inherited Greek, Syriac, or hagiopolite melodies. This brings up the definitional question of what constitutes a unique Georgian melody?

Peter Jeffery has suggested that while certain features of the most common melodies (such as modal assignment and melodic contour) were transmitted via Jerusalem to other Christian centers, the actual note-to-note detailed performance of these melodies could have varied widely in different languages and in different musical cultures.\(^{52}\) Thus, a model melody originating in Jerusalem could very quickly become a "Georgian melody" depending on the manner in which it was sung. But many Georgian sources also indicate that by the late tenth century, new melodies were specifically composed to accommodate new texts. The relationship between these 'newly composed' melodies and those that were inherited is unknown.\(^{53}\)

1.3.1 Greek heirmos melodies

The use of transliterated Greek incipit texts in Georgian manuscripts has been the source of considerable debate. More specifically, neumed and un-neumed manuscripts from the first half of the tenth century, mostly originating at the Monastery of St. Saba in Jerusalem (but now preserved in the sizable Georgian collection at the library of St. Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai, Egypt), contain Greek incipits transliterated into the Georgian alphabet. Meanwhile, neumed manuscripts dating from the second half of the tenth century, namely the Mikael Modrek'ili \textit{iadgari}\(^{54}\) (978-988) and the heirmologion compiled by Iordane (c. 950)\(^{55}\), do not contain these Greek incipits, though the neume systems in both sets of manuscripts can be said to be from the same general school. The debate concerns whether or not and to what extent Greek melodies were still sung by Georgian chanters, and what the significance of the transliterated incipits might be.

\(^{52}\) Peter Jeffery, “The Earliest Chant Repertory” (1994).
\(^{53}\) By the tenth century, Georgian chanters had been singing psalm verses and other hymns for at least five hundred years. But were these melodies the product of influence from hagiopolite Greek or Armenian melodies, or were they entirely 'Georgian' by this period? The musical content of these hymns may never be known.
\(^{54}\) The Modrek'ili \textit{iadgari} (manuscript S-425, National Manuscript Center, Tbilisi, Georgia), once filled 1,264 pages, but just 544 pages remain today (according to Magda Sukhiashvili). Among the materials lost are the foreword and afterword to the collection.
\(^{55}\) The Iordane heirmologion is housed in the National Center of Manuscripts (A-603), Tbilisi, Georgia. A photocopy of the contents, with transliteration into modern Georgian, is provided in Gulnaz K'ik'nadze, \textit{Nevmirebuli dzlisp’irni, khelnats’eri A-603} (Tbilisi: Metsniereba Press, 1982).
Several scholars, including Elene Met'reveli and Dali Dolidze, argue that the use of Greek incipits must reflect a performance practice of Greek melodies. While they don't deny that Georgian melodies then entered the performance tradition, they suggest that the manuscripts from the latter tenth century indicate this change in performance practice. Historian K'orneli K'ek'elidze (and most Georgian musicologists) disagree with this idea, arguing that such incipits in the Greek language could have other explanations that do not necessarily reflect contemporary performance practice. K'ek'elidze suggests that the practice of writing the Greek incipits, even in transliteration, was one way to legitimize the authority of the source text in Greek, and had less to do with a musical reference to a known Greek melody.

Musicologist Magda Sukhiashvili underscores the point that mismatches between the genres of incipits and texts cast further doubt on the premise that Georgians sang Greek melodies, arguing that the Greek incipits refer to Greek texts of a genre different from the Georgian texts. The incipit for a heirmos text, for example, often does not refer to an heirmos text in Greek, but to a text in another genre. The historian Gulnadze K’ik’nadze not only dislikes the notion that Georgians may have been singing "Greek" melodies, but goes so far as to suggest that the omission of Greek incipits in the later manuscripts proves that Georgian melodies, not Greek, were performed during this period.

Other references to the translation process of hymn texts from Greek into Georgian, focus on evidence that reflects the performance tradition of the tenth and eleventh centuries. For example, in the neumated iadgari by Mikael Modrek'ili (dated 978-988), one marginalia note describes the specific organization of chants within the manuscript, demonstrating that Georgian texts and, separately, Georgian melodies were already in common practice. “I gathered all the Paschal chants that existed in the Georgian language and ordered them according to the guidelines of the church: the mekhurni, the Greek ones, and the Georgian ones.”

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56 This argument is promoted in an article by Dali Dolidze, “Dogma da t‘raditsia k’anonik’ur saek’lesio galobashi” [Dogma and Tradition in Canonical Liturgical Chant], Kartuli Saek’lesio Galobis Tanamedrove Problemebi [Issues in Georgian Liturgical Chant] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2002), 62-90.
58 Interview, Magda Sukhiashvili, January 29th, 2014. The evolution of Greek and Georgian model melodies is very unclear. For more on the inherited model melody system in Georgia, see the section, 11.1 Georgian Model Melodies.
60 Mikael Modrek’ili, mss. S-425 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 262v. The original quotation is as follows: “შევთავან საქართველოში ტერა შევთავა თანამდებობაში, რომლებიც ქონები იპოვათ ქრისტიანული ქრისტიანულ აღმოსავლეთში, საქართველოში, საქართველოში თანამდებობა, შიდა საქართ-

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To fully understand this critical reference, we need to parse the various terms. In referring to 'all the texts that existed in the Georgian language,' Modrek'ili is saying that he gathered all the texts that were translated from Greek, and the original texts written in Georgian. He specifies this by listing the three types of texts that he had access to: Greek (in translation), Georgian (original compositions), and the mekhurni. The texts designated as “Georgian” likely refer to texts that commemorate Georgians saints, such as St. Abo, St. Nino, and others.

1.3.2 The Importance of the term Mekhurni

The term mekhurni in the Modrek'ili colophon remains somewhat ambiguous. The term could be related to the activities of the master hymnographers, such as the positioning of musical neumes, or the modal assignments for heirmoi, but the true distinction intended by Modrek’ili remains unclear. Perhaps in the tenth century, the term had a different, more musical meaning, and referred to borrowed Greek melodies. If the terms “Georgian” and “Greek” are not interpreted as referring to the language of origin, but rather to musical melody types, then we need to reexamine what the word mekhurni might mean in this context.

The cognate term, mekhelní, has been associated with the art of hymnography. According to historian K’orneli K’ek’elidze, the plural noun mekhelní means, ‘the people of the profession of the voice,’ and may derive etymologically from the Greek word echos ["sound"]. The word appears in connection with talented hymnographers, as well as neumed manuscripts. For example, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli wrote that, “… the hymns to the Theotokos are translated by mekhelní,” and elsewhere, “I have mekhelní as teachers and godly men.”

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61 The word mekhurni is the plural adjectival form of the noun mekhelní, discussed next section. The suffix, -eli indicates a noun form, while the suffix -uri indicates an adjectival form. Plural is formed in Classical Georgian by adding -ta or -ni.

62 K’orneli K’ek’elidze thinks that the term mekhelní has a common etymological root with the Greek word eikhos (voice). The root of both words is “kh”, with the Georgian me-elní prefix-suffixes indicating “the people of,” or “the profession of.”

Meanwhile, the historian Elene Met'reveli noted that the term *mekhuri* was used to describe a particular kind of *iadgari* [heirmologion]. In this case, a *mekhuri iadgari* indicates that the manuscript contained neume notation. Met'reveli suggests that the adjectival use of the word serves to qualify a manuscript as one, ‘of the profession of the voice.’ With this elucidation of the term, the title of *mekhelni* thus suggests a new class of professional, one who could not just translate hymn texts from Greek, but also one who also engaged in text-setting, the writing of neumes, and even the composition of new melodies. Such melodies were called *tvitavaji*, and their manipulation for the setting of newly translated or composed texts became the special preoccupation of the *mekhelni*.

1.3.3 New Compositions

The inclusion of many new hymn texts, among them the cycle of feast-day texts commemorating St. Nino and St. Abo, suggest an active compositional practice of setting existing texts to Georgian melodies. Such texts had not been attested in previous Georgian or Greek sources. Even if the texts themselves date from an earlier period, the T’ao-Klarjeti masters decided to set them to new music, as evidenced by colophons indicating the composers of new musical settings for specific kanons.

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65 Elene Met’reveli, "Mekhelisa da mekhuris gagebisatvis" [On the meaning of mekheli and mekhuri], *Shota Rustaveli* (Tbilisi: Historico-Philological Studies, 1966), 170. A historical usage of the term ‘mekhuri iadgari’ occurs in the will of Catholicos-Patriarch Melkisedek’, dated 1040, in which he bequeathed two *iadgari* manuscripts—the New Annual *iadgari* and the Mekhuri *iadgari*—to the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral.
66 For example, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli wrote chant texts for St. Ekvtime Mtats’mindeli and St. Josaphat, and set these texts to newly composed melodies. These can be seen in the following source: manuscript H-1710 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 64-66, and 109-112. Cited in Sukhiashvili and Oniani, “The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant,” trans. Ninoshvili, ed. Graham (forthcoming, 2015).
67 The term *tvitavaji* can be equated with the Greek term *idiomela*, of which it appears to be a direct translation: *tvit-*(or *tvitni*), like the Greek *ideo*, means ‘type of’, while *avaji*, like the Greek *melo*, means ‘melody.’ In sources from Giorgi Mtats’mindeli (and also Ioane Minchki) the term *tvitavaji* appears in the context of a musical phrase “having its own melody,” or setting a new text “to the tone [melody].”
68 These hymn texts are variously attributed to the hymnographers Ioane Konkozisdze, Ioane Minchki, and Sananoidze, who are known to have composed hymns to Saint Abo. Unique texts were also written for particularly venerated non-Georgian saints such as those written by the Georgian saint Basil Sabaseli for the fifth century Greek saint Saba. For the hagiographical account of the lives of Saint Nino, Saint Abo, and others, see Zakaria Machit’adze, *Lives of the Georgian Saints* (Platina, CA: Press of the St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2006).
One of the tenth-century masters, Ioane Minchkhi, was connected with the monastic scriptoria located in the T’ao-Klarjeti region, but is better known to history for his activity at the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. He is credited with several musical settings including a kanon to St. George, and a kanon for Pascha.69 Another master, Grigol of Khakhuli Monastery, composed a kanon to all the saints commemorated in October, as well as other chants.70 Many textual-musical attributions are listed in the T’ao-Klarjeti sources, suggesting that the relationship with musical composition changed during this period. The tenth-century masters in T’ao-Klarjeti were regarded not just as conduits of God-given musical inspiration (and thus to remain anonymous), but as masters of the new art of hymnography, meriting individual honor and recognition by name and title. For the first time, the names of composers of musical settings were credited directly in the manuscript texts.

During the late tenth century, hymnographic activity shifted from Jerusalem and Mount Sinai to the monastic scriptoria in T’ao-Klarjeti, and then in the early eleventh century to the Iveron monastery on Mount Athos, Greece. The evidence for the widespread composition and use of uniquely Georgian melodies becomes more apparent in these sources. During the period, a large number of newly translated Greek texts were introduced into Georgian liturgical practice for the first time.

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70 The list of original chants composed by Georgian masters is extensive. Here is a sampling: in the eleventh century, a monk named Nik’ola added new ts’ardgoma (prokeimena) to some heirmoi in the Menaion. In the later eleventh century, Zosime Mtats’mindeli wrote a set of troparia dedicated to Saint Ekvtime Mtats’mindeli, and a kanon to Saint Ilarion Kartveli. During the same period, Basil Mtats’mindeli also dedicated a set of hymns to Saint Ekvtime Mtats’mindeli, while Ezra Mtats’mindeli composed hymns in honor of Saint Ioane Mtats’mindeli. Later, in the thirteenth century, Catholicos-Patriarch Ioane of Kartli was commissioned by King David the Builder to compose new musical settings of the Kanon of St. Andrew of Crete. His contemporary, Catholicos-Patriarch Arsen, composed original melodies to the kanon of the Icon of the Savior “Not Made by Human Hands,” which are found in several manuscripts. Abuserisdze T’beli compiled an important manuscript and spoke of ‘embellishing’ old hymns (A-85, 239v, NCM). For further references to medieval Georgian hymnographers, see Sukhiashvili and Oniani, "The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant" (forthcoming, 2015).
The hymnographers of the Iveron Monastery, in many cases, set these new texts to existing Georgian melodies, as attested in the following highly significant commentary, written by the athonite father, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli\textsuperscript{71} in the early eleventh century.

I knew these foreign (that is, non-Georgian) heirmoi in the Greek language. It would have been good to set them to a Georgian melody, but for what use? How many Georgians could I even teach them to? And so I substituted them [the new texts] with heirmoi that had already been translated [into Georgian and set to Georgian melodies] and, by God’s mercy, these are of no less quality than the [translated] Greek ones.\textsuperscript{72}

Lili Khevsuriani, a medieval historian at the National Centre of Manuscripts who first studied this commentary, interprets the passage to mean that Georgian melodies must have already been familiar to the Athonite-Georgian community by the mid-eleventh century.\textsuperscript{73} Giorgi Mtats’mindeli was educated at the Khakhuli Monastery in T’ao-Klarjeti (Figure 12), where he studied the master chanter tradition of the previous generation, chanters such as Ioane Minchkhi, Mikael Modrek’ili, Iordane, and others. This practice may have varied widely. In practice, each master likely taught a variety of musical settings of the hymn texts in the iadvari compendiums, and even here, variation was to be expected. In the words of medievalist Elene Met'reveli, hymnographic collections “were intended not for liturgical practice, but as a textbook for training choristers.”\textsuperscript{1}

The marginalia written by Giorgi Mtats’mindeli seems, in several cases, to be directly aimed at Georgian chanters. In a commentary on the tueni (Menaian), St. Giorgi Mtats’mindeli writes,

\textsuperscript{71} The Georgian word, \textit{mtats’mindeli}, means “of the holy mountain” (meaning Mount Athos). Other names for the two hymnographers discussed here are “the Hagiorite,” “of Athos,” “the Athonite,” and “Atoneli.” For purposes of consistency, I use \textit{mtats’mindeli}.


\textsuperscript{73} ibid., 27.
If anyone knows different [variants of these] heirmoi, he should not be surprised, as I learned them at Khakhuli Monastery. Everyone knows them in Georgian, so utter them according to our tradition.⁷⁴

This comment indicates that not only were Georgian melodies in common practice, they existed in several variations that could be identified with specific monastery chant schools such as the Khakhuli monastery where Giorgi Mtats'mindeli studied.⁷⁵

1.3.4 Dating the Georgian Melodies

Giorgi Mtats'mindeli offers a tantalizing reference to the age of Georgian chant in a marginal note in the eleventh-century Lenten Triodion (NCM A-339). But such references must be evaluated for their veracity. This particular comment forces scholars to question theoretical chronologies and poses complex challenges for the dating of the Georgian melodies. Mtat'smindeli wrote, in reference to a specific chant: “this plagal melody is remembered for more than four hundred years.”⁷⁶ In other words, in the early eleventh century, the predominant hymnographer of his era claimed that a melody that he knew was already four hundred years, dating it to the early seventh century.

This comment requires a moment of reflection. Besides the numerous questions it raises—not least of which the historical awareness of the author—it is curious that he cited a date

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⁷⁵ Giorgi Mtats’mindeli (1009-1065 CE), Basil, son of Bagrat (c. 1000-1050), and Grigol of Khakhuli (c. 1050-1100) were active hymnographers at the scriptorium of Khakhuli Monastery. During the Ottoman period, the monastery church was converted into a mosque, which is still functioning. This unique set of circumstances has preserved the building more than the other Georgian monasteries in the Tao-Klarjeti region, which are otherwise in various states of ruin. The Khakhuli Monastery is located near the current town of Yusipeli, Turkey.

⁷⁶ Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, Lenten Triodion, manuscript A-339 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 115. Published in, Chronicles and Other Materials for the History of Georgia (in Georgian), 2 vols., ed Tevdore Zhordania (Tbilisi: 1892), 380. Republished with editing by Buba Kudava (Tbilisi: Artanuji, 2004). The original quotation is as follows: “amas guerdsa oTxasi weli ufro axsovs.” Tranliteration: “amas guerdsa otkhasi ts’eli upro akhsovs.” The verb is in the present passive tense: “is remembered.” The term “guerdi” means “plagal”, but according to Magda Sukhiashvili (interview, 2014), in this context it must refer to something more concrete, possibly the melody of the heirmos (this commentary concerns the melodies for the heirmoi of the All-Night Vigil for Great and Holy Friday).
of four hundred years previous. Given the benefit of the doubt, what might Mtats'mindeli have been referring to, when he mentioned such a vague, yet specific, historical date?

As an author of the early-mid eleventh century, Giorgi Mtats'mindeli claims to have inherited melodies four hundred years old, thus dating them to the early seventh century. Was there anything particular in the history of Georgian hymnography associated in the popular consciousness of the Athonite fathers with this date? Perhaps Mtats'mindeli was referring to the period when the Georgian Church reportedly rejected 'monophysite' leanings and finally accepted Chalcedonian Orthodoxy, an historical event that would not have been unknown to the learned abbot-theologian.

### 1.4 Georgian Medieval Neumes

The Georgian neume system represents a medieval chant system that depended almost entirely on oral transmission. As such, the function of the notation is designed to interact with specific elements of musical knowledge prioritized by that transmission, namely the model melody system. In this way, the Georgian neumes are similar to all early medieval notational systems. In other ways, such as their graphic representation both above and below the text, they are unique. Several scholars have attempted to decipher Georgian neume notation, applying a variety of methodological approaches over the past century.\(^7\) In this section, we review some of these studies, and offer a brief analysis of neume patterns in the Modrek'il'i iadgari manuscript.

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from the tenth century as an example of promising avenues of further research. This is by no means a comprehensive study, which is not within the parameters of this dissertation, but is meant as an introduction to an important field in Georgian chant studies.

1.4.1 Issues in the Study of Medieval Neumes

Through comparative work with other chant traditions, it is possible to show that Georgian medieval neumes reflected a model melody system that thrived in Jerusalem in the eighth to tenth century period. Despite a variety of chronological and geographical transmission histories, many of the modal assignments for chants found in the earliest Georgian sources are preserved in later Byzantine and even in Latin sources. The importance of the earliest Georgian sources, especially the neumed manuscripts, cannot be overstated. On this point, Peter Jeffery writes:

Though the original Greek manuscripts are lost, the medieval Georgian translations permit us to know what they contained, to trace their historical development, and to document the influence Jerusalem exerted on other Eastern and Western centers of liturgical chant. Even the Georgian neumes are about as old as the extant Greek and Latin notations, and are at least as likely—if not more—to transmit very early musical traditions from the Holy City. 78

Georgian sources that may reveal regional influences between the earliest Christian repertories must be examined with a view towards the primary music tradition that it represents. Thus, the Georgian neumed manuscripts created at the St. Sabas monastery in Jerusalem in the mid-tenth century may indeed reflect the musical tradition of Jerusalem. But it was likely filtered through the Georgian performance of that tradition. Furthermore, those same sources could also reflect an entirely unique, Georgian musical tradition. It is likely that there is some truth in both of these assertions.

Assuming that some Georgian melodies are direct descendents of Greek melodies (while others are known to be original compositions), it is possible to conjecture that some Greek musical elements may have been retained in the oral tradition of Georgian chant, such as the basic melodic contour, modal assignment, and other characteristics. Even if this hypothesis is one day proved, the performance of these melodies likely changed quickly as Georgian singers

inserted new musical influences such as nuances of tempo, timbre, tuning, ornamentation, and the accentuation of significant words in the Georgian language. Many Georgian scholars suggest that such adaptive processes of "enculturation" could have included harmonizing the model melodies, even in the early medieval period (for this debate, see the section, 2.4 Georgian Polyphony).

Several challenges increase the difficulty of understanding the neume system. The lack of any surviving manuals or theoretical treatises that describe or reference the manner and method of singing from neumes, for example, does not give scholars the luxury of comparing source manuscripts with contemporary theoretical thought. Even without theoretical treatises (such as those extant in the Latin tradition), however, much can be learned from the few extent manuscripts containing medieval Georgian neume notation.

Georgian neume notation first appears in manuscripts dating to the mid tenth century. Many of the neumed manuscripts seem to have originated from the scriptoria of Georgian monasteries in Jerusalem, with the technique quickly spreading to Georgian monasteries in T’ao-Klarjeti. A separate neume system for representing the cantillation of the Gospel, *ekphonetic* notation, was borrowed from Greek practice in the eleventh century and is found in two manuscripts associated with Giorgi Mtats'mindeli (see the section, 2.3.1 Ekphonetic Notation in Georgian Sources). Both of these notation systems remain mostly indecipherable to scholars today because the notation is neither diastematic or prescriptive in its detail. Rather, the neume signs indicate to learned chanters on which syllable to initiate known model melody motives. The challenge with any attempt at deciphering the precise musical content of the neume systems

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80 There are several manuscripts that contain medieval neume notation, but their direct comparison has thus far been made prohibitively difficult by a lack of proper digitization, and their geographical distribution (for a full list, see Appendix E: Original Notated Sources of Georgian Chant). Three of the most important neumed sources are located in the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Georgia. These include the Mikael Modrek’ili hirmologion (NCM S-425); the hirmologion compiled by Iordane (NCM A-603); and the sadghesast’aulo (NCM A-596). Also located in Georgia, but far from Tbilisi, the "Ieli iadgari" is housed in the National Museum of Georgia in Mestia, Svanetian highlands. In the library of St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai, Egypt, is the Sinaiic iadgari (Sin. 1). Other important manuscripts are kept at the Iveron Monastery Library on Mount Athos, Greece (such as Athos-85). Until digital images of these manuscripts become available for scholarly study, comparative work is very difficult.
lies in the fact that they represent a descriptive notation of a memorized repertory that is mostly lost to history. Therefore, the analysis of the tenth-eleventh century notation should focus less on an attempt to reconstruct the precise melodies of the period, and more on understanding how this notation system reflects the music of the period and its complex transmission.

By observing patterns in the sequences of various types of neumes, a picture of the Georgian oral pedagogy emerges, which is useful for understanding how chant may have been transmitted through subsequent centuries. Furthermore, neume patterns can be compared to the inherited melodies of the Georgian Orthodox system as transcribed in the late nineteenth century for instances of congruence, though this type of comparison must be viewed skeptically for false positives, given the extreme chronological differences in sources (see the section, 1.4.3 Case Study: Cadential Neume Patterns).

The tenth and eleventh century manuscripts are witness to a larger movement to notate chant across the Christian world. The explosion of newly translated liturgical texts from Greek sources placed new burdens on Georgian chanters, who were now required to sing not hundreds, but thousands of individual texts throughout the calendrical cycle. This quickly expanding repertory was one cause of the growth and experimentation with written representations of music during this period not only in Georgia but throughout the Byzantine and Latin Christian space.

These early experiments with notation interacted with existing pedagogical processes of memorizing flexible model melodies that could be applied to new texts. The function of Georgian neume notation does not seem to have been the indication of precise pitches, but rather the approximate contour of the melody. The placement of the neumes was especially critical, as it showed singers already versed in the melodic tradition how to sing those melodies to the given text. The evolution of music notation—that which took place in Byzantium and the Latin West in the eleventh and twelfth centuries—never occured in Georgia. Curiously, manuscripts from the twelfth century no longer contain the unique Georgian neume notation seen in manuscripts from the previous two centuries.

This lacuna of notated sources after the eleventh century has traditionally been attributed to the various invasions that destroyed the unified Georgian kingdom (starting with the Mongols in the early thirteenth century), but in reality, the practice of representing music in writing

seems to have disappeared at least a century before those invasions began. Indeed, Georgia was at the height of its political and ecclesiastical power, the so-called "Golden Era" of Georgian history, precisely in the twelfth century. Despite the disappearance of the Georgian medieval neume system from the manuscript record, the oral transmission of liturgical chant appears to have continued well into the nineteenth century. This inherited tradition, whose written transcription in the late nineteenth century is the focus of this dissertation, presents extraordinary new evidence for understanding the processes that governed the oral transmission of chant in the medieval era.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, new attempts were made at writing the music of the oral liturgical repertory (see the section, 9.2 Nishnebi Neume Notation). These improvised notation systems—which include graphic neume systems, alphabetic codes, and charts of named model melodies—provide a contemporary perspective on how master chanters used writing to represent their memorized repertoires. Though these later sources differ from the medieval notation discussed this chapter, both systems provide intriguing written clues to understanding the underlying processes behind the oral transmission of Georgian chant.

1.4.2 The Modrek'ili iadgari

The Modrek'ili iadgari (heirmologion) has been dated to the years 978-988. 82 This manuscript, whose date of origin has been convincingly dated to the decade between 978-988, originally contained over one thousand pages of tiny script, only five hundred pages of which survive. Its finely written text and neume notation includes some nine hundred texts that include dozens of original texts first attested in this source. Most of the texts that have neume notation are heirmoi. 83

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83 This evidence supports the idea that neume notation served a mnemonic function for chanters versed in oral tradition. Liturgy chants were well known and did not need to be neumed, whereas heirmoi texts might be sung only once per year. If a chanter knew the model melodies, and the neume system, he could set obscure heirmoi texts to known melodies with the use of the neumes.
It is worth considering how the political events of the late tenth century may have influenced the writing of the *iadgari*. The T’ao-Klarjeti region had been ruled by the Bagratid dynastic family since they were ousted from Tbilisi in the eighth century by the Abbasid Arabs.\(^\text{84}\)

By 978 AD, about the time that Mikael Modrek’ili began work on the *iadgari* (see Figure 3), David III *kouropalates* the Bagratid was in favor with Emperor Basil II of Byzantium, having aided in the defeat of the rebel Bardas Skleros at the battle of Pankalia in 979 AD. But in the course of the next ten years (as the manuscript was written), the Georgian king David III staged his own rebellion against the Byzantine Emperor, Basil II (together with the Armenian general Bardas Phocas). He was defeated in 989, however, and forced to cede all of T’ao-Klarjeti to the Byzantine Empire. Thus, while Byzantine artistic influence is visible in the organization of the manuscript, the dramatic events of the decade certainly changed the political ties of its patron, king David III. This may have contributed to the tone of select marginalia comments, written by Mikael Modrek'ili, that emphasize the independent placement of "Georgian" texts versus "Greek" texts (cited previously, see "Greek heirmos melodies").

The educational function of the *iadgari* is confirmed in a colophon written by Mikael Modrek'ili, the author-compiler of the extremely detailed neumed *iadgari* from Shat’berdi Monastery. In one note, the following text appears: “You, who will read, study, or listen to the words of these divine hymns, intercede for my poor soul and [express] my love to Christ, in order that you may also find the grace of mercy and the price of love.”\(^\text{85}\) This passage contains a typical plea for intercession, but also offers an insight into the author’s intended use of the manuscript. He includes nearly every church-attending person when he addresses broadly those that will ‘listen’ to the words of the chants, but he addresses more specifically his students when he addresses those that will ‘read’ and ‘study’ his neumed texts for the purpose of learning to sing.


As both scribe and master chanter (scholars believe that both text and neumes are written by the same author), Modrek’ili was one of the first great pedagogues in the long chain of Georgian masters of the oral chant tradition. But in dedicating substantial time and effort to the notation of the oral repertory, Modrek’ili represents one of the first Georgian scholar-chanters interested in the perpetuation of the liturgical repertory beyond his own immediate lifetime.

Neume groupings in the Modrek’ili iadgari show which chants were sung to the same model melodies, and comparative research with the inherited nineteenth-century tradition of polyphonic chant suggests that there are strong musical links between these and the medieval chant tradition, despite nine centuries of chronological difference. The following section introduces the range of methodological questions that exemplify the current state of scholarship on medieval Georgian neumes.
1.4.3 Case Study: Cadential Neume Patterns

As a case study, we look at one page from the iadgari compiled by Mikael Modrek’ili at the Shat’berdi Monastery in T’ao-Klarjeti. This example isolates the final phrases of four successive heirmoi chant texts from folio 25v of the Modrek’ili iadgari (boxed, Figure 5). In an expanded view of the boxed passages, we see the neume notation above and below the texts of each final phrase of the heirmoi (Figure 6). In these final phrases, the ordered arrangement of at least six neumes can be recognized as following a similar sequential pattern (Figure 7). For frame of reference, the predominant neume types seen in the Modrek’ili iadgari are represented in a neume chart (Figure 4).86

Figure 4. Neume reference chart (Modrek'ili neumes)

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The typography of the Georgian medieval neume system can be characterized as including straight, bent, or wavy lines of varying lengths and directions (Figure 4). Unusually, these neumes are written both above and below chant texts (represented by the dashed line), and often appear in clusters of two or three particularly at points of musical or textual cadence. Georgian neumes have not been conclusively deciphered, but it is clear that they indicated to chanthers versed in the melodies of the oral tradition the appropriate place to start and end melodic segments within the phrase and the cadential formula for each phrase. The neumes do not appear to have indicated specific pitches, intervals, or rhythms, though the function of each neume has not been adequately discussed in the academic literature.

86 The digital font for the neumatic notation in this chart was developed by the eminent chanter and neume scholar, Zaal Ts'ereteli.
The most ubiquitous neumes in medieval Georgian manuscripts are punctuation marks known as *gank’uetilobi* (#7, Figure 4). Punctuation neumes can be divided into two types: musical and semantic. These can be distinguished by the use of red ink for musical punctuation neumes or black ink for semantic punctuation. Other neumes in the Georgian system are generally classed into various types, such as those that feature straight lines, angled lines, bent lines, or wavy lines of various kinds.

Taking the same page of the Modrek’ili *iadgari* (complete page exhibited in Figure 3), we examine the final cadences of a series of *heirmoi* (boxed, Figure 5). The identification of the final phrases can be observed in the placement of three or four black dots at the end of the text (located in the right corner of each box, Figure 5). Knowing that the performance of the *heirmos* must conclude with a musical cadence, final phrases are an obvious place to look for neume groupings that might indicate similar types of cadential patterns.
In this case, the heirmoi are all assigned to the fourth mode plagal (Tone 8), suggesting that each text could have been sung to the same basic model melody.\footnote{I'm grateful to Davit Shugliashvili for his assistance in identifying the mode of these particular chant texts.}

The sequence of neumes is very similar for all four heirmoi, especially the final four signs (Figure 7). The order of neumes in phrases (a) and (b) is as follows: 7, 9, 9, 1, 2, 1, 11, 8 (refer to the neume chart in Figure 4). This pattern of neumes is identical in these two phrases and is almost exactly the same in phrases (c) and (d) as well. In these latter phrases, two neumes are omitted, probably to accommodate a text with less syllables in the phrase. The order for phrases (c) and (d) is as follows: 7, 9, 2, 1, 11, 8. All four phrases end with the same four neumes: 2, 1, 11, 8 (Figure 7). This strongly suggests that each heirmoi ended with a similar cadential formula.

The differences between the phrases suggests that depending on the number of sung syllables in the final phrase, the cadential pattern could be truncated at the beginning of the phrase, but not the end. The final four neumes are consistent between all four phrases. The same phenomenon can be observed in a second set of heirmoi melodies (Figure 8). In these three final phrases, similar neume patterns are observed (Figure 9). In this case the neume pattern is as follows (refer to neume chart Figure 4): 1, 6, 7, 9, 9, 2, 3, 2, 8. But in this case, phrase a) contains less syllables than phrases b) and c). The longer phrases added two extra neumes to accommodate the extra syllables (two extra #9 neumes). The final four neumes of each phrase are identical, again suggesting a common phrasing for musical cadences on the last line of heirmoi chants.
Figure 6. Detail, cadence "X," Modrek'ili iadgari, S-425

a)

b)

c)

d)

Figure 7. Graphic, Cadence "X," Modrek'ili iadgari, S-425

a) 

b) 

c) 

d)
The presence of neume patterns is evident in this second cadence group (named "Y" just for comparison), but what information can be gained from this observation? Several scholars have worked on this issue: Vazha Gvakharia listed a number of neume cadence patterns as evidence for his theory of mixolydian cadence types.\(^8\) Ek’at’erine Oniani compared medieval neume groupings to the eighteenth and nineteenth century neumes contained in manuscript Q-845.\(^9\) In another approach, Zaal Ts’ereteli started with examples of notated chants that were transcribed in the late nineteenth-century, and compared their melodies to the same texts as they appear in medieval manuscripts with neume notation.\(^9\) He proposes that groups of neumes correspond to modern melodic phrase units.\(^9\) If the Ts'ereteli theory proves to be correct, it would corroborate a long-held claim that the medieval musical system was preserved through oral tradition, despite nine centuries of political instability.\(^9\) These promising studies present several avenues for further inquiry. A comparative study with non-Georgian neumed chant sources, specifically palaeo-Byzantine notated manuscripts, presents a formidable but worthy challenge.

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89 Ek’at’erine Oniani, “Nevmuri damts'erloba...” (PhD diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2004).
90 Zaal Ts’ereteli, a mathematician and chanter, has been able to provide compelling evidence that a relationship between the medieval and modern melodies does indeed exist. His methodology is based on comparing the placement of medieval neume groups with the notated, nineteenth-century melodies for the same set of chant texts. Zaal Ts’ereteli, “Dzveli kartuli nevmuri sist’emis gashiprva da p’rakt’ik’ ashik’helakhla danerqvis gzebi” [Decoding the old Georgian neume system and ways of reintroducing it into practice], *Proceedings...* (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2008). Zaal Ts’ereteli, “Udzvelesi kartuli samgaloblo nishnebis int’erp’ret’atsis shesadzleloba XIX sauk'unis sanot’o khelnatserebis mikhedvit” [On the possibility of deciphering the old Georgian chants through nineteenth century transcriptions], *Proceedings...* (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2006). Zaal Ts’ereteli, *Sami Nevmirebuli K'anoni* [Three Neumed Canons] (Tbilisi: Megobroba Press, 2013). The neumes in the Ts'ereteli studies are based on an analysis of the heirmologion by the monk Iordane (NCM A603) (not the Modrek’ili iadgari).
91 Medieval neumes appear in groups, and can be fruitfully compared as cohesive units to the melodies inherited in the nineteenth century. These comparisons do not yield direct matches, according to Ts'ereteli, but do show statistical similarity. Discrepancies between the inherited melodies of the nineteenth century and the placement of neumes on the same texts in tenth century sources can be explained, argues Ts'ereteli, as superficial differences, while the melodic patterns seem to follow the neume patterns in a more general sense.
92 The Mongols decimated Georgian armies in the 1220s, leaving a power vacuum as the Georgian aristocracy disbanded. For the following five centuries, Georgia was split between dozens of feuding principalities that owed only marginal allegiance to the Georgian monarchy, allying instead with the regional powers of Persia, Turkey, and eventually Russia. Russia did not gain full control of Georgian territories until the defeat of the forces of the king of West Georgia, Solomon II, in 1810.
Figure 8. Detail, cadence "Y," Modrek'ili iadgari, S-425

a)

b)

c)

Figure 9. Graphic, cadence "Y," Modrek'ili iadgari, S-425

a)

b)

c)
1.5 Chapter Conclusion

Despite the semiographic resemblance to Byzantine, Slavic, and Latin forms of early notation, the Georgian neume system is considered distinct, and has thus far proven resistant to deciphering by modern scholars. The Georgian neumes represent a unique medieval notational system. Variations in the manuscript sources suggest an evolving tradition that originated from one school of hymnography centered in Jerusalem in the early tenth century or before. By the late tenth century, though, neumed manuscripts were distributed to many monastic communities, especially the monasteries in Jerusalem and the kingdom of T’ao-Klarjeti.93

After the eleventh century, however, neume notation does not appear in any extant manuscripts until the late eighteenth century, a lacuna that is difficult to attribute only to the political instability of the thirteenth century, or the loss of (all) manuscript sources that might show a continuation of the tradition of the neume notation beyond the late eleventh century.94 When notation does reappear in the manuscript record, in sources at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, it takes on different forms.

In a study of the Ambrosi chantbook, NCM Q-845 (examined in the section, 9.2.2 The Earliest Nishnebi Sources), musicologist Ek’aterine Oniani also sees a connection between the medieval and later neume systems of the eighteenth and nineteenth. She argues that there are significant reasons to believe that the use of neumes continued throughout the intervening centuries despite a lack of specific sources to prove or contradict this idea. This idea is based on the observation that the similarity of the placement of neumes above and below the line of text shows a continuation in the relationship between the written and sung performance of chant.95

Oniani further argues that while the specific knowledge of how to read the medieval neume system may have been lost, the similar function of the later eighteenth-twentieth century

93 The only written witnesses to the great Georgian scriptorium at St. Sabas monastery in Jerusalem survive at the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai, Egypt. According to Manana Andriadze, “In St. Savas' Monastery, the Georgian holy fathers' activities were especially intensive in the eighth to tenth century period. It is evidenced by the most valuable manuscripts preserved on Mount Sinai, which were transferred gradually to the new center at St. Catherine's Monastery, in the period of the decline of St. Savas' Lavra. Especially noteworthy is John Zosime's Calendar (Sin 34), the so-called iadgari scroll (H-2123, now preserved at the NCM) annual hymn collection: Gk. tropologion), some copies of the oldest iadgari (Sin 18, Sin 40, Sin 41), and the Jerusalem Lectionary (Sin 37).” Manana Andriadze, “Sagalobeli kartuli...” (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2004), reprinted in English in Musicology Today, #20 (Bucharest: Journal of Music of the National University of Bucharest, 2014): 2. http://www.musicologytoday.ro/studies1.php
94 See discussion in Manana Andriadze, Sagalobelta zhanrebi... (PhD. diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1998), 90.
95 See Ek’at’erine Oniani, Nevmuri dants'erloba... (PhD diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2004).
neumes speaks to some continuity of understanding or praxis in the minds of chanters. While this may be true, the evidence supports a clean break between the medieval notation in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the new school of neume notation that emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (discussed in "Nishnebi Neume Notation").

The continuity theory is somewhat suspect in that it attempts to create a connection in reverse chronology: by associating the neume notation of the nineteenth-century inherited polyphonic chant tradition with the neume notation of the tenth century, the author then also tries to argue that medieval neume notation also represents a polyphonic practice of chant. This logical leap is very enticing for those wishing to prove the existence of polyphony in the ninth to eleventh century period, via the presence of neume notation in tenth century sources, but other explanations are equally possible.

Another theory is that neume notation fell out of use already in the twelfth century. Manuscripts produced during this period—the height of Georgian civil and religious power—do not contain neumes. This shift away from the practice of the previous century suggests a change in the production of hymnographic manuscripts that may or may not reflect the practice of chant. The evidence does not strongly support or refute either hypothesis, so it is worth noting that there are alternative ways to construct the narrative history of Georgian neume development and transmission.

Though the shift in usage of the neumed manuscripts from the eleventh to the twelfth centuries has not been emphasized, many Georgian scholars believe that it was in the late tenth and early eleventh century that polyphonic chant began to dominate the performance of Georgian liturgical chant. Could the shift from monophonic to polyphonic chant envisaged by many scholars as occurring in this period be connected with the lack of evidence for the active use of neumes in the twelfth century? Perhaps it was this shift that presaged the abandonment of the neume system associated with the great tenth century hymnographers.

Advances in the analysis of Georgian medieval neumes will benefit the comparative study of all medieval neume systems, with perhaps the greatest potential for discovery arising in the connection with palaeo-Byzantine notation, a system of signs indicating gesture or melodic direction rather than exact pitch.
Chapter II. Hymnography (Part 2)

The translations of Greek heirmoi on Mount Athos, Greece, in the early eleventh century represent a significant period of transition in the history of Georgian hymnography. New texts demanded new melodies, and the challenge of translating versified stanzas from Greek liturgical poetry proved difficult. Strangely, the Georgian neume system gradually went out of circulation in the eleventh century, and is not attested in any twelfth century sources. But Greek *ekphonic* notation appears in two twelfth century sources, though this also did not seem to enter common practice. For modern scholars, the eleventh and twelfth centuries represent the 'Golden Era' in Georgian history, and indeed in Georgian medieval musicology. Much has been written about the advent of liturgical polyphony in this period, a discussion we cover in depth.

2.1 The Athonite Fathers

In the late tenth and eleventh centuries, the translation and text-setting of Greek hymn texts to Georgian melodies became the overwhelming preoccupation of several prominent Georgian scholar-monks on Mount Athos, Greece (referred to as the Holy Mountain—*mtats’minda*—in Georgian). Working in the environs of the major Georgian monastery of Iveron (founded circa 980 AD) on the northeast shore of the peninsula of Mount Athos (Figure 10),96 painstaking translations were copied and desseminated to the Georgian monasteries in T’ao-Klarjeti (as well as the monasteries in Abkhazia-Imereti—West Georgia, Iberia—East Georgia,

Antioch, Palestine, and Egypt (see Map of Regional Monasteries, Figure 2). Of the many who worked on the translation of Greek texts, two are particularly noteworthy.

**Figure 10. Iveron Monastery, Mount Athos, Greece**

2.1.1 Ekvtime Mtats’mindeli (955-1028)

Ekvtime Mtats’mindeli (955-1028), ⁹⁷ abbot of the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos (Figure 10), became well known for his translations.⁹⁸ Among these were translations of the four gospels, the hymns for the month of September, and the kanon of Andrew of Crete.⁹⁹ Giorgi

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⁹⁷ Ekvtime Mtats’mindeli was also the first Georgian “protos” (leader) of the entire monastic community on Mount Athos. He was canonized shortly after his death, and his successor, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, wrote his hagiography and the **okhita** chant texts for the liturgical commemoration of the saint. Greek troparion texts also exist, which are (apparently) different from the Georgian originals.

⁹⁸ Iveron Monastery, Mount Athos, Greece. Photo Credit: Nebojša Stankovic.

⁹⁹ The Palestinian Triodion, which contained chants for Lent and the Paschal season (Item 5, Georgian Manuscript Collection, St. Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai, Egypt) includes Ekvtime Mtats'mindeli’s translation of the Great
Mtats’mindeli (1009-1065 CE), his successor as both hymnographer and abbot, edited the gospel translations as well as numerous translations of Greek hymnographical texts such as heirmoi, troparia, and canons. Both men were adept at setting new hymn texts to music, and worked to codify translation and text-setting practice for future generations. New collections of chant texts, called *dzlispirni da ghmrtismshoblisani* [heirmoi and theotokia], were needed to accommodate the bloom of translated canons. These texts were at first copied into separated collections as supplements to the *iadgari*, but later became established as independent hymnographic books (theotokia).

The prolific translations and hymnographic settings by Ekvtime Mtats’mindeli and Giorgi Mtats’mindeli remain the foundation for the liturgical chant texts of the Georgian Orthodox Church, and Giorgi was one of the foremost international hymnographers of his generation, revered by both Georgians and Greeks alike.

### 2.1.2 Giorgi Mtats'mindeli (1009-1065)

To understand the art of the hymnographers, it is worth spending a few lines on some pertinent details from the life of St. Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, the most famous of the Athonite translators (Figure 11). Our ability to reconstruct the history of the transmission of Georgian liturgical chant in the tenth-eleventh century period is immensely increased with the assistance of

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100 Giorgi Mtats’mindeli translated the prayers for all twelve months, the four gospels, readings of the apostles, the psalter, and many other texts. He also translated texts by Gregory of Nyssa, John Damascene, Dorotheus of Tyre, Basil of Caesarea, and others.

101 The Georgian book *dzlis'irni da gmrtismshoblisani* (‘heirmoi and theotokia’), is different from the Byzantine heirmologion in that it contains both the heirmoi and the corresponding theotokia.

102 According to the hagiography of Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, several praise texts commemorating the saint were written in Greek (in addition to Georgian).

his personal commentaries on his translations. Giorgi Mtats’mindeli was reputedly a highly trained chanter. As a student, he was so accomplished that he mastered the chant repertory in a surprisingly short time. According to his hagiography: “He excelled in relation to his peers and memorized the entire year’s chant settings with utmost speed.”\textsuperscript{104} He trained at the Kakhuli Monastery in T’ao, where he described his teachers as “godly men.”

\textbf{Figure 11.} Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, Akhtala Monastery (12th century)

In the 1020s Giorgi Mtats’mindeli studied Greek theology in Constantinople, and only returned to Georgia in 1034. After being tonsured as a monk, he traveled to Jerusalem and eventually to the Iveron (Georgian) Monastery on Mount Athos, Greece, where he became a choir director within a short time and was “given the honor of priesthood, leadership of a small church and seniority among priests, and appointed to a group of chanters.”\textsuperscript{105} After just four years, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli became abbot, and immediately began rejuvenating the activities of the monastery. Translation and hymnography became an important aspect of his private work, and his contributions in this area are still the standard texts of the Georgian Orthodox Church.

Giorgi Mtats'mindeli was not just a hymnographer, but a chanter of some talent. According to his hagiography, “Young Giorgi quickly and easily memorized the harmonization of the voices to the chant melodies.”\textsuperscript{106} This statement is intriguing not only for its reference to the skill of the Athonite abbot, but also for its reference to harmonization. Whether or not this statement refers to the practice of polyphony is a matter of hermeneutical debate on the meaning of the classical Georgian terms, \textit{shets’qobileba galobata}.\textsuperscript{107}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{105} ibid.
\bibitem{106} Giorgi Mtats'mindeli, DZKALDZ (1963).
\bibitem{107} Ivane Javakhishvili (1938) translates the classical Georgian phrase, ‘\textit{shets’qobileba galobata},’ to the modern Georgian phrase, ‘\textit{hangebis shebaneba}.’ As discussed in Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music, the
\end{thebibliography}
Giorgi Mtats‘mindeli (and Ekvtim Mtats‘mindeli before him) was actively involved in the translation of Greek liturgical poetry which, until that point, had not been translated into Georgian. These texts, most of them heirmoi and troparia for kanons to new saints, needed musical settings. Forced to evaluate on one hand, the efficacy of the existing Byzantine musical repertory, and on the other hand, the existing Georgian Orthodox repertory, in many cases the Athonite translators found neither to be satisfactory and took it upon themselves to compose new melodies (this would become one of the most creative periods in the history of Georgian

word shets‘qobili meant harmony and is thought to be related to the medieval cognate shets‘qobay (found in Ioane P‘et‘rits‘i sources), and the nineteenth century cognate shemets‘qobni (harmony singer); the word galobata is the plural of galoba, meaning ‘ode’ or ‘canticle’. Thus in classical Georgian, the clause shets‘qobileba galobata may have meant ‘harmonizing the ode,’ or ‘accompanying the canticle.’ Meanwhile, in modern Georgian, the word shebaneba means ‘to accompany’ and is cognate with other musical terms such as maghali bani (high bass), dabali bani (low bass), etc. The word hangi (pl. hangebi) means musical phrase. Thus, in modern Georgian, hangebis shebaneba translates as, “the accompaniment of the musical phrases.”
hymnography). They were forced into a three-way choice: to set the new texts to existing Greek melodies, to existing Georgian melodies, or to compose entirely new melodies. Commentaries that attest to the need for new melodies are plentiful. Mtats’mindeli wrote in one commentary to his translation of the Triodion, for example, that: “it became necessary for us to set the [new] text to a melody.”

Because the setting of new hymn texts to music was of primary concern for hymnographers, new types of skills were required. Indeed, at this time, references to the mekhelni—a class of scholar-monk concerned with composing, writing, and setting texts to music—becomes increasingly prominent in manuscript sources (also see the section, 1.3.2 The Importance of the term Mekhurni). Arsen Iqaltoeli, a late eleventh-century hymnographer and contemporary with David the Builder, called this process khmisa dadebisa khelkopa, literally ‘to put a melody’.

The vast numbers of translated heirmoi translated by Giorgi Mtats'mindeli and disseminated in manuscripts to Georgian monastic centers in Egypt, Palestine, Greece, and around Georgia attest to the importance of his work. Several of them survived for more than ten centuries in the remote, high-altitude valleys of the Greater Caucasus Mountains, where they remain in the National Museum of Mestia. The burst of creative activity that accompanied the setting of translated Greek texts to new Georgian chant melodies (and seemed to be a labor of love), had a profound influence on the future of hymnography in Georgia.

108 Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, Triodion, manuscript A-339 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 115. Cited in Sukhiashvili and Oniani, “The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant,” trans. Ninoshvili, ed. Graham (forthcoming, 2015). The precise reasons for this ‘necessity’ are unclear from the comment, but the context of the overall project allows scholars to presume that he was referring to the syllable distribution of a translated text that did not fit its (former) Greek melody.


110 At least five medieval manuscripts dating from the ninth and tenth centuries are housed in the National Museum of Mestia, Svaneti highland region, Georgia. One of them is the neumed ileli iadgari (named for the tiny hamlet where it was kept for centuries), a manuscript that was copied at the Shat’berdi monastery in T’ao in the tenth century.

111 But it is not hard to imagine the enthusiasm that this creative period brought for the Athonite translators, and indeed for Georgian learned monks everywhere. In the Sagalobelni iadgari, housed in the Library of St. Catherine’s Monastery, Mount Sinai, and one of the earliest extant sources that contains the newly translated Georgian texts, readers are entreated to “rejoice in the teachings of spiritual praises... for we will beautify words with sung hymns.” Giorgi Sabats’mindeli-Sineli, Sagalobelni iadgari, #34 (Mount Sinai, Egypt: Library of St. Catherine’s Monastery). Note: the iadgari was written by Giorgi Sabats'mindeli-Sineli [of St. Saba’s and Mt. Sinai monasteries], while the full liturgical manuscript was compiled by Ioane-Zosime. The original quotation is as follows: “იადგარებით ღირსი, ღირსადღეფი, ღირსი ღირსი ღირსი, ღირსი, ღირსი ღირs
2.1.3 Church Reform

There is abundant literature on the life of Giorgi Mtats’mindeli.\textsuperscript{112} One detail that is less often described concerns his role in the church reform of the late 1050s in the West Georgian kingdom of king Bagrat IV, specifically the role between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the royal family.\textsuperscript{113} During the five years that Giorgi Mtats'mindeli was back in Georgia, a popular story describes how he traveled from Georgia to Constantinople with a choir of eighty children, who purportedly performed in the Byzantine capital to much acclaim.\textsuperscript{114} Presumably, many of these children were bound for Mount Athos for their continuing theological education. The tale illustrates the widespread influence of Giorgi Mtats’mindeli both as a reformer of kanon law and also of the liturgical arts. That he championed the rejuvenation of chant schools can hardly be considered surprising, considering his life’s work as a translator and hymnographer, but it exciting to think about how far he went in reforming the musical practice of his day.

Around 1060, when Giorgi Mtats’mindeli traveled from Mount Athos, Greece back to West Georgia, he must have come armed with new texts, new melodies, and new ideas about how to teach chant. Since he had been asked by King Bagrat IV to enact a reform of the Church, we might expect to see some changes in the pedagogy of chant as well. At the heart of such questions is whether or not the reform of Giorgi Mtats’mindeli involved the singing of chant in three-voiced polyphony (as inherited centuries later), or whether polyphony had not yet developed (see section, 2.5 Medieval References to Polyphony). It is curious, therefore, that the innovative neumatic notation system developed by the tenth century Georgian hymnographers in Jerusalem and T'ao-Klarjeti (the very "mekhelni" teachers whom Mtats'mindeli himself considered to be “teachers and godly men”), does not appear in any manuscripts associated with Giorgi Mtats’mindeli (the Athonite). Was part of his reform a distancing from the neume notation of the previous generation, or was it a distancing from the repertory that those neumes depicted?

Such a change, it would seem, would have been alluded to in the descriptions of the Georgian and Greek melodies found in the marginalia of Giorgi’s translated texts, or in other

\textsuperscript{112} Giorgi Mtats'mindeli, DZKALDZ (1963).
\textsuperscript{114} Giorgi Mtats'mindeli, DZKALDZ (1963).
church records of note. The hierarch’s defense of the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church in Antioch in 1052 is well documented, as well as his defiance of the hardline Byzantine position that led to the Great Schism of 1054. With so many sources documenting his professional ecclesiastical positions, and his own attention to hymnographic and musical detail, the absence of any mention of polyphonic singing (which would have sounded very strange in Byzantine musical circles) suggests that this singing style was not central to the reform elements under his jurisdiction. Further research will be needed to ascertain the extent of the reform of Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, but this remains a key moment in the back-and-forth transition of the Georgian Orthodox Church from hagiopolite to athonite rites.

After their lifetimes and well into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the works of Ekvtime and Giorgi Mtats’mindeli continued to be copied and disseminated throughout unified Georgia. Many new hymn texts were also composed, particularly at the Gelati Monastery in West Georgia, an academic and ecclesiastical center created by David the Builder just outside his capital city of Kutaisi (several chants attributed to the king himself survive as a set of Hymns of Repentance). The translated works of Ekvtime and Giorgi Mtats’mindeli proved to be a hefty addition to the corpus of available Georgian liturgical texts, and their study provides an important witness to the wider Byzantine liturgical practice of the eleventh century.

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115 The dispute occurred between 1052 and 1057, when Giorgi Mtats'mindeli left Mount Athos to defend a group of Georgian monks accused of heresy in Antioch. The root of the dispute centered on the question of the canonical legality of the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church—granted to king Vakhtang Gorgasali of Iberia in the fifth century—but disputed by Bishop Theodosius III of Antioch. According to Georgian sources, Giorgi Mtats'mindeli was able to explain in learned fashion the basis for the claim to autocephaly, which was eventually accepted by the Antiochian Church. Giorgi Mtats’mindeli also opposed Byzantine Ecumenical Patriarch, Michael I Kerularius, on his hardline position towards the Western Latin Church. In the years following the schism of 1054, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli was one of the few ranking hierarchs in Constantinople to publicly argue for the reapproachment of the Eastern and Western Churches. For more on these events, see Cyril Toumanoff, "Christian Caucasus between Byzantium and Iran: New Light from Old Sources," Traditio 10 (1954). Donald Rayfield, Edge of Empires (2012), 80.

116 Of the extant hymn collections from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the following composers are known: King David the Builder, Hymns of Repentance (XII c.); Catholicos-Patriarch Nikoloz Gulaberdzde, Hymns of the Life-Giving Pillar (c. 1150-1200); Catholicos-Patriarch Arsen Bulmashimisdze, hymns to St. Nino, St. Shio Mghvimeli, and the Mart’qopi Icon of the Savior “Not Made by Hands” (c. 1200-1250); the Hymns of Anchiskhat’i by Ioane Ancheli (c. 1150-1200); Abuserisdzde Tbeli, “Hymns of the Three Johns” (c. 1200-1250); the kanons for the Feasts of the Lord by Arsen Ch’qondideli (XIII c.); Saba Svingelozzi, “Hymns of the Laws and Incarnation of Christ” (c. 1200-1250); and the iambic compositions of Iezekeil (XII c.), Ioane P’et’rit’s’i (VIII-XII c.), and P’t’re of Gelati (XIII c.). Cited in Sukhiashvili and Oniani, “The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant,” trans. Ninoshvili, ed. Graham (forthcoming, 2015).
2.2 Punctuation and Text-Setting

According to his contemporaries, Giorgi Mtats'mindeli was very accurate in adding punctuation to newly translated texts, a process described as *martlad gank ’uetilobis* [properly-separated punctuation] by the eleventh-century chronicler Ephrem Mtsire (d. 1101).\(^\text{117}\) Accuracy in the placement of punctuation signs was an elementary but important hymnographical practice, especially in un-neumed manuscripts where punctuation might be the only indicator of where musical cadences should occur (for an example of punctuation neumes, see #7, Figure 4). Such skills remain vital to this day as chanters are frequently asked to sing tunes from memory to the troparion text of the day. Chanters must have a clear understanding of the natural divisions in the text, as well as the model melody to which it is to be sung (see discussion in the section, 11.1.7 Syllable Counting: An Experiment in Text-Setting).

Musicologist Magda Sukhiashvili argues in a well-cited essay on this subject that the superiority of the punctuation in the translations of Giorgi Mtats’mindeli should be attributed not only to his knowledge of Greek but to his skill with music. She sees in his divisions of hymn text an expert hand, someone versed in both the semantic meaning of the original Greek texts and the musical setting that he intended for those texts. Despite errors in the written transmission of the Mtats’mindeli texts, the oral transmission of chant as passed on through generations of master chanters seems to preserve the correct initial divisions.\(^\text{118}\) But in making musical as well as semantic calculations in his translations, Mtats’mindeli had to compromise with the strict syllabic meter of the Greek liturgical poetic form.

Sometimes, in the process of written transmission, punctuation neumes were erroneously shifted, a change that caused problems for chanters. Medieval hymnographers knew the tendency to neglect the precise location of punctuation neumes, so they specifically enjoined future scribes to pay attention to this detail. For example, the eleventh-century theologian Ephrem Mtsire wrote, “…I entreat you to preserve the ‘stops’, and forgive me my faults.” His contemporary, Iovane Jibisdze, wrote, “…I ask everybody who will copy this to change neither the words, nor


\(^{118}\) In one study, Magda Sukhiashvili compared the punctuation neumes of the Giorgi Mtats’mindeli translations with nineteenth century transcriptions from the Ektime K’ereselidze archive preserved at the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Georgia. Her conclusion is that the concordances are nearly identical and “very impressive.” Sukhiashvili, *Rhythmical Punctuation* (2013).
Despite these entreaties, erroneous punctuation abounds in later copies of medieval texts, errata that historian K'orneli K'ek'elidze calls, the “loss of logical and musical sense… where subject and verb are separated.”

2.2.1 Meter and Verse

For translators such as Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, preserving the meter of the Greek text was a contentious issue as poetic meter was important for performance but the language differences made precise translations difficult. It is unclear whether the preservation of the Greek poetic meter was the result of liturgical convention (unrelated to performance), or a deliberate attempt to preserve the ability to sing the newly translated Georgian texts to the original Greek melodies. Either way, despite the exceptional skill of the Athonite translators, a one-for-one syllable count with the Greek text in every line was nearly impossible in translation without compromising the semantic meaning of the translations. The sources suggest that a difference of one or two syllables from the original Greek was an acceptable compromise, however, in the interest of preserving an accurate translation.

But as it proved nearly impossible to retain the exact meters, Georgian hymnographers were forced to adapt. Giorgi Mtats’mindeli writes about one translation: “this is no worse than the Greek,” expressing what can best be interpreted as a plea for acceptance of his translation among Greek and Georgian peers. Elsewhere he also alludes to the difficulty of the task of khmisa dadeba [the placing of the voice]:

All you instructors and scholars of this art know well how difficult, and at the same time necessary, a task is the translation of troparia. Everything requires careful calculation,
deliberation, and time…. You know better than we what arduous and trying work it is to translate, measure, and correct the heirmoi.\textsuperscript{123}

These comments are witness to the complexities faced by the Georgian Athonite translators in their work of translation and text-setting. The difficulty of the task required a new scientific discipline with rigorous training for young disciples, a study that came to be called \textit{dasdeblis metsniereba} [the science of hymns].\textsuperscript{124}

According to the Greek system with which Mtats’mindeli was familiar, the number of syllables in each particular line of troparia or heirmoi text corresponded proportionally to the number of notes in the melody that it was assigned. When his Georgian translations could not preserve both this strict syllable count, \textit{and} the essential meaning of the Greek text, Mtats’mindeli chose to preserve the semantic content of the text. Through this choice he was forced, in a sense, to abandon the Greek-Byzantine model-melody system and create a new system: one that could adapt to text phrases with varying numbers of syllables. The flexible melodic system, inherited through oral tradition in Georgia, shows that the model melodies are designed to adapt to accommodate any number of syllables in a phrase, thus separating the melody from strict metrical organizations of text.

The prioritization of the semantic meaning of the text over the syllable-count of the poetic meter resulted in some awkward adaptations in the Georgian translations. A phrase in one troparion might contain thirteen syllables while the analogous phrase in a second troparion (which is supposed to conform in syllable count) might split the text in question into two smaller

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{The term \textit{dasdeblis metsniereba} [study of troparia] denoted an academic discipline whose study enabled student hymnographers to perfect their knowledge of the translation of sacred texts and the composition of various tunes within the eight-tone system. A master of this art was called a \textit{mekheli}, see a broader discussion in the section: 1.3.2 The Importance of the term \textit{Mekhuri}. Met’ reveli, “Mekhelia...” (1966). Magda Sukhiashvili, \textit{Kartul Saeklesio Sagaloblebshi “Dasdeblis Metsnierebis” Gamovlenis Zogierti Aspektis Shesakheb} [On Some Aspects of the Manifestation of the “Science of Hymns” in Georgian Chants], \textit{Proceedings} (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2006).}
\end{footnotes}
textual lines of five and eight syllables respectively. The differences in the poetic meter of the Greek texts and the Georgian translations have given some scholars more ‘proof’ that Georgian medieval music had nothing to do with Byzantine music. Gulnaz K’ik’nadze argues that,

Where the textual content is the same in both the Georgian and the Greek, it is frequently the case that the rhythmic pattern of the Greek original is broken in order to facilitate a musical setting in a Georgian melodic context… Differences in content or rhythm indicate the adaptation of a Greek heirmos to a Georgian tune.

K’ik’nadze sees the lack of metrical concordance between the Greek and Georgian texts as an indicator of differences in musical melody.

2.2.2 The Division of Text

In a study that compares the eleventh century Mta'tsmindeli translated hymn texts with those inherited through oral tradition and recorded at the end of nineteenth century, musicologist Magda Sukhiashvili finds that there is near complete congruence in the placement of punctuation marks. Perhaps this should not be so surprising, however, considering that the art of dividing hymn texts into segments for chanting remained a basic duty of chanters for the performance of the liturgy, and chanters continued to rely on the foundational translations of Mtats’mindeli through the nineteenth century. But this observation is worth remembering when questions about the linear development of Georgian chant force us to evaluate our assumptions about the accuracy, or inaccuracy, of oral transmission. Certain parameters of Georgian chant are very flexible, such as the harmonization of model melodies in three-part harmony. But other parameters, such as the location of musical cadences (through placement of punctuation), demonstrate a remarkable consistency across centuries of transmission.

125 An example of this process is noted in two Paschal troparia in tone 8, daisaja sik’udili, and kholo mtavari soplisa moadzlude. Sukhiashvili, Rhythmical Punctuation (2013).
127 It bears pointing out that differences in syllabic count or meter do not necessarily determine the origin of melody. Such differences can be explained in several other ways. The vast linguistic separation between the Byzantine Greek and (non-Indo-European) Classical Georgian languages, for example, required feats of learned expertise to translate. In many cases, exact syllable counts were impossible if meaning was to be preserved, and this may be why Georgian model melodies evolved to be flexible enough to accommodate texts of different syllable counts. What is interesting is how the act of translation affected the subsequent development of the Georgian model melody system. Two areas can be investigated: the stability of punctuation neumes and the relative flexibility of model melodies.
As for the flexibility of model melodies, to make any determination about how this system might have changed since the initial translations in the tenth-eleventh centuries, we have only the evidence of the melodic system as inherited in the nineteenth-century. But as analysis will show, the melodies are indeed flexible enough to accommodate texts with different numbers of syllables.\(^{129}\) Thus, it seems that semantic concerns profoundly influenced the way in which chant was transmitted between the medieval period and the nineteenth century.\(^{130}\)

Giorgi Mtats’mindeli was not bound to the strict poetic parameters of Greek liturgical texts, and because of this he was free to add punctuation at the most logical semantic points for the Georgian content. His musical settings also changed as he realized that the Georgian texts did not conform to Greek model melodies. He confronted a text-setting challenge in which he either needed to compose new melodies or adapt existing Georgian melodies to the new texts of varying syllable lengths. Our lack of precise knowledge about either the Greek or Georgian melodic systems of the early eleventh century unfortunately limit the amount of musical knowledge to be gained from this kind of speculation, yet there is still much to be learned about the process of translation and text-setting that will prove useful in future collaborate and comparative studies between palaeo-Byzantine and Georgian liturgical poetry.

2.3 Ekphonetic Notation

The cantillation of the Gospel required its own special intonation formulas in the Orthodox liturgy. Greek ekphonetic notation, used for describing the nuances of this performance practice, appears in two Georgian manuscripts associated with Giorgi Mtats’mindeli (the Athonite): the Gelati Gospel and the Shio-Mghvime Typikon.\(^{131}\) In Greece, this notation appears in manuscripts

\(^{129}\) See the section, 11.1.7 Syllable Counting: An Experiment in Text-Setting. Also see, Graham, "The Role of Memory," *Proceedings...* (2010).

\(^{130}\) In the Georgian *rva-khma* system (Oktoechos), each model phrase contains one or two notes that act as “chanting notes,” which accommodate any extra syllables in the texted phrase (see the section, 11.1.7 Syllable Counting: An Experiment in Text-Setting).

\(^{131}\) The ekphonetic notation associated with Giorgi Mtats’mindeli can be found in the following sources: the Gelati Gospel, manuscript Q-908 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 279r-v. The Shio-mghvime Typikon, manuscript H-1349 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 116v. A discussion of these sources appears in, Manana Andriadze, *Sagalobelta zhanrebi...* (PhD diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, Tbilisi, Georgia, 1998), 11.
from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries (specifically in pericopes of the Gospel). While scholarly analysis of the Greek sources has been ongoing for decades (notably Høeg, 1935), little has been written on the Georgian sources.

The ekphonetic notation system consists of a series of semiographical symbols inherited and adapted from Greek prosodic accent signs used by Greek grammarians. They are typically written in pairs above biblical texts and signify the pitch, rhythm, and intensity of the performance. Lists of signs, serving as a key to cantors, are often included in Gospel manuscripts that contain ekphonetic signs. The signs may be over any phrase, but are often clustered at medial and final cadential points and typically occur in pairs.

2.3.1 Ekphonetic Notation in Georgian Sources

Though ekphonetic notation in Georgian and Greek sources is very similar (unlike the neume notation for hymn singing), it is possible that the musical content and style of Georgian cantillation may have been quite different from the Greek.

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132 A table of the Byzantine ekphonetic notation signs, at least as found in the Old Testament lectionary or Prophetologia, can be found in: Gudrun Engberg, ed., Prophetologium 2: Lectiones anni mobilibis, Monumenta Musicæ Byzantinae: Lectionaria I pars altera, fascicle 2 (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1981), 198. We await comparable studies of the Byzantine epistle and gospel lectionaries. Also see Johann von Gardner, Russian Church Singing, Vol. II (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary Press, 2000), 91. Ekphonetic signs come in pairs, at beginnings and ends of phrases (textual phrases represented by ellipses in the table), and some of them are written beneath the line. This is the only other Christian notational tradition besides the Georgian medieval neumes where notational signs are written both above and below the text.


135 Magda Sukhiashvili suggests that ekphonetic notation left a lot of room for performative interpretation, and thus may have been modified to local performance practices in the Georgian context (interview, Magda Sukhiashvili, Jan 20th, 2014).
Figure 13. Ekphonic Notation, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, NCM H1349: 166v

Transliteration: Georgian muskhuri

Qveve რაოდენობის აფხაზები ჰქონია. კრთული ქრონიკა.

Transliteration (from Georgian)
Oksia pros oksian. varie varie. k’atist’e
k’atist’e. Surmat’i k’e k’e
t’elia + p’arabh’i-
k’i k’e t’elia + parak’i-
it’ik’i k’e t’elia + up’o-
k’risis upok’risis up-
ok’risis. k’remast’e k’re-
mast’e. ap’eso ek’so
ok’zia k’e t’alia + ap’-
ost’ropos ap’ost’rop-
os ap’ost’ropos. Su-
nemva k’e t’elia + k’ent’i-
mat’a k’ent’imat’a su-
nemva k’e t’elia + okste
dip’le dip’li. Vari-
e k’ent’imat’a k’e ap’o-
st’ropou +

Greek (original text)
Όχεία προς όχείαν. βα-
ρία βαριαία. καθισταί
catoioi, συμματικὴ καὶ
teleia + paraklitikὴ καὶ
teleia + paraklitikὴ καὶ
teleia + ὑπό-
κρισις ὑπόκρισις ὑπ-
κρισιν κρεμασταὶ κρε-
μασταὶ. απέσω ἕχω,
όχεία καὶ τελεία + ἀπ-
όστροφος, ἀπόστροφος,
ἀπόστροφος, συ-
νέμβα καὶ τελεία + κεντῆ-
ματα κεντῆματα συνέμ-
βα καὶ τελεία + όχεία
ditplai ditplai bohii-
ai. κεντῆματα καὶ ἀπό-
στροφοι. +
Magda Sukhiashvili argues that it should not be difficult to imagine that the Greek ekphonetic notation, as reflected in the Gelati Gospel and Typikon of Shio-mghvime, may have been adapted to Georgian cantillation practice. With Gospel cantillation being a focal point for early worship practice, it does seem plausible that Georgians, like Armenians, Egyptians, Syrians, and others, adapted their own intonation formulas for performance in their respective vernacular languages, complete with intonational, timbral, and cadential variation. That such variation in performance practice of the liturgy existed between the various early Christian churches is quite clear. Thus, Sukhiashvili argues that the use of similar symbols does not necessarily mean that readers adopted the intonation of Greek-Byzantine readers, an observation supported by studies showing that borrowed prosodic signs, such as oxeia, were reinterpreted for Georgian musical use.

Looking at the extant Georgian sources of ekphonetic notation, however, another possibility emerges. (Figure 13 shows a page from the Shio-mghvime Typikon, written in the nuskhuri alphabet, and including a transliteration in the Georgian nuskhuri alphabet, the original Greek, and a Latin transliteration of the Georgian). Unlike the rest of the manuscript, which is in the Georgian language, this particular page is a transliteration from Greek and is in fact a list of ekphonetic signs similar to those seen in the Leimon Codex 38 and other manuscripts. The names of the Greek signs are copied into closely equivalent sounds in the Georgian language (with some discrepancies), in what is apparently an adoption of the Greek ekphonetic notational system (see transliteration).

136 According to historian K’orneli K’ek’elidze, NCM H-1349 was copied between 1247-1269 AD from an earlier translation made in 1172 AD. For more on these sources see, K’orneli K’ek’elidze, Литургические грузинские памятники в отечественных книгохранилищах и их научное значение [Georgian Liturgical Manuscripts in Native Book Depositories and their Scientific Meaning] (Tiflis, 1908).
137 Carsten Høeg, La notation ekphonétique, MMB Subsidia 1, fascs. 2 (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1935). Dali Dolidze first pointed out the similarity between the ekphonetic charts in NCM H-1349 and the Leimon Codex 38, fol. 318r. Further comparative work may determine the source of the original Giorgi Mtats’mindeli transcriptions in the eleventh century.
138 The differences between the Greek and Georgian transliteration are cognate. For example, Greek oksia becomes Georgian oksia; bariai becomes varie; kathistai becomes k’atiste’e; teleia becomes t’elia; paraklitike becomes p’arak’lit’ik’e; kai becomes k’e; hypokrisis becomes up’ok’risis; kremastai becomes k’remast’e; synemba becomes sunemva; apostrophoi becomes ap’ost’ropou. Specific changes include the following: Oxeia: ‘ks’ replaces Greek x; Greek ‘ei’ becomes ‘e’ in the Georgian. Bariai: the Greek suffix ‘ai’ appears in Georgian as ‘e’. Kathistai: Greek ‘th’ becomes ‘t’ in Georgian. Greek ‘t’ becomes ‘t’ in Georgian. Syrmatike: Greek ‘u’ is written as ‘vie’ in the nuskhuri Georgian alphabet… later the letter ‘vie’ combines with the letter ‘on’ to become ‘uni’, so in this case, it seems appropriate to interpret the letter ‘vie’ as meaning ‘uni’, considering that the Greek spelling also utilizes ‘u’.
Giorgi Mtats'mindeli, who is associated with the introduction of this notation system into Georgian hymnographic practice, described the usefulness of ekphonetic notation: “With the help of these signs, the Greeks read the Gospel and the Epistles.”\(^{139}\) He does not elaborate on whether he hoped that Georgian priests would also adopt the Greek system, but in the act of transcribing the system into the Georgian alphabet in his hymnographic texts, this intention seems implied.\(^{140}\)

### 2.3.2 Conclusion: Ekphonetic Notation

The Georgian medieval neume system (such as seen in the Modrek'ili *iadgari*) resembles the Byzantine *ekphonetic* notation more than palaeo-Byzantine notation. This is noticeable especially in one facet: both systems employ the use of neumes above and below the text. Historian Elene Met'reveli believes this similarity reflects the antiquity of the Georgian neume notational system:

> The closeness of Georgian neumes to the system of ekphonetic signs indicates the archaic character of the Georgian system. It represents the initial stage of the Palaeo-Byzantine period (or is a Georgian graphic version corresponding to this system), whose Greek specimens, due to the absence of old Greek manuscripts, have not come down to this day.\(^{141}\)

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\(^{139}\) Giorgi Mtats'mindeli, Gelati Gospel, manuscript Q-908 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 279v. Cited in Dali Dolidze, "Dzveli Kartuli Sinodikoni..." (2001).

\(^{140}\) It is curious that Giorgi Mtats'mindeli decided to include Greek ekphonetic notation with his Gospel translations. It is hardly likely that Georgian hierarchs needed a new cantillation system, but, as with many reforms, other motivations were perhaps in play. It is possible that Giorgi Mtats'mindeli wished to standardize various Georgian cantillation practices, and aimed to legitimize his own style (whether Greek or Georgian) with an elaborate notation system imported from Mount Athos. Further research will be necessary to solve the question of whether he planned to use Greek ekphonetic notation to introduce Greek cantillation formulas, or whether he hoped that the use of notation might facilitate the codification of one or more existing Georgian cantillation styles.

The fact that Georgians used Byzantine *ekphonetic* notation for the intonation formulas of Gospel reading, but created their own form of musical notation for the various genres of responsorial chant, has been seen as significant evidence of a unique melodic tradition by musicologists such as Manana Andriadze.

Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, in translating the Gospel, used the exact same [notational] signs as the Byzantines. Georgians did not create ekphonetic signs of their own because they did not need new ones just for the purpose of recitative. But in the case of chant, one sees a big difference in neume styles. It is clear that the Georgians could not use Byzantine neumes for their own chants, proving that there were big differences in their chant melodies.\(^\text{142}\)

Andriadze underscores that Georgians used Byzantine ekphonetic neumes, but did not use the available Byzantine melodic neume system. She understood these differences to mean that, “the Georgian tradition must have varied from the Byzantine tradition which existed at that time.”\(^\text{143}\)

While it may be true that the two musical traditions were different, the use of a distinct notational system does not prove or disprove conjecture about the existence of unique melodies. Two notational systems could easily describe the same musical formulas, just as one notational system could represent two different musical systems.

I do not dispute that Georgians were singing their own melodies in the tenth century, because there is ample evidence of this fact from Giorgi Mtats’mindeli and others (as discussed in Chapter 1), but it is critical not to confuse sources through false chronologies or convenient comparisons. The available sources for medieval Georgian notation include manuscripts containing neumes, and manuscripts containing Byzantine *ekphonetic* notation. The Georgian neumed manuscripts originated in Jerusalem or T’ao-Klarjeti in the tenth century and further copies were made and distributed through the eleventh century (somewhat surprisingly, neume notation does not occur in twelfth century manuscripts). Any influences or precursors to Georgian neume notation must be sought in sources that reflect the chant tradition of Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, Giorgi Mtats’mindeli is personally responsible for the introduction of Byzantine *ekphonetic* notation into Georgian manuscripts, which reflects his experience on Mount Athos in the eleventh century. It is probable that *ekphonetic* notation of this type was also in practice in Jerusalem. But it is unclear to what extent this notation was ever in use in Georgia,

\(^{142}\) Manana Andriadze, “Georgian Chant” (Tbilisi, 2003).
\(^{143}\) ibid.: 3.
and this question should be considered an open debate. *Ekphonetic* notation does not appear to have been widely copied in Georgian manuscripts, appearing in only two sources (despite many other extant manuscripts from the eleventh and twelfth century period). Unraveling the relationship between the two notational styles in use in eleventh century Georgian monasteries, and their reflection of the oral tradition of that time, will need further comparative research with the earliest available Byzantine sources. The results could be definitive for our understanding of the origins and evolution of notation in the various medieval Christian music traditions during this major period of chant evolution.

### 2.4 Georgian Polyphony

Vocal polyphony is the primary indigenous music form of the various groups of ethnic Kartvelians (Georgians) that inhabit the South Caucasus regions.\(^{144}\) To the south and east of Georgia, the peoples of Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan have historically sung monophonic music, while to the north, two-voiced polyphony can be found among certain ethnic groups of the North Caucasus such as the Chechyans, Kalbar-Balkars, and Adyghians.\(^ {145}\) Complex, three and four-voiced indigenous polyphony is highly developed among many of the diverse regions of Georgia, thus forming an anomaly with the majority of surrounding musical cultures. Furthermore, vocal polyphony is the predominant form of music-making, and folksongs once accompanied almost every daily ritual imaginable in the lives of agrarian peasants in Georgia, as evidenced by the sheer number of folksongs of all varieties that have survived in oral tradition or in collections of transcriptions.\(^ {146}\)

\(^{144}\) Georgians are linguistically and culturally related to three other Kartvelian ethnic groups: the Svans, Megrelians, and Laz. All of these groups (and their subdivisions) also sing polyphonic music. Other peoples of the Caucasus such as the Kists, Chechyans, and Abkhaz share similar musical traits, such as multi-voice singing, round-dances, and specific instruments such as bagpipes.


\(^{146}\) Some fifty genres of folksongs include ritual songs to pre-Christian deities, work songs for every kind of specific agrarian task from log-hauling to scything, healing songs, lullabies, entertainment songs, round-dance songs, songs for the hunt, songs for horse-back riding, cart-driving songs, rafting songs, improvised humorous songs, historical-
2.4.1 Origins Debate

The phenomenon of vocal polyphony in the Caucasus has been debated by many Georgian and international scholars for more than a century, which forms the basis for the short summary provided in this section. The origin and dating of polyphony is particularly vexing for chant scholars, who wish to understand how the unique three-voiced polyphony of the Georgian Orthodox Church relates to indigenous folk polyphony, and how to contextualize Georgian liturgical chant in international debates on the development of polyphony in Europe.

Comparative music analysis of examples of Georgian liturgical and folk polyphony show a robust regional relationship, while the interaction and influence of Byzantine and Palestinian Christian monody on the development of Georgian liturgical chant remains less clear (see analysis, 10.2 Regional Harmony: Central Georgia). The early scholarship on these issues in the late nineteenth century was highly politicized due to a political movement pressing for the restoration of the autocephalic independence of the Georgian Church from the Russian Orthodox Church, and current scholarship echoes some of the nationalist agendas promoted in that era.

The threat of Russian (European) music against the performance of traditional music in Georgia

ballad songs, para-liturgical festival songs, circle-dance songs, solo-dance songs, songs to venerate sacred objects, songs to honor guests and hosts, songs to call favorable weather, marriage songs, etc.


148 For more on the agendas of the various political factions in late nineteenth century Georgia, see the excellent study by Stephen F. Jones, Socialism in Georgian Colors, European Road to Social Democracy 1883-1917 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).
was first articulated in scholarly circles by ethnomusicologist Dimit’ri Araqishvili in 1925 (see 3.4 Preservation: East Georgia).149

Historians at the turn of the last century (including Araqishvili) tended to downplay a Byzantine or Palestinian origin for Georgian chant, instead singling out the influence of the native polyphonic folk singing traditions in the South Caucasus.150 The idea of an ancient origin for the folk polyphony of the Caucasus is not new, but suffers from a lack of specific written or material evidence.151 For example, an oft-repeated trope is a citation from the Greek soldier-historian Xenophon, who described the “rhythmic march and song” of the ancient Mossynoei tribes of the Black Sea region in the fourth-century BCE.152 In a 1948 publication, scholar Dimit’ri Janelidze submitted that Xenophon must have heard polyphonic music, a speculative opinion that has received widespread currency among general audiences in Georgia. Musicologist Shalva Aslanishvili suggested that it was much more likely that polyphony arose later, in the sixth century AD, when the traditions of Christianity solidified and the various Georgian tribes established their unique territories.153 In this section we review the various methodological approaches, primary sources, and scholarly disputes on the issues of the dating and origin of folk and liturgical polyphony in Georgia.

150 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli saero da sasuliero k’iloebi, ist’oriuli mimokhilva [Historical survey of Georgian secular and sacred modes] (Tbilisi, 1898). Araqishvili, Kartuli musika (1925).
151 An investigation of this issue in English sources can be found in Jeremy Foutz, “Ancientness and Traditionality: Cultural Intersections of Vocal Music and History in the Republic of Georgia” (MA thesis, University of Maryland, 2010).
152 The passages in the Anabasis by Xenophon refer to a song “leader” and the “unusual” singing of the tribe. But a comparison of this passage in several English translation reveals that some contain these specific references, while others do not. According to O.J. Todd, “After they had formed their lines, one of them led off, and the rest after him, every man of them, fell into a rhythmic march and song, and passing though the battalions and through the quarters of the Greeks they went straight on against the enemy, toward a stronghold which seemed to be especially assailable.” Here there is no mention of a song leader, nor anything unusual. See O.J. Todd, trans., Xenophon, Anabasis, Books IV-VIII (New York: Loeb Classical Library, 1922), 123. But in the translation by H. G. Dakyns, “Then one of them gave, as it were, the key-note and started, while the rest, taking up the strain and the step, followed singing and marking time... Then they turned round and made off, first cutting off the heads of the dead men and flaunting them in the face of the Hellenes and of their private foes, dancing the while and singing in a measured strain.” It is this translation that provides the “song leader” and the “measured strain” that have picqued the imagination of Georgian musicologists. See H. G. Dakyns, Xenophon: Anabasis (the Persian Expedition) (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1897), republished as an ebook by Digireads (2009), 325-326. For the significance of Xenophon on Georgian folklore studies, see Joseph Jordania (Josif Zhordania), "Georgian Folk Singing..." (1984).
153 Dispute discussed in Rusudan Ts’urts’umia, XX sauk’unis kartuli musik’a: tvitmqopadoba da ghirebulebiti orient’atsiebi [Twentieth century Georgian music: towards individuality and value] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2005), 12-14.
2.4.2 Folk Polyphony and Form

The folk-music of Georgia is a polyphonic, vocal song tradition that once dominated almost every activity of life, both agrarian and ritualistic. Singing accompanied various forms of work such as threshing wheat, harvesting corn, scything hay, hauling logs, or stomping grapes. Singing marked the celebration of rituals, both animist and Christian. Entertainment songs, dance-songs, historical-ballad songs, songs to prepare for the hunt, and horse-back riding songs... these were the repertory of local singers in throughout Georgia, as evidenced in the archival field recordings and transcriptions collected throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Lullabies and healing songs were sung for those with particular illnesses such as measles or cholera. Para-liturgical carol singing held a critical function at the festivities that followed major Orthodox feastday celebrations, especially Nativity and Pascha.

The dating of folk polyphony is based on archeological, textual, and anthropological research. The discovery of a bone flute dating to the 3rd-2nd millennia BC has been suggested as a starting point for vocal polyphony, citing twentieth century recordings of shepherds humming a harmony part while playing melodies on hand-made flutes. Others have “correlated the origin and establishment of polyphony to the linguistic hypothesis of the existence of a Kartvelian proto-language and the gradual process of its disintegration.” Pre-Christian (or non-Christian) polyphonic ritual songs have survived in many regions of Georgia, especially the remote and historically inaccessible highlands of Svaneti, leading scholars to believe that polyphonic music predates the introduction of Christianity in the fourth-sixth centuries in Georgia.

Music theorists describe the development of folk polyphony in evolutionary terms: original solo melodies gradually became a melody accompanied by drone, then a melody with drone and upper harmony, and finally, complex polyphony that includes improvising voices in all three parts. From this perspective, the presence of a drone suggests the oldest layer of

156 Though folksongs with non-Christian themes are often characterized as "pre-Christian", there are regions of Georgia (such as highlands of the Northeast Caucasus) where Christianity never held tangible influence. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether such folksongs—some of them devoted to animist gods—are pre-Christian or indeed, relatively modern. The question of dating is not as important (to my thinking) as what the song texts reveal about local ritual and belief.
When ethnomusicological study of Georgian folk music began in the early twentieth century, researchers found that a majority of the thousands of collected folk songs describe three-voiced polyphony (solo, two-voiced, four-voiced also occur, but are frequently found to be subservient to a three-voiced structure). But each of the twelve-fifteen distinct cultural regions in mountainous Georgia display extraordinary differences in harmony, timbre, tuning, ornamentation, form, structure, and treatment of text. These differences in the folk tradition are considered to represent centuries if not millenia of independent musical evolution.

Another approach to answering the question of the origin of polyphonic folk music comes by way of political geography and musical mapping. According to this methodology, it can be shown that the diverse highland and lowland musics of Georgia all exhibit unique forms of three-voiced polyphonic folk music despite lingual, cultural, and political differences throughout history. An evolutionary approach to the development of polyphony suggests that simple melodies were first harmonized by drone, and later with a third upper voice. This type of polyphony, or remnants of its earliest forms, can still be observed in some highland regions, thus leading to the theory that primitive forms endure in isolated communities.

Dimit’ri Araqishvili (1873-1953), looked at the song tradition of one-voiced labor songs Kalouri and Urmuli for the ancient roots of Georgian song, hypothesizing an evolutionary development from one, to two, to three-voiced polyphony. While not all agree with this assessment, most Georgian scholars agree that three-voiced polyphony arose from a simple two-voiced structure in which a melody is harmonized by a moving drone. Songs of this type are

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159 The work of Dimit’ri Araqishvili cannot be overemphasized. He founded the academic study of folk music in Georgia, and was also an accomplished composer. He transcribed approximately 500 transcriptions of Georgian folksongs, and published them for the Musical-Ethnographic Commission of the Moscow University Society of Natural Science, Anthropology, and Ethnography. As a result, many of his foundational works appear in Russian. See for example, Dimit’ri Araqishvili (Arakchiev), *Gruzinskoie Narodnoe Muzikalnoe Tvorchestvo; Narodnaia Pesnia Vostochnoi Gruzii i Severnogo Kavkaza; Narodnaia Pesnia Gruzin-Gortsev Vostochnoi Gruzii; Narodnaia Pesnia Zapadnoi Gruzii* [Georgian Folk Music Art; Folk Song of Eastern Georgia and North Caucasus; Folk Song from Highland Regions of Eastern Georgia; Folk Song of Western Georgia], Volume V (in Russian), Materials of the Musical-Ethnographic Commission of Moscow University (Moscow: Lissner and Sobko Publishing, 1916).
prevalent, especially in the Eastern Georgian mountain regions of Khevsureti, Pshavi, Mtiuleti, and Tusheti, as well as Chechneti (Chechnya).

### 2.4.3 Types of Polyphony in Georgia

Georgia is renowned for its diverse forms of vocal polyphony. Music theorists have categorized a number of different basic types of multi-voiced singing that can be broadly differentiated by the following compositional processes. From each of these types, there are many hybrid forms that combine several elements, such as drone with ostinato. The International Research Centre of Traditional Polyphony, based at the Tbilisi State Conservatoire, formulated these categories as follows:

1. **Drone principle** – movement of the upper voices over a bass drone (homophonic structure);
2. **Ostinato principle** – movement of the upper voices over a repeated ostinato bass, and ostinato movement in all voices;
3. **Parallel principle** – parallel movement of voices;
4. **Complex (synchronous) principle** – synchronized movement of chord complexes (not necessarily parallel);
5. **Free contrasting principle** – unlimited independent voice movement (polyphonic structure).

The drone principle can be further divided into types, including rhythmic drone and pedal drone, both of which change their pitch to facilitate modulation. According to Dolidze, “the rhythmic (recitative) drone is common in all regions and may be the most ancient; it articulates either the song text, along with the high voices, or stereotyped glossalalia [i.e. non semantic vocables].”

Several salient aspects of Georgian traditional music define its performance practice. One of these is the principle that the upper voice parts are only sung by soloists, thus allowing free improvisation. But these soloists conform to the principle of synchronized vertical harmony, forming defined chord progression types in the performance of each phrase. The upper voices can either be simple homophonic expressions of lengthy texts, or highly ornamented melismatic

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manifestations of short texts. The lowest voice is either sung by a third member of the trio (in the Guria region), or more commonly by the rest of the gathering. Folk polyphony can be sung by men or women especially festival or round-dance songs. This being acknowledged, the great majority of folksongs seem to have been performed by one or the other gender, depending on song function: songs about hunting, traveling, working, history were typically sung by men, while songs about healing or lullabies were typically sung by women.

Doubling at the octave is rarely encountered, so mixed-gender singing necessitates women singing in their lower range, while men sing in their upper range in order to preserve the close-harmony structure of Georgian three-voiced polyphony. Certain types of upper voices occur in specific regions: the k’rimanch’uli yodel, for example, is only encountered in the folklore of the Guria region (and less so in the Imereti region). In East Georgia (Kartl-K’akheti regions), a highly developed entertainment genre of folksong features drawn-out, highly ornamented and intertwined soloist passages over a moving pedal drone.

2.4.4 Folk Polyphony and Liturgical Polyphony

Liturgical polyphony is similar to those varieties of folk polyphony that are homophonic, in that the text is sung by all three voices at all times. The articulation of the text is sacrosanct in Orthodox chant: it is considered as a form of prayer, rather than performance. While experimenting with text is strictly forbidden in the performance of liturgical chant, the musical ornamentation of the three voices is encouraged and often mirrors the ornamentation styles of the local folk music. Thus, the great variety of regional folk-singing styles is also apparent in the variety of liturgical music traditions. At least three major ‘schools’ of chant are attested in the thousands of transcriptions notated at the end of the nineteenth century, each distinguished by their musical harmonization of common model melodies (see analysis, 10.2 Regional Harmony:

162 Many folk songs feature improvisational musical sections performed to nonsense vocables. In some cases, one or more voices perform texts while the others perform with vocables, especially in the folk tradition from the region of Guria. For discussion on this topic, see Lauren Ninoshvili, “Singing between the Words: the Poetics of Georgian Polyphony” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2010).
Central Georgia). Several other schools of chant were presumably lost, and only survive in fragmentary form.\footnote{The best example of one of the lost schools of Georgian liturgical polyphony is the Svanetian liturgical school, which in the five or six surviving examples of Svan chant, demonstrates a completely unique harmonization of common melodies.}

The quest to discover the origin and dating of the liturgical polyphony of the Georgian Orthodox Church relies on several methodological approaches and sources. In the absence of any notable music treatises or specific sources on polyphonic chant before the eighteenth century, scholarly efforts have focused instead on the interpretation of musical terms in medieval sources: those that specifically reference the performance of music (discussed next section). A unique system of neume notation is also considered a potential witness to polyphonic chant (as discussed in the section, 1.4.3 Case Study: Cadential Neume Patterns).

Historian Ivane Javakhishvili believed that polyphony was promulgated in the medieval Georgian Church as a means to attract a laity steeped in polyphonic folk music.\footnote{Ivane Javakhishvili, Kartuli musik’is ist’oriis... (1938). Also cited in Nino Tsitsishvili, "National Unity and Gender Differences in Georgian Song-Culture: Ideologies and Practices" (PhD diss., Monash University, Australia, 2004).} Following this line of thinking, musicologist Shalva Aslanishvili acknowledged that the earliest imported Christian chant of the fourth-sixth century period was likely monophonic chant of the Greek-Syriac type, but agreed that the granting of autocephy to the Georgian Orthodox Church in the sixth century inspired the performance of chant in a ‘Georgian manner.’ Others have noted some similarities between processes of ornamenting and harmonizing melodies in the chant traditions of Georgia and the Latin West.\footnote{John A. Graham, “The Role of Memory,” Proceedings (2010). Also see, Davit Shugliashvili, "Kartuli galobis 'unisonuri' mravalkhianoba" [‘Unison’ polyphony in Georgian chant], Sasuliero Da Saero Musik'is Mravalkhianobis P'rblemebi [Issues in Polyphony in Sacred and Secular Music] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2001), 101-118.} In the 1930s, Siegfried Nadel searched for an origin for Georgian polyphony in early Western music, but finally concluded that due to the longevity of the chant tradition in Georgia, “It is more likely for polyphony to have originated first in Georgia and to have spread subsequently to Europe from there.”\footnote{Siegfried F. Nadel, Georgische Gesange, (Berlin: Lautabteilung, 1933), republished in English in Echoes from Georgia (2010).} His student Marius Schneider also speculated that polyphony in Georgia predated Parisian organum in Europe.\footnote{Marius Schneider, "Kaukasische Parallelen zur mittelalterlichen Mehrstimmigkeit," Acta Musicologica, Vol. 12, Fasc. 1/4 (1940): 52-61.}
2.5 Medieval References to Polyphony

The Gelati Monastery academy, founded in the early twelfth century by king David the Builder near his capital in central Georgia, became the vibrant center of the hymnographic reforms of Giorgi Mtats’mindeli. David the Builder conceived the monastery as a center of learning worthy of his aspirations for a unified Georgian state. According to one section of the chronicle of Georgian kings, Kartlis Tskhvireba, the Gelati monastery was referred to as the “Jerusalem of the East” and a “second Athens” because of the scholarly and liturgical activity at the royally-sponsored complex.\(^{168}\) Scholars invited from Byzantium taught subjects ranging from philosophy, theology, rhetoric, and grammar, to mathematics, and geometry. The impressive number and variety of sources generated at the Gelati monastery during the twelfth century give unprecedented access into the liturgical and theological life of the Georgian Church at the height of its medieval power.

2.5.1 Ioane P‘et’rits‘i

One of the most productive professors at the academy of Gelati Monastery in the twelfth century was the theologian Ioane P‘et’rits‘i, a Georgian aristocrat likely educated in Constantinople. His many extant writings cover subjects primarily concerned with synthesizing Orthodox theology and neo-Platonist philosophy.\(^{169}\) His translations and commentaries on contemporary and ancient texts provide insight into the pedagogical art of rhetoric studied at the


\(^{169}\) Ioane P‘et’rits‘i (11th-12th century) is one of the most intriguing figures in Georgian medieval studies. His many works were recopied through the medieval period, and survive in a variety of sources. His precise dating and background is unknown, debate on this issue has caused some controversy. The predominant theory is that he was educated in Constantinople, perhaps with Michael Psellos and John Italus, but this has recently been disputed by Damana Melikishvili, who contends that the considerable philosophical differences between P‘et’rits‘i and these neo-Platonist teachers sheds doubt on any teacher-student relationship. Another theory, which suggests that P‘et’rits‘i studied in what is now modern Bulgaria and took his name from the Georgian “P‘et’rits‘ioni” monastery (now called Bachkovo Monastery), has been disputed by Edisher Ch‘elidze. Ch‘elidze also argues that P‘et’rits‘i likely lived at the end of the twelfth century, not at the end of the eleventh century as had been widely assumed. The main evidence for the earlier dating was a reference to “the help of David” which most assumed to be King David the Builder (1073-1125), but Ch‘elidze argues that this is instead a reference to David the Psalmist. Elguja Giunashvili defends the earlier dating, citing evidence from marginalia in the works of Arsen Iqaltoeli that suggest P‘et’rits‘i lived at the end of the eleventh century and was one of the first professors at the Gelati Monastery Academy in the beginning of the twelfth century. I’m indebted to Magda Sukhiashvili for helping me understand the nuances of these debates.
Gelati Monastery.\textsuperscript{170} He was also a poet and hymnographer, evidenced by his many analogies and references to music and a few surviving original liturgical poems.\textsuperscript{171} His translations contain many Georgian words and concepts that he apparently invented, making the interpretation of his texts in Classical Georgian a difficult task even for trained medievalists. The hermeneutics of P'et'rits'i sources has become its own field of study in Georgian philological circles, with multiple interpretations of each term debated in the scholarly literature. This is central to our study because the basis for arguments on whether or not liturgical chant was performed in a polyphonic manner in medieval Georgia originates in philological study.

In the \textit{Exegesis on the Philosophy of Proclus Diadochus and Plato},\textsuperscript{172} in a discussion on the three-fold nature of the Trinity, P'et'rits'i uses a musical analogy to describe how three can be considered one:

Our music has been blessed and beautified by the Holy Spirit, and has three core elements named \textit{mzakhr}, \textit{zhir}, and \textit{bam}. Those three create a sympathetic sound, for what was incorrect harmonization becomes correct harmonization. The simultaneous tuning of these three elements, which can be produced by either voice or string, reflects the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Of different substance, but together forming the holy


Trinity, three become one. The same exists in music: the tuning of three unique voices, *mzakhr, zhir, and bam*, creates one whole.\(^{173}\)

This is the first documented reference to a musical culture that included three voices.\(^{174}\) It is unclear from the context whether the intention was to name three strings on a lute or three voices of a polyphonic song, but this has not been considered essential. Most Georgian scholars consider that the reference to a three-part musical tradition must logically include the three-voiced polyphonic vocal music which is pervasive throughout modern Georgia and regions that were historically within the Kartvelian sphere of cultural influence.

With the idea that the P’et’rits’i commentary is our first material witness to medieval polyphony, scholars have painstakingly examined every other word for hints of polyphony. In addition to the above quote, musicologist Nino Pirtskhalava identified several other musical terms and offered the following definitions: *ertbami* (meaning ‘several parts united in one), *dabamva* (meaning ‘to blend’), *ertobai shekorlebisai* (meaning the ‘simultaneous sounding of various pitches’), and *rtva* (meaning ‘harmony’).\(^{175}\) Because of these musical references, P’et’rits’i has been promoted as the first source for the national music aesthetic of vocal polyphony.\(^{176}\)

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173 Ioane Pet’rit’si, *Shromebi*, Vol. II (Tbilisi, 1937), 217. Quote translated from Classical Georgian by Nana Daniela and John A. Graham, 2006. The original is as follows: “rametu qovliturt samusoy ars chueni ese samoqusoy mortuli ts’midisa mier sulisa, da esetsa samta mier prtongta, vi’qi samta dabamvata, romelta mier sheinats’evrebis qoveli sheqovelbuli: mzakhr, zhir, da bam rmulni, da ranive mrtvelobani dzalita da khmatani amat samta mier memokmedeben k’etil-ptogovnebata, rametu uts’orobisagan mortulebatasya mietsemis sists’ore k’etil dadasvasa mortulebisasa.” Transliteration: “rametu qovliturt samusoy ars chueni ese samoqusoy mortuli ts’midisa mier sulisa, da esetsa samta mier prtongta, vi’qi samta dabamvata, romelta mier sheinats’evrebis qoveli sheqovelbuli: mzakhr, zhir, da bam rmulni, da ranive mrtvelobani dzalita da khmatani amat samta mier memokmedeben k’etil-ptogovnebata, rametu uts’orobisagan mortulebatasya mietsemis sists’ore k’etil dadasvasa mortulebisasa.” The term *mzakhr* is considered cognate to the term *modzakhili* (the one who calls) in modern Georgian; *zhir* means “two” in the Megrelian language, and thus considered to mean ‘second voice;’ *bam* is cognate with *bani* (bass or accompaniment), and related to the term *ertbamad*, which in the modern Mingrelian language means to collect, to blend, or to remain together. For more on these terms, see Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music.

174 For analysis of this quote, see Nino Pirtskhalava, “Tsneba’bamtan’ dakavshirebit...” (2000). Another derivative term from *bani*, *she-ban-eba*, was used in the sense of “tuning of voices.” See Ivane Javakhishvili, *Kartuli musik’i*... (1938).

175 Nino Pirtskhalava, “P’et’rit’si’s pilosopia da kartuli mravalchmianoba” [The philosophy of Ioane Pet’rit’si and Georgian polyphony], *Proceedings*... (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2003), 120. In the article, she also defines the following terms associated with instrumental playing: *dzali* (string), *mortuli dzali* (tuned string), *moshued* (lax string), *mskhirpaned mortulni dzalni* (tightly tuned strings).

But in the opinion of historian Magda Sukhiashvili, the lack of other substantive musical sources from P’et’rits’i, such as a music treatise, appears suspicious. She contends that the study of music at the Gelati Monastery academy would have required the creation and use of textbooks reflecting Platonic music theory, of which P'et'rits'i was clearly familiar (no such texts survive). For example, in the *Exegesis of the Philosophy on Proclus Diadochus and Plato*, we read that, “the study of stringed instruments of certain modes and manners of performance evokes the Sun, Saturn, Jupiter, and Venus.” Here, P'et'rits'i invokes a Platonist musical-cosmological analogy, one of many such references that demonstrate his familiarity with Platonistic literature and music theory.

Further evidence suggests that P’et'rits'i even taught music theory at Gelati Monastery. Several hymns are attributed to him, as well as a major hymnographic collection called the “Lesser Gulani,” which included chant texts for the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, the prophecies, the lives of the Saints, the Menaion for all twelve months, the Triodion and Pentecostarion, the Psalms, the Hours, the Synaxarion, and the Typikon. His surviving output reveals that he was a master of both the philosophical and musical pedagogical thought of his day.

### 2.5.2 Terminology that Reflects Polyphonic Practice

Given the status that P’et’rits’i held at the Gelati Monastery Academy, most Georgian scholars consider his Trinitarian analogy (*mzakhr, zhir,* and *bam*) as a fail-proof indicator not just of polyphony, but of a liturgical practice of three-voiced polyphonic chant. Unfortunately, other evidence to either corroborate or disprove this dominantly held view is not available. The three musical terms used by P'et'rits'i do not occur in any other known sources, until the dictionary compiled by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani in the eighteenth century (as discussed by twentieth century scholars Niko Marr and Ivane Javakhishvili). Despite the lacuna of other sources, philological analysis of P’et’rits’i musical vocabulary continues vigorously.

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178 The existence of the Lesser Gulani by Ioane P’et’rits’i is attested in a document written by Catholicos-Patriarch Ant’on I (1720-1788), who incorporated some of its texts into a new *sadghesats’aulo* [Book of Feasts]. Unfortunately, the original Gulani by P'et'rits'i has since been lost. I am grateful to Magda Sukhiashvili for bringing this interesting reference to my attention.
179 Ivane Javakhishvili, *Kartuli musik’is...* (1938).
Several terms have come under particular scrutiny, especially shetsqobai (harmony), mortulebai (harmony, ornamentation), and mukazeli (ornamentation).\textsuperscript{180} According to Mzia Iashvili, P’et’rits’i must have been aware of the Platonist interpretation of the word ‘harmonia’, which did not carry a meaning of vertical, multi-voiced harmony the way it does today but rather a general sense of congruence and integration. If P’et’rits’i had wanted to make a reference to the ‘harmony of the stars’ in a Platonic sense, she argues, he could have used existing Greek vocabulary. Instead he employs other words (specifically narti - mixed; and rtvai - to bind, to knit) to connote harmony precisely because he intended to describe multi-voiced vocal harmony.\textsuperscript{181}

Nino Pirtskhalava has devoted several essays to the study of the musical language of P’et’rits’i, arguing that his commentary on Proclus draws upon a ‘national vocabulary connected with polyphony.’\textsuperscript{182} She argues that many of the musical terms employed by P’et’rits’i to discuss the Platonic vision of the universe and God, also reflect the musical reality of medieval Georgia. The word shets’qobleba (cognate shets’qobay) is the subject of an analysis by musicologist Magda Sukhiashvili in which she identifies this term as meaning multi-voiced harmony.\textsuperscript{183} In his own analysis of these terms, historian Ivane Javakhishvili used the medieval term she-ban-eba to translate the meaning of shets’qobleba into modern Georgian.\textsuperscript{184} The term she-ban-eba relates to the concept of accompaniment, because bam or ban is not only the ‘bass’ voice but rather the accompaniment of the tune. Thus, even in nineteenth century transcriptions, the lowest voice is called dabali bani [low bass] while the middle voice is called maghali bani [high bass]. The word shets’yobai (to put together) can be used to describe the unison singing of a group, but

\textsuperscript{181} It must be noted that P’et’rits’i seemed to have a penchant for not using Greek words… he created dozens of Georgian words to translate Greek philosophical texts, and only in some cases used the original Greek terminology. See Mzia Iashvili, Kartuli mravalkhmianobis sak’tkhisatvis [On the problem of Georgian polyphony], (Tbilisi: Khelovneba, 1975), 36-37. Also see Nino Pirtskhalava, "Musik’aluri analogiebis shesakheb ioane p’et’rits’is ‘gannmar’ebashi” [On musical analogies in the 'Interpretations' of Ioane P’et’rits’i], Sabchota Khelovneba [Soviet Art], No. 5 (in Georgian) (Tbilisi, 1989), 110-115.
\textsuperscript{182} Nino Pirtskhalava, "P’et’rits’is pilosopia..." (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2003), 120.
\textsuperscript{183} Magda Sukhiashvili, “Zogierti dzveli kartuli samusik’o...” (Tbilisi: Metsniereba Press, 2003). The term shets’qobleba is found in sources by Giorgi Mtsire, while the cognate shets’qobay is found in sources by Ioane P’et’rits’i and Eprem Mtsire. See Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music.
\textsuperscript{184} Specifically, Javakhishvili translates shets’qobleba galobata [to put together the odes] as hangebis shebaneba [to harmonize tunes]. See Ivane Javakhishvili, Kartuli musik’is... (1938).
P’et’rits’i makes it clear that his intended use of the word here is in reference to three elements: “the elements mzakhra, zhir, and bam are ‘put together’ like one.”

Given that the vocabulary of the P’et’rits’i translations is notoriously difficult to understand, the determination of whether his references to music actually reflect contemporary polyphonic practice has become a matter of philological exegesis. For example, in an obscure passage in which he uses two borrowed Greek musical terms, nete (Geo. ὑιτη, Gk. νητη) and hypaté (Geo. ιπατη, Gk. 'υπατη'), scholars debate his intended meaning: “But you, melisma and matching consonance, they are holding the parts from the low [pitch] to the high.” The transliteration of these terms also provides chronological data about its historical adaptation into Georgian.

Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani discussed this passage in his (eighteenth-century) dictionary Sitqvis k’ona, describing the Georgian cognate terms nit’i and ip’at’oi as, “musical terms ranging from high to low.” From this, Vazha Gvakharia concludes that P’et’rits’i intended to describe the vertical range of the voices. Magda Sukhiashvili suggests that it meant, “many parts

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186 In ancient Greek music theory, each pitch had a specific name: the term hypaté denotes the lowest pitch while the term nete is the highest. For a general overview of terminology in the ancient Greek musical system, see Thomas J. Mathiesen, Apollo’s Lyre: Greek Music and Music Theory in Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

187 Ioane P’et’rits’i, Shromebi, Vol. II (Tbilisi, 1937), 22. The original quotation is as follows: "შენთ რითანი და შესიბოლი იპ’ატ’ოი ვიდრე ნით’ი სამუსტ’ა ცალი არიან." Transliteration: “shen rtvani da shets’qobilni ip’at’oy vidre nit’amde nats’ilad ip’qren.” The word rtvani means ‘knitted,’ or ‘to bind,’ so in a musical context has been interpreted to mean, ‘melisma/ornament’, or possibly ‘mode.’

188 According to Kartvelian linguist Thomas Wier (interview correspondence), these loan words from Greek can be identified as belonging to a particular historical period. For example, the Greek word νητη, which was borrowed into Georgian as nit’i rather than nete, provides an interesting example because the shift of eta to iota did not occur in Byzantine Greek until around the ninth or tenth centuries. Likewise, the borrowing of υπατη as ip’at’oi implies that the word was borrowed into Georgian after the shift of upsilon to iota. It is possible, however, that the Georgian spelling was an effect of borrowing into a different language rather than a reflection of the pronunciation of Byzantine Greek, because Greek upsilon was originally a front-rounded vowel like German ü and Georgian did not have this vowel. The transliteration of nit’i is definitive, however, since Georgian clearly distinguishes between the /e/ and /i/ vowels.

make a whole.”\footnote{Magda Sukhiashvili, “Zogierit dzveli kartuli samusik’o...” (Tbilisi: Metsniereba Press, 2003), 159.} By interpreting the term \textit{rtvani} to mean ‘mode’ or ‘modal scale’ (instead of its traditional definition as ‘knitted’ or, in reference to music, ‘melisma/ornament’), musicologist K’akhi Rosebashvili hypothesized that this passage discusses modal scales (in range, from high to low).\footnote{K’akhi Rosebashvili, “Kartuli khalkhuri simgheris k’ilos gansazghvris sak’itkhisatvis” [On issues of defining the mode in Georgian folk song], \textit{Kartuli musik’is p’oliponiis sak’itkhebi shromebi krebuli} [Publication on issues in Georgian polyphonic music] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1988). Cited in Sukhiashvili, “Zogierit dzveli kartuli samusik’o...” (Tbilisi: Metsniereba Press, 2003). Also discussed in Gvakharia, \textit{Kartul musik’alur sist’emata...} (1962).} In short, the breadth of interpretation is as wide as one might expect, given the difficulty of the original text and the overall lack of other sources that might contribute more context.

\subsection*{2.5.3 Proving Polyphony}

The unique qualities of Georgian medieval neume notation have not gone unnoticed by those bent on finding evidence of polyphony. In particular, the presence of neume symbols both above and below the text convinces some scholars that the neumes reflect multi-voice singing. According to musicologist Vazha Gvakharia:

\begin{quote}
We suppose that the neumes written above and below the text is an indicator for polyphony, because those peoples that have monophonic singing write neumes above the text, and never below it. We see examples of this in Byzantine music and Armenian ‘khaz’ [notation].\footnote{Vazha Gvakharia, \textit{Kartul musik’alur sist’emata...} (1962).}
\end{quote}

While it is true that the Georgian use of neumes above and below the text is unusual, this type of conjecture needs further study.\footnote{Gvakharia goes on to say that this type of musical representation, written both above and below the lines, is uniquely Georgian. Ioane Bat’onishvili, who devised and proposed several new notation styles for polyphonic music in the early nineteenth century, also used the technique of writing both above and below the text to indicate the direction of musical interval, which Gvakharia sees as further proof that polyphonic liturgical singing was also being represented in the Georgian medieval neumes. For more on the Bat'onishvili notation, see Chapter IX: Other Notational Systems.} Such opinions are perpetuated on both popular and academic platforms. In the following citation, for example, Georgian tenth century neume notation is misunderstood as evidence for multi-voiced chanting, despite evidence to suggest is was a graphic system representing only melodies. According to a Tbilisi Conservatory website:

\begin{quote}
Some scholars believe that with the adoption of Christianity, one-voiced Greek liturgical chant was replaced by Georgian multi-voiced chant no later than the tenth century. First,
this is proved by neume notation in tropologia (tenth century) where an independent system of musical signs are used; and second, by a postscript found in the eleventh century Parakliton by Giorgi Mtats’mindeli where he directly cites setting Greek heirmoi texts to Georgian melodies.\footnote{Webpage of the International Center for Traditional Polyphony of the Tbilisi State Conservatory. http://polyphony.ge/index.php\?m=566. Accessed Dec. 12th, 2013. Edited for clarity.}

In addition, the existence of Georgian melodies that are unique from Byzantine melodies is also confused with the presence of polyphony. This widely supported claim contains some logical leaps. While Georgian neume notation from the tenth century can be understood as unique, it may or may not reflect a polyphonic performance of chant (see discussion, 2.4 Georgian Polyphony).\footnote{For an example of scholarship that supports the theory that Georgian medieval neume notation represented only one fundamental voice, see Zaal Ts’ereteli, \textit{Sami Nevmirebulti K’anoni} [Three Neumed Canons], Chant Center of the Georgian Patriarchate (Tbilisi: Megobroba Press, 2013).} Giorgi Mtats’mindeli may indeed have set his translations to newly invented melodies in a "Georgian" style, but this also does not prove or disprove that these melodies were performed in polyphonic realization.

It has been our attempt to show the main evidence for discussions about the origin of polyphonic music in the medieval source material, and to describe the dominant methodological approaches to these sources. From the philological exegesis of the P’et’rits’i sources, a connection to polyphonic music can be established through the use of specific vocabulary terms. But whether the use of these terms reflects an instrumental or vocal genre, or a folk or sacred genre, is difficult to determine from the available materials. We desperately want these sources to reflect a polyphonic liturgical music system in the eleventh century, because the inherited eighteenth-century tradition is so rich and well defined, seemingly transmitted for centuries through oral tradition in disparate and remote monasteries throughout the country. Without any other sources such as a single music treatise, a manuscript containing music notation, or any verbal reference to polyphonic music between the eleventh-twelfth-century P’et’rits’i sources and the eighteenth century, it is difficult for Georgian scholars to imagine such a complex and high artform arising in the political dark ages of Georgia’s middle centuries.
2.6 Chapter Conclusion

The hymnographical sources in Georgia show an exceptional engagement with the processes of recording, translating, and beautifying the written texts of the Christian world of the late antiquity. Georgian monks were resident in monasteries throughout the holy land, from Mount Sinai and Jerusalem to Antioch and Cyprus to Constantinople and Mount Athos, Greece. From the fifth to twelfth centuries, Georgians were active members of Christian communities, sharing and embracing in common Orthodox values, and providing a conduit of liturgical culture back to Georgia for incorporation into their mother Church’s yearly rituals. Musically, the Georgians are a polyphonic-singing people: in this section, we have discussed the theories of when this polyphonic performance practice entered the liturgical canon.

The intensity of Georgian engagement with the wider Christian world ebbed with the political fortunes of their homeland. During the fifth century, for example, King Vakhtang Gorgasali consolidated power in East Georgia and established the independence of the Georgian Orthodox Church from Antioch. In the late seventh century, however, the Abbasid Arabs conquered East Georgia, remaining in control for nearly four hundred years. Only in the ninth century, and in far Southwestern Georgia (T’ao-Klarjeti), did the semblance of an independent Georgian kingdom arise again. The resulting creative period in the ninth and tenth centuries gave rise to the great iadgari neumed manuscripts, notably that written by Mikael Modrek’ili in the final decades of the tenth century. The eleventh century was marked by a massive influx of newly translated Greek heirmoi texts from Mount Athos, and by the twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries, the first political unification of the various Georgian kingdoms resulted in a flourishing Orthodox culture. This period was marked by the building of great cathedrals, the creation of expensive illuminated gospels, the painting of hundreds of churches, and the hammering of thousands of gold and silver plated metal-relief icons. Stone-carving, cloisonne enamel work, and fine embroidery with precious metals also mark these decades of wealth and power, representing the culmination of Georgian ecclesiastical art.

For most scholars, they also include the singing of wonderfully complex liturgical polyphony among all of the other high art forms that were developed and perfected during this “Golden Era” of unified Georgian history, the so-called 'pre-Mongol period'. The evidence for this is far from conclusive, however, as discussed this chapter. The primary evidence rests on the
philological exegesis of specific words such as *shets’qoba* and *mortulebay*, which indicate to many scholars that knowledge of multi-stringed instrumental music and perhaps vocal polyphony was commonplace in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (for a quick definition of these terms, see, Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music). Further evidence for the argument that medieval liturgical chant was performed polyphoniaclly is retrieved referentially, such as the “Georgian melodies known for four hundred years,” cited by Giorgi Mtats’mindeli, the unique Georgian neume system found in half a dozen tenth and eleventh century manuscripts, the presence of unique texts written for Georgian saints, etc. Unfortunately, none of these sources specifically reference polyphonic liturgical practice. One can surmise that all of these sources reflect an active (polyphonic) hymnographical tradition—if one has already been convinced by the philological exegesis of terms such as *shets’qoba* that liturgical polyphony existed—but each source examined closely does not provide any type of conclusive proof of a medieval liturgical polyphonic process.

This being said, I believe that there is a good chance that Georgian polyphony originated in the medieval period. But I think the way to truly argue for this thesis, in addition to the sources covered in this section, is a thorough understanding of the processes governing the oral transmission of chant in Georgia, as much as can be deduced through the available eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century sources. With thorough knowledge of these sources (especially the transcriptions discussed and presented in the following chapters of this dissertation), comparative work is also possible with the critical neumed sources of the tenth century. The first steps in such comparative work has already shown that there is a continuity between the melodies depicted in the tenth century neume notation, and the melodies of the same texts as inherited through oral tradition.

The Georgian liturgical repertory is immense, and highly varied. But musical analysis shows that certain features remain stable, even among chant repertories from extremely diverse geographical, political, and musical areas. This type of analysis offers another methodological approach to understanding how Georgian chant operates as a musical system, and how certain musical features are preserved through centuries and centuries of oral transmission (see 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison). Understanding processes of the oral transmission of chant, in its specificity to the Georgian tradition, will assist in solving the question of the dating of liturgical polyphony.
Having accomplished a basic outline in Chapters I and II of the most vivid questions pursued by musicologists of Georgian medieval sources, we now turn towards the major sources of Georgian chant as recorded in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. Following is a brief summary of the rest of the dissertation: Chapter III reviews the revival and decline of the oral tradition of chant in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a period documented with abundant historical sources. Chapter IV offers a closer look at the events that led to the first efforts to transcribe chant, while Chapter V details the first major transcription projects in the years 1883-1886. Chapter VI discusses the first publications of these transcriptions starting in 1895. Chapter VII presents a series of case studies in which the transcriptions of a single chant are discussed in the context of problems of transcription. The transcription of Georgian chant—sung in a non-diatonic tuning system—to European staff notation presented a host of issues that can be observed in the extant sources.

Chapter VIII presents a different case study in which an analysis of a series of four manuscripts offers a discussion on processes of editing the transcriptions by contemporary chanters in the period between 1912-1915. Chapter IX offers original analysis of Georgian nishnebi notation, with a section detailing other notation systems. Chapter X parses the harmonic differences in chant from the various surviving regional chant schools in Georgia. Chapter XII argues for the predominance of model melodies in the top voice as the structural basis for the oral transmission of chant, and presents a series of examples on how chant may be ornamented in all three voice parts. Chapter XII offers a case study on the transmission of one chant, shen khar venakhi [You are the Vineyard], through the twentieth century.
Chapter III: Revival and Decline (1764-1880)

This chapter introduces the historical factors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that led to the decline of the oral transmission of chant, and ultimately to the various responses that this decline elicited. The oral transmission of Georgian Orthodox liturgical chant is a venerable tradition that stretches back to at least the fifth century AD.\textsuperscript{196} This was not a loose or haphazard process, but the sophisticated trade of the master hymnographer-chanter, a guild of professionals whose role in the Church was well respected and long established. The health of the hymnography-chant tradition in Georgia ebbed with the fortunes of the Church, which was itself highly dependent on the fortunes of the political state.

In times of unification and growth the quality of manuscripts and the sponsorship of chanting schools increased. Conversely, in times of political devastation—such as after the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, the Turkish invasions of the sixteenth century, or the Persian invasions of the seventeenth century—the transmission of chant was maintained in an ad-hoc manner. The transmission of Georgian chant was remarkably resilient, given the challenges, as the period between the thirteenth and the eighteenth century was witness to one anti-Christian invader after another. No surviving chantbooks exist from this period (a lacuna of hymnographic sources noted in Chapter I), yet the oral transmission of chant persisted.

In the first section of this chapter, we discuss the history of the transmission of traditional chant through a brief revival in the mid-eighteenth century and into its decline under Russian imperial rule in the first half of the nineteenth century. The second half of the chapter describes specific families of chanters in East and West Georgia who were able to transmit their chant tradition long enough for it to be transcribed into notation at the end of the century, a subject continued in Chapters IV, V, and VI.

\textsuperscript{196} St. Saba, a fifth century abbot in Jerusalem, invited the Georgians and Syrians to join the Greeks for the Eucharist, indicating that Georgians celebrated the liturgy in their own language (see the section, 1.1 The Textual Chronology).
Figure 14. Map of Georgia

Monasteries:
(1) Shemokmedi
(2) Martvili
(3) Gelati
(4) Svetitskhoveli
(5) Davit Gareji
(6) Bodbe
3.1 The Historical Context

From the thirteenth to the end of the eighteenth century, Georgia was invaded and destroyed repeatedly by the armies of the Khwarasmian Arabs, various Mongol campaigns, the armies of Timur [Tamerlane], Ottoman Turks, Safavid Persians, and the Lezgin slave-raiders of Daghestan. 197 Sunni Turks and Shia Qizilbash-Safavid Persians conducted near constant war on the territories of Georgia and Armenia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During this period, Georgian aristocrats served utilitarian positions in both of these empires, especially Persia, where Georgian aristocrats served as generals in the military. One notable example is Giorgi Saakadze (1570-1629), who commanded a sizable Persian army tasked with suppressing rebellions in Baghdad, Kandahar, and even India. In an eventful military, Saakadze later fought with Georgian royalist forces against the Shah, but after quarreling with King Teimuraz I, he was forced to flee to the Ottoman Empire. 198

The inhabitants of East Georgia suffered to the extreme: the punishing series of massacres inflicted by Shah Abbas I (1571-1629) in the campaigns of 1616-1620 were particularly brutalizing: more than 500,000 were killed, and 100,000 taken hostage to be resettled in central Persia. 199 During periods of Georgian independence, ethnic tensions between local Georgians and the populations of Central Asian Tatars resettled by successive Persian rulers in the valleys of East Georgia were common.

Neither Turks nor Persians were particularly bent on exterminating Orthodox Christianity, as had been the case with the Muslim Khwarasmians (Chorasmians), 200 but they

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198 Ironically, with each change of fortune, he was required to nominally convert to the religion of his sponsor: Shia Islam in Persia, Orthodox Christianity in Georgia, and Sunni Islam in Ottoman Turkey.

199 Historical accounts differ, but at least 500,000 inhabitants of East Georgia were killed or kidnapped by Persian forces of Shah Abbas I between 1616-1620. Rayfield suggests that Shah Abbas I was paranoid of Russian advances, and planned to repopulate massacred Kakheti (East Georgia) with Turkmen tribesmen as a bulwark. See Donald Rayfield, Edge of Empires: A History of Georgia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 187-190.

200 In 1226, pushed West by the Mongols, Jalal-ad-din and a Khwarasmian (Chorasmian) Turkish army defeated East Georgia, purportedly killing 100,000 people who did not renounce Christianity by stepping on a miracle-
instead focused on enforcing control over the strategic agricultural lands, trade routes, and human resources (both slave and soldier) of the South Caucasus. There were obvious exceptions to this policy, such as the six thousand monks of the David Gareja monasteries who were executed in 1620 by Shah Abbas I, and the brutal, forced conversions of the Adjaran and Meskhetian Georgians on the Turkish borderlands during the fourteenth-seventeenth centuries.

The practice of the liturgy depended on the oral transmission of thousands of chants, a critical institution of the Church that was maintained in monastery and cathedral centers, as well as within strong family and clan units throughout mountainous Georgia. While the great academies of the "Golden Era" (eleventh and twelfth centuries) stood in ruin, the fate of individual parish churches was one of constant rebuilding, a relentless effort to maintain Georgian religious and cultural identity. Orthodox Christianity became, at times, the only social force holding Georgians of various political affiliations together against common enemies.

After centuries of political and cultural upheaval following the Mongol and Khwarazmian invasions, the devastating massacres of 1620 in East Georgia almost annihilated the population. For at least two generations, little hymnographical activity is recorded. But in the 1690s, a period of relative peace sparked a rejuvenation of the ecclesiastical arts including the study of chant. Though this renewal would be short lived—again be forced into decline after the incorporation of Georgia into the Tsarist Empire in the nineteenth century—its effect would carry over just enough for a handful of master chanter to transmit their oral tradition of liturgical chant to musicians skilled in transcribing music into European notation starting in the 1880s.

3.2 Chant Revival of the 18th Century

During the decade of the 1760s, King Erekle Bagrat’ioni II (1720-1798) was able to consolidate power, and direct several reforms that led to a period of ecclesiastical and cultural revival in East Georgia.201 The opening of several seminaries was particularly advantageous for

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201 Attempting to 'throw off the yoke' of Persian control, the primary diplomatic efforts of Bagrat’ioni, King Erekle II (1720-1798), centered on convincing Catherine the Great of Russia that her interest in the region merited military support, a discussion that was formalized after decades of negotiation at the Treaty of Giorgievsk in 1783. Russian forces did not honor the agreement, however, when Tbilisi was attacked and destroyed by a Persian cavalry force led by Abba Mohammed Khan in 1795. Instead, Russian troops entered East Georgia only in 1801, when King Erekle

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the transmission of traditional chant. Hymnography likewise flourished, and according to a somewhat whimsical reflection by the nineteenth-century poet Davit Machabeli (writing a century later), 'every shepherd on trail and field could be heard singing chant.'

### 3.2.1 Patriarch-Catholicos Ant'on I

The revival of chanting institutions in East Georgia was initiated by the re-opening of several seminaries by Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I (1720-1788). One of the decisions made at a month-long Synod of bishops in 1764 included a resolution to finance and open several theological academies for the rejuvenation of ecclesiastical education in East Georgia. The first major Seminary school was established at the Svet'itskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta, the ancient capital of Georgia just outside Tbilisi (Figure 15). Later, regional seminary schools were opened in the regional cities of Tbilisi (in 1755), and Telavi (in 1782), sparking a widespread chant revival in East Georgia that was both monastic and urban. The opening of these seminaries had enormous implications on the health of the oral tradition of chant, though their eventual closing by the Russian Orthodox Church would have a doubly severe impact on the motivation and ability of master chanters to continue their craft.

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II had died and the country was devastated from war. East Georgia was annexed as a guberniya of the Tsarist Empire, and a military general dispatched to serve as governor.

202 Davit Machabeli, "Kartvelta Zneoba" [Morals of Georgians], Tsisk'ari Journal, No. 5 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1864, 61-62. The full quote is as follows: "A traveler in Georgia, going from the coast of the Black Sea through Old Egrisi (Colchis) into Imereti and especially in Guria, finds knowledgeable and capable chanters; and these are not only in holy churches of the Lord or the houses of noblemen, but [found] in the bush, in dense forests, on paths and fields. These early-rising shepherds chant to the sky, glorifying God Sabaoth." Earlier in the same article, Machabeli laments at the lack of competent chanters in contemporary Georgia, a reflection of the decline in the oral tradition through the first half of the nineteenth century: “Today, there are no singers of Georgian chant in the entire country who can knowledgeably and thoroughly chant the service; they can't even chant the Creed or the Our Father in the correct mode even though the entire liturgy and every Christian prayer is based on those two and they are beautiful chants."

203 The Synod of the Georgian Orthodox Church was held from October 1st-18th, 1764, at the Svet'itskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta, and included bishops, abbots, and abbesses from around Georgia.
The primary goal of the chant schools in the new seminaries was to train a new generation of chanters capable of singing the entire liturgical cycle of festival chants, set new chant texts to music, and transmit chant systematically to future generations. Each seminary held an important regional function, but none more so than the Svet'itskhoveli Cathedral [Cathedral of the Life-Giving Pillar]. About this chant school, one source notes that: “young male pupils studied Georgian chanting in addition to other subjects…. The institution of chant study and scholarship spread from here all across Kartli and K’akheti.”

From other sources it is known that such active courses of study took between four and six years. Thus, within a short time, an accomplished master versed in the arts of the oral tradition could train many students who could in turn begin teaching new parish choirs. Students

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204 The kingdoms of Kartli and K’akheti (East Georgia) were under the jurisdiction of Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I during this period. Poliev'tos K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero da Sasuliero K’iloebi [Georgian Sacred and Secular Modes] (T’pilisi, 1898), 69-70.
did not just learn to preserve the fundamentals of medieval chant, but were also trained to create new chants as well:

Every pupil wrote hymns in honor of the king, the Catholicos-Patriarch, and other distinguished individuals…. each feast was commemorated in full form with readings and chanting. Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on served as an example for every pupil: he composed and translated the necessary books, the songs of praise to venerate the saints, and distributed these to the students in the form of a textbook.205

Though students composed new texts,206 they appear to have followed well-established musical rules of text setting, as attested to in the words of Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I himself:

One tenet which is known to everyone is that it is not within any individual’s right to change the order of words in the tone of the chant established by our holy fathers. No one must think that they are wiser than the holy fathers who carried generations of chanting tradition. Tell me, if someone did choose to ignore this tradition, through which new musical rule would they set their melodies? And if someone did this while neglecting any system of rules, our life would be no good.207

The attention of Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I to the details of canon and rule inspired both a creative and a regulated revival of Orthodox chant.208 He brought the best chanter from around the country to teach at the Seminary and was himself a prolific composer, setting twenty-two kanons dedicated to various Georgian saints to the melodies of the East Georgian chant

205 Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I published a textbook, Kartuli grammatika [Georgian Grammar], in 1753. P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 74-75.
206 A hymnographic text dated to the eighteenth century, called the sadghesastsaulo (Book of Feasts), records hymns commemorating new Georgian saints. Among these were Nikolo Meghalashvili’s idiomela stichera for St. Shio and the five monk-martyrs of David-Gareja Monastery; Hieromonk Grigol Vakhvakhishvili’s hymns for Martyr-Queen Ketevan; Catholicos-Patriarch Besarion Orbelishvili’s hymns for Protomartyr Razhden, Ise of Ts’ilk’ani, and Evst’ati of Mtskheta; and Ise Eristavi’s kanon to Martyrs Bidzina, Shalva, and Elizbar. Cited in Manana Andriadze, “Introduction,” Kartuli t’raditsiuli saek’lesio galoba [Georgian Traditional Church Hymns] (Tbilisi: Petite Publishing, 2010).
207 K’orneli K’ek’elidze, “Ant’on k’atolik’osis salit’urgik’o moghvats’eobidan” [From the liturgical works of Catholicos-Patriarch Ant’on], Et’iudebi dzveli kartuli literaturis istoriidan [Studies in early Georgian literature], Vol. IV (Tbilisi, 1957), first published in 1914.
208 Ant’on I served as Catholicos-Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church in the years 1744–1755 and again from 1764–1788. Born Teimuraz Bat’onishvili, he was the son of the renegade King Ise of Kartli and was raised with his cousin Prince Erek’le, the future King Erek’le II, in K’akheti (East Georgia). In 1738, he became a monk at the Gelati Monastery, later moving to the Gareja Monastery in K’akheti in 1743. While Catholicos-Patriarch, he was accused by an influential priest of the royal family, Zakaria Gabashvili, of being influenced by Benedictine Catholic theology, an accusation for which he was dismissed from the ranking post of Catholicos-Patriarch in 1755. Ant’on I went to Russia for seven years, and only returned to Georgia when his cousin Erek’le II ascended the throne. He was reinstated as Catholicos-Patriarch of Kartl-K’akheti in 1764. Among his many deeds, he translated European books on physics, and personally taught this subject to students in the seminaries that he founded.
school. He oversaw the compilation of new editions of existing hymnographic collections, and introduced several new liturgical editions including a new festal Menaion, Kondakarion, and Oktoechos based on old Slavonic editions.

3.2.2 The David Gareja Monasteries

The David Gareja desert monasteries played a historic role in the transmission of East Georgian chant dating from the late seventeenth century, especially the Lavra, Dodo, and St. John the Baptist monasteries (Figure 16). After the devastating destruction of the entire area in the years, 1615-1620 by Shah Abbas I of Persia (1571-1629), the practice and study of chant and theology at the David Gareja monasteries were slow to recover. But in 1690, at a council organized by King Erek'le I, a chanter named Onopre Matchutadze was appointed as the head of the David Gareja monasteries, sparking a revival of the famous scriptoria and chant schools. Under Matchutadze’s stewardship (where he remained abbot until 1733), the training of young pupils especially in the art of chanting became a vital aspect of the life of the monastery. In addition, students studied theology, literature, mathematics, and history with the learned elders that lived in the David Gareja wilderness. Thus by the 1760s, these monasteries already served as the regional educational center for aristocratic youth, as the medieval hymnographic traditions had been reinstated starting in the late seventeenth century.


210 The redaction by Catholicos-Patriarch Anton I is Document S-1464 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts).

211 Located in the arid plains country to the southeast of Tbilisi, the first monastery was founded in the sixth century by St. David Garejeli, a Syrian monk who along with twelve others, helped to establish monasticism in East Georgia. St. David’s disciple Dodo later established his own monastery nearby, and over the centuries, other monasteries emerged. The landscape of Gareja is characterized by long sandstone ridges ideal for carving vaulted churches and cells inside the rock. Over time many of these interior spaces were painted with frescoes, and the monasteries continued to gain prestige as pilgrimage destinations to the relics of St. David and St. Dodo, and as a center for the study of hymnography and theology. In the late seventeenth century, following the general abandonment of the area after the forces of Shah Abbas massacred the entire community in the early seventeenth century, several sources attest to the re-emergence of the scholarly community in the David Gareja monasteries.


213 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898).
A typical apprenticeship lasted five to ten years, as attested to in several sources about the educational culture of these monasteries.\textsuperscript{214} For example, one well known teacher, Gabriel the Lesser (d. 1802), relates the following about one of his young students: “Porpiri was brought up with spiritual and ecclesiastical teachings. By the age of sixteen he had completely mastered not only theology and chanting, but calligraphy and rhetoric.”\textsuperscript{215}

\textbf{Figure 16.} The Lavra Monastery, David-Gareja Wilderness (9th century)

Apprenticeships lasted between five and ten years, starting as early as the age of six, and through the decades of the eighteenth century, many famous chanter were raised in the monasteries of David Gareja, particularly in St. John the Baptist monastery. One teacher,

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\textsuperscript{214} For example, “Ioseb, the son of the aristocratic Aragvi Eristavi was brought in 1702 at the age of 10… Elise Saginashvili was brought in 1713 at the age of 6.” Discussed in Sukhiashvili and Oniani, “The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant,” trans. Ninoshvili, ed. Graham (forthcoming, 2015).
\end{flushright}
Archimandrite Sopron, was entrusted with the care of nearly forty pupils, including such figures as the future bishop of the Rustavi-Martqopi diocese, Ektime Ch’ilashvili (1795-1856), and other well known chanter of the period. As a result of the educational importance of the David Gareja monasteries, and the new seminary school of Svet’itskhovali in Mtskheta, many monasteries and churches in East Georgia boasted excellent chanter, especially the monasteries of Pit’areti, Mart’qopi, Shio-mghvime, Ghirsa, Bodbe, as well as the Anchiskhat’i Church and the Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi.

3.2.3 The Court of King Erek’le II

The courts of the nobility were also locations for the sponsorship and performance of chant, as well as other artforms. Not only did an official chant ensemble accompany the king’s entourage on excursions throughout his territory, evening performances by these singers were a regular feature of entertainment at the court. K’arbelashvili relates how the courts of Queen Mariam (reigned 1632-1658) and her successor, Queen Ana (d. 1716), resembled a “hearth of scholarship.” Chanters were well-respected members of society during this period, enjoying the favor of the aristocratic class following the lead of the king and queen.

The K’akhetian court was also known for its performances of classical Persian music, starting with the Persianized Georgian kings of the seventeenth century. King Rost’om of Kartl-K’akheti (reigned 1632-1658), who was raised as a Muslim at the Safavid court in Isfahan, introduced many Persian cultural elements into his court in Georgia. Poetic bards, called mgosani or ashugh, performed classical poetry in addition to improvised texts to the accompaniment of instruments such as the tar, zurna, saz, and kemancha. These performances often featured multi-lingual and multi-cultural musicians who made their living as traveling performers. Sayat-nova (1712-1795), an ethnic Armenian and the personal ashugh (bard) for King Erek'le II (1720-1798), wrote and performed songs in Georgian, Azeri Turkish, and

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216 Among the most well known chanter of the David Gareja monasteries, the following names stand out: Archimandrite Gerasime (d. 1805), Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I (1720-1788), Ambros Nekreseli (1728-1815), author of NCM Q-845, Archimandrite Geront’i Sologhashvili (1757-1813), Hierodeacon Geront’i Vachnadze (1783-1851), Archimandrite Teopane Machabeli (1787-1854), Archimandrite Sopron Eristavi (1780-1850). Cited in Gocha Bidzinashvili, "Introduction," Kartuli Galoba, Vol. VII (Tbilisi, 2014), i-iv.

217 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 62.
According to Nino Tsitsishvili, the art of the *ashughs* in Georgia eventually blended Persian and Georgian musical styles. Thus, by the nineteenth century, “the system of the Persian *maqam* [*mughami* in Georgian], with its characteristic scalar-modal and poetic forms of *baiati, shikeste*, and *mukhambazi*, was assimilated in the East Georgian music-culture...”

Other entertainment was also featured at the court of King Erekle II. Evenings of French theater, for example, alternated with performances of classical Persian music, and traveling Georgian bagpipers and Georgian folk singers. Amongst these choices, Georgian music competed within a broader marketplace of available entertainment. But for a Georgian aristocratic class that considered itself cosmopolitan and international, Georgian folk and liturgical music appears to have continued to hold popular support as the best representative of the local ethnic tradition. Indeed, the performance of traditional Georgian folk and sacred music was a desired feature of the courtly entertainment. King Erekle II himself studied with the master chanter Dimit’ri Khelashvili as a boy, and during his reign was a consistent supporter of the transmission of liturgical chant. According to Ioane Bat’onishvili, an important chronicler of the period, several famous chanters were regular performers at the palace of the king. “Iotam the Chanter, Dimit’ri Garsevanishvili, K’ok’ia and Solomon, P’aat’a Meghvinet-Khutsishvili... they were the private chanter-scholars of King Erekle II, and they instructed many.”

### 3.2.4 East-West Exchange

The court of King Erekle II actively participated in the performance and pedagogy of chant. In a letter written to a master chanter, Archimandrite T’arasi Aleksi-Meskhishvili, King Erekle II wrote: “In Kartl-K’akheti no one remembers the *Tsisk’ris Alilo* [Christmas carol for Matins]. Please come and teach us this chant.” Even the king desired to learn chant, and specified precisely the chant lacking from the repertory of his court singers. That a king would

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218 For more on Sayatnova in the Georgian context, see *Kartuli musik'is ist'oria* [Georgian Music History] (Tbilisi, 1990), 54. For general information see, Charles Dowsett, *Sayat-Nova, an 18th-century Troubadour: a Biographical and Literary Study* (Lovani: In Aedibus Peeters, 1997).

219 Nino Tsitsishvili, “National Unity and Gender...” (Ph.D. diss., 2004), 51.

220 The French tragedy *Phedre*, by seventeenth century playwright Jean Racine, was performed at the court of King Erekle II. P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, *Kartuli Saero*... (1898).


222 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, *Kartuli Saero*... (1898), 73. According to Davit Shugliashvili (interview), *Tsiskris Alilo* was an alternate name for the Matins chant, *Akebdit sakhelsa uplisa* (Praise Ye the Name of the Lord).
personally write such a request speaks to the importance of the chant tradition for the Georgian aristocratic society in this period. According to another source, King Erekle II was dissatisfied with the general quality of chanting in East Georgia, calling on West Georgian masters to join his court as teachers and mentors. "In East Georgia, the ancient chant had been abolished, so we had to call the Antadze brothers and other chanters from West Georgia. They were paid by the state, even in the times of my father, Erekle I."  

This remark, written by Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on II, is not entirely accurate. Musicologist Davit Shugliashvili points out that in the written dialogue of a source contemporary to the period (the early nineteenth-century *Kalmasoba* by Ioane Bat'onishvili), two fictional characters discuss the difference between studying East and West Georgian chant. The discussion does not touch on the decline or revival, but simply on the aesthetic differences of the two schools, implying their equally developed and well-established nature.  

Both chant types are presented as fully formed, self-contained systems.

It is necessary to acknowledge that the presence of West Georgian chanters (such as Gerasime Antadze) in East Georgia represented an exception to the rule. Clearly, there were also many master chanters of the East Georgian chant tradition. However, the fact remains that during the reforms of the 1760s, when institutionalized support for the transmission of chant was officially sponsored by King Erekle II and Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I, they commissioned a trio of chanters from West Georgia to come and teach chant. This historical event suggests that the chant tradition in East Georgia had degenerated beyond internal repair.

Meanwhile, it could also mean that existing East Georgian chanters were perfectly capable of teaching chant, but that the King or Catholicos-Patriarch had other motives for inviting chanters from the west. Certainly, both were interested in greater political ties with the Imeretian king of West Georgia, Solomon I Bagrat'ioni (1735-1784) and his brother, Catholicos-Patriarch Ioseb Bagrat'ioni (1739-1776). A third reason could assume that the King and Catholicos-Patriarch anticipated the historical importance of opening a new seminary to teach

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224 Ioane Bat'onishvili, *Khumarst's'vala (k'almasoba)*, Books I-II (originals written between 1817-1828) (Tbilisi: Merani Press, 1990/1991). In one section of the dialogue on chant, the character Metodi says to Ioane: “You are right, Imeretian chant is better tuned than Kartlian. Which one have you studied?” Ioane responds, “Kartlian style.” From this dialogue, one has the sense that both styles were well established. Note: Imereti is West Georgian, Kartli is East Georgia.
traditional chant, and sought to unify the oral transmission of East and West Georgian chant. None of these possibilities are mutually exclusive, but the fact that court also contained *ashugh* performers of Persian music suggests that plurality and diversity were significant motivations in bringing different types of music to the salons of the king.

With this perspective, it becomes clear that it was not a lack of chanters in East Georgia that prompted the invitation of West Georgian masters, but rather an attempt to stimulate and enhance the musical community of the king’s court.

King Erekle II brought one monk to town and opened a wonderful school for clerics, where they carefully studied Georgian chant and literature. Among the students of this particular monk, there are several worth highlighting: Geronti I, Archimandrite Bidzina, Archimandrite Sopron, Little Geronti II, from whom Father K’arbelovi and K’arbelovi himself learned chanting. But the present priest, Grigol K’arbelovi, has been taught more by his father.  

The “monk” in the description was almost certainly Gerasime Antadze (d.1805), who is referenced in several sources as a Gurian chanter trained at the Gelati Monastery, and who later served for many years as the abbot of the St. John the Baptist Monastery in the David Gareja desert in East Georgia. He was invited to the court of King Erekle II in 1766 along with his brother Otar and nephew Grigol. Gerasime Antadze was a master-chanter from the far western Georgian region of Guria and educated at the Gelati Monastery.

Travel between East and West Georgia seems to have been more common during this period, as sources cite other monks from West Georgia visiting East Georgian monasteries. For example, Archimandrite Sopron and Archimandrite Genadi, both master chanters also educated at the Gelati Monastery in West Georgia, lived at the monastery of St. John the Baptist in the David Gareja desert. These chanters likely came at the invitation of Abbot Gerasime Antadze, who actively promoted the study of chant, teaching many students who would become famous in their own generation. These included Archimandrite Geront’i Sologhashvili (1757-1813), Hierodeacon Geront’i Vachnadze (1783-1851), Archimandrite Teopane Machabeli (1787-1854), and Archimandrite Sopron Eristavi (1780-1850).

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The number of high-caliber chant teachers known from the decades surrounding the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth century indicates a strong and active oral transmission of chant in East Georgia. But oral traditions, by nature, exist in a precarious medium that can be lost without active support and engagement. Of all the master teachers cited in sources from this period, only one or two would successfully transmit chant into the late-nineteenth century, a result of the widespread decline of the Georgian Church after the incorporation of the Georgian state into Tsarist Russia.

3.2.5 T’arasi Alexi-Meskishvili

T’arasi Alexi-Meskishvili (1805-1874) was a strong, anti-Russian activist, famously provoking fights on subjects ranging from the right to autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church, to the rules of fasting. In one instance, when several men carrying fish to a banquet during the fast said they had permission from the Russian-appointed Exarch, he famously responded, “What the holy fathers demanded, a drunk man has canceled.” Alexi-Meskishvili was the son of a priest, Solomon, who served in the 'king’s church'—the Anchiskhat’i basilica in Tbilisi—and from whom he learned traditional chant. Later, despite wanting to live on Mount Athos, Greece, he served in the Kvabtakhevi Monastery in Kartli, rebuilding that monastery around 1855. He was especially well known for his ability to read the prayers and the Gospel in the old Georgian intonation, a skill that made him a sought-after teacher among Georgian priests and deacons. While rebuilding the Kvabtakhevi Monastery, one novice recalled:

When they finished the church and the cupola was ready to put the cross on top, T’arasi himself with some novices went all the way up the scaffolding. He put on the priest's vestment, and served the paraklesis service of the holy cross at the top of the church. They chanted jvarsa shensa [To Thy cross] and with that, placed the cross on the top of the cupola. They also took wine and a little food, and ate breakfast there on the top of the church, celebrating the occasion with one or two toasts. Under that cross there is a big base stone, and under that, T’arasi hid a bottle. No one knows what is in the bottle, but we guess that it contains the names of the people that helped to finance the renovation of the church.

227 Marine Qipiani, “Tsilk'neli episk'oposis t'arasis arkividan, oriode sit'qva t'arasi arkimandrit'ze: Aleksi-Meskishvilze” [From the Archive of Bishop T’arasi of Tsilk'neli, a few words about Archimandrite T’arasi Aleksi-Meskishvil], Literary Chronicles (Tbilisi: State Museum of Georgian Literature Press, 2005), 309.

228 ibid.: 301.
Alexi-Meskhishvili was fluent in Russian, having studied in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and left behind a rich library of hand-written documents including commentaries, translations, and details about the rebuilding of the Kvabtakhevi Monastery. He was also the author of more than twenty-five translations of Russian texts into Georgian, and reportedly knew the Gospel books so well that he corrected all of the novice readers.

He knew by heart almost all the books that were read in church. He would stand close to the reader and to the chanterers and he would pay attention to what they were reading. He would correct them so they did not read too fast or without sensibility. He would say, 'do not steal words from God!' when readers cut out sections. Many people that wanted to be priests would visit him to learn how to read the Gospel (in the Georgian intonational mode).

In retrospect, Alexi-Meskhishvili’s nationalist, anti-Imperial stance presented an intolerable challenge to the authority of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Imperial administration in the Caucasus. But their ability to curb every dissenting voice had become tenuous. The tenure of both of these institutions was already in jeopardy in the Caucasus: in 1905, the demand for the independence of the Georgian Church became so heated that the Russian authorities were forced to review their demands with an official committee. In the same year, a widespread peasant revolt began in West Georgia, quickly spreading throughout the Tsarist Empire.

3.2.6 P’et’re K’arbelashvili

P’et’re K’arbelashvili (1754-1848) was born with the surname Khmaladze, but he was generally called “K’arbela” after the name of his mother’s village. His descendents inherited the

229 T’arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili was succeeded at Kvabtakhevi Monastery by Kirion Sadzaglishvili (who would later become the first patriarch since Ant’on II in 1810 when he was consecrated as Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia in 1917). The writings of T’arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili are considered to have been very influential to the young Sadzaglishvili, who became a staunch supporter of the movement to reinstate the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church during the first decades of the twentieth century. It was a young monk named T’arasi K’andelak’i (1871-1951), a disciple of Sadzaglishvili at the Kvabtakhevi Monastery, who collected research on the life and writings of Alexi-Meskhishvili. Together, they aimed to published the collected volume, but it was denied publication rights by the Russian authorities in 1904.

230 Qipiani, Tsilk’neli episk’oposis t’arasis... (Tbilisi, 2005), 306. The "Georgian intonational mode" of psalm reading is a subject ably described in a Masters thesis by Ioseb Kopaleishvili, "Saek’lesio k’itkhvisa da galobis urtiert mimartebis sak’itkhebi [Issues on the interaction of ecclesiastical reading and chanting] (unpublished) (Masters diploma, Tbilisi Seminary of the Georgian Patriarchate, 2007).

surname as K’arbelashvili, meaning “son of K’arbela”\textsuperscript{232} (hereafter referred to as K’arbelashvili). He grew up in his father’s village of Ch’ala, the seat of the powerful Amilakhvari aristocratic family. P’et’re K’arbelashvili attended the same school as the children of this family, benefitting from the proximity of these learned teachers. According to one source, he was sent to the newly opened Svet’itskhoveli seminary school in the years 1766-1768.\textsuperscript{233} It was at the Seminary school that he likely befriended Gerasime Antadze’s nephew, Grigol (d. 1812), who became a lifelong friend and was later himself a master chanter in the episcopal choir of Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on II (1764-1827).\textsuperscript{234}

Because of this connection, it is interesting to speculate that P’et’re K’arbelashvili may have been one of the students of Gerasime Antadze, the master chanter from Guria who was trained at the Gelati Monastery in West Georgia. If so, the inherited chant tradition of East Georgia would have been significantly cross-pollinated with the melodic tradition from West Georgia. According to Gocha Bidzinishvili and Magda Sukhiashvili, the significance of this East-West connection should not be underestimated, even considering the obvious musical differences in the manifestation of the two regional chant styles. “The fact that a master chanter from Guria could successfully train chanters in East Georgia substantiates the perspective that a fundamental unity exists between the chant systems of East and West Georgia….“\textsuperscript{235} This historical point of intersection raises increasing interest when analyzing the differences in the melodic and harmonic construction of chant from East and West Georgia (as explored in the section, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison).

\textsuperscript{232} Kveli Chkhat’araishvili, “Kartuli galobis aghdgenisa da chats’eris p’irveli tsdebi XIX sauk’uneshi,” Journal Gant’iadi, No. 6 (Tbilisi, 1989), 258.

\textsuperscript{233} Polievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 74-83. According to K’arbelashvili, his grandfather P’et’re (1754-1848) was a close school friend of Gogia Amilakhvari (1738-1799). However, the age difference suggests otherwise. He might have been mistaken for Givi Amilakhvari (1760-1848), the son, whose dates more closely correspond with the dates K’arbelashvili gives for his grandfather. As the K’arbelashvili history book (1898) has other known factual errors, the issue of the identity of the childhood playmate also brings up the question of birthdate. If indeed it was Givi Amilakhvari with whom P’et’re K’arbelashvili studied, then he was likely born around 1760. Supporting the argument for this later birth date, as opposed to the birthdate of Gogia Amilakhvari (1738), is the more established fact that the son of P’et’re K’arbelashvili, Grigol, was born in 1812. Though it seems more likely that P’et’re K’arbelashvili was born around 1760, until further evidence emerges, the birthdate of 1754 cited by his grandson Polievkt’os K’arbelashvili is used in this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{234} Polievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 71. According to this account, after the Catholicsos-Patriarch was exiled to Russia, Grigol Antadze (d. 1812) moved to the village of Lower Ch’ala, where he lived out his final years with his friend P’et’re K’arbelashvili.

Of the students of P’et're K’arbelashvili (1754-1848), his youngest son Grigol K’arbelashvili (1812-1880) was by far the best, mastering the East Georgian chant tradition of the David Gareja monasteries and the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral and later passing it on to his five sons. Through these consecutive generations of priests, the Eastern Georgian chant practice would be transmitted to notation via his grandsons Vasil and P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili (these transcriptions are the primary source for the East Georgian school of chant; see the section, 4.5 K’arbelashvili Family Transcriptions).

3.3 Decline of the Oral Tradition of Chant

Despite the period of relative peace that allowed chant to thrive in the religious institutions of the late seventeenth-eighteenth centuries, the reign of Erek'le II was also filled with turmoil and political instability. Lezgin slave- raiders from Daghestan terrorized the Telavi-Alezani valley, kidnapping women and children with impunity, and even taking princesses as hostages from within ten kilometers of the royal palace. Alliances with the Muslim khanates to the East were tenuous, and proved unreliable as soon as the Qajar dynasty ascended the Persian throne. Many overtures to Catherine the Great were finally formalized in the Treaty of Giorgievsk in 1783, providing security guarantees against invaders, and protections for the independence of the Georgian Church and the Georgian monarchy.

Within less than two decades, these promises would be broken. In 1795, the Russian army of the Caucasus did nothing to prevent a major attack by the Qajar-Persian caliph, Akha Makhmed Khan, leaving Erek'le II and his army to the hapless defense of Tbilisi at the battle of Krtsanisi. Georgian forces were reportedly outnumbered 40,000 to 5,000, and were overwhelmed within two days, essentially sealing the fate of Tbilisi. King Erek'le II died three years after the attack, leaving the monarchy in question and further disrupting the security of the

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236 The K'arbelashvili family figures prominently in the dissertation (see the section, 3.4.5 Grigol K'arbelashvili, Master Teacher. Also see Dzmebi K'arbelashvilebi [The K'arbelashvili brothers] (in Georgian with English summary by John A. Graham), ed. by Luarsab T’ogonidze (Tbilisi, 2012).
237 For this and what follows, see Donald Rayfield, *Edge of Empires* (2012), 231-255.
238 The Georgian monarchy was abolished in 1801, as was the independence of the Georgian Church in 1810.
239 The battle took place at the Eastern gates of Tbilisi, September 11th, 1795. A story about this battle recalls three hundred warriors from the Mtiuletian highlands arriving to defend the King’s capital city only too find Tbilisi burning, having just been taken by the invaders. Faced with the decision to retreat to their impassable mountain valleys or to attack, the Mtiuletiens engaged the overwhelmingly numerous Persian army, dying to a man.
region. With the sacking of Tbilisi in 1795, the death of King Erekle II in 1798, and the arrival of Russian forces in 1801, the balance of power in the Caucasus had shifted in ways that would create serious consequences for the transmission of liturgical chant.

In 1810, the exiling of Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on II (1764–1827) effectively ended the ecclesiastical autonomy (autocephaly) of the Georgian Orthodox Church granted by the Antiochian Church in the fifth century. A decade earlier, the political annexation of East Georgia into the Tsarist Empire, following the death of King Giorgi XII in 1801, signaled a radical shift not only in the traditional sources of power but in the methods of administering that power. Governor-generals reporting to St. Petersburg and commanding considerable military forces instituted major political and social reforms throughout the South Caucasus.

In this state of political upheaval of the feudal ecclesiastical system that had supported the transmission of liturgical chant, the tradition gradually went into decline. In this section, we review the political elements that contributed to this decline, as well as the wider social causes such as urbanization, modernization, and the introduction of European music into Georgia.

3.3.1 The Russian Church in the Caucasus

Expecting liberation from a four-century occupation by the Persian and Ottoman empires, Georgians little suspected that Russian imperialist policies would succeed in undermining their

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240 Ironically, one of the six sons of King Erekle II, Alexander, sought refuge in Iran when the Russians abolished the Georgian monarchy, and used his platform there to instigate anti-Russian rebellions in Georgia. This attempt at the Georgian throne ended with the 1804 battle near Yerevan between Qajar Persians and General Tsitsianov commanding Russian forces. For more on Tsitsianov’s conquest of Armenia and the response of the Qajar Persians (with Alexander Bagrat’ioni), see Kaveh Farrokh, Iran at War: 1500-1988 (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2011).

241 Ant’on II, née Teimuraz Bagrat’ioni, son of King Erekle II, served as Catholicos-Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church from 1788–1811. In the period leading to the Russo-Georgian treaty of 1783, he served in diplomatic missions to the Russian imperial court. He initially supported the Russian authorities in Georgia, but later opposed them when he learned of their mal-intent. On June 10, 1811, he was summoned to St. Petersburg by Tsar Alexander and never allowed to return to Georgia. With this action, the independence of the Georgian Orthodox Church was suppressed for more than a century.

242 According to Georgian sources, autocephaly (independence) was granted to the Georgian Orthodox Church during the reign of King Vakhtang Gorgasali of Iberia (fifth century). After being administered by the Russian Orthodox Church for more than a century (1810-1917), independence was restored by a Synod of bishops in 1917. This status was then revoked again in 1921 by the Bolshevik regime. See Stephen H. Rapp, “Georgian Christianity,” Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 137-155. Also see the historical accounts of Church independence in: Kartlis Tskhovreba (Tbilisi: Artanuji Publishing, 2014).

243 After the death of King Giorgi XII in Dec., 1800, the heir apparent, Giorgi the Regent, was taken under military escort to St. Petersburg in 1803, thus ending the Georgian monarchy (East Georgia was annexed to the Tsarist Empire in May, 1801 with the arrival of General Knorring).
carefully guarded church culture where previous Muslim overlords had failed. Within decades of the Russian annexation of Georgia, however, such changes would become obvious; Russian language services were imposed on many urban churches, seminaries were conducted in Russian only, and the performance of Slavonic chant was aggressively propagated on Georgian parishes.

These policies would be continued throughout the nineteenth century, administered by appointees of the Synod of Russian Orthodox bishops presiding in St. Petersburg. At first, Georgians served as exarchs, later Russian bishops were sent. It was this absorption of the Georgian Church into the Russian Church, more than the political annexation of Georgia into the Tsarist Empire, which irrevocably altered the oral transmission of traditional chant in Georgia.

Pavle Tsitsianov (1754-1806) acted as the first Russian viceroy in the South Caucasus. He was universally disliked, and feared, for his brutality towards local peoples, but also respected for his military conquests. Even before the complete takeover of the Georgian Orthodox Church by the Patriarchate of St. Petersburg, the severity of Tsitsianov's administrative decrees served as a harbinger of what was to come. He was particularly opposed to Georgian chant, comparing it to the “bleating of a goat,” and ordering Orthodox services to be conducted in the Slavonic language.

Formerly, Georgian bishops administered their own local economies and defensive networks. Centuries of gifting from Georgian aristocrats had made the monasteries wealthy in land and agricultural income. Entire villages of serfs belonged to the monasteries and provided either products, the services of craftsmen, and even defensive networks for the protection of monasteries. These villagers were also members of the parish of the monastic communities, sending talented children to study with the scholar-monks in the monastic schools. Priests were

244 From 1811-1817, for example, a Georgian nobleman named Varlam Eristavi served as Exarch. This was the same Varlam Eristavi who recorded the first Georgian chant in notation in Kiev in 1802 (see the section, 4.4.2 The Bolkhovitinov Transcription (1802)).
245 Pavle Tsitsianov, a Russified ethnic Georgian from a noble family, was appointed commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in the Caucasus in 1802, remaining in that position until 1814. He was despised in particular by the Georgian aristocracy, whom Tsitsianov routinely suppressed. See Philip Longworth, Russia's Empires: Their Rise and Fall: From Prehistory to Putin (London: John Murray, 2005). Kaveh Farrokh, Iran at War: 1500-1988 (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2011).
246 Slavic Chant was performed throughout the nineteenth century at the Kashueti Church of St. George and the Sioni Cathedral in central Tbilisi. See K'alist'rat'e Tsintsadze, Kvashvetis ts'midis giorgis ek'lesia t'pilisshi [Kvashveti church of St. Georgia in Tbilisi], ed. Mikheil Kavtaria (Tbilisi: K'ek'elidze Institute of Manuscripts Press, 1994).
247 Attacks were so common throughout medieval Georgia that every village had a defensive plan. An elite militia, consisting of specially chosen warriors and elders, was assigned the task of secreting away the most precious icons, relics, illuminated manuscripts, and other valuables to pre-designated locations in the forests.
frequent travelers between villages, ministering for weddings, funerals, and baptisms. Promising scholars were sent abroad to study in the Georgian monasteries of Mount Athos, the Black Mountain (near Antioch), Jerusalem, or Sinai. Bishops, meanwhile, traveled with their entourages (including chanters) between monastic centers, attending to larger church business and accompanying diplomatic envoys between regions.

In the first years of the Russian occupation, local Georgian militias were increasingly called upon to defend Georgian monasteries from Russian ecclesiastical delegations purportedly taking inventory of Church wealth. Numerous witness accounts describe an abuse of power, as many of the most valued local treasures were stolen and sent back to St. Petersburg in the name of safekeeping. Churches that came into Russian hands were whitewashed, some of them being repainted in Russian style, while others were left white. As a result of this reputation, Russian priests in charge of such 'cataloging' were forced to travel under heavy guard.

Teophilaktos Rusanov, acting Exarch of the Russian Orthodox Church in Georgia from 1817-1821, centralized the traditional economies of the Georgian Church by joining twenty-five dioceses—historically divided along geographic and cultural lines—into just five dioceses. The reasoning for this consolidation was clear: with only five dioceses, the Russian administrators could effectively control the income and management of the entire Georgian Church. Pro-Russian bishops (who were often ethnic Georgians) were assigned to control the new administrative regions, particularly in the streaming of revenue back to St. Petersburg.

Spending priorities were likewise allocated from St. Petersburg, and among the first cuts in the new budgetary allotments were the Georgian-language seminaries established by Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I. Thus, abbots, abbesses, bishops, and even local priests were unable to support chanters, who had to find other occupations, or rely on the meager donations of parish members for their subsistence. This dire situation, which persisted throughout the imperial period (1801-1917), can be seen as the main catalyst for the decline of the oral transmission of Georgian traditional chant.

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248 Examples of such white-washing practices are evident throughout Georgia even today. For example, seventeenth-century Ananuri Church along the Russian Military Highway, and the ninth century Bodbe Convent basilica in East Georgia (which was a Russian Monastery in the mid-nineteenth century). Prior to a planned visit of Tsar Nicholas 1st in the 1830s, the walls of Svet‘itskhoveli Cathedral were also white washed.

249 For this and what follows, see Tamara Grdzelidze, Witness through Troubled Times: A History of the Georgian Orthodox Church, 1811 to the Present (London: Bennet & Bloom, 2006).
Exarch Teophilaktos Rusanov imposed many of the harshest reforms, such as repossessing church treasuries to send to Russia, taking away budgetary control from local clerical officials, and ending the funding of Georgian chant schools. According to the Georgian aristocrat and writer, Davit Bat'onishvili (1767-1819), Exarch Rusanov “took Georgian chant and replaced it with chanting in the Georgian language in the musical manner of the Russians and Latins.”

Such processes of 'Russification' became standard policy for the Russian imperial administration in the South Caucasus. In a letter written to Exarch Iona Vasilevski, from the board of directors at the Tbilisi Seminary, the authors complained:

When [Exarch] Teophilactos opened a Russian Orthodox seminary in Tbilisi, a special class for Slavonic chant was instituted. But this class was discontinued, because of a lack of interest in this subject from the students and especially because of the wildness of their voices. As for Georgian chant, which is sung without musical notation, no one with an educated musical ear likes it. We would like to request permission to continue the class on Slavonic chant at the seminary.

The forced learning of Russian Slavonic chant became common practice throughout the nineteenth century, though the severity of Russification policies varied from one Exarch to another.

Exarch Rusanov promoted only those clergy that were pro-Tsarist, punishing those that were not. In the process of reducing the number of administrative diocese, he was responsible for the displacement of a large number of Georgian hierarchs. Many of these were killed in

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250 The polyphonic Slavonic chant of the early nineteenth century was heavily influenced by Italian harmony, thus the reference to “Latins.” See Ilia Tavberidze, XIX sauk'unis kartveli moghvats'eebi da saek'lesio galoba [Georgian public figures and sacred chant of the XIX century] (Tbilisi, 2010), 12.


252 For example, the appointment of Exarch Teophilaktos Rusanov, whose tenure lasted from 1817-1821, marked a particularly dark period for Georgian clergymen. Rebellions against his authoritarian and ruthless policies, including the deportation and murder of leading Georgian bishops and the confiscation of precious treasure from cathedrals, led to several rebellions which were also brutally suppressed. By contrast, Exarch Jonah, who served as Exarch from 1821-1832, was one of the most humane and productive of all the nineteenth-century exarchs. He famously rebuffed his predecessor by offering council and diplomatic solutions to various disputes instead of violence. For details, see E. K. Smolich, History of the Russian Church (9 Volumes), Vol 8, Part 1 (Moscow, 1996), 270.

253 Egzarkhos in Georgian, hereafter referred to as Exarch for purposes of clarity. The following is a list of the Russian-appointed Exarch-administrators of the Georgian Orthodox Church (some of them were ethnic Georgians) between 1811-1917: Metropolitan Varlam (Eristavi) (1811–1817); Metropolitan Teophilaktos (Rusanov) (1817–1821); Metropolitan Iona (Vasilevsky) (1821–1834); Archbishop Mose (Bogdanov–Platonov) (1832–1834); Archbishop Yevgeni (Baganov) (1834–1844); Archbishop Isidore (Nikolsky) (1844–1858); Archbishop Evsevi
various rebellions of the period, or exiled to various parts of the Tsarist Empire, while others made their way to the David Gareja monasteries as a form of “voluntary” retirement.  

This unintentional gathering of bishops must have represented one of the most diverse master chanter communities in Georgia in several centuries.

3.3.2 Rebellion

Such societal change did not go without resistance from the Georgian aristocracy, and the Georgian Church was not immune to involvement either. Between 1812 and 1832, at least sixteen major rebellions throughout Georgia were violently suppressed, with the majority of antagonists jailed, killed, or exiled. For example, in the rebellion of 1820 in the West Georgian capital of Kutaisi, two leading bishops, Dositeos Kutateli (Ts’ereteli) and Ekvtime Gelateli Shervashidze (1776-1820), were captured, beaten, and deported. Bishop Dositeos died from his wounds and was secretly buried in the Ananuri castle, while Bishop Ekvtime died in Russian captivity two years later. In the same uprising, almost all members of the Tsurukidze noble family from the Rach'an highlands were killed.

A widespread rebellion planned for the summer of 1832, and involving many members of the Bagrat’ioni royal family, leading church figures, and ranking aristocrats, represented the most spectacular among this series of failed insurrections. Before any action could take place—the organizers had plotted to repossess urban administrative and military centers around the

(Ilinsky) (1858–1877); Archbishop Ioaniike (Rudnev) (1877–1882); Archbishop Pavel (Lebedev) (1882–1887); Archbishop Palladi (Raev) (1887–1892); Archbishop Vladimir (Bogojavlensky) (1892–1898); Archbishop Flabiane (Gorodetsky) (1898–1901); Archbishop Aleksey I (Opotsky) (1901–1905); Archbishop Nikolay (Nalimov) (1905–1906); Archbishop Nikon (Sofiisky) (1906–1908); Archbishop Innokenty (Belaev) (1909–1913); Archbishop Aleksey II (Molchanov) (1913–1914); Archbishop Piterim (Oknov) (1914–1915); Archbishop Platon (Rozhdestvensky) (1915–1917).

254 Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898). Also see also Mikheil Kavtaria, "David Garejas Lit'erat'uruli Sk'ola" [The Literary School of David of Gareja] (Tbilisi, 1965). The choice of these monasteries as a place to refuge may have coincided with their reputation in the eighteenth century as a center for the scholarly study of theology, hymnography, and writing. Unfortunately, very few sources survive from the David Gareja monasteries during the early-nineteenth century, so the names of these heirarchs are not known. It is worth noting that bishops do not typically sing in the liturgical services with the choirs, but they were often excellent chanters, having been trained in the best chant schools as children.

255 A major rebellion in 1832 by a consortium of aristocrats was betrayed, leading to the execution, exile, and suppression of many church and state officials. More than twenty bishops were forced into “voluntary” exile in the desert monasteries of David Gareja, far from political action, while others were deported to Russian provinces. See Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898).

country—most of the high-ranking perpetrators were betrayed and arrested. Many were killed, but some escaped with lighter sentences such as exile. Those that survived the brutal response to this particular uprising credited a priest who is said to have saved the lives of many fellow prisoners while in jail.

According to witnesses, priest-monk (and master chanter) T’arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili was able to intone instructions and encouragement throughout the prison while ostensibly 'praying' in his cell. “When they were in prison, T’arasi and another priest asked the guards, ‘we are monks, please give us permission to pray out loud.’ They prayed out loud, and using the church style [of chanting], they informed those in the cells what to say...”257 This use of Georgian traditional chant to send covert messages to the other prisoners is credited with saving many lives; Alexi-Meskhishvili was able to coordinate matching alibis for many of the prisoners prior to interrogation.

3.3.3 The Srulimgaloblebi [Complete Chanters]

It is possible to speculate that the practice of church chanting was still widespread throughout the mountain villages of Georgia in the first decades of the 1800s. Chanters trained in the seminaries founded by Ant'on I, and Erek'le II, in the mid-eighteenth century, continued to live and chant in villages and monasteries throughout the countryside despite the political upheaval in lowland urban centers. Called srulimgalobeli, these master chanters knew the musical settings for thousands of unique and rare hymn texts and more importantly, were trained in the pedagogical systems necessary for the transmission of this repertory. However, without seminary schools dedicated to the instruction in medieval tradition, where these masters could surround themselves with the most capable students, the transmission of chant was fractured. And in the most important cathedral and parish centers, such as the Sioni Cathedral and Kashweti Church in Tbilisi, the Svet'itskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta, the Ananuri fortress church in Kartli, and in the seminaries in Tbilisi and Kutaisi, Slavonic chant dominated services throughout the nineteenth century.

257 See document transcription in the Leningrad [St. Petersburg] Fund, Notebook 7, p. 1036. Published in Masalebi, XIX sauk'unis p'irveli nakhevris kartuli sazogadoebriobis ist'oriisatvis (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1980), 119. The other priest was Philadelphos K’ik’nadze from the Shuamta Monastery. It is also worth noting that very few Russians in the nineteenth century bothered to learn Georgian or any other local languages, hence the effectiveness of Aleksi-Meskhishvili's instructions in the Georgian language.
K’irion Sadzaglishvili II (1855-1918), the first Georgian Catholicos-Patriarch elect after the fall of Tsarist Empire in 1917, wrote about the eighteenth-century decline of the chant tradition in the following terms:

After the monasteries were pillaged, there was no longer any place to study chant. It was slowly flickering, dying out, disappearing. As a result, people lost interest in a Church where the old-style hymns could no longer be heard. Truly, what kind of religious feeling could a single deacon stir up in the people?258

In retrospect, the chant revival initiated by Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I in 1764 was short lived. The loss of ecclesiastical autonomy of the Georgian Church in 1811, and the subsequent shift in budgetary priorities, signaled the beginning of the decline of Georgian traditional chant. These were not the only factors, as changing culture that accompanied modernization also contributed to an increasing lack of interest from the young educated classes. But Russification policies of the Exarch-administered Russian Orthodox Church also directly undermined the transmission of Georgian chant through bans on Georgian chant in important educational centers such as the Tbilisi Seminary, and the forced setting of Georgian ecclesiastical texts to the melodies and harmonies of Slavonic chant (see the section, 4.3.3 Trouble with the Russian Exarch, 1884).

In some ways, the revival of the Seminary chant schools in the eighteenth century created a dependency upon institutionally-supported income that, when taken away, inhibited chanters from furthering their craft through the organized and systematic transmission of chant to groups of students. However, it also provided the masters-level education that would propel the study and practice of chant through the difficult period of the nineteenth century, and bring the role of the srulimgalobeli into clear focus even as the overall tradition went into decline.

The profession of the srulimgalobeli (complete-chanter) comprised the dual roles of practitioner and teacher. As practitioners, master teachers were expected to prepare their choirs for singing the daily services in monasteries, or the frequent services of bishops and aristocrats, especially the complex chants necessary for the various feast-day services celebrated in the Orthodox calendar such as Nativity, Pascha, the feast of St. Nino, St. George, and many others. As teachers, master chanters were expected to train the next generation of chanters in the exact same manner that they had been trained, so that the Georgian chant tradition would persevere

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258 K’irion Sadzaglishvili, Document 1458 (Tbilisi: State Central Archive of Georgia, Catholicos-Patriarch K’irion II Collection).
into future generations. The degree to which the srulimaloblebi [master-chanters] were able to fulfill these duties depended largely on the political security of the country which, as discussed, was often tenuous.

3.3.4 Is Persian Music to Blame

It was no secret that the courts of eighteenth century kings of East Georgia enjoyed the music of Persia. A century later, commentators looking to blame the decline of the oral transmission of Georgian chant on external societal factors found an easy scapegoat in the 'Persian influence'. One of the first reflections on this phenomenon is found in a wide-ranging, multi-themed article published in 1861 by Alexander Orbeliani (the grandson of King Erekle II by matrimonial line). “We knew that King Rost’om Khan brought the Persian customs to Georgia… some might say that [our] customs were changed and wasted by these Qizilbash (Persians).”

An aristocrat named Davit Machabeli, another prominent commentator on Georgian culture, specifically mentions the prevalence of Persian music while lamenting the loss of inherited Georgian musical traditions in an article dated to 1864. “Unfortunately, for many reasons and political changes, these customs have been forgotten. Now instead of holy chants, they are singing eastern (mgosani) music during the feasts, and not just the peasants, even the aznauri-tavadi [aristocrats] are singing these. Chants have been totally forgotten and neglected.”

For Machabeli, the loss of the Orthodox oral chant tradition signaled a general decline in Georgian society. In answer to this rhetorical question, “What is chant?” He wrote, "It is essential for the human being in every station of life.” He wrote an extensive list of societal classes that would supposedly benefit from the active singing of chant, a list that expanded beyond chanters and clergy to include peasants, noble ladies, students, children, and others.

259 Alexander Jambak'uri-Orbeliani, "Iverianelebis galoba, simghera da ghighini" [The chanting, singing and humming of the Iberians], Tsisk'uri Journal, No. 1 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1861, 154. While Orbeliani does not name music specifically, he was a noted supporter of Georgian traditional chant, even commissioning performances from famous chanters in his home in Tbilisi. In this citation, he is speaking broadly about Georgian culture.


261 ibid.: 60-61.
Without patronage for the pedagogical study of chant, the lack of expertise in basic chanting had become obvious. By 1864, Machabeli was forced to conclude that even clergy could no longer be relied upon to retain even the most basic chants.

Sadly, I have to admit that East Georgians are generally forgetting chant. It is hard to find even priests that chant well. For example, for the funerals, they don't even know *ts'mindao ghmerto* [the trisagion hymn]. I remember that in churches, and in the houses of the aristocrats, they used to teach chant.\(^{262}\)

If this testimony is to be understood at face value, the decline of the chanting tradition in the mid-nineteenth century was already severe. The trisagion hymn is one of the most common chants in the Orthodox canon.

### 3.3.5 Chant Families

During the nineteenth century, when the institutional support of church-supported chant schools disintegrated, chant teachers in these schools were obliged to return to their villages, where in many cases they continued to teach chant on an informal basis. Naturally, the children of master chanters were in the best position to inherit the depth of the chant tradition, and this was especially the case within the aristocratic and clerical families. Certain families in each region were known for producing great folk singers, and these singing families were also often involved with transmitting the chant tradition of the Orthodox Church. Two of the most significant singers in the history of the transmission of East and West Georgian chant were members of multi-generational chanting families. From the East, Grigol K'arbelashvili was the son of famed chanter P'et're K’arbelashvili; from the West, Ant'on Dumbadze was the nephew of the chanter Giorgi Dumbadze. Both of these men taught their professions to their sons along with other students, maintaining the family-clan tie to their profession (detailed in the following sections, this chapter).

The family-chanter tradition was a closely guarded profession in feudal Georgian-society, where trades were passed from father to son, and the success of the family depended upon reputation and honor associated with the family lineage. Thus, the various regional chant styles came to bear the names of the famous families or individuals who transmitted those regional repertories. Some of these names from the East Georgian tradition include: Geront’i the Great,

\(^{262}\) ibid.: 62.
Archimandrite Bidzina, Archimandrite Sopron, Archimandrite T’aras, and P’et’re K’arbelashvili. In West Georgia, other names were well known, such as the Dumbadze family, the Ch’alaganidze family, the Kutateladze family, the K’andelak’i family, and others. In the modern era, scholars have returned the designation of regional chant styles to their monastic centers, with names such as the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral style or David-Gareja Monastery style (K’arbelashvili style), the Gelati-Mart’vili Monastery style (K’andelak’i, Kutateladze, Ch’alaganidze styles), and the Shemokmedi Monastery style (Dumbadze style).

Even without the support of the church, the profession of the srulimgalobeli continued to be passed to younger generations within the traditional family structure in both East and West Georgia until the possibility to transcribe their musical tradition into western five-line staff notation became a reality in the late nineteenth century. In particular, the K’arbelashvili chanting family in East Georgia and the Dumbadze chanting family in West Georgia transmitted a masters-level quality of chant and serve as the primary informants for traditional polyphonic chant from their respective regions. Despite chant being carried by certain 'singing' families, the widespread knowledge of the Georgian chant tradition went into decline.

By the 1850s, the situation had become dire. Customary avenues of financial and institutional patronage were broken, and few master chanter who knew the entire canonical chant repertory could be found to perform the required services for the major cathedral centers. As the traditional sponsors, protectors, and students of chant, the vulnerability of the Georgian aristocratic class in the first decades of Imperial Russian occupation reverberated through the Georgian Church, which suffered under the authoritarian leadership of the Exarch system imposed from St. Petersburg. The neglect of the traditional transmission of chant eventually came to the attention of a new generation of leaders in Georgia. Foremost among these was Alexander Okrop’iridze, an aristocrat and firebrand bishop who became increasingly alarmed at the degradation of Georgian monastic buildings and the diminishing quality of Georgian chant in liturgical services. He resolved to rebuild both.

3.4 Preservation: East Georgia

Despite the general decline of the transmission of Georgian chant, signs of political support began to surface from the emerging Georgian intellectual class in the mid-nineteenth
century. After decades of neglect, the few remaining chanters capable of performing the entire liturgical kanon of chant were sought out and given public teaching posts in an effort to preserve their fragile aural repertory through training a new generation of chanters. The project worked, to some extent, at least in the sense that the students of such chanters as Grigol K’arbelashvili and Ant’on Dumbadze lived long enough to have their teacher's repertories transcribed into standard Western music notation.

What neither of them could know then is that they represented the very last generation of master chanters in Georgian chant history. The biographies of these chanters, as well as the political climate that supported the preservation of their craft, reveal an intriguing historical glimpse at processes of the transmission of chant in the generation before it was transcribed into European notation. The following is divided into two sections: the preservation efforts in East Georgia, and those in West Georgia.

3.4.1 The Tergdaleulni Enlightenment

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Russian Church continued to impose a ban on the use of Georgian chant in public performances. This was especially the case in liturgical centers like the Sioni Patriarchal Cathedral in Tbilisi, and major institutions like the Tbilisi Seminary. Seminarians were required to study in Russian, learn the accepted four-voiced style of Russian Slavonic chant, and set Georgian texts to Russian (four-voiced) hymn tunes. As the performance and transmission of chant continued to decline, secular music from Europe thrived in the capital, where the opera and theater productions became staples of the Vorontsov-administered Caucasus of the 1850s.

In 1845, governor-general Mikhail Vorontsov invited the first groups of performers to Tbilisi, and commissioned the building of the first Opera house in the Caucasus. The first performances consisted mostly of Western vaudeville and comedies, but with the opening of the Tbilisi Opera and Ballet State Academic Theater on Rustaveli Avenue in 1851, performances

263 For more on Vorontsov, and the Russian administration of the Caucasus in general, see Alex Marshall, The Russian General Staff and Asia: 1800-1917 (New York: Routledge, 2006).
such as ‘Lucia di Lammermoor’ by Gaetano Donizetti became common. These venues created a demand for young performers, voice teachers, musicians, and stagehands.

During this period, the seeds of Georgian nationalism began to surface in new ways. Whereas in previous decades, when violent revolt had seemed the only recourse to increasing Russian imperial pressure on the Georgian aristocracy and church, now intellectuals such as Ilia Ch'avch'avadze began to write novelettes and nationalist poetry inspiring Georgians to unite behind a common history and destiny framed in the nationalist rhetoric of continental Europe. Ch'avch'avadze was exemplary of a generation of young Georgian aristocrats called collectively the tergdaleulni (lit. ‘those who have crossed the river Terek’), who were sent over the Caucasus mountains in the 1850s to study at the universities in Moscow and St. Petersburg. This exodus of the aristocratic elite was conceived of as a training of imperial administrators in the Caucasus. But instead of assisting the project of replicating Europe in the Caucasus, many young Georgians returned with dreams of independence: not of recreating the feudal kingdom of their fathers, but of building a modern nation-state.

The history of this generational shift of perspective originates in the first decades of Russian conquest in the Caucasus, when the role of the Georgian petty nobility (aznauri) changed radically. Formerly, the aznauri were land-owners beholden to feudal lords (tavadi) for annual tithes, the provision of soldiers, and the maintenance of institutions like churches and schools. The most powerful of these tavadi families competed for resources and territory, often allying independently with regional powers such as the Safavid Persians or Ottoman Turks, and warring with each other or the various regional branches of the monarchical Bagrat'ioni family. The threat of disenfranchisement ensured the loyalty of each local aznauri family, who were alternatively rewarded with more land or titles for support during the frequent regional conflicts between competing noble families. Ties with the institution of the Church were cemented in familial relationships: senior ecclesiastical figures often came from the local tavadi or aznauri-ranked nobility. As a result of these ties, strong patterns of patronage supported the ongoing development of church artforms such as chanting, vestment embroidery, cloisonne

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264 Musik’is Entsik’lop’ediuri Leksik’oni [Encyclopedia of Music], eds. Anzor Tamarashvili, Gulbat T’oradze (Akhaltsikhe: State University, 2005), 103.
266 For example, Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I (1720-1788) was the first cousin of King Erek'le II (1720-1798), while Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on II was the son of King Erek'le II.
enamel, icon and wall painting, stone carving, and book copying. These systems of patronage were broken when imperial-Russian rule stripped financial and legislative authority from the aznaur-tavadi aristocratic classes and the church hierarchy.

Despite these radical shifts in power structures, the Tsarist administrative structure did present attractive possibilities for social advancement through the military or diplomatic corps beyond local borders. Whereas former sons of local aznauri could look forward to a life of subservience to local aristocrats or to life as a church hierarch, now they were presented with the possibility to advance their fortune through travel and education in Russia and beyond. During this period, the officer corps of the Russian military was particularly attractive for the young men of the Caucasus, as imperial Russia was engaged in wars of expansion on nearly every border. Those who studied in the universities of St. Petersburg or Moscow and returned to Georgia often found bureaucratic positions within the political administration of the empire. Conversely, those who did not invest in Russian education risked losing even the authority to govern their own territories.

Figures such as Davit Qipiani, Alexander Orbeliani, Davit Machebeli, Ak’ak’i Ts'ereteli, and Ilia Ch’aveh’avadze were exemplars of the tergdaleulni generation who returned to Georgia with nationalistic aspirations, using education and rhetoric as weapons in their fight for Georgian independence. The Iveria and Droeba Georgian-language newspapers became heated platforms for their discussions on the means to reinstate Georgian independence, but without overtly stating such aims, many of these discussions centered on aspects of culture and literacy. These writers were hugely influential among the growing Georgian urban population of the latter nineteenth century, and helped to galvanize popular support for the preservation of Georgian traditions.

The theme of Georgian liturgical chant became a point of contention in these publications, and was discussed not only in terms of its relevance for the worship services of the Orthodox Church, but more poignantly as the highest standard of Georgian national musical culture. Georgian polyphonic folk and sacred music were set in opposition to the monophonic music of Armenia, Persia, and surrounding cultures as a means to show originality, uniqueness, and creativity, themes that continue to resonate among Georgian nationalists even into the twenty-first century.
Ilia Ch'avch'avadze (1837-1907), who returned from study in St. Petersburg in 1861 (where he was influenced by revolutionary ideas from, for example, the Italian Giuseppe Garibaldi), recognized the threat that unabated Westernization posed to traditional forms of Georgian culture. Ch'avch'avadze became the president of the Georgian National Democratic party, and was also the founder and chairman of many public, cultural and educational organizations including the Society for the Spreading of Literacy Among Georgians.²⁶⁷ He was involved in the labor negotiations following the emancipation of serfs in Georgia in 1861, and also authored many nationalist poems, plays, and novelettes that expressed his political opinion in terms acceptable to the Russian censors.²⁶⁸ He would go on to found the influential Georgian-language newspaper Iveria, whose press later became the focal point for the publication of Georgian chant transcriptions in the 1890s.²⁶⁹ Ch'avch'avadze became involved in the preservation for liturgical chant when he became the godson of Alexander Okrop’iridze, a Georgian bishop who became a big influence in his life.²⁷⁰

3.4.2 Bishop Alexander (Okrop'iridze)

In the late 1850s, Alexander Okrop'iridze (1824-1907) emerged as a leading clerical figure in the Georgian nationalist movement and particularly in the preservation of Georgian chant (Figure 17).²⁷¹ He was well aware of the decline in attendance at Georgian services under

²⁶⁷ Ilia Ch'avch'avadze also founded the first national “Bank of the Nobility,” the Dramatic Society, the Historical-Ethnographical Society of Georgia, and other successful state-building institutions. He was a member of the Caucasian Committee of the Geographical Society of Russia, the Society of Ethnography and Anthropology of Moscow University, the Society of Orientalists of Russia and the Anglo-Russian Literary Society (London). Between 1906 and 1907, he also served as a member of the State Council (Gosudarstvennaya Duma) in Russia.²⁶⁸ Among many, these are some of the most well known writings of Ilia Ch’avch’avadze: The Vision (1859), Several Scenes, or An Incident From a Robber’s Life (1860), and the novella Tale of a Pauper (1859–62).²⁶⁹ Several members of the Iveria press were key actors in the movement to preserve Georgian chant, including Maksime Sharadze and Ekvtime K’ereselidze (see the section, 6.1 Maksime Sharadze).²⁷⁰ For more on the intellectual elite of the late nineteenth century, and their role in promoting nationalist interests in Georgia, see Oliver Reisner, "The Tergdaleulebi: Founders of Georgian National Identity," Forms of Identity: Definitions and Changes, ed. Ladislaus Löb, István Petrovics, György E. Szyoni (Szeged: Attila Jozsef University, 1994), 125–37. Oliver Reisner, “Travelling Between Two Worlds: the Tergdaleulebi, their Identity Conflict, and National Life,” Identity Studies, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (2009): 36-50. Jones, Socialism... (2005).

²⁷¹ Alexander Okrop’iridze excelled in the seminaries in Tbilisi and Kazan, Russia. He served as bishop of the Samegrelo, Abkhazia, and Gurian regions in West Georgia, but also spent many years in Tbilisi. He was canonized as a saint of the Georgian Orthodox Church on 18 September, 1995. During his lifetime, he was responsible for the rebuilding of the monasteries of Shio-Mghvime (where he is buried), Zedazeni, David-Gareja, and Shemokmedi as well as the Jvari Church, the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral, and several churches in Abkhazia. He opened a diocesan school for women in Tbilisi. He was also the driving force behind the publication of ecclesiastical and historical textbooks, as well as the transcription and publication of Georgian traditional chant. For more information, see The
the russifying policies of the Exarch-administered Georgian Church, and unlike many others, he was in a position to affect policy as an independently wealthy and highly educated member of the Georgian aristocratic class. As a priest in the far West Georgian region of Abkhazia, Okrop’iridze gained a reputation for fiery sermons, and rebuilding of many Georgian churches and parishes. Fearing his pro-Georgian nationalist activities, the Exarch-administration tried to monitor him by frequently calling him to Tbilisi in East Georgia. But this attempt to inhibit his activities only allowed Okrop’iridze to mingle with the Georgian intelligentsia in the city. During the 1860s-1870s, he would emerge as the most vocal leader of the effort to revive the Georgian chant tradition.

**Figure 17.** Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze (1824-1907)

In 1860, Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) formed the Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Liturgical Chant with his own funds (and donations he solicited from other Georgian aristocrats), and began an active campaign to popularize the need to support the fragile chant tradition.272 Okrop’iridze first appealed to other aristocratic figures such as Dimit’ri Qipiani, imploring them to champion the revival of traditional chant as a part of the wider effort to maintain some control over the fate of Georgian art and culture. Their efforts took on a two-pronged focus: active rehabilitation of the traditional methods of oral transmission through the funding of chant schools, and the written preservation of chant through western five-line staff notation.

To popularize these initiatives, and mindful of the Russian censors, members of the Committee championed the preservation of Georgian chant as a feature of a burgeoning Georgian independence movement. These nationalist undertones emerge in the articles and

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272 Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, *Kartuli Saero...* (1898).

editorials of the Georgian-language press from the latter half of the nineteenth century, which implored ‘patriots’ to rally behind the plight of the disappearing medieval chant tradition.

The Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Church Chant attempted to attract and sustain public interest in the chant tradition through newspaper articles from leading intellectuals and the organization of public events. With the funds they collected, the Committee sponsored master chanter teacher who taught through oral transmission, and they also began to explore ways to preserve chant in notated form.

3.4.3 Dimit’ri Qipiani

Dimit’ri Qipiani, a leading figure in the nationalist liberation movement in Tbilisi, became involved in the Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Church Chant both as a public advocate and as a leading financial supporter. In 1862, after visiting the monastery of Bodbe in Eastern Georgia, he wrote a letter to the abbot praising the study of traditional chant that he had witnessed there. In the letter addressed to the abbot, Mak’ari Mat’atashvili, Qipiani cited the importance of the grave of St. Nino, described a previous visit in which the loneliness of the abandoned monastery had overcome him, and then,

The second time when I came to Bodbe, in May, my heart was sweetened because I heard the old [style] chant being performed and with your care, the study of chant has been renewed. Thank you so much! But this kind of gratitude is not useful for you. Please Father, accept this small donation of 5 tumani273 and spend it on Orthodox deeds. I trust myself to your blessings and prayers, at your service, humbly, Dimit’ri Qipiani.274

The Bodbe monastery, as the pilgrimage site of the relics of St. Nino, had also been a center for chant and Orthodox schooling before being abandoned after the death of the long-standing local bishop, Ioane Makashvili, in 1837 (Figure 18).275 Following a public plea from a council of area priests in 1862, a new abbot was appointed to lead the rehabilitation of the Bodbe monastery.

273 The donation cited, 5 tumani (equal to 50 maneti or rubles), was indeed a significant sum. For comparison, Grigol K’arbelashvili’s yearly salary in 1863 was 30 tumani, thus 5 tumani represented two months salary. Each parish in the region was responsible for raising only 0.5 tumani to help pay for the rejuvenation of the chant school at the Bodbe Monastery for the whole year.

274 Polievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 89-90.

275 Bishop Ioane (Makashvili) died in 1837 at the age of ninety-four. His tomb at the Bodbe monastery bears the following inscription (in Russian): “Here lies the venerable remains of the reverend Metropolitan of Bodbe, descendant of the K’akheti dukes, Makayevsyus.”
3.4.4 Archimandrite Mak'ari Mat'atashvili

Mak'ari Mat'atashvili (1818-1892), a recent graduate of the Russian seminary in Tbilisi, was given the assignment. As a student, the opinionated Mat'atashvili had been a political activist among his fellow Seminarians, therefore it’s possible he was given the difficult task of rejuvenating a rural abandoned monastery in order to remove him from the political environment of Tbilisi. But at the Bodbe Monastery, Mat'atashvili would play an inspiring role in supporting the transmission of chant by reviving a chant school in collaboration with members of the Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Church Chant.

In correspondences with Alexander Okrop’iridze and others in the years 1862-1863, Mat'atashvili described the decision of all the priests in the diocese to raise money for reopening
a school of liturgical chant. In a search for a suitable teacher, he eventually persuaded Grigol K’arbelashvili, a priest and master chanter from the village of Ch’ala (located in the Kartli region more than 150 kilometers away) to relocate to Bodbe monastery to start the chant school. In a letter to Dimit’ri Berieli dated March, 1863, the Abbot wrote:

I know that you will be pleased with this news, so I hurry to write you about the revival of our church chant which had nearly fallen away to nothingness. For a long time I have had a flame in my heart for the Orthodox church and for my home country, and the great desire to resurrect our old chants.... with the support of my priests, we have agreed to bring the Priest Grigol to teach our children chants and other subjects.... It will be a big help if you can write an article in the Tsisk’ari [newspaper] that concerns our revival efforts and asking for support from people in Tbilisi.

The chant school's success represented a significant step in the effort to resuscitate the East Georgian School of liturgical chant. The students of Grigol K’arbelashvili would be the last generation of proficient East Georgian chanters trained in the oral tradition.

3.4.5 Grigol K'arbelashvili, Master Teacher

Grigol K'arbelashvili (1812-1880), like his father P't're K’arbelashvili, was a priest and master chanter in the village of Ch’ala, Kartli region, seat of the Amilakhvari aristocrats. His family actively practiced the rich chant repertory inherited from his father, who had studied with Gerasime Antadze and other famous chanters at the court of King Erekle II, in the Svet’itkhoveli Cathedral Seminary, and the David Gareja monastery of Saint John the Baptist. After contemplating the offer to rejuvenate the Georgian chant tradition through a dedicated chant school, and hearing the enthusiasm for the project expressed by the young Abbot Mak'ari Mat'atashvili, Grigol decided to move with his wife and five sons to the Bodbe Monastery in late 1862. Over the course of two years, he trained famous students such as Grigol Mghebrishvili, Alexander Molodinashvili, his five sons, and many other students.

Within the first month of the arrival of Grigol K’arbelashvili, 35 students were enrolled in the chant school. This was a significant event considering the general decline of Georgian

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276 Polievk'tos K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 86. The motion to raise money locally was approved by Exarch Evsevi Ilinsky, even though he personally did not favor Georgian chant.
277 Polievk'tos K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 87-88. For more on the history of the Tsisk’ari Journal, which served as a voice for Georgian progressive ideas from 1852-1853, 1857-1875, see Donald Rayfield, “The Literature of Georgia” (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 157.
278 See the section, 3.2.6 P't're K’arbelashvili.
Orthodoxy during the first decades of Russian control. The children’s choir raised interest levels and immediately boosted attendance at services not only at the monastery, but throughout the entire diocese. The success of the program became news even in the capital of Tbilisi, one hundred kilometers away, as Georgians and Russians alike were curious about the new children chanters. Within the year, the best of K’arbelashvili’s students were invited to Tbilisi to perform chant for services at the Sioni Patriarchal Cathedral, where their performance was so impressive that even the Exarch-controlled administration of the Tbilisi Seminary took notice.

Grigol K’arbelashvili was one of the fortunate few who made a living as a chant teacher during the nineteenth century, largely because of his widely acknowledged talent as a true inheritor of the David Gareja and Svetitskhoveli Cathedral chant styles. Without the sponsorship of the Exarch-administered church, Georgian master chanters could not support themselves as teachers, resulting in the loss of many regional variations of chant when these teachers died. But with his post at the Bodbe Monastery and later at the Tbilisi Seminary, K’arbelashvili was able to meet influential friends among the nationalist intelligentsia in Tbilisi.

In September, 1864, after less than two years at the Bodbe Monastery, Grigol K’arbelashvili became the head teacher of canonical chant and liturgical reading at the Tbilisi Seminary, a post he would hold until a change in political climate in 1872. During this period, K’arbelashvili had a profound effect on the quality of church chant in the entire capital city, training a generation of new young chanters who performed in many of the most famous Tbilisi churches.279

3.4.6 Retrospective

Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze, founder of the Chant Preservation Committee, championed Grigol K’arbelashvili and his five sons as exemplars of the David Gareja tradition of the eighteenth century, helping to secure and hold the Tbilisi Seminary post for more than a decade. When the Russian Exarch planned to terminate the study of Georgian chant in the Tbilisi seminary in 1872, Okrop’iridze confronted him, saying, “What you’re doing is wrong!” Exarch

279 Polievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 91. Here, he singles out the quality of the choir of the Anchiskhat’i basilica, who “performed every Matins, Vespers, and Divine Liturgy” service of the church year. According to Luarsab T’ogonidze, turn-of-the-century Tbilisi boasted approximately 25 Georgian-Russian churches, with an additional 20 Armenian churches. Many of these were private, such as the Orbeliani chapel inside the family’s residential compound.
Evsevi Ilinsky replied, “I hate these chants like a rattlesnake,” Okrop’iridze stood his ground and said angrily, “You will regret those words on the day of Judgement!” Despite this confrontation, Grigol K’arbelashvili was eventually forced out in 1872, and with his loss, the study of traditional chant again languished. Students studied other subjects, and no true masters of the tradition stepped forward. Monks such as Archimandrite Tarasi Alexi-Meskhishvili were isolated in remote monasteries, and with his passing in 1874, one of the last great masters of East Georgian chant disappeared without any significant successor. Grigol K'arbelashvili died in Ch’ala a few years later (in 1880), leaving his sons and a few other students as the only living transmitters of East Georgian chant.

After the expulsion of Grigol K’arbelashvili from the Tbilisi Seminary in 1872, it became more difficult for Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze and the other high-ranking members of the ‘Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Church Chant’ to draw attention to the importance of the oral transmission of liturgical chant from qualified chanter. The efforts of the Committee from 1860 to the mid 1870s had been focused on providing institutional support to master chanter such as Grigol K’arbelashvili so that their pedagogical efforts could reach a maximum number of students. But after he returned to his home parish in the village of Lower Ch’ala in 1872, it became clear that simply supporting the pedagogy of chant only delayed what had become inevitable: the oral chant tradition had almost disappeared from East Georgia.

The concentration of the Committee shifted from an effort at rejuvenation to one of preservation. From this point forward, their focus would be on finding ways to preserve chant in European notation. Besides the numerical increase in the number of chanter in the environs of Tbilisi and the Bodbe diocese, the creation of a platform for the professional study of chant was arguably the more necessary development. Precisely the lack of institutions, where chant could be taught systematically, had made it difficult for chant specialists to teach their craft with the thoroughness required of such a vast repertory.

In retrospect, the hiring of Grigol K’arbelashvili to teach at the Bodbe monastery chant school probably delayed the eventual demise of the oral transmission of East Georgian chant by a critical fifty years. His students were able to transmit the chant tradition at a high level. The

280 Alexander Okrop’iridze, Album #27 (Tbilisi: Central Archive, Photo-Phono Archive, 1893).
281 Polievkt’os K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 91. K’arbelashvili reported that his father Grigol was forced out of the Seminary as part of an effort to “annihilate the study of Georgian chant and [psalm] reading from the Seminary.”
teaching position at the Bodbe Monastery, which led to his teaching post at the Tbilisi Seminary, provided the perfect environment for the training of the last generation of chanter\textacuteacute s in Eastern Georgia. It was this generation that committed the entirety of the K’arbelashvili family chant repertory to notation in the decades following Grigol’s death in the year 1880, a critical period of preservation that preceded the total ban on chant performance by the Bolsheviks starting in 1921.\textsuperscript{282}

3.5 Preservation: West Georgia

The preservation of chant in Western Georgia during the nineteenth century, while bearing some resemblance to the challenges in Eastern Georgia, must also be viewed in the context of a different cultural and political reality. Russian control over the Orthodox Church in West Georgia remained comparatively weak, thus allowing the transmission of chant in regional centers such as the Gelati, Mart’vili, and Shemokmedi monasteries to continue throughout the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{283} When funding for the study of Georgian chant was withheld from the Svet’itskhoveli Seminary and other centralized institutions in East Georgia, dealing a serious blow to the institutional transmission of chant for the whole region, similar processes in West Georgia had less overall effect due to the decentralized economics of chant transmission, and the relative strength of the chanter-family tradition. Surnames of such family dynasties in West Georgia include Dumbadze, Ch’alaganidze, and K’andelak’i, names that factor prominently into the history of chant preservation.

While sources are scarce on the eighteenth century transmission of chant in West Georgia, it is clear that the Gelati Monastery in central Imereti retained a powerful influence over the pedagogy of chant study, a continuation of its academic origins in the twelfth-thirteenth

\textsuperscript{282} While it can be assumed that Grigol K’arbelashvili would have taught chant within his own family regardless of circumstance, certainly the support and publicity of his role in rejuvenating chant at the Bodbe monastery school impacted his sons’ aspirations to learn their father’s trade well.

\textsuperscript{283} The ‘divide and conquer’ strategy to split regional power blocks (like Georgia) often focused on minority languages. In the 1880s, for example, Russian religious authorities in the Megrelian speaking region of West Georgia attempted to translate the Bible and other major literary books into the Megrelian language, which was also promoted in schools and Orthodox services throughout the region. These efforts were spurned by the Georgian Orthodox leadership, especially the well-liked Bishop Gabriel Kikodze, who exposed the Tsarist policy as an effort aimed at alienating the Megrelian people from their traditional cultural and religious allies throughout Georgia. Such strategies continued with more success in the Soviet period.
The transmission of chant in West Georgia is closely tied with the history of one ecclesiastical institution—Gelati Monastery—a twelfth century theological academy built by King David the Builder (Figure 19). Master chancers trained generations of students at the Gelati Monastery, providing a pedagogical center for chanting in the dozens of monastery and parish choirs throughout the region. Even as the general practice of chant declined in the nineteenth century, the Gelati Monastery remained a source of steady training, and eventually served as the location for the first transcription of West Georgian chant in the 1880s.

The Gelati monastery complex is situated just outside the city of Kutaisi—capital of West Georgia since the tenth-eleventh centuries—and dates to the early twelfth century. The various churches, bell-towers, and outbuildings of the complex are embedded into a meadow near the crest of a long limestone ridge above the Rioni River, commanding a striking view over

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284 Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898).
285 Razhden Khundadze, "Kartuli galoba" [Georgian chant], Shinauri Sakmeebi, No. 18 (Tbilisi, 1910).
286 Ibid.
the surrounding valleys and forested hills. In the most prominent position in the monastic village sits the massive cathedral, closely seconded by a high-arching, two-story academy building (seating 350), with four-feet thick stone walls. The medieval university of Gelati convened here during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and is said to have enrolled up to one hundred students. King David the Builder, who requested that he be buried in the entrance to the monastery gate-house, envisioned a place of worship and learning for his kingdom unparalleled in the South Caucasus, and to this effect, invited learned men from Byzantium including such theologians as Ioane P’et’r’ts’i (see the section, 2.5 Medieval References to Polyphony). The acoustics of the main cathedral are especially resonant such that even a single trio of chanters can fill the sanctuary with sound, while at the same time a large choir is not overpowering.

**Figure 19.** The Gelati Monastery (12th century)
The study of chant was an essential component of the academic curriculum at the Gelati Monastery in the medieval period, and continued even during the period of Ottoman rule and into the Russian period. The academy represented the highest institute of higher learning in medieval Georgia, and as such was not only the center of chant study in Imereti, but throughout all of Georgia. Deacon Razhden Khundadze\textsuperscript{287} wrote, “In bygone times, Gelati was the ‘nest-for-chant’ (\textit{galobis-bude}), and [in modern times] some of our most recent renowned chanters were raised at Gelati including Ant'on Dumbadze, Sino K’andelak’i, Davit Chkhareli (Shotadze), and others.”\textsuperscript{288}

As an educational center, the Gelati monastery chant school seems to have been responsible for training not only locals, but also the most promising chanters from each region. According to Pilimon Koridze (1835-1911), a famous opera singer who spent many years transcribing chant, the Gelati and Mart'vili monasteries served as the center for the distribution of chant throughout Georgia.\textsuperscript{289}

\textbf{3.5.2 The Mart'vili Monastery}

Other significant centers that contributed to the successful transmission of chant in the nineteenth century include the Mart’vili monastery (Figure 20), and the Shemokmedi monastery (Figure 21), which were both closely linked with the Gelati monastery in Central-West Georgia. Chanters from each of these monasteries were easily able to match their own regional styles when singing together in the nineteenth century. One remarkable story illustrates the closeness of the singing styles of these three regional centers (though their differences are also very noticeable). Art’em Erkomaishvili, a young chanter from the Shemokmedi Monastery in Guria, once related that he was able to sing a full service with chanters from the Mart’vili Monastery in Samegrelo, without any preparation of rehearsal.

In the old times there was one common style of church chant. At the Mart’vili Monastery in Samegrelo, Dit’o Chalaganidze’s group still sings in this common style. Ch'alaganidze

\textsuperscript{287} Razhden Khundadze (1858-1929), a famous master chanter of the Gelati, Mart'vili, and Shemokmedi chant schools, was later a priest in Kutaisi. See the section, 8.2.1 The Help of Razhden Khundadze.

\textsuperscript{288} Razhden Khundadze, \textit{Shinauri Sakmeebi} (1910).

was Davit Dumbadze’s friend. One day there was a funeral of an important person, so a special service was organized in his honor at the Mart’vili Monastery. One of Chalaganidze’s singers was ill, so I offered to help… and sang every hymn that was in the service with their choir. Afterwards, Dit’o took me into his room, thanked me and asked, ‘How did you manage to learn all those hymns at such an early age?’

The three-voiced chant sung at Gelati Monastery is harmonically complex, with many levels of potential ornamentation. Chant from the other monastic centers in Georgia all resemble chant from the Gelati chant school, but do not in all cases resemble each other, an observation that supports the idea that the Gelati monastery school was the pedagogical center for chant distribution via oral transmission. Details of this transmission remain elusive, especially considering that for many centuries, the territories of Georgia in question were vassal to the Saffavid Persians or the Ottoman Turks. Only the mountain tribes in the high Caucasus retained some level of autonomy from outside cultural influence during the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries, but unfortunately, chant from these regions has not survived either in audio recordings or in notated transcriptions.

The influence of the Gelati Monastery chant on regional monasteries in West Georgia, such as the Shemokmedi Monastery in Guria, is verified through musical analysis of extant transcriptions (see the section, 10.3.1 Liturgical Harmony: Shemokmedi Monastery Style). The Gelati Monastery style was also taught in East Georgia when Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I invited chanter from Gelati such as Gerasime Antadze to teach at the Svet'itskhoveli Seminary in the 1760s. Because of these connections, the ‘Gelati style’ (or Imeretian regional style) became the standard to which all other regional chant styles were compared.

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290 Anzor Erkomaishvili, “Introduction,” Georgian Folk Music, Guria, Art’em Erkomaishvili’s Collection (Tbilisi: The International Center for Georgian Folk Song, 2005). What is remarkable about this story is that Art’em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967)—who studied chant with Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze and grew up singing the regional chant style from the Shemokmedi Monastery (Gurian region)—could so easily sing in the chant style of the Megrelian choir. The Shemokmedi monastery style sounds distinctly unique from Mart’vili style (see the section, 10.3.1 Liturgical Harmony: Shemokmedi Monastery Style). The fact that Art’em Erkomaishvili also knew a basic structure of church chant which was compatible with the style sung by the Mart’vili monastery choir implies a common structure to West Georgian chant, as well as a pedagogical method (now lost) whereby students learned such a common structure before learning regional variation. At age twenty-two, Art’em Erkomaishvili already knew both the Gelati-Mart’vili style and the Shemokmedi style, which may have been regional variations on the same basic structure. For more on the melodic structure of chant, see 11.1 Georgian Model Melodies, for more on the harmonic structure of Georgian chant, see 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison.

291 Approximately five Svanetian liturgical hymns are known, and many para-liturgical hymns have survived from all the highland regions through oral tradition.
Chanters in early nineteenth-century West Georgia were noted members of the community, commanding respect and privilege not only from the Church but from all ranks of society. According to the ethnographer Apolon Tsuladze, "The majority of church chanters were nobles and family of the clergy… In the nineteenth century, Georgian chant was better preserved in Guria than anywhere else in Georgia… and a good chanter who could also teach was greatly respected. Everyone loved and honored [such a chanter] as a great public figure."\(^{292}\)

Good chanters were often also good folk singers, a tradition acknowledged in the naming of excellent singers as *mgalobel-momgherali* (chanter-singer). In the region of Guria, singers from neighboring villages competed to see whose improvisatory variations could outdo the others in vocal prowess and creative improvisation. Experts have called folk music from this region in particular a treasure of world music, citing the high-pitched yodeling called *k’rimanch’uli* as one reason Gurian folk music is considered one of the most highly-developed vocal polyphony systems in the world and a recipient of a UNESCO designation as “intangible

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heritage of humanity." The regional style of Gurian chant as performed at the Shemokmedi Monastery shares a number of interesting harmonic and ornamental characteristics with the local folk music, as both were oral improvised traditions performed by the same singers (10.3.1 Liturgical Harmony: Shemokmedi Monastery Style).

3.5.3 The Shemokmedi Monastery and Giorgi Dumbadze

The transmission of chant at the Shemokmedi monastery, located in the region of Guria, is closely associated with the Dumbadze family. Historically, the family was closely tied to the Church, often serving as priests and chanters while also with the regional military. Sources attest to this connection from at least the early seventeenth century, when Iak’ob Dumbadze (1647-1713) was the Metropolitan of the monastery. During this period, and even earlier, the monastery was considered a center for high-quality chanting. In the sixteenth century, for example, Abbot Mate Gogitidze (1541-1560) and his nephew Ioane Gogitidze (1560-1590) were well known chanters.

The nineteenth century transmission of Shemokmedi Monastery chant was dominated by Giorgi Dumbadze (1785-1883), a prolific master of Gurian chanting who lived an incredibly long life as the resident priest and chant pedagogue of the monastery (Figure 22). Known throughout the region as a strict disciplinarian, Dumbadze struck fear into young monks' hearts because of his impeccable memory for the Gospels and various liturgical prayers, which he corrected by rote if there was even a single mistake. He is said to have trained more than three hundred students in reading, writing, and chant during his long life. Among his most famous

293 UNESCO declared Georgian traditional polyphonic singing as an element of the intangible heritage of humanity in the year 2000.
294 Iak’ob Dumbadze, ”Ts’qaroebi da sametsniero lit’erat’ura” [Sources and scholarly literature], in Dzveli kartuli mts’erlobis k’erebi [Old Georgian Writers], Vol. I, 2nd edition (Tbilisi, 1962). Н. Марр, Из книги царевича Баграта о грузинских переводах духовных сочинений и героической повести ’Дареджаниани’−, Известия Академии Наук, Vol. 10, № 2 (1899). According to this source, members of the Dumbadze famously disputed issues of theology with local Catholic monks, who were reportedly tolerated due to their excellent medical skills.
296 Kveli Chkhata'arajishvili (1989) writes that Giorgi Dumbadze died in 1883, at the age of 100 years old. P’olievkt’os Karbelashvili (1898), who should be considered less of an authority because of numerous dating issues in his book, thought that Giorgi Dumbadze died in 1875.
297 The life story of Giorgi Dumbadze is somewhat tragic, as his young wife and first child died due to complications with childbirth. Being a priest, he never remarried, instead engaging in risky nighttime expeditions into the neighboring Turkish-controlled region of Adjara to baptize Georgian Christians.
students were his nephew Ant'on Dumbadze and his godson Maksime Chkhat’araishvili, who would lead the Gurian choir to the East - West chant competition in Tbilisi in 1878.

**Figure 21.** Shemokmedi Monastery (12th century)

Sources that highlight the strict pedagogical style of Giorgi Dumbadze as a disciplinarian underscore his exactitude as in the oral transmission of chant. In one anecdote, a student related how a breathless reader omitted the word “light” in the reading, “Glory to you, who brings us light!” Dumbadze immediately snorted from behind the iconostasis: “what did he bring, what did he bring?!?” The hapless reader could only respond: “light!” Giorgi Dumbadze enjoyed such alacrity throughout his advanced age. While traveling through the region, Razhden Khundadze reported in 1878: "I cannot neglect to mention one wonderful person that I met in the Shemokmedi monastery: this was the local priest, Giorgi Dumbadze. Though he is already more

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than ninety years old, he does not resemble someone of that age with his healthy energy and mind." The mindfulness to preserve the exact words of the liturgical text is a condition not only of a strict disciplinarian, but emblematic of an entire religious tradition based on oral transmission. Precision was critical for the maintenance of the correct forms. And this attitude extended itself into the pedagogy of learned chanters, of whom Dumbadze was considered the best in all of West Georgia during his long and productive lifetime.

Several other monasteries in West Georgia claimed the residency of true master chanters such as Giorgi Dumbadze. These included Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze from Samegrelo, Sino and Nikoloz K’andelak’i from the village of Gelati, Ivliane Shotadze, Niko Medzmariashvili from Lower Imereti, Ioseb Ts'ereteli from Upper Imereti, Vasil Kutateladze from the town of Khoni, all of whom sang variations on the same style. But the figure of Giorgi Dumbadze (1785-1883) as a prominent monastic priest and teacher of chants with incredible longevity and many students is best compared to the life of T’arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili (1793-1874), his near contemporary from East Georgia. Both were raised in the pre-Russian period, commanded impeccable training at the top chant institutions of their respective regions, were highly-respected and well known members of society, held contentious relationships with local Russian authorities, and maintained strict discipline among their students.

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301 For more on T’arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili, an important East Georgian chanter, see the section, 3.2.5 T’arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili.
3.5.4 Ant'on Dumbadze, Master Teacher

One of Giorgi Dumbadze’s students in particular, Ant'on Dumbadze, was responsible for the preservation of the ‘Dumbadze style’ or chant tradition of Shemokmedi Monastery. Ant'on Dumbadze (1827-1907), who by the end of the nineteenth century would be universally recognized as the most talented chanter in Georgia, studied chant and folk music with his uncle Giorgi Dumbadze at the Shemokmedi Monastery and later with the master-chanter Davit Shotadze at the Gelati monastery (Figure 23).

While at the Shemokmedi Monastery, where he was tutored by members of the aristocratic Tskvit'ishvili family, he also excelled at the study of history, literature, and military tactics. Raised in the 1830s, young Ant'on Dumbadze’s education was still very much in keeping with the feudal age of Georgia. Aristocratic children were sent to local monastic centers to be educated in the language arts, theology and philosophy, chant, and in many cases, weaponry and military tactics. Nobles were expected not only to be the bearers of the cultural and historical knowledge of the nation, but to maintain diplomatic relations and build defensive networks for times of conflict.

The first mention of Ant'on Dumbadze’s prowess as a chanter arrives in an unusual source. While traveling in West Georgia during the 1850s, the famous poet and statesman Ak’ak’i Ts'eroteli apparently took note of the ‘young Dumbadze’ while he was singing in a service in Gelati Monastery.

302 According to oral tradition, a Gurian bishop gave the village of Aketi to the three Tskvit’ishvili brothers in the 1830s. When Giorgi Dumbadze (priest of the Shemokmedi Monastery) heard that these educated men were living nearby, he paid them a monthly salary (in wine) to teach his best young students: Ant'on Dumbadze and Maksime Chkhat'araishvili.
Ts’ereteli later recalled, “…there were two choirs, one with the young Ant’on Dumbadze of the ‘excellent bass voice,’ the other a choir of older chanters, who weren’t as strong because of their
ears, but whose prayers came out of deep experience.…  

Ant'on Dumbadze emulated the pedagogical approach of his uncle, taking on dozens if not hundreds of chant students, all while maintaining a military career in the Russian Imperial army. According to one of his students, the Dumbadze method involved mastering no less than 3750 chants over the course of one’s 3-5 year apprenticeship. In the final decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, Dumbadze’s students were active throughout East and West Georgia, playing a critical role in the notation of ‘Dumbadze style’ chant into western five-line staff notation. One of these students, Melk’elsidek’ Nak’ashidze, also played a prominent role in teaching chant (Figure 24).

3.5.5 Benedikte Bark'alaia

Benedikte Bark'alaia (1834-1911), an eccentric Georgian aristocrat from the Samegrelo-Abkhaz region in Western Georgia, decided to revitalize the community of Georgian monks on the ‘Holy Mountain’ of Mount Athos, Greece. The Iveron Monastery, built by Georgians in the tenth-eleventh centuries, was one of the oldest and most respected monasteries on the peninsula, but following the fourteenth century when the Georgian monarchy had been unable to maintain the monastery due to political instability in the Caucasus, it had been run by Greeks.

Bark'alaia resolved to become a monk and reinvigorate the Georgian monastic community on Mount Athos after a harrowing experience in the Russian military in 1858. He followed through with these vows, placing his considerable wealth in trust, and beginning his monastic lifestyle. After a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he traveled to Constantinople and eventually to Mount Athos, where he re-energized the existing Georgian monastic community by rebuilding the skete of St. John the Theologian. When Bark'alaia arrived in 1865, only five old monks remained of a once thriving community. Bark'alaia used his funds to rebuild the monastery infrastructure, attract more monastics to the brotherhood, and create a vibrant spiritual community of Georgians on the peninsula.

303 The source does not specifically mention the Gelati Monastery, but this is inferred from the name, Sino K’andelak’i, who was a known chanter at the Gelati monastery. Recorded in Ak’ak’i Ts’ereteli, "Mogoneba: pekhta bana" [Memories: the Bathing of the Feet], K’vali Journal, No. 28 (Tbilisi, July 3, 1894) republished in Tkhzulebata sruli k’rebuli 1890-1900 [Letters, 1890-1900: Complete Collection], Vol. 13, ed. G. Amzianidze (Tbilisi: Soviet Georgia State Publisher, 1961), 137-139.
305 Ant’on Natroev [Natroshvili]. Натроев А. Иверский монастырь на Афоне, в Турции, на одном из выступов Халкидонского полуострова (1910), 357.
In seeking to bring chanters to Mount Athos, Abbot Benedikte Bark'alaia found Ant'on Dumbadze. He wrote about this revelation, exclaiming, “In all Georgia, I found one brilliant man in Guria with knowledge of the old chants, his surname Dumbadze; I brought nine young men to him to be trained [in chant] over five years.”

Apparently Bark'alaia not only brought promising chanters to Guria to be trained in chant, but also invited them to visit the St. John the Theologian monastery on Mount Athos. Among some of those young chanters who took advantage of this opportunity were Melkisedek’ Nak'ashidze, the Molarishvili brothers, Davit Jinch’aradze, Pilip’e Sharashidze, Nest'or K'ont'ridze, Ivliane Khavtasi, and other students who would play vital roles in the preservation of West Georgian chant.

3.6 Chapter Conclusion

In summary, the revival of the chant tradition in eighteenth century East Georgia proved critical to the long-term preservation of traditional polyphonic liturgical chant. As a system that relied on oral transmission, that revival allowed existing master chanters to thrive in a chant schools that specifically coveted their services, and to teach students that were genuinely interested in their knowledge. The generation of chanters trained just before the Russian annexation of Georgia and takeover of the Georgian Church were resilient enough to teach a few more chanters who were able to continue the master's tradition of chant through to the beginning of the transcription era in the 1880s. While it is easy to find individual Russian authorities to scapegoat for the degradation of the oral chant tradition, the reality is far more complex. Without Russian intervention in 1801, both East and West Georgia would have remained under the control of the Qajar Persians and the Ottoman Turks.

But Russian colonialism came with a price for Georgian traditional music. European innovations in opera, theater, instrumentation, and chorus quickly became popular in the urban


307 P’et’re K’onch’oshvili, "Mogzauroba Ierusalimsa da Atonis Mtaze" [Travels in Jerusalem and on Mount Athos] (T’pilisi: Sharadze & Friends Press, 1901), 181-182, republished and edited by Zaza Vashaqmadze (Tbilisi: Nek’eri Press, 2010). According to P’et’re K’onch’oshvili, who traveled to Mount Athos in the 1880s, “within the Georgian monastery at Athos there is a sweet-singing chant choir… among these are, Sir Melk’esidek’ Nak’ashidze, Mr. Giorgi Molaridze the worthy disciple of the Shemokmedi Monastery in Guria, Mr. K’ont’ridze, Mr. Ch’inch’aradze and Mr. Pilip’e Sharashidze… all of them can sing Georgian chant to the eight tones under the leadership of Ant’on Dumbadze.”
centers of Tbilisi and Kutaisi, and with these arts came prestige, a chance to travel and perform abroad, and exposure to the great classical music traditions of Western Europe. The educated elite of Georgia, by and large, became far more interested in these new possibilities than in pursuing the arcane traditions of their ancestors. Thus, a combination of all of these factors led to the loss of interest in traditional chant, which gradually went into irreversible decline.

Notable families kept the chant tradition in practice through the nineteenth century, despite any support from the Russian-administered Church and often at the expense of public respectability. In Eastern Georgia the K’arbelashvili dynasty proved the most resilient, with each successive family patriarch instilling in his children and their friends a deep commitment to the ecclesiastical tradition. In Western Georgia, the multi-faceted military general Ant’on Dumbadze seemingly led two careers as, in addition to commanding military units, he is credited with training hundreds of chant students in the sophisticated and complex West Georgian polyphonic chant tradition (including his eight sons). His legacy endures to this day in the music transcribed from him and his students in the last decades of his life. Despite the heroic efforts of these families, many other chant traditions were lost, such as those from the highland regions of Rach’a and Svaneti. Without the efforts of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) and others, the K’arbelashvili and Dumbadze traditions could have been lost as well.
Chapter IV: Urban Politics and the Early Transcriptions

By the 1870s, the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Church Chant had been established for more than a decade. Grigol K’arbelashvili taught at the Tbilisi Seminary for a decade before being dismissed in 1872. Ant’on Dumbadze’s students had traveled to Mount Athos to solidify their chant skills, and returned to chant in the various parishes in Guria. Despite these success stories, the general decline of high quality chant was evident to all observers. It seemed like a troubling trend in all spheres of Georgian culture and art as European advances in military, education, finance, and architecture were promoted in thunderous fashion by the colonial bureaucrats dispatched from St. Petersburg to administer the Russification of the South Caucasus.

Despite challenges from the political and ecclesiastical Russian elites, Georgian clergymen and 'new nationalists' attempted to harness public financial and moral support for a wider preservation movement of traditional chant. The urgency of the situation—the complete decline and loss of the centuries-old oral liturgical tradition of the Georgian Orthodox Church—came to a critical point in the 1870s, when chanters and their supporters gathered to try to determine possible avenues to save the tradition from complete loss. These meetings led to the first concerted efforts to preserve the oral tradition of chant through writing.

The Georgian Orthodox Church suffered from a variety of issues in the late nineteenth century: Russian authoritarianism, declining parishes, revenue drop, and infrastructural problems with churches and cathedrals, to mention a few. Not many clergymen could afford to pay attention to the decreasing numbers of qualified chanters throughout Georgia. It was merely one problem among many. Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze prioritized the plight of the declining chant tradition, however, galvanizing many allies behind his efforts to support master chanters and eventually, transcription in European notation. In so doing, he also gained many critical glances from within the Russian administration, as well as from doubters within the Georgian Orthodox community.

In this chapter we review the efforts of the Committee to bring together chanters from East and West Georgia together in Tbilisi for a massive publicity event thinly disguised as a “competition.” This was a watershed event as it succeeded in raising awareness among decision-
makers and wealthy individuals, and kept the subject of chant preservation circulating in Tbilisian press circles for years to follow. The event was perceived as more than an exhibition of two different chant styles, but as a moment when leading members of the emerging National-Democratic party asserted their moral adoption of ‘the plight of Georgian chant’ as a rallying cry for larger issues of national and ecclesiastical independence from Russia. Moreover, Okrop’iridze realized that his long-standing support of the old-style apprenticeship system of chant pedagogy (K’arbelashvili in particular), could never fully solve the long-term transmission problem. He needed to turn to more radical preservation methods, even if that meant relying on “Russian” (European) music notation as a means to transcribe and preserve chant.

Figure 25. Tbilisi (19th century)
4.1 The Committee

In 1878, a request from the Tbilisi Seminary was sent to Bishop Gabriel of Guria requesting that a choir of expert Georgian chanters be sent to Tbilisi for a competition (Figure 25). The event was organized by Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze, who vowed to determine which of the two choirs—from the East or from the West—should have their chant funded for transcription into European notation. Ant’on Dumbadze was expected to lead the West Georgian choir, but when the Russian-Ottoman war flared up in the summer of 1878, Dumbadze was unable to leave his position as a commander in the local regiment. Instead, the bishop sent the chanter Maksime Chkhat'araishvili, along with several of the above-mentioned students, in Dumbadze's place. The events directly preceding this watershed moment in the preservation of chant warrant some discussion.

4.1.1 Cash Incentives

In Tbilisi, Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze and the Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Church Chant were looking for ways to increase publicity, activity, and funding for their collective initiatives. In 1877, in a radical move to shake up the musical and ecclesiastical establishment in Tbilisi, Okrop’iridze offered the sum of 500 maneti (rubles) as an “award” to anyone who would successfully start to transcribe Georgian liturgical chant into notation.308 According to P’olievkt’os Karbelashvili, who wrote about the event in 1898, the offer of such an enormous sum drove “people to become obsessed with this money.” Within weeks, several professional musicians made themselves known to the committee, and within the next five years, the transcription of Georgian chant began in earnest. The Committee faced one serious problem: charlatanism. Many musicians in Georgia apparently had some knowledge of European notation, but finding a real professional who could accurately transcribe the particular nuances of Georgian chant — an orally transmitted repertory — proved difficult.

308 P’olievkt’os Karbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 91. In 1885, the Tsarist ruble was pegged to gold at the rate of 1 ruble=4 French francs and to $0.77 US. In 1897 there was a revaluation at 2 2/3 francs and $0.514 US. For more on currency values, see Chester L. Krause and Clifford Mishler, 1994 Standard Catalog of World Coins (Iola WI: Krause Publications, 1993).
4.1.2 Public Skepticism

Perspectives on the viability of European notation varied. Many master chanters, such as Ant’on Dumbadze in the West Georgian province of Guria, were skeptical that “Russian notes” could accurately reflect the fluid multi-voiced performance of Georgian traditional music. Prominent members of Tbilisi society were equally skeptical, on the grounds that Georgian music was based on completely different principles and could not be notated. But for the members of the Committee, who realized that simply teaching new students the basic liturgy chants would never suffice to preserve the inherited masters-level chant tradition, the transcription and distribution of chant in European notation represented the last possible means to stave off the increasingly imminent demise of the oral tradition. Unfortunately, the difficulty of transcription would become obvious from the number of early failures to notate Georgian chant.

According to P’et’re Umik’ashvili, a journalist writing in 1878, the difference between traditional music and European notation could be likened to the difference in pronunciation of different languages.

It is necessary to invite an educated musician not only because of the difficulty of writing notation but because there are other demands in this work as well. Someone whose ear is used to music and chant can easily differentiate European music from our Georgian chant. [It is clear that] the alphabet of notation was designed for European voices and music. [Meanwhile] Georgian instruments, chants, and also therefore folksongs, are sung in such a way that they do not fit with European notation in the same way that [for example], the articulation of the Georgian [non-aspirated] sounds q and ch’ do not exist in any European language. Moreover, Georgian rules concerning the harmony and concordance of voice parts are different from the rules in Europe.

Such perspectives dampened hope that any solution to the problem would be achieved. In this climate of futility and desperation, coupled with the increasing domination of Russian culture in every aspect of Georgian civil and religious life, Okrop’iridze decided that only a massively lucrative and public award would shake up the apathetic music community in Georgia.

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4.1.3 Inviting West Georgian Chanters to Tbilisi

But the gamble of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) to offer an attention-gathering reward paid off in unexpected ways. First, several musicians unexpectedly submitted chant transcriptions, and second, the idea to bring East and West Georgian chanters together for a public event was born. These two events would generate substantial momentum for the preservation of chant in the years to come. In response to the first submission of chant transcriptions, Okrop’iridze appointed a committee to review the submissions (see the section, 4.4 Early Transcription Efforts).

The committee rejected the first submissions of chant transcriptions. But instead of faulting the transcribers for improperly notating chants, the committee made an unusual recommendation (considering their strong affiliation with East Georgian chant). In a statement to Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze), they said, “It will be necessary to invite a specialist from a Georgian diocese where Georgian chant has not completely disappeared, and with this person, to help the committee to transcribe chant into notation.” This enigmatic response apparently implied that they would seek consultation from master-chanters in West Georgia, especially the regions of Guria and Imereti, where the oral folk and chant tradition was still strong. In another source, P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili cited the committee as saying, “it would be better if you invited chanters from Western Georgia, and with their help, transcribe Georgian chant.”

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311 Andria Mrevlishvili and Grigol Ch’relashvili submitted various transcriptions of liturgical chants to the Committee in early 1878 (see the section, 4.4.1 The Mrevlishvili and Ch’relashvili Transcriptions).
312 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 86. The committee members included mostly students of Grigol K’arbelashvili: the priests P’olievkt’os and Vasil K’arbelashvili, Grigol Mgherabishvili, Alexander Molodinashvili. Also Vasil Aushev.
314 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 86. The suggestion to call West Georgian chanters is interesting. Is this comment to be interpreted as a gesture of deference to the long-standing authority of the West Georgian tradition (Gelati Monastery in particular)? Or if not a suggestion of deference, perhaps it was an indication that chanters in general recognized the unifying principles of East and West, and thus felt that any transcription project of traditional chant should involve fair representation.
One option included sending two members of the panel, Archimandrite Mak'ari Mat'atashvili (of the Bodbe Monastery) and Deacon Vasil Aushev (director of the Exarch's episcopal choir in Tbilisi), to find a suitable master chanter in West Georgia who would agree to work with a qualified musician to transcribe chant into European notation. Instead, Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) wrote a letter to his counterpart in Guria requesting that master chanters be released from regular duties to travel to Tbilisi for a public performance.

A response to this request arrived from Bishop Gabriel T’usk’ia of Guria, naming two chanters: "... the best chanter in Guria, Ant’on Dumbadze, is with the army... after him the next best chanter is the Priest Maksime Chkhat'araishvili and the plan is to send him, God willing.
There are no better chanters in Guria than these." In September, 1878, the elder Chkhat’araishvili arrived in Tbilisi, East Georgia (Figure 25), with three other Gurian chanters. Little did they realize that their distinctive chant style would be compared, analyzed, and dissected in comparison to the more familiar East Georgian style, with the goal of determining which chant style should be preserved for posterity in written European notation.

4.2 The Chant Competition of 1878

The suggestion to hold a public event coincided with a change in leadership, as a new Russian appointee, Archbishop Ioanike Rudnev, arrived in Tbilisi to serve as Exarch over the Georgian Orthodox Church. Exarch Rudnev accepted the petition to hold an exposition of Georgian traditional chant in Tbilisi, thus leading to the events of September, 1878. Bishop Alexander Okrop'iridze and Mak'ari Mat'atashvili promoted the event as a competition between expert church choirs from East and West Georgia. Ostensibly, the audiences were to judge which choir presented the more authentic chant style in order to disperse funding for transcription. In reality, the authenticity of neither tradition was in doubt, but Okrop'iridze needed a controversy to solicit public attention for the event. I argue that his true goal was simply gaining publicity and financial commitments from attending members of society. He achieved both goals.

4.2.1 The Performance

They proposed a public service, to be held on the feastday of the Elevation of the Cross, 14 September, at which the best chanters from East and West Georgia would be evaluated. “There were two choirs in the Sioni: to the left, the chanters normal station, a choir of Kartl-

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316 The first meeting of the choirs occurred on September 3, 1878, as reported in the *Droeba Journal*, No. 180 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Sept. 6, 1878, 3. “Several knowledgeable chanters were invited to the church of the Orbeliani aristocrats: the Gurian Priest Maksime Chkhat’araishvili and the elder K’arbelovi. The purpose of the meeting was to determine which chant style would be better for transcription into notation, and which was most pleasing to hear.” Thank you to Luarsab T’ogonidze for pointing out that the original site of this church was located inside the Orbeliani residence at #4 Vakhtang Orbeliani Street, Tbilisi (which later housed the US Embassy in the 1990s).
K’akhetian chanters stood on a stand, and to the right, a choir of Imeretian-Gurian chanters took their place. Among the Kartl-K’akhetians were 5-6 men, and among the Imeretians 3-4…”

The first service was held in the Sioni Cathedral (Figure 26), but in total, the two choirs ‘faced off’ against each other in public religious services four times during the months of September and October, 1878. The chanters described were the students of Grigol K’arbelashvili including some combination of his sons Vasil, P’olievkt'os, Andria, and P'et're, and the priests Grigol Mghebrishvili, Alexander Molodinashvili (Figure 29). The West Georgian chanters were represented by the elderly priest, Maksime Chkhat’araishvili, as well as three students of Ant'on Dumbadze: Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze (Figure 27), Nest'or K'ont'ridze (Figure 28), and Ivliane Khavtasi.

A great deal of excitement surrounded these chant performances, and Okrop’iridze’s popularization of the events proved to be provocative and effective. A significant secondary interest included the effort to raise funds for the ongoing preservation of chant through the support of master chanters and the search for qualified musicians capable of transcribing chant into European notation. With these goals in mind, publicity for the event was pushed to a feverish level, with several articles emerging in the Iveria journal and the Droeba newspaper prior to the event, as well as extensive discussion in the papers after the event. This amount of coverage, rare for the period, offers a detailed glimpse into the discussions that surrounded the preservation of chant, especially (for the purposes of our subject) in regards to transcription.

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318 The two choirs performed services on the following dates in 1878: 3 Sept. in the Orbeliani church; 14 Sept. in the Sioni Cathedral; 24 Sept. in the Anchiskhat’i church; and 17 Oct. again in the Sioni Cathedral.
319 Scant details have emerged about the life of the priest and chanter Ivane Khavtasi (1824-?). In 1857 he was a chanter in the central cathedral in Ouzurgeti, Guria region, but then became a member of Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze’s choir in Abkhazia for many years. In 1871 he returned to Guria, and in 1878 he came to Tbilisi by invitation of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) where he remained with the other Gurians for several years.
To raise the profile of the event amongst the Tbilisi public, it was suggested that the chant of the Eastern Georgian style might have been influenced by the melodies of the Persian courts. This recurring suspicion constantly resurfaced in the minds of the non-musically educated general society, as the Persians had dominated the Kartl-K’akhetian kingdom for more than four centuries. Others questioned whether West Georgian chant resembled East Georgian chant at all. Underlying all of the discourse was a question on which chant style should be transcribed into notation, as opined by this observer following the concert in the Anchiskhat’it Church (Figure 30) in September, 1878:

If only you had been in the Anchiskhat’i Church yesterday at 5 o'clock, such exquisite Georgian chanting was heard! One invited priest chanter came from Guria so that we could observe, whether their chant would resemble the [general] mode of the Georgians. With this question, many chanteries assembled at the church, and after the vespers service, members of the Committee and other people gathered to discuss [these matters] in the living room of the Archimandrite [Mak’ari Mat’atashvili] in the presence of Bishop Alexander [Okrop’iridze], the founder of this good work.

Prestigious members of society were invited to evaluate the chanteries, with the ‘winner’ to receive a commission to work with a qualified musician to transcribe their repertory. In reality, the authenticity of East Georgian chant was never in doubt. Okrop’iridze hoped to transcribe all

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320 For more on the issue of Persian modal and ornamental influence in Georgian chant, see the section, 3.3.4 Is Persian Music to Blame
322 Significantly, older Georgian clergymen, who could remember the traditional services from before the severe Russification of the Georgian Church, were invited to provide commentary on the longevity and veracity of the Georgian chant tradition. Their perspective and commentary was particularly valuable to Okrop’iridze and the other Committee members who sought to legitimize their claims that the invited chanteries were truly representative of ancient Georgian ecclesiastical culture, and thus a basis for the continuing demand for the reinstatement of the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church. Several articles about the event appeared in the Iveria newspaper in 1878, including numbers 8, 17, 38, & 39 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library). Also see Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 92.
Georgian chant—both East and West—but needed publicity for his fund-raising efforts. The successive 'competitions' brought him, and the chant tradition, exactly that.

Figure 29. The East Georgian Choir, 1885

By October, 1878, the Tbilisi public had grown weary of the competition, and demanded conclusions and decisions from the Committee. According to one article in the Droeba journal, "The church is not a good place for these experiments." These public demands were exactly what Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) and Archimandrite Mat'atashvili needed, as they were given the authority to make decisions concerning the future of the preservation of Georgian church chant that carried weight with a wider public.

In retrospect, three themes emerge from the events of 1877-1878: 1) broader public interest in the traditional chant as expressed through public debates on style, preservation, and transcription; 2) the ability to appeal to the wider public for funds to support well-publicized projects; 3) the beginning of the transcription era of Georgian church chant.

**Figure 30.** The Anchiskhat’i Church (6th century), Tbilisi

### 4.2.2 Reaction to the Competition

For the general public in Tbilisi, the juxtaposition of the two chant styles—East and West—created an entertaining stir. Judging from the available sources in print media from September-October, 1878, discussion seems to have covered a wide range of topics including musical observations on vocal style and ornamentation, but also opinions on the qualitative, aesthetic similarities and differences of East and West Georgian chant. Some writers were clearly more educated in Georgian traditional music than others, while regional biases were expressed freely.
The chanters attracted the listener's attention especially when they took the beginning of the chant from the others [choir]. The singing of Chkhat'araishvili was more pleasant for the listeners. Even though he did not have fellow chanters who knew his style [well], he sang sometimes 'high bass' and sometimes low, and sometimes ts'vrili voice, and that's how he was able to disguise his fellow chanter's defects. As for the K'arbelov chants, many of them resembled one another, so I think that they are probably modifications of the Gurian chants.  

Several details emerge from this commentary. The first comment suggests that the two choirs sang antiphonally, starting the beginning of their chant on the cadence of the other choir. If this reading is accurate, then one may also assume that the choirs organized the program in order to designate what verses and which chants would be sung antiphonally.  

Next, the writer ("Mamateli") clearly preferred the singing of the West Georgian choir, but he also did not fail to criticize them for various perceived 'defects'. The musical terminology in this passage is also intriguing, including such words as ts'vrili (thin voice), maghali bani (high bass), and bani (bass).  

As for the final comment about the K’arbelashvili chants from East Georgia, it is an interesting observation. Before simply dismissing it as a biased and non-educated comment, it is worth noting that to any inexperienced ear, East Georgian chant is much more simple than West Georgian chant, particularly in its harmonic movement. The basic harmonies are relatively static, relying heavily on parallel motion in the lower voice parts at the intervals of a third, fifth, and octave, so it is understandable that a listener would hear them collectively as being very similar. But why mention that they were modifications of Gurian chant, especially if the West Georgian chanters sounded so different? Indeed there are similarities, as we conclude through music analysis further in the dissertation, but there are also significant differences. This leaves the question, to what extent did the master-chanters that were brought from the Gelati Monastery in

325 Meanwhile, his affirmation of Maksime Chkhat'araishvili (d. 1885) as the best of the Gurian singers fits historical accounts citing the elder priest as being one of the most accomplished students of the legendary Giorgi Dumbadze (see the section, 3.5.3 The Shemokmedi Monastery and Giorgi Dumbadze).  
326 The high voice is called by its timbral quality—ts'vrili (thin voice)—instead of the more typical designation as mtkmeli (the one who speaks). The use of this term may reflect the writer's impression of the Gurian performance aesthetic—thin-voiced, nasal, high in range—as such qualities are typical in performances of Gurian folk music. Meanwhile, the accompanying voices are not called ‘second’ or ‘third’ or names from folk music such as modzakhili (one who calls), but just ‘bass’ and ‘high bass.’ These designations clearly illustrate the functional relationship of the voice parts to one another, because the term ‘bass’ has the dual meaning of ‘low voice’ and ‘accompanying voice.’
the mid-eighteenth century (led by Gerasime Antadze) affect the tradition of chant in East Georgia? This is a debate that continues in scholarly circles today.

Another observer of the service in the Sioni Cathedral on September 14th, 1878, noted the difference in performance timbre and ornamental style, also astutely recognizing the common root of their melodies.327

The motivic-melodies of the fundamental chant voices between the two styles are one and the same. But the noticeable differences of the voices lie in the twisting and turning, and the ups and downs, which divide one style from the other and create a different color. The Kartl-K’akhetians chant with their throats fully open, while the Imeret-Gurians hum and whir with their noses, producing a ringing tone. It sounds almost like the ringing of the bells on Good-Friday…. According to my impressions, this is the difference between the chant styles.328

The author continues the article with more analysis, while also admonishing both choirs for a ‘lack of rehearsals’ which would have made their performance ‘that much more wonderful.’

This type of description was meant to educate the public about what to listen for when attending future services, and also to highlight the issues at stake in the ‘evaluation’ of the two choirs by the Okrop’iridze and the Committee for the Restoration of Church Chant. This description of voice quality provided an aesthetic differentiation between East and West. But the most striking comment from this witness is the first: the unity of the lead-voice melodies. Despite all of the incongruences in harmonic variation, ornamentation, and vocal timbre, the observation that a fundamental unity exists between the motives of the respective regional styles suggests common musical roots, and a sophisticated oral transmission to preserve those common roots.

4.2.3 Unity and Difference of Regional Style

The debate on the unity of chant style should have been put to rest with a pronouncement by Maksime Chkhat’araishvili, the leader of the West Georgian choir. But sources show that this debate continued for decades. Responding to speculation in the press on the question of whether Eastern or Western Georgian chant was more authentic, the elderly chanter said:

327 This is one of the first times that the similarity of the regional styles of Georgian chant was noted in the press, an important observation that is explored through comparative analysis of regional chant schools in the section, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison.
Sir, this chanting [event], for which we were brought here, you already have it! I do not understand why you spent so much money to bring us here. Eastern Georgian chant is no different from our Western Georgian chant, and can be sung together.\textsuperscript{329}

The Chkhat'araishvili comment is noteworthy for several reasons, especially in signaling that the structure of Georgian chant shared common musical roots. It also reflects the resiliency and the flexibility of the professional transmission of chant, which persisted in both East and West Georgia.

The concept of stylistic unity across regions, understood implicitly by the senior chanter, was enthusiastically embraced by the members of the Committee and their supporters. This idea gained traction, and recurs frequently in the literature. Another reference from twenty years later, for example, expresses the same idea: “If we take what we call the sada k’ilo [simple style] of Gurian-Imeretian chant and compare it with that of the Kartl-K’akhetian chant, we find that they are the same, save for a turn of the voice here or there that distinguishes one from the other.”\textsuperscript{330}

The observation that the Eastern and Western chant systems shared essential musical qualities, even after several centuries of relatively independent oral transmission, suggests a strong adherence to formal and structural musical elements.\textsuperscript{331} Though there are a number of observable differences between regional styles of Georgian chant, such as second and third voice harmonization, tempo variation, vocal timbre, and ornamentation technique, other parameters such as the melody, length of phrase, and cadence type remained remarkably similar in both regions. Considering the scale of difference between regional folk music styles within Georgia, and the relative isolation of church musicians relative to one another, the liturgical music tradition maintained by the sruligalobelni only survived through the strict adherence to the canonical melodies of the Eight Tone System (Oktoechos).

The premise that the underlying musical structure of all Georgian chant is the same, despite widely differing regional variation styles, serves as the basis for much of the research on the oral transmission of chant presented in this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{330} Anonymous, \textit{Iveria}, No. 256 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1898.
\textsuperscript{331} The regions were not completely isolated, and there are notable examples of teachers from West Georgia teaching in East Georgia. For example, the chanter Gerasime Antadze was trained at the Gelati monastery in West Georgia in the early nineteenth century, but thrived as a teacher in East Georgia. But these individual cases seem to be exceptions to the general arc of history which is characterized by the independent transmission of chant in East and West.
4.2.4 Fund-Raising for Chant Preservation

Following the widespread publicity leading up to and following these events, the Committee was able to successful lobby for the donations of money to the cause of preserving Georgian church chant. Journalists such as P'et're Umik'ashvili implored the general public to follow the example of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) in offering what they could to the cause. “Bishop Alexander gave us the highest example of sacrifice for the preservation of chant by giving fifty tumani [500 "maneti" or rubles]. Now it is our turn to follow this example by giving what we can to this work.” Archimandrite Mat'atashvili was also especially active in requisitioning donations to the cause, suggesting ways in which interested parties could give single sums, or small monthly installments to support chant teachers and chant projects. "We address all Georgians, church fathers and secular persons, and ask humbly to give us money to help us accomplish this work, either once or periodically (every month) according to your means.”

Newspapers such as Droeba and Iveria Journal began to report the exact sources for the donations publicly, in order to generate civil consciousness about the need for such support. For example, in an article dated May, 1879, the following donation sources were noted for the months following the events of September 1878. "655 maneti and 30 k'ap'ik'i were collected: Archimandrite Grigol (6); Grigol Orbeliani (20); Dimit'ri Qipiani (25); the Monastery of St. John the Theologian in David Gareja (30); Sioni Cathedral (48); Kashveti Church (30); Anchiskhat'i Cathedral (15); and others." This became common practice through the 1880s-1890s, when the editors of the Droeba and Iveria journals periodically published the names of donors with a list of amounts.

To some observers, it became clear that both traditions were equally worthy of being preserved through transcription into European notation. “I heard from a number of sources that the Gurian chant was superior, of a higher quality. But while everyone could see the differences…it was [also] clear that both styles of chant must be written down, absolutely and

334 Further sources of money are listed in the Alexander Okrop'iridze Fund, No. 99 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts). Cited in Tavberidze, XIX sauk'unis kartveli moghvats'eebi... (2005), 32.
335 Mak'ari Mat'atashvili, Droeba Journal, No. 100 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), May 16, 1879.
Nevertheless, the Committee felt that a focused effort in regards to transcription would be imperative for true progress to be accomplished and decided to retain the West Georgian trio Melkisedek’ Nak'ashidze, Ivliane Khavtasi, and Nest’or K’ont’ridze in Tbilisi. This was a curious decision considering that the Committee members were mainly East-Georgian chanters.  

The K’arbelashvili brothers, meanwhile, returned to the village of Ch’ala, where Grigol and his sons continued to chant in the Samtavisi Cathedral. There was some discontent with this decision as expressed by at least one anonymous writer in the Droeba Journal: "Archimandrite Mak'ari [Mat'atashvili] brought Gurian chanter to the city in order to notate their chants. But as there has been much talk about how the K'arbelashvili chant is true Georgian church chant, it would not be out of line in our opinion to also pay proper attention to this chant in the process of notation."

Others expressed similar opinions including someone writing under the pseudonym "Aragveli" who submitted an opinion piece to the Iveria journal requesting that Grigol K'arbelashvili be acknowledged. "It would be a lie to say there are even fifteen chanter in Georgia, because those who know only the liturgy chants we cannot call chanter. We only have one true chanter, Father Grigol K'arbelovi, who firmly remembers [all] the chant melodies. But disastrously for us, he is advanced in age."

Years later, P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili himself admitted that for the sake of preserving the brotherhood of the chant community, he and his brothers acquiesced to the decision of their Father Grigol to obey the blessing of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) and the other Committee members to sponsor the West Georgian chanters. But when the elder K’arbelashvili passed away two years later, both P’olievkt’os and Vasil returned to Tbilisi to renew their quest to preserve their family chant tradition. Without suggesting that a full rivalry existed between the Eastern and Western chanter, at least it can be observed that there was no love lost between at

337 The other members of the Committee in 1878-1879 were Grigol Dadiani, the Priest Alexander Molodinashvili, the Priest Grigol Mghebrishvili, Deacon Vasil Aushev (director of the Exarch-choir), and Mikhail Mach'avariani, see Droeba Journal, No. 220 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1878.
340 Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 93.
least a few representative members, and both parties certainly attempted to pursue their own interests.\textsuperscript{341}

### 4.3 Public Criticism

After the meeting of September 24\textsuperscript{th}, 1878, it was decided that three of the Gurian chanters, Nak’ashidze, K’ont’ridze, and Khavtasi would stay in Tbilisi to transcribe their repertory into notation. To provide for the Gurians, the Committee arranged for a monthly salary from the public donations solicited, and provided housing near the Anchiskhat’t Church in Old Town, Tbilisi.\textsuperscript{342} As part of their duties, the singers offered free lessons at the Anchiskhat’i Church,\textsuperscript{343} and the Tbilisi Seminary, as shown in a public letter of gratitude printed by many of their students.

With the assistance of Mr. Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze and Nest'or K'ont'ridze, we became worthy of hearing Georgian tunes at our theological seminary. For these good works and favors, we publicly extend our deepest thanks to Mr. Nak'ashidze and Mr. K'ont'ridze. From their Seminary students.\textsuperscript{344}

Despite these successes, the future of the transcription project remained unclear. In 1879, Okrop'iridze was assigned to the distant diocese of Guria in West Georgia, effectively removing him from the intellectual milieu of Tbilisi. In his place, Archimandrite Mak’ari Mat'atashvili (formerly of Bodbe Monastery) and Archimandrite Grigol Dadiani continued the leadership of the Committee for the Restoration of Church Chant.

The Committee began to hear criticisms for a lack of immediate and visible successes. According to one article, “They haven't done anything tangible, they haven't made a deal with even a single cent [of the donations].”\textsuperscript{345} This criticism may have prompted the committee to increase the chanter’s salaries, and more importantly, to appoint one of the Committee members

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{341} P'olievkt'os K'arbelashvili and Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze engaged in a written spat decades later, as evidenced in a series of articles published in 1911.
\textsuperscript{342} Nak’ashidze, as a nobleman and the director the group, was paid 20 maneti (rubles) per month, while Khavtasi and K’ont’ridze received 10 each. P'olievkt'os K'arbelashvili, \textit{Kartuli Saero...} (1898), 92.
\textsuperscript{343} Mak'ari Mat'ashvili, \textit{Droeba Journal}, No. 220 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Oct. 29, 1878.
\textsuperscript{344} Students of the Tbilisi Theological Seminary, \textit{Droeba Journal}, No. 24 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Feb. 4, 1883.
\end{footnotesize}
to begin the work of transcribing chant into European notation. “On April 9th, 1879 (with the approval of the Exarch) the committee decided to add 5 maneti [rubles] to each of the singer’s salaries. In addition, Mach'avariani, the Russian chant teacher at the Seminary, was paid 30 maneti for transcribing their chant.”

4.3.1 Transcription Failures

Mikhail Mach’avariani, a longtime professor of Slavonic chant at the Tbilisi Seminary and a member of the Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Church Chant, was given the responsibility of attempting to transcribe chant from the West Georgians. He was also paid to travel eighty kilometers out of the Tbilisi to transcribe chant from the aging Grigol K’arbelashvili. In the ‘History of Georgian Sacred and Secular Modes’ (1898), P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili humorlessly opined on the overall futility of this effort:

In the same years many pieces of paper were wasted by M. Mach'avariani, the teacher of Russian chant in the Seminary, who went to Ch’ala and made an old man sing [for hours on end] as if he was transcribing his chants. When he [Grigol K’arbelashvili] couldn't observe any properly written notation, he told this scholar and musician, ‘if you won't spare me this torture, at least spare yourself!' The truth of this anecdote cannot be verified, but clearly, P’olievktos K’arbelashvili did not have any respect for Mach'avariani or his work. Others also doubted the technical accuracy of the Mach’avariani transcriptions, with demands being voiced for authentication of the manuscripts from experts in St. Peters burg.

It is interesting to find in other sources that Mach’avariani responded with his own complaints about the transcription process. In an article published in 1881, he underscores some of the difficulties that Western-trained musicians encountered while trying to transcribe Georgian traditional chant into five-line staff notation, especially the obstacle of the scale used to tune the three-voiced chords. Regarding his work with the Gurian trio in 1878-79, Mach’avariani observed,

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346 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 91. As indicated earlier, in 1885, the Tsarist ruble was pegged to gold at the rate of 1 ruble=4 French francs and to $0.77 US. In 1897 there was a revaluation at 2 2/3 francs and $0.514 US. For more on currency values, see Chester L. Krause and Clifford Mishler, 1994 Standard Catalog of World Coins (Iola WI: Krause Publications, 1993).  
347 ibid.: 91.  
348 Cited in Tavberidze, XIX sauk’unis kartveli moghvats’eebi... (2005), 32.
I transcribed exactly what the Gurian singers sang, and if this notation is not sufficient to your taste, do not blame me, for this is the nature of Georgian chant. The first voice adapted well to notation, but I had trouble with the other two voices because [in my transcription] they ended up sounding like Russian-Italian harmony. If we use Russian-Italian rules to transcribe Georgian chant, they will definitely reflect the Russian-Italian k'ilo [tuning] and not be accepted by the Georgian people.\(^{349}\)

Unfortunately, none of the Mach’avariani transcriptions have surfaced in the modern era.\(^{350}\) Therefore, it is impossible to independently verify the reasons for K’arbelashvili’s critique. But it is clear from the available sources that Mach’avariani was a willing transcriber, but by his own admission struggled to fully and accurately notate the three-voiced structure of Georgian chant. Furthermore, there was general discontent with the quality of his transcriptions both from his chanter-informants and from the general public.

This criticism carried over to the Committee for the Restoration of Georgian Church Chant. In the news section of the Droeba Journal, an editorial opined:

> The work of [protecting] Georgian church chant is not moving forward properly... Father Mak’ari has stepped back from making any new decisions for now. They say that chanters cannot approach their own duties properly, such as teaching the deacons, and worst of all, they say that some of the notation transcribed by Mach’avariani (the elder) is completely worthless.\(^ {351}\)

Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze responded to the criticism, defending the actions Archimandrite Mak’ari Mat’atashvili, his longtime friend and collaborator on the Committee since his tenure at the Bodbe Monastery in the early 1860s. "Archimandrite Mak’ari has done many deeds for chant and demonstrated different kinds of help; for this he is worthy of our gratefulness."\(^ {352}\) And in a broader response to the public negativity with the activities of the Committee, Okrop’iridze appealed for patience.

> I request that everyone exercise patience concerning the work of [preserving] chant. It hasn’t been very long since this chant committee was founded, and I, as the appointed

\(^{349}\) Mikhail Mach’avariani, quoted by Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze in his article in Droeba Newspaper, #137-138 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), July 3, 1881, 2-3.

\(^{350}\) A handwritten book of arranged folksongs by Mach’avariani does exist. It includes two dozen folksongs, and one East Georgian chant arranged into four voices (Krist’e aghdga—Christ is Risen). Mikheil Mach’avariani, “Samshoblo Khmebi” (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory Dept. of Folklore Library, 1878).

\(^{351}\) Anonymous, Droeba Journal, No. 26 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Feb. 2, 1880. As the editors of the journal at the time were Iliia Ch’avch’avadze and Sergei Meskhi, we can assume that they either wrote or endorsed this criticism.

\(^{352}\) Alexander Okrop’iridze, letter (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, Fund 99). Cited in Tavberidze, XIX sauk’unis kartveli moghvats’eebi... (2005), 32.
head of this afore-mentioned committee, try not to mention badly the theme chant, neither with tongue nor pen, as these bad comments do not [create] a clean atmosphere. Give me two or three years and let's see how the business of chant [preservation] and transcription proceeds. There is a saying that ‘those who hurry will be late.’ Also, the result will reveal the culmination of this work. Perhaps, in the end, the children of old Iberia [Georgia] will say: ‘light is shining on the horizon of Georgian church chant;’ and ‘in the proper manner, church chant was transcribed into notation.’

Without a proper answer to the difficulties of transcribing traditional Georgian chant, however, the Committee continued to find itself in an embattled position.

### 4.3.2 In Defense of Budgets

In 1884, tensions flared once again, this time concerning the use of funds donated publicly to the activities of the Committee. As one writer irritably demanded, "We hope that he [Okrop'iridze] will inform us how much money he collected for the restoration of chant and where that money is." Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) responded to this question from Guria by stating that, "Money was collected for the study of chant in schools, not for transcription into notation.” He also further detailed his position on the question of the transcription of East and West Georgian chant, and his loyalties to the choirs representing both regional styles.

1) I have never been against the transcription of Georgian chant. On the contrary, with the permission of the Exarch, I took responsibility for the restoration of Kartl-K’akhuri-style church chant at my own expense.

2) I have never been against Gurian-style chant. I said then, and I say now that Gurian-style chant is excellent in its own homeland of Guria. In Georgia (in Kartli and K’akheti), Gurian-style chant cannot be established, as experience has proven.

3) I am not against the Church Chant Committee, but I refuse to be the leader of it.

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353 ibid.
354 Anonymous, "Letter from Guria," *Mts'qemsi* Journal, No. 13 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), July 1, 1884. Historian Luarsab T’ogonidze suggests that this letter was written by Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze, who was well known for his caustic prose.
356 ibid. General criticism towards the leadership of the Committee, suggests historian Ilia Tavberidze, likely influenced the bishop's decision to step aside from the leadership of the organization that he had shepherded since its inception in 1860. He continued to be an active and influential proponent of supporting chant teachers, however, and especially the ongoing efforts to transcribe chant into music notation. In May of 1884, Alexander Okrop’iridze commissioned the young Russian composer, Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov, to transcribe the liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and Basil the Great from the K’arbelashvili brothers and their choir, a project detailed in the section, 4.5.3 The Ippolitov-Ivanov Transcriptions.
4.3.3 Trouble with the Russian Exarch, 1884

This back and forth eventually led to a high-level intervention from the Russian authorities. P’ayle Lebedev, the Russian-appointed Exarch, demanded that the Committee publically declare their organizational mission, or face closure by executive order.357 This direct challenge to the existence of the Committee prompted the acting directors, Archimandrite Mak’ari Mat’atashvili and Archimandrite Grigol Dadiani to call a general meeting of review in 1884, which was reportedly attended by members of the intelligentsia such as Ak’ak’i Ts’ereteli, an influential writer and poet. While the purpose of the meeting was to establish the direction of the movement for the preservation of chant, it was also an occasion for various influential members of the intellectual and ecclesiastical community to express their opinions in a direct and public manner.

Figure 31. The Tbilisi Seminary (1890)

357 Reported in the Mts'qemsi Journal, No. 23 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Dec. 1, 1884. Cited in Tavberidze, XIX sau’unis kartveli moghvats’eebi... (2005), 35. The authority of the office of the Russian-appointed Exarch in the Caucasus was final and complete on matters of jurisprudence over the Georgian Orthodox Church.
P’avle Chudetsk’i, the Russian rector of the Tbilisi Seminar (Figure 31), and a known skeptic of Georgian liturgical history and culture, was in attendance at the meeting. Before long, he made several self-satisfied comments that aggravated the assembled crowd.

This business, though blessed by God, has some challenges. I know from knowledgeable people that Georgian chant is so specific and so different from other people's chants that to transcribe it into Russian notation is impossible. We will have to invent [new] musical notation that will be appropriate for Georgian chant. This will require a lot of work, time, and finances, and unfortunately, the Church of Georgia is too poor to afford it. 358

In response to this pessimistic (but perhaps realistic) view, Vasil Aushev, the Russian director of the Exarch’s choir and a longtime member of the Committee for the Restoration of Church Chant, stood up and publicly disagreed with this position. According to witnesses, Chudetsk’i responded with tactless patronizing to the whole assembly: “Georgians, forget your barking. You would do better to learn melodious Slavic chant, which is pleasing to the Lord!” These comments, in the context of a heated discussion on the preservation of Georgian traditional chant, obviously raised the hackles of many of the leading thinkers in attendance.

Some, such as Ak’ak’i Ts’ereteli, responded immediately, while others such as Dimit’ri Qipiani, reserved condemnation for public letters to the press. Ts’ereteli’s words from the event are representative:

You may say no to our desires, for that is your right. But now you have touched our ‘holy of holies’ with your clumsiness. You believe that we, Georgians, will become Slavs with your blessing. Georgia has a grand history with a rich and ancient culture, and for our own destiny, the road shall be prepared by us. No abusive force will change this road. For one hundred years the Georgian nation hasn't forsaken its identity, and neither will it change in the future. The Georgian nation will protect and develop its own incomparable music, that which has an embroidered immortal soul… it doesn't need your help! 359

Following these words, others spoke their mind, and just in case those in authority might consider their position secure, an well known writer named Alexander Qazbegi stated unilaterally that all statements made in the meeting would be published in the following daily newspapers. Chudetsk’i had no choice but to conclude the meeting. 360

360 Discussed in Tavberidze, *XIX sauk’unis kartveli moghvats’eebi*... (2005), 35.
4.3.4 Consequences

The consequences of this meeting played themselves out over the following months and years. One of the attendees, Dimit’ri Qipiani, former mayor of Tbilisi and long-time supporter of the chant preservation movement dating to the K’arbelashvili chant school in Bodbe Monastery in the early 1860s, wrote a public letter of protest which questioned the legitimacy of the entire Russian administration in Georgia. Such open resistance from high-ranking Georgians provoked the Russian authorities into arresting and exiling Qipiani to Stavropol, Russia.\footnote{Dimit’ri Qipiani was assassinated on Oct. 24, 1887, while living in exile in Stavropol, Russia. He was exiled in part because of the critical letter that he wrote to Chudetsk’i in response to the 1884 meeting concerning the transcription of Georgian chant.} The dramatic arrest quieted public outrage for a time, but Chudesk’i remained an unpopular figure. Two years later, on May 24th, 1886, Chudetsk’i was stabbed to death in an altercation with Ioseb Laghiashvili, a recently suspended seminary student who had been found with Marxist publications.\footnote{Ioseb Laghiashvili (1866-?) was a member of a radical group called Rtsmena da Samshoblo [Faith and Homeland] and became an instant hero for his ignominious act (assassinating Chudetsk’i). Instead of condemning the crime, the Georgian press defended Laghiashvili, and the royal Konstatine Mukhran-Bagrat’ioni personally hired the best trial lawyer in the city, T’urkevich, to defend him in court. The verdict found him too young to be executed, so he was sentenced to twenty years penal servitude on Sakhalin Island, Russia (or Siberia, in other accounts). In response to the Chudesk’i slaying, Exarch P’avle Lebedev famously issued a curse on “all Georgians and the Georgian Church,” to which Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) angrily replied, “You will regret those words on the day of Judgement!” (interview, T’ogonidze, 2006).}

The severity of these events underscore the heated tensions bubbling just beneath the surface of the public discourse on the right to sing Georgian chant in institutions of the Church. The vehemence of the argument and the deadly consequences for several of those in attendance at the Seminary meeting of 1884 clearly demonstrates that the stakes were much higher than could be assumed of a mere discussion of music. The views expressed by Ak’ak’i Ts’ereteli at the meeting exemplify the National-Democratic party position on the issue of preserving Georgian cultural heritage as a first step towards consolidating a nation state around the history and destiny of the Georgian people. The patronizing and colonial bureaucratic attitudes displayed by Exarch P’avle Lebedev and the Seminary director P’avle Chudetsk’i were not unusual for officials in the Tsarist administration in late nineteenth century Georgia.\footnote{Many instances of open bigotry towards the Georgian Church and its artforms by the Russian-appointed exarchs are recorded. In one instance, after being repeatedly asked to over-rule his ban on Georgian chant in the Tbilisi Seminary, Exarch Vladimir Bogoiavlinsky stated: “Why are you pestering me with this thing which I hate and despise like a snake?” (interview, T’ogonidze, 2006).}
The comments made by Chudetsk’i were symptomatic of a wider Russian attitude in which the legitimacy of the Georgian Orthodox Church was frequently and publically questioned. This line of speculation enabled some Russians to see achievements of Georgian Orthodox art such as eleventh-twelth century frescoes or polyphonic chant as irrelevant to modern worship. These attitudes had real consequences, such as the banning of traditional chant schools, and the whitewashing of original medieval frescoes. The suppression of Georgian traditional chant in the highest pedagogical institutions of the Church, such as the Tbilisi Seminary, was another act of violence against the long-standing culture of the Georgian Church. Thus, in the quest to create a Georgian nation-state, discussions surrounding the status of Georgian chant were extremely barbed. For Russians of an imperialist nature, it was a means to exert authority and undermine the aspirations of the budding nation-builders in Georgia, while for the National-Democrats such as Ak’ak’i Ts’ereteli and Ilia Ch’avch’avadze, it was a point upon which failure signaled the hopelessness of the entire experiment on creating Georgian nationalism.

4.4 Early Transcription Efforts

During the decade between 1878-1888, several attempts were made to hire knowledgeable musicians and sit down with masters of the Georgian chant tradition to transcribe their oral repertory into European staff notation. These efforts were short-lived and for the most part unproductive, with few transcriptions even surviving into the modern era. Our knowledge of these projects is gathered from various personal accounts including contemporary newspaper articles and private letters (for a full list, see Appendix E: Original Notated Sources).

Chanters and benefactors remained unconvinced that transcription into European notation presented a viable method of preservation. Key figures such as Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze, however, maintained that all avenues of preservation must be utilized to the full. He supported traditional methods of preservation such as financing schools where master chanters like Grigol K’arbelashvili could train young chanters through aural pedagogical method. But he also understood that the era of oral transmission of chant was coming to an end, and the long-term preservation of chant inevitably depended on finding a means to accurately and efficiently record chant in writing.
4.4.1 The Mrevlishvili and Ch'relashvili Transcriptions

As previously described, Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze offered the outrageous sum of five hundred tumani to any individual who would seriously take on the project of transcribing chant, in December of 1877. Several musicians from around the country offered their credentials to the jury of professional chanters selected by the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Church chant to award the contract. According to P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, submissions were received from a “Mr. Mrevlovi (Mrevlishvili) of Kutaisi who offered some [transcriptions of] liturgy chants, and a Mr. Ch'relashvili who also offered his transcriptions… both of these offers were rejected.”

K’arbelashvili did not give any further explanation concerning the details or under what criteria these transcriptions proved undesirable, so we are left to assume that the technical quality of the transcriptions was somehow inaccurate. Personal differences between jury members and other musicians (or their factions) should not be ruled out as a possible motivating factor, however, considering the large sums involved and the importance of preserving one musical style over another. The competition between chanting groups, just like folk singers, was an undeniable aspect of the chanting culture.

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364 For this and what follows, see P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 91-92. The jury included Archimindrite Mak'ari Mat'atashvili, Priest Grigol Mgebrishvili, Priest Alexander Molodinashvili, and archpriest Vasil Aushev, the director of the Exarch choir. All of these jury members were students of Grigol K’arbelashvili, except for archpriest Vasil Aushev, whose connection to K’arbelashvili has not been established. This affiliation is important when considering their loyalties. The committee was tasked with deciding not only who would transcribe chant, but whose chant was worthy of being transcribed.

365 ibid.: 91.

366 I do not mean to insinuate that the K’arbelashvili faction excluded other East Georgian chant traditions. In fact, the committee recommended inviting master chanters from West Georgia after reviewing the available submissions in early 1878, leading to the invitation of the Gurian chanters (as discussed in the section, 4.2 The Chant Competition of 1878). But healthy competition between rival chanting factions is also a reality of the era of oral transmission of chant, when livelihoods depended on protecting learned musical knowledge. For more on the competitive aspects of chanters and folk-singers, see the wonderfully personalized stories told by Anzor Erkomaishvili about his grandfather Art'em Erkomaishvili, Mival Guriashi Mara [I'm Going to Guria] (Tbilisi: Sakartvelos Matsne, 2006).
Figure 32. Chart of Georgian chant transcriptions before 1885

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcriber</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Singers</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evgeni Bolkhovit'inov,</td>
<td>1802</td>
<td>Varlam Eristavi</td>
<td><em>Aghaghe p'iri chemi</em> (Theotokion heirmos), only first voice melody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Metropolitan of Kiev)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mose Bogdanov-Platonov,</td>
<td>1832</td>
<td>Pet're K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Not extant. &quot;Ugalobes ramdenime sagalobeli...&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Russian Exarch 1832-1834)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[he sang a number of chants...].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davit Chijavadze-Mikhailovi</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Divine Liturgy of John Chrysostom in three voices, also harmonized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>into four voices. 25 chants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grigol Ch'relashvili</td>
<td>1877a</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Not extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andria Mrevlishvili (1823-1889)</td>
<td>1877b</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Not extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikheil Mach'avariani</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Grigol K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Not extant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilimon Koridze (1835-1911)</td>
<td>1883a</td>
<td>Melk'isedek' Nak'ashidze; Nest'or K'on'tridze; and Ioane Khaptasi.</td>
<td>Divine Liturgy chants. Manuscript Q676, National Centre of Manuscripts,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Theater Musician)</td>
<td>1883b</td>
<td>P'olievkt'os K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Tbilisi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andria Benashvili</td>
<td>1885a</td>
<td>Fr. Qaramani Menteshashvili, Fr. Gigo Menteshashvili</td>
<td>Divine Liturgy chants. Transcriptions not extant. Published in 1886.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov</td>
<td>1885b</td>
<td>P'olievkt'os K'arbelashvili; Vasil K'arbelashvili; Alexander Molodinashvili; Grigol Mghebrishvili.</td>
<td>Divine Liturgy chants. Transcriptions in the Folklore Centre, Tbilisi. Published in 1899.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilimon Koridze</td>
<td>1885-</td>
<td>Ivliane Ts'ereteli; Razhden Khundadze; Dimit'ri Ch'alaganidze; Ant'on Dumbadze.</td>
<td>500 chants. Transcriptions in National Centre of Manuscripts, Tbilisi. Published in 1895.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Andria Mrevlishvili (1823-1889), one of the musicians cited by K’arbelashvili as submitting (rejected) transcriptions in 1877, was a music teacher in the East Georgian city of Telavi, and later in Kutaisi, the largest city in West Georgia. His father, Giorgi Mrevlishvili, was a priest for the aristocratic Maqashvili family in the Iqalto region, and a famous chanter who likely studied at the Telavi Seminary established by King Erekle II in the eighteenth century. His two sons Andria and Egnate learned chant in the family, thus directly inheriting the East Georgian style (Svet’itskhoveli cathedral chant style) of chanting through oral transmission by family members.

Grigol Ch’relashvili, the other musician mentioned in the K’arbelashvili history, was the choir director of the prestigious Kashweti St. George Church Choir in Tbilisi. Little information is known about his musical training, and the transcriptions from 1877 are not extant. It is unknown what repertories Mrevlishvili and Ch’relashvili notated, but it is a safe assumption that it was not the K’arbelashvili family repertory (otherwise that would have been emphasized in the subjective history of East Georgian chant published by P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili in 1898). One might assume that Ch’relashvili made transcriptions from his own Kashweti church choir in Tbilisi, whose members included various well known singers from East Georgia. It is also conceivable that Mrevlishvili notated his own family repertory, having been raised as the son of a priest and active chant teacher. This speculation leads to the question of how many East Georgian chant traditions were still active in the 1870s that were never fully transcribed and do not survive.

Thus the transcriptions of 1877 were not the first attempts to notate Georgian chant, though at the time previous efforts may have been unknown. The chart in Figure 32 represents the most accurate understanding of Georgian transcriptions available at the time of writing. New

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367 The movement of professionals between East and West Georgia was fairly common during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Still, it is curious that a chanter trained in East Georgia would be hired in West Georgia, where the local Gelati Monastery chant tradition was far more stable and well developed. This suggests that Mrevlishvili was not a traditional chanter, but rather a trained teacher of European music, which would also help explain why he was proficient in European staff notation at a time when such training was non-existent among traditional chanters in Georgia.

368 For more on the history of the Kashueti Church of St. George, see K'alist'rat'e Tsintsadze, Kvashvetis ts'midis giorgis ek'lesia t'pilisshi [Kvashveti church of St. Georgia in Tbilisi] (Tbilisi: K'ek'elidze Institute of Manuscripts Press, 1994).

369 No mention of the Chijavadze-Mikhailov transcriptions is made in any contemporary source from the nineteenth century, suggesting that they were unknown to the chant community of the time. The dating of the compositions must also be investigated.
transcriptions continue to surface in various archives and private collections, however, and it is hoped that further sources might exist in international archives.\textsuperscript{370}

\subsection*{4.4.2 The Bolkhovitinov Transcription (1802)}

The earliest known example of notated Georgian chant dates from the early nineteenth century, and is held in the Public Library in Kiev, Ukraine.\textsuperscript{371} This remarkably early exemplar, which has been examined by musicologist Davit Shugliashvili, records the first-voice melody of one Theotokion heirmos, \textit{aghaghe p’iri chemi} [I will open my mouth]. The original transcription was notated in Kievan notation, a simplified version of Western staff notation (original: Figure 33).\textsuperscript{372} For comparative purposes, I provide a transcription in modern notation (Figure 34).\textsuperscript{373}

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{370} Significant efforts to locate and catalogue international collections of Georgian music materials have been conducted by Anzor Erkomaishvili. The product of his investigative work has been published in numerous audio and written collections notably, \textit{Kartuli khalkhuri simghera: p’irveli ponochanats’erebi, 1901-1914} [Georgian Folk Song: the First Sound Recordings, 1901-1914], eds. Anzor Erkomaishvili and Vakht’ang Rodonai (Tbilisi: The International Center for Georgian Folk Song, 2006). Also see \textit{Echoes from the Past: Georgian folk music from phonograph wax cylinders} (10 CD collection with recordings from 1923-1931), eds. Ketevan Matiashvili, Nino Kalandadze, and Davit Shugliashvili (Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2007).

\footnote{371} In 1959, the transcription leaf was housed in the Archive of Manuscripts of the Public Library in Kiev, Ukraine. A photocopy is also kept in the Literature Museum of Georgia, Tbilisi, Georgia. It would be useful to confirm if the original is still in the Public Library in Kiev. I am grateful to Davit Shugliashvili for directing my attention to this little-studied source, providing the photocopy of the original, and allowing me to use his comparative transcription. As noted in his dissertation, the first Georgian scholar to observe this important reference was S. Lek’ishvili (1959). See Davit Shugliashvili, \textit{“Rva khmis sist’ema kartul saek’lesio galobashi”} [The eight-tone system in Georgian church chant] (PhD Diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2009), 15.

\footnote{372} Kievan notation dates from the late sixteenth century, when the southwestern portion of the Russian patriarchate was under the rule of Lithuanian and Polish kings. For more on the notation of this chant, see, Johann von Gardner, \textit{Russian Church Singing. Orthodox Worship and Hymnography}, Vol. I (Crestwood, NY, SVS Press, 1980). Also see, \textit{Sputnik psalomshekha} (pesopeniia godichnogo kruga s treboispravlenitami), second edition (St. Petersburg, 1914), reprinted (Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery Press, 1959).

\footnote{373} Note that the original transcription is written with an alto clef on the center line of the five-line staff. Note also that the Cyrillic text on the original 1802 transcription is a transliteration of the Georgian chant text. On this example, I provide the Cyrillic (as best as can be read), and the canonical Georgian text in Latin transliteration. These two texts do not correspond because the original Russian transliteration contains a number of erroneous correspondences. For example, instead of the Georgian \textit{aghavse}, the Russian reads \textit{yagavse}; instead of the Georgian \textit{dghesats’aulsa}, the Russian reads \textit{treiesa-?-ula}; instead of the Georgian \textit{briqinvale mshveniersa}, the Russian reads \textit{skinvale shveniesa}; etc. These transliteration inaccuracies could have been caused by: 1) Varlam Eristavi singing a slightly different text than currently accepted, or 2) Bolkhovitinov incorrectly transliterating the sung text into Cyrillic. The transliteration does assist us in one aspect: the Russian \textit{treiesa...} shows that the singer inserted an \textquotedblleft\textit{i}\textquotedblright\ phoneme into the syllable \textit{dghe}, like this: \textit{dghe-i-e...}. Such phoneme insertions are a regular feature of Georgian chant. See the section, 9.4 Inserted Phoneme Notation. The slurs in the transcription are my own. I'm indebted to Ek'at'erine Diasamidze, Daniel Galadza, and Peter Jeffery for their consultation on this transcription.}

\end{footnotesize}

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180
Figure 33. Aghaghe p’iri chemi, Bolkhovitinov transcription, 1802
According to musicologist Davit Shugliashvili, the original transcription was written in Kiev by Metropolitan Evgeni (Bolkhovitinov). The singer was Varlam Eristavi, a Georgian aristocrat who visited Kiev in 1802. Shugliashvili also made a transcription of the Bolkhovitinov original, usefully comparing it to two other transcriptions of the chant *agaghe p’iri chemi* [I will open my mouth]. The melody as sung by Varlam Eristavi in 1802 appears in the top line (only the first half of chant depicted here, Figure 35). Below the Eristavi melody appears the same chant text, as notated circa 1900 by Vasil K’arbelashvili (second line), and

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374 Varlam Eristavi would become the first Exarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church, appointed by the Russian administration. See the section, 3.3.1 The Russian Church in the Caucasus.
375 Note that my transcription differs in several places from the Shugliashvili transcription, which is transcribed up an interval of a fourth for purposes of comparison in his dissertation. Davit Shugliashvili, "Rva khmis sist'ema..." (PhD Diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2009), 15.
Pilimon Koridze (third line). The melodies are very similar in contour, phrase length, syllabic distribution, and other musical parameters of Georgian chant. The differences, according to Shugliashvili, should be understood as local variations of the same fundamental melody.

**Figure 35. Aghaghe p’iri chemi** (comparison by Davit Shugliashvili)
Besides this single leaf transcription from 1802, only one other early-nineteenth-century transcription project is attested in secondary sources but is unfortunately not extant. According to the 1898 memoir by P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, his grandfather P’et’re K’arbel was summoned in 1832 to sing for Bishop Mose Bogdanov-Platonov, the newly appointed Exarch of Georgia. According to K’arbelashvili, his grandfather and the others “sang several chants, and since the Exarch enjoyed their chanting, he wrote down several of them in notation.” Unfortunately, these transcriptions are not extant, so it has been impossible to verify K’arbelashvili’s account. One hopes that these transcriptions might be found in a private archival collection in Russia that is associated with Exarch Mose Bogdanov-Platonov. The first transcriptions in European staff notation date to 1863, as described in the following section.

4.4.3 The Chijavadze-Mikhailov Transcriptions

One of the most surprising and perplexing set of transcriptions of East Georgian chant also happens to be the oldest. A file dated to 1863 containing approximately one hundred pages of handwritten notation (representing approximately fifteen-twenty liturgy chants, arranged for three and four-voices, written out in score and by part) exists in the obscure fund called Skhvadashhva [Miscellaneous] in the National Centre of Manuscripts.

A single, hand-written page accompanies the transcriptions, signed by musicologist Otar Chijavadze (1919-1998). Here, he indicates his submission of the music materials to the National archives in 1955, dates their transcription to the year 1863, and attributes their provenance to a nineteenth-century relative named Davit Chijavadze-Mikhailov. There are no colophon markings on the manuscripts, and the letter does not offer any further details on the biography of the author or the singers or any possible reason that they manuscripts were created. The early dating, if sustained, suggests that these are the first attested transcriptions of multi-voiced Georgian chant written in European notation.

376 Mose Bogdanov-Platonov was apparently highly sympathetic to Georgian liturgical arts, but served only two years in his post as Exarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church, from 1832-1834.
377 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898).
378 I am grateful to Davit Shugliashvili for bringing this collection to my attention.
379 In the only scholarly article that refers to this collection, Davit Shugliashvili traces a potential familial link between Davit Chijavadze-Mikhailov and Otar Chijavadze that helps to explain how the transcriptions came into the possession of the scholar. See Davit Shugliashvili, "Otar Chijavadzis mier da’tovebuli eri khelnats'eris shesakheb" [About a manuscript left by Otar Chijavadze], Otar Chijavadze, Ninety (in Georgian) (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2011).
From among the chants in the Chijavadze collection, the litany response *upalo shegvits’qalen* (Figure 36) is the transcription that perhaps most resembles traditional Georgian chant. Here we observe the top voice ornamenting a simple descending tetrachord from D to A, with this figure repeated several times with half cadences on A. The middle voice mostly parallels the melody, while the bass ornaments what is essentially a pedal drone at the octave, only rising for the final unison cadence on A. In one exception, the bass also parallels the upper harmony, which is characteristic of East Georgian chant near final cadences (circled). This is very typical harmony for East Georgian chant, and if observed in an isolated situation, one might suppose that it represents K’arbelashvili style.380

Figure 36. *Upalo shegvits’qalen*, Davit Chijavadze-Mikhailov, 1863

380 Most of the other Chijavadze transcriptions do not display such traditional harmonic function or voice leading, which causes understandable confusion about his musical influences and broader intentions.
Figure 37. Krist'e aghdga, Mikheil Mach’avariani (1878)
4.4.4 The Mach'avariani Transcriptions

In 1878, the music teacher Mikhail Mach’avariani was considered a better qualified candidate for the task of transcription than any other, perhaps due to his position as head of Slavonic music studies at the Tbilisi Seminary. Despite being much maligned in the historical retrospective published by P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, in 1878 Mach’avariani received the contract to transcribe chant both from Nak’ashidze and the West Georgian chanter after the East-West Chant Competition (see the section, 4.2 The Chant Competition of 1878), and from the aging Grigol K’arbelashvili in his home village of Ch’ala. That same year, Mach’avariani published a book of arranged folksongs, including a four-part arrangement of the popular Paschal troparion, krist’e aghdga [Christ is Risen] (Figure 37).381

One can sympathize with the criticism of Mach’avariani after singing through the Paschal troparion. The simplistic arrangement for SATB chorus, in Bortnyansky-style Russian harmony, is a complete departure from the East Georgian traditional chant. Only the first voice melody (sung by the soprano voice) is preserved. The alto voice parallels the melody at the interval of a third, the tenor line provides a high pedal drone, while the bass sings large intervals between the fundamentals of an invented tonic-subdominant harmony (the bass voice in Georgian traditional chant typically moves in stepwise motion). This type of arrangement was popular in Russian conservatories in the late nineteenth century, as the composition of opera and sacred chorale focused on the harmonic arrangement of ‘found melodies’ from folk tradition, znamenny chant, or exotified Turkish, Arab, and Persian musical traditions.

4.5 K’arbelashvili Family Transcriptions

The success of the transmission of East Georgian chant via the students of Grigol K’arbelashvili (1812-1880) can be understood as a fortunate anomaly (in the midst of widespread decline of the chant tradition) that combined the transmission of chant within a single disciplined family with the timely support of one powerful individual. As discussed in the section, 3.4 Preservation: East Georgia, when Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) formed the Committee for the Preservation for Church Chant in 1860, he searched all of East Georgia for

381 Mikheil Mach’avariani, Samshoblo Khmebi (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory Folklore Dept. Library, 1878).
knowledgeable chanters. By his own admission, he found just one competent master chanter: Grigol K’arbelashvili. This startling reality reflects the poor state of chant transmission already by mid century.

In the late eighteenth century, the chanters who had completed their study at the seminaries reopened by Catholicos-Patriarch Ant'on I in 1764 filled the churches of East Georgia. But as the systems of patronage and church culture were radically disrupted by war with Persia, annexation by Russia, and especially the suppression of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church, institutional spaces for the systematic transmission of chant were abruptly cut off. Over the course of fifty years, many chanters died without successfully transmitting their knowledge to the next generation of students. In the absence of institutional environments for the transmission of church culture, the family home and parish became the final place for nurturing the culture of chanting. It is telling that, by the end of the nineteenth century, chant styles were no longer called by the name of their monastery (such as the Shemokmedi, Svet'itskhoveli, or Gelati monastery styles), but rather by the names of the last remaining families that could still chant. In East Georgia, traditional chant came to be associated with just one family—the K’arbelashvilis—the last of the East Georgian srulimgalobeli [master-chanters].

P’et’re K’arbela (1754-1858) was not only an excellent chanter, he managed to teach the importance of strictly maintaining the aural pedagogical method. His youngest son Grigol K’arbelashvili (1812-1880) raised his five sons to be priests and excellent chanters, preserving the East Georgian chant school through a period of widespread social and ecclesiastical upheaval. Pictured from left to right: P’olievkt’os, Vasil, P’et’re, and Andria K’arbelashvili (Pilimon not pictured), Figure 38.382 The brothers learned chant starting from early childhood: Vasil K'arbelashvili (1858-1936) recalled that: “At the age of six we could easily chant the liturgy.”383

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382 The five sons of Grigol K’arbelashvili: Pilimon (1836-1879); Andria (1851-1924); P’olievkt’os (1855-1936); Vasil (1858-1936); and P’et’re (1860-1924). All five were priests and chanters, but P’olievkt’os and Vasil were the most active in the transcription of their family chant tradition. For an excellent historical account of the family, including their canonization by the Synod of bishops of the Georgian Orthodox Church on December 20th, 2011, see Dzembi K’arbelashvilebi [The K’arbelashvili brothers], eds. Luarsab T’ogonidze et. al. (in Georgian, with English summary by John A. Graham) (Tbilisi, 2012).

383 Document No. 86 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, K'arbelashvili fund).
4.5.1 The Students of Grigol K’arbelashvili

Vasil K’arbelashvili (1858-1936), the fourth son of Grigol, was only twenty-one years old when his father died, but he had already resolved to dedicate himself to the preservation of chant specifically through learning western musical notation. He studied piano, violin, and music theory in Tbilisi and St. Petersburg during the 1880s, and over the course of a long lifetime, transcribed up to one thousand chants.384 Vasil taught chant in the Tbilisi Seminary during the 1890s and published several chantbooks of his transcriptions.

384 The Vasil K’arbelashvili archive, #264, in the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, is the largest extant collection of East Georgian chant. K’arbelashvili focused on recording the ornamental chant style, which is characterized by florid middle-voice ornamentation.
P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili (1855-1936), the third son of Grigol, was an active member of the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Church Chant in Tbilisi, and a consistent voice among the city’s elite promoting the transcription of the Eastern chant style. He started the Georgian chant choirs at the Seminary and Patriarchate school again in the 1880s, the first such choirs since his father had been dismissed in 1872. P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili was a keen observer of culture and art. He wrote a history of Georgian chant in 1898 and participating in a scientific expedition to the remote highlands region of Svaneti in 1903.

The brothers were not only chanters and priests, but were active in the politics of the National-Democratic party, particularly in the fight to re-establish the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church. While it is impossible to relate the entire fascinating account of this family, certain details are central to the broader historical questions surrounding the transmission of Georgian chant. To grasp how this repertory is both unique to Grigol K’arbelashvili, and representative of a wider regional chant system, it will be useful to examine key points in the transmission, transcription, and eventual publication of the family’s chant repertory in the later decades of the century.

After the death of Grigol K’arbelashvili in 1880, his sons took on a greater leadership role in promoting the preservation of traditional chant. In 1881, P’olievkt’os returned to Tbilisi to “awaken the chant activity.” In early 1882, a new administrator named S. Miropolsky arrived from Russia to reform the curriculum of the Tbilisi seminary. As the fortunes of Georgian chant study in the capital often depended entirely on the musical tastes of these Russian appointees, the arrival of Miropolsky was much anticipated by the chant community. P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili would later describe the events of the summer:

During that spring (1882), the Holy Synod sent S. Miropolsky, a dignified child of Russia and supporter of chant, to reform the Exarch theological school…. Miropolsky promised to help and support the study of Georgian chant as much as he could, and he made his promise come true. In August I received a paper from the seminary manager telling me to form chant choirs for both the theological seminary and the patriarchate school, which I

385 P’olievkt’os and Vasil K’arbelashvili also became heavily involved in the movement to re-establish Georgian Orthodox autocephaly, which was finally achieved with the enthronement of Bishop Kirion Sadzglishvili as Patriarch of the Georgian Church in 1917. Patriarch Sadzglishvili was killed a year later under suspicious circumstances. With the invasion of Bolshevik forces in 1921, the Church was systematically suppressed.

386 Polievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero… (1898), 93.
did with joy. Thus, after ten years, Georgian chant began 'to walk again' at the seminary, and as to how well it proceeded, the students and teachers can confirm [its success].

P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili was asked to gather chanter's from among his students to form the official choir at the main institution of the Georgian Orthodox Church, the Tbilisi Theological Seminary (in this capacity, he would follow in the footsteps of his father Grigol, a decade after the elder K’arbelashvili had been dismissed). The new chant choirs were successful in mastering the basic liturgy chants, and by January of 1883, twenty students from the Seminary performed a service at the Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi.

P’olievkt'os K’arbelashvili became personally involved in the transcription project when the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Church Chant was again considering proposals for major transcription projects in 1883. Five years before, following the competition of East and West Georgian chanters in 1878, the Committee had elected to pass on transcribing chant from the K’arbelashvilis, instead contracting the musician Mikhail Mach’avariani to transcribe chant as performed by Nak’ashidze and the West Georgians. Without work, Grigol and his sons returned to their village. But this project had failed to produce any meaningful results (these transcriptions do not survive), and the enthusiasm for the preservation of chant had waned in the absence of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze).

But with P’olievkt’os back in Tbilisi, drumming up support for his cause among Committee members and the clerical hierarchy, new enthusiasm built for the transcription of East Georgian chant. This impulse was fueled by new competition from the West Georgian faction: a famous Georgian opera star named Pilimon Koridze had returned to Tbilisi and was generating press as he produced credible transcriptions from the West Georgian chanters.

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387 Ibid.: 93.
388 Ibid.: 94. The choir also performed at the funeral service of the nobleman Grigol Orbeliani, he who had sponsored the competition of chanters in 1878. Also reported in an obituary in the Droeba journal, No. 15 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1883. It is striking that K’arbelashvili attributes so much importance to performing in the Sioni Cathedral. The emphasis on this event, and other appearances such as the 1878 performance in the same cathedral, underscores the heavy burden that he and other traditional chanters felt knowing that their primary houses of worship had become the domains of Slavonic chant, the music of the imperial Russian Church.
389 Following the death of Bishop Gabriel T’usk’a of Guria (Dec. 11, 1881), Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) was named as his replacement. While a promotion (he was named Metropolitan), it was also evident that the Exarch administration did not want his influential voice contributing to the growing political dissent in Tbilisi over questions of national independence and the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church.
4.5.2 The Truffi Transcriptions

In early 1884, K’arbelashvili sought to bolster his own family repertory by contracting the Italian musician Giuseppe Truffi (1850-1925), then the well-respected conductor of music at the Tbilisi theater, to transcribe several chants for presentation to the Committee.390

As the committee had done me a favor, I felt obliged [to help them], so I asked the conductor of the Tbilisi Theatre, Mr. Truffi, to transcribe the chants ts'mindao ghmerto, jvarsa shensa taqvanis vsetsemt, shen gigalobt, and sul o chemo, sul o chemo. The gathering liked them but it wasn't enough. They asked us to also transcribe movedit taqvanis vsetset, romelni kerubimta, and the troparion for Epiphany ganmanatlebeli chveni, as examples of more complicated chants. I made Mr. Truffi transcribe those chants for me as well, and for the next gathering, on February 27, he brought six Italian choristers to sing these chants.391

According to K’arbelashvili, the presentation was well received, and the Committee agreed to finance a major transcription project in which Giuseppe Truffi would be paid the very serious sum of 4,500 maneti (rubles) for producing notation for five hundred East Georgian chants.392 This, claimed K’arbelashvili, was also due to the fact that Koridze had demanded the outrageous sum of 30,000 maneti for notating the same number of West Georgian chants from Nak’ashidze. The Committee, under intense scrutiny in 1884, wavered in their decision and neither of these specific projects ever materialized.393

Despite public criticism for his efforts, Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) re-emerged once again to support the preservation of East Georgian chant.394 Writing from far Western

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390 It is unclear exactly who the Committee members were in early 1884.
391 Polievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 94-95. It is interesting that the Committee requested the troparion for Epiphany, specifically, considering that this was the most complex chant transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze and Nest’or K’ont’ridze the year before, and presented to the Committee in December, 1883. This is one more signal that a process of comparison and competition was taking place behind closed doors, as both choirs vied for the contract to preserve their version of Georgian traditional chant in European notation. The Committee was culprit in this competition, as they continued to draw out the process.
392 Ibid.: 94-95. As mentioned, up until this point, only Mikhail Mach’avariani had attempted any transcriptions of East Georgian chant, and these transcriptions were deemed inaccurate. The project proposal with Giuseppe Truffi to transcribe five hundred chants was easily the most ambitious such project to date, showing the urgency in which P’olievkt’os approached the process of preserving East Georgian chant.
393 See the section, 4.3 Public Criticism. Public criticism of the Committee’s goals and finances led to Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze stepping down as head. At the same time, Exarch P’avle Lebedev called a public meeting to discuss the issue, and heated exchanges at that meeting culminated in the exile and assassination of several key figures over the following months, including the Georgian aristocrat Dimit’ri Qipiane and the Russian Seminary director P’avle Chudetsky.
394 In a letter published July 1, 1884, in Mts’qemsi Journal, No. 13 (Georgian National Library), an anonymous writer attacked the supposed hypocrisy of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) for collecting money for the preservation of chant, but in reality only supporting the transcription of East Georgian “Kartl-K’akhuri” chant style.
Georgia, the bishop committed to personally financing the proposed K’arbelashvili project. But instead of working with Giuseppe Truffi, K’arbelashvili looked towards other talent in the city, finding a recent Conservatory graduate, the twenty-four year old Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (Figure 39).

In September, I went to see Mr. Ippolitov-Ivanov, the director of the Tbilisi Music Academy, who agreed to take responsibility to notate four hundred chants for a price of 2000 maneti. The Exarch signed off on this project, which stipulated participation from myself, Vasil, Fr. Mghebrishvili, and Fr. Molodinashvili.395

These were the same chanter s that had performed six years before during the Committee-organized chant competition in Tbilisi (Figure 29).

### 4.5.3 The Ippolitov-Ivanov Transcriptions

With the sophisticated young Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov at the piano, the transcription of East Georgian chant finally began in 1884.396 According to the list prepared by P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, they would start with the complete liturgies of John Chrysostom and Basil the Great, then moving on to the transcription of chants for the Vespers and Matins services, proceed to the essential chants for funerals, weddings, and the major feastdays, and finally record the heirmoi for canons.397 Initially scheduled for two years, the project was delayed and protracted over nearly a decade due to a variety of circumstances including the physical separation of the singers through the reassignment of both Vasil and P’olievkt’os to parish churches outside of Tbilisi. But the choir managed to meet twice a year in Tbilisi, transcribing nearly one hundred

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The Gurian author goes on to suggest that an independent committee be formed that would represent the interests of the West Georgian regional chant. Cited in the section, 4.3 Public Criticism.

395 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 96.

396 Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859-1935) studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory with Rimsky-Korsakov. Upon graduating, his first major posting was at the Tbilisi Music Academy, where he was director from 1882-1893. In 1893, he became a professor of the Moscow Conservatory (later serving as director from 1905-1924), and published his most famous work “Caucasian Sketches” during that period. Most of the notation that he transcribed from the K’arbelashvili chanters from 1884-1893 was eventually published in 1899 (Appendix C: Sharadze & Friends Chantbook Publications).

397 The Ippolitov-Ivanov transcription project dragged out for several years because in 1885, Vasil K’arbelashvili was assigned to serve as a priest to the community of Nukha, and later went to St. Petersburg to study, only returning to Tbilisi in 1887. Likewise in 1885, P’olievkt’os was assigned to a village church outside of Tbilisi. The chanters were only able to convene in Tbilisi on a bi-annual basis to continue their work. For details, see P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 96. The original transcriptions are located in the Center of Folklore, Tbilisi, Nos. 2099, 2110, 2111, 2112, and 2113. On the last page of one of the transcriptions is the colophon, “Clergyman Vasil K’arbelov, 1888, September 10th (in Russian). These transcriptions are discussed by Davit Shugliashvili, "Forward," Kartuli Galoba, Svet’itskhoveli School Simple Mode, Vol. 1 (Tbilisi, 2012).
chants by the time that Ippolitov-Ivanov departed Tbilisi in 1893 to take a post in the Moscow Conservatory.

In order to publish the Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions, they needed to be approved through a bureaucratic process involving the official Russian censors. This process took years to complete. Ekvtime K’ereselidze, remembering these events in his 1936 memoir, reported that the K’arbelashvili brothers "sent their transcriptions to the Capella in Russia for comparison, but no one paid attention to them, and they stayed there untouched for three years. After repeated inquiries, the transcriptions were sent back. Then they compared and corrected them for publication themselves."\(^{398}\) When the editing process was complete, the Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions were finally published in 1899 at the Sharadze & Friends Press in 1899 (see, for example, Figure 69).\(^{399}\)

4.5.4 The Vasil K’arbelashvili Transcriptions

Beginning in the mid-1880s, Vasil K’arbelashvili learned to read and write western music.\(^{400}\) Over the following decades, he transcribed hundreds of complex three-voiced chants into staff notation, bequeathing the most superb examples of his family’s liturgical music culture

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\(^{398}\) Ekvtime K’ereselidze, *Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze gadaghebis ist’oria* [History of the transcription of Georgian church chant] (trans. Luarsab T’ogonidze and John A. Graham, Nov. 2004) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potshverashvili private archive, 1936), 17. All transcriptions had to be approved by a special censor’s committee, a process that Ippolitov-Ivanov initiated in Moscow in 1896, and was only approved at the end of 1897.


\(^{400}\) Vasil K’arbelashvili studied European notation in Moscow for a short period in 1886-1887.
to future generations of singers and researchers. In this collection of some five hundred transcriptions, now housed in the National Centre of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, a fascinating display of notational experiments and drafts-in-progress show the transcriptional process of one of the last great chanter in Georgia. K’arbelashvili tried to decipher the eleventh century medieval neume system by transcribing the medieval neumes from the Iordane manuscript (NCM A603), and writing out the texts and melodies of chants that he knew (Figure 40). 401

Figure 40. Ghmerti khar, Neume notation, Vasil K’arbelashvili (c. 1889)

He was also not satisfied with western staff notation alone. He experimented with other ways of notating chant including writing chant texts diastematically on the staff, repeating each vowel for each durational beat that it was sung (Figure 41). 402

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401 Analysis of these studies shows that the melodies that K’arbelashvili knew through oral tradition do not match up cleanly with the medieval neumes for the same chant texts.
402 Vasil K’arbelashvili, Ghmerti khar [You are Lord], comparison of model melody with medieval neume notation from the Iordane heirmologion (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, Vasil K’arbelashvili fund, c. 1889). A note
Vasil K’arbelashvili became interested in recording not only the basic structure of chant, but also the ornamental possibilities of chant (and folksongs), exercising his considerable talent as a singer, and newfound skill as a music writer, to transcribe many highly complex variants. Given that these variants only appear in the transcriptions in his collection, scholars have debated whether Vasil K’arbelashvili’s transcriptions represent the contemporary practice of skilled chanters, or perhaps the product of his own compositional process. The manuscript evidence is not definitive on this question, though it is clear that in his transcriptions, the middle voice received the majority of ornamental flourishes.

The original transcription of the Paschal heirmoi *aghdgomisa dghe ars* [This is the day of Resurrection] shows the ornamental focus of the middle voice (Figure 42). In this and other transcriptions by Vasil K’arbelashvili, it is clear that a certain hierarchy of voice parts existed: first he notated the top voice, then the bass voice in simple octave-fifth harmony, and finally added an elaborate middle voice that sings nearly double the number of notes as the outer voices (Figure 42).

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403 It should be noted that there are also more than one hundred transcriptions of East Georgian folksongs by Vasil K’arbelashvili in his personal archive, #264, National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi.

404 The bass voice describes parallel figuration or basic counterpoint with the top voice, with passing tones leading to intervals of a fifth or an octave below the melody on the harmonic rhythm. Parallel octaves and fifths are common between the outer voices. For more on harmonic voice leading of Georgian traditional chant, see the section, 10.2 Regional Harmony: Central Georgia.

405 A colophon on the first page of this packet of transcriptions reads: “This Paschal kanon was transcribed by Fr. Vasil K’arbelashvili, September 1st, 1892” (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, Vasil K’arbelashvili fund).
4.6 Andria Benashvili Transcriptions, 1885

Andria Benashvili (1852-1908) is significant to the history of the transcription movement for his foundational publication of transcriptions of simple-style East Georgian chant (Figure 43). His 1886 chantbook was the first such publication to appear in Georgia. As a former student of Grigol K’arbelashvili at the Tbilisi Seminary (and possibly as a child at the Bodbe

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406 A second collection of transcriptions dated to 1902 was never published, but exists in rough draft in manuscript Q-1287 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts).
Monastery), Benashvili was well positioned to make informed choices about transcribing Georgian chant.\textsuperscript{407} In the introduction to his landmark publication, Benashvili wrote:

> Everyone understands the importance of transcribing chant into notation, and for that purpose I have always prepared myself to preserve the correct Georgian mode and to transcribe our true inheritance—Georgian chants and songs.\textsuperscript{408}

Starting in 1875, Benashvili began a career as a music and grammar teacher in the capital city of Kutaisi, West Georgia (from 1876-1878 he also taught in Ozurgeti, Guria region), where he taught Russian Slavonic chant as well as Georgian chant. In 1882, he became the director of the two Kutaisi Cathedral choirs: one that sang Geogian chant, the other Slavonic chant.

Benashvili commanded an acute awareness of the danger to traditional chant posed by the liberal musical borrowing from European sources. In the foreword to his publication of East Georgian chant (1886), he mentions the common practice of setting Georgian folk texts to new European harmony, and as a teacher of both traditional and Slavonic chant, he was well aware of the ease with which one could be conflated with the other, especially in the accompanying parts. He himself alluded to arranging East Georgian (Kartl-K’akhetian) chant into four-part harmony, though these manuscripts do not

\textsuperscript{407} Andria Benashvili (1852-1908) was born in the village of Zemo Machkhaani, which is just five kilometers from the Bodbe Monastery where Grigol K’arbelashvili taught in 1862. It is very possible that a ten-year-old Benashvili was one of the thirty-five students that he trained in East Georgian chant that year. Later, Benashvili studied at the Tbilisi Seminary, where K’arbelashvili taught from 1864-1872 (see the section, 3.4.5 Grigol K’arbelashvili, Master Teacher). Benashvili graduated from the Tbilisi Seminary in 1873.

survive. “I arranged the Kartl-K’akhuri liturgy into four voice parts, because it was my goal for the choir that sometimes they would perform those chants in place of Russian chant.”

The Benashvili chantbook, produced from a lithograph engraving (because there was no music type in Georgia), became the first publication that included Georgian Orthodox liturgical chants in European music notation. The chants were recorded by the Menteshashvili brothers, two former students of Grigol K’arbelashvili. Benashvili preferred the sada k’ilo (plain style) forms of chant, perhaps because of his work as a chant pedagogue for beginner students. These preferences are reflected in his landmark publication, which displays highly simple variations of the K’arbelashvili style.

4.6.1 Upalo shegvits’qalen [Lord have mercy], Andria Benashvili

The first chant in the Benashvili chantbook, upalo shegvits’qalen [Lord have mercy], displays one of the common melodies from the kanon of the East Georgian chant repertory, harmonized in three voices (Figure 44). The melody describes a lightly ornamented descending trichord from C to A, which is the basic contour of almost all traditional litany melodies in Georgian traditional chant. Note the ubiquitous use of parallel third intervals between the upper voices (circled), a simplistic form of chant harmonization commonly referred to as sabavshvo k’ilo [children’s style].

409 Andria Benashvili, “P’asukhad kartuli galobis moqvares” [Reply to ‘Admirer of Georgian Chant’ (pseudonym)], Mts’qemsi Journal, Nos. 23-24, 1890. I’m grateful to Magda Sukhiashvili for bringing this letter to my attention. Four-part Slavonic harmony was favored by the Russian administration of the Georgian Orthodox Church: they wanted not only the performance of chant in Russian, but the full Russification of Georgian liturgical services. Setting Georgian hymn texts to Slavonic melodies and harmonies was an important aspect of Russification policy. It seems that Benashvili was attempting to introduce the possibility of singing Georgian texts and melodies into official services, hoping that their arrangement into four-part harmony might be more palatable to Russian Church officials.

410 Andria Benashvili, Kartuli Khmebi (T’pilisi, Melikishvilisa Press, 1886). There are twenty-two pages of chant, and twenty-eight pages of folksongs. The manuscript was published from a lithograph template signed by engraver Gr. T’at’ishvili, as music type would not arrive in Georgia until 1891. Lithographs were a common form of publication (the first one appeared in Georgia in 1796). In 1894, Benashvili published a grammar book called “Mok’le kartuli gramat’ik’a” [Short Georgian Grammar] that became standard in Georgian secondary schools.

411 ibid. On the first page of chant (but not on the cover, title page, or in the introduction), Benashvili includes the words “Church Chant: Liturgy of John Chrysostom, in the mode of K’arbelov,” paying some tribute to Grigol K’arbelashvili. In the introduction, Benashvili specifies that he transcribed the liturgy chants in this publication from Fr. Qaramani Menteshashvili and Fr. Gigo Menteshashvili, who studied chant with Grigol K’arbelashvili at the Bodbe Monastery in 1861. As K’arbelashvili taught there for less than two years, we cannot consider the Menteshashvilis as master-chanters. Therefore it is also likely that their limited knowledge of chant had some bearing on the lack of complexity in the Benashvili transcriptions.
It is possible that Benashvili’s role as a teacher of beginner music students influenced his choice to publish the most simple variants of the common liturgy chants, such as those seen in Figure 44 and Figure 45.\textsuperscript{412} While a teacher at the Patriarchate school for Ladies in Kutaisi,\textsuperscript{413} he apparently trained chanters in East-Georgian simple style, despite their proximity to the venerable chanters of the Gelati monastery situated just outside of Kutaisi. According to Razhden Khundadze, who succeeded Benashvili as the music teacher at the school, he was forced to adapt his own pedagogical practice because the students had become accustomed to a simple style of East Georgian chant as taught by Benashvili.

Before I arrived [at the patriarchate school for ladies], Benashvili was the teacher. He did not like Western style, so he was teaching them K’arbelashvili style. When I arrived and started teaching, the ladies told me that they were accustomed to Benashvili’s style, and said that it would be difficult for them to switch to Western mode. As I had quite a hard time teaching the Western mode, I was eventually forced to learn and teach [in Benashvili’s style]. But it must be said that Benashvili’s [style] is not like real Eastern mode, it has been changed.\textsuperscript{414}

The comment on inauthenticity is curious considering Benashvili’s own claim to authenticity in the introduction.\textsuperscript{415}

\textsuperscript{412} Throughout the transcription movement, a dialogue would occur between those musicians and chanters who espoused the transcription and publication of simple style chant for the practical use of new singers (among these are P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili and his son Pilimon K’arbelashvili, Razhden Khundadze, and others), and those who preferred to also notate the ornamental style as a means to preserve the full complexity of the art form (among these were Vasil K’arbelashvili, Ekvtime K’ereselidze, Pilimon Koridze, Ant’on Dumbadze, and others).

\textsuperscript{413} At the Patriarchate School for Ladies, daughters of affluent individuals in the Russian Empire studied all kinds of music including European classical music, Georgian folk instruments such as the four-stringed lute, chonguri, and sacred music including Slavonic chant and Georgian chant.

\textsuperscript{414} Razhden Khundadze, note written at the bottom of Benashvili manuscript (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory Sacred Music Library, 1925).

\textsuperscript{415} This comment from Razhden Khundadze is also odd because his own transcriptions of West Georgian chant feature a highly simplified middle voice that, like the Benashvili transcriptions, employs the use of parallel third intervals between the upper voices. Is it possible that by teaching at the same Patriarchate school in Kutaisi, Khundadze was forced to adapt his own ornamental style of chant to teach in a manner similar to Benashvili? This would seem unlikely, considering that Razhden Khundadze commanded a masters-level knowledge of the West Georgian tradition, but his oversimplified transcriptions from his later output continue to puzzle scholars, and the Benashvili connection has not been sufficiently explored.
Closer inspection suggests that the use of parallel third intervals in the upper voices may have been the feature of the music that Khundadze found uncharacteristic of East Georgian chant. The use of parallel thirds as a harmonization style is not incorrect, but is not typical. Otherwise the melodies, cadences, bass harmony, and other musical features of the chants in the Benashvili publication remain characteristic to the East Georgian chant tradition.\footnote{An undated set of penciled East-Georgian style transcriptions by Andria Benashvili, now housed in the Tbilisi Conservatory library, display some interesting differences from the published scores of 1886. It is unclear if these were the original transcriptions but were then modified before publication or, as is more probable, they are unrelated. In these transcriptions, the bass voice does not sing traditional Georgian harmony, but rather Russian-European harmony. The obvious indicator for this treatment are the large intervals as the bass voice jumps from one root chord to another, and the second indicator is that these root chords do not follow Georgian traditional harmony based on chord progressions based on I-VII-I, but rather on Russian-European harmony based on I-IV-I.}
Benashvili should be considered as a representative of the larger group of chant practitioners connected to Grigol K’arbelashvili (1812-1880), himself an inheritor of the East Georgian chant style taught at the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral Seminary school that opened in the 1760s. Other inheritors of the eighteenth-century chant style originating from this East Georgian revival likely continued to chant through the nineteenth century, but transcriptions of their chant have not survived. The transcriptions by Andria Mrevlishvili from the Iqalto diocese represent one example of a family tradition of East Georgian chant that did not survive (discussed in the section, 4.4.1 The Mrevlishvili and Ch'relashvili Transcriptions). Another family tradition is represented by the Chijavadze manuscripts, which may describe a separate transmission history from the K’arbelashvili style.

It is our loss that very little is known about the eighteenth-century master chanters from the David Gareja desert monasteries, or the master singers who performed at the feasts of King Erek’le II in East Georgia. Despite this lacuna, the Benashvili sources add to our general knowledge of the diversity of the East Georgian chant tradition, which is otherwise exclusively represented by sources from the K’arbelashvili brothers.
4.7 Chapter Conclusion

The creation of the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Chant by Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) in 1860 signaled the institutional recognition of a serious problem: the gradual disappearance of the oral transmission of Georgian liturgical chant. The isolated successes of specific singing families, such as the K’arbelashvili and Dumbadze families, could not hide the widespread collapse of the chant tradition during the Tsarist era. The major accomplishment of Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) was his ability to convince the Georgian intellectual class not to forget Georgian traditional and ecclesiastical arts in their haste to adapt to European (Russian) culture, but to embrace them as part of their own heritage and culture. In this, he was successful.

By the late 1870s, Georgian chant had come to symbolize everything that was pure and ancient about Georgian civilization, it came to represent the unique contribution of Georgia to world art and culture, and became a leading cause célébre for those who argued that Georgia should be once again free as a nation and as a Church. Those same Georgian aristocrats who took fortepiano lessons, attended Russian schools, and frequented the latest opera performances in Tbilisi, came to believe with Okrop’iridze that liturgical chant was fundamental to their identity as Georgians. This perspective enabled prominent leaders of the Georgian nationalist movement such as Ilia Ch'avch'avadze, Ak'ak'i Ts'ereteli, and Dimit'ri Qipiani, to vocalize their protest at the systematic disenfranchisement of Georgian cultural arts including liturgical chant to their peers in the Russian administration of institutions such as the Tbilisi Theological Seminary. Without this critical association, expertly cultivated by Okrop’iridze, the public and financial support for the transcription movement that followed in the 1880s may have never materialized.

The chant competition of 1878 in Tbilisi galvanized public interest and knowledge of Georgian traditional chant, leading to the first transcriptions of Georgian chant, and the introduction of knowledgeable chanters with key financiers, publishers, and musicians trained in Western notation. These introductions would pave the way for the major transcriptions projects of the 1880s discussed in the following chapters.
Chapter V: Transcription Projects: West Georgia (1883-1886)

At the end of the nineteenth century, the liturgical chant of the Georgian Orthodox Church was transcribed into European staff notation. More than twenty thousand pages of transcriptions reflect the surviving repertory of the inherited oral tradition of liturgical chant, as transmitted for centuries by specific clans of professional church musicians in each of the twelve regions of this Christian, South-Caucasus nation. Other known traditions of chant such as those from the regions of Svaneti, Racha, and Meskheti were never transcribed and are lost to history. The existing transcriptions, written by various musicians with Western music training, represent our best access to the medieval tradition of three-voiced polyphonic chant.

This chapter investigates the social, economic, and musical processes involved in the first major transcription projects of West Georgian chant between the years 1883-1886. Issues of transcription raised in the chapter (which continue in Chapters VI, VII, and VIII) are framed within broader discussions on authenticity, variation, ornamentation, model melodies, tuning, and key signature choices that confronted the musicians and chanters working to preserve chant at the turn of the last century.

5.1 The Need for Transcription

The production of music transcriptions in late nineteenth-century Georgia represented the final efforts to save the collapsing oral tradition of liturgical chant. Comparable to the chant of the Latin West in sophistication, range of variation, and sheer numbers of chants, the Georgian liturgical repertory has been virtually unknown to all but a handful of Georgian scholars until the twenty-first century. The difficulty of access to these materials has until now prohibited significant research by non-Georgian musicologists, yet the importance of Georgian chant manuscripts cannot be overstated.

The majority of the transcriptions are housed in the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Georgia, with smaller collections scattered throughout other institutions such as the National Folklore Center in Tbilisi, or held in private collection. These sources were almost never opened during the Soviet era, when archives were closed to everyone except specialists, but a recent performance revival of Georgian traditional chant has sparked the first interest in the
incredible richness of these musical sources. While a dozen chantbooks have been published since the year 2000, these represent only a fraction of the total chants contained in the manuscripts. Meanwhile, serious scholarly attention for the manuscript sources still awaits, but the potential contribution of these manuscripts to our collective knowledge of medieval musical processes will very likely offer a substantial contribution to the field of medieval Christian chant studies.

The decline of the oral transmission of chant and the pressing need to find other ways to preserve the musical tradition for future generations. Efforts by the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Church Chant to support and promote the traditional methods of teaching chant by rote had largely failed by the 1870s. More radical measures were necessary. While master chanter such as Grigol K’arbelashvili were able to teach a handful of students the arts of memorization, harmonization, and variation at the Bodbe Monastery (and later at the Tbilisi Seminary), even the majority of these few students were not talented enough to master the entire liturgical repertory. Furthermore, diminishing participation in Orthodox services coupled with Russian suppression of the Georgian Orthodox Church and major societal changes such as the emancipation of the serfs in 1840 created conditions in which the profession of the master chanter was no longer a widely respected choice of profession.417

Younger students, especially those from aristocratic or land-owning families, looked towards new possibilities for European-style education that could lead to advancement in the colonial military, administration, or other institutions of the Tsar. Promising music students were no longer sent to the local chant master for study, but to the Tbilisi Academy of Music, or even to the Moscow Conservatory to master the arts of counterpoint, organ, and composition.418 These factors contributed to a situation in which, as the decades of the nineteenth century progressed, fewer and fewer chanter were available to sing the basic services in the country’s churches. The oral transmission of chant was fading from lack of interest, and new radical measures needed to be explored if the liturgical chant tradition was to be preserved for future generations. Once the major political, artistic, and ecclesiastical figures invested in the preservation of Georgian chant

417 For more on the history of the Georgian Church, see Grdzeliidze, Witness through Troubled Times (2006). For more on the emancipation of serfs, see Jones, Socialism in Georgian Colors (2005).
418 Zakaria Paliashvili (1871-1933) was one such student, who after studying with Sergei Taneyev at the Moscow Conservatory, returned to Georgia to compose operas, liturgies, and collect folksongs (see 12.3.2 The Paliashvili Arrangement).
realized the inevitability of the decline of the oral tradition, the transcription of chant into Western staff notation became a priority.

5.1.1 Challenges to Transcription

The history of transcription of chant in Georgia involves several different groups of the people: the master chanters, trained musicians, the clergy, and leaders of civil society who supported the public fund-raising campaigns. Unlike nineteenth-century projects in sub-Saharan Africa or North America, the challenges of the transcription movement in Georgia did not revolve around what Ter Ellingson calls, “European standards of measurement, notation, and universalist assumptions.”419 Rather, native Georgians such as Pilimon Koridze, Razhden Khundadze, and Vasil K’arbelashvili were able to bypass cultural misinterpretation and European musical bias in order to arrive at a closer rendition of the salient features of Georgian chant.

However, as relatively inexperienced users of European notation, these musicians were forced to compromise when determining how to notate such features as the non-diatonic Georgian scale, forms of improvisation and variation, and aspects of performance practice such as breathing, tempo, stress, and accentuation. The ethnomusicologist Dimit’ri Araqishvili expressed this sentiment clearly, stating, “The great majority of our chants are based on a natural scale opposed to a tempered one, therefore, we do not have the means to transcribe them with great precision.”420

The received tradition of Georgian chant in the late nineteenth century included a massive repertory of melodies harmonized into three voice parts in at least five different regional schools of chant. Furthermore, each chant can be sung in simple, true, or ornamental styles. The diversity of manifestation of any particular melody can be overwhelming at first, but is an essential aspect of understanding the transmission of chant in the oral tradition. The transcription record is grouped around three major schools of chant, named after the local monastic centers: Shemokmedi monastery in West Georgia, the Gelati-Mart’vili monasteries in central Georgia,

and the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral in East Georgia. The majority of chant transcriptions reflect the Gelati monastery school tradition, a center of chant pedagogy since medieval times, because of the strength of the chanters in that region and the support of the diocese at the beginning of the transcription movement.

Many transcriptions are incomplete. In the interest of time, hundreds of melodies were written down without their accompanying voice parts, which were considered to be of secondary importance. Efforts to reharmonize these melodies met with varied success, and even today practitioners dream of completing the polyphonic manifestation of the complete liturgical musical kanon. But the majority of transcriptions do contain three-voiced chant, representing a sophisticated and complex musical tradition that remains as difficult to master today, with notation, as it did in the nineteenth century.

This chapter details the first major transcription projects by Pilimon Koridze during the years 1883-1886. Abundant sources attest to the social history of this projects, which produced thousands of chant transcriptions that in many ways serve as the basis for the contemporary performance revival of the Georgian chant repertory.

5.1.2 Pilimon Koridze

The transcription of West Georgian chant revolves around the efforts of one vital figure, Pilimon Koridze (1835-1911). In this section, we review the musical training, critical events, and general motivation of Koridze, focusing on the transcriptions that he produced in 1883 with a group of West-Georgian chanters while they were based in the city of Tbilisi (in East Georgia). These initial efforts represent the first successful transcriptions of West Georgian chant, and led to a series of more substantial transcription projects conducted by Koridze spanning the decades 1885-1908.

Born into a priest’s family in Guria, Pilimon Koridze was discovered by visiting Italian opera singers while studying at the Tbilisi Seminary, and invited to study at the La Scala opera school in Italy (Figure 46). He became a well known singer on the stages of Italian and Russian opera houses, but confessed to dreaming of returning home to write the first Georgian opera. When he and his Ukrainian wife finally did return to Tbilisi in 1881, he found his musical skills courted both for performances in the opera and theater, and for the preservation of Georgian traditional chant.
An April, 1881, meeting with Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze reflects this active recruiting process, as the bishop sought to find any ‘patriot’ of Georgia who would undertake the daunting task of transcribing the massive oral liturgical repertory into European notation. A couple of weeks after the meeting, the bishop submitted a letter to the editor of the influential Droeba Georgian-language journal recording their meeting and making his wishes very publically clear. "I extend my gratitude to Mr. Koridze for his kind desire to transcribe our church chant and hope that [the project] will go well."\footnote{Alexander Okrop’iridze, Droeba Journal, No. 111 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), May 31, 1881.}

At the time, Tbilisi was ablaze with pro-Georgian nationalist fervor, dedicated to the liberation of the Georgian nation, monarchy, and Church from Russian imperial control. Koridze became involved in the professional musical world of Tbilisi, coaching young musicians and directing choirs.\footnote{Koridze helped, for example, a young Meliton Balanchivadze (father of George Balanchine) to enter the Tbilisi Opera chorus. Elizabeth Kendall, Balanchine and the Lost Muse: Revolution and the Making of a Choreographer (Oxford University Press, 2013), 17-19.} With the inspiration of the writer Ilia Ch’avch’avadze, the founder of the Society for the Advancement of Reading and Writing, Koridze decided to use his musical talent and celebrity status to champion the plight of Georgian chant. It would take Koridze several years to actually begin the process of transcription, but in 1883, he met Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze (Figure 27), and formed an immediate bond over their common origins from the region of Guria, and their mutual occupations as professional singers.\footnote{Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze (1858-1934) was born and raised in the West Georgian province of Guria. He studied chant with Ant’on Dumbadze, and also visited the Georgian monastery of St. John the Theologian on Mount Athos, Greece to sing chant. Called to Tbilisi for the chant ‘competition’ in 1878, Nak’ashidze stayed in the capital to teach chant (see the section, 4.2 The Chant Competition of 1878). He was a singer in the Anchiskhat’i church, then in the Kashweti church in Tbilisi starting in 1882. In 1886 he sang in the Avlobari Church of the Archangels in Tbilisi, and in 1889 he began teaching chant in the Tbilisi Seminary. He was an important figure in the transcription movement, working with Mikhail Mach’avariani in 1878-1879, Pilimon Koridze in 1883-1884, and then again with Koridze in 1906-1908. He was said to be very charismatic, and helped to inspire and teach many seminal figures in the chant movement.}
5.2 The Nak’ashidze Transcription Project, 1883

According to an account of the interaction written by Ekvtime K’ereselidze, Nak’ashidze posed a challenge to Koridze at their first meeting: “Some people say that Georgian chant cannot be written in notation but I ask, if it is possible for other languages, why not Georgian?” Koridze reacted to the insinuation that the technology of Western notation was somehow inadequate to the task, perhaps not realizing that he would spend the next twenty-five years of his life struggling with exactly this problem. “How can it not work?!” He exclaimed. "It is definitely possible to transcribe both Georgian songs and chants into notation.” For Koridze, a trained musician, notation was a flexible writing system that could accommodate any type of (Western) musical form. In fact, Koridze would find that dealing with a non-tempered tuning system and a semi-improvisatory performance culture presented serious challenges to the durability of Western notation as a means of transcribing chant.

Koridze began transcribing chant from performances by Nak’ashidze and his choir in 1883. Their first efforts stumbled as the singers adjusted to the limitations of written notation, and Koridze adjusted his ear to the unusual tunings and intervals of traditional Georgian music. Because the singers knew all of their chants by heart, having learned them by rote, they did not understand the process by which Koridze had to interpret and notate their singing into staff notation. At their very first meeting, Koridze despairingly listened as Nak’ashidze and his choir began singing the troparion for the Epiphany service, Ganmanatbeli chveni [Enlightener of us], a highly complex and technically difficult chant (see Figure 48). After they had finished singing, Koridze said,

Until we get used to each other, let’s not transcribe k’rimanch’uli (yodeling). Later we can transcribe that and more. But for now, I think that we should focus on slowly writing

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424 Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze, as recounted in the memoir of K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potshkheravashvili private archive, 1936), 9.
425 Pilimon Koridze, as recounted in the memoir of K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potshkheravashvili private archive, 1936), 9.
the liturgy chants, and when we have accomplished that goal and we have performed these chants well, society will realize the possibility of transcribing even Georgian chant.\textsuperscript{426}

Koridze, once a seminary student, was familiar with the fundamentals of Georgian chant, and his keen musical ear soon readjusted to the nuances of Georgian traditional singers. Singing simpler chants, the transcription process soon found success. As an experiment, Koridze presented the new transcriptions to his well-trained Tbilisi-based theater choir, some of whom were Russian and completely unfamiliar with the nuances of Georgian traditional harmony.

I will teach my choir how to sing these chants from the notes. I have some Russians in my group who do not know how to chant Georgian chants, so if they are able to perform these hymns from notation, it will be obvious to society that this method of preservation is successful.\textsuperscript{427}

These academic singers were able to easily sing from notated transcriptions, surprising Nak'ashidze and the other West Georgian chanter. In late 1883, Koridze completed the transcription of the basic liturgy as sung by Nak’ashidze and K’ont’ridze, and gave a public performance on 10 December at the Exarch church.\textsuperscript{428}

Koridze seemed particularly motivated to prove to the Tbilisian Georgian society that European culture was more than simply a threat to traditional Georgian culture. Rather, certain European technological advances, such as written music notation, could be used to the advantage of Georgian society through the preservation of a dying oral tradition of folk and liturgical music. Together with Nak’ashidze, he dedicated himself to proving that the transcription of Georgian traditional chant into ‘Russian notes’ could work as a tool for preserving liturgical music. Considering the various failures to notate any convincing transcriptions of liturgical chant up until that point, it is not surprising that many Georgians of all levels of education and rank in society held doubts that European notation could in fact be useful as a preservation tool. Koridze would prove this theory wrong, and in the pursuit of that agenda, become more and more aware of the seriousness and urgency of the preservation project.

\textsuperscript{426} ibid.: 10-11.
\textsuperscript{427} ibid.: 10-11.
\textsuperscript{428} Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 93.
5.2.1 Upalo shegvits’qalen [Lord have mercy]

One of the first chants that Koridze transcribed was the common response of the litany, *Upalo shegvits’qalen* [Lord have mercy] (Figure 47). There are dozens of musical variants of this simple text, which is sung many times throughout the liturgical week, and is the first chant that young children learn to sing along with. One of the common musical features of almost all litany responses in Georgia is the falling melody line, which typically descends by an interval of a third (from the fifth to the third degree above the bass voice).

In the example notated from Nak’ashidze, the top voice ornaments this general motion by descending lower in pitch than the middle voice, thus affecting the perceived timbre of the choir as the upper voices switch register (discussed in the section, 11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing). We also observe that Koridze includes a piano score that mostly duplicates the three vocal lines above (circled, Figure 47), however in some cases Koridze fills in certain chords with extra notes, adds a lower octave to the bass voice, or fails to completely write out the bass counterpoint.\(^{429}\)

The inclusion of the piano score reflects the transcription process that Koridze described to Nak’ashidze from the outset, namely, that he would listen to the singers, work out how to play what they were singing on his fortepiano, and only then notate the chant on printed staff paper. The process of filtering the performed chant through the fortepiano, however, distorted the original tuning of the Georgian natural scale (discussed in the section, 7.1 Georgian Traditional Tuning). The boxed chord in measure 2 shows how this quickly became a problem: the singers tuned the chord with the outer voices singing the interval of a fifth and the middle voice providing a fourth, a whole tone below the top voice. But in the key chosen by Koridze, which includes three flats, the chord Ab- G-D forms a tritone between the outer voices, with a minor second interval between the upper voices, a wholly unusual and uncharacteristic chord in Georgian traditional harmony (this discussion pursued in the section, 7.3 Analysis: Isaia mkhiarul [Rejoice, O Isaiah]; for more on typical chords in Georgian chant, see the section, (10.1.2 Typical Chords: Georgian Traditional Chant).

\(^{429}\) For example, see pages 45-46 of manuscript Q-676 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts) for examples of an added third interval to fill out an open-fifth interval chord, or the ‘floating’ chord in the piano left-hand stave that does not portray the moving vocal line of the third voice. Octave doubling of the bass voice can be found in several places, for example pages 6-7, 15-16, etc.
5.2.2 Ganmanatlebeli chveni [Enlightener of us]

When Koridze produced a good copy of the Nak’ashidze transcriptions in 1884 (the location of the original rough-draft copies is not known), he included Ganmanatlebeli chveni [Enlightener of us], the same Epiphany chant that he reportedly described as ‘yodeling’ when Nak’ashidze and his choir first visited his studio (Figure 48). But are there any musical elements of this chant that resemble the famous k’rimanch’uli ‘yodeling’ technique of the Gurian singers in West Georgia? In fact there are none. Koridze used the term in a colloquial manner to indicate unfamiliarity with the musical processes of the singers, using a term local to the Gurian

\[\text{Figure 47. Upalo shegvits’qalen, Q-676, Pilimon Koridze, 1883}\]

430 The yodeling technique known as k’rimanch’uli is a specialized rhythmic element of certain Gurian folksongs. It is sung in a high-pitched, squeezed voice that is neither head-voice nor falsetto. It describes a rhythmic pattern over the other two voices, often singing pitch classes 8, 4, and 2 in repetitive patterns, with the open fifth interval bridging the singer’s tessitura. For more on various singing styles and their specialized nomenclature, see Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music.
singers themselves. Without knowing exactly what perplexed Koridze the most about their initial performance, we can only look at the transcription itself for answers.

In an initial observation of the chant, ganmanatlebeli chveni [Enlightener of us],\(^{431}\) one notices that the underlying parallelism common to simple variants of Georgian chant is disguised here by the independent movement of all three voice parts. Despite this contrapunctal nature, this variant is not nearly as complex as it could be: highly ornamental chants from West Georgia are often far more complex, featuring voice crossings, unusual harmonies, and pronounced ornamentation. This chant is still an ornamental variant, however, clearly defined by the drawn-out phrasing of the text over supplemental musical material. The first phrase of *ganmanatlebeli chveni*, which consumes the entirety of the example, has been substantially elongated due to the insertion of two additional medial cadences in measures 3 and 7 (circled, Figure 48).\(^{432}\)

These cadences are highly unusual in that they do not end in unison or an open fifth (as most chant cadences), but feature the lower two voices moving in parallel octaves. The model melody formulas that display this type of cadence, are called the *shesvladi* [Introit] type, because of their frequent appearance in chants of this genre.\(^{433}\) The syllables of the text are distributed over additional formulaic musical material, such as that seen in the elongated cadence in measures 2-3, and the voice crossing in measures 8-10.\(^{434}\) But none of these factors should have

\(^{431}\) Pilimon Koridze, *Ganmanatlebeli chveni* [Enlightener of us], manuscript Q-676 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 57v-63v. The 13 pages necessary to transcribe the chant can be partially explained by the inclusion of a piano score beneath each vocal stave (not pictured in this example, but visible in Figure 49), thus allowing space for only two staves per page instead of three or even four as seen in other notated manuscripts.

\(^{432}\) For a description of this particular cadence type, see Davit Shugliashvili, “Shesvladi kartul saek’lesio galobashi” [The introit in Georgian ecclesiastic chant], *Proceedings* (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2006). A very interesting point in this article is that the unique cadence pattern found in the Introit genre model melody entered the para-liturgical folk tradition. This can be seen even in untexted funeral laments sung entirely to the syllables vai-vai. This is a clear example of how liturgical music influenced the folk tradition, an influence that is otherwise considered to have traveled mostly in the opposite direction especially in the localized harmonic sensibilities coming from folk music (see, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison).

\(^{433}\) *Shesvladi*-type [Introit] medial cadences occur not only in Introit chants, but also in the ornamental variations of West Georgian Eucharist chants such as *shen gigalobt* [We praise Thee], and *ghirs ars ch’eshrmaritad* [Truly it is worthy to bless Thee]. They have a simple structure: the top-voice melody holds a note, for example pitch class A; the middle voice executes a number of ornamentations, eventually joining the top voice on A; the bass also joins the top voice at the interval of an octave lower. At this moment, when all three voices are singing unison octaves, the top voice drops out, and the lower two voices rise one pitch in parallel octaves to cadence on B (circled, Figure 48). In many cases the next phrase begins with the top voice singing the previous cadence note, in this case B, while the lower two voices harmonize in any of a variety of ways (chords types: B-G-E, B-A-E, B-G-D, B-G-B, B-G-G).

\(^{434}\) K’ereselidze and others called these inserted extra musical phrases *ch’reli*, though this term is problematic due to multiple meanings depending on context. For further discussion, see the section, 9.1 The *Ch’reli* System.
confused Koridze, a well-trained professional singer of European opera. Several other possibilities come to mind: tempo, tuning, and improvisation.

**Figure 48. Ganmanatlebeli chveni, transcribed by Pilimon Koridze, 1883.**
The rhythm of Introit-style chants is supposed to be relatively free-form, with the middle-voice given free rein to elongate the cadential ornamentations (circled, Figure 48). Because of the numerous medial cadences, the rhythm of the chant is constantly broken with potential pauses. These can either be honored, or in some cases circumvented, with a quick jump to the beginning of the next phrase. Without a clear beat to establish time, Koridze may have been confused about how the three voice parts were to be synchronized together. Scholars agree that Nak’ashidze and his singers sang in a modified heptatonic scale, such that the octave was divided more or less by seven equal intervals.

For Koridze, this tuning would not have allowed him to immediately grasp anything like a European tonic-dominant relationship, or a major-minor modality. Finally, the potential for improvisation is perhaps best expressed in the loose, free-form structure of the Introit musical phrases. Expert singers would never sing these phrases the same way twice, with all three voice parts having ‘permission’ to freely ornament their individual lines within the basic cadential structures. An improvised performance is very difficult to transcribe not only because of the variation that occurs through every repetition, but because of the lack of predictability. All of these factors may have played a role in confusing even well trained musicians such as Pilimon Koridze, one of the most internationally experienced Georgian musicians of his era.

5.3 The Model Melody Debate

In 1884, when the Tbilisi-based theater choir of Pilimon Koridze traveled to Kutaisi to perform the first transcriptions of West Georgian chant in front of a large gathering of clergy and master chanters, the performance received mixed reactions. For most of those in attendance, the performance of Georgian traditional liturgical chant from staff notation—associated previously only with European opera, theater, and symphonic music—marked a complete shift in their conception of the possibilities for preserving chant in notated transcriptions (previously, notation was considered by many Georgian traditional singers to be limited to the representation of Western music). But certain aspects of the performance troubled the assembled master
In this section, we review the possible reasons for this critique of the first performance of West Georgian chant from notation, a moment which represents one of the only historically recorded instances of peer review. This event sheds light not only on issues of performance practice, but fundamentally on aspects of peer review that bring up questions of authenticity and correct practice from within the last community of elite chanters.

Among those performances critiqued, the chant *shen gigalobt* [We praise Thee] was one of those singled out as problematic. The Koridze transcription as sung by Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze (manuscript NCM Q-676) displays an extremely ornamented variant of the common Eucharistic chant. The standard melody is practically unheard throughout this variant as the first-voice melody sings an extended improvisation in voice crossing with the second voice, a preferred style of the Gurian singers at the Shemokmedi Monastery (for more on this topic, see the section, 11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing). The lack of the heard melody was likely a factor in the critique of this particular chant, as was the inserted *ch’reli* style phrases (for more on this subject, see Figure 142). Indeed, one witness singled out the length of the ‘vocalizations’ of the chant *shen gigalobt* for negative comment: "It did not turn out well because the phrasing and vocalizations were overly prolonged."

5.3.1 *Romelni kerubimta* [Let us, the Cherubim], 1883

The critics mentioned two other chants, but these do not contain very many voice crossings, leading us to consider other explanations for their apparent unsuitability. The chant *romelni kerubimta* [Let us, the Cherubim], for example, does not contain many voice crossings though it is highly ornamented (Figure 49). For ease of comparison, see digital transcription
(Figure 51). In the variant sung by the Nak'ashidze choir in 1883 and notated by Koridze, there is little obvious fault with the musical content. It is a highly ornamental performance, but so are other chants in the collection. The assembled chanter who disliked the 1884 performance were indisputably masters of liturgical ornamentation technique, thus some other parameter must have irked their musical sensibilities. So what musical reason is there for their irritation? Perhaps it was a combination of several factors.

**Figure 49. Romelni kerubimta, Pilimon Koridze (Nak’ashidze variant), 1883**

One possible reason for the critique concerns the discrepancies in tuning. Koridze's Tbilisi theater choir very likely performed in equal-tempered tuning (they served as the opera chorus, regularly performing with orchestra), so perhaps the unusual sounding tritone intervals

Entrance. The familiarity with the (short) text and the need for its prolonged performance allowed a rich musical tradition to thrive around the vocalization of this particular hymn. In the Georgian transcription record, more than a dozen variants are extant from the various transcription projects described this chapter. The text in English is: "We, who mystically represent the Cherubim, And chant the thrice-holy hymn to the Life-giving Trinity, Let us set aside the cares of life, That we may receive the King of all, Who comes invisibly escorted by the Divine Hosts."
shocked the attending chant experts. A third reason might have concerned the competition between different regional schools in West Georgia, as Nak’ashidze and his choir represented the Shemokmedi School in the province of Guria. An examination of the transcription reveals a fourth possibility, however, and raises the issue of authentic model melody assignment.

A closer inspection of this particular Koridze transcription reveals that the Nak’ashidze variant is not sung to the standard model melody of the cherubic hymn, *romelni kerubimta*, but to an entirely different melody borrowed from the troparia genre. Could the musical content of the Nak’ashidze variant have been the cause of such critique? Analysis reveals that Nak’ashidze performed the cherubikon text to the ideomelic model melodies of another genre: in this case, the melodies for troparia in Tone 8. Before assessing the possible significance of this unusual setting, or the musical and liturgical ramifications of such a choice, let’s examine the sources.

5.3.2 Model Melodies of Tone 8 Troparia

The Tone 8 troparia model melody system has been described in a dissertation by musicologist Davit Shugliashvili. For comparison sake, only the opening two melodic phrases of Tone 8 troparia are presented here (up to seven melodic phrases are available for the setting of any chant text in this tone, Figure 50). These model melodies were collated from hundreds of examples of Tone 8 troparia in an averaging process. Slight variations from the model are not only expected, they are the norm.

Figure 50. Georgian model melodies, Tone 8 troparia

![Figure 50](image)

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438 For an explanation of why the transcription of Georgian chant into European staff notation forced Koridze to frequently notate the uncharacteristic interval of a tritone, see the section, 7.3 Analysis: *Isaia mkhiauri* [Rejoice, O Isaiah].

439 These Tone 8 model melodies were copied (and transposed for ease of comparison) from a chart published by Davit Shugliashvili, "Rva khmis sist'ema..." (PhD diss., 2009), 145.
The following discussion compares the Nak'ashidze performance to the model melodies in an effort to understand if the Nak’ashidze performance of the cherubicon text set to Tone 8 model melodies was in any way at fault for the master chanters. For ease of comparison, measure markings have been added (compare measures 1-14, Figure 50 and Figure 51).

**Figure 51. romanini kerubimta, Nak’ashidze variant (1883), digital transcription**

When comparing these two examples, several aspects may be confusing (note that the model melody is in the top voice, and that the harmonic rhythm is halved in the Nak'ashidze transcription). First, the cadences are different. In measures 7-9, a voice crossing occurs and the phrasal cadence unusually ends in a unison on pitch class F#. Typically, this model melody should end on pitch class C# with the lower two voices singing F# at the fifth below the melody.
(compare measure 9, Figure 50, Figure 51). But in this case, the Nak'ashidze top voice abandons the model melody. Starting in measure 7, the top voice initiates a voice crossing and cadences in unison with the lower voices on pitch class F# (for full analysis of advanced ornamentation techniques such as voice crossing, see the section, 11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing). The same cadential technique is employed for the end of phrase B (measure 14).

This type of cadence is unusual in the transcription record, though exceptions can be found.

Another difference between the Nak'ashidze performance and the model melodies can be observed in the B-phrase (measures 10-14). Here, Nak'ashidze sings the entire phrase one pitch lower than the model (compare measure 11, Figure 50 and Figure 51). It is unusual that a phrase would be sung lower than the model melody, though it has been shown that phrases do modulate up by one pitch on occasion. Thus, in comparison to hundreds of other chants that do not sing one model melody phrase lower than its normal position, this might be considered an unusual variant or even a mistake.

The syllabic content of the text is also not mapped precisely to the model melody (the standard is indicated with the slur markings in Figure 50). For example, in the model melody, new syllables occur at the beginning of measures 12, 13, and 14. In the Nak'ashidze variant, however, new syllables are not sung at these time markers. Syllable distribution over the model melody was a fundamental musical parameter of the oral transmission of chant. The number of different texts, with different numbers of syllables per phrase, made this process difficult. This may explain some of the discrepancies in syllabic distribution seen in some transcriptions. All of these differences are relatively minor in the spectrum of change seen in the various improvised regional performances of the Georgian model melodies. The similarities, in this case, are far more significant than the differences.

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440 In other words, if in the model melody schema the melody is supposed to cadence on pitch C, the lower two harmonizing voices will, in standard practice, cadence on pitch F: an interval of a fifth below the melody. In Shemokmedi monastery chant, the melody sometimes joins the lower voices on a unison cadence, though this is not seen frequently in the transcription record.

441 In the model melody of phrase-B, Nak'ashidze again initiates a voice crossing and cadences in unison with the lower voice parts. Given the cadential pitch of C# in the model melody of phrase-B, we would expect this unison cadence to be on pitch F#, just like phrase-A. But because Nak'ashidze sings the B-phrase one pitch lower than the model, the cadential pitch is one whole-tone lower than expected, occurring on pitch class E.

442 There are several possible reasons for the mismatch in text between the Nak'ashidze setting of romelni kerubimta and the model melody. Perhaps the best answer is that the text of romelni kerubimta does not contain as many syllables per phrase as a typical troparia text.
The attending master chanters did not have a problem with the ornamentation level of the chant performance, or even the minor mistakes. Rather, they disagreed with the practice of singing a standard Eucharist text with a fixed melody to a set of model melodies from the rva-khma (Oktoechos) system. In order to understand the significance of setting a hymn text to the wrong melody, such as is apparently the case with romelni kerubimta being set to melodies of troparia, Tone 8, it is worth discussing the subject of melody assignments in the Georgian liturgical system.

5.3.3 Melody Assignment

As model melodies in the Georgian rva-khma (Oktoechos) system are uniquely assigned to only one tone in one chant genre, usage of model melodies for texts in other chant genres is highly unusual. For example, the melodies of troparia, tone 6, should never be used to sing any text that falls into the genre of kondakia or heirmoi. The transmission of the Georgian model melody system depended on the accurate retention of the correct melodies for each genre and tone. This point aside, it must be pointed out that the cherubikon hymn falls into a different liturgical category in terms of its musical setting. Its text is neither categorized as belonging to the troparion, kondakion, or heirmos genre, nor is it a text set to eight different musical melodies such as the Vespers-Matins texts “Lord I have Cried,” or “God is the Lord.” In Georgian tradition, the cherubikon hymn, like many other common liturgy chants, retains its own individual melody that is separate and unique from the hundreds of model melodies contained in the Georgian Oktoechos system.

Given the unique melodic classification of the liturgy chant, romelni kerubimta, could the setting of the hymn to other model melodies in the transcription of the Nak’ashidze variant have offended the master chanters? Was the ‘degradation of the natural mode’ really a quibble with the unorthodox musical setting of the standard liturgy text? Such an interpretation seems justifiable, given that the very foundation of the oral transmission of the Georgian chant system

443 It must be noted that while this general rule applies to most chants in the Georgian oktoechos system, there are also exceptions. For example, certain troparia sung to the melodies of Tone 1 ‘borrow’ certain phrases from Tone 8, etc. Such borrowing suggests a fluid oral transmission of these chant melodies, as well as a lack of codification of the model melody system.

444 For more on melody assignments in the Georgian Oktoechos, see Shugliashvili, "Rva khmis sist'ema..." (PhD diss., 2009).
seems to have been built upon the accurate classification, memorization, and retention of the model melodies by genre assignment. The musical performance of thousands of individual liturgical texts throughout the calendar year relied upon strict adherence to the principle of the model melody system, even while the individual performance of any chant might vary from day to day in its range, color, harmonization, and ornamentation level. Thus, no matter how well executed the three-voiced harmonization or the individual ornamentation, I posit that Nak’ashidze was being criticized for changing the model melody, or as they phrased it, the ‘natural voice’ (*bunebrivi khma*) of the chant.\(^{445}\)

5.4 Chant Performance in Kutaisi, 1884

Sensing the potential to notate chant successfully, Nak'ashidze and Koridze looked for sponsorship for a larger project, but unfortunately, the founder of the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Church Chant, Bishop Alexander Okrop'iridze, had been reassigned by the Russian Exarch to the distant diocese of Guria-Samegrelo in order to remove him from the intellectual milieu of Tbilisi. Okrop’iridze, despite criticism to the contrary, had supported the West Georgian chanters in Tbilisi, choosing to sponsor the transcription of their chant over the K’arbelashvili style after the competition of 1878 (see the section, 4.2.2 Reaction to the Competition). According to P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Koridze did gain an audience with the remaining Committee leadership in Tbilisi, Archimandrite Mak’ari Mat’atashvili and Archimandrite Grigol Dadiani, but requested an opera-star's salary for his transcription project.\(^{446}\) As this proposal was not accepted, Nak'ashidze and Koridze requested an audience with Bishop Gabriel Kikodze in West Georgia to present their work.

\(^{445}\) It should be noted that while most of the dozen or so transcriptions of the Cherubic hymn, *romelni kerubimta*, retain variations of the same generic melody, one or two unique musical settings do appear in addition to the 1883 Nak’ashidze variant discussed this section (from manuscript NCM Q-676). One of these other variants is a setting of the Cherubic text to the model melodies of Tone 6 troparia. As this is likely a variant originating from Ant’on Dumbadze, one begins to suspect a tradition at the Shemokmedi Monastery of embelling common liturgy chants by setting them to other model melody systems. This observation suggests some liberality with the musical setting of very common hymns at the local church or monastery level, but should not be interpreted to mean that such melodic borrowings were standard practice or even condoned by the majority of chanters, who otherwise appear to have relied upon the inherited melodic assignments for each text.

\(^{446}\) P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, *Kartuli Saero...* (1898), 94-95. In his account, K’arbelashvili reports that Koridze “demanded” 30,000 *maneti* (rubles) for the transcription of five hundred chants.
In 1884, Pilimon Koridze traveled from Tbilisi with his choir of trained musicians (Georgians, Russians, and others) some one hundred miles away over the Likhi mountain range to Kutaisi. There, they were to sing a public service, with Bishop Gabriel (Kikodze) presiding, singing traditional chant from the first transcriptions of West Georgian chant.

The event was unprecedented in the history of the transmission of Georgian chant in that non-Georgian singers, without any training in the oral tradition, would be tested for their ability to capture the nuance and technicality of the professional liturgical music system. In reality, it was the system of European notation itself that was under scrutiny, with the question of whether it could truly represent the improvisatory nature of Georgian chant still unconvincingly answered. In this section, we detail the event itself and the public and private reactions from the public and the professional chanters in attendance.

5.4.1 The Audience

The excitement for the first performance of West Georgian chant from European notation was not confined to clerical circles in Kutaisi. In preparation for the arrival of Pilimon Koridze and his choir, Bishop Gabriel Kikodze (1825-1896) sent messengers to every corner of West Georgia requesting the attendance of all master chanters, many of whom traveled from various remote highland regions (Figure 52). With this single gesture, the bishop demonstrated his extraordinary gifts as a leader. He realized that no matter what the outcome of the performance would be, he needed to build consensus from the master-chanter professional class on the question of what direction to pursue for preserving West Georgian chant.

According to the memoir written by Ekvtime K’ereselidze, the majority of master chanters in the 1880s were still highly skeptical of the viability of European notation to capture the essential features of the oral tradition of liturgical chant. Earlier transcription efforts by musicians such as Mikael Mach’avariani and Andria Benashvili had not yielded significant results.

447 According to Razhden Khundadze, there were five members of the choir: “Kartuli saek’lesio galoba” [Georgian ecclesiastical chant], Mts’qemsi, No. 7 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), April 1, 1884, 4-5.
448 Bishop Gabriel Kikodze (1825-1896) was responsible for many positive developments in West Georgia including the rebuilding of churches, opening a Seminary, funding a Church newsletter in the Georgian language, and writing learned editorials that openly questioned the policies of the Moscow appointed Church Exarchs in Tbilisi. He was one of the first Church figures to be canonized by the Georgian Orthodox Church in the Post-Soviet period.
results. To gain the support and cooperation of a majority of influential professional chanters, Kikodze needed a public event that would prove the usefulness of notation.

Figure 52. Gabriel Kikodze, Bishop of Imereti (c. 1885)

In retrospect, Kikodze had already planned with Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze to open a West Georgian branch of the Tbilisi-based Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Chant, founded by Okrop’iridze in 1860. As high-ranking Georgian clerics who shared similar nationalist perspectives on matters of autocephaly, language, chant, and liturgical education, Kikodze and Okrop’iridze often communicated their mutual respect for one another. With the arrival of the choir from Tbilisi, Kikodze sensed the correct moment to form a new Committee, and gather constituents from among the attending chanters. In K’ereselidze’s account of the event, he records a long list of the master-chanters that attended the event, revealing a who’s-who of West Georgian professionals many of whom would be the last master-chanters of their respective areas. Indeed, twenty years later, Razhden Khundadze would lament that there were no chanters left in West Georgia like those from earlier times.

449 Ekvtime K’ereselidze recalled the following chanters in attendance: “Jaba Gurieli and his brother T’elemoni with their choir came from Guria. Also with them came Ant'on Dumbadze with [his uncle] Giorgi, and son Davit, and many others with them. From Khoni and Mart'vili [in Samegrelo] came Dimit’ri Ch'alaganidze with his choir, as well as Vasil and [his son] Arist'ovle Kutateladze and many others. From [the highland region of] Rach’a came Aslan Eristavi from the Barak'oni church with his choir, and from Nik'orts'minda cathedral came the K'andelak'i brothers. And from [the village of] Chkhari came the famous chanter Davit Chkhareli with his choir. And from [nearby] Gelati cathedral, the Shotadze brothers and K'andelak'i brothers came. From Jruch'i and Sachkhere [in Upper Imereti] came the Ts'ereteli brothers and others.” K’ereselidze, Kartul saek'le'sio sagaloblebis not'ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 12.

When Pilimon Koridze arrived with his choir from Tbilisi, he was met not only by Bishop Gabriel Kikodze of Kutaisi, but by a crowd of chanters with their choirs, called to witness the performance of Georgian chant from notated transcriptions. Many of those in attendance were doubtful that European notation could ever accurately depict the nuances of the Georgian oral tradition, stirring a great deal of public debate, speculation, and opinionated controversy surrounding widespread curiosity from the general public. When word spread that Russian singers planned to sing Georgian chant from ‘Russian notes’, those with an opinion on this issue flocked to the cathedral in central Kutaisi in such numbers that there wasn’t space either inside or outside the doors (Figure 53).\textsuperscript{451}

\textsuperscript{451} The Kutaisi Cathedral, an iconic building in the heart of the city, was completely destroyed in 1924 by the Bolsheviks. Shortly afterwards, Metropolitan Nazarius (1872-1924) of Kutaisi and four other clergymen were
5.4.2 The First Performance from Notation

For the service, led by Bishop Gabriel Kikodze himself, Koridze and his choir performed all of the liturgy chants. According to K’ereselidze’s account of the performance, the gathering was enthralled with the result:

As the liturgy began, everyone stood humbly and expectantly as the choir began chanting, their attention directed to the sound. All of the chants were executed with resolute firmness and wonderfully performed by Pilimon Koridze and his choir. From time to time, Pilimon would blend in his own deep bass voice, and everyone was excited to listen to the sweet chanting.\(^4\)

Bishop Gabriel Kikodze was extremely pleased with the result, and showered Koridze and the choir members with public lyrical praise, a significant endorsement considering the bishop’s prestige and respect in the region.

I want to thank our nation’s talented child Pilimon, and our enterprising Georgians who helped him to end his travels abroad and return to his beloved country, bringing his knowledge and education to our nation as a gift. With a strong voice he proclaims, as he begins our people’s songs and chants, now we need to resurrect it! From among the other kingdoms, the beauty and majesty of our natural voices must be brilliantly glorified.\(^4\)

The bishop framed his comments in nationalist terms, leaving little doubt that the agenda of preserving traditional chant would be justified to his public as a worthy project, if for no other reason than its inherent Georgian quality.

To the professional chan ters, he was more blunt: “From my perspective, the number of our knowledgeable chan ters is becoming fewer and fewer, and in the end we will completely lose [this chant] if we do not transcribe it into notation. This is urgent business that will require the collection of proper finances.”\(^4\)

5.4.3 Reactions

Despite the glowing endorsement from Bishop Gabriel Kikodze in front of large crowds of excited parishioners, a voice of critique arose from the master chan ters themselves. They

\(^4\) Ibid.: 13-14.
\(^4\) Ibid.: 15.
questioned the veracity of the transcribed chants, and privately accosted Koridze, asking why he had not written the correct variants of the chants? According to K’ereselidze’s account of the meeting, several master chanters (he does not name any specific person) began by politely stating their positive impressions of the usefulness of notation, but quickly turned towards a more pressing matter.

We have all become convinced that it is possible to write Georgian songs and chants in notation, but why did you desire to write certain chants, for instance romelni kerubinta, davitartsa meupisa, and shen gigalobt, with a degraded and transformed mode? Why did not you write it in its natural mode?!455

Koridze was taken aback by the aggressive disapproval of their accusation, and defended himself:

As you know well, I have not studied the oral tradition of chant. What I know is [the science of] notation; what I heard I wrote, and what they chanted for me, that is what I wrote down and that is what we chanted. If it was canonical chant or not I cannot say, that is the informant’s fault.456

This reasonable response still did not sit well with the master chanters, as they considered Koridze the author of the transcriptions and the director of the choir. Nonetheless, they hurried to Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze, and according to K’ereselidze’s account, did not hesitate to rebuke him severely, saying, “How did you dare? You are making him write a transformed and degraded variant and losing the ‘natural’ mode. With that, you are losing the worthy quality of the chant and also your own self-respect!”457

In subsequent months, nearly a dozen letters of praise and rebuke were published in the major newspapers of Tbilisi and Kutaisi, many leveling blame at Nak’ashidze.458

Whatever chants the singers performed in the right style, Mr. Koridze transcribed correctly without anything lacking. But those that were performed with a distorted melody, for those we need to rebuke the singers and not Mr. Koridze.459

455 ibid.: 13. In this case, I translated the word khma [voice] in its medieval usage as ‘mode’, which in this case, we can take to mean the ‘model melody’.
456 ibid.: 13.
457 ibid.: 13.
Others were surprised at the particular kinds of mistakes that seemed to be promoted in the transcriptions. Some criticized the harmonization, others criticized the model melodies, and still others professed disbelief that these were even valid chants. Razhden Khundadze remarked, “If I am to be honest, this was the first time that I had ever heard these variants of *romelni kerubimta, meupisa, ghirsa ars da martal taqvanis tsema,* and *ts’mida arsi.*”

The published conversation about the performance in Kutaisi also touched on other matters, such as the appropriate performance etiquette for chanters and church choirs. Data Gugunava, a nobleman from Guria who attended the Koridze concerts, described how chant choirs should be constructed.

Georgian chant must be sung by three people: first the *mtkmeli* [speaker], second the *maghali bani* [high bass], and third the *bani* [bass]. The *mtkmeli* must start and the others must harmonize. Sometimes, a fourth singer may join in, but in that case, he must sing together with the bass voice such that their voices are inseparable. If they cannot blend well, the chant will lose its character…. If there are too many singers, the chant will become lose its character and beauty, becoming like European art songs.

It is not clear why Gugunava felt it expedient to describe the correct number of voices to be sung, but it is possible that this was a reaction to Koridze allowing multiple singers to perform each of the voice parts (a common practice in European choirs), or that Koridze’s operatic bass voice did not blend well with the others.

The criticism leveled at Nak’ashidze, an accomplished chanter by any measure, bears investigation both for its technical specifics, and for its reflection of the internal culture of the professional chanter class (a discussion on the specific chants mentioned as not carrying their ‘natural style’, with analysis of their musical contents, is offered in the section, 5.3 The Model Melody Debate).

It is worth examining the social pressure exerted by the professional class of chanters against one of their own who had erred in a critical task. Such moments, most of them unrecorded to history, are extremely valuable for understanding the internal control and

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460 Razhden Khundadze, “Kartuli saek’lesio galoba” [Georgian ecclesiastical chant], *Mts’qemsi,* No. 7 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), April 1, 1884, 4-5. The four chants named by Khundadze are common liturgy chants that every chanter would know in multiple variants. Here he is implying that these (common) chants were not properly transcribed according to known and accepted model melodies.

strictness of the profession of chanting, which was considered a major responsibility by the Church hierarchy considering its central importance to the performance of the liturgy.

Georgian chant will disappear when the chanters that are alive now will no longer be alive, and what I’m saying doesn't need a lot of proof, because those who know chant are not teaching their children. Meanwhile, other children don't have the time or the desire to study chant. Unfortunately for us, in private schools in Imereti and Guria, they don't even teach chant. The transcription of chant will be an eternal treasure for Georgians because it will be saved and preserved until the Georgian people disappear from the earth.462

Such criticism demonstrates that the musical aspects of chant were guarded as carefully by their professional interlocutors as the dogmatic liturgical texts. Any breach of protocol in the oral transmission of chant was denigrated with immediate and swift shaming, which essentially barred a chanter from practicing his craft.

Following the public performance of notated chant by Pilimon Koridze and his Tbilisi choir, Bishop Kikodze organized the Kutaisi branch of the Committee for the Preservation of Church Chant.463 Their first action was to persuade Koridze to agree to a multi-year contract that envisioned the complete transcription of the West Georgian liturgical repertory. Fortunately for Georgian chant studies, Koridze agreed. He would work with four elite West Georgian chanters, hand-picked by the Bishop, so that his transcriptions would be more ‘accurate’ and ‘sound correct.’464 The project began in early 1885.

5.5 Kutaisi Transcription Project, 1885-1886

With the decision to found a Committee and commission the largescale transcription of West Georgian chant from Pilimon Koridze, one of the most accomplished Georgian musicians in the country, Bishop Gabriel Kikodze succeeded in advancing the long-suffering hopes of Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze to preserve the oral tradition of chant in European notation. Kikodze was able to raise funds for the project not from single wealthy patrons, but from hundreds of small tithes from parish members throughout the diocese. He created a series of

462 ibid.: 2-3.
463 Bishop Gabriel Kikodze placed the influential publisher Davit Ghambashidze at the head of the Kutaisi branch of the Committee for the Preservation of Church Chant. This resolution was adopted by the twenty-first Convention of Clergy in Kutaisi (Nov, 1884).
checks and balances to make sure that the transcriptions were evaluated by both professional chanters from the oral tradition and European-trained musicians, ensuring that the quality of the transcriptions would never come into doubt again (an issue that plagued the early transcription efforts in East Georgia).

Kikodze also personally chose the chanters for the project, selecting four chanters from different regions of West Georgia with the thought that if they could agree on a common variant to record, it would represent the common and archetypal basis for the collective inherited tradition. Such organizational considerations were rare for the period, and further emphasize the significant leadership role that Bishop Kikodze played in the success of the first major transcription project.

The Kutaisi Chant Committee wisely avoided involving the administrative hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church in Tbilisi, knowing that they would never support the transcription of Georgian traditional chant. Instead of following protocol, Bishop Kikodze quietly requested funds from within his own diocese, asking all the faithful to contribute just two maneti each to the project. According to K’ereselidze, in the name of the newly formed Kutaisi branch of the Committee for the Preservation of Church Chant, Bishop Kikodze was able to raise five thousand tumani (50,000 maneti or rubles). The timely enthusiasm generated from the liturgical performance of Koridze’s choir in Kutaisi assisted the fund-raising, and as a result, Bishop Kikodze was able to announce a two-year transcription project.

5.5.1 Checks and Balances

Bishop Kikodze also created a series of unusually rational checks and balances for the project: Koridze was commissioned to transcribe chant from a group of four singers including Razhden Khundadze, Ivliane Ts'ereteli, Dimit’ri Ch'alaganidze, and Ant'on Dumbadze, who represented the Gelati, Khobi, Martvili, and Shemokmedi monastery schools of chant, respectively. By choosing chanters from different monastery traditions, Bishop Kikodze

465 ibid.: 15. As indicated earlier, in 1885, the Tsarist ruble was pegged to gold at the rate of 1 ruble=4 French francs and to $0.77 US. In 1897 there was a revaluation at 2 2/3 francs and $0.514 US. For more on currency values, see Chester L. Krause and Clifford Mishler, 1994 Standard Catalog of World Coins (Iola WI: Krause Publications, 1993).
466 The Gelati, Khobi, and Mart’vili monasteries are all relatively close together in Imereti-Samegrelo, while the Shemokmedi Monastery in the Gurian region is farther away (see, Figure 14. Map of Georgia).
charged the team with choosing the most archetypal chant variants, and stipulated that their salaries depended on the production of notated chant transcriptions. A transcription was only to be considered complete when Koridze’s trained choir members sang the notated chants, and the master singers approved that performance with their combined signatures on the final manuscripts, thus ensuring that all parties agreed on the accuracy of the transcriptions.

Once this final check was completed, the master-chanters signed the good-copy manuscripts, they were stamped by representatives of the Imeretian diocese, and then sent to Tbilisi for approval from the official censors of the Russian Orthodox administration. The project was to continue for two years, with the goal of producing five hundred three-voiced transcriptions comprising the fundamental Matins, Vespers, and Liturgy service chants, as well as the majority of Feast-Day troparia and kondakaria chants. This series of checks and balances established by Bishop Gabriel Kikodze set a precedent of professionalism in the early transcription movement that ensured cooperation, diligence, and efficiency.

Pilimon Koridze was impressed with the organization of the project, and readily agreed to relocating his family to the West Georgian capital, despite giving up a burgeoning musical career in Tbilisi, the cultural center of the South Caucasus. Later he would write of his decision,

The success and fortune of an eminent singer is fleeting, but my current labors are for the good of society…. The works I transcribe and print will never be erased, but will elevate our Georgian music to a high level, such that it will exceed the music of other countries.

The competitive spirit of his personal motivation was typical of the late nineteenth century, when a whole generation of European ethnographers looked to record the music of their homelands for

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467 According to K’ereselidze, Pilimon Koridze and the chanters were to be paid at a rate of ten maneti (rubles) per completed transcription, with Koridze earning five maneti, and the three chanters splitting the other five maneti.
468 This bureaucratic process is visible in the number of signatures and stamps on the last page of each of the original chant manuscripts produced in Kutaisi between 1885-1886 and housed in the National Center of Manuscripts: Q-677, Q-678, Q-679, Q-680, and Q-681. The good copy of the earlier Nak’ashidze transcriptions are also stamped and signed in manuscript Q-676.
469 For a general biography on Pilimon Koridze, see Magda Sukhiashvili and Ek’at’erine Sanik’idze, Pilimon Koridze: kartuli galobis moamageni [Pilimon Koridze: Care-taker of Georgian chant], ed. Tinatin Zhvania (Tbilisi: Sakartvelos Matsne Press, 2004).
the posterity of the nation. Having lived abroad for so many years, Koridze was well aware of the prevalence of national music projects in Europe, and probably disappointed that Georgian music remained relatively unknown. With this transcription project, Koridze sensed the role that he could play in building the national consciousness of the Georgian nation. As a relatively non-religious person, he was less concerned with preserving liturgical culture than with bringing a sense of national identity to Georgians, and raising awareness about the culture of the Georgian nation to the international community.

5.5.2 The Chanters

Four chanters were selected to perform the chants that would be preserved in European notation. The prerequisite attributes that Bishop Kikodze looked for were: reputation for excellence, availability for a two-year project, and diversity of regional style. He was concerned that official transcriptions made from the performance of only one chanter would not represent the spectrum of musical diversity in the oral chant tradition, known for its variation of ornamental styles. The three primary chanters were nobleman and choir-director Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze of the Mart’vili Monastery in the Samegrelo region, Archdeacon Razhden Khundadze of the Kutaisi Theological Academy, and Subdeacon Ivliane Ts’ereteli of the Kutaisi Cathedral choir. To act as supervisor and consultant, the bishop requested the participation of the aristocrat Ant'on Dumbadze, a renowned master chanter and descendent of the venerable Dumbadze family of the Shemokmedi Monastery School in Guria (see Map of Georgia, Figure 14). Pilimon Koridze was given a house in Kutaisi, where the chanters would come each day to sing around the piano.

These men were chosen because they represented different monastery chant traditions in West Georgia. By requiring them to sing together, Bishop Kikodze ensured that a discussion would occur on which was the most authentic, traditional, and correct variant for each chant. Only in agreement could a chant be performed in three voices, a natural mechanism for self-

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471 Perhaps most well known among these was Bela Bartok in Hungary. Another example would be Komitas Vardapet in Armenia.
472 For this and what follows, see Ekvtime K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potkhverashvili private archive, 1936). Also, Davit Shugliashvili, “Kartuli galobis sk’olebi da t’radisiebi” [Chant schools and traditions of Georgia], Proceeding... (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2003).
censorship. Thus the chants that were transcribed by Pilimon Koridze are sometimes referred to as belonging to the ‘Imeretian style,’ but are more commonly known as the ‘Gelati-Mart’vili style’, named after the monastery school traditions inherited by the chanters. Let’s review the specific schools represented.

**Figure 54.** Razhden Khundadze and family (c. 1880)

Razhden Khundadze (1845-1929), in particular, was a significant choice for the transcription project because he was a talented young priest who had a background in several of the West Georgian chant traditions (Figure 54). He was born and raised in the Gurian hills, and studied with both Giorgi Dumbadze (1788-1886) and Ant’on Dumbadze at the Shemokmedi
Monastery. Later he attended school at the Gelati Monastery in the Imereti region, where he was a chanter. As a deacon, he was assigned to the Mart‘vili monastery in the Samegrelo region, where he learned the regional style of that monastery studying with the master chanter Dimit‘ri Ch’alaganidze. In 1885, he was a music teacher at the Theological Academy in Kutaisi, which meant that he was local and would not have to commute any distance to attend transcription sessions.

Ivliane Ts’ereteli (1841-1923) was born in the town of Sats’eretlo in the Imereti province, a town that was literally named after his aristocratic forebears (Figure 55). As a young man, however, Ts’ereteli trained in the diocese of Khoni (Imereti-Samegrelo border) with one of the most famous chanters of the mid-nineteenth century, Simon Pirtskhalava. “The best and most knowledgeable chanter, Simon ‘the Cripple,’ lived in the church of Khoni near Senak’i. He raised many chanters including our famous Ivliane Ts’ereteli.” In 1885, Ts’ereteli was resident in Kutaisi (and thus available for the two-year transcription project) serving as the hierodeacon of the Kutaisi cathedral as well as a chanter in the cathedral choir directed by Andria Benashvili.

Dimit‘ri Ch’alaganidze (1836-1917) grew up in a chanting family (Figure 56). His father Rost’om Ch’alaganidze studied with the famous chanter, Metropolitan Besarion Dadiani of Ch’qondidi. Ant’on Dumbadze (1824-1907) also grew up in a chant family, acquiring his musical knowledge from his uncle Giorgi Dumbadze at the Shemokmedi Monastery. These two chanters were universally praised throughout West Georgia as the best chanters of their generation.

Figure 55. Ivliane Ts’ereteli (c. 1890)

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473 Razhden Khundadze, “Kartuli galoba: ra mdgomareobashi iquito kartuli galoba, ts’inet ra mdgomareobashia dghes” [Georgian chant: its condition before, its condition now], Shinauri Sakmeebi [Enlightened work], No. 18 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), May 9, 1910, 11. Years later, Khundadze would write, “I studied chant in Guria,” self-identifying with his home province despite having spent most of his life in Kutaisi and having received a robust musical education from several different teachers.

474 ibid.: 13.
The Georgian chanting under the direction of Dimit’ri Ch'alaganidze, who is as famous a chanter here in Samegrelo as Ant'on Dumbadze is in Guria, was incredible. But it is rather surprising that nowadays, the people in Guria and Samegrelo that know chant the best are from secular society. Of course, among the clergy one can find good priests, but among them it is not possible to find even one who knows all the chants as well as Dumbadze and Ch'alaganidze.475

Figure 56. Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze (c. 1880)

This is a significant observation because it reflects the changing culture of the class-system in Georgia and the degradation of Seminary education under Russian authority. These two singers represented a feudal-era aristocratic education system that emphasized not only the ability to read Georgian secular and theological literature, but also the cultivation of essential forms of traditional culture such as art, architecture, literature, history, and music.

Ant’on Dumbadze, in particular, served multiple roles as a secular citizen: he served as a military general, maintained a household with eight sons, and also served as a chanter and chant-teacher for the Church. By the mid-nineteenth century, this model of education had already become outdated, as most young gentlemen of the Georgian gentry class were sent to Europe instead of to the local bishop for their education. This shift in educational model explains the surprise of the above-quoted author when discovering that the best chanters (in 1893) were not even representatives of the clerical class.

Starting in 1885, these four chanters began the painstaking process of choosing the correct versions of chant to repeat over and over until their new colleague, Pilimon Koridze, could accurate transcribe it to notation. They worked for three to four hours every day, grouped around the piano in Koridze’s Kutaisi apartment.

5.5.3 Aghdgomasa shensa [To your resurrection, Lord]

Two of the first chants that Pilimon Koridze transcribed in the Kutaisi project of 1885-1886 were the paschal troparia, aghdgomasa shensa [To your resurrection, Lord], and krist’e aghdga [Christ is risen]. These triumphant, jubilant hymns are sung, fittingly, at the very beginning of the Paschal service which itself marks the beginning of the liturgical year. By looking at one example, it is possible to make several observations about Koridze’s working process. In the rough-draft copy of aghdgomasa shensa, for example, each voice part is placed on a separate staff, while the piano score that appeared in previous transcriptions is omitted. The top two voice parts are written with treble clefs, the bottom voice part with a bass clef. The key signature is written only in the top voice. The text is written under each voice part.

The note-heads are spaced broadly to allow for later additions and editing. Places where the spacing is awkwardly tight, such as the offset barlines at the end of measure 4, reveal that Koridze wrote the top voice first and only later tried to squeeze the passing-tones in the middle voice into the limited vertical space beneath (boxed, Figure 57). Another indicator that the top voice was written first is revealed in the crossed-out notes at the ends of the first and second staves. As Koridze wrote quickly, it appears that he did not realize that he was running out of space, perhaps because the palm of his writing hand obscured the end of the line (circled, Figure 57). His choice of key signature with two sharps is understandable, considering the concentration of the melody around the tonal center of D, but the chant sounds awkward in a D-major sonority because the C# causes some unusual chords. These types of discrepancies in ficta show that

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476 For the English translations and liturgical rubrics of these chants, as well as a description of the liturgical context of their performance in the Paschal service, see the Service book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church, edited and compiled by Isabel Florence Hapgood (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1922), 226.
477 Specifically, Pilimon Koridze included a piano reduction of the vocal harmony in manuscript NCM Q-676, which is his first collection of transcriptions notated in Tbilisi in 1883 from Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze and his choir. See the section, 5.2 The Nak’ashidze Transcription Project, 1883.
478 Koridze did not indicate octave. The treble clefs should indicate a tenor octave, as all voices sing within the same octave in close harmony.
479 Differences in pressure, line and letter formation, and even variance in the sharpness of the pencil suggest that the text was not written out all at the same time, but rather consecutively, at the same time as the transcription of each voice-part.
480 For example, chords with both a G and a C# result in a tritone (measure 2), chords with high D and low C# result in a minor ninth interval (measure 2), but the chord with G, F#, and C# is the most awkward of all (measures 3, 6, 9, etc.). In other variants of this chant, the key signature only includes one sharp instead of two. In this variant, such a change would have posed additional challenges, however, as chords with C and F# would be problematic because of the tritone interval especially on the strong beats in measures 6 and 11. Further evidence of a unique tuning system that confused Koridze’s ability to reproduce the correct chords on the tempered piano occur in measure 10, where an
from the beginning of the project, Koridze was forced to make compromises in order to ‘fit’ Georgian chant onto the medium of the European five-line staff.

**Figure 57. Aghdgomasa shensa, rough draft, 1885 (NCM Q-667: 2)**

accidental has been written into the top voice (D#), but then later crossed out. It was likely crossed-out because the beginning of the final cadence starts on a chord with the pitches D-A-D: with D#, the chord becomes an untenable tritone (4th beat, measure 12). It is worth noting that recordings even in the 1990s showed that village singers (inheritors of the oral tradition) sang this D#. All published variants of this chant omit the D#, because of the reasons outlined, but the village singers still sing it. See Chapter X: Georgian Chant Harmony for further analysis and comparative examples of the chant, *aghdgomasa shensa* [To your Resurrection].
Figure 58. Aghdgomasa shensa, good copy, 1886 (NCM Q-678: 3)
Figure 59. Aghdgomasa shensa, Gelati monastery variant, digital transcription
There are several emendations to the rough draft of the chant *aghdgomasa shensa* that could indicate the presence of another editor besides Koridze himself (K’ereselidze edited many of these manuscripts in preparation for publication in the 1890s). For example, the tempo marking *andante* in Latin script is crossed out, then replaced with the word *adagio*. In the good copy of *aghdgomasa shensa* (Figure 58), this ‘suggestion’ has been reversed.\(^{481}\) An editor of the good copy manuscript also crosses out the separated consonants at the end of words: in this case the word for Christ, *kri-s-t’e* was reduced to *kris-t’e*, thus forming two syllables instead of three. It was a well known practice among master chanters to separate consonants into discrete syllables (sung with the schwa: an indeterminate /ə/ vowel). But this practice was frowned upon by editors and publishers (such as K’ereselidze) who routinely crossed out these extra consonants in favor of complete syllables (see the digital transcription, Figure 59).

### 5.5.4 Published Reactions

It is interesting that these four chanters, representing different provinces in West Georgia each with their own manner of performing the oral repertory of liturgical chant, found a common repertory to sing for the transcription project (the differences in their styles can be evaluated from the hundreds of transcriptions that were notated from individual chanters in separate transcription projects).\(^{482}\) The collective effort of these master chanters, working within the parameters of the project defined by Bishop Gabriel Kikodze, were admired for years to come by those invested in the preservation of church chant. One anonymous letter to the editor of a popular journal observed that,

> At the auditions, they brought chanters from different regions of Imereti, but was discovered that they all chanted in such concordance that one would have thought that

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\(^{481}\) The literal definitions of these tempi — *adagio*: slow and stately; *andante*: walking pace—are highly appropriate considering that this particular text is only sung while the choir and the clergy process around the exterior of the church just before the All-Night Paschal Vigil begins. In practice, the tempo of the chant often depends on the pace of the procession.

\(^{482}\) For example, in 1903-1904, Koridze transcribed at least five hundred chants from Arist’ovle Kutateladze, who represented the Khoni monastery chant tradition. In the 1890s, and then again in 1906-1908, Koridze worked for several years transcribing chant from various Gurian chanters including Ant’on Dumbadze and Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze. Transcriptions and recordings from Nak’ashidze’s students in the twentieth century, furthermore, lend to our knowledge of the musical differences between these regional schools. Unfortunately, the chant tradition from the provinces of Rach’a, Upper Imereti, and Svaneti, and Abkhazia were never transcribed.
they studied with the same teacher. Dumbadze from Guria, Ch'alaganidze from Samegrelo, K'andakli from the village of Gelati, Medzmiarishvili from Lower Imereti, Ioseb T'sereteli from Upper Imereti, Vasil Kutateladze from the town of Khoni... they all chant in the same style. They inspected Koridze's transcriptions together [to agree upon the correct style].

The gravity of codifying the music of the oral tradition was not lost on contemporary observers, who placed a great deal of emphasis on determining the 'correct mode' of chant in order to preserve the authentic musical tradition. Indeed, leading members of the educated class such as Ilia Ch'avch'avadze and Iak'ob Gogebashvili promoted the codification of a "mother tongue" which would synthesize the dozens of dialects throughout the highland and lowland provinces of Georgia and become a standard curriculum in national schools. The standardization of a national language was part of a broader effort to create a foundation for a common education that would train a new generation of 'nationalized' Georgians. For Ch'avch'avadze and others, the preservation of liturgical chant was a vital piece of the larger puzzle whose solving he hoped would culminate in the liberation of the Georgian people from imperial subjugation.

In a search to find a name for the common basis for West Georgian chant, many commenters weighed in on the question of naming, arguing for a regionally-based name such as 'Imeretian chant' or an ecclesiastical-based name such as 'Gelati monastery style.' According to one journal contributor in 1890 (anonymous because of the threat of imperial punishment to active nationalists), "In bygone times... Gelati monastery was the mother-nest of ecclesiastical chant. Here was located the main academy, and from there chant was spread not only to all of Imereti, but throughout the whole of Georgia." Echoing these comments and reflecting on the last generation of great master chanter twenty years later, Razhden Khundadze also sees

483 Anonymous, “Pilimon Koridzis da saek'lesio galobis shesakheb” [About Pilimon Koridze and church chant], Mts'qemsi, No. 22 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Nov. 30, 1890, 6-8, and reprinted in Iveria, No. 259, Dec. 5, 1890, 2.
484 Iak'ob Gogebashvili, Deda ena: anbani da p'irveli sak'itkhavi ts'igni sakhaniba sk'olebisatvis [Mother language: the alphabet and beginner reading for the schools of the people] (Tbilisi: Melikishvili and Co. Press, 1876). “Deda ena” [Mother language], published widely in 1876, was considered a visionary pedagogical text aimed at educating every Georgian. Advocates suggested that the standardization of the language was necessary to build a foundation for the establishment of an independent state. Modifications of this original text still serve as the basic primer in Georgian elementary schools.
485 For an excellent overview on the theme of language and nationalism in nineteenth-century Georgia, see Donald Rayfield, The Literature of Georgia (London: Curzon Press, 2000).
486 Anonymous, “Pilimon Koridzis...” Mts'qemsi, No. 22 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Nov. 30, 1890, 6-8, and reprinted in Iveria, No. 259, Dec. 5, 1890, 2.
commonality with the site of inspiration and study at the Gelati monastery: “In ancient times, Gelati was the nest of chant and as far as I know, all of our best chanters (now reposed) were trained at the Gelati monastery: Ant’on Dumbadze, Sino K’andelak’i, Davit Chkhareli Shotadze, and others.”

For nationalists, provincial or regional names suited their interest of inclusively branding liturgical chant among other aspects of the emerging national culture (both secular and ecclesiastical), a habit of nomenclature that has resurfaced in the post-Soviet period with the common usage of ‘East’ and ‘West’ to define regional chant styles. But for chanters themselves, the association with the central monastic schools of chant has remained consistent, especially for purposes of differentiating the various styles of chant that emerged in each region.

The product of the Kutaisi transcription project of 1885-1886, was five large books of chant notation. The signatures of each master chanter on each of the hand-written, good-copy books signified their accuracy. By all accounts, the project progressed smoothly, in large part due to the unusually competent organization of time, space, and finances, facilitated by Bishop Kikodze. The chanters and Koridze met and exceeded their goals, completing the transcription of approximately five hundred “exercised and ornamented” chants, many of them highly complex. They focused on the most essential chants, especially the liturgies of St. John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, and Gregory the Theologian, but also notated many other chants.

Contemporary reaction to the project was mostly positive. Several aging master chanters that were keen observers of the transcription process wrote a public letter in 1887, expressing their admiration for each project member.

Of course, first mention and praise must go to all of the spiritual fathers who assisted this work, especially Bishop Gabriel of Imereti and with him all of his clergy, who did not spare any expense to support this project. We also cannot forget to mention those who worked for three-four hours every day, without shirking time, energy, or effort: we have seen with our own eyes how Mr. Pilimon Koridze, with Archdeacon Razhden

\[487\] Razhden Khundadze, "Kartuli galoba..." Shinauri Sakmeebi, No. 18 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), May 9, 1910, 9.

\[488\] K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 16. In addition to the liturgies of St. John Chrysostom, Basil the Great, and Gregory the Theologian, Koridze noted the ninth canticles for the great feastdays, the katavasia of the canons, funeral and wedding chants, all of the feastday troparion.

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Khundadze, Dimit’ri Ch'alaganidze, and Ivliane Ts'ereteli diligently accomplished this work.\textsuperscript{489}

In the same letter, the authors specifically noted the dedication of the entire team because of an all-consuming passion for their transcription work, and out of a belief that their work constituted an act of sacrifice that benefitted not just the present society, but the future of the nation.

They were diligently placing these voice parts together so that on the one hand, one felt pleasure watching them and on the other, pity that they were working so selflessly in summer and winter. And what was the reason for this? Was it the pittance that was their salary? Or course not! Each one was consumed with the knowledge that they were doing useful work for society. This idea was printed in each of their hearts, and it pushed them to accomplish such grand work, wonderfully and in such praise-worthy fashion. Each Georgian has a duty to express their appreciation for such genuine work and as such, we dedicate our deepest gratitude for their accomplishment in front of all Georgians, and we recognize this accomplishment as glorious.\textsuperscript{490}

This testimonial is that much more vivid given that its authors represented the last of their generation of chanters. Many of the remaining master chanters in the late nineteenth century did not have any apparent successors with whom they could feel confident that the oral transmission of chant would continue (Arist’ovle Kutateladze, son of Vasil Kutateladze, might be one exception), thus they understood the timely gravity of the transcription project more clearly than most of contemporary society.

Voices of criticism were scarce. Chanter and Priest P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili expressed some discontent a decade later, however, undervaluing the project by claiming that only four hundred chants were transcribed (instead of five hundred), and arguing that the focus on the transcription of ornamental chant ignored the essential musical foundations of the simple-style chant.

In Imereti and Guria, the old style chant has been preserved even until today (especially in Lechkhumi), and they call this \textit{sada galobas} [simple chant]. In the last eighty years the so-called ‘exercised’ or ‘beautified’ chant was invented, which is different from simple chant through an increased twisting and meandering of the voices, as well as the elevation and descent of the voices. Without paying attention, they transcribed this

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\textsuperscript{489} Vasil Kutateladze, Nik'o Medzmariashvili, and Nik'oloz K'andelak'i, "Kartuli galobis shesakheb" [Concerning Georgian chant], \textit{Iveria}, No. 95 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1887, 3-4. Also cited in Shugliashvili, “Introduction,” \textit{Kartuli sagaloblebis khelnats’erta}... (Tbilisi: Chant Center of the Georgian Patriarchate, 2013), 19. \\
\textsuperscript{490} ibid.: 3-4.
\end{flushleft}
ornamental chant while ignoring the older, simpler style that had been formed through the course of centuries and had become sanctified. In truth, this was a big mistake.491

While this criticism was likely based on K’arbelashvili’s own struggle to secure scarce financial resources for the preservation of his family tradition of liturgical chant, he does make an interesting point here, which is that it is impossible to sing the ornamental modes without first knowing the simple style. The question of what to transcribe (not just how) had become a larger debate by the 1890s, as publication became a possibility. P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili often argued with his brother Vasil K’arbelashvili and others on whether to publish simple or ornamental style chant. Vasil favored the publication of ornamental-style chant (as seen in his transcriptions and publications), while P’olievkt’os considered that the simple style was more important not only as the basis for the ornamental style, but also as a practical means to make traditional chant accessible to the general public.492 Viewed within this context, the critique makes more sense.493

The old debate on whether or not European notation could or should be used to represent the musical variation of the oral tradition of liturgical chant were put to rest once and for all in a letter by An’ton Dumbadze, who wrote:

> For a long time, there has been talk all around Georgia on whether it was possible to transcribe Georgian chant into notation or not. I had my doubts. But now, thank God, in such a short period of time, this kind of doubting and talking is over. Now, for the fifth month, the respected Pilimon Koridze has been working hard here in the city of Ouzurgeti

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491 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 97. The specific terms used can be found in the glossary: gavajrishebuli (exercised), and gamshvenierebuli (beautified) are infrequent synonyms of the more common term gamshvenebuli (ornamented) (see Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music).
492 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili published a book of simple-style liturgy chant (transcribed by his son Pilimon) at the same time his brother Vasil published his books of ornamental chant (1897-1899). Others also weighed in on the debate. For instance, Razhden Khundadze became a strong advocate for transcribing and publishing simple-style chant in his later years (1910-1934), even though he was a primary chanter in the 1885-1886 transcription project which focused on the ornamental style. Ekvtime K’ereselidze, in his editing work in 1912-1915, preferred the ornamental style, though he occasionally notated the simple-style melody in addition to the ornamental melody (see Chapter VIII: Completing the Transcriptions).
493 P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Kartuli Saero... (1898), 97. But then P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili continues with a venomous tone, indicating that he still harbored bitter feelings about the relative success of the West Georgian transcription projects with Pilimon Koridze, in comparison to the series of lackluster efforts that had marked the East Georgian transcription projects up until the time of his writing in 1898: “We know that our respected, reposed Bishop Gabriel did not like that style of chant, and it would not have pleased him to have it sung at the liturgy. First they should have transcribed the old sada chant into notation, protecting at least this for future generations. We are convinced that the energetic clergy of Imereti, with their usual care, will one day understand this huge mistake and will try again to protect the sada chant modes of their holy ancestors. I do not have any doubt that this sada chant still survives in Lechkhumi as well as in Gelati and in Guria. The descendents won't forgive anyone who has changed and sullied the old chant, and everyone who is guilty of this will be cursed.”
to transcribe chant with me, my son Fr. Davit, and one of my students, Molarishvili. As an experienced and knowledgeable chanter, let me say that it is a pleasure that each church chant is being transcribed correctly, unchanged, with no defects, and in the mode that existed and still exists in Guria-Imereti.\textsuperscript{494}

With this strong endorsement of the methodology of transcription from the most famous West Georgian chanter, few if any further letters appeared which doubted the efficacy or accuracy of European notation.

5.6 Chapter Conclusion

The transcription projects conducted by Pilimon Koridze between the years 1883-1886 represented the first systematic attempt to notate the canon of Georgian traditional chant. Pilimon Koridze worked with the four chanters for two years, recording the most essential chants for the liturgy and celebrations of the Orthodox calendar. The chanters were able to find a common musical style from which to improvise the most complex chants yet notated, even though they represented different regional schools of chant. They succeeded in transcribing around five hundred samples into European staff notation. The progress of their work attracted the attention of many chanters in the region, who often came to listen and observe the proceedings. As an intellectual achievement, the project put to rest the doubts of those who had expressed skepticism that European notation could accurately capture the nuances of Georgian traditional chant.

Andria Benashvili, who was living and working in the city of Kutaisi at the same time that Koridze was there, also played a significant part in the transcription of chant. As a native of East Georgia, his publication of East Georgian chant demonstrated that transcription and publication were viable means of preserving the oral tradition of chant. But his publication of some twenty chants also demonstrated the unfeasibility of lithograph as a medium for the publication of the entire liturgy.

Despite the overall success of these projects, further questions now presented themselves. Now that chant could be transcribed, what was the fate of these written sources? Their mere existence did not ensure the preservation of the chant tradition, but perhaps they could be used in an effort to re-activate the oral transmission of chant to young students. The obvious next step

\textsuperscript{494} Ant'on Dumbadze, “Letter,” \textit{Iveria} Daily, No. 60 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), March 19, 1894.
involved the publication and distribution of the notation to schools around the country, but many challenges impeded this process. The only means to publish music notation in Georgia in 1886, involved the arcane technology of lithography, an expensive and time-consuming process that was certainly outside the financial reach of the locally supported episcopal dioceses or the Kutaisi Chant Committee. New technology was needed.
Chapter VI: Publication and Transcription (1891-1911)

In 1891, the first moveable type with music characters was imported from Moscow.\textsuperscript{495} Previously, music publishing in the South Caucasus relied exclusively on lithograph print technology, a laborious and expensive procedure. A group of printers, working for the influential daily newspaper *Iveria*, founded the Sharadze & Friends Press and managed to acquire the necessary publishing equipment specifically to print chant transcriptions. For a productive twenty years, between 1891-1911, the Sharadze & Friends Press published a dozen chantbooks containing hundreds of chants notated by the K’arbelashvili brothers, Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov, Pilimon Koridze, and others (Appendix C: Sharadze & Friends Chantbook Publications).

This era of music publication signaled a shift in the history of the preservation of traditional Georgian chant, which had evolved from a subject of concern and debate among the *intelligentsia* in the decades of the 1860s-1870s to a project of practical transcription in the 1880s. By the early 1890s, as the last living masters of the oral chant tradition approached old age, hurried transcription projects signaled the impending collapse of the entire musical legacy of the medieval Georgian Church.\textsuperscript{496}

In this section, we review the social and economic forces that contributed to the outburst of positive activity surrounding the Sharadze & Friends Press, whose entry into the movement to preserve chant renewed public support, private hope, and desperately needed financial assistance to key figures such as Pilimon Koridze, Ant‘on Dumbadze, and others. In addition, the Press made up for lost time by publishing transcriptions from the East Georgians including the K’arbelashvili brothers and Mikael Ippolitov-Ivanov. The influence of Maksime Sharadze on all the major players in the continuing transcription movement is noted, as well as the emergence of

\textsuperscript{495} According to K’ereselidze, the music type was received by the Sharadze & Friends Press on 10 December, 1891.
\textsuperscript{496} To understand the monumental changes in the traditional music community in the late nineteenth century, consider the extraordinary leap of imagination required of the master-chanters in just one generation’s time. The mere act of writing the music of the oral tradition felt foreign to most interlocutors. Yet in 1891, just five years after the completion of the first major transcription project, a printing-press would be capable of mass-producing those notated transcriptions for the entire world to study and learn from in the same way that the Bible could be studied and read. At the time, these technological possibilities represented a reality-shifting change in the approach and attitude towards the art of chanting. This leap is much much larger than even the modern advances we enjoy, such as moving from cassette to digital technology, or from a technological platform of manually typing out music in the computer to a platform where computers record, notate, print, distribute around the world, and play back our voices at a few strokes of the keypad.
Ekvtomi K’ereselidze, a co-founder of the press and later the inheritor and incognito guardian of the chant manuscripts during the early decades of the turbulent Bolshevik takeover of Georgia.

To make the printing of chantbooks possible in the last decade of the nineteenth century, several forces needed to align: wealthy patronage, innovative thinking, team collaboration and management, and hours of intensive labor in the printing room. These qualities aligned in the presence of one dynamic figure, Maksime Sharadze, whose unique combination of charisma, talent, and genuine love of chant helped him to redefine the direction and tempo of the chant preservation movement (Figure 60). Here we detail how Sharadze became involved in the publication and transcription of liturgical chant.

6.1 Maksime Sharadze

When only twenty-three years old and still a relatively recent emigrant to the capital from rural Guria, Maksime Sharadze (1859-1908) formed a collective called the K’abineti, an organization that he described as being dedicated to the study of Georgian culture and art through literature. According to the account by Ekvtime K'ereselidze, Sharadze said, “Would not it be wonderful to open a free library for the advancement and education of working class people, and also, to learn our Georgian church chant?” Sharadze also excitedly pledged his personal funds from working at the Ch'avch'avadze press for the advancement of his ideological cause. "I receive a salary of twenty five rubles per month; I would give it all for the preservation of our chant.”

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497 Maksime Sharadze (1859-1908) is a relatively unknown figure to historians. Few personal artifacts, photographs, or written accounts about his private life survive. He was from a town called Etseri in the Gurian province in western Georgia, an only child and an orphan. As a young man, he moved to Tbilisi and quickly became the chief publisher and editor of a major daily newspaper, the Iveria, a member of numerous organizations, as well as the personal housekeeper for Ilia Ch’avch’avadze, the lead editor of the Iveria daily, an influential writer, and President of the National-Democrat society. Sharadze never married, and in his later years shared all of his possessions, expenses, and living quarters with other members of the socialist collective that he founded.

498 The early stages of this research was published in the article, John A. Graham and Luarsab T’ogonidze, “Maksime sharadzis ghvats'li kartuli sagaloblebis gadarchenis sakmeshi” [The role of Maxime Sharadze in the Georgian chant preservation movement], Musik’ismtasodeobis Sak’tikhebi: Sasuliero Musik’a [Issues in Musicology: Sacred Music Series] (in Georgian) (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2007), 98-106.

499 For this and what follows, see K’ereselidze, Kartul saek'lesio sagaloblebis not'ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936).
Sharadze wrote a charter for the group, and posted it on the wall of the new 'library,' a rented space that he stocked with books and back issues of the *Iveria* newspaper. In the words of his longtime friend and colleague Ekvtime K'ereselidze,

Because of his honesty and generosity everyone loved Maksime. In the entire city, those who knew him trusted him; one couldn’t find anyone who would say a bad thing about Maksime. He was forever cheerful, polite, reliable, and generous, always ready with a helping hand.

The popularity of Maksime Sharadze also brought him unwanted attention from the Russian police, who jailed him for three days of questioning soon after the opening of the K'abineti. He was suspected of inciting ‘social and religious unrest’, a label that justified the arrest of any citizen suspected of nationalist, anti-Tsarist activity.

**Figure 60. Maksime Sharadze (c. 1900)**

### 6.1.1 The K'abineti

The K'abineti grew into a popular venue for discussions on current events, reading the Georgian-language dailies, and meeting other like-minded people. And though it was supposed to be a socialist experiment in shared resources, with members volunteering and paying dues, in reality Sharadze continued to finance all of their activities with his salary. “While many friends were attending the K'abineti, no one else paid dues to support the financial end of the business. Maksime paid all of the expenses and did not ask for anything.”

The activity of the K’abineti, which held nightly events reading Georgian poetry and novels, hosting discussions or speakers on controversial topics, as well as music and reading lessons, became well known among the leading citizens of the Georgian population of Tbilisi.

The Priest P’et’re K’onch’oshvili, who had been assigned by Russian authorities to ‘keep an eye’ on Sharadze, became a regular attendee (even becoming the spiritual father of Sharadze).

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500 ibid.: 17-18.
K’ereselidze relates how on one visit, when K’onch’oshvili brought Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze, the bishop greeted them loudly: “greetings my sons of Georgia! Kartlians, Gurians, Megrelians, Imeretians, and Osetians! Keep working, keep trying!” The greeting was met with applause and the rousing episcopal greeting chant, *ispola eti despota* [Many years to you, Master].

### 6.1.2 Studying Chant

From the very inception of the K'abineti, Sharadze had spoken out about trying to find a way to assist in the preservation of the chant tradition. In November, 1885, Sharadze met the chanter Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze while attending liturgy at the Kashweti Church in downtown Tbilisi. According to K’ereselidze, he was, “brought to tears when he heard the troparion of Saint George, performed in the old-Georgian manner of church singing.”

Sharadze met Nak’ashidze after the service and convinced him to teach three times a week at the K’abineti. This association led to strategic connections with key activists and chanters in the chant preservation movement, such as the opera-singer Pilimon Koridze, the financier and chanter Arist’ovle Kutateladze, the master chanter Ant'on Dumbadze, and others.

Nak'ashidze began to teach the core group of artists and writers who regularly attended the K'abineti events in Tbilisi. Sharadze proved to be not only a gifted leader, but also a student of chant. According to K’ereselidze's account, he worked extremely hard to train himself and the K'abineti members to chant under the instruction of Nak'ashidze. “Maksime learned the chants more quickly and with more talent than anyone else. Because of this, Melkisedek' allowed him to give lessons to the other men in the mornings.”

Soon, singers were divided by skill into two

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501 ibid.: 8-9.
502 ibid. The director of the choir at the time was none other than Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze, the Gurian master chanter who had been teaching chant in Tbilisi since 1878 and who, together with Pilimon Koridze, had notated the first West Georgian chants in 1883. It is worth noting that Sharadze was also from Guria, which probably contributed to his distinctly appreciative feelings for the style of chant sung by Nak’ashidze and his choir.
503 ibid. A young Ekvtime K’ereselidze (born Est’at’e K’ereselidze), who worked in the *Iveria* Press with Sharadze and was a regular attendee of the K’abineti meetings and discussions, produced his exceptionally important neumed manuscript while studying with Nak’ashidze from 1885-1891. This manuscript is called *zeb’iri galoba* [memorized chant], manuscript Q-830 in the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi. For sample pages from this extremely important manuscript, see Figure 117, Figure 119, and Figure 120.
groups that progressed at different rates. Their study of chant continued in this way from 1885-1891.

6.1.3 Ambitious Goals

During these years, Tbilisi society eagerly followed news of the ongoing transcription project in Kutaisi led by the celebrity singer Pilimon Koridze. The K'abineti had evolved into a publishing house for Georgian literature, poetry, and Orthodox moralistic teachings, and while Sharadze continued to learn and teach chant with the other K'abineti members, his perspective on the preservation movement was shifting. He began to realize that the practice of chant, even the transcription of chant would not be enough to ensure the preservation of the tradition for future generations. Together with K’ereselidze and others that worked in the workroom of the Iveria daily, Sharadze became convinced that mass-production represented the only means to ensure that the single-draft Koridze transcriptions were properly preserved, even if the original manuscript was lost. The realization that publication represented the best means to contribute to the preservation and promotion of Georgian national culture and art became the guiding inspiration for Sharadze’s future career and work.

In addition to becoming a new group of enthusiastic chant students in Tbilisi, members of the K’abineti collective began to take on leadership roles in the preservation of Georgian chant. Maksime Sharadze in particular urged Pilimon Koridze to return to the field to continue the transcription of chant from the last of the living master chanter. He offered his support services as fund-raiser, accountant, publicist, and publisher. A rejuvenated Koridze apparently agreed to this proposition, traveling to the rural province of Guria in 1893 to begin a new, two-year transcription project with the master chanter Ant’on Dumbadze.

6.2 The Dumbadze Transcription Project, 1893

By 1893, seven years had passed since the end of the much-heralded transcription project in Kutaisi. Pilimon Koridze, now famous for his unique ability to notate the sung intangibles of West Georgian polyphonic chant, had convincingly written five hundred West Georgian chants into European notation. But as funding ran out, and the project naturally concluded and public
enthusiasm for the accomplishment faded. The issue of whether or not chant could be notated, debated for decades, was now a past topic of discussion. Yet, the further transcription or preservation of chant was unclear. Who would lead the Chant Committees? Who would finance new projects? What should those projects entail? In this section, we detail the way in which Maksime Sharadze stepped into a leadership role in the transcription and publication of chant during the critical final years of the last living master chanters of the liturgical tradition.

**Figure 61.** Choir of Pilimon Koridze, Kutaisi 1890

After 1886, Koridze remained in Kutaisi with his Ukrainian wife teaching music and directing the theater choir (Figure 61). The transcriptions remained on a shelf in the diocese office, and discussion of further transcription projects stalled. Then in 1893, at the urging of Maksime Sharadze and his K’abineti Collective, Koridze began a new transcription project. The

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504 Both of Pilimon Koridze's children studied at boarding school in Italy.
plan detailed that he would travel to the city of Ozurgeti, in the province of Guria along the Black Sea, to meet with Ant’on Dumbadze, the aging master chanter who had worked with Koridze on the first transcription project.

The events leading up to this project were recounted by Ekvtime K’ereselidze in his memoir on the period. According to this account, after Koridze’s wife died in 1889, Koridze fell into depression and wanted to leave his home in Kutaisi. He contemplated returning to his career in Italy. But on a final visit to Tbilisi, however, he was brought to the K’abineti to meet Maksime Sharadze:

Pilimon came to us and said, ‘I’ve just arrived in Tbilisi, and I do not even have a place to stay.’ Maksime said to him, ‘Pilimon, please, stay and teach us how to read western notation. We will find you a house; we’ll pay you a salary, anything you need. We are ready to dedicate ourselves to the study of chant and we want to be able to read the new transcriptions!’

According to K’ereselidze, this meeting with the charismatic Sharadze convinced Koridze to stay in Tbilisi, and eventually (in 1893) to resume his work transcribing traditional chant.

6.2.1 Publicity and Fund-Raising

Without institutional support for transcription, Sharadze began a fund-raising campaign by publishing frequent articles about the need to utilize the unique talents of Pilimon Koridze to preserve the inherited musical largesse of the remaining master chancers. He focused his efforts on the noted master chanter, Ant’on Dumbadze, who lived in the remote West Georgian province of Guria. An editorial dated April 20th, 1893, in the Iveria newspaper (printed by Sharadze) read,

At this moment, one of the only thoroughly knowledgeable chanters in Guria is the nobleman Ant’on Dumbadze, who has no equal in the knowledge and ornamentation of

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505 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936).

506 Befriending Koridze and keeping him involved in the preservation movement was one of Sharadze’s inadvertent acts of genius. Not only did Sharadze keep his promise, finding Koridze an apartment with running water and other amenities, but he also organized a paid position for him to teach chant and transcription to members of the K’abinet. Later, a rejuvenated Koridze went on to transcribe the majority of chant that has survived into the twenty-first century, a total of at least 1500 individual hymns. It is estimated that with the contributions of other transcribers such as the K’arbelashvili brothers, Khundadze, K’ereselidze, and others, four thousand individual hymn variants survive on approximately twenty thousand pages of transcription paper. The majority of chant from the provinces of Svaneti, Rach’a, Adjara, and Hereti was never transcribed and did not survive.
voices. May the Lord not permit Ant'on to weaken or leave us because with him would go our chants.  

Writing under the pseudonym, “Just another admirer of Georgian chant,” Sharadze wrote just a couple of weeks later in 1893,

Mr. Ant'on Dumbadze is our master chanter tradition's true representative. His name is known through all of Georgia from coast to coast... on this earth he has no equal in this regard. His sweet, soft-hearted, self-confident chant... whose heart doesn't it warm and what good deeds doesn't it inspire? His chanting reminds us of the past, makes his heart cry, and gives him hope for the future, and brings him tears of joy. The person who is sentimental, and loves his homeland, must hold a handkerchief in his hand so that he can clean his tears of sorrow and mourning.

By late spring, Sharadze announced the beginning of the project with an imaginative visualization of the meeting between two ‘great’ men:

Today, on the sixteenth of this month, Mr. Pilimon Koridze is going to the city of Ouzurgeti. As one will see, two strong patriots, Koridze, who can transcribe our chants into notation as clearly as a photograph, and Mr. Ant'on Dumbadze, a master chanter unique in all the land, these two men will meet.... When useful and charitable activity is begun, one may clearly see and understand the nature of a human being; one may see introspectively the motivation of one’s work, in honesty, clearness of heart, and whether these qualities are matching between word and deed. Each one of us must help and support the efforts of these great men in this manner, to show our true selves and to demonstrate whether we believe in goodness or not.

Through such articles, as well as events at the K'abineti, Sharadze was able to increase public awareness of the chant preservation movement and to solicit the necessary donations to finance the project.

In 1894, for example, he was able to raise more than six hundred rubles from society members. With this money, he purchased a portable travel organ for Koridze, and paid the


508 Maksime Sharadze (pseudonym: galobis erti moqvarultagani [just another admirer of chant]), "Bat'onon ant'on dumbadzis saek'lesio galobis shesakheb" [Concerning the ecclesiastical chant of Mr. Ant'on Dumbadze] Iveria, No. 108 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1893, 2. Also cited in Shugliashvili, "Introduction," Kartuli sagaloblebis khehnats'erta... (2013), 16.


510 Maksime Sharadze, “Chvenis saek'lesio sagalobleta not'ebad gadaghebisa da dabech’dvis gamo” [Concerning the transcription and printing of our church chant notation]. Iveria, No. 276 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Museum, 1894).
promised salaries for Koridze and the chanters. Later, additional support came from unexpected sources such as from the community of Georgian monks on Mount Athos led by Benedikt’e Barkalaia.511

Figure 62. Ant’on Dumbadze (c. 1890)

Pilimon Koridze first met Ant’on Dumbadze in 1885, when the pair worked together on the Kutaisi transcription project together with master chanters Razhden Khundadze, Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze, and Ivliane Ts’ereteli. For this project, Dumbadze (Figure 62) was assisted by his student Svimon Molarishvili, and his son Fr. Davit Dumbadze.

6.2.2 The Transcriptions

To expedite matters, Koridze notated many of the transcriptions in just one voice. K’ereselidze describes this decision: “They wrote just the top voice part because in that way many more chants could be written and it was our desire that no chant would be left unwritten. We thought, at the time, that the second and bass voices could be written later.”512 K’ereselidze would come to regret this decision, because the process of harmonizing these and other incomplete transcriptions would consume him for more than three years (detailed in Chapter VIII: Completing the Transcriptions). Musicologist Davit Shugliashvili points out that in 1893, there were still several chanters capable of harmonizing chant melodies in three voices. But by 1912,

Donations were most frequent from master chanter and preservation benefactor Arist’ovle Kutateladze, a wealthy Tbilisi resident. Sharadze published all the benefactor’s names in the newspaper.  
511 A letter written by Hieromonk Iona and published in Iveria, No. 67 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), March 28, 1895, indicates the support of the Georgian Athonite community for the continuing transcription project between Pilimon Koridze and Ant’on Dumbadze.  
512 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesi sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 38.
when K’ereselidze would finally have time to initiate this harmonization project, there were hardly any left.\footnote{513}{See discussion in Shugliashvili, "Introduction,” Kartuli sagaloblebis khelnats’erta... (2013), 17.}

By October of 1893, Koridze had already sent the first batch of transcriptions back to the K’abineti to be prepared for publication by the Sharadze & Friends Press.\footnote{514}{Editorial, Iveria, No. 212 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Oct. 5, 1893.} Most of the transcriptions contained complex heirmoi chants, collected in five books containing 764 individual chants, written on 1233 pages of transcription paper (this project continued on and off for nearly a decade, 1893-1902).\footnote{515}{These manuscripts are housed in the National Center of Manuscripts: Q-683, Q-684, Q-685, Q-686, and Q-687. Ekvtime K’ereselidze kept thorough indexes with contents, page numbers, and chant numbers for each book, carefully recorded in manuscript Q-665. Also discussed in K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potshkverashvili private archive, 1936), 86-88.} In 1894, the Tbilisi public were able to read a letter written by Dumbadze himself, in which he praised the transcription project, Koridze’s efforts to convince him and other master chanters that European notation worked, and to thank Maksime Sharadze specifically.

It is a fact that there is one honest patriot and supporter of this important work, someone who hasn’t been deflected by difficulties and material expenses. That man is Maxime Sharadze, and his friends too, whom I would like to thank for their long-lasting deed for society.\footnote{516}{Ant’on Dumbadze, “Letter,” Iveria, No. 60 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), March 19th, 1894.}

Most of the hundreds of chants that Pilimon Koridze transcribed from Ant’on Dumbadze and his colleagues were rare heirmoi, sung only once per year.\footnote{517}{From 1906-1908, Pilimon Koridze returned to Ozurgeti to transcribe chant from Fr. Davit Dumbadze, Svimon Molarishvili, and Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze. While Ant’on Dumbadze was still alive (d. 1907), he was involved in helping his best students transcribe the most accurate and true renditions of the Shemokmedi monastery school of chant.} However, they also transcribed different variants of commonly performed liturgy chants (Sundays, feastdays, etc.).
As Dumbadze had been involved in the Kutaisi Transcription Project in 1885-1886, where all of the liturgy chants had already been notated, he seems to have chosen new and more complex variations to transcribe in the 1890s. In all, they transcribed some 673 chants, according to
calculations made be Ekvtime K’ereselidze.\textsuperscript{518} Figure 63 shows the first page of a nine-page rough draft transcription of the liturgy chant \textit{romelni kerubinta} [Let us, the Cherubim] from manuscript NCM Q-685: 135v-140v (see full analysis in the section, 7.4 Key Signature Debate: \textit{Romelni kerubinta} [Let us, the Cherubim]).\textsuperscript{519}

The success of this second transcription project cemented Pilimon Koridze's reputation as a principled man who was using his training as a professional musician for the advancement of his national cultural heritage. Though he worked in the mountains of West Georgia transcribing chant, Koridze was a household name among the wide readership of the \textit{Iveria} Press in the city of Tbilisi, some 400 kilometers distant in East Georgia, where Sharadze continued to post regular updates in editorial columns and published letters from the field.

6.2.3 The Last Chanters

Meanwhile, the urgency of the project to preserve Georgian liturgical chant had shifted from a race to teach a new generation of chanters through designated chant schools (this had all but failed to produce any new master chanters), to a race to transcribe chants from the last of the aging masters. Writing in 1902, Razhden Khundadze summed up the number of masters still alive in West Georgia:

In Guria, we have the 78-year-old Ant’on Dumbadze and his son Fr. Davit (with whom I myself studied chant). In Samegrelo, 77-year-old Dit’o Ch’alaganidze is still there and in Imereti, Ivliane Ts’ereteli remembers Georgian chant even though he completely gave up chanting after leaving to become a village priest. These are our knowledgeable chanters… these are all that remain.\textsuperscript{520}

Sharadze was not satisfied with only publishing the existing chant transcriptions. He used the resources of the press to finance further publication projects, and published frequent accolades in an effort to attract popular support for the transcription efforts of the aging stage-singer, Pilimon Koridze. By upholding this idealistic image, Sharadze was able to inspire

\textsuperscript{518} This figure was calculated based on K’ereselidze adding the chants number from the original Koridze-Dumbadze transcriptions (1893-1903) contained in manuscripts Q-683, Q-684, Q-685, Q-686, and Q687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts).

\textsuperscript{519} The various items of text at the top and left of the page read: \textit{mghvdlis romeli kerabinta} [Let us the Cherubim for the service of the priests]; \textit{gadats’erilia terrad} [written in good copy]; \textit{Andante}.

Koridze to continue his incredible contribution to the preservation of traditional chant by transcribing thousands of additional melodies during the years 1893-1911. Sharadze made sure that Koridze continued to receive respect and acknowledgement from the public, and this reciprocal relationship remained productive for the rest of their respective lives.521

6.3 The M. Sharadze & Friends Press

The importance of the Sharadze & Friends Press cannot be overestimated. In the two decades between 1891-1911, the press served as the catalyst for the continuing efforts to transcribe, preserve, and publish Georgian traditional chant.522 By 1891, it was no longer a question if the public supported the idea of chant transcription, as it had been for the earlier generation of enthusiastic chant preservationists (Bishop Alexander Okrop’iridze, Mak’ari Bat’atashvili, Bishop Gabriel Kikodze, and other ranking hierarchs and members of society).

Pilimon Koridze and the K’arbelashvili brothers had emerged as the most productive and skilled figures in the transcription of chant during the 1880s-1890s, but the transcriptions were useful only insofar as new chanterists could access their contents. While singers remained untrained in reading European notation, and the transcriptions languished in single copies on locked storeroom shelves, they were virtually useless. The press aimed to solve this issue by importing music type, publishing chantbooks, and using the income to commission further transcriptions from the aging generation of master chanterists.

6.3.1 Socialist Beginnings

Maksime Sharadze, as both an amateur chanter and a man trained in publishing technology, perceived the critical lack of access to the chant manuscripts and resolved to publish the notated transcriptions. Instead of making this a profitable business, at the expense of the Church, he donated his time and effort to the publication of chantbooks. Furthermore, without fanfare, he quietly took over the leadership of the chant preservation movement, using Press

521 Maksime Sharadze died in 1908, while Pilimon Koridze died in 1911. Koridze was still transcribing chant up until 1910, and Ekvtime K’ereselidze continued to publish chantbooks through 1911.

income to finance successive transcription projects up until his death in 1908. This section chronicles the dozen chantbooks published by the M. Sharadze & Friends Press between 1895-1911, highlighting the increasingly critical role that Est’at’e K’ereselidze would serve as music editor, type-setter, and Sharadze’s right-hand man.

Working at the Iveria newspaper press, Maksime Sharadze became intimately involved in the publishing world of Tbilisi, which boasted half a dozen daily newspapers and journals printed in Russian, Georgian, and Armenian. Thus, he was one of the first people to become aware that an Armenian priest who had imported a brand new press from Moscow was denied a printing permit. In 1890, Sharadze was able to acquire this press at cost, founding what would become the first incarnation of the M. Sharadze & Friends Press. Continuing the socialist-oriented organization of the K’abineti collective, Sharadze laid out a charter of ownership for the new press, which he envisioned would be owned by a collective that shared in the labor, ownership, and responsibility. Furthermore, he gave the press a charter which expressed their collective goals of dedicating their publications to topics on civil society, moral values, and traditional chant.

Four men became co-partners in the press including Maksime Sharadze, Ekvtime K’ereselidze, Vasil Grdzelidze, and Ivane Zakarashvili. Each partner was required to work full time for the press, to abstain from excessive partying or immoral activity, and to share in all income and expenses. This photo from 1902 (Figure 64) shows several of the important figures in the daily operation of the Press, particularly Maksime Sharadze (seated, center), Arist’ovle Kutateladze (seated, second from right), and Est’at’e (Ekvtime) K’ereselidze (seated, far right).

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523 According to K’ereselidze, an Armenian priest named Nikoloz had imported the press from Germany only to have his publishing rights denied by the Russian censors.

524 Over the years 1890-1911, this Press would operate under different names including M. Sharadze & Friends Press, A. Kutateladze Press, Dzmobisa Press, and Elektrombech’davi A. K’ereselidzisa Press.

525 The partnership changed frequently, however, with new members coming and going. According to K’ereselidze, Zakarashvili left in 1893, and his replacement, the Armenian Bagrat’ Arshak’uni, only lasted one year before moving to Echmiadzin, Armenia. His replacement was named Sp’iridon Losaberidze, who later came into conflict with K’ereselidze over the dissolution of the assets of the Press. In 1898, founding partner Grdzelidze died, and was not replaced. For more on these details, see K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 26-27.
6.3.2 Music Type

The press began producing publications in Russian, Georgian, and Armenian at breakneck speed, producing tens of book-length publications per year. But without a single collection of musical type font anywhere in the country, Sharadze could not achieve his goal of publishing the chant transcriptions. To obtain the necessary moveable type, he wrote to Professor Alexander Khakhanashvili, a friend of his influential benefactor and employer Ilia Ch’avch’avadze who lived in Moscow.

**Figure 64. M. Sharadze & Friends Press workers (1902)**

In a letter written in 1891, Sharadze asked for advice on obtaining the necessary printing components and concluded:

> If the type font is not too expensive, I can pay cash right away, but if it is expensive, we will need to search for further funds. However, my direction is clear; whether sooner or
later, I am absolutely dedicated to fulfilling my commitment to publish Georgian chant.\textsuperscript{526}

Ch’avch’avadze financed the purchase of the musical type himself, which arrived from Russia on December 10th, 1891.\textsuperscript{527}

Sharadze wrote a second letter, this time to Bishop Gabriel Kikodze in Kutaisi, asking permission to print the Koridze chant transcriptions from the 1885-1886 transcription project. In this letter, Sharadze expressed concern for the fragility of the transcriptions, which still existed as single copies, suggesting that the publication of these precious sources would increase their safety.\textsuperscript{528} The bishop readily agreed to the request, and trusting in a man he had never met, he sent the precious chant transcriptions to Sharadze and his new press in Tbilisi.

\textbf{6.3.3 Ekvtime (Est’at’e) K’ereselidze}

Ekvtime (Est’at’e) K’ereselidze (Figure 65), one of the young apprentice type-setters in the early 1880s at the press for the Georgian nationalist daily, \textit{Iveria}, became deeply involved in the chant preservation movement under the charismatic leadership of Maksime Sharadze.\textsuperscript{529} As

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Maksime Sharadze, private letter, document No. 698 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, Khakhanishvili archive), Feb 7th, 1891.
\item K’ereselidze, \textit{Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze} (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potshverashvili private archive, 1936), 23.
\item Maksime Sharadze, "Letter to Bishop Gabriel," document No. 12544 (in Russian) (Kutaisi: State Archive of Kutaisi, Fund No. 21), 1891.
\item Ekvtime (Est’at’e) K’ereselidze (1865-1944), originally from the Rach’a province in the West Georgian highlands, emigrated to Tbilisi looking for work in the 1880s. He worked in the Sharadze Press in Tbilisi from 1890 until 1910. In 1911, he copied Koridze's melodies for an entire year before moving to the Gelati Monastery in 1912 where he became a monk and took the name Ekvtime. He hired Khundadze to harmonize chant melodies in 1914, then worked with Nik’oladze to emend these harmonizations in 1914-1915. He continued to organize and re-copy chantbooks until his death in 1944, leaving a legacy of thousands of chants organized and recopied in his own hand. He was canonized a saint by the Georgian Orthodox church in 2003.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Sharadze became busier with the Iveria newspaper, writing articles, and fundraising for the publication of chantbooks, K’ereselidze increasingly managed the complicated task of setting the movable music type. As he needed to learn to set the type, he studied notation with Koridze in order to understand the mechanics of musical notation.

Pilimon Koridze sent hundreds of handwritten transcriptions back to Tbilisi where, as master of editing and type-setting for the Press, K’ereselidze worked diligently to edit and organize them for publication. K’ereselidze also encouraged Koridze, writing: “Please notate the oldest and most unique chants so that we can record and save these. All of this work makes us so excited.” Pencil emendations in the original scores also indicate that K’ereselidze looked to correct certain musical aspects of the transcriptions before publication, a specificity likely born of his work setting type for manifestos from many of Tbilisi’s leading intellectuals. This methodical and meticulous attention to detail is a hallmark of K’ereselidze’s later career as the inheritor and organizer of the Koridze transcriptions (detailed in Chapter VIII: Completing the Transcriptions).

6.3.4 What to Publish? Ornamental vs. Simple Style

The first chantbook appeared in an initial print run of one thousand, five hundred copies in 1895 (Figure 66). The publication included the liturgy chants of St. John Chrysostom, compiled from the transcriptions notated by Pilimon Koridze in the 1885-1886 Kutaisi project. In general, the publication of the first chantbook signaled a major achievement for the preservation of church chant, and was celebrated as such by everyone who understood its importance. Critics of the first volume pointed out, however, that many of the chants were extremely ornamental, and virtually inaccessible to the average performer.

This criticism sparked a debate on what types of chant to transcribe, and publish, and the overall purpose of the entire project to preserve chant. Pragmatists such as P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili and Razhden Khundadze argued that the transcription and publication of chant

\[530\] K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936).
should be entirely focused on reviving the current chant tradition with an emphasis on recording and teaching the basic chant melodies to a new generation of students.\textsuperscript{531}

**Figure 66.** Cover page, *Liturgy Chants of St. John Chrysostom* (1895)

\textsuperscript{531} The liturgy chants published by Razhden Khundadze in 1911 are extremely simple, with parallel third intervals between the upper voices. This publication stands in direct juxtaposition to the highly ornamental liturgy chantbook published in 1895 that represents transcriptions also sung by Khundadze (he sang alongside master chanters Ch’alaganidze, Ts’ereteli, and Dumbadze in the 1885-1886 Kutaisi transcription project). These two Khundadze-influenced publications attest to a radical philosophical change in what level of ornamental chant should be transcribed and published for public consumption.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Transcriber</th>
<th>Singers</th>
<th>Chantbook Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Preservationists such as Maksime Sharadze, Ekvtime K’ereselidze, and others wanted to record absolutely every chant variant, both simple and ornamental, and publish these for future generations of musicians and historians. Certain master chanters such as Vasi K’arbelashvili, Ant’on Dumbadze, Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze, Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze, and others preferred to transcribe the most ornamental variants of their respective chant traditions (though it must be said that all of them also recorded simple style variants as well).

Between the years 1895-1911, a dozen more chant collections were printed by the Sharadze press, reflecting the diversity of regional chant styles and representing a range of ornamental difficulty. In total, six publications of transcriptions by Pilimon Koridze were published, as detailed in the chart of chantbook publications (Figure 67). Five published chantbooks represent the East Georgian chant tradition. Among these, the books titled Vespers chant (1897), and Matins chant (1898), were published by Vasil K’arbelashvili. These transcriptions are unique for their highly elaborate middle voice, which seems to have been the particular ornamental preference of Vasil K’arbelashvili as such florid variations do not appear in any other East Georgian transcriptions (Figure 68).

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532 The Press did not only publish liturgical chant, but also folk song collections. For example, in 1899, a collection of folksongs by I. Kargareteli was published.

533 These publications were meant to complement the liturgy chants transcribed by Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov in the 1880s from Vasil K’arbelashvili, P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili, Fr. Grigol Mgebrishvili, and Fr. Alexander Molodinashvili (see the section, 4.5.3 The Ippolitov-Ivanov Transcriptions). But this particular set of transcriptions was not published until 1899 because of long delays being approved by the censors.
Figure 68. Chantbook for Matins, page 1, Vasil K’arbelashvili, 1898
P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili seems to have disagreed with the publication of such highly ornamental chant, and formed a new working group to transcribe his own brand of ‘simple style’ East-Georgian chant. Two publications reflect such ‘simple style’ transcriptions, as notated by Pilimon K’arbelashvili (son of P’olievkt’os) and sung by P’olievkt’os K’arbelashvili and Fr. Alexander Molodinashvili. These publications are the Nativity chantbook (1899c), and the Vespers chantbook (1907). The fifth publication representing East Georgian chant is the Ippolitov-Ivanov liturgy transcriptions from the 1880s, published in 1899a (Figure 69).

In the introduction to the publication of the Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions in 1899, the K’arbelashvili brothers included a key on how to read notation in treble, tenor, and bass clefs (Figure 69). Such a chart would have been essential for readers given that European notation was relatively unknown to Georgian chanter outside of Tbilisi in the late nineteenth century. Even though the key for the treble clef displays pitches ascending to high C, a written comment next to it indicates to readers that the range of Georgian chant should rarely exceed a tenor G. The publication of the Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions reflects the original tenor clefs used for the upper two voice parts, an exception to the quickly established music publishing norms. Bass clef is used for the lowest voice part.

6.4 The Kutateladze Transcription Project: 1903-1905

In 1901, the Sharadze Press suffered a major setback. Russian censors revoked the printing permit, claiming that the press printed anti-Tsarist proclamations and effectively ending the legal right to print and distribute any texts. For an entire year, the press lay dormant. Sharadze became very ill, struggling with the fact that he couldn’t convince the Russian

534 The exception to this observation were students of Pilimon Koridze and Andria Benashvili in Kutaisi. For example, it is known that the chanter, Ivliane Nik’oladze, completed a course on reading and writing European notation taught by Pilimon Koridze, for which he was awarded a certificate of excellence. These skills became extremely useful when Nik’oladze assisted K’ereselidze in editing many chant manuscripts in 1914-1915 (see the section, 8.3 The Editing Project).
535 Use of tenor clefs in publication reflects the clefs of the original Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions. For details on the Ippolitov-Ivanov transcription project in 1884-1893 (from the students of Grigol K’arbelashvili), see the section 4.5.3 The Ippolitov-Ivanov Transcriptions.
bureaucracy to grant his printing permit. In 1902, however, they were able to reopen the Press under a new name.

Arist’ovle Kutateladze (1839-1912), a teacher at the prestigious Gymnasium secondary school in Tbilisi and a trained chanter, was able to convince Russian authorities to allow him to open the Press using his name. As K’ereselidze described events, “Our big-hearted comrade, the Gymnasium-teacher Arist’ovle Kutateladze, took responsibility for reopening our press in his name.”536 With the press operational again, Sharadze returned to work, immediately injecting the chant preservation movement with renewed enthusiasm and project management.

Figure 70. Arist’ovle Kutateladze (1839-1912), c. 1902

Kutateladze was a consistent contributor to the chant transcription and publication projects of the press. He was also an accomplished chanter, having studied with a local master chanter in the town of Khoni. During the years 1903-1905, Sharadze financed Pilimon Koridze to transcribe heirmoi melodies from Kutateladze. The project aimed to fill repertory gaps from the previous transcriptions projects, specifically, the hundreds of rare heirmoi texts sung throughout the Orthodox calendar year. In the interest of time, or perhaps because Kutateladze did not have any fellow singers that knew this particular repertory, Koridze notated only the top-voice melody of each chant. Four volumes containing nearly one thousand melodies attest to the breadth of the project, but the transcriptions presented a major problem: in their incomplete state, without the middle and bass parts, they were virtually unperformable.537 It would take Ekvtime K’ereselidze many years

537 Georgian traditional chant is only performed as a three-voiced repertory, though the top-voice is considered the fundamental melody. In the oral tradition, chanters were trained to harmonize such model melodies in three voice parts, but by 1900, very few skilled chanters would have been capable of correctly harmonizing the Kutateladze
to harmonize the Kutateladze transcriptions (a project described in Chapter VIII: Completing the Transcriptions).

6.4.1 Arist’ovle Kutateladze

Arist’ovle Kutateladze was born near the Khoni Monastery in the Samegrelo, the son of Priest Vasil Kutateladze (Figure 70). According to Pilimon Koridze, many members of the Kutateladze family were conveyors of the Khoni monastery chant style.

I heard that in Khoni, the entire Kutateladze family were professional chanters, having studied with the chanter, Simon the Cripple. He was said to have had an incredible bass voice. His students reverently carried him around in a specially constructed cart, and also led him by hand. He was a teacher, a very strict teacher… he carried paramount respect from the community. 538

Arist’ovle Kutateladze benefitted from this chant education as years later, he would be the last living master of the Khoni monastery chant tradition.

As a professional, Kutateladze was a well known pedagogue in Tbilisi, where he authored books on math and geography (published at the Sharadze press), and taught at the first ‘gymnasium’ school for the children of aristocratic members of society. 539 Sometime after Kutateladze helped to re-open the press in 1902, Sharadze suggested that Kutateladze transcribe his family tradition of chant into notation, inherited from the Khoni monastery masters, and offered to pay the well-known opera singer Pilimon Koridze for the job. This suggestion proved to be more than a consolation project, as Kutateladze was indeed an accomplished chanter of the entire canonical repertory of the Orthodox rite. Pilimon Koridze himself was much impressed with the knowledge of Kutateladze, remarking:

heirmoi melodies. Furthermore, those singers that might have been capable of spontaneously and correctly improvising the harmonized voice parts, were mostly incapable of reading European notation. Therefore, Sharadze and K’ereselidze did not have a large incentive to publish the transcriptions before they could be harmonized in three voice parts, a project that K’ereselidze was not able to complete until 1915 (see Chapter VIII: Completing the Transcriptions).

539 His philanthropy involved not only funding the chant preservation movement, but also the rebuilding of Betania monastery under the direction of the Tbilisi Museum director, Ekvtime Taqaishvili.
Our protector, Mr. Arist'ovle Kutateladze, is thoroughly knowledgeable of the old memorized chant [tradition]. He studied with the famous chanter in Khoni, Simon the Cripple. By now, I have transcribed the melody and texts of 551 chants from him.\textsuperscript{540}

6.4.2 Publicity

The transcription of Khoni monastery chant began in 1903 and lasted at least through 1905.\textsuperscript{541} As usual, Sharadze used his considerable influence as a publisher to generate public goodwill for those working on the transcription of chant. In the middle of the Koridze-Kutateladze transcription project, for example, praise-filled public letters appeared on a regular basis:

Apparently, there is a man doing many good deeds, asking neither praise nor thanks because he finds both in his own work. But we are still obligated to offer support for such a man and his good work, either in word or in writing. For this reason, it is impossible to hide and not say aloud that Mr. Arist'o Kutateladze has been working and studying very hard for the recent project to transcribe chant notation.\textsuperscript{542}

Koridze transcribed quickly, as Sharadze had requested, notating only the first-voice melodies. Unfortunately, not even one chant sung by Arist’ovle Kutateladze was transcribed completely (in three voice parts), leaving scholars to speculate on the harmonic qualities of the Khoni monastery style.\textsuperscript{543} With what was transcribed, however, it is possible to observe unique melodic characteristics, suggesting that a separate school of chant existed in the Khoni diocese.

Ten years later (between 1913-1915), K’ereselidze would attempt to complete the harmonization of these transcriptions by hiring Razhden Khundadze and Ivliane Nik'oladze to write out the second and third voice parts (discussed in the section, 8.4.1 Source References to Nik'oladze). In preparation for this process, K’ereselidze recopied all of the Koridze-Kutateladze transcriptions into manuscript paper, leaving two blank staff lines below each melody line (Figure 71).\textsuperscript{544} The

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{541} A colophon in Pilimon Koridze's handwriting (in manuscript NCM H-154.8) states that the transcription of this manuscript commenced on December 23, 1904.
\bibitem{542} Maksime Sharadze, “Chvenis saek'lesio sagalobelta not’ebad gadaghebisa..." Iveria, No. 276 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), 1894: 2-3.
\bibitem{543} In general, chant melodies remain relatively stable across all regional chant schools, while the lower-voiced harmonization of the melody displays striking regional differences. Discussed in the section, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison.
\bibitem{544} This page can be found in manuscript NCM Q-689: 55r, written by Ekvtime K’ereselidze. The transmission is complex. K’ereselidze made this copy (c.1912) of the original transcription written by Pilimon Koridze from chanter
\end{thebibliography}
melody is quite sophisticated in its rhythm, range, and ornamentation. For comparative purposes, see the digital transcription (Figure 72).

6.4.3 Experimental Harmonization: Ioanes Orkhonosa [John, organ of...]

A quick glance at the melody for one of the heirmoi chants prompted by Arist’ovle Kutateladze between 1903-1905, Ioanes orghanosa [John, organ of the Holy Spirit], reveals a sophisticated knowledge of the Georgian liturgical tradition (Figure 71 and Figure 72). The range of the melody, high G to middle C, is quite large for a Georgian melody, suggesting an ornamental variant sung by a master singer. The singer of this melody knew all three voice parts to this chant. Some of the evidence for this claim can be observed in the first phrase, where the melody descends a full octave from C to C before rising again for the cadence on F. Chanters would immediately recognize this movement as a voice crossing cadence initiated by the first voice in preparation for a unison cadence. Both of the harmonizing voice parts must react appropriately (see section on 11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing).

Singing the melody of the chant, Ioanes orghanosa [John, organ of the Holy Spirit] in the key signature written, does not present any obvious problems except for perhaps the tritone interval leap between measures 7-8. But in a three-voiced context, with unison cadences on pitch class F (measures 3 and 7) and fifth-interval cadences on pitch classes B-E (measures 5 and 8), a more likely choice suggests the use of a key signature with three sharps. With a key signature featuring three sharps, one avoids half-step intervals leading to cadence pitches (such as C to B, or F to E), a phrygian-sounding cadence type that is rare in Georgian traditional music, and tritone intervals on strong beats.
Just as an experiment, I added three sharps to the key signature and realized the chant melody of *ioanes orghanosa* in three voices following the harmonization style of the Gelati-Mart’vili monastery chant schools (Figure 73).\(^{545}\) In this proposed three-voiced format, the

\(^{545}\) The harmony of the Gelati-Mart’vili monastery chant schools exhibits a chord-structure that relies on intervals of a third, fifth, octave, or tenth on strong beats. Parallel harmony is not avoided, but is often ornamented with simple counterpoint. Voice crossings require the middle voice to ascend while the outer voices descend (measures 2-3). Gelati-Mart’vili monastery chant harmony can be studied in detail in the following publications: *Kartuli galoba* [Georgian chant], Volumes I, II, IV, VI. ed. Malkhaz Erkvanidze et. al. (Tbilisi: Chant Center of the Georgian Patriarchate Press, 2004-2011).
unique qualities of the melody become more pronounced. The natural way that the text is set to rising and descending contours of the melody based on accented words is impressive, likewise the medial cadences at the conclusion of each textual unit. For example, the word galobita [chanting/singing] marks the musical climax (measure 11) in the chant, and is the active verb in the central phrase, medghesasts’auleni galobita khsenebasa [The one who serves the feastday sings your praises]. Such musical sensitivity to the text is a hallmark of the medieval mekhelnî hymnographers (discussed in the section, 1.3.2 The Importance of the term Mekhurni), and testament to the strength of the oral transmission of the Khoni monastery chant tradition inherited by Arist’ovle Kutateladze.

**Figure 72. Ioanes orghanosa, Kutateladze variant, digital transcription**

An element of these melodies that distinguishes them from other melodies in the Georgian kanon is the preference to anticipate and ornament the cadence pitch several beats before the actual cadence. In most West Georgian chant, the cadence pitch is not highlighted until the final, but in the Kutateladze melodies, we see a different effect. For example, in preparation for the cadence on pitch class B at the end of measure 5, the top voice sings B twice before the cadence. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the cadence in measure 8 (on the pitch B), and again in measures 13-14 (on the pitch C). As a rule, this particular feature is reminiscent of East Georgian melodic tendencies, rather than West Georgian, though one can always find exceptions. Cadential patterns are a significant musical parameter because they are critical to the oral transmission of Georgian chant, and therefore typically remain stable across geographical region and variation type (discussed in the section, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison).
More than 550 chants were transcribed from Arist’ovle Kutateladze, representing the only recorded chants from the Khoni monastery region in the Samegrelo province region. These chants were unfortunately only recorded in one voice, and would have remained incomplete except for a massive harmonization project in 1913-1915 that is the subject of Chapter VIII. These valuable yet incomplete transcriptions were kept at the press, awaiting three-voiced realization, editing, and publication. Together with the heirmoi transcriptions from Ant’on

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546 The project hinged upon Ekvtime K’ereselidze hiring Razhden Khundadze to harmonize the incomplete transcriptions into three-voiced harmony in 1913-1914.
Dumbadze (also incomplete), the Kutateladze manuscripts comprise a complete set of the complex and numerous melodies of the Georgian kanon.\textsuperscript{547} They also represent the daily efforts of a master chanter who was the last interlocutor of the oral tradition of liturgical chant from the Khoni monastery.

6.5 The Ozurgeti Transcription Project, 1906-1908

In Ant’on Dumbadze’s final years (1824-1907), he worked on one last transcription project with his longtime counterpart, Pilimon Koridze. According to Ekvtime K’ereselidze, who commissioned the transcriptions together with his fellow printer Maksime Sharadze, they requested that Koridze notate all of the chants in the eight-mode system, the basic liturgy chants in simple-style, and any remaining heirmoi left unnotated following the Kutateladze transcription project of 1903-1904. Time was of the essence, as Dumbadze was perhaps the last remaining chanter who knew all of these melodies well. The project lasted for more than two years (despite Dumbadze’s death in 1907), with a total production of one thousand incomplete transcriptions (only the melodies were notated). In this section, we review the details of this final project, with a view towards understanding how these incomplete transcriptions fit into the larger corpus of notated Georgian chant.\textsuperscript{548}

\textsuperscript{547} An interesting note appears in a small, un-notated manuscript of chant texts dated to 1918, but not submitted to the National Center of Manuscripts until 1944 (NCM Q-832). On page 2, Ekvtime K’ereselidze writes, “I wrote these chants down in 1918 from a hand-written book by Davit Jinch’aradze. Later I compared them with the heirmoi that I already have (thinking I would need to notate these), but found that I already had five times as many. Then I remembered and believed the words of Arist’ovle Kutateladze, who had said, ‘Pilimon Koridze wrote down all of our heirmoi chants’.”

\textsuperscript{548} For this project, Maksime Sharadze purchased a small travel organ for Pilimon Koridze’s use, and negotiated salaries for Koridze and chanter Ant’on Dumbadze (this very same travel organ now resides in a monk's cell at the Betania Monastery, according to the Betania monks). Specific chant repertories were ordered, including simple-style liturgy chants which had not been notated in the Kutaisi transcription project of 1885-1886, and heirmoi lacking from the transcription project of 1903-1904. It was agreed that both Pilimon Koridze and Ant’on Dumbadze would earn three maneti (rubles) per transcribed chant, and Koridze would also earn one hundred maneti per month for living expenses. Sharadze planned to finance this budget from the income from the press, as well as public fund-raising campaigns in Tbilisi. By Sharadze’s own request, some chants were notated only in the first voice, in the interest of time and in consideration of Dumbadze’s advanced age, with the thought that the three-voiced completion of these transcriptions could happen at a later date. K’ereselidze, \textit{Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze} (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 28-29.
6.5.1 Urgency

In 1906, the final transcription project began in Ozurgeti, Guria. Because Ant’on Dumbadze was already 82 years old, there was genuine fear that he would die at any time, taking his knowledge of the oral chant system with him. K’ereselidze recalled that, “Ant’on was so old, we were really afraid that he would die. Our thinking was confirmed because in 1907, Ant’on died. His replacement was his son, archpriest Davit, working with Molarishvili.” From the beginning, Pilimon Koridze understood the urgency of this particular project, and sought to notate as many chants as possible. In a letter back to Tbilisi, he wrote: “Often, I ask Ant’on if he will let me write some unusual, highly ornamental chant that no one else knows, that will be preserved in his name.” Together, the pair worked through hundreds of hymnographic texts, recording the melody of each in European staff notation.

The priority for Maksime Sharadze and Ekvtime K’ereselidze, the project sponsors, was the notation of all chant melodies. The three-voiced complete transcription of chant took far longer than a melody transcription, because of the number of times that the choir needed to repeat a three-voiced realization and the amount of time needed to discuss and agree upon the appropriate variant and ornamentation level. In short, notating melodies was far more efficient. Sharadze and K’ereselidze planned to complete the three-voiced realizations of the chant transcriptions in preparation for publication, a project that was stymied by Sharadze’s death and the loss of income after the dissolution of the press.

In retrospect, it is tempting to criticize such ‘time-saving’ measures, but in another sense, one could applaud Sharadze for displaying such foresight, given that his protege Ekvtime K’ereselidze would eventually succeed in realizing the three-voiced completion of the transcriptions (see the section, 8.2 The Harmonization Project). Though this project would focus on a very basic ‘simple-style’ harmonization, other sources from the twentieth century hint at the extraordinary original harmonization of the Dumbadze style.

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549 ibid.: 28-29.
550 ibid.: 30.
551 Three-voiced recordings from the twentieth century reveal an incredible harmonic manifestation of the heirmoi melodies transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Ant’on Dumbadze in 1906. For example, the transcription of the third canticle of the Nativity service, *ghmerto mokheden* [Oh Lord, listen to the prayers], is only one of many inconspicuous melodies contained in manuscript NCM Q-691 (page 164v); there are eight hundred and thirty transcribed melodies in this mss alone. To sing this particular melody by itself is unremarkable, or at least indistinguishable from any of the hundreds of other melodies. Likewise, no single transcription was highlighted by Koridze as more significant or impressive than any other in the rough-draft pencil notation in Q-691. To a researcher
Because Ant'on Dumbadze was already so advanced in years, he couldn’t sing every chant. Instead, his three most advanced students—Davit Dumbadze, Svimon Molarishvili, and Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze—took turns singing the required melodies for Koridze while Ant’on Dumbadze listened and corrected. All of these chanter were in the Gurian province at the time. On more than one occasion, when memory seemed to have failed, the elder Dumbadze returned after a break having recalled the obscure melody required of a certain text. He hummed the tune for his students, and in this way, the team notated hundreds of melodies for the heirmoi of the great feastdays as well as other chants. All together, almost one thousand chant melodies were notated in six volumes and sent back to Sharadze and K’ereselidze for printing in Tbilisi during the years 1906-1908.

6.5.2 The Students of Ant’on Dumbadze

Ant’on Dumbadze was not only a chanter, but the commander of a military unit in the Russian military and the father of a large family. His regiment was responsible for holding the nearby Russian-Turkish border along the strategic Black Sea coastal transportation routes, and saw action in the frequent skirmishes in the border provinces of Guria and Adjara (it was this}

browsing through page after page of this manuscript, it is difficult to imagine or hear the three-voice context of any particular chant, especially in a state of incomplete transcription. Fortunately, other sources exist. In 1966, nearly sixty years after the Koridze transcription, the chanter Art’em Erkomaishvili recorded all three voice parts to a number of chants including the chant ghmerto mokheden. The Anchiskhat’i Church Choir later performed the Erkomaishvili recordings to stunning effect, releasing their performance on compact disk (Hear this chant on Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #3). To hear an entire choir sing the chant is exquisitely powerful, especially in the use of Gurian harmony and intertwining voice parts. At times the melody is barely heard, obscured by the rising or falling of the other voices, or positioned on top of the harmony in such a way that it is not the voice immediately apparent to the ear. To listen to this single example, and imagine all one thousand transcribed heirmoi melodies performed as they should be, with full and active choir, gives a sense of what an incredible repertory the master chanters inherited through the oral tradition, and what a loss went with them when they died.

552 In his index of chantbooks (NCM Q-665), Ekvtime K’ereselidze notes that the singers of the chants contained in NCM Q-691 (1906-1908) were the three students of Ant’on Dumbadze, even though for at least half of the project, Dumbadze himself was still alive and directing the transcription project.

553 Alexander Okrop’iridze, Iveria, No. 102 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), May 12, 1901. Also cited in Tavberidze, XIX sauk’unis kartveli moghvats’eebi... (2005), 37. In 1901, Bishop Alexander (Okrop’iridze) created a local organization in the province of Guria for the study of traditional chant. Through this organization and using his own finances, he assigned chanters Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze and Svimon Molarishvili the responsibility of traveling and teaching chant to anyone in Guria for free. In addition to supporting the transcription of chant, Okrop’iridze continued to believe that the training of future chanters was an essential aspect of the rejuvenation of the Georgian liturgical chant tradition.

554 Later, Ekvtime K’ereselidze bound all of these books together into one massive tome (manuscript NCM Q-691), which contains the first-voice transcriptions for 831 chants.
military duty that prevented him from attending the chant competition of 1878 in Tbilisi, see the section, 4.1.3 Inviting West Georgian Chanters to Tbilisi). His eight sons became military and civic leaders except for his eldest, Davit Dumbadze (1850-1918), who became a priest (Figure 74). Though all of the Dumbadze sons learned to chant in the family tradition, only Davit Dumbadze studied to a masters level, working closely with his father and Pilimon Koridze to transcribe their inherited Shemokmedi monastery chant tradition into notation, especially in the projects of 1893-1894 and 1906-1908.\footnote{In a tragic end to the long line of Dumbadze chant masters stretching back to Iak’ob Dumbadze (1647-1713), the youngest master chanter, Davit Dumbadze (1850-1918), refused to abandon the central church in the city of Ozurgeti during a Turkish invasion during the First World War and was killed there by Turkish soldiers in 1918. He was survived by two young sons, neither of whom had the chance to learn the chant tradition of their grandfathers.}

\textbf{Figure 74.} Davit Dumbadze (c. 1900)

Ant’on Dumbadze did not only teach his sons to chant, but many others as well. Even after he died in 1907 at the age of 83, his students Davit Dumbadze, Svimon Molarishvili, and Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze were able to complete the project. According to Varlam Simonishvili, a student of Nak’ashidze, the Dumbadze pedagogical program consisted of memorizing 3750 chants, including the three liturgies, Vespers, Matins, festal chants the feastdays of saints, heirmoi of the various canons, and related services such as weddings, funerals, ordination of priests, and the paraklesis services. These chant texts were set to a complex arrangement of model melodies, which were memorized and harmonized according to strict parameters.\footnote{Varlam Simonishvili, cited in Magda Sukhiashvili, “Saek’lesio galobis st’savelbis metodik’is sak’itkhisatvis: XIX-XX sau’k’unis mijnis ts’erilobiti da bech’duiri ts’qaroebis mikhedvit” [On the issue of the pedagogical methodology of studying eclesiastical chant: based on 19th-20th century handwritten and published sources], Proceedings of the International Conference of the Batumi Society of the Humanities, Vol. II (Batumi: Shota Rustaveli State University Press, 2010), 311-316.} Among the most famous of Dumbadze’s students were Razhden Khundadze
(1845-1929), Melkisedek’ Nak'ashidze (1858-1934),\(^{557}\) Nest’or K’ont’ridze (1854-1931),\(^{558}\) his son Davit Dumbadze, the Molarishvili brothers,\(^ {559}\) and many others.

6.6 Chapter Conclusion

This would be Pilimon Koridze’s final transcription project. Less than four years after Dumbadze, Pilimon Koridze died in Ozurgeti in 1911.\(^ {560}\) Between 1883-1908, he transcribed nearly three thousand chants, and saw at least five hundred published during his lifetime.\(^ {561}\) Throughout his lifetime, Koridze remained exuberant about his work. He conceived of the project to transcribe chant as a major contribution to society and homeland, often sharing his ideals in public editorials and private letters with friends.

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\(^{557}\) After the exposition of 1878, Melkisedek’ Nak'ashidze stayed in Tbilisi directing choirs, teaching at the Seminary, and starting in 1883, working with Pilimon Koridze to begin his series of historic transcription projects. During this period, Nak’ashidze taught West Georgian chant to several important figures includes Maksime Sharadze and Ekvtiime K’ereselidze, both of whom would go on to have major roles in the preservation of Georgian chant. Later, Nak’ashidze opened a chant school in Guria, and was remembered by his student Art’em Erkomaishvili for his missionary work in the mountainous Ottoman border regions of Adjara and Guria. Among Nak’ashidze’s most famous students were Art’em Erkomaishvili, Dimit’ri P’at’arava, Konst’ant’ine Salukvadze, Ilia Komerik’i, Samson Ch’anuqvadze, Domant’i Khintibidze, and Samuel Chkhik’vishvili, the last generation of Georgian traditional chanters. From among these latter students, Erkomaishvili and P’at’arava are considered srulimgaloblebi—those who knew the complete system of chant and could teach its sophisticated practice through oral transmission.

\(^{558}\) Nest’or K’ont’ridze was born and raised in the province of Guria. From 1878-1889, he taught at various institutions in Tbilisi, later returning to Guria where he was a priest in the village of Likhauri. He continued to teach chant throughout Guria together with his friend Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze. In the 1920s, as members of the Young Communist party began burning and looting churches, K’ont’ridze is said to have personally jumped into a fire to save an eleventh-century Gospel and icon from being destroyed. Tragically, as an old priest, he was beaten to death by some anonymous thug in 1931 as he sat under a tree. At the time, he was one of the greatest master chanters still living in Georgia.

\(^{559}\) The Molarishvili family was also deeply connected with the Orthodox Church and its chanting tradition in Guria. Simon Molarishvili worked with Ant’on Dumbadze for years helping to transcribe chant with Pilimon Koridze. One of Simon’s brothers was a monk with Benedikte Bark'alaia on Mount Athos, Greece, and Giorgi Molarishvili, a third brother and acting Abbot of the Shemokmedi Monastery in 1920, was a victim of the anti-religious fanaticism there at the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution.

\(^{560}\) In 2004, a large bust of Pilimon Koridze was placed on the central square in Ozurgeti near the location where he said to have been buried. The original church and cemetery in the city of Ozurgeti no longer exists; in the 1920s, it was razed to the ground by the Bolsheviks. On December 20, 2011, Koridze was canonized a saint in the Georgian Orthodox Church and given the name, Pilimon the Chanter (Koridze).

\(^{561}\) These estimates are based on the study of the approximately 15,000 pages of transcriptions in the K’ereselidze-Koridze collection in the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Georgia which form the basis of the archival material for this dissertation. Though in 1936, K’ereselidze mentioned submitting books containing 5532 chants, these include the rough draft and good copies of many chants that K’ereselidze collated into large volumes between 1915-1932. For more, see Appendix E: Original Notated Sources of Georgian Chant.
Isn't it true that I have traveled in many different kingdoms and studied many things, but in all of these places not one of them has such colorful, such difficult, such exquisite, such delightfully-tuned music as the chants and songs that we have in our small country of Georgia! Because of that, I am working so hard, day and night, so that no chant is left un-notated, written in the various voice parts.562

Many chanters joined Koridze in lauding Dumbadze as the greatest chanter of his generation. Others lamented the end of an era, citing the degradation of the Georgian ecclesiastical culture, the lack of administrative support, and other factors in the demise of the oral chant tradition.563

Razhden Khundadze, one of dozens of chanters who trained with Dumbadze and never one to mince words, recalled one such moment. “Georgians have not had a chanter like Ant'on Dumbadze for one hundred years; in Guria they revoked his wages, so he sat at home while in his place mere psalm-readers squawked through the chant of the Divine Liturgy.”564 Khundadze’s frustration mirrors the sentiment of many chanters, who saw the suppressive policies of the Russian administration as a scapegoat for the general malaise of the Georgian Orthodox Church and its cultural heritage. The death of each master chanter signaled a further step towards what seemed like an inevitable collapse of the oral transmission of liturgical chant.

Such resentment should be understood in the context of the suppressive policies of the Russian administration in the decades surrounding the twentieth century, especially towards agitators within the Orthodox Church. For example, the budgetary priorities of the Exarch-administered Georgian Orthodox Church did not include the salary of Georgian traditional chanters or the study of traditional chant in the institutions of the Church. Countless examples reveal a systematic pledge to russify the culture of Georgian Orthodoxy, including but not limited to the requirement by Tbilisi Seminary students to set Georgian Orthodox texts to Slavonic musical melodies.565 In another case, Russian educational authorities attempted to remove the Georgian language from school curricula in 1903.566

563 Anger at the Russian administration was a boiling undercurrent of contemporary discourse during the first decade of the twentieth century. Following the “People’s Revolt” of 1905, Russian administrators were paranoid about radical ecclesiastical figures galvanizing popular support for the autocephaly of the Georgian church. See Tamara Grdzelidze, Witness through Troubled Times (2006).
564 Razhden Khundadze, “Kartuli galoba...” Shinauri Sakmeebi, No. 16 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), April 18th, 1910, 15.
565 It is well known that during the administration of Exarch Vladimir Bogoiaevlinski (1892-99), a leading cause for the frequent student strikes at the Theological Seminary was anger at the systematicRussification of Georgian ecclesiastical culture. One particularly offending policy concerned the requirement that seminarians learn to set
By 1906, only a widespread societal change promoting the independence of the Georgian Church and its unique cultural heritage could have sparked a revival from the few remaining students of West Georgian chant. Instead, misfortune struck the small community of chant preservationists. As noted, Ant’ on Dumbadze died in 1907, but many others also passed away.

In July of 1907, the great statesman and chant supporter Ilia Ch’avch’avadze was murdered while traveling to his country home outside of Tbilisi. As the longtime benefactor and employer of Maksime Sharadze, Ch’avch’avadze played a vital role in the publication of chant including a grant to purchase the first musical printing font. His death shattered the broad membership of the Democratic Nationalist Party, among them the K’abineti Collective members. Maksime Sharadze was personally devastated, and immersed himself manically in the work of the press.

In the winter of 1907, Maksime Sharze contracted tuberculosis, dying the next year. After his death in December, 1908, the Press was unable to continue effectively. Financial support for the Koridze transcription project with Ant'on Dumbadze's students evaporated. Pilimon Koridze himself died in 1911 while he was still living in the city of Ozurgeti in the province of Guria. His death ended his series of curated transcription projects dating back to 1883, the collective product of which remains our most thorough source of West Georgian chant and provides our greatest access to the masters tradition of Georgian liturgical chant.

Georgian chant texts to the tunes of Russian–Slavonic sacred music. While Vasil K’arbelashvili was one of the primary chant instructors at the Tbilisi Theological seminary, he recalled that the rector, Serafim Mesheriakov, attempted to force this issue with him. “Rector Serafim told me, ‘write Georgian words for these Russian chants!!” (See Document No. 138, Vasil K’arbelashvili Collection, National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi).

In 1903, a governor’s degree instructed Tedo Zhordania, supervisor of the parish schools of the West Georgian provinces of Guria and Samegrelo, to remove the Georgian language from the curriculum and introduce Russian and Megrelian instead. Intellectual Georgians (many of them ecclesiastical hierarchs) successfully protested this order, but the dispute illustrates the machinations of the imperial administration, as well as a complete lack of local sensitivity. While the native language of people from the province of Samegrelo is the Megrelian language, people in the province of Guria speak the related but distinctive Kartuli language (Georgian). Forcing Gurians to abandon their native language in favor of their long-time friendly rival’s Megrelian language was unthinkable for most Gurians. The issue of learning Russian (as a second language) was less of an issue, since it was already accepted as the common language of the Tsarist empire. For Megrelians, who speak Megrelian at home and learn Georgian in school, the issue revolved around whether they belonged to the historical kingdom of Abkhazeti-Imereti (official language Georgian), or to the broader Tsarist Empire (official language Russian). For the Georgian Orthodox hierarchy, maintaining the hegemony of the classical Georgian ‘sacred language’ was of paramount importance to keep the integrity of the Georgian Orthodox Church despite its incorporation into the Synod-controlled Russian Church. The order to change the language of secondary education was identified by this group as an effort to divide and weaken the efforts of the Georgian ecclesiastical hierarchy to restore autonomy and autocephaly to the Georgian Church, which went before referendum and was rejected by the Synod in 1905. See Tamara Grdzeliđze, Witness through Troubled Times (2006).
Chapter VII: Transcription Issues

The transcription of Georgian liturgical chant into European staff notation saved the tradition from complete loss. But the transcriptions are fraught with practical issues that remain problematic for performers and editors to this day. The fundamental issue is one that has concerned ethnomusicologists for decades: the relationship of transcribed music to sounding music. Georgian liturgical chant as performed by masters of the oral tradition was a polyphonic tradition tuned to a non-diatonic scale. The transcription of this scale using European staff notation—which was developed for diatonic idioms—mis-represents the intonation of the original sounding music. Various scholars have offered diverse explanations of the Georgian scale—it has similarities with one or more regional folk-singing scales, for example—but debate continues. Such theories have affected the way that chant is performed in the post-Soviet period, as choir directors pick and choose among various publications of edited transcriptions (Appendix F: Published Notation).

Key signature is a particularly controversial manifestation of the issues surrounding the adaptation of the non-diatonic Georgian scale to staff notation. In the course of republishing turn-of-the-century chantbooks produced by the Sharadze & Friends Press, for example, key signatures are often revised by modern editors looking to promote their own theories of tuning. Thus, the key signatures of chants in modern publications often do not reflect the key signatures chosen by Pilimon Koridze and others for the original transcription projects at the turn of the last century. Instead of publishing fascimile editions, the introductions to these modern chantbooks make pains to denigrate the quality of the original Koridze or K'arbelashvili transcriptions in order to justify extensive emendation. It can be said that for the practical performance of chant, these edits are (for the most part) improvements over the original transcriptions, for reasons that are explained in this chapter. But the debate on when, and how, to emend the original transcriptions is not our main concern.

The aim of this chapter is to understand, as a scholarly exercise, the fundamental problems of the original transcription process. Proceeding from a summary of the relevant theories on the Georgian liturgical tuning system, we examine several case studies using examples of actual transcriptions. The process of listening to the sounded music is revealed...
through the written representation of that sound, and the 'errors' of transcription often provide the most revealing clues to that process.

7.1 Georgian Traditional Tuning

Understanding the nature of the Georgian scale is critical for the modern performance of chant, the editing of modern publications of chantbooks, and for our purposes, the thorough investigation of its effect on the transcription process. The scholarly study of this subject has only just begun, but our understanding of the Georgian scale has been vastly improved through the experience of practical chanter{s} and folk-singers in the last thirty years.\textsuperscript{567} The evidence for a unique scale for liturgical chant relies on audio recordings. Due to the poor quality of these recordings, however, other sources are also relevant, such as the study of regional folk singing traditions that have preserved their own scale systems through oral transmission, even into the twenty-first century.

In this section, we review the various theories that address the ordering of pitch classes and interval ratios for the Georgian liturgical tuning system, with the goal of establishing what chant sounded like. Only in understanding the basic parameters of performed chant, as heard by Koridze and other transcribers, can we hope to establish the relationship of between transcription and sounding music in the Georgian context.

7.1.1 Audio Recordings

Audio recordings of chants made in the twentieth century remain our most significant witnesses to the tuning system of the oral tradition of liturgical chant. A chart of all such recordings can be seen as an addendum to the dissertation (Appendix B: Audio Recordings of Traditional Chant). The most significant collection consists of one hundred chants recorded at the Tbilisi Conservatory in 1966 (Figure 75).

\textsuperscript{567} Members of the Anchiskhat'i Church Choir, in particular, have been instrumental in improving the general knowledge of the inherited liturgical tuning system(s). Malkhaz Erkvanidze, Zaal Ts'ereteli, Levan Veshapidze, and others continue to publish and debate these important issues, contributing vastly to our collective knowledge.
Figure 75. Audio Source for Traditional Georgian Chant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chant(s)</th>
<th>Chanter(s)</th>
<th>Regional Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1 eucharist chant (audio): <em>Shen gigalobt</em> [We praise Thee].</td>
<td>Ap'olon Tsamtsishvili Choir</td>
<td>Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1 eucharist chant (audio): <em>Mamao chveno</em> [Our Father].</td>
<td>Sandro K'avsadze Choir</td>
<td>Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>2 chants (audio): <em>Shoba sheni ukhrts'nel ars</em> [Your nativity is everlasting]; <em>Dideba ghmertsa</em> [Glory to God].</td>
<td>Gigo Erkomaishvili, Art'em Erkomaishvili, Giorgi Iobishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>2 heirmoi (audio): <em>Siqvarulman mogiqvana</em> [Love has brought Thee] (incomplete); <em>Shen romelman gananatle</em> [You have enlightened us].</td>
<td>Samuel Chavleishvili, Besarion Ints'k'irveli, Varlam Simonishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>11 heirmoi (audio).</td>
<td>Dimit’ri P'at'arava, Varlam Simonishvili, Art'em Erkomaishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Assorted chants (audio): <em>Shen khar venakhi</em> [You are the Vineyard]</td>
<td>Mughashvili Choir</td>
<td>Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>1 assorted chant (audio): <em>Shen khar venakhi</em> [You are the Vineyard]</td>
<td>Art'em Erkomaishvili, Anania Erkomaishvili, Vladimir Erkomaishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1 chant (audio): <em>Motsikuli krist'esagan</em> [Apostle sent by Christ].</td>
<td>Art'em Erkomaishvili, Badri Toidze, Anzor Erkomaishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>10 assorted chants (audio): Recorded in Ozurgeti, only 4 extant.</td>
<td>Art'em Erkomaishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1 heirmos (video): <em>Siqvarulman mogiqvana</em> [Love has brought Thee].</td>
<td>Art'em Erkomaishvili, Anania Erkomaishvili, Vladimir Erkomaishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These were recorded by the last master chanter, Art’em Erkomaishvili, and represent our most significant access to the tuning system of the master chanters (hear Erkomaishvili's tuning system on Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Tracks #5 and #33). On the 1966 recordings, Erkomaishvili sang each voice part one at a time, because no else alive at the time knew the harmonizations to these chants. As a result, the Erkomaishvili tuning system is clearly audible in each discrete voice part, despite the deterioration of the original cassette tapes. While it is unclear if this scale is representative of the various regional chant systems, or even of chant in previous centuries, the quantity of the recordings allows scholars to build an accurate picture of the Erkomaishvili scale based on statistical averages (instead of inferring a scale from a single exemplar).

Other recordings include five recordings made between the years 1902-1914 by the English Gramophone Company, eleven chants recorded in 1949, and various other sources (Figure 75). In addition to recorded chants, hundreds of folk songs recorded throughout the twentieth century attest to similar tuning system(s). Available recordings of these historic audio files have been made available through the accompanying audio disk; see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Tracks #23-34.

7.1.2 Historical References to Georgian Tuning

Evidence of a non-diatonic system is also evident in the notated transcription record: Koridze edited his key signatures between rough drafts and publication, Vasil K’arbelashvili

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chants Recorded</th>
<th>Chants by</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>107 assorted chants (audio):</td>
<td>Art’em Erkomaishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>3-5 assorted chants by Yvette Grimaud (audio): - Aghdgomasa shensa [To thy Resurrection Lord];</td>
<td>Gurian Choir; Mughashvili Choir in Gurjaani</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West); Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>78 eucharist and other chants (audio).</td>
<td>Vaziashvili Choir, Kashweti St. George Church, Tbilisi</td>
<td>Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

568 Many singers are of the opinion that folk music from different regions exhibit different tuning systems. This has not been fully investigated.
added and then crossed-out flats and sharps, and in 1878, Mach’avariani complained that he could not adapt the Gurian tuning system to the five-line staff.

I transcribed exactly what the Gurian singers sang, and if this notation is not sufficient to your taste, do not blame me, for this is the nature of Georgian chant. The first voice adapted well to notation, but I had trouble with the other two voices because [in my transcription] they ended up sounding like Russian-Italian harmony. If we use Russian-Italian rules to transcribe Georgian chant, they will definitely reflect the Russian-Italian k’ilo [tuning] and not be accepted by the Georgian people.\footnote{Mikhail Mach’avariani, cited by Bishop Alexander Okrop’’iridze, Droeba Newspaper, Nos. 137-138 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), July 3, 1881, 2-3. Also cited in the section, 4.3.1 Transcription Failures.}

This testimony is edifying in that Mach’avariani identifies his notational difficulty as arising from the transcription of the three-voiced harmony of Georgian chant. In notating a single voice, he may have overlooked the peculiarities of Georgian tuning, perhaps perceiving them as intonational errors.\footnote{Mach’avariani was trained to teach Slavonic chant, he was not an ethnomusicologist or folklorist who might have been familiar with the concept of trying to notate non-diatomic tuning systems, therefore it is certainly possible that he perceived the Georgian tuning system as erroneous.} But as soon as all three parts were sung together, he was apparently unable to avoid hearing their unusual intervalllic relationships. Self-admittedly, he found it difficult to complete the transcriptions, complaining that the lower voice parts ended up sounding like Russo-Italian tuning.\footnote{Mach’avariani transcribed chant from the Gurian trio from West Georgia (Nak’ashidze, Khavtasi, and K’ont’ridze), as well as from the East Georgian master Grigol K’arbelashvili between 1878-1882. Unfortunately, none of these transcriptions are extant for comparison (see the section, 4.4.4 The Mach’avariani Transcriptions).}

The Koridze transcriptions show that compromises were necessary in choosing how to notate each chant. These compromises are especially evident in the transcription of fifth intervals as tritones—an unknown interval in Georgian tuning—or half-step approaches to cadences that give an unusual phrygian-scale sonority to the phrase. The choice of key signature also became an obvious point of frustration, not just for Koridze but for all the transcribers, as the Georgian chanter was singing in a non-tempered tuning system. This tuning system—characterized by neutral thirds, sixths, and sevenths—did not translate to the tempered tuning of contemporary European instruments. The struggle to find a suitable key signature can be easily seen on many pages of transcribed chant notation, where the key signature has been changed.\footnote{For example, in one of dozens of such instances, the Bb is crossed out by Koridze on his good copy transcription of the liturgy chant shen gigalob [We praise Thee], manuscript NCM Q-676, page 45r, with the penciled note: nishani ar unda, arts bemoli arts dziezi [no sign necessary, neither flat nor sharp].}
7.1.3 Theories of Tuning

Malkhaz Erkvanidze, a chant scholar and choir director with extensive experience with issues of tuning as the lead editor of chantbooks published by the Patriarchate of the Georgian Orthodox Church, believes that knowledge of the original tuning system has essentially been lost.

The scale of medieval Georgian chant does not correspond to the tempered scale or to the five-line notational system that represents it. Without a uniquely fitted notational system to work with, nineteenth and twentieth century musicologists were forced to transcribe onto the five-line staff. As a result of this necessity, the natural sound of Georgian chant and the unique Georgian tuning systems have been lost. Unfortunately, this publication cannot make up for this drawback, and must likewise publish in western staff notation.⁵⁷³

In attempting to reconstruct an original tuning system, Erkvanidze proposes the equal division of the octave by descending conjunct tetrachords each split by three mostly equal-sized intervals (Figure 76).⁵⁷⁴ In a diagram of a descending scale published in 2006, this theory is represented through the placement of directional arrows indicating the manner in which notes are supposed to be sung higher or lower than the pitch represented diatonically on the five-line staff (essentially, half-steps are to be widened, whole-steps narrowed).⁵⁷⁵

Figure 76. Georgian scale with tetrachords, from Vol. II, Kartuli Galoba (2006)


The scale is also mapped onto three descending disjunct tetrachords, a borrowing from Ancient Greek music theory which Erkvanidze believes to be related to the Georgian tuning system. Instead of a descending tetrachord with the intervals of tone-semitone-tone (TST) as written, Erkvanidze suggests that a raised Eb and a lowered D in the first descending tetrachord results in three relatively equally spaced intervals. In a wide-ranging interview on the subject in 2012, Erkvanidze further specified that he believes many of the intervals of the Georgian scale to equal 160-170 cents, while the interval from tonic to super-tonic would be closer to a full whole-step at 200 cents.576

In his role as editor of chantbook publications for the Georgian Patriarchate (eight chantbook publications between 2000-2015), Erkvanidze has made liberal changes to the key signatures of the original sources. These changes, he explains, are still a compromise because they use the five-line staff system, but represent the Georgian tuning system more accurately.577 Because the neutral third, sixth, and seventh degree of the scale sounds most like a mixolydian scale, Erkvanidze explains, he tends to alter key signatures for mixolydian prioritization. Therefore a chant melody based around the pitch D will command a key signature of one sharp (D mixolydian), whereas in the Koridze transcriptions, such melodies are often written with one flat (D aolian).578 Erkvanidze is not opposed to leaving a key signature in a non-mixolydian mode, but examines the cadences for ‘unnatural-sounding’ cadence approaches such as the half-step Bb-A.579

Theorists and chanters Zaal Ts’ereteli and Levan Veshapidze have recently weighed in on the tuning debate with several public presentations at conferences in 2014 and 2015 and online debates on social media, though no publications have yet emerged. They agree on octave equivalence,580 but suggest that all intervals remain equal in the division of the octave.

576 Malkhaz Erkvanidze, interview, October 25, 2012. Erkvanidze has experimented with this tuning in computer modeling and in training the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir (albums: 2000, 2001) and his new ensemble, the Mama Davit Church Choir, to perform with this technique (albums released 2011, 2012). Erkvanidze also said that in some cases, the exact pitches could be changed based on their position within chords relative to the ‘chanting note’ or tonic of the particular chant.
577 For this and what follows, Malkhaz Erkvanidze, interview, October 25th, 2012.
578 See for example, numerous examples of troparion melodies in Tone 1 that have been modified in this manner.
579 For more, see the section, 7.4 Key Signature Debate: Romelni kerubimta [Let us, the Cherubim].
580 By octave equivalence, I mean the theory that the octave represents a stable element in the tuning of the gamut of pitches in the Georgian scale. In folk music, this is often not the case. Many scholars suggest that the tuning of Georgian traditional folk music is based on the stable interval of a fifth.
Erkvanidze disputes this theory, arguing that such a division of the octave cannot account for the subtle modulations heard in the archival recordings of Art’em Erkomaishvili.

Other theories postulate that Georgian traditional music, especially folk music, is based on the interval of a fifth and not the octave.\textsuperscript{581} It is likely that both sets of theories have some degree of accuraey, and need to be parsed according to region and repertory. Georgian folk music is extremely diverse and displays a wide diversity of harmonic structure, much of it based on fifth intervals. Liturgical music clearly relies more heavily on octaves, which are widespread throughout the transcription record from all monastery chant schools. These differences certainly influenced the performance practice of these traditions though church chancers and folk singers were often one and the same singer.

This debate will likely continue until precise spectral analysis can be conducted on the available recordings. What is clear for all investigators is that the intervallic nature of the scale on the 1966 Erkomaishvili recordings is such that it does not accommodate half-step intervals. While intervals of a fifth and fourth seem constant, even they can vary depending on the surrounding chord and their position relative to the primary ‘chanting-tone’ of the chant.\textsuperscript{582} While chords with fourth, fifth, or octave intervals formed under the chanting-tone are typically tuned according to Pythagorean principles of tuning, these intervals might be slightly stretched or reduced if they fall under a melody note in any other position. Thus if the chanting-tone in the top voice is the pitch D, then the harmonizing pitches A, G, and D should be tuned as perfect consonances (of a fourth, fifth, and octave respectively). Meanwhile, if the top voice is singing the pitch B (located at an interval of a neutral third below the primary pitch of the chant), or pitch F (located at an interval of a neutral third above the primary pitch of the chant), the tuning of the chords is less prescribed.

This is the gray area debated by chant scholars. Must the chords that form under neutral pitches in the general gamut of the Georgian traditional scale tuned as perfect fourths, fifths, and


\textsuperscript{582} Such chanting tones in Georgian chant behave like a reciting tone in a Gregorian psalm tone. Additional syllables of text can be recited before the rest of the syllables are distributed over the model melody (see, 11.1.7 Syllable Counting: An Experiment in Text-Setting).
octaves, or must they tune as something else? Did Georgian traditional singers even think of primary and secondary pitches within the scale? Or was every pitch considered equal, regardless of its relationship to the chanting pitch. Further research must clarify these issues: any theory must account for both the tuning system heard in the 1966 Erkomaishvili recordings and evidence from earlier singers and other regional chant systems seen in the transcription record.

7.2 Analysis: Ts’mindao ghmerto [Holy God]

This analysis of one variant of the chant ts’mindao ghmerto [Holy God - the Trisagion hymn] examines problems of transcription that are characteristic of many West Georgian chant transcriptions notated by Pilimon Koridze. By looking at various drafts of the chant as it was emended for good copy and eventual publication, an editing process concerning the choice of key signature, accidentals, and chord peculiarities is revealed in the context of notating a modal scale that did not map perfectly to European staff notation.

7.2.1 Simple and Ornamental Variants

Many musical variants of the West Georgian trisagion text display a melodic gesture of a descending tetrachord. One of the simplest of these variants appears in Figure 77. On this page, the final phrase of the chant demonstrates the basic ascent and descent of the melody on the tetrachord (pitches C-B-A-G, measures 1-2, 6-7). The indication in measure 1 to perform the chant with one flat offers a key signature of C mixolydian that helpfully presents the least number of problems for a chant melody that clearly pivots around the pitch C.

\[\text{Ts’mindao ghmerto, ts’mindao dzliero, ts’mindao uk’vdao, shegviq’alen chven [Holy God, Holy Almighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us]. The text of the trisagion hymn has many musical settings in the Georgian transcription sources, as the short prayer text occurs in different liturgical contexts, some requiring stretched musical phrases to accommodate liturgical function. For example, during Vespers of Holy Saturday, the trisagion hymn is sung by Georgian choirs while processing solemnly around the exterior of the church after the singing of Glory to God in the Highest. The trisagion hymn is also sung during liturgy, funeral services, paraclesis services, and in extended variants or iterations during episcopal liturgies.}

\[\text{The authorship of this chant variant is unclear as there are several authors that worked on manuscript NCM Q-683, 26v, including Ektime K’ereselidze, who appears to have copied chants from other manuscripts here.}

\[\text{Another transcription of this variant in manuscript NCM Q-676 transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze in 1883 indicates the medial cadences as occurring at the end of each repetition of the word ts’mindao, rather than at the end of the following words ghmerto, dzliero, or uk’vdao, as found in this variant.}\]
Figure 77. Ts ‘mindao ghmerto, Pilimon Koridze (NCM Q-683: 26v)

The ornamental version of this ts ‘mindao ghmerto variant presents more points for discussion (to hear this chant, refer to Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #4). This version was transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Ant’on Dumbadze in 1893 and appears in manuscript NCM Q-685, page 132v (Figure 78). Koridze’s hurried scrawl reflects an efficient use of line to notate the voices of his interlocutors as they sang in real time. In this rough draft, he left out such details as the key signature, time signature, and bar lines, focusing instead on the notation of pitch and text. The words at the top read ქართული ტექსტი.
[Ts ‘mindao ghmerto - Holy God], and written in ink under the title are the words ოჯორი ჯობიობო [gadats’erilia tetrad - written in good copy], presumably added later as Koridze rewrote each of his rough drafts into good copy in separate manuscripts.

Figure 78. Ts ‘mindao ghmerto, Pilimon Koridze 1893 (NCM Q-685: 132v)

Figure 79. Ts ‘mindao ghmerto, good copy (NCM Q-671: 120r)

Several interesting details can be observed in the beginning of the rough draft of the ornamental ts ‘mindao ghmerto (Figure 78). It appears that Koridze began by transcribing the first voice from middle C, but directly scratched out his first note and began again, this time starting a pitch higher. Typically, Koridze attempted to choose key signatures with the least number of
sharps or flats, a factor that may have contributed to his decision to start the transcription from the pitch D instead of C (by moving the opening chord up a whole step, Koridze avoided a Bb in the bass voice in the first chord). Changing the starting note suggests three points: Koridze was thinking about how to set the chant within the diatonic framework of European notation, he was able to ascertain the opening chord and therefore all three chanters were singing at once, and he began by transcribing the upper-most voice part.

Given the wider halfsteps of Georgian traditional tuning, it was difficult for Koridze and others involved in the transcription of traditional music to assign a key that accurately reflected the music as heard (Malkhaz Erkvanidze suggests that the mixolydian scale is the closest compromise). The first accidental that Koridze marks is an F# in the middle voice at the beginning of the second measure (Figure 78). However, in the good copy of this same variant, found in manuscript NCM Q-671 page 120r, the key signature has been changed with the addition of a second sharp (note that the C# is written behind the F#, a non-standard formation that suggests it was added as an afterthought). A snapshot of the good copy of Koridze’s rough draft is pictured in Figure 79, and for ease of analysis, a digital transcription is also provided in Figure 80.586

7.2.2 Editing Between Drafts

Several problems are evident in the transmission of the notated transcriptions from rough draft to good copy. The addition of the C# in the key signature was an ill-considered choice given that the very first chord of measure 1 would then begin with a tritone in the lower voices, and a diminished ninth between the outer voices (such a chord does not exist in Georgian traditional music).587 So why was the second sharp added to the key signature? One possibility revolves around a problem created by the addition of the F# in the second measure of the rough

586 The authorship of manuscript NCM Q-671 is also uncertain. This is a good copy manuscript (written in pen) of liturgy chants that seem to have been collated from various rough draft sources. The chant ts‘mindao ghmerto was copied from a rough manuscript written by Pilimon Koridze from Ant‘on Dumbadze in the province of Guria in 1893 (NCM Q-685), but other chants seem to have been copied from other sources such as manuscript NCM Q-666, which is a collection of Koridze transcriptions notated in 1885.

587 The chord formed by harmonizing a melody note with intervals of a fifth and ninth below is only heard as two perfect fifth intervals, and is common in folk and liturgical music of West Georgia, especially that from the province of Guria. Sometimes, entire phrases are sung in parallel fifths and ninths. See, for example, scores of the 1966 recordings of Art‘en Erkomaishvili, published in notation in the following volume: Shugliashvili, ed., Kartuli saek‘lesio galoba, shemokmedis sk‘ola... (2006).
draft (Figure 78). With only one sharp, a tritone interval occurs between the lower voice parts as the middle voice descends to an F# above the C in the bass voice. A hastily added C# temporarily resolves the tritone, but causes widespread problems elsewhere.

**Figure 80.** *Ts’mindao ghmerto*, digital transcription (NCM Q-671: 120r)

The same issue with tritones in the first chord of the piece also occurs at the beginning of measure 9, which is also a so-called 1-5-9 chord constructed under the melodic pitch of D (Figure 80). With two sharps in the key signature, this chord also has a tritone in the lower voices where there should be an open fifth interval. But if the key signature is changed back to one sharp to resolve this issue (re-instituting the open fifth intervals between all three voices), we immediately run into the same problem in the first chord of measure 10 on the notes C-F-B. With
two sharps, we hear two open fifth chords in tempered tuning, while with just one sharp, the upper voices form a tritone interval. Further issue is found with the chord C-G-C in measures 11-12: all notes must either be natural, or sharped, in order to avoid tritone intervals. Thus, certain chords appear to require no more than one sharp (measures 1, 9, 11), while other chords require at least two sharps (measure 10), or even three sharps (measures 11, 12; here, a G# is needed to tune correctly with the C#).

Transcription in European notation is a problematic mapping of the Georgian modal scale, and must be understood as a compromised representation of Georgian liturgical music. It was extremely useful as a method of preservation, but for modern performers, it must be understood as flawed in certain respects. Knowledge of the Georgian modal scale is required if it is to be accurately interpreted by scholars and performers. As discussed in this example (Figure 80), Koridze was unable to resolve the incongruency of hearing open fourth and fifth intervals but having no way to notate them.

### 7.2.3 Issues with Tritones

Without adding chromatic accidentals, tritones were unavoidable in the transcription of Georgian chant to European staff notation. Ultimately, he was forced to compromise, writing tritones in places that best seemed to approximate the natural tuning, and leaving further interpretation open to singers who understood the correct way to modify the written transcriptions for accurate tuning in performance. In this way, the transcription of Georgian chant was like any other notated sound: the interpreter must know the conventions of the music that inhere.

The chant, *ts’mindao ghmerto* [Holy God], was published in 1895 at the Sharadze & Friends press in Tbilisi (Figure 81). Close scrutiny reveals some changes from the original sources, such as the inclusion of just one sharp in the key signature. As discussed, the omission of any sharps in the rough draft, and the inclusion of two sharps in the good copy were both problematic for the correct tuning of consonant chords in the chant. The removal of the C# allows the chant to begin on a consonant chord instead of on the interval of a diminished ninth.

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588 *Kartuli galoba: Lit’urgia Ioane Okrop’irisa* [Georgian chant: liturgy of St. John Chrysostom], Vol. 1, Transcribed and compiled by Pilimon Koridze, as chanted by Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze, Razhden Khundadze, Ivliane Ts’ereteli, and Ant’on Dumbadze (Tbilisi, M. Sharadze & Friends Press, 1895), 57.
(though it does not solve the awkward chord in measure 10). A subtle but significant change occurs in the first beat of measure 2, where the bass voice has been changed from the pitch C to the pitch D. This change avoids a tritone between C and F# in the lower two voices, one of the problem chords discussed in the context of the rough draft (Figure 78).\(^{589}\) Thus the published version of *ts’mindao ghmerto* solves some of the transcription issues seen in the key signatures of the earlier written drafts.

Figure 81. *Ts’mindao ghmerto*, Sharadze & Friends Press, 1895

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\(^{589}\) Other edits to the published version are small changes in the lower two voice parts that seem to resolve some of the transcription issues discussed here. Ekvtime (Est’at’e) K’ereselidze was one of the primary setters of music type and a partner at the press, and he very likely had a role in helping to proof and edit the first drafts of the chantbook.
7.3 Analysis: *Isaia mkh’iarul* [Rejoice, O Isaiah]

Similar issues with non-tempered tuning are evident in the transcriptions of the chant *isaia mkh’iarul* [Rejoice, O Isaiah], the ninth canticle of the liturgy of matrimony. The chant was first notated by Pilimon Koridze while engaged in the two-year Kutaisi transcription project of 1885-1886. In this section we present a number of stages of transcription, copying, editing, and publication that describe further struggles to accommodate the limitations of European staff notation with the nuances of Georgian modal tuning.

7.3.1 The Koridze variant

For the initial rough-draft transcription of *isaia mkh’iarul* (Figure 82), Koridze refrained from committing to a key signature in the transcription of the first voice, possibly because he could not hear a clear placement of a half-step in the rising tetrachord A-D in the melody voice (again, Georgian tuning does not include half-step intervals). A recording of this chant made in 1967 by the French ethnomusicologist, Yvette Grimaud, preserves the original tuning of the chant, giving some insight into the challenges Koridze struggled with in transcribing the Georgian scale (refer to Track #6, Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc). In the recording, the melody voice sings the first three intervals—A-B, B-C, and C-D—with intervals approximately 160 cents apart.

Koridze commits to a key signature only when notating the accompanying voice parts, marking three sharps at the beginning of the middle voice (circled, Figure 82). The need to define the key signature seems to have arisen when notating the middle voice in measures 1 and 2. In measure 1, pitch class F must tune as a neutral third between the outer voices (triad A-F-D: measure 1), and at the beginning of measure 2, as a perfect fifth below pitch C in the top voice (measure 2). While a key signature with zero sharps would accommodate these two tuning needs, Koridze chose three sharps. He chose this key signature because the top voice rose to what

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590 The project was financed by Bishop Gabriel (Kikodze) and the diocese of Imereti (see details in the section, 5.5 Kutaisi Transcription Project, 1885-1886). Pilimon Koridze transcribed more than 500 chants from the singers Razhden Khundadze, Ant’ on Dumbadze, Dimit’ ri Ch’ alaganidze, and Ivliane Ts’ ereteli.

591 Twentieth century recordings of rural Georgian folk choirs offer excellent source material for the study of liturgical tuning as their performance practice, held in oral tradition only, closely matches the few recordings of liturgical chant that survive. Even today, certain village singers in rural Georgia retain an inherited music tradition that includes the non-tempered tuning of folk songs and select chants.
sounded like a C# in the beginning of measure 2, thus forcing him to choose a key signature that included at least C# and F#. To avoid a tritone between C-G-C in measure 2, it also made sense to add a sharp to pitch class G.

**Figure 82. Isaia mkhiarul, Pilimon Koridze rough draft (Q-666: 453)**

![Figure 82. Isaia mkhiarul, Pilimon Koridze rough draft (Q-666: 453)](image)

### 7.3.2 The P'at'arava Variant

A slightly different variant of *isaia mkhiarul* was transcribed in the 1930s from the master chanter, Dimit’ri P’at’arava, a student of Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze (one of the chanters prompting for Koridze in 1883). In this transcription (Figure 83), the key signature of one sharp differs significantly from the key of three sharps seen in the Koridze rough draft of *isaia mkhiarul* (Figure 82). The prevalence of the pitch classes D-G-C together (the so-called 1-5-9 chord), which must tune as two perfect fifths, suggests that the key signature with just one sharp is untenable. Quickly, the transcriber (or editor) recognizes this issue, adding a C# in the top

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592 The transcription was made by Mamia P’at’arava (son of Dimit’ri P’at’arava) in the 1940s and was first published in 2003. I am grateful to Malkhaz Erkvanidze for access to the original transcriptions, which are held in his private collection.
voice at the beginning of measure 2. To hear this chant, refer to Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Tracks #5, #6, and #7.

**Figure 83.** *Isaia mkhiarul*, Dimit’ri P’at’arava (1940s, private collection)

The first issue with a key signature of one sharp, as noticed by a later editor (who added C#s), occurs in the chord C-F-B (beat one, measure 2). The held pitch of F in the middle voice must tune as a fifth interval below melodic C, thus requiring either sharps or naturals for both C and F. The bass voice sings a ninth below the melody (pitch B), thus suggesting that both upper voices must be sharped in order to maintain the correct open fifth tuning between all three voice parts (otherwise, with a C in the upper voice, and a B in the lowest voice, the chord remains diminished with a tritone between the lower two voice parts). P’at’arava almost certainly did not sing tritones in the first substantive consonant chord of the chant, thus such intervals must be understood as technical errors as authors attempted to reconcile Georgian tuning with European notation.

A later editor of the P’at’arava transcription tried to solve this tuning irregularity by adding sharps in the outer voice parts (edits appear in the published version of the chant by Malkhaz Erkvanidze in 2003—Figure 84). In the published variant, Erkvanidze adds a sharp to pitch class C in both of the outer voices in measure 1. However, the key signature including C#/ immediately presents new problems, as the next chord (beat three, measure 2), is also supposed
to tune with two perfect fifths in the chord D-G-C. To accommodate this, the editor adds a natural sign to the C in the lowest voice (beat 1, measure 2).

**Figure 84. Isaia mkhiarul, Dimit’ri P’at’arava (publ. 2003)**

This change results in a chromatic bass-voice movement that proceeds from D, C#, B, to C ⁷/₄ (measures 1-2). This is entirely unnatural in traditional performance practice, because of the different half-step intervals. The editor’s use of what amounts to musical ficta in this case is misleading, and only justifiable when understood in the context of their attempt to avoid notating tritones. In Georgian tuning, all iterations of the pitch C in measures 1-2 would have sounded the same. How is this possible?

### 7.3.3 A Hypothetical Model of the Georgian Liturgical Scale

One way to understand the tuning of this piece is to picture a grid of 3/4 step intervals. In the accompanying graphic (Figure 85), the right hand column represents an approximation of the Georgian equal-spaced scale; the left hand column shows a diatonic scale in equal-tempered tuning. One way to think of the practical realization of this scale, which is always performed in three-voiced harmony, is that each pitch remains relative to the top-voice melody. In this way, each pitch is not a fixed frequency, but rather a harmonizing interval that is relative to the other pitches in a three-voiced context (especially the melody). If the singer of the melodic voice
'modulates' to a new tonal center (this concept is disputed), or simply goes 'out of tune', the lower two voices must also shift their tonal center in order to continue tuning appropriately.\textsuperscript{593}

\textbf{Figure 85. Tuning graphic}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c|c|c}
\hline
E Mixolydian Scale & Georgian E Scale \\
Equal Tempered Tuning & Theoretical Tuning \\
\hline
E & E \\
D & D \\
C# & C# \\
B & B \\
A & A \\
G# & G# \\
F# & F# \\
E & E \\
D & D \\
C# & C# \\
B & B \\
A & A \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{593} While the Georgian scale is composed of discrete intervals of approximately 170 cents, recordings of chanters suggest that microtunal modulations do occur. I hypothesize that such modulations are initiated by the singer of the top voice melody, while the harmony singers adjust their tuning to the top voice.
Note that three sharps are marked here to mirror the chant example under discussion, *isaia mkhiarul*, while in reality, there is no distinction between C♯ and C# in the Georgian liturgical scale, are sounded as the same pitch. As the graphic shows, pitch class C# in the Georgian scale is far more neutral (lower) than pitch class C# in tempered tuning. The same can be said of pitch class G#. These positions in the scale—intervals of a third and sixth below the top voice, respectively—are typically neutral in their tuning, relative to a tempered scale. This neutral tuning has a particular advantage: it allows these pitch classes to tune in fifths and avoid tritone intervals. For example, note the interval relationship of pitch classes D and G# (a tritone in tempered tuning). In the Georgian liturgical scale, a raised D in the melody and a significantly lowered G# in one or both of the lower voice parts allow a chord with these two pitches to sound like a fifth rather than a tritone.\(^{594}\)

Returning to the discussion of the P’at’arava variant of *isaia mkhiarul*, let us consider how the sounded Georgian scale influenced the transcription of this chant. The raised C♯ in the top voice will tune as a fifth above a raised F♯ in the middle voice and a ninth above the stable B in the bass voice (Figure 83, measure 2). For the following chord, D-G-C, the entire chord is shifted up 3/4 step, thus also tuning as two open fifth intervals (Figure 83, third beat, measure 2). While the notated chant published in 2003 forces bass singers to sing both C# and C♯ in the opening two bars of the chant, in reality these two pitches are one and the same in Georgian traditional tuning.

### 7.3.4 Emending the Koridze Variant of *isaia mkhiarul*

In the Koridze transcription of the chant, *isaia mkhiarul*, it is possible to observe an evolution of emendation through several drafts. The close study of several corrections in the bass voice reveals an interesting chronology of the transmission of this chant as it was recopied and edited in preparation for publication. Four documents come into the discussion: the rough draft, two good copies, and the publication of the chant in 1901.

\(^{594}\) In my opinion, a passing chord with pitches D and G# will have a less than Pythagorean tuning of the fifth. But in a cadence, the lower voices will tune precisely a Pythagorean fifth below the melody. Empirical research is necessary to verify these observations.
The initial editing of *isaia mkhiarul* occurred not in the rough draft of the chant (Q-666, Figure 82), but in the good copy prepared by Pilimon Koridze (Q-677, Figure 86).\(^{595}\) These corrections were then transferred back into the rough draft in pen (measure 6, Figure 82) and later somewhat dubiously copied into a third manuscript in pen (Q-671, Figure 87).\(^{596}\) The author of manuscript Q-671 is not known, but it may have been a young Ekvtime K’ereselidze. Evidence that the author of this second good copy did not have access to the Koridze good copy (Figure 87, Q-671) can be deduced from differences between the two good copies of the chant. For example, a mistake in beat one of the top voice in manuscript Q-677 was not copied into manuscript Q-671 (boxed, Figure 86). Also, instead of three different possible variations for the bass voice (on pitches G, D, or low G), the unknown copier of Q-671 erroneously merged two of

\(^{595}\) Pilimon Koridze, manuscript Q-677 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1886), 98r.
\(^{596}\) Unknown scribe, manuscript Q-671 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 59.
the variants together, creating an uncharacteristic bass line that includes rapid intervallic jumps (boxed, measure 7, Figure 87).\textsuperscript{597}

**Figure 87. Isaia mkhiarul, unknown copier, good copy (Q-671: 59)**

Besides this particular edit, the rough draft remains un-corrected. However, an “X” mark above the melody voice in measure 12 suggests that further editing was intended. Indeed, the Koridze good copy (manuscript Q-677) shows signs of extensive editing especially in the bass voice precisely at measure 12. When these transcriptions were finally passed through the censors

\textsuperscript{597} The presence of five eighth notes in a 2/4 bar (measure 7, Figure 87) also suggests that the copier of manuscript Q-671 was somewhat confused about European notation in general, and was therefore not Pilimon Koridze, an expert in staff notation.
in Tbilisi and arrived at press in 1895, they went through yet another editing process which would further complicate the choice of key signature and the natural tuning of consonant chords. The edits measures 11-15 of Q-677 were incorporated into the variant of *isaia mkhiaurul* published by the Sharadze & Friends Press in 1901 (boxed, measures 11-15, Figure 88). Compare this corrected bass line to the uncorrected variant retained in Q-671, which was clearly not the source of the published chant (boxed, measures 11-15, Figure 87).

For some reason, the editors of the published *isaia mkhiaurul* decided to change the key signature yet again (from three sharps to two sharps). This change did not present as many tuning problems as it would have in the P’at’arava variant (as discussed previously), because the first chord of measure 3 is not harmonized with two open fifth chords (as in the P’at’arava variant, see Figure 84). However, problems begin in measure 16 where the chord, C-G-C is held at the beginning of the third phrase for nearly six beats (boxed, measure 16, Figure 88). With an untenable key signature of only two sharps, this chord is heard as an excruciating double tritone (C#-G-C#). The three sharps in the rough draft avoid this particular issue with a G# in the key signature.

These aspects of emendation at the publishing level are further markers of an evolving process of transcription, adaptation, and editing that continue to shape the preservation of chant in its written form even into the present era. Thorough study of the Georgian tuning system, as evidenced in audio recordings and through the transmission and emendation of chant notation, is vital for the correct interpretation of written chant sources. The failure to properly understand the Georgian tuning system will result in performances of bizarre chords (especially tritones) in equal-tempered tuning that take away from the beauty of the original chant.

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598 *Kartuli galoba: sagalobelni p’irvel shets’irulisa, Vasil didisa, mghvdlis k’urtkhevisa da korts’inebisa* [Chants of the First Martyr, Basil the Great, the ordination of priests, and weddings], Vol. No. 2., Transcribed and compiled by Pilimon Koridze, as chanted by Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze, Razhen Khundadze, Ivliane Ts’ereteli, and Ant’on Dumbadze (Tbilisi: M. Sharadze & Friends Press, 1901), 65.
7.4 Key Signature Debate: *Romelni kerubimta* [Let us, the Cherubim]

In 1893, Maksime Sharadze and Ekvtime K’ereselidze commissioned Pilimon Koridze to a new transcription project in the name of the M. Sharadze & Friends Press. For this particular project, they specifically requested the transcription of the liturgy chants in simple style (among other chant genres) in order to respond to criticism that the former transcriptions recorded only ornamental style chant variants. After working for two years with the great master chanter Ant’on Dumbadze, Pilimon Koridze had produced nearly a thousand new chant transcriptions,
including one that is the subject of the current discussion on choice of key signatures (for more on the history of that transcription project, see the section, 6.2 The Dumbadze Transcription Project, 1893).

7.4.1 The Dumbadze Variant (1893)

The opening two measures of the Dumbadze (simple style) variant of romelni kerubimta [Let us, the Cherubim] provide an accessible case study for a discussion on key signature (for an image of the original transcription, see Figure 63; for ease of comparison, see digital transcription, Figure 89).\footnote{The original transcription is located in manuscript Q-685 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1893), 135v.} One of the first peculiarities of this transcription is the unusual chord choice. Despite the request to notate the simplest variant of the chant, the first chord starts with a whole tone dissonance between the upper voice parts, with a full octave separating the outer voices (pitches B-A-B). The first chord of measure 2 likewise prioritizes a whole-tone interval, despite the large intervallic leap necessitated by the middle voice from pitch class F to C. The approach to measure 3 is curious in that the bass voice, instead of continuing the octave harmonization of the previous two measures, descends to form a ninth interval below the melody voice, forming a chord on pitches D-G-C (first beat, measure 3, Figure 89).

To contemporary students of East Georgian chant, or even the nearby Gelati Monastery School of chant in West Georgia (not to mention the perspective of music theorists attempting to understand Georgian liturgical harmonization), these chord choices would have seemed unusual. Despite their unique qualities, however, Ant'on Dumbadze considered these chords to be simple: indeed, this variant of the chant romelni kerubimta was transcribed at the specific request to notate the simple style repertory of the Shemokmedi Monastery in the Guria region. Gurian regional folk and liturgical polyphony include the so-called 5-4-1 chord (B-A-E), the 8-7-1 chord (B-A-B), the 9-5-1 chord (B-E-A), and others (see the section, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison).

These signature chords have now become familiar to modern students of Georgian chant as belonging to the Shemokmedi School of chant. Such 'signatures' could be even more specific, however. A telltale ornament identifying a chant by Ant'on Dumbadze, for example, is the ‘eighth-note dip’ used to anticipate the final note of a descending motive. Such dips occur on the
‘strong beat’ of a measure (beats 1 and 3) throughout the Dumbadze transcriptions. Here, they can be seen in the melodic voice in measures 5 and 12, and the middle voice in measures 1 and 7 (circled, Figure 89).

**Figure 89. Romelni kerubimta, Ant’ on Dumbadze (1893), digital transcription**
The presence of chords that feature whole-tone intervals presents a unique set of challenges for choosing an appropriate key signature in European notation. Half-step intervals within chords must be avoided even more than tritone intervals. Let’s consider Koridze’s choice of three flats for this transcription (Figure 89). It is a useful key especially for the first couple of bars, as half-tone dissonances can be avoided between chords containing pitches B-A (first beat, measure 1) or pitches D-C (first beat, measure 2), while maintaining open fifth chords throughout. Problems start occurring at the end of measure 3, with a notated tritone interval between Ab in the middle voice and D in the lowest voice, a harbinger of major problems ahead as the first phrase cadence also ends on pitches A-D in measure 8 (boxed, Figure 89).

As discussed in previous sections, tritone intervals did not occur in Georgian traditional tuning. Even if some scholars consider that intervals of a fifth in certain contexts may be tuned at less than a perfect fifth (this is a subject of considerable debate), it is clear that cadences were not such a location. More than 95% of medial cadences in Georgian liturgical chant resolve to the interval of an open fifth, which in all recordings is tuned as a Pythagorean fifth. That Koridze neglected to change his key signature to reflect a perfect fifth in the cadence, arguably the most critical place to define the tuning of the piece, leads us to wonder if he was in fact playing all of these passages on his portable fortepiano, or if this oversight was simply the product of an expedited transcription process.

7.4.2 Order of Transcription

From analysis of dozens of Koridze rough drafts, the following picture emerges: Koridze transcribed the top voice melody first, and in so doing, he chose a key signature that he felt most closely approximated the tonality of the melody. Later, when transcribing the lower voice parts, he modified the key signature to accommodate unusual chord placements, but did spend an inordinate amount of time trying to figure out the best key signature. For the transcription of the chant, *romelni kerubimta*, he must have heard the rising melody (B-C-D) ascend by two whole-step intervals, thus requiring a Bb on the starting pitch. Later, when the second voice begins at

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600 Open fifth chords occur between pitches B-E (second beat, measure 1), pitches C-F (third beat, measure 1), pitches E-A (fourth beat, measure 2), or pitches D-G and pitches G-C (first beat, measure 3).

601 By ‘perfect fifth’, I am implying the Pythagorean tuning, a ratio of 3:2 on the monochord.
the interval of a whole-step lower than the first voice on pitch class A, this pitch also necessitated a flat in order to avoid a half-tone interval in the starting chord of the chant.

Looking closely at the key signature of the Dumbadze rough draft of the chant, *romelni kerubimta* (measure 1, Figure 63), one can see that the flat signs for pitches Eb and Ab are slightly darker than the flat sign for pitch Bb. They are also squeezed into place, suggesting that they were added later than the initial single flat sign in the key signature. Further evidence of this later emendation is visible in the spacing of the key signature and the first noteheads. To accommodate the space used by the additional flats in the key signature, the first note of the top voice was erased and rewritten somewhat to the right (maintaining the same pitch), a reflection of a perfectionistic and subconscious act to maintain the correct spacing between key signature and initial notehead (many musicians will be able to relate to this type of spatial perfectionism). It is clear from these observations that Koridze edited his rough drafts before they went to publication (he may have received assistance from Ekvtime K’ereselidze, the primary person responsible for setting musical type at the press).

### 7.4.3 The Sharadze Published Version

The Dumbadze variant of the cherubic hymn, *romelni kerubimta*, was published in 1895 by the Sharadze & Friends Press. The publication shows several changes to the variants previously examined, notably a change of key signature to two flats (Figure 90). This key signature change presents an elegant solution to several of the issues discussed thus far. For example, pitch class A now tunes as a perfect fifth with pitch class D in measure 3 and, critically, in the cadence in measure 8. To bypass the half-tone dissonance that might occur between the upper voices with Bb and A, a single Ab accidental is placed in the middle voice (with A re-established in the middle voice in measure 2). While a simple solution for these problem spots, this key signature still does not address the presence of a number of tritone intervals, and a potentially phrygian sounding mode surrounding cadences on pitches A-D.

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603 With A now in the key signature, tritones reappear between Eb-A (fourth beat, measure 2) and A-Eb (fourth beat, measure 7). Potentially, cadences would also sound phrygian, if voice-leading dictated that pitch class Bb resolve to A, and/or pitch class Eb resolve to D. In this variant, however, the cadential approaches are rising (G to A, and C to D respectively), obfuscating this particular concern.
7.4.4 Mixolydian Prioritization as Editing Technique

Malkhaz Erkvanidze, a chant pedagogue who is also the primary editor of the official published chantbook series for the Georgian Patriarchate, considers these and other factors when editing the original transcriptions for republication. In general, he attempts to find the best compromise between two non-overlapping systems: European notation and Georgian traditional tuning (for more on this process, see: 7.1 Georgian Traditional Tuning). His process involves identifying the 'chanting' pitch of the chant (or phrase) in the top voice, and then choosing a key signature that represents a mixolydian scale based on that pitch.604

604 Malkhaz Erkvanidze, interview, 2007. Mixolydian scales, he argues, most closely resemble the Georgian tuning system and present the least number of problems for the editor. Furthermore, when dealing with European notation, mixolydian keys are useful for transcribing Georgian chant because the tritone intervals are displaced to the 3rd and 7th degrees of the scale, where they typically do not interfere with cadence pitches, or starting chords. But he admits that it is not a perfect system, and still very much a compromise to the natural Georgian scale.
To find the mixolydian scale for *romelni kerubimta*, one must identify the primary pitch of the melody (often one of the highest), around which the melody rotates and the other voices harmonize. In the first two phrases of *romelni kerubimta*, this dominant pitch is D, which according to the mixolydian-prioritization model would require a key signature reflecting a D-mixolydian scale (one sharp). Such a key signature solves several problems discussed this section, but not necessarily all of them. Let’s examine the issues to see if there isn’t a better solution for the chant under discussion.

To review, the melody was originally notated with one flat because of an initial rising gesture that included (what sounded like) two whole steps: Bb–C–D. When the other two voice parts were transcribed, Koridze added two additional flats (Ab and Eb) to accommodate whole-tone dissonances between the upper voice parts in Gurian regional harmony. After review for publication in 1895, the key signature was changed again to two flats (with a single Ab accidental inserted in the middle voice in the first measure). Were the chant to be published by the press of the Georgian Patriarchate, editors employing the concept of mixolydian-prioritization would likely emend the key signature to one sharp, eliminating tuning issues surrounding cadences on the pitch classes A–D. But this solution also contains problems. For example, a key signature including one sharp would not account for the unique set of chords found in the first measure (including a blatant interval of a tritone in the first measure between pitch classes C and F#), or allow for the two rising whole steps in the melodic voice that initially guided Koridze’s decision to choose a key signature with three flats.

Experimenting with the process of mixolydian-prioritization yields a modified key signature for the Dumbadze variant of the chant, *romelni kerubimta* (Figure 91). One possible solution to the problem of hearing two rising whole steps in the melody of the first measure (but being unable to notate it with a suitable key signature) is addressed with the following suggestion: by retaining the essential elements of the original key signature (three flats) for the first measure, the melodic voice is allowed to rise by two whole steps from pitches Bb to C to D (marked in red, Figure 91).\(^{605}\) The middle voice can tune to these fundamental melodic pitches, with Ab–F–C respectively, without singing the intervals of either a half-tone or a tritone. The key

\(^{605}\) This solution is only one suggestion (hence the ficta in parentheses), as singing the first measure in D-mixolydian is also not a bad option. But by singing B to C to D in the initial melody, the correct interval relationships are changed from the traditional tuning, which we know Koridze heard because of his initial choice of key signature.
of D-mixolydian is established with A ♯ in the middle voice and B ♯ in the top voice starting in measure 2.

**Figure 91. Romelni kerubimta, Ant’on Dumbadze (1893), alternate key signature**

The key of D-mixolydian, while a good choice of key signature for the Dumbadze variant of romelni kerubimta, still requires ficta changes to decrease instances of tritone intervals that
occur between pitch classes of C and F. If such chords occur in passing tones as a process of ornamentation, it is not such a big deal. But where C and F occur in ‘strong beat’ chords, it is necessary to change F# to F♮ in the middle voice in order to tune as a perfect fifth below C ♭ (boxed, Figure 91). In measures 2 and 9, the bass voice must also sing F ♭ in order to tune to C ♭ in the top voice. Conversely, where pitch classes B and F occur together, F must be written as F# in order to tune as a fifth above B (for example, in measures 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, and 14, Figure 91). As explained elsewhere, F# to F♮ tune as the same pitch in Georgian traditional tuning (the discussion here is only about the best representation of Georgian chant in European notation).606

7.4.5 Retrospective on Key Signature Choices

To speculate further on the issue of representation in key signature, let us assume that Pilimon Koridze knew that Ant’on Dumbadze was not singing in equal-tempered tuning, but for some reason chose to ignore this reality. Certainly, he did not pay much attention to notating key signatures, instead focusing on the transcription of pitch and rhythm. Indeed, he hardly ever bothered himself with notating additional accidentals, modulations, or key changes (even though there is evidence to suggest that they occurred), and rarely even indicated the key signature for the second or third voices or any subsequent staves besides the very first.

While the use of such shorthand is understandable for any musician transcribing difficult music at speed, one can only surmise that he did not think much of the difference in tuning, since complaints about discrepancies are almost non-existent in his various writings.607 Still, he must have realized, as he played his transcriptions back to himself on the forte-piano, that the equal-tempered version of the chant emitting from the piano was only an approximation of the traditional tuning sung by his interlocutors.

In many places in the transcription record, he does make small changes to the key signatures, or signal that one or more sharps be added or omitted for certain chants. Perhaps he considered it just another aspect of the challenge of notating traditional chant, one of the hurdles

606 For more on Georgian traditional tuning, see the section, 7.1 Georgian Traditional Tuning. A chart comparing Georgian tuning with equal-tempered tuning appears in Figure 85.
607 Magda Sukhiashvili, who authored a biography on Pilimon Koridze, confirmed that she is unaware of any personal writing from Pilimon Koridze that might describe his observations of the Georgian tuning system.
that had prevented success by so many contemporary musicians in Tbilisi (such as Mikheil Mach’ avariani), but one that he had managed to understand and overcome in his own transcription work. Perhaps he understood that, true to the traditional transmission of Georgian chant, the tuning of the lower two voices must be derived from the canonical melodic voice. In oral tradition, if the singer of the melodic voice finished a phrase by singing the pitch Ab, for example, the lower voices were required to react by singing a perfect fifth below. All three voices supported the tuning of the chant, but if the melody voice veared sharp or flat, the rest of the choir followed suit in order to maintain the integrity of the harmony.

7.5 Chapter Conclusion

As modern interpreters of the Georgian chant transcriptions, we must attempt not to view the transcriptions as an exact representation of the original music, especially when it comes to issues of tuning. European notation was essential to the preservation of Georgian chant, but it was also a deeply flawed medium for the accurate transcription of the Georgian tuning system, and as such, must be understood as a filter through which one must squint to gain any sort of sense of what the original music must have sounded like. Failure to study the original tuning system is particularly problematic both for those attempting to conduct Western tonal analysis, and for editors wishing to revise the key signatures of original transcriptions for use in new chant publications.

The challenge of interpreting the chant transcriptions is at the heart of the issues discussed in this chapter. What did Georgian chant really sound like, and to what degree can we determine this from the transcriptions? Clearly, a hermeneutical process is necessary. But this challenge is associated with interpreting any musical notation and is a fundamental musicological problem. At the heart of the dilemma concerning Georgian chant is the elusive intonation of the traditional singers, and hence, the elusive sound of Georgian chant.
Chapter VIII: Completing the Transcriptions (1912-1915)

The incomplete transcriptions of chants by Ant'on Dumbadze and Arist'ovle Kutateladze between 1893 and 1905 became the top priority for those involved in the preservation of Georgian chant. Ekvtime K'ereselidze, who inherited the Koridze transcriptions after the dissolution of the M. Sharadze & Friends Press in 1910, hired several singers to help him harmonize these transcriptions with the goal of publishing them in a future incarnation of the Press. Though he would never accomplish the goal of publishing the completed transcriptions, he was able to complete the harmonization of more than one thousand chant melodies, working with chanters Razhdene Khundadze and Ivliane Nik'oladze between the years 1912-1915. This process was not without its difficulties, however, as disagreements on ornamental style written into the margins of the working manuscripts attest. It is these disagreements, however, that offer insight into the various aesthetic preferences of the last of the master chanters in the early twentieth century.

8.1 The Dissolution of the Press

For more than two decades, the motivational energy (and practical financing) behind the transcription of Georgian chant had revolved around the offices of the M. Sharadze & Friends Press in Tbilisi. But with the untimely death of chief publisher and founding director Maksime Sharadze in 1908, it was not long before the momentum of the press ground to a halt due to friction between the remaining partners. This conflict resulted in the dissolution of the press in 1910, and the cessation of all activities related to the printing of chantbooks, or financial support of further transcription projects.

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608 Between the years 1891-1910, the press operated under several different names, though the founding partners remained the same. See section, 6.3 The M. Sharadze & Friends Press.
8.1.1 Conflict of Partners: K'ereselidze and Losaberidze

The heart of the conflict apparently involved the financial expenses of the chant transcription projects. Ekvtime (Est'at'e) K'ereselidze, one partner at the press, was convinced that continuing to publish church chant remained a priority for the press, following Sharadze’s ideological mission to preserve and rebuild the practice of Georgian chant. But another partner at the press, Sp'iridon Losaberidze, had no interest in pursuing what he perceived to be an unprofitable and time-consuming venture. According to K’ereselidze,

We were printing a big chantbook of Celebration Hymns, which was to number more than 864 pages, but because of the death of Sharadze we unfortunately could not finish it. I had the printed pages in boxes… Sp'iridon was really mad about this, saying, ‘I’m not printing those, no one buys them anyway!’

The effort and expense of preparing and publishing chantbooks was not an economically sound project. But for Sharadze and K’ereselidze, that had never been the point. For them, the press was merely a means to advance their ideological mission, and for years the transcription and publication of chant had been their primary objective.

According to K'ereselidze's memoir, Losaberidze was a character of such low moral conscience that after Sharadze’s death, he had held a special celebratory feast in anticipation of taking control of the entire operation of the press. His plan to force K’ereselidze out of the business began immediately as he sought out secret consultations with lawyers and began the surreptitious collection of legal documents associated with the collective ownership of the press as established by Sharadze in 1891.

K’ereselidze remained oblivious of these machinations, he writes, until a co-worker found a conspiratorial note from a lawyer. The situation was spiraling out of his control when a priest from Kutaisi, Fr. Svimon Ch’edlidze, offered his help. He introduced himself as a newspaper editor and admirer of the Sharadze press, and suggested that K’ereselidze come to Kutaisi to join his brotherhood of like-minded ‘sons-of-the-nation’ to help publish and preserve chant. In desperate need of assistance, K’ereselidze was easily convinced.

610 For this and what follows, see K'ereselidze, Kartul saek'lesio sagaloblebis not'ebze (trans. T'ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 32.
611 ibid.: 32-36.
8.1.2 Stolen Chantbooks

In 1910, with the capable assistance of Fr. Svimon Ch’edlidze, K’ereselidze was able to initiate the dissolution of the ownership of the Press and the division of assets between the remaining two partners. According to K’ereselidze, Losaberidze was incensed at this sudden move, as he had plotted to take control of the entire press. The night before the planned division, Losaberidze stole the most valuable tools, but even more insidiously, he contested the ownership of the Koridze transcriptions. According to the K’ereselidze memoir, our only source for these events, Losaberidze was not above stealing for spite.

In the night, Sp’iridon stole all the best tools and press decorations and hid them. With the witnesses the next day, Sp’iridon went first to the books of chant books and said, ‘these must be divided first.’ I replied, saying, ‘these cannot be divided, they must be together. Most of these chantbooks are incomplete, and depend upon each other to be completed. They cannot be divided,’ I said. Sp’iridon did not agree, and by the rule, we had to divide the chantbooks. I was so heartbroken, I could only write down the names of the chants. When I asked to borrow the books to copy the chants, I was refused. No one believed or understood me.

The attending lawyers were bound to divide all assets equally, so Losaberidze removed nine large volumes of original transcriptions, those that had notated by Koridze from the late master chanters Arist’ovle Kutateladze and Ant’on Dumbadze between the years 1903-1908. This action was all the more devastating, knowing Losaberidze’s callous and unsympathetic attitude towards the chant transcription projects.

When K’ereselidze discovered the location of the missing manuscripts (on the advice, of a lawyer, Losaberidze apparently donated them to the Tbilisi University Museum), he went there immediately to see if they had been damaged. He was overjoyed that they were all there,

612 ibid.: 37-40. According to the K’ereselidze memoir, a Fr. Svimon Ch’edlidze introduced himself as the editor of the weekly publication, “Brillant Works,” in Kutaisi. As a representative of the “Brotherhood of St. George”, which supposedly included all of the priests of West Georgia, he wished to invite K’ereselidze to be their feature publisher of chantbooks, sermons, Orthodox calendars, and other pamphlets for the Orthodox society of West Georgia. He convinced K’ereselidze to relocate to Kutaisi with the press, and become their new printer. K’ereselidze agreed, on condition that Fr. Ch’edlidze assist him from cutting ties with Sp’iridon Losaberidze. In 1910, K’ereselidze’s portion of the press was shipped to Kutaisi, taking up three full train cars of equipment. But the brotherhood was fake, the entire project a lie. Furthermore, many of K’ereselidze’s belongings were never moved inside in Kutaisi, but remained outside stacked in a yard, from which thieves had stolen manuscript paper. The project to rebuild Sharadze’s dream in Kutaisi never came to fruition, and instead, K’ereselidze lost considerable money paying off debts and returning the entire press to Tbilisi.

613 ibid.: 40.
614 ibid.: 43.
615 ibid.: 44.
intact, as he feared their complete loss. He knew that these particular manuscripts needed substantial editing before publication. The rest of the assets of the M. Sharadze & Press brotherhood took several years to liquidate, but eventually, K’ereselidze would receive his share.

In 1910, K’ereselidze requested and received permission from the director of the museum, Ekvtime Taqaishvili, to recopy the nine chantbooks, a project that took one entire year (1911). This herculean effort is reflected in five large volumes of transcriptions, which are now housed in the National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi (Figure 92). It is these manuscripts that formed the basis for K’ereselidze’s next major project: the harmonization of the incomplete Koridze transcriptions.

**Figure 92.** Manuscript Q-688, National Center of Manuscripts, 1910

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616 The so-called Losaberidze manuscripts were those that included the incomplete Koridze transcriptions, where only the first voice had been notated. Sharadze and K’ereselidze had taken a calculated risk, when commissioning these transcriptions, that it would be better to notate as many chant melodies as possible from the aging masters, than fewer chants in complete three-voiced harmony. Their plan had always been to complete the harmonization of these melodies and publish the entire group together.

617 In 1915, after the sale of properties, a friend sent K’ereselidze his portion of the income, money that according to K’ereselidze, he used solely for the payment of chant harmonizations and the materials for binding chantbooks.

618 The nine volumes of chant in Losaberidze's possession wound up in the university museum and survive into the modern era as a collection titled H-154 in the National Center for Manuscripts. The collection contains the first voice transcriptions of hundreds of heirmoi, troparia, graduas, and other chants noted over several years in Tbilisi and in Ozurgeti (Guria) by Pilimon Koridze. For more on the H-154 manuscripts, see the introduction to Shugliashvili, "Rva khmis sist'ema..." (PhD diss., 2009), 18-19.

619 Five large volumes of 300-800 pages each are testament to K’ereselidze’s recopying efforts in 1910. The Koridze originals are now part of the H-154 collection, while the K’ereselidze copies can be found in manuscripts Q-683, Q-687, Q-688, Q-689, and Q-690 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts).
8.2 The Harmonization Project

In 1912, Ekvtime K’ereselidze moved to the Gelati Monastery in central Georgia (Figure 93). After the death of Maksime Sharadze, the trickery and deceit of those that wanted the assets of the press aggravated his life for nearly three years. In moving to the monastery, K’ereselidze ensured himself the peace of mind to devote himself to his true passion: Georgian chant. He committed to becoming an Orthodox monk, taking the name Ekvtime, and began to work completing the organization, harmonization, and recopying of the chant transcriptions.

Figure 93. Ekvtime K’ereselidze (1865-1944), as a novice monk c. 1912

One project weighed on his mind in particular: the harmonization of the single-voice melodies transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from master chanters Arist’ovle Kutateladze and Ant’on Dumbadze between 1903-1908. As he exclaimed in his memoir: “The very same day that I entered the monastery, I began to put the chants in order. I put the three-voiced chants together, then the ones that needed to be harmonized, I put in a different place.” In deciding to move to central Georgia, K’ereselidze placed himself in a position to hire one of the last remaining master chanters capable of helping him complete the unfinished Koridze transcriptions: Razhden Khundadze. The

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620 Nearly fifteen pages of the K’ereselidze memoir is devoted to the various intrigues that he endured at the hands of cheats surrounding him on all sides, especially Sp’iridon Losaberidze in Tbilisi, and Fr. Svimon Ch’edlidze and his associates in Kutaisi.

621 Born Est’at’e (son of Solomon) K’ereselidze, in 1912 he was tonsured a monk and given the name Ekvtime (Gk. Euthymius). He became a hierodeacon in 1913, and a priest in 1917. He was canonized a saint of the Georgian Orthodox Church in 2003, under the name Saint Ekvtime the Confessor (K’ereselidze). For his hagiography, see Zakaria Machit’adze, Lives of the Georgian Saints (Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska, 2006).

622 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek ‘lesio sagaloblebis not’ebe (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 54.
relationship was not without its personal and aesthetic differences, however, leading to a battle of words contained within the margins of some of the working manuscripts. Eventually, K’ereselidze would seek additional help to complete the harmonization project.

### 8.2.1 The Help of Razhden Khundadze

In 1912, K’ereselidze commissioned the chanter, Fr. Razhden Khundadze (Figure 94), to begin working on the harmonization of approximately one thousand unfinished chant melodies that he had copied from the original Koridze transcriptions in Tbilisi. Khundadze agreed to harmonize the Kutateladze and Dumbadze melodies for a price of one ruble per chant.

![Figure 94. Razhden Khundadze (1845-1929), c. 1920](image)

According to K’ereselidze, the project began well. After asking the chanter if there might be any composers or knowledgeable musicians willing to harmonize the thousand unfinished Koridze transcriptions, Khundadze expressed enthusiasm for the project: “Do not go looking far away! I can sing these chants quite well myself in three voices, and after writing them down, we’ll sing the parts together to make sure they fit well.”

Fr. Razhden Khundadze was a master chanter of the first order, probably the best chanter in West Georgia in 1912. He had been

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623 Following the first major transcription project of 1885-1886, in which he was one of the featured chant prompters, Razhden Khundadze (1845-1929) became a priest in the city of Kutaisi.


625 ibid.: 55.

626 Other notable West-Georgian master chanters involved in the transcription projects had since passed away, or were very old, such as Ant’on Dumbadze, Arist’ovle Kutateladze, Ivliane Ts’ereteli, and Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze. Even Pilimon Koridze had died in 1911.
hand-picked in 1885 to be a member of the group of chanters to participate in the first Koridze transcription project in Kutaisi, and commanded a repertory of thousands of chants in their most complex variants.\footnote{The transcription project was initiated by Bishop Gabriel Kikodze in the years 1885-1886, and included the master chanters Ivliane Ts'ereteli, Dimitri Ch'alaganidze, Razhden Khundadze, and Ant'on Dumbadze. Pilimon Koridze was the transcriber. See the section, 5.5 Kutaisi Transcription Project, 1885-1886.} He took pride in his work, often signing the transcriptions that he harmonized and describing his efforts. In one marginal note, he wrote:

\begin{quote}
Fr. Ekvtime, born Est'at'e K'ereselidze, had the stichera for the Matins Graduals of the Twelve Great Feastdays written in only one voice-part. I, Fr. Razhden Khundadze, harmonized them by writing the second and third voice parts. [These melodies] were learned from Simon the Cripple, sung by the late Arist'ovle Kutateladze, transcribed by Koridze, and commissioned by Ekvtime. I wrote in [Simon’s musical] style without changing it, even though it has slight differences with the modern [Gelati] style. It’s a wonderful style! —Fr. Razhden Khundadze, 1913, sixth November.\footnote{Razhden Khundadze, manuscript Q-688 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1912), 267.}
\end{quote}

Four thick manuscripts (Q-686, Q-687, Q-688, and Q-689), each containing between 300-800 pages of chant, are witness to the harmonization efforts by Khundadze.\footnote{These manuscripts contain melodies copied from the Koridze original transcriptions by Ekvtime K'ereselidze in 1910-1911. Another manuscript, Q-683, also contains chants copied by K’ereselidze in 1910, but does not show harmonizations by Khundadze.}

\subsection*{8.2.2 Preparing the Manuscripts: Zghvisa mkhetsisa}

When first copying the Koridze manuscripts in the Tbilisi Museum in 1910, K’ereselidze notated the melodies exactly as Koridze had transcribed them (see, for example, his copy of the chant \textit{zghvisa mkhetsisa} [From the belly of the whale] in Figure 95).\footnote{Manuscript Q-683 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1912), 71r.} But after a few pages, K’ereselidze started leaving two extra lines of staff notation below each copied melody, apparently intending to complete what Koridze and Sharadze had been unable to finish: the realization of the chant melodies into three-voiced harmony. K’ereselidze copied hundreds of chants in this manner, later recopying them in different working manuscripts and cross-indexing all of his efforts in long lists. For example, the heirmos \textit{zghvisa mkhetsisa} can be seen recopied in three different manuscripts in various stages of completion: Figure 95 shows his copy from the Koridze original in 1910; Figure 96 shows this melody recopied, now with two blank lines
underneath, one of which has been harmonized by another hand;\textsuperscript{631} finally Figure 97 demonstrates the manner in which the melody was realized in three-voiced harmony and edited for style.\textsuperscript{632}

\textbf{Figure 95.} \textit{Zghvisa mkhetsisa}, Ekvtime K’ereselidze

The melody of the chant \textit{zghvisa mkhetsisa} in Figure 96, copied by Ekvtime K’ereselidze, can be seen here with an accompanying second voice written by Fr. Razhden Khundadze. The harmony is characterized by parallel third intervals. In the following example (Figure 97), the same chant is harmonized in three voice parts in a separate manuscript.\textsuperscript{633} Here, the bass voice has been added, with almost every interval either an octave or a fifth interval below the melody. There are noticeable changes between the middle voice harmonization of these two transcriptions. For example, the expected cadence location was changed: where it looks to be

\textsuperscript{631} Manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1912), 35r. This chant appears to have been copied from manuscript Q-683: 71r.

\textsuperscript{632} The original variant of the chant that K’ereselidze copied, \textit{zghvisa mkhetsisa} [From the belly of the whale], can be found in the Koridze rough draft manuscript, H-154/1, No. 81 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1905), 21.

\textsuperscript{633} Manuscript Q-688 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1912), 168v. It must be noted that not many chants are duplicated three times like this. K’ereselidze attempted to keep track of where and in what condition each chant melody occurred through extensive cross-indexing. This anomaly of having the same chant in three different manuscripts presents a unique case that is useful for the present explanatory purposes.
located in beat three, measure 4 in Figure 96, it has clearly been shifted to beat 1, measure 6 in Figure 97.

**Figure 96. Zghvisa mkhetsisa, Ekvtime K’ereselidze, Razhden Khundadze**

The manuscripts reveal that by 1913, Khundadze had a strong preference for singing the simple *sada* (plain style) manner of performing chant, perhaps from his long-suffering experience teaching amateur singers.\(^{634}\) This is curious considering his mastery of the complex

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\(^{634}\) Khundadze taught chant and folk music for many years at the Patriarchate School for Ladies in Kutaisi. Later, when looking for chant students, he ran an advertisement in a Kutaisi-based newspaper offering to teach students for free if they would only commit to learning the basic structure of Georgian chant. Unfortunately, this predicament demonstrates that students were not only disinterested, but they did not demonstrate sufficient talent or fortitude to learn the entire chant repertory. This reality has been offered as one explanation for Khundadze’s preference for simple harmonizations of chant, as reflected in the K’ereselidze harmonization project described this section as well as his own abundant transcriptions housed in the National Folklore Center, Tbilisi, Georgia.
ornamental chanting style. The middle-voiced parallelisms are hardly augmented with a simple bass voice that harmonizes with intervals of either a fifth or octave below the melody. This oversimplified form of harmonization is uncharacteristic of West-Georgian chant (it is more common in the East Georgian simple style), but has come to be known in the post-Soviet revival as the "Khundadze style".

**Figure 97. Zghvisa mkhetsisa, Ekvtime K’ereselidze, Razhden Khundadze**

8.2.3 Handwriting Styles: *Isaia mkhiaurul* [Rejoice, O Isaiah]

An intriguing aspect of my study of these manuscripts has been the attempt to identify different handwriting styles. Gratefully, with practice, it has been possible to distinguish between the handwriting of K’ereselidze (writing the top-voice melody) and Razhden Khundadze (writing

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635 Razhden Khundadze was a known master-chanter, one of those selected to sing in the prestigious Kutaisi Transcription Project of 1885-1886.
the lower voice harmonizations).\textsuperscript{636} The top voice is defined by the clean straight stems in Ekvtime K’ereselidze’s studious handwriting, while the quick, confident strokes of Khundadze’s script reflect a utilitarian approach to the writing process.

Compare, for example, the first and second voices of the chant *isaia mkhiarul* [Rejoice, O Isaiah], as harmonized entirely in parallel third intervals by Razhden Khundadze (boxed, measures 5-9, Figure 98).\textsuperscript{637} In this example, careful observation shows that K’ereselidze lifts his pencil to draw the stem after the notehead in the top voice, while Khundadze in general does not lift the pencil from the page, creating both notehead and stem in the same stroke (middle voice, Figure 98). While K’ereselidze’s stems are precisely vertical, Khundadze’s quick style often allows downward stems to trail off to one direction or another. While K’ereselidze is fairly consistent with the size of his noteheads, Khundadze’s noteheads are generally small and scribbled, while his half-note duration noteheads can be overly large, as seen in the bass voice (measure 1, Figure 98).

### 8.2.4 The Problem with Parallel Thirds

Khundadze often responded to these notes, creating an interesting verbal dialogue that accompanies what we can observe through graphology and musical analysis. In one comment that was later erased but is nevertheless visible, located at the bottom of the first page of the chant *isaia mkhiarul* [Rejoice, O Isaiah], K’ereselidze wrote: “Fr. Razhden, apparently we have an ornamented version of this and various other chants… it is imperative that a simple version is written out in chords. —Ekvtime.”\textsuperscript{638} This type of request is quite common throughout the manuscripts. But other dialogues were more argumentative. K’ereselidze maintained dialogue with Khundadze throughout the harmonization project, writing instructions within the margins of the manuscripts (see, for example, Figure 99).

\textsuperscript{636} Noticing the details of the handwriting style became an important aspect of my work for this section, enabling me to identify not only the distinctive scripts of K’ereselidze and Khundadze, but also a previously undiscovered third editor, Ivliane Nik’oladze.

\textsuperscript{637} *Isaia mkhiarul* [Rejoice, O Isaiah], heirmoi for service of matrimony. Manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 76r. Note also the exact parallelisms in the second voice harmonization.

\textsuperscript{638} Ekvtime K’ereselidze, marginalia, manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 76r.
The following back-and-forth commentary on the aesthetics of ornamentation was written into the margin of one manuscript (Arrows, Figure 99). K'ereselidze begins:
Father Razhden! With all due respect and with your permission, if it would be in any way possible... for this series of chants would you mind ornamenting them in some places? Otherwise they seem to be written in a very simple style, as far as I hear it, and the second and bass voices don't seem to fit well together.\footnote{Ekvtime K’ereselidze, marginalia, manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 65r.}

Khundadze disagreed, writing directly underneath, "I checked all of these feastday chants, but found them to be written very naturally and satisfactorily. The high bass [middle voice] and the bass sound good together."\footnote{Razhden Khundadze, marginalia, manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 65r.} Such contested discussions are rare in the manuscripts, but the difference in opinion seems to have run deeper.

Clearly, K’ereselidze did not favor the harmonizations he commissioned from Khundadze. The style was so bare that K’ereselidze became irritated, suspecting laziness on the part of the master chanter, who demonstrably knew how to perform and harmonize chant at a high level considering his central role in the transcription project of 1885-1886 from which the most ornamented chants were transcribed.\footnote{See the section 5.5 Kutaisi Transcription Project, 1885-1886.} It wasn’t that K’ereselidze wanted complex ornamental variations so much as an artistic harmonization of the Kutateladze/Dumbadze melodies. It was fair to expect, he maintained, that the commissioned harmonizations at least resembled the subtle counterpoint of the Gelati monastery simple style, a qualitative expectation that was not met with the predictable parallelisms that Razhden Khundadze continued to produce.

A quick glance at the \textit{mirkma} feastday chants in question shows that the harmonization is the same as everywhere else: hundreds and hundreds of pages of parallel-third harmonization in the middle voice with fifth-octave interval harmony in the bass voice (Figure 99).\footnote{\textit{Ukmi kveqana}, manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 65r.} Curiously enough, the chant shows some signs of editing. The approach to the cadence was erased and changed in the bass voice (boxed, measure 6, Figure 99), while at least two notes in the middle voice were changed from the familiar parallel-third harmony (boxed, measure 7, Figure 99).\footnote{These changes were not immune to errors, as this example shows. The bass voice cadences on pitch class G, instead of unison A with the upper voices, as it should (circled, measure 7).}
On further inspection, these types of minor edits are widespread throughout the manuscripts under discussion.

**Figure 99. Ukmi kveqana, Q-687: 65r**

8.3 The Editing Project

More than 70% of the chants found in the manuscripts under discussion (especially Q-687, Q-688) have been edited. Even though only 5% of these can be considered a significant
change, such editing warrants a discussion. What types of musical changes were made, what motivated these changes, and who was responsible for them? These questions are explored in the following set of music examples, chosen from the manuscripts harmonized by Razhden Khundadze in 1913-1914. One might suppose that Khundadze, being a master of the oral chant tradition, edited his own work. However, three sources of evidence suggest otherwise: first, K’ereselidze’s irritation at the Khundadze harmonizations (as cited in the previous section); second, examination of the handwriting; and third, the content of the editing. Each of these elements suggests the involvement of someone else. Let’s examine a few examples.

**Figure 100. Romelman sit’yvit ararasagan, Q-688: 113v**

![](image)

### 8.3.1 Emendations

In the heirmos, *romelman sit’yvit ararasagan* (Figure 100), several emendations are visible in the second-voice which have been re-worked with simple counterpoint. In moments where the middle voice originally held notes of half-note duration, these have been erased and

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644 I consider a significant change to mean the emendation of the originally melody as transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from the master chanters, or a change to all three voice parts in for example, the number of beats to a cadence, or the cadence pitches. These elements tended to be fairly stable in the oral transmission of chant, thus changing these elements is far more significant than changes to the ornamentation or even harmonization styles. The exact percentages of chants that have been edited are only estimated here, as many of the chants that show no edits have duplicate copies in other manuscripts where they are edited, thus making an exact calculation difficult.
corrected with simple rising melodies; it happens no less than three times in this short exemplar (boxed, Figure 100). This type of edit in the middle voice is very common.

In the following example, *romelman ts’amis qopit shek’ribna* (Figure 101), one sees the same preference for a delayed rising line in the middle voice, and in this case, the cadence is also changed: where Khundadze had originally written even the cadence with parallel-third harmony in the middle voice, this has been edited for the more classical cadence type in which the middle voice descends to meet the bass voice at the interval of a fifth below the melody (boxed, Figure 101).

Figure 101. *Romelman ts’amis qopit shek’ribna*, Q-688: 112v

But not all the edits are this simple. In the chant *sighrmeta tsodvisata* (Figure 102), an entire line of parallel third intervals in the middle voice has been changed, this time somewhat awkwardly. The thirds have been replaced with a series of parallel fifth intervals (boxed, Figure 102). This particular change is surprising considering that the bulk of the editing seems to be focused on decreasing parallelism in the upper voices. But by erasing parallel third harmony, and

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647 *Sighrmeta tsodvisata*, Manuscript Q-688 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 117r. Note, the partially erased text above the staff is different than the text of this chant, showing that K’ereselidze attempted to use this melody to set the text of another (probably un-notated) heirmos text.
replacing it with parallel fifth harmony, the purpose of the editing project becomes somewhat confusing. However, parallel-fifth harmony proves to be rare in the manuscripts, suggesting that this was simply the best solution that the editor could find for this particular phrase.

**Figure 102. Sighrmeta tsodvisata, Q-688: 117r**

The next two examples demonstrate the range of emendation seen in the manuscript record, increasing in severity. For example, in the heirmos *mt’irtvelman gamoutkmelad* (Figure 103), all three voice parts have been changed instead of just the middle voice. Because this type of whole-scale change is unusual in these manuscripts, there are certain observations that can be considered significant for the current discussion. For example, in addition to the simplification of the middle voice seemingly motivated by the attempt to avoid parallel third harmonization (middle voice, measure 2, Figure 103), the melody has been changed starting in measure 3. As a result, the lower two voice parts have also been completely reharmonized, but not adeptly: the bass voice is more than typically repetitive (boxed, Figure 103).

The only edit that could be considered more drastic—than changing the melodic contour of Pilimon Koridze’s original transcription—would be to change the timing or pitch of a phrasal cadence. Just this type of change can be seen in the heirmos, *aravin ars ts’midad* (Figure 104). In this example, we see that the final cadence of the chant has been changed from pitch class E to

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648 *Mt’irtvelman gamoutkmelad ukrts’nelebisaman*, heirmos, ode 9, tone 7. Manuscript Q-688 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 151r.
pitch F, and the final cadence occurs one half-note earlier (boxed, Figure 104). In order to anticipate the change in cadence pitch, the preceding six beats in all voices have all been edited. As argued elsewhere, the number of beats in a phrase, and the cadence pitch, are two of the parameters most fundamental to the structure of Georgian chant as transmitted in oral tradition, thus making this one of the more radical edits examined thus far.

Figure 103. Mt’irtvelman gamoutkmelad, Q-688: 151r

Figure 104. Aravin ars ts’mida (Q-688, p135r)

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650 Interesting, where the text was erased, it was re-written in K’ereselidze’s hand, but the notation was not. The notation is in a different handwriting. This suggests that K’ereselidze was present at the time of the editing process.
651 Graham, “The Role of Memory...” Proceedings... (2010).
8.3.2 Handwriting Analysis

Returning to the analysis of handwriting in these manuscripts, let’s examine these examples further. As noted earlier, K’ereselidze's note stems are generally vertical (seen in the top voice), while Khundadze's often taper to the right at the bottom of descending stems (lower voice parts). K'ereselidze writes half notes with a circle and a stroke, while Khundadze writes half notes in one motion, without letting the pencil leave the page. The question is whether a third set of handwriting can be identified (I would suggest that it can). In the second measure of the chant, *romelman ts'amis* (Figure 101), for example, the emended eighth notes in the middle voice look similar to those in Khundadze’s handwriting, but the note-heads are smaller and the stems are inconsistent in direction and length. The half note that was replaced in the cadence of the middle voice, furthermore, is different from the erased version below it.

Another example is also instructional: if we look closely at the eighth note beaming in the chant, *romelman sit'qvit* (Figure 100), we see striking differences between three sets of handwriting. In the top voice, K’ereselidze’s original copy remains unedited (circled, top voice, measure 2, Figure 100). In the bass voice, Khundadze’s familiar handwriting also remains unedited: the upward stems taper left and the beam does not fully connect the two stems. Meanwhile, the middle voice has been emended in three places with beamed eighth notes. The handwriting is consistent with itself, yet different from either the K’ereselidze or Khundadze beamed eighth notes. The stems rise to the right, the beams fully connect both stems (boxed, Figure 100). Once the eye learns to see these differences, they appear everywhere in the manuscripts. In the next section we explore the probable identity of the editor of the K’ereselidze-Khundadze harmonization project.

8.4 Ivliane Nik’oladze (d. 1941)

The only identifying evidence that the K’ereselidze-Khundadze manuscripts were edited by a little-known chanter named Ivliane Nik’oladze (d. 1941), is found on page 56 in the personal memoir of Ekvtime K’ereselidze, written in 1936. But close analysis of the manuscripts

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652 The early stages of this research were first published in John A. Graham, "Ivliane Nik’oladze: the Alternate Redacteur of the Georgian Heirmoi," *Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony* (in Georgian and English) (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2012), 425-446.
suggests that Nik'oladze's role in editing the harmonizations of Razhden Khundadze was substantial. Furthermore, the fact that Ekvtime K’ereselidze commissioned these emendations, after paying Khundadze for the original harmonization work, gives us a unique window into the musical-aesthetic preferences of these figures.

The manuscripts suggest the following perspectives: for the chant teacher, Razhden Khundadze, the transcription of chant had become a tool for the pedagogy of chant to a new generation of students, an efficient means to convey the simplest method of singing the liturgy. For Ekvtime K’ereselidze, on the other hand, the transcriptions did not represent a chance to teach current students, but a chance to preserve the dying art of past generations of master chanters for future generations of scholar-practioners. The written product of the projects to harmonize, and then edit, the melodies of the last master chanters thus reflects these two divergent perspectives, helping us to understand both the complexity of the social-political reality of the period directly before the collapse of the Tsarist Empire, and the musical aesthetics of two of the last people to witness the oral transmission of Georgian liturgical chant.

### 8.4.1 Source References to Nik'oladze

In 1914, Ekvtime K’ereselidze cut ties with the chanter-priest Razhden Khundadze, whom he had commissioned to harmonize more than one thousand incomplete transcriptions of heirmoi melodies. Though the work had been completed over the course of two years, K’ereselidze was not satisfied with the results. In his opinion, the chants were indistinguishable one from the next, because of their identical and simple harmonization. However, there was little that he could change considering the fact that Razhden Khundadze was the greatest living master of the Georgian chant tradition, and the sheer number of melodies prohibited any kind of re-harmonization. Decades later, K’ereselidze would remember this predicament somewhat ruefully, writing in his memoir:

> It can be said that some of the chants were not well harmonized, but when I mentioned this fact to Khundadze, he would not listen to me because he was a stubborn man. So I made a little mark on the chants that I did not like, I paid him, and took the chantbooks
away. He harmonized for two years and I gave him our full agreed-upon price, 1025 rubles. Thus, our business ended peacefully.653

Instead of trying to re-harmonize the heirmoi melodies, an unfeasible objective, K’ereselidze sought to find someone else that could help him edit the Khundadze harmonizations. It is instructive that K’ereselidze did not rely on his own musical abilities to make the corrections that he wanted, rather seeking out someone else that he perceived as being more qualified.

There were very few skilled chanters who had both experience in the oral transmission of chant, and knowledge of European music notation. But K’ereselidze managed to find one such chanter, Ivliane Nik’oladze, a figure little known to history.

Then I went to Ivliane Nik’oladze, a chanter in Kutaisi, and told him, ‘I don't like some of Razhden’s harmonizations, so I would like to ask you, as one of Pilimon Koridze's most talented students, and well-trained choir directors, to help me re-harmonize these chants. I know that you can harmonize and write these chants much better than Razhden Khundadze. Not all of these chants are well harmonized, please, let's work together. Let's go through the chants and harmonize them better and make them more beautiful, and the cost of your work, whatever you request I will give to you.’654

This short reference is one of only a few clues about a figure in chant history that has thus far eluded scholarly or public attention. Indeed, details about the life of Nik’oladze remain elusive: a single source confirms that he studied European notation with Pilimon Koridze in Kutaisi during the 1890s, as evidenced by a surviving Certificate of Excellence, dated to 1894 and signed by Pilimon Koridze in both Georgian and Russian (Figure 105).655 The document reflects that Nik’oladze undertook a course of study in European notation, and cites his completion of all requirements exemplary aptitude for the subject.

The identification of two photographs has also helped to shed light on the performance career of Ivliane Nik’oladze. Taken sometime in the early 1890s, one photo shows that Nik’oladze sang as a member of the Kutaisi cathedral choir (Nik’oladze is standing, second from

653 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesi sa galaoblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 56-57.
654 ibid.: 56-57.
655 Document courtesy of Luarsab T’ogonidze, who noted its historical importance while searching a family archive, and made this photo available to me for my work on the identification of the Nik’oladze music manuscripts.
the right, in the back row, Figure 106).\textsuperscript{656} This fact is also confirmed by one of the descendents of Ivliane Nik’oladze.\textsuperscript{657} The only other known photo dates from the 1930s (Figure 107).

As a graduate of Pilimon Koridze’s course on European notation, and a singer with the prestigious cathedral choir of Bishop Gabriel Kikodze, Nik’oladze was in a strong position to assist with the harmonization project (See Figure 106: Bishop Gabriel Kikodze is seated at center, Nik’oladze is standing, second from right). According to K’ereselidze, Nik’oladze readily agreed to help him and they began working whenever K’ereselidze visited the city of Kutaisi from the Gelati Monastery, ten kilometers distant.\textsuperscript{658}

In 1914, we began editing the chants. Some of them were okay, but the rest we had to erase and correct. Our work was not continuous because he had a job as the head of the Kutaisi choir, so our work took a long time but we completed it in 1915.\textsuperscript{659}

With this direct evidence of collaboration from Kereselidze's memoirs, and until more can be learned about Nikoladze's biography, an analysis of the manuscripts must suffice to answer immediately pressing questions. For example, how extensive was Nikoladze's involvement as an editor?

A quick glance through the four working manuscripts shows that Kereselidze’s ‘little marks’—those that he referenced as locating near the harmonized chants that he did not like—are ubiquitously distributed among several thousand pages of chant, often appearing more than once per page (for an example, see the X mark on the top-left side of the transcription of the chant, ukmi kveqana, Figure 99). The pair apparently spent significant hours editing, as approximately 70% of the 2000+ manuscript pages are corrected in some manner. In this environment of intensive transcription work with K’ereselidze, one wonders if Nik’oladze did not harmonize or prompt any other original chant selections. Could there be an unknown repertoire

\textsuperscript{656} This also happens to be one of the last photos of Bishop Gabriel (Kikodze) (1825-1896), the sponsor of the first major transcription of West Georgian chant and the founder of the Committee for the Preservation of Georgian Church Chant in Kutaisi (seated, center, front row). For the identification of figures in this and other photographs, I would like to express my gratitude to Luarsab T’ogonidze for his expertise in this matter.\textsuperscript{657} Unpublished interview conducted by musicologist Magda Sukhiashvili with Lamara Tutberidze-Nik'oladze (wife of Ivliane Nikoladze's grandson), 2002.\textsuperscript{658} K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskverashvili private archive, 1936), 57. According to K’ereselidze, Nik’oladze accepted his request with the following words: “I think what you are doing is a very good deed. If I did not have a wife and children, I would not take any money for this work. But you can give me whatever you want and I will be grateful.” \textsuperscript{659} ibid.: 57.
of chants by Nik'oladze himself? A re-examination of the sources with this question in mind reveals several interesting problems with our previous assumptions.

**Figure 105.** Award for Ivliane Nik'oladze, written by Pilimon Koridze (1894)

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660 In the middle of a massive tome of hand-written liturgical chants, copied by Ekvtime K’ereselidze and dated 1921-1932, four para-liturgical hymns are cited as belonging to Ivliane Nik'oladze. See manuscript Q-674 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 361-364. My gratitude to Malkhaz Erkvanidze for bringing my attention to this outstanding reference.
8.4.2 The Nik’oladze Harmonizations, *Nateli mkhiaruli*

The Vespers chant, *nateli mkhiaruli* [O Gladsome Light] appears in three-voice parts in manuscript Q-687, and is at first glance indistinguishable from hundreds of other harmonized chants in this large volume of transcriptions. But after discovering that Nik’oladze may have played a larger than anticipated role in the editing of these manuscripts, a fresh perspective reveals previously unnoticed details. One such overlooked aspect of this particular chant is the marginal note in Khundadze's handwriting which states, "this chant has already been written in three voices;" in other words, ‘I’ve already harmonized this chant elsewhere’. Such notes are not uncommon, a self-indexing reference easily skimmed over on first reading. In other places where such notes occur, Khundadze typically left the second and third staves blank, as one might

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661 Manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 71v. The text in Georgian is marked with a red arrow, upper left of the chant *nateli mkhiaruli*, and states, “samve khma dats’erili iqo, Razhdeni” [this was written in three voices, Razhdeni].
expect if he had already harmonized the chant. But in this case, _nateli mkh iaruli_ is harmonized in three voices, warranting further inspection (Figure 108).

On closer inspection, one notices the absence of parallel-third prioritization in the middle voice harmony, Khundadze’s signature style in these manuscripts. Instead, the middle voice begins the second phrase with a rising line very similar to the emendations seen in the previously discussed chant, _romelman sit’yvit ararasagan_ (Figure 100). But unlike in that example, the rising line in the chant, _nateli mkh iaruli_, is not the product of an editing process: rather, it was written directly into the score (boxed, measure 4, Figure 108). The handwriting is identical to the Nik’oladze edits previously examined, especially in the small note-heads and gently right-leaning ascending stems (Khundadze’s upward stems curve left). Other musical details also suggest that this chant was harmonized not by Khundadze, but by Nik’oladze. To hear a version of this chant, refer to Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #8.

For example, in measure 2, the middle voice delays parallelism by suspending a previous note, momentarily creating a whole tone dissonance in the upper voices (boxed, measure 2, Figure 108). While this might seem like a small detail, this type of dissonance is hardly ever seen in the clearly identifiable Khundadze second-voice harmonizations, even though such close harmony is entirely characteristic of the Gelati monastery school harmonization style.\(^662\) In measures 5-6, the middle voice specifically does not parallel the movement of the melody, again mirroring the types of edits that we have come to associate with Nik’oladze. In the bass voice,

\[^662\] For an example of such whole-tone close harmonization, see the previous discussions, 7.3 Analysis: _Isaia mkh iarul_ [Rejoice, O Isaiah], and 5.3 The Model Melody Debate.
measure 3, instead of harmonizing with a predictable interval of a fifth or octave (Khundadze’s default harmonization), Nik’oladze shows artistry by employing a simple voice exchange with the melody (boxed, measure 3, Figure 108).

**Figure 108. Nateli mkhiaruli, K’ereselidze, Nik’oladze**

Considering the fact that the handwriting of Khundadze and Nik’oladze are quite similar, it is understandable that no one had ever identified any of the chants in this set of transcriptions as having been harmonized by anyone other than Razhden Khundadze. With new evidence that Ivliane Nik’oladze could have been responsible for the entire harmonization of the chant, *nateli mkhiaruli*, it becomes prescient to investigate not only further harmonizations, but indeed chant transcriptions authored by him.

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663 The first identification was published in the paper, John A. Graham, "Ivliane Nik’oladze..." (2012).
The answer to this query becomes immediately apparent upon review of the sources: the chant *nateli mkhiaruli* was not an anomaly, there are other chants that appear to have been harmonized by Nik’oladze. This discovery problematized the accepted view that Khundadze harmonized these manuscripts and that if Nik’oladze had any role, it was only as a minor editor of as yet, unidentified chant transcriptions. For example, in the transcription for the Theotokion heirmos, *shen romeli ukorts’inemel khar dedao* [You, O Mother, who were never married], the manner in which all three voices specifically avoid parallelism is indicative of the Nik’oladze harmonization style previously observed (boxed, measure 4, Figure 109).

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664 After conducting interviews in 2010 with the few scholars familiar with this set of manuscripts, this was the consensus opinion.

665 *Shen romeli ukorts’inemel khar dedao*, heirmos, ode 9, tone 8. Manuscript Q-687 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1912), 98v.
directly into the score (without any visible emendations), we observe the now familiar presence of delayed rising lines in the middle voice, and a preference for basic counterpoint over parallel harmony.

The editing project with Ivliane Nik’oladze continued for two years, 1914-1915, and ended amicably. K’ereselidze reports that Nik’oladze offered to assist with the harmonization of any further chants, and supported K’ereselidze in his project to organize and rewrite all of the working transcriptions into good copy in large volumes. For his work with the editing, K’ereselidze paid Nik’oladze 500 rubles.666

Beyond the observation that emendations by different hands were visible in this set of manuscripts, the referential material in Kereselidze's memoirs remains the most substantial evidence to support the case for Ivliane Nik’oladze's involvement in the editing and harmonization of Georgian chant. I estimate that Ivliane Nik’oladze completely harmonized about twenty to thirty chants, which in reality is a tiny fraction of those harmonized by Razhden Khundadze. Despite this, they represent a significant group, and suggest the possibility that he transcribed or harmonized other (as yet unfound) chant examples.

8.5 Ekvtime K’ereselidze (1865-1944)

Ekvtime K’ereselidze is one of the most pivotal figure in the history of the Georgian chant. Without his care for the majority of source transcriptions, much of the music of the Georgian Orthodox Church would be lost, despite all of the best efforts of the transcribers, chanters, financiers, and publishers to preserve the tradition. In due time, his life story will warrant a complete monograph. In this section, we review a few key details of his life, especially as it relates to the safe-guarding, organization, recopying, and eventual submission of the transcriptions to the Georgian National Museum in 1936.

666 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesi sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 58.
8.5.1 Biographical

In the early 1880s, Ekvtime K'ereselidze (1865-1944) immigrated to the capital city of Tbilisi looking for work. He came from the impoverished highland region of Rach’a in the northwest Caucasus, where most inhabitants survived on subsistence farming and animal husbandry. In Tbilisi, K’ereselidze found part-time jobs in kitchens run by other immigrants from Rach’a, and in his spare time, frequented the K’abineti library established and run by Maksime Sharadze. K’ereselidze quickly gravitated to the charisma of Sharadze, joining him in the study of Georgian traditional chant starting in 1884.

With Maksime Sharidze, I began to learn chant from Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze. I was so excited with this study that I even forgot my own work. I had a job in a hotel kitchen, but I took every free minute to steal away and learn chants. Maksime and I became close friends in those days; we were brothers.667

Through this relationship, K'ereselidze became one of the most dedicated members of the K'abineti collective.668

Over the years the K'abineti evolved from a loose collective of men who gathered at Sharadze’s library to discuss literature and politics into a socialist group dedicated to the preservation of Georgian culture through printed materials. Not only did the members work together, but they shared belongings and lived together in collective housing. In 1891, K’ereselidze became a founding member of the M. Sharadze & Friends Press, and a specialist in setting the rare musical type for the publication of chantbooks. He was in charge of editing, producing, and printing the chant transcriptions that they received from the K'arbelashvili brothers and Pilimon Koridze. He worked in this position until the dissolution of the collective ownership of the press in 1910, but even then, K’ereselidze published two more chantbooks in 1911.669

In 1912, Ekvtime K’ereselidze took monastic vows and gave up his work with the press. The only thing he took with him to the Gelati monastery were the chant transcriptions. Monastery life was not unlike his former days as a member of the K'abineti collective living in a shared-income community, yet now his goals were clearer: he wished to thoroughly learn the rubrics of the complex Orthodox liturgical calendar so that he could organize and recopy the

667 ibid.: 17.
668 See the section, 6.1.1 The K'abineti.
669 See the section, 6.3 The M. Sharadze & Friends Press.
chant transcriptions into proper hymnographical volumes. As he reflected in later years, “I chose to be a monk in Gelati because the full service is served there. It was essential to me to know all the rules and orders so that I could organize all of the chants correctly.” He held in possession thousands of rough-draft transcriptions of various chants, but they were in various states of incompletion and disastrously disorganized.

8.5.2 The Gelati Monastery Period (1912-1924)

The Gelati Monastery was a perfect location to work on solitary activity like recopying chantbooks. Once the greatest cultural and academic seat of the twelfth century Georgian kingdom, the monastery had since fallen into disrepair and was by the early twentieth century quite impoverished. Still, the small monastic community offered some support for K’ereselidze’s study, and the remote location ensured that his work went undisturbed. When he arrived, there were six or seven priest-monks, nine or ten monks, and five novices in residence. The community still performed the sung liturgy in the medieval three-voiced polyphonic tradition, but their repertory of only the most basic liturgical chants, none of the more complex festival or kanon chants maintained exclusively by trained master chanters.

During his tenure at the Gelati Monastery, 1912-1923, K’ereselidze became an expert in Orthodox liturgics. He became a hiero-deacon in 1913, and a priest in 1917, serving the liturgy nearly every day for the monastic community. In the evenings, he worked on copying chantbooks. By 1915, he had completed the harmonization and editing of the incomplete heirmoi chant transcriptions, with the help of chanters Razhden Khundadze and Ivliane Nik’oladze.

The harmonization project consumed K’ereselidze’s life for five years. Starting from the dissolution of the press in 1910, through the copying of the Koridze originals in the University library in 1910-1911, the commissioning of Razhden Khundadze to harmonize the melodies in 1913, and finally the editing of the manuscripts in 1914-1915, K’ereselidze worked tirelessly to complete this particular project. In his memoir, written years later, we still hear the voice of enthusiasm that he conveys for this project.

670 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’iesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 54.
671 See the sections, Error! Reference source not found..
All these books and chants were written by Koridze, but they remain unfinished, they still need work and expense to complete. But when they are completed, everyone will be grateful and overjoyed! I will bring these to the museum for future generations... Let me say that for the protection of these books, I am working with all my heart, with all of my soul. I’m spending money, I’m correcting, gathering, organizing, and where necessary, completing these chants in three-part harmony. I will not hesitate to give all of my belongings for this kind work; I will spare no expense, nor will I request any help.672

From this commentary, it is clear that K’ereselidze remained steadfastly committed to his work on the chant manuscripts. Elsewhere in his memoir, conversely, he sounds defeated by the treacherous machinations of many other individuals that he had dealings with (Losaberidze, Ch’edlidze, Khundadze, etc.). The decision to join an ascetic community as a monk thus seems to have been motivated by a desire to leave behind the troubles of worldly life to focus instead of his chosen spiritual path: the completion of the chantbooks.

During these years (1913-1914), K’ereselidze received an unexpected sum of money from the sale of several buildings owned by the Sharadze press collective in Tbilisi, which he used to pay Khundadze and Nik’oladze for their efforts, and to purchase notation paper and book-binding supplies. He worked day and night recopying and organizing the transcriptions into large leather bound books, often to the perplexity of the other monks, who did not understand his fascination with the old chants. According to K’ereselidze, his fellow monks would occasionally enter his cell and ask,

‘What are you doing? You are here day and night, writing and writing with your head in your palm, why are you torturing yourself this way?’ I responded to them, ‘But I am not torturing myself, you see, this is the greatest of treasures! What you see here, this is precious metal, this is better than gold, silver, or gems; this is eternal treasure! I am like a goldsmith working on the finest jewelry, but in truth, I am no one, and am more like a clumsy bear sweeping his paw through a honey jar. Honestly, who let me, unworthy servant that I am, to be responsible for these chants, these holy gifts?’673

To them, his work copying and recopying the chantbooks was a curiosity, but for K’ereselidze, his activity needed his utmost concentration. He truly understood the position he had fallen into, as the sole inheritor of the musical legacy of the Georgian Orthodox Church.

In his memoir, titled ‘A History of the Transcription of Georgian Church Chants,’ dated 1936, K’ereselidze does not mention the volatile years between 1915-1924. During this period,

672 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 44-45.
673 ibid.: 66-67.
World War I raged in nearby Turkey, British troops occupied coastal Georgia, and a Georgian Menshevik government was elected, presented, and eventually overwhelmed by the Bolshevik Red Army in 1921. We can only imagine K’ereselidze, perched in his monastery cell on the mountain slope high above the Rioni River valley, diligently fulfilling his sense of responsibility to save the medieval Georgian chant tradition from oblivion and loss.

With the Bolsheviks in control, the security of the chant transcriptions became even more precarious. Whereas before the chant tradition suffered from general ambivalence and lack of public support, now it was under direct threat from the outright hostility and violence of the Young Communist party members, who routinely destroyed churches, murdered priests and monastics, and destroyed precious artifacts. Soon, the Church was outlawed, and the public performance of liturgical chant was forbidden.

Sensing these changes, K’ereselidze loaded a cart full of his chant manuscripts, and took them to Kutaisi for safe-keeping in the basement of Fr. Razhden Khundadze. In 1923, the Gelati Monastery was closed for good. Later, K’ereselidze would recall,

In 1924, I was still working on collecting and notating the chant books, but those were dangerous times, and I was afraid someone would come and ask me about my activities. I was really afraid to lose them and was thinking only about the books, not myself.  

In that same year, the bishop of Kutaisi and three other priests were murdered outside Kutaisi, and the Kutaisi cathedral torn down by Bolshevik radicals (Figure 53). Among those killed was K’ereselidze’s old acquaintance, Fr. Svimon Ch’edlidze, the man who had helped him separate from the untrustworthy partnership with Sp’iridon Losaberidze in 1910.

The chant manuscripts remained in Razhden Khundadze’s basement in Kutaisi for some time, but as things cooled down in the summer of 1925, K’ereselidze came back to retrieve them. Meanwhile, Khundadze’s son, who worked for the government, convinced his elderly father to support the family by trying to sell the chant transcriptions in Tbilisi. Khundadze, out of a job and under pressure to feed a large family, was somehow convinced by the reasoning of his son, and when K’ereselidze came to reclaim the hidden boxes of chant notation, Khundadze demanded to keep ‘his share’. As K’ereselidze looked on, the elderly priest pulled out scissors and symbolically slashed several manuscripts into strips saying, “the first voice will be yours,

\[674\] ibid.: 62.
and the second and third voices will be mine. Two shares will be mine, and one share will be yours.\textsuperscript{675}

This tragic event upset K'ereselidze so much that he almost suffered a heart-attack. He recalled of this moment,

When I observed what was happening, my heart started beating with the greatest trembling... I was shaking, and tears were bursting from my eyes. A feeling like ‘Hell’s despairing fire’ came into my heart, and I started lamenting like only a mother and father can mourn for a dead child. I kept whispering to myself, oh Lord, oh Lord!\textsuperscript{676}

Following this event, K’ereselidze couldn’t continue his work. So many chants were missing, he became ill. But after one month, K’ereselidze returned to Khundadze and pleaded to borrow each chantbook, one by one, so that he could copy them and continue his work collating the master volumes. Khundadze eventually agreed to this, so for the next two years K'ereselidze hand copied an unknown number of chants once again.\textsuperscript{677}

\textbf{8.5.3 The Later Years (1925-1944)}

In 1925, Ekvtime K'ereselidze decided to move to the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral in East Georgia. Before he left, he visited Razhden Khundadze one last time to return the borrowed chantbooks. Khundadze, lying sick in bed, begged confession from K'ereselidze, saying,

Ah, why did I listen to my son? Why did I need those chantbooks? I went to Tbilisi, going from office to office trying to sell them, but they always sent me on to another place.... I, a crippled man, went up and down all those stairs, and when my cane slipped and I fell down several flights, I lay there with a broken leg for two hours before anyone came... I’ve been in a hospital one year already, and am still not better.\textsuperscript{678}

According to K’ereselidze, Khundadze wept and begged forgiveness for his mistake in withholding the chantbooks, describing his desperation to feed his family.

\textsuperscript{675} ibid.: 64. K’ereselidze reports that Khundadze cut four or five books in half, keeping at least 2000 pages for himself.
\textsuperscript{676} ibid.: 65.
\textsuperscript{677} ibid.: 66. K’ereselidze writes that it took him two years to copy four complete books of chant transcriptions, working day and night.
\textsuperscript{678} ibid.: 67.
In truth, there was no market for old chant transcriptions, even the idea of it had been a deception. He had not been able to sell a single page in Tbilisi. According to K’ereselidze, the
great master chanter Razhden Khundadze never recovered from his broken leg, dying some time later from his injuries. His son Shalva, who worked for the government, apparently did manage to sell many of his father’s transcriptions in Tbilisi in 1937, where they survive today as part of the collection of the National Folklore Center in Tbilisi, Georgia. While living at the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, K’erselidze continued to copy the rough-draft transcriptions into five special hymnographic volumes, some of them numbering more than one thousand pages. These volumes were collated by K’erselidze between the years, 1915-1932 (Figure 110).

8.5.4 The Fate of the Koridze Chant Transcriptions

In 1935, Davit Davitashvili and Dimit’ri Shevardnadze, two of the directors of the Tbilisi State Museum, discovered Ekvtime K’ereselidze living alone in the remote Zedazeni monastery in the hills outside the city. The meeting was providential, as evidenced by the following dialogue between Davitashvili and the old monk.

“Monks in the Betania Monastery have confided to me that a certain monk, Ekvtime K’ereselidze by name, possesses old handwritten documents. Are you this person, and is this true?”

“Yes I am Ekvtime K’ereselidze, and it is true what you say,” responded the old monk.

“May I ask, what do your documents contain?” asked Davitashvili.

“They are the Georgian church chant transcriptions in notation,” said the monk.

“Do you have a lot, or just a little?” asked Davitashvili.

“It would need one horse-cart to carry them all,” said the monk, eyeing the men suspiciously.

“Why did not you tell us,” the directors pressed. “Why have not you told anyone from the museums?” Davitashvili said doubtfully.

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679 Ibid. 67.
680 Manuscript Q-674 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, 1932), 1. This illustrated page gives an idea of K’ereselidze’s attention to the presentation of his chant collections. Following tradition, the titles and rubrics are written in red ink, the notation in black ink, with ornaments in different colors. He also often included descriptions of the liturgical context for certain groups of chants, such as the entrance chants seen here on the first page of the service for the ordination of hierarchs.
681 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesi sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 82-83.
“I have not told anyone.” K'ereselidze said. “I’ve been working quietly, keeping this secret for so many years. I’ve been afraid for the safety of the chants, and afraid of being jailed myself.”

The directors looked at each other in excitement, hardly believing their ears.

“Do you have a list of those chants?” asked Davitashvili.

“Yes, I do,” replied the monk.

“Please show it to us,” said Davitashvili, adding, “If this is true, you have done an incredible deed to save these books. We have been looking for the manuscripts of the great Pilimon Koridze for years now. As members of the Society for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, we are very interested to learn what has been saved from the treasure of Georgia’s chant tradition.”

The next day, when Davitashvili and Shevardnadze returned to the monastery, the old monk handed Davitashvili a beautifully scripted manuscript containing an index of chant names. He took it in his hands and saw rows and rows of chant names, arranged into columns and numbered according to their order in the services of the Orthodox calendar year, in total more than five thousand chants (Figure 111). Astonished, Davitashvili turned to his colleague, saying, “Please look at the enormous collection here, this monk has done a miracle. This is the treasure of our Georgian chants, it’s a miracle they have survived.”

On 20 November, 1935, a public document was issued by officials representing the Commission for the Preservation of Historical Monuments of the Communist Party that read in part:

To the protector of the historical monuments of the Zedazeni Monastery, Ekvtime K'ereselidze: for those books which have been given to the museum Commission, and in recognition of the very rare and cultural masterpieces which have been protected by Citizen K'ereselidze, the Commission awards official congratulations, an award of 1500 rubles, and a monthly pension of 150 rubles.  

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682 This is an example of indexing by K’ereselidze: Manuscript Q-674 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), xxi.
683 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 85.
Figure 111. Table of Contents, Ekvtime K’ereselidze (1932)
A total of thirty-seven handwritten books, containing a staggering 5532 chants in organized, catalogued, and scripted form were handed over by Ekvtime K’ereselidze on November 20th, 1935 to representatives of the National Museum. The chantbooks contained Koridze’s rough-draft and good-copy transcriptions from 1885-1908 (except for the nine volumes taken by Sp’iridon Losaberidze), the five volumes of harmonized heirmoi chants by K’ereselidze-Khundadze-Nik’oladze, as well as numerous other volumes copied out by K’ereselidze himself in elegant, well-spaced notation.

Before arriving in the museum vaults, the manuscripts had traveled from the Gelati monastery to Razhden Khundadze’s basement in the city of Kutaisi for safe-keeping in 1923; from there to the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral in East Georgia in 1925; then between the years 1932-1935, the manuscripts were reportedly buried in metal boxes in the yard of the remote, mountain-top Zedazeni monastery.

8.5.5 An Unusual Witness

Ekvtime K’ereselidze (1865-1944) lived at the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral until 1932, when he moved to the remote Zedazeni Monastery farther up in the hills (Figure 112). His grand-nephew recalls that he liked to collect mushrooms and berries in the forest, was fond of imported olives, and would bring all manner of herbs and edible foods from the Zedazeni forests when he came to visit his relatives in Tbilisi once a month.

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684 Both Davit Davitashvili and Dimit’ri Shevardnadze were shot during the purges of 1937. The chantbooks were safe in the museum inventory, though knowledge of their contents and whereabouts quickly became a forgotten memory in the harsh suppressive environment of the pre-war years. Today, the K’ereselidze manuscripts are held in the Q-collection of the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi, Georgia, forming the bulk of the surviving music manuscripts that represent the West Georgian chant tradition.

685 Even today, the dirt track to the mountain top Zedazeni Monastery requires a full day of hiking from the nearest village. Though jeeps may access the monastery in good weather, the road is frequently washed out by rain and landslide, maintaining its remote character.
A British undercover agent, visiting Georgia sometime between 1942-1944, happened to visit the Zedazeni monastery with his Georgian translator who, years later, related the following story:

Once there was a high British official visiting Georgia, who wanted to stay incognito. He refused personal guards, and the KGB did not really pressure him, but who knows, maybe there was a secret guard following him around. I had to accompany him as a translator. He wanted to see the Ioane Zedazeni monastery, so we took the road uphill through the forest. As we were talking on the way, I learned that he had graduated from Oxford and was working for the Diplomatic Corps. He was well aware of subjects such as philosophy and art, but his personality was cynical. He avoided expressing his personal ideas. There was a beautiful view from the top of the mountain where the monastery is, and the Englishman enjoyed this panorama for a long time.687

The story continues:

Then, when we entered the church, we saw a tall skinny monk with a pale face serving the liturgy. He was singing alone, some kind of ancient monastic tune. After a moment or two, I heard weeping. It was the Englishman. He was covering his face like a child, sobbing uncontrollably into his hands! After the liturgy, we left the church and he told me, ‘I often go to chapel in London and it’s become a tradition for me. I’ve attended the Pope’s service in St. Peter’s Cathedral in Rome, and I’ve traveled throughout Europe. I’ve been to monasteries in the Balkans, and other places, but I’ve never had such a feeling as I just had in this poor, half-ruined chapel. Here I could clearly see, what I would call, holiness.’ Later, on the way back down the hill, he was quiet and introspective. I offered to show him some other places, but he replied, ‘That was enough for me.’688

This remarkable, eye-witness testimony can only refer to Ekvtime K’ereselidze, who from 1942-1944 was the sole living inhabitant of the Zedazeni monastery.689 To imagine that

686 Interview, Otar K’ereselidze (Tbilisi: November, 2004).
687 Abbot Archimandrite Rafael Karelín, ‘Mystery of the Redemption: Saving the Soul’ (Moscow, 2002), 344-345.
688 Ibid.
689 In his retelling of the story, Rafael Karelín cites the singing monk’s name as Jesse Sukhiashvili, living at the Zedazeni Monastery. There are several problems with this attribution however. Documentation shows that only four monks lived at the Zedazeni Monastery during years of World War II. These were: Monk Saaba (deceased 1940), Abbot Mikhael Mandaria (killed by soldiers when he broke a curfew in 1942), young monk-deacon P’arteni (caught and jailed in 1942), and Ekvtime K’ereselidze (alone in Zedazeni Monastery from 1942 to his death at the end of 1944). An Archimandrite Jesse lived in the Mshio-ghvime monastery (two days walk removed from the Zedazeni monastery) from 1905 until his death in 1950. Per the description given by the Englishman, and related by Rafael Karelín, the singing-monk was a tall skinny man with a pale face. This description matches photos of Ekvtime K’ereselidze, whereas descriptions of the monk, Jesse Sukhiashvili, describe him as a shorter man with dark hair and skin. Also, there are no records that he had any knowledge of the Georgian chant tradition (see Autobiography of Jesse Sukhiashvili, State Museum of Literature, doc #3308), thus suggesting that the singing-monk witnessed in this account was indeed Ekvtime K’ereselidze. I am grateful to Luarsab T’ogonidze for this very significant reference and analysis.
while living alone at the monastery, he continued to sing the melodies to the polyphonic chants he so cherished while serving the Orthodox liturgy, it is simply astounding. This may be one of the last known records of Ekvtime K’ereselidze, who disappeared from historical memory until his transcriptions were re-discovered nearly forty years after his death in 1944. 690

8.5.6 Final Correspondences

Until his dying days, K’ereselidze maintained his commitment to the chant tradition. In the last letter that he wrote to his friend K’ot’e Potskharashvili, for example, he wrote,

Brother K’ot’e, I hope you will never forget our good friendship and the conversations we had together. Please take care of our great books because I am leaving this world and going away forever. I’m saying goodbye to my beloved brothers and friends. Abbot K’ereselidze, son of Solomon K’ereselidze.

In his memoir, whose last entry is dated to 1941, he also wrote about the chants, expressing his dismay that he couldn’t accomplish more.

In these books, there are many chants I could not finish, some that are only in one voice, some that we could not harmonize completely. What beautiful chants! It would be so wonderful to finish them, that we could have proof of Georgia’s treasure as a memorial for the generations yet to come! 691

In truth, he accomplished all of the projects that he set out to complete. The unfinished Koridze transcriptions were harmonized, the disorganized transcriptions were copied into perfectly scripted hymnographical tomes, organized by service type, calendar date, and liturgical order. Most importantly, he took personal responsibility for the chantbooks in a time when churches were brazenly destroyed and monks killed with impunity.

For his inspired work guarding, beautifying, and enhancing the massive collection of chant transcriptions that he inherited from the Press, K’ereselidze credited his old friend Maksime Sharadze, the man who first motivated him.

In my life I only had one true ‘heart-friend,’ Maksime Rost’omisdze Sharadze who, unfortunately, lived only a short life. In all my other days, I was tortured by evil people;

690 Ekvtime K’ereselidze died at the Zedazani Monastery in 1944, and is buried in the monastery yard near the East apse of the church.
691 K’ereselidze, Kartul saek’lesio sagaloblebis not’ebze (trans. T’ogonidze and Graham) (Tbilisi: K’ot’e Potskhverashvili private archive, 1936), 80.
many times I was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, even in jail... but all of this time I tried to collect and complete these chants in order to save them for the future.\textsuperscript{692}

In the manuscripts, K’ereselidze signed his name in several places in a manner that would be typical of a medieval scribe.

For example, after quoting an Orthodox prayer in the margins of one page in manuscript Q-675, he writes, "Please forgive me, fathers and brothers, for the mistakes that I have made in writing this book, and if you notice a lack of knowledge, don't curse me, but please pray for me."\textsuperscript{693} What is remarkable about such comments, written in genuine humility, is that they were written in the decade of the 1920s, a time when the Orthodox monks of Georgia suffered widespread calamity and destruction at the hands of the Bolshevik regime.

Ekvtime K’ereselidze was canonized a saint of the Georgian Orthodox Church in December, 2003, with the name Ekvtime the Confessor. In many churches around Georgia, his icon hangs in a place of honor near where the chanters perform tunes and harmonies that he helped to safeguard in the first decades of the twentieth century. Hearing these chants reminds us that music is our most fragile art, but can also be our most enduring.

8.6 Chapter Conclusion

The example that this case study presents to modern church singers and the scholarly community at large is that the chant manuscripts were changing, dynamic objects, and should not be read as static, infallible texts. Each of the actors who worked on these manuscripts was in some way intimately involved with the oral tradition either as informant, transcriber, scribe, editor, or publisher, and their various aesthetic values exerted a subtle but significant influence over the particular manner in which a melody was transcribed, harmonized, edited, and in many cases published. These differences of aesthetic are visible in the changes of key signature, the editing of the harmonized manuscripts, and in the choice of variant: simple versus complex. Given this historical context, the transcriptions must be understood as significant resources that reflect a changing and dynamic musical culture.

\textsuperscript{692} ibid.: 79.
\textsuperscript{693} Ekvtime K’ereselidze, marginalia, manuscript Q-675 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 340r.
Recently published chant-books in most contemporary Georgian Orthodox churches serve as the primary source and reference for the performance of liturgical chants. Read as literary objects, the printed music notation in these chant-books is rendered vocally as precisely as possible to the written score. But this concept of reading music is a relatively recent phenomenon in the Georgian Church. Before the late nineteenth-century preservation movement when, as we have discussed, much of the Georgian repertory was transcribed into European notation, the performance of chant was only possible through the collective recall and skill set of a core of professional musicians. The concept of a piece existed not on the level of ornamentation or even harmony, but rather in the deeper structure of particular melodies that could be harmonized and ornamented in any number of ways. Even in the process of transcription, which demands the fixation of a particular variant, individual attitudes of musical aesthetic played a role in defining which variants were transcribed, harmonized, edited and copied for publication.

K’ereselidze's aesthetic justification for disliking Khundadze's thin harmonizations signals the main difference between the way the two men viewed the chant preservation movement. On the one hand, Khundadze—a priest, father of five children, and master chanter—sought the simplest and most practical method of realizing the three-voiced structure of Georgian chant. On the other hand, K’ereselidze—the junior printer turned scribal monk who had dedicated his life to preserving chant through writing—searched for the most authentic and representative variants for his chant collections, in the same way that a museum curator seeks the right combination of complementary artwork for an exhibition. Meanwhile, Nik’oladze obliged K’ereselidze's request to edit the basic harmonizations by Khundadze, but that he did so with a great deal of restraint. The majority of his emendations do not significantly change Khundadze's basic harmonic language in terms of the cadence points, bass range, structural chords, and other significant parameters. Rather, they focus on removing the salient parallel-third intervals in the middle voice, as seen in the presented music examples.

To review, Khundadze's harmonic style in 1913-1914 included the salient use of parallel-third intervals in the middle voice, as well as fifth or octave intervals in the bass voice, and a tendency to ‘fill-in’ cadential chords as a triad (instead of allowing the middle voice to create the typical open-fifth interval by joining the bass voice). Meanwhile, under the watchful eye of K’ereselidze, the Nik’oladze emendations clearly demonstrate a preference for counter-motion in
the middle voice (which is often corrected with a delayed rising line), and open-fifth intervals in cadential chords. Strangely, Nik’oladze sometimes used awkward phrasing, such as writing parallel-fifth intervals, or committed errors in his editing, such as notating pitch class G instead of A in the bass voice of *ukmi kveqana* (circled, measure 7, Figure 99).

The presence of the errors suggest that Nik’oladze was not as adept at notation as the others, while the awkward harmonizations suggest that he was not entirely familiar with what K’ereselidze was seeking as a final product. On the other hand, his artful way of avoiding ubiquitous parallelism underscores his familiarity with variation technique and spontaneous performance. Perhaps most intriguing about the Nik'oladze edits, because it was already a quality rarely found among his generation of chanters, is the flexibility of variation that he exhibits as an editor. This, more than anything, demonstrates his proficiency as a singer of an oral tradition, in which individual aesthetic preferences can be expressed through the ability to harmonize and ornament in any number of different ways.

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694 While parallel third and parallel fifth motion are not uncommon in the Gelati Monastery school style, basic counterpoint is generally the rule and becomes increasingly prevalent in the more ornamental styles, such as namdvili (simple-true), and gamshvenebuli (ornamental), which demonstrate increasingly complex levels of counterpoint and rhythm (see 11.2.2 Simple Voice Crossing (*gadajvaredineba*)).

695 This is clearly an editing error as all final cadences end either on the interval of an open fifth or in unison. As the upper voices both cadence on pitch A, the bass must theoretically also cadence on pitch A.
Chapter IX: Other Notational Systems

Following the disappearance of medieval neume notation from the manuscript record in the twelfth century, musical notation reappeared only in the later feudal period (eighteenth to twentieth centuries). During this latter period, several new notational systems appear, each an innovative written solutions to the representation of sound. These include the Anbani system (an alphabetic notation), the Ch’reli system (a named index of memorized melodies), and the Nishnebi system (various neume notational systems). Vasil K'arbelashvili experimented with writing alphabetic syllables diastematically on a staff (Figure 41). These systems are represented in only a few manuscripts and do not seem to have become widespread practice. Nevertheless, they represent significant milestones in the evolution of music writing in Georgia.

The various systems of written music explored in this chapter represent the musical and creative thought of Georgian master chanters over the course of the last one thousand years, and should present a valuable contribution to the musicological study of comparative notational systems. It is hoped that the descriptions and analysis here provides an introduction for further in-depth scholarship on the Georgian music writing systems, and provides a new case study for the notation of Christian chant.

One idea for the notation of chant was proposed by the eighteenth-century nobleman, Ioane Bat’onishvili (1768-1830), an accomplished performer of the fortepiano and educated musician in Western notation. He described the so-called Anbani [alphabet] notation system in a wide-ranging text on philosophy, history, and music known as Khumarts’avla-Kalmasoba, in which he proposed using the first eight letters of the Georgian nuskhuri-asomtavruli alphabet (a, b, g, d, e, v, z, ey) as pitch names, with supplementary symbols such as diastematic dots representing the rise and fall of the melodic line. This system is only found in original sources penned by Bat’onishvili, or copies of those texts.

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696 A unique system of Georgian neume notation appears in tenth and eleventh century manuscripts, but not in twelfth century manuscripts (see the section, 1.4 Georgian Medieval Neumes.

697 This proposal can be found in the manuscript NCM H-2241, page 7r. Additional original sources of the Khumarts’avla-Kalmasoba are located in the National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, Georgia under the following headings: H-2170, H-2134, H-2153, H-2282, Q-720, S-5375. The 1948 or 1990 reprints of its contents are typically cited in scholarly works. For discussion, see Manana Andriadze, Sagalobelta zhanrebi... (PhD diss., 1998), 98-100.
9.1 The Ch’reli System

Manuscripts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reflect a musical indexing system referred to as ch’reli. The name first appears in a thirteenth-century source, but is more common in later manuscripts. The word ch'reli literally means ‘colorful,’ but also carries the sense of ‘patterned’ especially in the context of weaving and wood carving. The term also has other usages: in some sources, it is associated with lists of named model melodies or melodic phrases, while in others it refers to untexted musical phrases added for the elongation of chants, or more generally to highly ornamented singing. Understanding these various usages is critical to the basic study of this system.

In its form as a textual referencing system for model melodies, it is used both specifically (for phrases of a specific length and melodic contour), and generally (to categories of melody). It works by utilizing keywords that recall specific musical lexica: by seeing the keyword, chanters could quickly recall the appropriate melody or phrase, and apply it to the unfamiliar chant text at hand. But our access to the exact meaning of the system remains elusive. While ongoing research has uncovered new clues, much remains to be discovered. Deciphering the ch'reli system should unlock the music of at least six music manuscripts that date from the height of the pre-Russian, chant revival in Georgia, and will hopefully clarify the exact meaning(s) of the word in


699 The manifestation of these types of phrases, called ch'reli, can best be understood as a type of inserted ideomelic phrase, not unlike the use of recycled musical phrase for clausula in twelfth century Parisian organum. At the end of certain liturgy chants, long phrases of additional musical material were sung to open vowels as an extension of the chant, quite possibly for some liturgical function. For example, such phrases might be added to the Cherubic Hymn as the priest needs significant time to prepare the communion, or to important words in feast-day chants. For a good example of this type of extended ch’reli phrase (that is also highly ornamental), see the extended prolongation on the word Ga-bri-el in the Ninth Irmos for the Entrance into the Temple by the Virgin Mary. Discussed by Malkhaz Erkvanidze, "Introduction," Kartuli Galoba, Volume II (Tbilisi: Patriarchate Press, 2002).

sources from various geographical locales and dating to different chronological eras. For the purposes of this section, however, we will focus on the text-referent system.

9.1.1 Ch'reli Sources

Most sources of the ch’reli referential system occur in manuscripts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a period when there was a robust revival of the Georgian chanting tradition.\(^{701}\) A list of twentyfour ch’reli can be found in the nineteenth-century Pit’areti heirmologion.\(^{702}\) Many texts in the manuscript are overlaid with ch’reli references. In these manuscripts, melodies were given specific names, such as ulkhine and oini, and these keywords were written above chant texts as a reference to other similar melodies. Each name represented a common model melodic phrase that could be paired to different chant texts.

The use of ch’reli lists of named model melodies or phrases represents a new way of referencing music in writing. Its use, however, could be far older than the written sources. Recently, new research revealed a medieval use of the term ch’reli. In this thirteenth century source, a collection of exapostilaria and stichera chant texts are referred to as ch’reli.\(^{703}\) This discovery has excited the scholarly community, as the term was thought to only refer to the model melody system of the last two or three centuries. The late Manana Andriadze, professor of liturgical music at the Tbilisi Conservatory and a leading scholar on ch’reli manuscripts, writes:

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\(^{701}\) The most substantial list of ch’reli survives in a nineteenth century manuscript from Pit'areti Monastery (NCM Q-298) which has two sections: one part (the neumatized heirmologion) is a copy of the eleventh century iadgari by Iordane, while the second part contains a collection of chant melodies indexed in the ch’reli system. A selection of the ch’reli names for model melodies include: khelmtsipe k’ilo; sachekeni; sami sabrunavi; misire sami sabrunavi; utskho; tsintkma; didi tsintkma; oini; diidi asamaghlebeli; chabaneba; odia; akhaia; etc. Other sources of ch’reli identified in the dissertation by Manana Andriadze include the following eighteenth and nineteenth century manuscripts from the Georgian National Center of Manuscripts: Q-103 (Shemokmedi Monastery Gulani), Q-104 (Guriantul Gulani), Q-298 (Pit’areti Heirmologion), H-2282 (Bat’onishvili Heirmologion), H-2134. Two sources have also been identified in the Kutaisi State Museum (KSM): KSM-368 and KSM-467. See discussion in Manana Andriadze, Sagalobelta... (PhD diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1998), 90.

\(^{702}\) The Pit’areti dzlisp’irni [Heirmologion] (manuscript Q-298, National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi) is a nineteenth-century manuscript that has been studied by several mid-twentieth-century scholars including Ivane Javakhishvili and Shalva Aslanishvili. They determined that part of the manuscript is a direct copy of the Iordane dzlisp’irni (NCM A-602), a tenth-eleventh century heirmologion.

\(^{703}\) The reference appears in a Heirmologion written in 1233 and associated with T’bel Abuserisdze, now housed in the National Center of Manuscripts (NCM A-85, page 387r). It is unclear to what extent this early usage of the term ch’reli reflects the eighteenth century usage, but in the latter period the term is also associated with the exapostilaria and stichera chant genres. For more on the ch’reli reference in A-85, see Sukhiashvili and Oniani, "The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant," (forthcoming, 2015).
There are now greater possibilities to compare hymns notated using ch’reli with corresponding texts, which will hopefully allow us, at least approximately, to determine the characteristic intonational models of ch’reli, some of which have their own names. This should help us to identify and restore the varieties most often used and mentioned in the list of twenty-four ch’reli forms, which thus far is the only way to decipher these manuscripts for transcription.704

Other scholars have speculated that if a texted referential system such as that observed in eighteenth century sources existed as far back as the thirteenth century, it may have overlapped common use of the Georgian medieval neume system seen in tenth and eleventh century sources. This is, unfortunately, difficult to confirm, given the lack of any confirming evidence studied thus far. But it does raise the possibility that the ch’reli model melody system was an ornamental advance over the previous system, perhaps a Georgian response to the shift in Byzantine performance practice attributed to Ioane Koukoozeles. While the dating of the use of the term ch’reli has expanded with this discovery, the medieval usage or meaning of the term has not been elucidated.

In the 1930s, the eminent historian Ivane Javakhishvili argued that the use of the ch’reli system showed that knowledge of the medieval notation system had been lost. “It is indisputably the case that, if not before, then at least in the eighteenth century, [Georgian chanters] had forgotten how to read and write musical notation and instead, had devised an alternate system with which to learn chants by rote.”705 This conclusion is based on the observation that the tenth-century neume system is not attested in any manuscripts after the twelfth century. If there is a connection with its use in the later sources, it must be analyzed in the context of studying the oral tradition, as the ch’reli lists are primarily referential systems for an oral repertory transmitted by rote.

704 Manana Andriadze. Cited in "Introduction," Kartuli khalkhuri simghera: p'irveli ponochanats'erebi, 1901-1914 [Georgian Folk Song: the First Sound Recordings, 1901-1914], eds. Anzor Erkomaishvili and Vakhtang Rodonaia (Tbilisi: International Center for Georgian Folk Song, 2006). The list of twenty-four ch’reli is found in the P’it’areti heirmologion and is also listed in P’olievktsos K’arbelashvili (1898: 35).

705 Ivane Javakhishvili, Kartuli Musikis... (1938). Translation in Sukhiashvili and Oniani, "The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant," (forthcoming, 2015). Here, Javakhishvili assumes that given the presence of notation, medieval chanters did not need to rely on learning ‘chant by rote.’ It is more probable that chanters continued to rely on oral transmission of the repertory while the available notational system was still in crude form. Furthermore, it is unclear how many chanters even used notation, as sources are limited to less than a dozen very expensive manuscripts that were likely reference manuals in major monasteries rather than practical chantbooks for singers. If understood in this way, the medieval neumes and the ch’reli system have a lot in common as they are both referential systems to a vast pedagogical and artistic space known generally as the oral tradition of chant.
9.1.2 The K'arbelashvili Study of ch'reli

The ch’reli system has been a subject of research for some time. The first scholarly investigation of ch’reli was published in the late nineteenth century by P’olievkt’os and Vasil K’arbelashvili (the brothers were priests and masters of their grandfather’s inherited oral chant tradition; see the section, 3.2.6 P’et’re K’arbelashvili). In their study, they attempted to identify the precise musical phrases associated with each of the ch’reli names by studying their placement in the Pit'areti heirmologion. Vasil K’arbelashvili transcribed each phrase that he recognized in European staff notation, and published five of them in a book of Matins chant in 1898 (Figure 113).706 This source, from a master of the inherited oral chant tradition, provides modern scholars with an invaluable key to the ch’reli system.

In Figure 113 the names chabaneba, ulkhine, oini, ch’rel sadagi, and noini are transcribed in European notation (text in Georgian and Cyrillic). For clarity, see the digital transcription (Figure 114). As these referent names are used frequently in the ch’reli manuscripts, the models shown must have been adaptable to texted phrases of varying lengths.

In a study of the K'arbelashvili personal archive, musicologist Marika Ositashvili noted that K’arbelashvili had identified several of the ch’reli melodies:

On one side, it seems that V. K’arbelashvili has written chants decorated with ch’reli (the verbal names of melodic formulae) as seen in the Pit'areti manuscript, while on the other side he shows chants transcribed into notation that had common texts. It’s obvious that some musical phrases coincide with some text of ch’reli.707

Later, Manana Andriadze and Tamar Chkheidze noticed that different textual references could be used for the same model melody phrase.708 They found that short quotations of two to four words from other chants were used in the same way as the ch’reli lists, that is, they were written in red ink above the main text of a chant and indicated the correct musical phrase to sing.

706 Vasil K'arbelashvili, Ts'inasit'qvaobis ts'il, Kartl-k'akhuri galoba k'arbelaan k'iloti: tsisk'ari [Introduction, Kartli-K’akhetian Chant in K’arbelashvili style: Matins], Part II (Tbilisi: Tsnobis Purtseli Press, 1898), I-XVIII. For more on all chant publications, see Appendix F: Published Notation of Georgian Chant.


708 For this and what follows, see Andriadze and Chkheidze, “K’ilo-modusebi...” Proceedings (2009).
Figure 113. *Ch'reli* melodies, as published by Vasil K'arbelashvili (1898)

Figure 114. *Ch'reli* melodies, digital transcription
These types of ch’reli-like referents did not seem limited to opening texts, like a Latin or Greek incipit, but could be borrowed from any phrase anywhere in any chant.

Andriadze argues that the use of ch’reli lists was limited, and that chanters likely did not learn model melodies as discrete units, but rather as the models existed in the context of specific chants. This explains, she writes, why in some manuscripts containing ch’reli-like keywords, we also find phrases of text from other chants that seem to indicate in specific detail how the text should overlay the melody.

Thus, on the basis of our research it can be concluded that in the conditions of the verbal definition, indication to the specific models of “ch’reli” bears only a general character, and using fragments of the texts of other chants indicates more precisely how the text should be sung. Learning a chant was always based on the simultaneous learning of the melody and the accompanying text.709

This conclusion follows the line of thinking espoused by historian Ivane Javakhishvili in the 1930s, when he characterized ch’reli phrases not as unique melodies, but rather as general models for the expression of a song or chant idea: “In church hymns, the ch’reli must have represented not single melodies but—like colored fabric—songs adorned with melodic ornaments and colors.”710 From this, we are to understand the ch’reli not as being specific melodies, but rather ideomela-like phrases that could be adapted to to various texts for purposes of ornamentation.

This observation prompts a whole new set of questions about the function of ch’reli. If one-for-one relationships between the named ch’reli and specific model melodies did not exist, how would chanters know which model melody to sing? Furthermore, why would more than one ch’reli be necessary for any given model melody? The reason for this, argues Andriadze and Chkheidze, has to do with differences in the way that text can overlay a model melody. For example, in one phrase of a troparion or heirmos, there might be fourteen syllables, while in another there might be eighteen. The distribution of these phrases of different lengths over the same model melody in some cases was as simple as singing the extra text to a 'chanting note' at the beginning of the phrase. But in other cases, certain symbolic words or syllables were emphasized by their distribution within the contour of the melody. By using sections of text from

709 ibid.: 452.
Another chant to indicate how to distribute the syllables of a new text to the melody of the other, the scribe was indicating the precise syllabic distribution required.

**9.1.3 Reflections on the *ch'reli* system**

The Georgian model melody system is flexible enough to accommodate these differences, but to be useful, a chanter needed to know the rules of text setting established by the *mekhelni* master hymnographers in the eleventh century and exemplified by Giorgi Mtats’mindeli. This was the ability to set phrases of different numbers of syllables to the same melodic formula. The *ch’reli* references in the *P’itaret’i Collection* show us that instead of grappling with how to set a new text with an odd number of syllables to a well known model melody, scribes simply found another chant text with the same number of syllables for that particular musical phrase.

The *ch’reli* system is not only anagalous to the Greek and Latin *incipit* system, which gives the initial intonation formula for the chant by referencing a well known textual example of that formula, but goes further in that it may reference any text from any place in any chant. Thus, if a troparion in Tone 4 has six model melody phrases, and the third phrase contains an unusual number of syllables, a small *ch’reli*-like rubic written in red ink could indicate the precise syllabic-distribution required with a quoted word or two from another (presumably well known) chant. For professional chanters, this type of mnemonic was sufficient to perform the new text with the same syllabic distribution, and to perform it precisely without rehearsal.

A familiar analogy might be appropriately borrowed from the world of statistics. Providing a precise mental framework using associative keywords is extremely useful to performers of games, tasks, or music that rely heavily on memory.\(^\text{711}\) In the game of chess, for example, the recognition of the opener called the Queen’s gambit might recall the following possible defenses depending on the level of student-player: Chigoran, symmetrical, Slav, Baltic, Marshall, Alekhine’s variation, etc.\(^\text{712}\) This list of verbal mnemonic keywords are each a mentally imprinted map of a detailed set of sequential moves. Similarly, a chanter in the midst of

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\(^\text{711}\) See more on the cognitive science behind music and memory in the section, 11.1.4 Model Melodies: Similarity and Difference.

singing *ulkhine*—the *ch'reli* name for a specific model melody phrase—is given a keyword that provides a reference to a known sequence of text-pitch relationships.

After analyzing the western notation published by Vasil K'arbelashvili in 1898, Andriadze concludes that the presence of such detailed textual references to phrases in other chants suggests that chanters did not learn model melodies as discrete units, but rather in the context of specific chant texts. This is a natural conclusion following analysis of the *ch’reli* lists, but perhaps should be limited to pedagogical practice in the oral transmission of chant in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There is no reason to presume that medieval hymnographers did not have a set of ideal forms of the model melody system that could be manipulated to accommodate texts of varying lengths.

An analysis of the seventeen examples of Tone 4 troparia contained in the standard publication of feast-day chants, used by every church choir in Georgia, shows that almost every one of these chants has unique solutions to the issue of setting texts of different lengths to the model melodies. In addition, the order of melodies varies widely, even the opening phrase. This evidence suggests that the model melody system had begun to break down by the nineteenth century. Instead of being able to rely on knowing just one set of model melodies and applying them to seventeen different troparion texts, as the system seems to have been designed for originally, chanters were being asked to remember seventeen chants with uncomfortably similar sets of melodies. This situation made it even more difficult to remember the nuances of each chant text than if they had completely different melodies.

The *ch’reli* referential system should therefore be seen as an ingenious solution for chanters burdened by too many variations of the same model melodies. At least temporarily, chanters could refer to (known) instances of chants where not only was the model melody the same, but the text distribution was *exactly* the same. The *ch'reli* index named the model melody, and the additional word or reference to a chant with similar text distribution pinpointed its intended use for the text at hand.

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713 John A. Graham, unpublished study. Chants analyzed from: *Kartuli Galoba, Mtsukhris-Tsiskris-Zhamistsirvis, Tormet Saupto da Udzrav Dghesastasulta, Pasekis, Panashvidis Da Kortsinebis Sagaloblebi, Gelatis Skola* [Matins, Vespers, Twelve Great Feasts and Immovable Feasts, Easter, Requiem and Wedding chants, Gelati School], Vol. II. eds. Malkhaz Erkvanidze, et. al. (Tbilisi: Chant Center of the Georgian Patriarchate, 2002). The study found that tone 4 troparia shared common model melodies, but differed in phrase order and ornamentation level.
The *ch’reli* were in use by master chanthers in East and West Georgia until the mid nineteenth century.\(^{714}\) The Vasil K’arbelashvili archive requires thorough research to identify further nuances of the *ch’reli* system. For example, his transcriptions of variants of the same model melodies should illustrate the ways in which named melodies in the *ch’reli* system were distinguished from one another. Furthermore, the additional meanings of *ch’reli*—highly ornamented, untexted additional phrase, etc.—demand careful study. These avenues of research should yield not only further information on the *ch’reli* system, but much anticipated insight into the nature of the oral tradition in the later period of the transmission of Georgian chant.

\[9.2 \text{ Nishnebi Neume Notation}\]

In the late eighteenth century, and continuing into the twentieth century, several manuscripts attest to a new type of semiographical neume notation. The various representations of this notation appear in personal handbooks of chant texts from different parts of the country, and together as a group are described with the term *nishnebi*, meaning “signs.” More than a dozen independently written sources from both East and West Georgia are witness to this form of *samusik’o nishnebis sist’ema* [system of musical signs],\(^{715}\) which does not seem to have ever been systematized, codified, or otherwise written out with any explanatory treatise.

In this section, several examples from different *nishnebi* sources are compared in order to examine the similarities and differences in the notation. The function and purpose of the notation is explored through the presentation of first-hand descriptions by known authors of *nishnebi* notation. Unique and unusual aspects of the notation are presented in a separate section that describes the phenomenon of using written vowels to indicate the rhythmic prolongation of certain syllables over a musical melisma (see, 9.4 Inserted Phoneme Notation). Finally, an analysis of various sources from the last cognizanti of *nishnebi* notation, Art’em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967), allows us to compare his neume system with staff notation of the same chants recorded during his lifetime.

\(^{714}\) Manana Andriadze likewise mentions this as a needed avenue of research in her dissertation, *Sagalobelta zhanrebi*... (PhD diss., 1998), 90.

\(^{715}\) Manana Andriadze, “Samusik'ok nishnebis sist'ema XIX sau'unis kartul samegaloblo p'rakt'ik'ashi” [Notational System of the Nineteenth Century in Chant Practice], *Musik’is mtsodneobis sak’itkhebi* [Questions in Musicology] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1999).
9.2.1 The Last Grand-Masters: 1949

The twentieth century witnessed the degradation of many oral traditions around the world. One of those that nearly disappeared entirely was the masters tradition of three-voiced liturgical chant of the Georgian Orthodox Church, an orally-transmitted musical system that endured for centuries in the rural monasteries of this South Caucasian nation. Three of the very last master chanter tradition, already in their advanced age, were recorded by the ethnomusicologist Vladimir Akhobadze in 1949, leader of a field expedition for the Tbilisi Conservatory. The goal of the trip focused on recording folksongs, but also included the possibility of recording any liturgical hymns that might remain after nearly three decades of religious suppression from the Soviet State (religious chant was under a strict performance ban in both public and private spaces).

Akhobadze was fortunate to find the last three great chanter of the oral tradition of Orthodox liturgical chant: Varlam Simonishvili (1884-1950), Art’em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967), and Dimit’ri P’at’arava (1892-1955). He had perhaps heard of the aging trio because just two years previous, in 1947, they had performed a traditional funeral service for Gigo Erkomaishvili (1840-1907), their longtime choir-director. In doing so, they defied a longtime Soviet moratorium on the traditional chant of the Orthodox Church and shocked listeners by singing dozens of ornate, three-voiced polyphonic chants from memory. Gigo Erkomaishvili’s great-grandson Anzor, who was present at the funeral as a young boy, later recalled, "The whole village was stunned, as this ritual had not been seen since the Bolsheviks came to power. Only the elderly remembered it.”

In 1949, the three chanter gathered to make a recording for the visiting Conservatory professor. A witness of the recording session, Samuel Toidze (the nephew of P’at’arava), later recalled the first rehearsal:

They decided to sing the ninth canticle for the feast of the Nativity, saidumlo utskho [A mystery strange and most glorious]. Dimit’ri P’at’arava began singing first. Then he was

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716 These singers were all students of Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze (1858-1934), who was himself a student of Ant’on Dumbadze (1924-1907).
717 Anzor Erkomaishvili (b. 1939), Gigo Erkomaishvili’s great grandson, was present at the funeral and recalled that the three chanter had stood next to the open coffin and performed the entire traditional funeral service from memory.
joined by the second voice, Varlam Simonishvili, and as for bass, Art'emat Erkomaishvili sang it as usual. It was the first time I had heard my uncle Dimit'ri sing first voice, and with Simonishvili joining in, I was unable to recognize their voices. If before that I had listened to their voices as basses, and liked them very much, now I was even more charmed, for in this case all their voices found the right place, and now, I understand how important this moment was.

This story illustrates an insight into the concepts presented in this chapter: despite all three chanters being characterized as basses, P'at'arava was easily able to assume the duty of singing the lead melody voice. Simonishvili likewise easily performed the second voice, despite this particular chant being one of the more difficult in the Shemokmedi monastery chant tradition.

This versatility demonstrates how critical it was for master chanters to know all three voice parts of every single chant, despite their comfortable vocal range.

Akhobadze recorded eleven chants in 1949, and afterwards engaged in the following dialogue (as remembered by witness, Samuel Toidze).

“How many chants can you sing?” Asked Vladimir Akhobadze of the three elderly men.

“Now that I'm thinking about it,” said Varlam Simonishvili, a famous choir director and folk singer, "I can recall about 350 [chants]. But you, dear Art'em, must know many more, don't you?”

“About 2500,” Art'emat Erkomaishvili replied, after some thought.

Turning to the third chanter, Dimit'ri P'at'arava, Simonishvili asked: “In any case Dimit'ri, you must certainly remember more than we do, because when we were apprentices, you were a thorough recorder of those cheat sheets (neume notation).”

“If you allow me to use this little book,” said Dimit'ri P'at'arava, producing a thick pocket-book of chant-texts with personalized neume notation, “I can sing about 3500 chants for you.”


720 While the duration of specific chants may vary between 30 seconds and 4 minutes, the level of difficulty in learning and retaining such a vast repertory in oral memory cannot be underestimated. As a point of comparison, students at the School of Chant and Folklore in Tbilisi, Georgia, are able to sing on average about 40-50 troparia and heirmoi chants by heart, as well as the basic set of 50 liturgy chants, according to Zurab Gogoladze (interview, March 29, 2008).


722 The word shp'argalk'ebi [Russian: cheat-sheet] was used to refer to the nishnebi neume notation in the personal pocket-book of chant texts possessed by Dimit'ri P'at'arava.
This telling anecdote, which was reported years later by Samuel Toidze who was present at the time of the interview, underscores the immense knowledge and capability of the class of chanters known as srulimalobeli [complete chanter]. When these three chanters were recorded in 1949, it was the last live recording ever made of three srulimalobeli, raised and trained in the methods of oral transmission inherited through generations of teachers. No one understood the fragility of the chant tradition more than the singers. Varlam Simonishvili said,

After the Soviet rule was established in Georgia, I gave up singing these church hymns and quite forgot them. I will sing together not only with old friends, but with anyone who wants to, so that this treasure of ours won’t be lost. I have been preaching this idea for these last years, because if one of us three leaves this world, two of us will not be able to cope with it, as this treasure will disappear to the grave with us.

Simonishvili was the first of the three to die, passing away the following year. In 1966, Erkomaishvili was recorded by the Tbilisi State Conservatory professor Kakha Rosebashvili, but by then the other chanters had died. He was the last living singer to inherit the oral tradition of the Shemokmedi monastery liturgical chant tradition.

9.2.2 The Earliest Nishnebi Sources

Individual nishnebi manuscripts have been the object of limited scholarly attention in recent decades, but offer fertile ground for further research. The much-respected musicologist Manana Andriadze (†2013) defended her doctoral thesis in 1998 on the subject of nishnebi notation, and this document still presents the standard secondary source for the subject, though continuing research by her students has expanded on many unanswered questions in the dissertation. Ek’at’erine Oniani, for example, completed a dissertation in 2004 that focused on the earliest nishnebi source, the Ambrosi chantbook (Q-845) written in 1793. Each of the approximately dozen nishnebi sources will eventually be the subject of dissertations or indeed, of

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723 Unfortunately, the book of P’at’arava neume notation referenced in this story is not known to the scholarly community. It is hoped that it still exists in a private collection and will become available in future decades.

724 Samuel Toidze went on to express his own feelings about the recording session with the following words: “And I, personally, was of the following opinion: I have listened to so many good songs in my life, to so many good concerts performed by excellent ensembles, even headed and performed by the singers themselves. But it was quite different to listen to these three grandmasters together. Nothing will be able to erase it from my memory while I am alive.” Toidze, “The Unique Treasure...” (1981), republished in Shugliashvili, Eleven Pearls (2004).

725 ibid.
entire monographs. For our purposes, a basic introduction to the system with analysis of one or two sources will have to suffice.

The sources for *nishnebi* neume notation generally appear in small, personal books of hand-written chant texts. In some cases, it is clear that both the text and neumes were written by the same person, while in others, the neumes appear to have been added to previously written texts. This tells us a lot about their creation and use. Each manuscript displays unique notational qualities, suggesting that the system was never specifically codified, theorized, or copied from one manuscript to another, but was rather a general system that supplemented the memorization of the Georgian chant repertory through oral transmission. These manuscripts were created by knowledgeable chanters during a period of vibrant creativity and revival (see the section, 3.1 The Historical Context).

Taking into account the geographical authorship of the *nishnebi* manuscripts, they can be broadly grouped into two categories: those originating in East Georgia, and those originating in West Georgia. However, clergy during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries frequently moved between East and West Georgia, a fact that adds another layer of uncertainty in determining which of the many monastic musical traditions are represented in each source.

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726 The following manuscripts contain *nishnebi* notation from East Georgia: NCM Q-845, attributed to Ambros of Nek'resi Monastery (East Georgia) and dated to 1793. NCM H-657, a collection of Paschal hymns attributed to the Priest Ioane Mrevlishvili and Archimandrite T'arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili, dated to first quarter of the nineteenth century. NCM Q-264 dates from the late nineteenth century (and early twentieth century) and contains several hundred looseleaf pages written by Vasil K'arbelashvili. These pages represent mostly transcriptions in *staff* notation, but also include a few pages of neume notation. K’arbelashvili attempted to decipher the medieval neume system, so many of these leaflets contain medieval neumes rather than the *nishnebi* neumes.

727 Most of the West Georgian neume sources seem to originate from the Shemokmedi Monastery. Where identifiable, these sources are attributed to students of the master chanter Ant’on Dumbadze (1824-1907). They include the following: NCM Q-651, a Pentecostarion from Shemokmedi Monastery, unknown nineteenth century authorship. NCM Q-634, a chantbook of festal troparia from the Shemokmedi Monastery. Zep’iri Sagalobeli, NCM Q-830, written by Ektime K’ereselidze in the 1880s while studying with the Shemokmedi Monastery chanter Melk’esidek Nak’ashidze in Tbilisi. *Sagaloblis ts’igni* [Chantbook], Art’em Erkomaishvili (1885-1967), located in the Erkomaishvili private family collection. Various other sources also exist, such as a few pages of neume notation by Anania Erkomaishvili, brother of Art’em Erkomaishvili. The manuscript fragment of a nineteenth century neumed chantbook by Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze (d. 1921), which contains only seven neumed chants, is kept in the Mart’vili Monastery museum. A source of neumed chant texts from the Tek’lati Convent in West Georgia is held in private collection.

728 Ambros of Nek’reseli (1728-1812), born Zakaria Mikadze, was an aristocrat from West Georgia. He was famous as a churchman in East Georgia, however, where he served as abbot of Ts’il’k’neti Monastery and then bishop of Nek’resi from 1794-1812. His sermons and poetry were highly influential, and were reportedly copied and disseminated throughout Georgia. Manuscript Q-845, the earliest known *nishnebi* neume manuscript, is attributed to him.
It is a peculiarity of Georgian chant studies that, after the eleventh century, the known music manuscripts do not contain a single instance of musical notation until the late eighteenth century heirmologion of Ambros Nek’reseli.\textsuperscript{729} This seven-century lacuna of neumed manuscripts raises several questions, notably the extent to which scholars can make claims about the musical continuity between manuscripts of the “Golden Era” of Georgian hymnography in the tenth-twelfth centuries, and manuscripts of the later feudal period in the seventeenth, eighteenth and into the beginning of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{730} But the lack of manuscripts, at least between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, can also be attributed to the political turmoil of the Caucasus region during the period.\textsuperscript{731} It is possible, but unlikely, that Christian manuscripts were confiscated by marauding armies and removed with other spoils of war. But more commonly, scriptoria were systematically destroyed.\textsuperscript{732} What is more perplexing about the lack of neumed manuscripts is the lacuna during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries before the Mongol invasions, a period of considerable prosperity for the Georgian Orthodox Church, but some reason, a dearth of neumed manuscripts.\textsuperscript{733}

After studying the neumed sources, the early twentieth-century historian, Ivane Javakhishvili, concluded that, “if not before then, by at least the eighteenth century they had

\textsuperscript{729} A discussion on sources occurs in Manana Andriadze, Sagalobelta zhanrebi... (PhD diss., 1998), 90.
\textsuperscript{730} Musicologist Ek’at’erine Oniani argues that the neume notation in the Ambros Nek’reseli manuscript (NCM Q-845) shows a “natural progression from earlier stages of musical notation.” Points of continuity, she contends, include the similarity of some neumes and the placement of symbols both above and below the text, while points of difference include the increased frequency of neumes (in the later source) and the addition of new symbols such as dots and slashes of varying lengths. Such questions of continuity will be difficult to substantiate one way or the other unless new sources surface. For a detailed discussion of this manuscript, see the dissertation, Ek’at’erine Oniani, Nevmuri damts’erloba da nevmuri sist’ema ghvtismsakhurebis kartul p’rakt’ik’ashi (IX-X da XVIII sauk’unis khehnats’erta magalitze) [Neume Writing and Neume Systems in Georgian Liturgical Practice (from ninth and tenth century and eighteenth century manuscript examples) (PhD diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 2004). Also cited in Sukhiashvili and Oniani, “The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant,” (forthcoming, 2015).
\textsuperscript{731} The kingdoms of Iberia, T’ao-Klarjeti, and Abkhazia-Samegrelo (and the Armenian kingdoms to the Southeast), were invaded by the Khwarazmian Turks, the Golden Horde, Timur [Tamerlane], Safavid Persians, Seljuk Turks, Qajar Persians, and the Ottoman Turks.
\textsuperscript{732} A famous scriptorium existed at the David Gareja Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Eastern Georgia. This was destroyed when Shah Abbas I of Persia annihilated the twenty monasteries of the region and executed the entire monastic population in 1616 AD. Local hagiography refers to this historical event as the “Six thousand martyrs of David Gareja,” though the true number of deceased may never be known. The scriptorium revived in a reduced state starting in 1690.
\textsuperscript{733} The relatively plentiful manuscripts from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries do not contain neume notation, suggesting that the use of medieval neume had changed, been forgotten, or perhaps that a shift in the musical production of chant had made the eleventh century neume system obsolete. Future research must address this question, however, as the lack of neumed manuscripts during this specific period does not fit the generally accepted explanation that political turmoil and invasion can be blamed for the lack of neumed manuscripts. Rather, they were already out of fashion during the height of ecclesiastical power in the twelfth century.
forgotten the practice of writing and reading neume notation, and that is why they were only capable of learning chant through memorization.”³³⁴ In a discussion of this premise in her dissertation, Manana Andriadze disputes his claim, suggesting that Javakhishvili based his observations primarily on medieval sources, and may not have considered the various nishnebi manuscripts now available for study.³³⁵ It is also possible, however, that Javakhishvili was aware of the nishnebi sources, but was referring specifically to the medieval Georgian notation in saying that knowledge of how to read them had been lost.

The nishnebi manuscripts, as a group, do not have very much in common except the use of a new type of neume notation. The manuscripts appear to have been produced in a wide variety of geographical locations in Georgia, represent different liturgical texts, date from a wide historical period, and feature unique notational styles. It is unclear, furthermore, which musical traditions the various neume systems represent, though analysis and educated guesswork has advanced considerably on this topic in recent years. These differences notwithstanding, the general descriptor of “nishnebi manuscripts” is used to refer to this group of sources for purposes of identifying notated manuscripts.

Each region of Georgia used to have unique musical variations of common model melody groups, manifested in local techniques of ornamentation and harmonization that vary considerably among the Georgian provinces. The transcription of Georgian chant preserved, for the most part, only three major traditions, while several others are known to have been lost. Thus, it is possible that the neumes in some of the nishnebi manuscripts represent lost variations of Georgian chant. But it is more likely that, as a group, the neumes represent the common model melody systems of each regional school of chant, and can therefore be profitably compared (once each neume system has been deciphered). The complexities of this project are staggering, but promise to yield exciting information about the state of the inherited oral tradition of chant during the first decades of the Russian suppression of the Georgian Orthodox Church (and chanting tradition) in the early nineteenth century. Before looking at some examples, it will be useful to summarize the available information on the most indispensible nishnebi sources.

³³⁴ Ivane Javakhishvili, Kartuli musik ’is... (1938), 249.
³³⁵ Manana Andriadze, Sagalobelta zhanrebi (PhD diss., 1998), 73. For a list of other scholars that have studied nishnebi and neumed sources, see the overview on page 75.
Manuscript NCM Q-845, attributed to Ambros of Nek’reseli (1728-1812), preserves the earliest extant example of a new style of neume notation created during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The manuscript is a small pocketbook, measuring only 11x15cm, with 474 pages of densely written chant texts in the mkhedruli alphabet. A colophon on the first page indicates that it took two years to produce the manuscript at Ts’il’k’neli Monastery, and it was given as a present to someone in 1793. Neume notation is not systematic throughout the manuscript, but appears on at least 20-30 pages as small slashes, groups of dots, and the occasional inserted phoneme that was likely added after the text was complete.

Manuscript NCM H-657 is also a personal chantbook, measuring just 16x10cm. It contains approximately one hundred and fifty pages of handwritten neumed chant texts, many of them associated with the Paschal cycle. Very little research has been published on this source, which exhibits remarkable calligraphy and unique features of neume notation (Figure 115). A colophon on the first page of the manuscript indicates that it belonged to a priest named Ioane Mrevlishvili, and scholar Ek’at’erine Oniani has dated the manuscript to circa 1812 based on evidence that Mrevlishvili was ordained at that time. But the manuscript is also associated with the Iqalto region of East Georgia, where other members of the family such as Andria Mrevlishvili served as priests and chanters for the Maqashvili aristocratic family. One record suggests that a certain Ioane Mrevlishvili was ordained in 1807. Manana Andriadze suggests that this was likely the same priest, therefore manuscript H-657 can be dated to the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Andriadze, Sagalobelta zhanrebi... (PhD diss., 1998), 106. But the available information about manuscript H-657 in the catalogue of the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi states that it was donated in 1911 by Bishop Kirion Sadzaglishvili (1855-1918), a former abbot of the Kvabtakhevi Monastery. This raises suspicion that the manuscript may have belonged to famed chanter and abbot of Kvabtakhevi Monastery, Archimandrite T’arasi Aleksi-Meskhishvili (see, 3.2.5 T’arasi Alexi-Meskhishvili).
with the Kvabtakhevi Monastery in East Georgia and its outspoken abbot, T’aras Alexi-Meshkishvili (1805-1874), thus producing speculation that the manuscript was created later.

The Zat’i’i [Pentecostarion] from Shemokmedi Monastery is a beautifully calligraphed miniature reference guide for chanters, measuring just 10x8cm (manuscript Q-651, National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi).\textsuperscript{740} It features nearly two hundred pages of tiny nushkuri script (the church alphabet), with neume notation added in pencil (Figure 116). Identifying information about the Zat’i’i manuscript is scarce. A short note on the first page, “Shemokmedi Monastery, 1924,” suggests that the manuscript was brought to the Tbilisi archive in 1924 from the Shemokmedi Monastery in West Georgia. But the organization of the manuscript, and its use of the older, church alphabet, suggests that it was written in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The musicologist Manana Andriadze classified the neumes in the Zat’i’i manuscript into a typology that includes nine groups. She noted the systematic use of neumes in the manuscript, which were added after the text was written.\textsuperscript{741} Certain chants near the end of the manuscript were added in a different handwriting and appear to have been written by a chanter because of the added vowel phonemes to indicate melismatic durations (see the section, 9.4 Inserted Phoneme Notation).

The student notebook of Ekvtime K’ereselidze (manuscript NCM Q-830) is one of the most remarkable and valuable sources in the entire record of Georgian chant sources. Written while K’ereselidze was a student of the chanter Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze in the early 1880s,\textsuperscript{742} the notebook includes 335 pages of clearly written texts with elaborate neume notation added in pencil (Figure 117). The chants are presumably written in the order that they were taught, which is in itself an interesting reflection of the pedagogy of oral transmission. Likewise, the neume notation demonstrates some development through the manuscript, though it was clearly added after the text was written out. In an introduction to the text that he added later, K’ereselidze wrote:

\textsuperscript{740} For discussion of manuscript NCM Q-651, see Andriadze, Sagalobelta zhanrebi... (PhD diss., 1998), 106-112. The Zat’i’i [Pentecostarion] became an independent liturgical book starting in the eleventh century: previously, it had been combined with the Lenten Triodion in one book called the Khvedrni.

\textsuperscript{741} Ibid.: 106-112. It should be noted that the final dozen chant texts in manuscript Q-651 were written with inserted phonemes in a different handwriting, a music-referential technique employed only by chanters (see the section, 9.4 Inserted Phoneme Notation).

\textsuperscript{742} For a detailed discussion of this important period in the history of the transmission of Georgian liturgical chant, see the section, 6.1.1 The K’abineti.
Along with some others, I began to learn Georgian-Imeretian chant by heart from the chanter Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze, starting in 1882. So that we would not forget what we had already learned, we all marked the verses and words with signs (before we knew how to read notation), and these signs helped our studies tremendously.\footnote{Ektime K'ereselidze, prescript, manuscript Q-830 (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts), 1r.}

From this insightful commentary, several questions arise: to what extent did Nak’ashidze and other masters use neume notation as a pedagogical tool, and to what extent did students rely on this notation once the chant form was learned? Furthermore, were K’ereselidze and Erkomaishvili exceptions in their diligence in marking up their study manuals with neumes, or was this a widespread phenomenon? To what extent, can scholars call these individual and private notational styles a single school? These questions are pursued in the following sections comparing specific examples from several different nishnebi neume sources.

9.2.4 Nishnebi Neume Analysis: Upalo ghaghad vqav

The Vespers chant Upalo ghaghad vqav [Lord, I have Cried] appears in several manuscripts written out eight times with different neume notation over each text. As a chant text that falls into the Rva-khma classification [literally ‘eight-voice’; Gk. Oktoechos], its text is sung to a different set of unique model melodies each week in the Georgian Orthodox calendar over an eight week cycle.\footnote{The Georgian melodies for the Vespers chant, “Lord I have Cried,” are unique, and do not overlap with the melodies for other chant genres such as troparia, kondakia, heirmoi, or alleluia. For more on the Georgian eight-tone system (rva-khma), see the excellent dissertation on the topic: Shugliashvili, Rva khmis sist'ema... (PhD diss., 2009).} The following three examples exhibit notation for Tone 5 of Upalo ghaghad vqav from three of the available sources containing Nishnebi neume notation.

Compared to the medieval Georgian neume notation, the nishnebi neumes are more numerous, and demonstrate a variety of new shapes (cups, strokes, dots, multiple lines). The nishnebi neumes also appear both above and below texts, like the medieval system. The melodies for the eight tones of this chant were preserved in oral transmission, and without access to those melodies, there is only so much information that we can gather from this type of referential neume notation system. The musical content of these neumes has not been conclusively deciphered, and much potential research awaits this field of study. Still, comparative analysis between neumed sources, and other sources does yield valuable information.
The text of the Mrevlishvili manuscript from East Georgia (Figure 115) appears to be written with enough space for neume notation to be placed between syllables, as well as above and below the text. This observation, together with the fact that the neumes and text are written with the same ink and in the same handwriting indicates that the text and the neumes were likely written at the same time by a single scribe (these were personal chantbooks and not created in scriptoria as in the medieval Georgian period).

**Figure 115. Upalo ghaghad vqav, Tone 5, NCM H-657: 12v**

The variety of cup, dot, and line shapes observable in this example is highlighted by the curious arrangement of multiple line signs close together (Figure 115). Such a sign does not appear in other Georgian neumed sources. In addition to leaving space for intra-syllabic neume notation, there is one instance of a repeated vowel written for musical purposes (boxed, Figure 115). This is a curious instance of this writing because it appears that two melismas must be sung to the same syllable: the first is indicated by three dots below the syllable “ne” (6), while the second is indicated by a series of four neumes above an additional “e” vowel (7), including one dot and three cup-shaped neumes. This is a simple and affective way to generate enough space to include seven different neume signs above and below one syllable, a technique that becomes more and more pronounced in later *nishnebi* neume manuscripts.

The same chant, *upalo ghaghad vqav* [Lord, I have cried], appears in the *Zat'ik'i* manuscript (Q-651) from the Shemokmedi Monastery (Figure 116). Though at first the faded pencil neumes look rough and imprecise in comparison to the bold line neumes in H-657, the
variety and placement of the neumes reveal the expertise of an experienced chanter. The use of inserted phonemes can be seen in this manuscript in, for example, the syllables at the end of the first line (Figure 116). The vowel “ee” in the nuskhuri alphabet (o-o-o) is repeated three times above the syllable “mi” (əo). These inserted vowel phonemes are circled.

**Figure 116. Upalo ghaghad vqav, Tone 5, NCM Q-651: 48v**

In the personal notebook of Ekvtime K’ereselidze (Q-830), the chant, *upalo ghaghad vqav* [Lord, I have cried] is visible with a different set of neume signs (Figure 117). Like in Q-651, the neumes are added in pencil above a previously written text in ink, and comprise a variety of lines, cups, dots, and inserted vowel phonemes. The multiple line sign combinations seen in H-657 do not appear here. K’ereselidze adds punctuation neumes, which are very useful, as these presumably indicate musical cadences of the model melodies (circled, Figure 117).

**Figure 117. Upalo ghaghad vqav, Tone 5, NCM Q-830: 149**
When comparing the neume notation in these three sources, certain elements are similar but there are also quite a few differences. The latter two examples—the Shemokmedi Monastery Zat‘ik‘i (Q-651) and the K’ereselidze chantbook (Q-830)—have more similarities than the Mrevlishvili manuscript (H-657). The latter displays an abundance of signs that do not appear in the other two manuscripts.

At first glance, the K’ereselidze neume notation seems to be grouped in bunches near the ends of cadential phrases. The unnotated text was likely recited, indicating that this was a fairly simple musical variant of the chant. In fact, this is one element that seems to be common between the three neumed sources of this chant: the neume notation in all three manuscripts appears in groupings differentiated from other areas where there are sections of un-neumed text. It is intriguing, however, that the locations of the neume groupings in the sources do not coincide. Neither do the graphic symbols. Therefore, we must assume (pending further research) that these manuscripts represent different variants of this common Vespers chant, and that the neume systems they represent were never codified and disseminated in any systematic manner. Rather, it seems that each neume system was the invention or adaptation of the authors of each particular manuscript.

### 9.3 Nishnebi Neumes and Questions of Polyphony

Several comments from contemporary authors of nishnebi neumes provide valuable insight into the social and musical function of the notation system. With only one set of neumes over a given text, must scholars assume that chanters were singing in unison? How is this possible, considering that the inherited Georgian chant tradition is three-voiced? The question of whether neumes represented a monophonic or a polyphonic performance tradition is still debated, when it concerns the medieval sources of neume notation. But for the nishnebi neume sources, it is clear that the same singers that notated chant using this system also sang in three-voiced polyphony.

Another question addressed in this section is the extent to which this notation was useful for chanters. Why aren't there more sources? Why did only certain chanters write nishnebi neume notation, while contemporaries did not? According to eyewitness testimony from Pilimon Koridze, neumed manuscripts seemed to carry significant social status for the chanters that
possessed them, so again the question, why weren't more such books created? One conclusion is that neume notation only became useful for extremely advanced chant students of the oral tradition, while others could rely on their memories. Only those attempting to learn multiple thousands of chants seemed to write and possess neumed chantbooks.

9.3.1 Art’em Erkomaishvili: Neumes Represent Melody

Art’em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967), a galvanizing chanter who figures prominently in this dissertation (Figure 118), was a famous singer of folk polyphony and liturgical polyphony. Audio and video recordings of his performances in the 1950s and 1960s represent some of the most significant sources for the performance practice of traditional music in Georgia.

Figure 118. Art'em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967), c. 1960

When interviewed on the subject of neume notation, Art’em Erkomaishvili made an extremely useful comment about the musical representation of the nishnebi signs. The interview, recorded by Anzor Erkomaishvili, a Conservatory student in the 1960s and a keen observer of his grandfather’s unique knowledge, includes the following:
“Grandfather Art’em specifically stated that neumes were used only for the first voice. The other voice parts would remember their parts by ear, following the first voice's lead.”745

This critical reference leads us to consider exactly how and why neume notation was reserved only for the top voice, especially in light of the fact that as a bass, Erkomaishvili most often sang the third voice when performing liturgical chant. But the comment also reflects what scholars have come to understand about the hierarchy of the

three voice parts and their inter-dependence (a topic explored in the section, 11.1 Georgian Model Melodies). Even though he was singer of the third and lowest voice part, Erkomaishvili knew all three voice parts and, critically, the referential melody sung in the top voice. The reliance of the lower two voice parts on this referential melody explains the need to write a graphic mnemonic for that voice as opposed to one or all of the other voice parts.

This testimony from a credible source, albeit in the twentieth century, gives ammunition to the argument that Georgian liturgical chant was performed as a polyphonic tradition as early as the ninth and tenth centuries. Medieval neume notation from the tenth century, they argue, also represented just the top voice melody, which was performed as a three-voiced polyphonic chant. The possibility of polyphonic performance in the medieval period cannot be excluded on the basis of neume notation that appears to only reflect a single voice, because the Erkomaishvili neumes show that a three-voiced performance is possible, even from neume notation that represents only one of those voice parts. Not only was it possible, the evidence supplied by Erkomaishvili makes it clear that this was the only reason that neumes were even written.

Another insight from Art‘em Erkomaishvili is instructive here (again as recorded by his grandson Anzor Erkomaishvili): "Grandfather used to say that someone who knew the neume system well could learn as many as ten new hymns each day."746 In short, the neume system was very useful. When considering that Erkomaishvili elsewhere reported having a repertory of 2500 chants in all three voices, the efficient intake of new melodies was an essential aspect of his student years.747 But interestingly, Erkomaishvili is one of only a handful of master chanters in the entire history of Georgian chant transmission whose neume notation has survived. Unknown thousands of chanters left no record of neume notation, and it must be assumed, because of a severe lack of sources, that most simply did not record their repertory in writing, preferring to rely on their memory.748

746 ibid.: 24.
748 Dimit’ri P’at’arava (1892-1955), another student of Melk’esidek Nak’ashidze, is reported to have been a “thorough writer of the signs.” Had his neumed notebook survived, it would provide an invaluable comparison to the surviving Erkomaishvili and K’ereselidze neumed chantbooks as the three of them all studied from the same teacher. Even with the technology of the nishnebi neume system available since at least 1793, the date of the earliest extant source, very few chanters seemed to find it useful enough to write personal notebooks similar to those examined this chapter. Despite the nineteenth century being a period of decline for the Georgian schools of chant, it is curious that there are not more sources for nishnebi notation from the hundreds of chanters around the country. Why wasn’t neume notation as useful for these other chanters as it was for Erkomaishvili? Or are there other problems here, such
It is tempting to assume that, by referring to the neume system facilitating learning chants, Erkomaishvili was suggesting that once one learned to write, one could easily read, and that through reading (neume notation) one could easily perform ten chants per day. But the reality is very different. Neume notation does not prescribe what notes to sing, it only references melodies that are already memorized. It is not the same as learning an alphabet and then being able to read anything written in that alphabet. Furthermore, if nishnebi neume notation could be read, then why would Erkomaishvili be limited to just ten new chants per day? A modern musician reading notation could conceivably “read” through thousands of pages of music notation in a day, and would not be limited to just ten hymns. Erkomaishvili must be referring to something else.

The usefulness of nishnebi neume notation is not how to sing the melody, but where. For learned chanters already versed in the appropriate model melody and harmonization, the knowledge of precisely where to implement melodic elements was much needed information especially when learning many new texts of varying phrase lengths. This is almost exactly the same situation which appears to have inspired the creation of the medieval Georgian neume system, and is generally a factor in the memorized performance of chant because Georgian liturgical texts do not have uniform syllable distribution between phrases like the liturgical poetry of Byzantine Greek. Each phrase needs to be adapted to the model melody, or rather, the model melody needs to be adapted to the text.

The nishnebi neumes indicate precisely where to sing the known melody to the new text. So the subtext to Erkomaishvili’s comment on neumes must be as follows: “Grandfather used to say that someone who knew the neume system well could learn as many as ten new hymns each day…” if they had already memorized the model melody, mastered the technique of three-voiced harmonization, and were skilled enough to adapt the model melody to textual phrases of differing lengths.

as lack of knowledge of the neume system, destruction of an untold number of manuscripts of nishnebi neume notation, or simply a decline of the chant tradition in the period discussed? Is it possible that only a few students wrote nishnebi notation because it was not in fact a useful technology for the others? Erkomaishvili’s premise that neume notation facilitated the learning of ‘as many as ten new hymns each day’ would seem to suggest that it was very useful, begging the question: why aren't there more sources for nishnebi neume notation?
9.3.2 The Secrecy of Nîshnebi Notation

The knowledge of neume notation was prized among Georgian chanter{s}. Its transmission reveals the elevated social function of the art of chanting in Georgian traditional society. Pilimon Koridze (1835-1911), an opera singer who worked with several master chanter{s} to transcribe their oral repertories into staff notation, noted the following story about the neumed chantbooks.

In order to ensure that a tune would be preserved unaltered, chants and songs were written down with special signs. This transcription was kept by a senior member of the family who had sworn, in writing, to keep it safe. Apparently in old times various competitions were customary…there were frequent singing and chanting competitions in which village against village, church against church, clan against clan would compete [in singing]. So they guarded these secret signs that their clan members had written down and concealed them from their curious opponents.749

The function of neumed chantbooks, according to this account, seems to have been as much about promoting the legitimacy and power of a particular master, as having any practical musical function.

It could be that only one or two such chant competitions ever existed, but their memory remained strong with students who repeated the stories in order to boost their own legitimacy as inheritors of a particular school of chant. Similar oral histories promoting the line of artistic master-apprentices exist in oral musical traditions around the world, and can be likened to oral histories of clan leaders and kings. But the value placed on the neumed liturgical manuscripts in Georgian traditional society, and the secrecy surrounding their writing and retention, reflects a complex social dynamic that is worth a short descriptive divergence.

In the feudal religious society of medieval, provincial Georgia (which arguably lasted through the Bolshevik Revolution of 1921 and beyond), the functionaries of the Orthodox Church were significant members of societal life. Master chanter{s} held a particularly respected role because, among the various clerical offices, their craft arguably demanded the most artistic skill. The Orthodox liturgy is a rite that is performed musically—by clergy, readers, and choir—thus placing enormous emphasis on the ability to sing. The Orthodox rite is also a dogmatic practice that follows strict sets of canons for all aspects of the performed liturgy, a set of

749 From the memoirs of Mikhei Koreli, Pilimon Koridze (Tbilisi, 1949), 87-88. Also cited in Sukhiashvili and Oniani, "The Art of Georgian Sacred Chant," (forthcoming, 2015). This remarkable reflection by Koridze is the product of oral history.
prescribed precepts that also permeated traditional life. The ability to sing well and the discipline to follow traditional rules were hallmarks of an accomplished chanter.

As a means of social elevation, chanting as a social occupation was also highly competitive. Accomplished chanters enjoyed widespread fame and respect among peers, avoided the drudgery of serf labor, and in some cases gained the patronage of aristocrats. Churchmen and chanters attached to bishops were also able to travel beyond their immediate province, a privilege not afforded to the average person. The competition to be the best local chanter inspired a guild-like mentality whereby well known master chanters could choose apprentices from among favored or allied clans, and could expect substantial economic compensation in the form of payments in grain, wine, or other services. Families hoping for social mobility encouraged their young sons to learn and study folksongs so that they might approach a master chanter about apprenticing their sons at the age of six or seven, selling his talent by displaying virtuosic singing ability and memory even at that young age. For the master chanters, the ability to gain and hold a position as a lead chanter in an urban church also required maintaining an exclusive school of apprentices who were perceived to be superior than competing groups of students.

The nishnebi neumed manuscripts were created as a means to preserve legitimacy in the face of competition. Lineages of chanters would claim that their book of neumes represented the true chant tradition, unspoiled by inferior chanters who broke the chain of quality in other competing traditions. Not surprisingly, the nishnebi neumes are almost incomprehensible to anyone except the person who wrote them. It is not even obvious if a student would be able to read their master’s neumes, as the comparisons in this section will show. By the late nineteenth century, the knowledge of neumes was not necessarily kept secret, but the available sources indicated that each student seems to have adapted a set of basic tenets for their own purpose. The result is a series of manuscripts that appear to be loosely related but in reality present unique notation systems in each source. So it is with these considerations that we evaluate the musical and mnemonic function of the neumes in this section.

One question posed is whether or not the diversity of neume systems reflects a diversity of performance practice, or simply the preferences of each individual chant student. If the notation does reflect a diversity of performance practice, was this a tradition that was changing every ten years as chant teachers trained new generations of students, or is there some consistency to the musical tradition that is not immediately apparent in the diverse written
sources? The answer to this question is complex, but it can be said that while manuscripts represent the most objective material evidence that can be studied by modern scholars, they represent an incomplete picture of the actual chanting tradition.

9.4 Inserted Phoneme Notation

One aspect of the nishnebi neumes that is essential for our understanding of this notation system is the insertion of additional phonemes into the text. Since this writing technique has specific musical relevance, it must be evaluated as a form of musical representation. The problem is that nishnebi notation does not specify the precise duration of notes, therefore the chanter did not know how many beats a particular syllable might require, even though the number of specific pitches might be indicated with different neumes. This became more of a problem with ornamental chants, or texts sung over ch’reli type phrases of ideomelic musical material (see section, 9.1 The Ch’reli System). Writing out additional vowel phonemes solved this problem, as chanters were able to visually represent the number of beats given to a single syllable. While it remained non-specific in its rhythmic representation of any individual note, the duration of the entire syllable was ultimately the more critical information for chanters to know in a polyphonic context.

9.4.1 Nateli mkhiaruli [Oh, Gladsome Light]

There are two ways that we see the principle of the inserted phoneme expressed in the manuscript record. In the K’ereselidze chantbook, a series of vowels rise in ascending diastematic lines above each syllable of text, each vowel representing one unit of duration or one note (the distinction is unclear). In the highly ornamented chant, Nateli mkhiaruli [Oh, Gladsome Light], for example, one immediately notices the repeated “i” vowels (ooo) (pronounced “ee”) above the first and second word of the chant (Figure 119). See detail in Figure 120. To hear a version of this chant, refer to Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #8.

On closer examination, the vowel of the sung syllable is sometimes modified to a nearby vowel when changing pitch, a diphthong technique perhaps familiar to folk singers of
Appalachian or country music. The social and improvisatory function of diphthongs and added vowels are also present in Georgian folk music, as explored in a recent dissertation by Lauren Ninoshvili.

**Figure 119. Nateli mkhiaruli, NCM Q-830: 266**

For example, above the second syllable (-a-) of the word *mkhi-a-ru-li* (მქხი-ა-რუ-ლი), the musical symbols alternate between repeating the “a” vowel and inserting an “i” vowel in the following progression “i-a-i-a-a” (ი-ა-ი-ა-ა). The heard affect is a melisma sung on alternating vowel sounds (see detail, Figure 120). This singing technique is fairly common in Georgian folk music and appears to have been a feature of the liturgical chant tradition studied by K’ereselidze (recordings from West Georgian chanters during the twentieth century confirm this).

**Figure 120. Detail: Nateli mkhiaruli, NCM Q-830: 266**

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751 For more on the symbolic meaning and practical function of singing non-semantic syllables particularly in folk music see, Lauren Ninoshvili, “Singing between the Words...” (PhD diss., 2010).

Inserted phonemes also appear in a second more direct manner: written directly into the text. Instead of placing vowel phonemes (along with neumes) above a previously copied chant text, this technique involves writing out the entire text with each vowel receiving one musical beat. For example, if a five-note melisma is required on the vowel “a”, the text is written out with five “a” vowels (aaaaa). The resulting text is often four or five times as long as the original text (with dozens of added vowel sounds), and is nearly illegible for anyone that does not realize that they are looking at a form of music notation. This is a writing system developed specifically to represent music to knowledgeable readers. The text may or may not have added neumes. In the following example, the first words of the chant nateli mkhiaruli, this principle is clearly illustrated (Figure 121).

Figure 121. nateli mkhiaruli, NCM Q-651: 92r

In this example, we are invited to examine the same syllable in the chant, nateli mkhiaruli, as presented in the previous example. In this case, the diphthong vowels, “i-a-i-a-a” (i-o-o-o-o) have been added to the vowel “-a-” of the word mkhi-a-ru-li (mxi-o-σ-ει-γι-γε) in order to signify the number of beats or notes that must be sung to that syllable (boxed, Figure 121). In this case, as before, the extra phonemes are not written above the text, but within it. In this way, the problem of notating the rhythmic duration of syllables achieved a partial solution.

Rhythmic information was of vital performance for chanters already well versed in the basic model melodies of the chant, but needing to know the precise number of beats for each sung syllable. Having this knowledge also likely helped chanters determine which variant of the
model melodies to sing. West Georgian chant is famous for its complex voice crossings and ornamental variations of basic model melodies.\textsuperscript{753}

## 9.5 The Art'em Erkomaishvili private chantbook

A significant source of neume notation comes from the last of the master chanters of Georgian liturgical chant, Art’em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967). The following section describes his work and presents some introductory analyses of his neume system using the funerary chant \textit{Sich’abuk’isa qvavili} as a music example. The context for the performance of this chant can be illustrated through the following description of a historical event:

In 1947, the most famous traditional singer in the region of Guria, Gigo Erkomaishvili, died at the age of 100 years old. The whole village turned out for the burial. A trio of his students, longtime members of his choir Dimit’ri P’at’arava, Varlam Simonishvili, and his eldest son Art’em Erkomaishvili, stood next to the open coffin, and sang the entire traditional music service for his funeral. They defied a Soviet moratorium on Orthodox church chanting (public or private), shocking listeners by singing dozens of ornate, three-voiced polyphonic chants from memory. Gigo’s great-grandson Anzor, who was present at the funeral as a young boy, later recalled, "The whole village was stunned, as this ritual had not been seen since the Bolsheviks came to power… only the elderly remembered it."\textsuperscript{754} One of the chants heard at the funeral would have been \textit{sich’abuk’isa qvavili} [Flower of Youth],\textsuperscript{755} a complex hymn known only to the best chanters.

\textsuperscript{753} For more on the subject, see the section, 11.2.1 The Concept of the 'Referent' Melody. Musicologist Manana Andriadze points out that the chant texts written out with duplicated vowels, such as \textit{Nateli mkhiaruli} in Q-651, are also the same chant texts that are designated as ch’reli in the transcriptions in staff-notation by Ekvtime K’ereselidze. Though the meaning of the word ch’reli in earlier sources referred to model melodies listed by keywords in manuscripts such as the Pit’areti Heirmologion, K’ereselidze here uses the word ch’reli to mean “highly ornamented.” Manana Andriadze, \textit{Sagaloblet'/zanrebi} (PhD diss., 1998), 106.


\textsuperscript{755} The text of the chant \textit{sich’abuk’isa qvavili} begins with: “Flower of youth and wonderful goodness and pestilential portly corpse of death…”

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9.5.1 Neume Analysis: Sich’abuk’isa qvavili

Several sources connected with Art’an Erkomaishvili (1887-1967) prove that he also knew this chant. Those sources provide an invaluable possibility to examine how this chant was transmitted and performed in the oral tradition, and how the neume notation system reflected that liturgical practice. The text and neume notation for the chant, sich’abuk’isa qvavili, as written by Art’an Erkomaishvili, presents an intriguing case study for the study of neume notation and the transmission of chant through the period of transcription in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century (Figure 122).756

Figure 122. Sich’abuk’isa qvavili, Art’an Erkomaishvili, private collection

756 These chantbooks are kept in the personal collection of Anzor Erkomaishvili in Tbilisi, Georgia, and are displayed here with his permission. This texted and neumed chantbook is considered to be the latest neumed source on record, as it was likely produced while Erkomaishvili was studying chant in the years immediately surrounding the turn of the last century.
At first glance, these neumes appear similar to the systems examined previously in the Q-651 and Q-830 manuscripts. But on closer scrutiny, there are a number of unusual elements, especially in the unique combinations of slashes, dots, and inserted vowel-phonemes. In addition to this neumed source, written by a master chanter of the oral tradition at the remarkably late date of the beginning of the twentieth century, there are a number of other highly valuable sources from Art’em Erkomaishvili. Among these are audio recordings of him singing all three voice parts to many chants, video performances, and transcriptions of his folk and liturgical repertory in staff notation. But this remarkable collection of recent sources does not make the process of deciphering the neumes a one-for-one process. Erkomaishvili was renowned for his ability to sing in variation, and apparently, he also took liberties with his own music notation. The following examples show the first phrase of the same chant, sich’abuk’isa qvavili, written in three different ways, all in Erkomaishvili’s handwriting (Figure 123). Each rendition of the chant receives a slightly different set of neumes.

Figure 123. Sich’abuk’isa qvavili, first phrase neume detail, Art’em Erkomaishvili

757 The presence of three neumed versions of the same chant can be explained by the fact that Erkomaishvili produced neume notation for chant texts in different books and at different times throughout his long career.
Here we must acknowledge the possibility that Erkomaishvili might have written neume notation for a completely different variant of the chant, considering that he knew at least the simple and ornamental variants to every chant. But in this case the notation of the three examples pictured appears similar enough to suspect that these samples depict the same general variant. A more detailed look reveals that in the Erkomaishvili neume system, cup shapes and dots appear interchangeably, as seen for example on the three syllables of the word *qva-vi-li*. Further comparison reveals that there is considerable variation of the neumes between the three examples. See the series of neumes over the word *da*, for example, which appear in various combinations of lines, cups, and dots. Clearly, this syllable received a lot of neumes in all three writings, but the neumes vary subtly from one another.

There are at least three ways to think about the variance in neumes on the word *da*. The first explanation suggests that because the neumes are different, they must depict different musical variants of the same word. This ‘literate-centric’ explanation assumes a standardized neume system that precisely portrays the nuances of the vocal line in much the same way as modern staff notation. A second explanation questions the precision of the neume system, and assumes that a master chanter in the oral tradition would have known his melodies much better than his written notation, therefore the variance in neumes is just a reflection of short-hand notation for a stable melody line. The third and most likely explanation is that there were several ways to sing the melisma on the word *da*, and that there were also several acceptable ways to represent that melisma in Erkomaishvili’s personal neume system.

### 9.5.2 Transcription of Sich’abuk’isa qvavili

Three transcriptions of the chant *sich’abuk’isa qvavili* [Flower of Youth] also exist in European staff notation (see chart of transmission and transcription, Figure 124).\(^7^5^8\) One of these

\(^7^5^8\) The survival of both neumed and notated sources from the same singer presents the exciting possibility of finding a key to a neume system, potentially unlocking the mystery of the other neumed manuscript sources. At the very least, these sources lend themselves to direct comparison, though it must also be pointed out that the neume notation could date from Erkomaishvili’s student days (1895-1905), while the notated transcription was made much later, circa 1960.
transcriptions was notated by Anzor Erkomaishvili from his grandfather, Art’em Erkomaishvili, sometime in the 1950s or early 1960s.\textsuperscript{759}

**Figure 124.** Transmission and transcription of *sich’abuk’isa qvavili*

The second and third transcriptions were notated some sixty years earlier (c. 1900) by the opera singer, Pilimon Koridze, from the master chanter Ant’on Dumbadze.\textsuperscript{760} The significance of these

\textsuperscript{759} This transcription of the chant, *sich’abuk’isa qvavili*, was notated by Anzor Erkomaishvili in the 1960s from his aging grandfather Art’em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967). It was published only recently, see *Georgian Folk Music, Guria, Art’em Erkomaishvili’s Collection*, ed. Anzor Erkomaishvili et. al. (Tbilisi: International Center for Georgian Folk Song, 2005), 75. The Anchiskhat’i Church Choir has also produced a recording of this transcription (Track #9, Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc).
transcriptions cannot be over-emphasized, as they provide scholars the rare possibility to examine sources of neume notation and staff notation that overlap chronologically, and that reflect the very final years of the transmission of the oral musical culture of Georgian liturgical chant.

9.5.3 Comparing Neumed and Notated Sources

Because of the abundance of sources for the funerary chant, *sich’abuk’isa qvavili* [Flower of Youth], a profitable comparison can be made between the notated transcription and the neume notation. The transcription was made by Anzor Erkomaishvili circa 1960, and is shown in Figure 125. To listen to a performance of this chant by the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #9.

All three voice parts are highly ornamented, which is at first glance somewhat surprising considering the paucity of the neume notation (compare to the neumed texts in Figure 122 and Figure 123. Note that Georgian neume notation only signifies the first voice melody, however, while the lower two voices are extrapolated from the referent melody (discussed further in the section, 11.1.2 Pedagogical References). In a direct comparison of the neume notation of the chant, *sich’abuk’isa qvavili* by Art’em Erkomaishvili (Figure 123), with the notated transcription as sung by Art’em Erkomaishvili (Figure 125), several similarities can be identified. For example, the line neumes over the first two syllables, *Si-ch’a-*, seem to correspond well to the two half notes at the beginning of the notated transcription. Furthermore, other syllables where that line neume occurs also seem to have half or whole note durational values. Thus, at least one function of the line neume seems to be duration.

760 Ant’on Dumbadze (1824-1907) was a master chanter based near the Shemokmedi Monastery in Guria province, West Georgia. For information on the transcriptions of these chants see, 6.2 The Dumbadze Transcription Project, 1893. It is useful to remember that almost all sources from the Shemokmedi Monastery arrive via the master chanter Ant’on Dumbadze or his students. He seems to have been an inexhaustible pedagogue, coaching dozens of students, and not only served as a local diplomat and active military general, but recorded hundreds of chants for Pilimon Koridze. His students included Melk’esidek’ Nak’ashidze (who then taught both Ekvtime K’ereselidze and Art’em Erkomaishvili), thus making him either the direct source (in the case of manuscripts Q-685 and Q-686) or a pedagogically linked ‘grandfather’ to many of the primary sources produced by students of his students.

761 The neume notation was meant as a mnemonic for chant teachers to remember the model melodies, while the act of harmonizing and ornamenting these melodies are practiced arts. Hypothetically, it was possible to know the art of chanting, but to forget the more rare and obscure model melodies, hence the invention of mnemonic notation systems like the Erkomaishvili neumes.
The staff notation, in addition to giving us a clear picture of how the music sounded in its three-voiced context, preserves some nuances of the neume notation. One of these is the added diphthong on the word *da* as it moves through the melisma as discussed in the previous section. The added vowel of “i” is clearly reflected in the neumes above the word *da* in Figure 123(a), and to a lesser degree in Figure 123(c), appearing as follows *da-i-a-a-a* (da-i-a-a-a). The other neumes begin to make sense in the following manner: line-neumes indicate a held duration or stay on the same note, dots indicate movement up or down sometimes as eighth notes sometimes as quarter notes, and added vowels represent added notes (more or less!). On the word *da* (measure 5, Figure 125), the syllable with the largest number of neumes on it, there is a convincingly complementary melisma written out in the transcription. Further observations can be made, but should realistically rely on a larger sample size before any specific key can be confirmed.

**Figure 125.** *Sich’abuk’isa qvavili*, first phrase, Art’em Erkomaishvili

Several peculiarities arise in this attempt at a one-for-one comparison. One of these is the number of neumes on the final syllable of the word *si-k’este*, last word of the first phrase (Figure
Clearly the cadence was a little more complicated in the rendition depicted by all three neumed variants, than that represented in the notated transcription. In the notation, the final syllable, -te, falls directly on the cadence note of G. It is highly unlikely that there would have been any possibility for improvisation or added melismatic notes on the final note of the cadence, especially in West Georgian chant. The multiple neumes on this syllable therefore seem incongruous with the actual music represented in the transcription.

Another seeming discrepancy occurs on the first syllable of the word si-k’e-te, which in two neumed variants, only has one line sign; in the Erkomaishvili transcription, on the other hand, there is a five-note descending melisma (Figure 126). When a single line-neume occurs elsewhere in the phrase, the notated example also typically has only one sung note, but in this case, there seems to be a wide discrepancy between notation and neumes. Whereas at first glance, we could imagine that the Erkomaishvili notated transcription would provide a key to deciphering the neumes, on closer inspection the number of oddities becomes strong enough that we have to reconsider this notion and look for further evidence.

Figure 126. Neume-notation comparison, 1960 transcription

The transcription of sich’abuk’isa qvavili (Figure 127), written circa 1900 by the opera singer Pilimon Koridze from the master chanter Ant’on Dumbadze, could be a vital piece of additional information in the attempt to unravel the Erkomaishvili neumed and notated sources. At the very least, a comparison between the two transcriptions, separated

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762 This transcription of sich’abuk’isa qvavili is preserved in manuscript NCM Q-685, page 160. It has been transposed for comparative purposes (the original starts on Ab in the unusual key of Db major). A very similar...
chronologically by sixty years, should demonstrate some of the evolution of this chant in the oral tradition of the first half of the twentieth century, a period when the performance of Orthodox liturgical chant was forbidden in Georgia in both public and private spaces. It is worth examining the differences between the two notated examples (each has been divided into six bars and transposed to the same key for purposes of comparison).

**Figure 127. Sich’abuk’isa qvavili, Ant’on Dumbadze, NCM Q-685: 160**

The first thing to notice about the Dumbadze transcription of the chant *sich’abuk’isa qvavili* (Figure 127) is that it represents the same basic melody as that in the 1960 Erkomaishvili transcription previously examined (Figure 125). The basic melodic contour of the top voices in each example lead us to conclude that these are slightly different ornamentations of the same transcription in the same key is recorded in a companion manuscript, NCM Q-686, page 69v, and displays only slight variations in the lower voices. It is otherwise similar in every way. The reason for the duplication is unclear, but it may have been simply a miscommunication on which chants had already been notated (many notes attesting to this confusion exist in the manuscripts themselves, as rough drafts were sent to Tbilisi for printing, and Koridze did not seem to be well-organized with lists of previously transcribed chants), or it may have been an attempt to show the possible range of variation in the lower voices.
chant variant. The second thing to notice is that there are several oddities and differences between the two examples that do not have to do with variation technique in the sense of ornamenting a similar structure, but rather with differences in durational values and text-setting. Some of these details are worth teasing apart before returning to the neume analysis.

The durational values of several of the syllables in the Dumbadze example (Figure 127) are only half of the similar values in the Erkomaishvili (Figure 125). This is visible in the last three syllables of the first word, -bu-’ki-sa, measures 1-2. A similar discrepancy occurs in the melisma in measure 5 where, again, the notes in the Dumbadze example have only half the rhythmic value of that sung by Erkomaishvili. One transcription having double or half the value of another would not be such a surprise, because different transcribers have different notational preferences and the performed result will be identical if the singers know the correct tempo. But in this case, other syllables have the same durational value in both transcriptions, such as those in the word qva-vi-li in measures 3-4. The mismatch in the duration of notes in two transcriptions of the same chant is very unusual in the transcription record of Georgian chant, as the number of beats given to each syllable is an essential feature of text-setting and the way that the chant is memorized in oral tradition. So this peculiarity bears attention.

Another observable difference concerns the setting of the text. Starting from the word da in measures 3-4, the text is aligned differently to the melody. Furthermore, instead of the cadences falling conveniently at the ends of words (as in the Erkomaishvili example), the potential cadences in the Dumbadze transcription fall in the middle of words and are avoided with ‘escape gestures’ from the lower voices, creating in effect a series of deceptive cadences. The unusual text-setting seems to be connected to the deceptive cadences, which are also relatively rare in the manuscript record. Let’s examine these occurrences.

At the end of measure 4 (Figure 125), the 1960 Erkomaishvili transcription displays a cadence on pitch classes B-E (on the word qva-vi-li). The Dumbadze transcription from 1900 shows two main differences: the text-setting is offset, and the cadence in measure 4 is avoided (Figure 127). Instead of rising to the cadential pitch of E, the bass voice remains in motion in a lower register, thus prolonging the phrase. Similarly, where Erkomaishvili completes a short echo phrase on the word da with a cadence on E-B (measure 5, Figure 125), Dumbadze begins the next word si-k’e-te and avoids the cadence with a leap in the middle voice (measure 5, Figure 127). Again, where the middle voice should descend from F# to E to meet the rising bass voice
and complete the cadence, instead the middle voice jumps to an A, thus forming a tension chord with the top voice on B and the bass voice on E (Figure 127).

This surprising move likewise prolongs and propels the phrase towards the final cadence and shows the brilliance of master chanter’s at their most playful and ingenious best. These are advanced techniques. Only knowledgeable singers knew how to create and react to deceptive cadences, and the use of text to preempt the musical action also seems like part of the internal game that singers played with one another to keep their skills sharp.\textsuperscript{763}

**Figure 128.** Neume-notation comparison, 1900 transcription

![Neume-notation comparison](image)

9.5.4 Further Neume Comparison

Returning to the neume notation of Art’em Erkomaishvili, and the problems observed when trying to compare these to a transcription of him singing the chant, it will be interesting to see how the neume notation aligns with the transcription of Ant’on Dumbadze’s variant of the chant, *sich'abuk'isa qavvili*, at least in the cadence of the first phrase (Figure 128: compares the staff notation of Figure 127 with the neume notation of Figure 123). To review, two of the observed discrepancies concerned the number of notes on the syllables of the last word of the phrase, *si-k’ete*, as opposed to the number of neume signs given those syllables in the three neumed sources.

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\textsuperscript{763} A more thorough discussion on the elements of variation and improvisation in the three-voiced oral performance of chant can be found in the section, 11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing.
Remarkably, the Dumbadze transcription seems to line up much more cleanly with the Erkomaishvili neumes than the Erkomaishvili transcription, as shown in Figure 128. In the Dumbadze transcription (dated to circa 1900), the first syllable of si-k’e-te has only one held note which matches the single neume seen in all three neumed examples. Furthermore, the different text-setting of the Dumbadze transcription positions the final syllable of the word si-k’e-te before the cadence (instead of on the cadence), thus more notes are sung on that syllable just as depicted in the neumed examples.

This series of observations is quite surprising, and raises a number of further questions such as, why do the neumes themselves vary between the three sources examined here? Also, why would the Erkomaishvili neumes reflect a musical variant notated from his teacher’s teacher (Ant’on Dumbadze) more than his own singing of the chant? Granted, the chronological gap spanning six decades separates the two sources, but there are still very few plausible explanations for this discrepancy considering that the three sources of neume notation are definitely attributable to Art’em Erkomaishvili himself.

9.5.5 Discussion on the Sources

This discussion of the three neumed and three notated examples of sich’abuk’isa qvavili demonstrate that even when dealing with a very closely related group of chan ters, the writing of neumes showed considerable interchangeability and variance. The number of neume signs, however, was generally very accurate, as one of the main functions of the neumes was to count the number of beats per melisma. This was doubted when we looked at a one-for-one comparison of the Erkomaishvili transcription in 1960 and the Erkomaishvili neumes and they did not seem to match up.

Somewhat improbably, the Erkomaishvili neumes line up far more accurately with the Dumbadze transcription from 1900. The only possible explanation for this is that Erkomaishvili wrote these neumes while studying with Dumbadze himself, or a close disciple of Dumbadze, probably at a similar chronological period. Indeed, Koridze’s transcription from Dumbadze occurred circa 1900-1902, a period when Erkomaishvili would have been 13-15 years old, and studying in the Nak’ashidze chant school in the same town (Ozurgeti) where Dumbadze lived. It would not be far-fetched to suggest that as a young student, Erkomaishvili even attended the ongoing transcription sessions led by the visiting opera singer Pilimon Koridze. For several
years, Koridze had paid Dumbadze to sing chants with the purpose of transcribing and
publishing them. Certainly, every young chanter in the region—Erkomaishvili included—would
have been well aware of the project as it concerned the most prestigious chanters in the whole
region and was a well-publicized public project.

But this hypothesis still does not explain why the 1960 transcription from Erkomaishvili
differs from his own neume notation written as a student. It is especially difficult to explain the
differences in durational values, as this is typically a stable feature of the oral tradition. If there
are no other clues in the available source materials, we might have to conclude that
Erkomaishvili decided to lengthen certain notes in order to create longer cadences. Other source
materials from Erkomaishvili’s formidable repertory, namely the one hundred audio recordings
made in 1966 near the end of his life, suggest that he could not sustain long phrases and
frequently took added breaths in the middle of words and phrases.764 If sich’abuk’isa qvavili was
transcribed near the end of his life, it is possible to imagine that he sang a simplified version of
the chant with only basic cadence types, especially considering that for the recording session he
sang all three voice parts himself, one after the other. The practice of playing with deceptive
cadences is an artform for three master chanters, and would be quite difficult to anticipate and
perform by oneself.

Another possibility for the discrepancy in durational values between the two
transcriptions of this chant could rest on Koridze, the opera singer who originally transcribed
from Ant’on Dumbadze circa 1900. As explored earlier, Koridze was prone to correcting ‘errors’
that he heard in pitch and duration. His training as an opera singer in Italy did not fully prepare
him for transcribing from chanters singing in a unique tuning system in three-part ornamental
polyphony. Therefore, the transcription from 1900 must also be scrutinized for potential
inaccuracies that inevitably arose as a result of working with a complex repertory from live
informants.

Many of the notes in this transcription are double the length of what Erkomaishvili would
sing in 1960, but not all. Also, Koridze did not indicate any of the nuances of tuning and
modulation captured in the later transcription. This hardly means that Erkomaishvili invented a
new modal system during his lifetime, but rather shows us that Koridze was unconcerned with

764 For the published transcriptions of this extended recording session, see Shugliashvili, Kartuli Saek’lesio Galoba
(2002).
subtleties of tuning and modulation, being more concerned with notating the basic melodic and harmonic structure of the chant. These and other questions are taken in turn in the following chapters of the dissertation organized around the history of the transcription movement, issues of transcription, and music analysis with a focus on the pedagogy of oral transmission.

9.6 Nishnebi Neumes and Model Melodies

The question of neume notation representing only the top voice must be addressed at least briefly. As cited in the introduction to this section, Art’em Erkomaishvili provides direct testimony that the nishnebi neumes only represented the top voice melody. Even though he was a singer of the third voice, his training as a chant student started with learning the top voice melody. It is curious however, that a writer of neumes would not expand the function of music writing to include the other voice parts.

The content of Erkomaishvili’s comment on this subject, requoted here, does not provide an answer to this question. "Grandfather used to say that someone who knew the neume system well could learn as many as ten new hymns each day." With only these words to go on, we are left to speculate that Erkomaishvili either did not find it necessary to notate the second and third voices, or that there was a deeper, stricter rule which he felt he would be violating by writing something that was in a sense improvised, the lower two voices being extrapolated from the referent.

The folklorist K’akhi Rosebashvili, who recorded Erkomaishvili’s chants in the Conservatory in 1966, apparently entertained the same question. In his notes from the recording sessions, we find an example of the chant adidebs suli chemi [My soul doth magnify] with the text written out three times with neume notation over each line. Next to each line is an indication for each of the three voice parts. This is a remarkable piece of evidence, and if it had somehow survived without any context, scholars might have seized upon it as the first indication of an advancement of the representational capabilities of Georgian neume notation to encompass a

765 This voice part is analogous to the cantus firmus in Medieval Latin polyphony, in the sense that a fundamental melody is ornamented by other voices. In the case of Georgian chant, these referent melodies were either uniquely composed, or perhaps borrowed from Byzantine tradition before 1000 AD, then harmonized in three-voices at some point after that (see the section, 2.4 Georgian Polyphony).

polyphonic repertory. As it is, we have abundant sources for both nishnebi notation and Georgian polyphonic chant, and this is the only instance of this notation being used to represent all three voice parts. Nevertheless, it is tempting to speculate how this notational system could have developed if Erkomaishvili had not been its last living interlocutor, living in a repressive regime that only did not value his unique inherited skills but actively suppressed them.

That Erkomaishvili could write neume notation for all three voices begs the question, why would not he do this for all of his chants, especially considering that his aim and intention was to learn and retain all three voice parts? If knowledge of the neumes was useful for learning “up to ten chants per day,” does not it make sense to notate all three voices? These questions form some of the essential themes explored in the dissertation as they reflect some of the core structural principles of Georgian chant, and indeed its successful oral transmission through generations of master chanters.

9.7 Chapter Conclusion

The attempt to preserve sound through writing has been repeated in many different ways around the globe before the advent of twentieth century recording technology enabled analogue and digital encoding of sound. Each written attempt showed new creative ways to solve the same basic problem: that sound, as a finite and ephemeral object, only exists while there is a performer to voice it. As soon as the singer stops singing, the sound stops. On a longer timescale, when the singer forgets the song, or dies (without teaching it), the song could be lost forever unless it was written down in some form. In this way, the writing of music is a function of preserving music beyond the singer’s lifetime. But there is another function for music notation as well: a mnemonic tool for performers. It is this latter type that we observe in Georgia, as chanters of various generations through the centuries adapted different methods of making notes, usually just for themselves, to jog their memories.

See K’akhi Rosebashvili, "Galobis t'raditsiis sakit'khisatvis sakartveloshi" [On the tradition of chant in Georgia], Sametsniero Shromebi [Academic Works] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1973), 162. In a brief discussion of this example in her dissertation, Manana Andriadze (PhD diss., 1998: 115) posits that this example must have been written out at Rosebashvili’s initiative. Afterall, he was transcribing Erkomaishvili’s voice in writing in all three voice parts (albeit European notation), so it stands to reason that he asked Erkomaishvili to write out neumes for all three voice parts. It must have seemed odd to Erkomaishvili, since he never otherwise notated the lower voices in his neumed records, but it is an extremely intriguing example of how a master chanter might have done so.
Georgian neumes remain one of the most intriguing undeciphered medieval music writing systems in the world. For more than a century, this notation has perplexed scholars attempting to find a key to unlock the melodies it reflects. Promising avenues of research include the statistical analysis of specific neume groups as an internal study, and hopefully international comparative work in the future will also yield new results as Georgian chant studies become more accessible for scholars of Byzantine and Latin notation systems. The anbani, ch ’reli, and nishnebi notation systems from the later feudal period in Georgia are perhaps not as exciting to comparative medievalists, given their late appearance in mostly nineteenth century sources, but these notational systems are nonetheless extremely intriguing for understanding the transmission of Georgian liturgical chant.

The study of neume notation necessarily relies on the available material sources, but an understanding of the oral tradition that the neumes reflected is critical to understanding their function in medieval musical culture. Even the most exhaustive study of the neumes will have limitations as a methodology if not coupled with an understanding of how medieval Christian cultures transmitted complex chant repertories in the wider Byzantine world. As a polyphonic-singing culture, Georgian chant represents a hybrid culture in which organizational and categorical systems like the Oktoechos were adopted from Jerusalem, and chant texts and genres such as the kanon-form were translated from Byzantine Greek. But as an independent church Georgians enjoyed the freedom to adapt worship practices to their own culture. This included wall paintings, architecture, metallurgy and icon-writing, and probably chanting. It is in this wider framework that future studies must begin to synthesize knowledge of the medieval practice of chant with what we observe in the neume notation and what we can know about the oral transmission of polyphonic chant.

Future research must analyze how neume notation interacts with and reflects the dominant historical form of chant transmission in Georgia, which was based on pedagogical processes of memorization, harmonization, and improvisation. When viewed through this lens, all of the notation systems presented in this chapter can be understood to be attempts not to solve a problem of preservation, but really a problem of remembering large quantities of chant melodies. The Georgian neumes are all mnemonic systems designed by chanters for their own purposes, and in many cases were illegible to anyone except the author or his direct students. Even when displaying prodigious feats of memory, every chanter would use whatever method
they could to assist in the recall of the hundreds of melodies, harmonies, and cadence types they had committed to memory. Indeed, chanters prided themselves on their memory, and as the following chapters will show, a specific pedagogy aimed at the memorization of the least amount of unique musical material allowed Georgian chanters to create and maintain phenomenal polyphonic music without losing repertory.
Chapter X: Georgian Chant Harmony

Georgian liturgical chant is a polyphonic, three-voiced art form whose melodies and harmonies are unique among vocal chant traditions. It is also an extremely complex repertory that displays a wide range of styles, ornamentation patterns, and regional variation among the thousands of extant transcriptions. This musical diversity is useful, however, in isolating features that are common to all Georgian chant examples, and features that vary according to ornamentation level and geographical location. The perseverance of the Georgian chant tradition suggests that, despite the transcription issues described, a core of stability characterized the oral transmission of the repertory. This musical stability runs deeper than the performance-to-performance variations, and is at the heart of the transmission of this three-voiced liturgical chant. It is our aim, in this section, to elucidate some of these deeper musical features that are common between regions.

Some of the analysis is reductive, but that is not our primary goal. Rather, it is the engine of variation around the stable core of the chant melodies and harmonies that interest us, for in the perpetual variation of the chant lies the secret to preserving the stable features of the chant structure. This is the principle of the so-called 'referent melodies,' a term that unfortunately still carries reductive overtones, but whose full musical significance is of particular interest to our understanding not only of Georgian musical culture but that of other polyphonic traditions as well. The principle is one of such theoretical complexity, however, that one dissertation cannot hope to illustrate its workings in all its implications.

10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison

This chapter introduces the harmonic differences and similarities between the three regional styles of Georgian traditional chant that were transcribed into western notation at the end of the nineteenth century. These three traditions are from the Gelati Monastery in central Georgia (Figure 19), the Shemokmedi Monastery in the southwest mountains along the Black Sea coast in West Georgia (Figure 21), and the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral in East Georgia (Figure 15). Their geographical positions in the South Caucasus can be seen on the regional map (Figure
Each of these famous chant schools developed a distinct manner of three-voiced liturgical singing that evolved alongside local folk singing traditions. While harmonic differences can easily be identified as having similarities to local folk traditions, as presented in the examples in this chapter, an significant point to emerge from this study is the striking similarities between the melodies of the regional liturgical chant styles.

### 10.1.1 Discussion: Unity or Difference of Regional Style

The transcription record presents a diverse range of chant harmonizations. Some twenty thousand pages of transcriptions have yet to be fully examined and interpreted by scholars, who have only recently gained access to the critical archives where this notational record has been stored for the past century. Some scholars have found unity in the transcription record, however, as explained by Malkaz Erkvanidze: “Though the many surviving chant styles seem quite diverse, they in fact illustrate the preservation of a single canonical chant rule, which is expressed in the melody and structure of the sada k’ilo [simple style].”

This view has been expressed in relation to folk music as well. The musicologist Vazha Gvakharia wrote in 1968: "Despite the difference in dialects, the foundation of all the regional music styles arises from the same Georgian musical base." These views stem from similar conclusions made in the nineteenth century: "What is Kartl-K'akhuri k'ilo [style] and what is Gurul-Imeruli k'ilo? If we take the simple style of both, they are one and the same. Only here and there the bending of the voices makes a tiny difference one from the other." For more on this discussion, see the section, 4.2 The Chant Competition of 1878.

The exercise of comparing regional chant variants to local folksongs is not new. In fact, the similarity between regional chant schools and local folk traditions can be understood as quite obvious to any serious Georgian singer. But a tension exists between understanding the regional

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768 This map of Georgia also appears in the section, 3.1 The Historical Context.
769 Other schools of chant are also known, such as the Khoni Monastery school, the Svan school, the Nik'orts'minda Cathedral school, the David Gareja monastery school, and others. Some of these overlapped with the three major schools mentioned in the text, displaying only slight variations, while others such as the Svan school show considerable harmonic and ornamental differences in the few remaining samples.
772 Kor. Maghradze, Iveria, Nos. 256/257 (Tbilisi: Georgian National Library), Dec. 1, 1898.
diversity of Georgian folksongs, yet claiming their universalism as part of a Georgian harmonic kanon. The same tension exists in discussions surrounding the classifications of liturgical chant. As Davit Shugliashvili argues, the similarity in melody between the various regional chant traditions marks the liturgical tradition as even more unified and consistent than the folk traditions.

The process of comparing many chants… proves that the Georgian chants are much more unified throughout Georgia, unlike folk songs which have strong regional variation, although their genetic development is connected to folksongs. Chant developed under regional folksong mentality. Chant is more general to all of Georgia, and does not belong to a specific region, the way one could speak about folksongs.773

Shugliashvili credits this unification not to processes of oral transmission, but rather to the centralizing and unifying role of the Georgian Orthodox Church in the history of the politically fractured South Caucasus regions.

The Georgian Orthodox Church has always been the spiritual unifier of Georgia. The ethnic dialectical differences, which of course exist in every part of any country, did not affect the Georgian church kanon. Because the church, by its nature, has always been monolithic, with an understanding of the people, the language, and the home country.774

Each of the major monasteries around the country functioned as a repository of learning, and served as the regional educational centers for the children of local aristocrats.

As in medieval Europe, the guild structure in Georgia enabled talented commoners to learn trades by apprenticing with local masters. Chanting was a critical art-form for serving the liturgy of the Orthodox Church, and as an oral tradition, the life of the church depended upon having well-trained chanter at every service. No better example of such social elevation can be given than the story of Pet’re K’arbela, the peasant friend of an aristocratic boy in East Georgia who studied at the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (see the section, 3.2.6 P’et’re K’arbelashvili). K’arbela far exceeded his counterpart in the study of chant, and was able to elevate himself to the status of master chanter through years of concerted effort. He started a dynasty of priest-chanters,

773 Davit Shugliashvili, "Kartuli galobis sk'olebi da t'raditsiebi" [Chant schools and traditions of Georgia], Proceedings... (2003).
and his grandsons would eventually be responsible for transcribing the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral chant style into European notation at the end of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{775}

**Figure 129.** Typical Chords, Georgian Monastery Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gelati Monastery School (Imereti-Samegrelo)</th>
<th>Shemokmedi Monastery School (Guria)</th>
<th>Svetitskhoveli Monastery School (Kartl-K’akheti)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| \begin{figure}
| \begin{tabular}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
| 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 & 9 & 10 \\
| \hline
| G & G & G & G & G & G & G & G & G |
| \end{tabular}
| \end{figure} |
| \begin{figure}
| \begin{tabular}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
| 11 & 12 & 13 & 14 & 15 & 16 & 17 & 18 & 19 & 20 \\
| \hline
| G & G & G & G & G & G & G & G & G & G |
| \end{tabular}
| \end{figure} |
| \begin{figure}
| \begin{tabular}{c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
| 21 & 22 & 23 & 24 & 25 & 26 & 27 & 28 & 29 \\
| \hline
| G & G & G & G & G & G & G & G & G |
| \end{tabular}
| \end{figure} |

### 10.1.2 Typical Chords: Georgian Traditional Chant

In presenting the harmonic styles of each of the three major monastery schools, it has been vital to generate a grammar of typical chords for each of the regional liturgical styles (Figure 129). The most common chord types are stated here for general reference, though it must be said that there are always exceptions to the rule. While the displayed chord types from each monastery school in this chart look deceptively similar, in the context of preferred local voice leading, ornamentation, and harmonic progression, however, the three-voiced realization of the liturgical melodies in each region is very distinctive.

Besides these chord types, it is worth noting that the intervals of a fifth and octave are extremely common in all Georgian traditional chant, and form the basis for the harmonization of common melodies. The predominance of these chord types may have something to do with the way that liturgical chant was transmitted in the oral tradition. The oral transmission of chant existed within the musical context of a rich folk-singing tradition that accompanied all aspects of daily life. Young chanter learned to harmonize and ornament through singing folk songs, and

\textsuperscript{775} See the section, 4.5 K’arbelashvili Family Transcriptions.
these skills were applied to the chant melodies they learned from the venerable chant masters in local monasteries. This will become clearer by looking at some examples.

10.2 Regional Harmony: Central Georgia

The Gelati Monastery and academy complex is perched on a narrow plateau near the top of a ridge of limestone overlooking a tributary of the Rioni River. From this significant vantage point, inhabitants of the monastery had a direct line of sight to the royal fortress and Bagrat Cathedral in the city center of Kutaisi, some ten miles downstream. The complex includes several buildings: the cathedral of the Dormition of the Theotokos, a smaller church dedicated to St. George, two bell towers, a massive academy refectory that could seat five hundred people, and numerous residential buildings all enclosed within a perimeter defensive wall and gatehouses. Over many centuries, the study of chant persisted as one of the primary functions of the medieval center of learning.

10.2.1 Liturgical Harmony: Gelati Monastery Style

The harmony of liturgical chant associated with the Gelati and Mart’vili monasteries in central Georgia displays characteristics that distinguish it from the chant of other regions of Georgia. But not all features are unique: certain musical parameters such as the melody remain similar between all regions, suggesting a common origin. A significant influence on regional harmonic styles can be observed in the musical features of local folksongs. Thus it is postulated that while Georgian chant may ultimately have developed from a common musical source, only the melody was transmitted as an essential element of that shared repertory.

776 Chants from the Gelati and Mart’vili monasteries account for more than eighty percent of extant chant transcriptions. This can be attributed both to the organization of Bishop Kikodze in bringing Pilimon Koridze to work with local chanters in the 1885-1886, and to the presence of a strong chant community in West Georgia late into the nineteenth century. Being further from the seat of Russian control in Tbilisi (East Georgia), clergy in the West Georgian dioceses of Imereti, Samegrelo, and Guria enjoyed more autonomy to conduct services in the Georgian language (and avoid the requirement to perform services in the Russian language using Russian chant).
Figure 130. Map of Georgia
The harmonization of these melodies through oral transmission, meanwhile, became increasingly diverse over time, adopting musical features from local folk-singing traditions. Through a comparative analysis of a single chant across multiple regional sources, this section will illustrate the similarities and differences that can be described in each regional harmonic style. Local folksongs are also offered as complementary evidence of regional specificity in the types of chords and ornamentation styles observed.

The paschal hymn *aghdgomasa shensa* [To Your resurrection] is one of the simplest chants of the Georgian Orthodox liturgy. It is sung repeatedly as icons are processed three times around the exterior of the sanctuary in preparation for the all-night Paschal vigil, one of the most significant liturgical services of the year. Perhaps because of its simplicity and association with a major feastday, it was one of the few Orthodox chants maintained in oral tradition in the region of Guria throughout the twentieth century, a period marked by extreme Soviet repression of traditional Orthodox chant (several recordings of this chant also exist).

Like almost all traditional Georgian chants, *aghdgomasa shensa* is sung in three-voiced harmony. The four-line text is divided into musical phrases by medial cadences, sung homophonically. The three voice parts are sung in close harmony, with the maximum range of the chant rarely exceeding the interval of a tenth (each voice occupies a range of about four or five notes). In the more ornamented variants, range may be increased and pre-cadential formulas may involve voice crossing in the upper voices. But in the basic *sada k’ilo* (simple style) performances of the chant, close harmony is maintained by constraining range. For example, in the simple variant from the Gelati Monastery, the upper voice melody primarily occupies the range of the descending tetrachord on pitch classes D-C-B-A, with upper and lower neighbor notes added (Figure 131). To listen to a performance of three versions of the Gelati Monastery style of this chant, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #10.

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777 Text and translation: *aghdgomasa shensa kriste matskhovar, angelozni ugaloben tsata shina! Da chvensa ghirs mkven kveqanasa zeda, ts’mindit gulita didebad shenda* [To Your resurrection, O Christ our Savior, the angels in heaven sing! Enable us who are on the earth to glorify You with a pure heart].
Figure 131. Aghdgomasa shensa, Gelati Monastery simple style
Cadences in Georgian chant are formulaic, and vary according to individual monastery school traditions. Broadly, they fall into two categories: those ending on the interval of an open fifth, and those ending in unison. Regional styles can vary in the approach to the cadence, however, as illustrated in the following examples. In the phrasal cadences of the Gelati Monastery school variant of *aghdgomasa shensa*, all phrases end on the interval of an open fifth (see the end of each line, Figure 131).

The simplest variant of this cadence can be seen in the reduction (Figure 132), though a cadential pattern on pitch classes D-C-B to the cadence is rarely seen. Instead, cadence preparation is often a site for expanded ornamentation including voice crossings and other techniques. Ornamentation in cadence preparation is only possible because the timing and pitch of the cadence chord is fixed and predetermined, as one of the most fixed musical elements of the Georgian chant structure. Exceptions to these cadential conventions are rare even in the most ornamental chant samples, though unison cadences sometimes present unusual features.

Figure 132. *Aghdgomasa shensa*, Reduction (Gelati Monastery style)

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778 As the melody is the most stable part of the chant in oral transmission, it is important to note the distinction between saying that the first voice harmonizes a fifth above the bass, since in Georgián chant, it is the lower voices that harmonize the melody.

779 For an expanded argument on this point, see Graham, “The Role of Memory...” *Proceedings* (2010).
The basic harmonic features of the lower two accompanying voices can be observed in the relationships of the three voice parts in *sada k'ilo* (simple style) variants. In general, the Gelati Monastery harmony can be characterized by the use of thirds, fifths, and octaves in the simplest style, with more complex chords and voice-leading present in ornamental variants. In the chant, *aghdgomasahenssa*, the middle voice starts at an interval of a third below the melody, and continues in parallel motion through most of the phrase until this marriage is disrupted by the gravity of the cadence convention, in which the middle voice must descend to meet the bass (Figure 131). In the final phrase, which is often melodically different from the rest of the chant, the middle voice deviates from simple parallelisms on the syllable of -ta to form a mid-phrase medial cadence (boxed, Figure 131). On this same chord, the bass voice finds the interval of a ninth below the melody, creating a “1-5-9” chord that, while considered ‘strong’, still requires resolution on an open fifth interval in the final cadence.\(^{780}\)

The bass voice in this example of *aghdgomasahenssa* begins at an octave below the melody (Figure 131). The bass could also begin at the interval of a fifth below the melody; both harmonizations are acceptable and interchangeable (see chord chart, Figure 129).\(^{781}\) One of the primary harmonic functions of the bass part in the Gelati Monastery style is to move easily and fluidly between fifth and octave intervals below the melody on significant consonant chords. In its simplest form, it can remain fairly static, as seen in this example, where the bass hardly moves except for cadential preparations. In these moments, movement is conditioned by providing counter-motion to the melody. Such counter-motion between the outer voices is considered a basic function of competent voice-leading in Gelati Monastery style, and can be observed in several places (see for example, the movement marked with red arrows in the second phrase).

Within the fabric of the *sada k'ilo* (simple style), there is a hierarchy of interdependence between the three voice parts. Structurally the first voice is independent and must be learned as a stand-alone melody. That being said, the first voice exists in a multi-voice context and can therefore be influenced by the harmonic motion of the lower two voice parts, especially as the variations increase in complexity. The lower voice parts are dependent on the first voice, as they

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\(^{780}\) The so-called “1-5-9” chord describes a typical chord in the Shemokmedi Monastery school whereby the three voice parts are separated by two open fifth intervals. This chord is common in West Georgian chant and folk music, but almost never occurs in East Georgian harmony.

\(^{781}\) Transcriptions of the same chant in slightly different Gelati Monastery variants show the interchangeability of the harmonization of the bass voice at either the interval of a fifth, or an octave, below the melody.
must harmonize and tune to the essential notes of the melodic contour. In the more complex variants, however, it is the lower voices that experiment more, as the choice of chord becomes a significant element of improvisation. For example, if the melody is sustaining one note, the middle voice is free to either sustain a harmonic note or to ornament.

10.2.2 Folk Harmony: Samegrelo Region

The polyphonic tradition of folk-singing in the Imereti and Samegrelo regions of West Georgia (former Colchis) in many ways resembles the chant of the Gelati and Mart’vili monasteries. This is not surprising, considering that the very same chanters who sang in the churches of these regions were also the local folk-song masters for their respective villages. While similarities are clear, we are also interested in the differences. In the following two folk-song examples from the Samegrelo region, we examine points of musical intersection and difference.

Figure 133. *Meureme*, cart-song (Samegrelo region)

In the first phrase of the folk-song *meureme* [cart driver], an opening solo establishes the scale and range for the entire song: a descending melody outlined by the pentachord D to G.
Viewed by itself, this melody could be harmonized in any number of ways, even within the Georgian folk idiom, so what is of particular value to our study is how the people in the Samegrelo region chose to harmonize such a melody. The harmonies in the first phrase of *meureme* (typically sung as a trio) consist of a series of parallel thirds in the middle voice, with only one or two deviations from this general pattern (measure 6, Figure 133). To listen to a performance of the folksong *meureme*, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #11.

Meanwhile, the lowest voice harmonizes with predominantly seventh intervals (in measures 5, 7, 8) and fifth intervals (in measures 6, 8). Strong beat emphasis on a seventh interval should not be considered as odd, as in this particular region, it is perceived as interchangeable with the interval of a fifth. This interchangeability is visible in the way that the bass voice uses passing tones to fill in the chord, moving from a seventh to a fifth below the melody (measure 5, Figure 133). What is missing here is any inclination to harmonize the melody with a lower octave, an observation that reoccurs as a major point of difference between folk and liturgical harmony.

Another folk song from the Imereti-Samegrelo region, *sat’rpialo* (love-song), shows similar principles of harmonization (Figure 134). In this example, the first two phrases consist entirely of non-semantic vocable syllables sung in a light, fast-paced tempo, allowing singers to demonstrate their versatility with both linear phrasing and vertical harmony. The bass voice harmonizes primarily with seventh intervals (in measures 3, 8), and fifth intervals (throughout). The middle voice demonstrates more ornamental and harmonic flare than in the *cart* song *meureme* (Figure 133). In the folksong, *sat’rpialo*, the middle voice begins both phrases singing a whole tone interval below the melody, and pronounces the text in the third and fourth phrases (measures 11-20, Figure 134).

The vocables sung at such a quick tempo give the effect of a stringed instrument being strummed. Indeed, many Megrelian songs are accompanied by the *chonguri*, a four-string lute common to the region (Figure 135). To listen to a performance of *sat’rpialo* with accompaniment on the *chonguri*, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #12.

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Figure 134. *Sat'rpialo*, love-song (Samegrelo region)

De-li vo-de-li a sa, de-li vo-de-li vo di-la da, de-li vo de-li vo di-la de-li-a da da,

de-li vo de-li vo di-la da, de-li vo de-li vo di-la de-li-a da da,

de-li vo de-li vo di-la da, de-li vo de-li vo di-la de-li-a da da,

na-ni-na, na-na na-na-i-a da, de-li vo de-li vo di-la de-li-a da da

na-na na-na-i-a da, de-li vo de-li vo di-la de-li-a da da

na-na na-na-i-a da, de-li vo de-li vo di-la de-li-a da da

O... Skan o-ro-pa ma p'ch'un tes'h, de-li-a da da

O... Skan o-ro-pa ma p'ch'un tes'h, o-bed va-ch've sa-k'Ve-tsi-s-na

O... Skan o-ro-pa ma p'ch'un tes'h, o-bed va-ch've sa-k'Ve-tsi-s-na

Chki-mi gu-rí tesh mu k'ob, de-li-a da da

O... Chki-mi gu-rí tesh mu k'ob, mu-ch'o chkho-mi art'k'e-tsi-s-na

O... Chki-mi gu-rí tesh mu k'ob, mu-ch'o chkho-mi art'k'e-tsi-s-na
Beginning at measure 11, the text of the love-song *sat'rpialo* is sung in a short call and response between the upper voice and the lower voices (Figure 134). The harmonizations in this call and response section describe musical vocabulary we have come to associate with the harmonic preferences for singers in the Imereti-Samegrelo regions. For example, as the melodic voice sings the "call", a descending melody in measures 11-12, the lower two voices respond with sustained notes at the intervals of a third and fifth (Figure 134). But starting in measure 13, when the lower voices repeat the stated text while the soloist holds an upper pedal tone, more complex types of harmony reflect an improvisational process.\textsuperscript{784}

For example, in measure 13, the second voice chooses a whole tone interval below the melody while the bass voice harmonizes with a seventh interval (Figure 134). This unusual chord on pitch classes C-Bb-D (1-2-7, where 1 is the melody) can be explained by the earlier observation that certain bass notes are interchangeable. If the bass had chosen to sing pitch class F instead of D at the beginning of measure 13 (Figure 134), the resulting chord would have been the very common 1-2-5 chord, C-Bb-F.\textsuperscript{785} It is possible that the second voice was anticipating this choice. If the second voice knew that the bass would choose to harmonize the melody at the interval of a seventh, it might have chosen to sing the interval of a third, creating a chord on pitch classes C-A-D (the 1-3-7 chord seen frequently in the cart-song *meureme*, Figure 133). But this is just speculation. The genius of an unwritten polyphonic tradition is that while certain chords tend to predominate, an environment of improvisation allows for new harmonic possibilities to emerge organically.

To review, liturgical harmony from the Gelati and Mart’vili monasteries can be characterized as having basic preferences for intervals of a third, fifth, and octave. Folk polyphony from the region is similar, except that seventh intervals are interchangeable with fifths, and octaves occur only rarely. In both a folk and liturgical polyphony, the middle voice tends to sing in parallel motion with the top voice (or vice versa), while the bass is expected to provide counter-motion. The bass voice in folk polyphony regularly improvises between the

\textsuperscript{784} The call-response form is not uncommon in Georgian folk music, though trading verses antiphonally in a homophonic, three-voiced context is far more typical. It is most common in West-Georgian worksongs, where a trio often alternates with the chorus or workers.

\textsuperscript{785} The so-called “1-2-5” chord (building from the top voice down down) or the “1-4-5” chord (building from the bass voice up) is very common in West Georgian folk harmony. It is also found in liturgical harmony, but only in more complex variants.
interchangeable intervals of a fifth and seventh. Similarly, the bass voice in liturgical polyphony easily and quickly moves between intervals of an octave or fifth below the melody. The intuition on how to harmonize a melody comes from musical sensibilities deeply embedded in local musical culture.

**Figure 135.** *chonguri*, four-string lute common to West Georgia

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10.3 Regional Harmony: Southwest Georgia

The Shemokmedi Monastery is located in the foothills of the a mountain range bordering the Black Sea in the West Georgian province of Guria (see regional map, Figure 130). The region is famous for its improvisational folk-singing traditions, which include highly specialized vocal techniques, such as the *k’rimanch’uli* yodel, that do not appear in any other regional musical dialects in Georgia. While the liturgical melodies of the Shemokmedi monastery school are clearly related to the Gelati monastery kanon, the harmonizations of these melodies are unique. To understand these harmonies, one must look to the rich local folk-singing traditions and the various types of improvisational harmony that occur in genres ranging from feasting songs, historical ballads, work-songs, and lullabies.
10.3.1 Liturgical Harmony: Shemokmedi Monastery Style

An example of the Paschal troparion, *aghdgomasa shensa* [To Your resurrection], was transcribed in the 1940s from the noted master chanter Dimit’ri P’at’arava (1892-1955), a representative of the Shemokmedi Monastery chant school (Figure 136). The first item to notice is that the melody is nearly identical to that of the Gelati Monastery: each phrase begins and ends on the same pitches, contains the same rhythmic durations, and follows a similar melodic gesture. Viewed in transcription, we note the added passing tones in the middle of each of the phrases, yet in the context of an oral tradition the similarities are more striking than the differences. The melody is nearly identical, and every structural pitch suggested in the reduction (Figure 132) is present in both of the variants. Meanwhile, the harmonizing voices show some points of difference that reflect their regional affiliation with Megrelian (Samegrelo-Imereti) and Gurian folk harmony, as discussed below.

In the P’at’arava variant of *aghdgomasa shensa*, small differences in harmonization separate it from the Gelati Monastery variant of the same chant (Figure 136). Some of these differences are markers of regional style, while others are general improvisational characteristics of a more general nature. The first marker of Shemokmedi monastery harmony occurs in the beginning of the second phrase at the word *angelozni*. Instead of harmonizing with intervals of a third, the middle voice instead chooses the interval of a whole-tone. In this case, the choice to sing a whole-tone interval is not merely a passing flirtation, but a deliberate decision to create a sonic space infused with tension. To listen to a performance of the P’at’arava variant of this chant, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #13.

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786 There is only one exception: the Gelati Monastery variant counts eight beats to sing the text *ts’mi-dit gu-li-ta* in the final phrase, while the Shemokmedi Monastery variant counts seven beats for the same text. This is not a significant difference however, as all the melodic notes are the same, the text is the same, and the second half of the phrase leading into the cadential formula is identical both in length and cadence pitch.

787 Transcribed by Mamia P’at’arava from his father, Dimit’ri P’at’arava in the 1940s. Originals are in the private collection of Malkhaz Erkvanidze, and were published in 2003 (see, Appendix F: Published Notation of Georgian Chant).

788 For an example of a general improvisational characteristic, see measure 1, where the second voice begins the chant at the interval of a fifth below the melody instead of a third below the melody (as seen in the Gelati monastery variant). This point of difference is superficial, and demonstrates only that the improvisation of liturgical polyphony allowed for interchangeable notes, similar to improvisation in folk polyphony. Rather, this example shows that even the first chord can vary. Beginning at the interval of a third or a fifth below the melody is not perceived as different; both are simply manifestations of the implied harmony of this particular melodic note, the third and fifth being interchangeable in this case.
With the bass voice singing either an octave or a ninth below the melody, this chord on pitch classes D-C-D (1-2-8 where 1 is the melody) is a unique marker of Shemokmedi Monastery harmony (first box, Figure 136). It is rarely found in the Gelati Monastery manuscript record, and almost never found in chant from the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral tradition in Eastern Georgia (see chord chart, Figure 129). The resolution of the sustained tension created in the middle voice is resolved with a chord including two open-fifth intervals (a 1-5-9 chord on pitch classes E-A-D), a chord of resolution particularly in the region of Guria, as previously discussed.

A more active bass voice differentiates the Shemokmedi Monastery variant of aghdgosasa shensa from other variants. The dominant function of the bass voice to provide fifth and octave intervals below the melody remains unchanged, but we also notice that the bass moves in parallel octaves more often. To the eye this type of movement might look heavy, but the gesture is often disguised with a lower-neighbor passing tone in the melody, or by a suspension in the middle voice that offsets the absolute parallelism. For example, see the lower-neighbor notes in the upper voices that disguise parallel octave motion in the outer voices (circled, second phrase, Figure 136).

Harmonically, the Shemokmedi Monastery variant is quite similar to the Gelati Monastery variant, with only minor differences that can be identified as originating from the regional harmony of Guria. These differences include the whole-tone intervals in the upper voices (boxed phrase 2, Figure 136), and the so-called 1-5-9 chord (second box, phrase 4, Figure 136). The 1-5-9 chord is highly stable in the harmony of the Shemokmedi Monastery school, and may even be sung in parallel motion (unlike octaves which, as previously discussed, tend to be disguised with counter-motion). At the beginning of the fourth phrase of aghdgosasa shensa, for example, we see an example of parallel motion in all three voices while singing a 1-5-9 chord (boxed, Figure 136). The second voice maintains its parallel-fifth relationship with the melody for the entire fourth phrase, and while the bass voice breaks out of parallel ninth-interval harmony, for example, on the word gu-li-ta, it would not be uncommon in Shemokmedi variants to hear the bass sing the entire phrase up to the cadential formula in parallel ninths.

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789 In the fourth phrase of the Gelati monastery variant of the Paschal chant, aghdgosasa shensa, on the other hand, the lower voices harmonize with intervals of a third, octave, and tenth.
790 This type of harmonization is prevalent in the 1966 audio recordings of Art’em Erkomaishvili, the last master chanter of the Shemokmedi monastery school. For the transcriptions see, Shugliashvili, Kartuli saek’lesio galoba... (2006).
Figure 136. *Aghdgomasa shensa*, Shemokmedi Monastery style (Dimit'ri P'at'arava)
It is worth comparing the middle voice harmonization of both the Gelati and Shemokmedi monastery variants for examples of parallelism. In the Shemokmedi monastery variant, the singer avoids absolute parallelisms of the melody in favor of stasis, or basic counter-motion. For example, on the words *she-n-sa kri-st’e* (see first phrase, Figure 136), instead of closely paralleling the melody as seen in the Gelati monastery variant of *aghdgomas shensa* (Figure 131), the second voice holds a static position on pitch class A. As the outer voices continue to change pitch, the stasis of the middle voice creates a number of interesting chords that do not arise in the Gelati Monastery variant where the middle voice harmonizes with parallel intervals.

In notation, holding a steady note seems simpler than movement, but in practice, it is far more difficult for a solo singer to hold and tune a single note while the outer voices continue to move than to simply parallel the familiar melody at a fixed distance of a third or fifth interval. Likewise for a listener, this sustained-note version is the more advanced one, as the resultant chords are more complex than those provided by the type of ubiquitous parallelism seen in the simple style variant from the Gelati Monastery. The ability to experiment with chords in this manner is called *namdvili k'ilo* (true style) chanting, considered to be one step more advanced than the parallel motion typical to *sada k'ilo* (simple style) performance (Figure 142).

10.3.2 Folk Harmony: Guria Region

On occasion, it is tempting to study sacred music traditions as insulated, discrete music systems. This tendency is exacerbated by the survival of single sources relatively isolated in time and context. Other information that might contextualize a particular source, such as the influence of local folk music, a practice of improvisation, or a treatise on tuning practices, is often unavailable to modern scholars. The Georgian case represents an extraordinary picture in this regard, as sources representing the oral transmission of the polyphonic liturgical system exist side by side with sources on local work songs, festival songs, as well as musical influences from other cultures such as Persia, Armenia, and Europe.

These sources obligate observers to consider the substantial musical influence of Georgian folk singing on the liturgical music tradition. In the region of Guria, the most famous master chanters were also coveted folk singers, the recipients of generously endowed invitations.
to sing at wedding or birthday celebrations. For example, the last master chanter, Artem Erkomaishvili (1887-1967), could sing not only thousands of liturgical hymns from memory, but also hundreds of folksongs. He was reportedly so good at these songs that he could perform any of the three voice parts, without repeating a variation.

**Figure 137. Maspindzelsa mkhiarulsa (Guria region)**

The improvisatory folk music in the province of Guria, a mountainous subtropical region of Georgia’s Black Sea coast, contains the most complex of all of the musical grammars in Georgia. By looking at the chord types found in the Gurian feast-song, *maspindzelsa mkhiarulsa* [the joyous host], the similarity with the harmonization of Shemokmedi monastery style chant can easily be established (Figure 137).\(^{791}\) The opening solo establishes the range, scale, and tempo of the piece through a rapidly rising gesture. Trio members must have extremely sharp ears to enter on their precise pitches in time with the utterance of the opening solo. To hear a

\(^{791}\) *Maspindzelsa mkhiarulsa* [the joyous host] (Gurian region) published in: Davit Shugliashvili et. al. eds., *Shevists’ avlot Kartuli Khalkhuri Simghera* [Let’s Learn Gurian Folk Songs] (Tbilisi: International Center of Georgian Folk Song, 2004), 1.
The initial choice of harmonization in the folk song, *maspindzelsa mkhiarulsa*, is fascinating to observe. Instead of intervals of thirds or fifths, the lower two voices harmonize with intervals of a whole tone and a ninth on pitches E-D-D (a 1-2-9 chord where 1 is the melody, Figure 137). As stated before, when the upper two voices sing a whole tone apart, the most common West Georgian chord is 1-2-5, which would be an acceptable opening chord in the musical grammar of Guria (as well as Imereti-Samegrelo and other West Georgian regions such as Svaneti, Adjara, Abkhazia, and Rach’a). When the bass sings a ninth interval below the melody, however, the middle voice usually splits the interval with a perfect fifth, forming the chord 1-5-9. In this case, the 1-2-9 chord 5 (boxed, measures 2, 5, Figure 137) can be understood as a variant or combination of the more common 1-2-5 chord and/or 1-5-9 chord.

The take-away point from this example is that, while in the region of Samegrelo, we observed the interchangeability of the fifth and seventh degree intervals in the bass voice while in the region of Guria, the bass voice has a wider range of harmonic choices. The bass can harmonize with intervals of a fifth, seventh, octave, or as in this case, a ninth.\textsuperscript{792} To bass singers in Guria, the interval of a ninth is valued to such a degree that entire chant phrases may be harmonized in parallel ninth intervals.

Complex ornamentation in *maspindzelsa mkhiarulsa* can be compared to variation techniques in the ornamental chanting styles in West Georgia, especially in the use of voice crossing. For example, after the initial ascent from pitch class A to E, the melody establishes the advanced improvisatory parameters of the song by immediately diving back into the range of the lower voices (measure 1, Figure 137). This action destabilizes the traditional relationships between the three voice parts both in range and harmonic function. Only a predetermined knowledge of the phrase length and cadence pitch allows the singers to conclude the phrase together.\textsuperscript{793} The middle voice must maintain a higher register, while the bass voice typically descends in order to accommodate the top voice entering its range.\textsuperscript{794} While singing text, the

\textsuperscript{792} The occurrence of a ninth within a 1-2-9 chord is relatively rare, and can be understood as an improvisational extrapolation from the far more common 1-5-9 chord previously discussed.

\textsuperscript{793} See further discussion in the section, 11.1.7 Syllable Counting: An Experiment in Text-Setting. For more on this argument, see Graham, “The Role of Memory...” *Proceedings* (2010).

\textsuperscript{794} See the section, 11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing.
lower voices maintain a simple harmonization, but when the top-voice initiates a second voice crossing while singing vocables (measures 7-8, Figure 137), the lower voices respond with invigorated rhythmic and melodic ornamentation.

In Georgian folk music, the function of the vocable (or nonsense-syllable) is an indispensible vehicle for practicing the art of ornamented singing. Singers honed their skills while improvising to such nonsense syllables (which occur as a common refrain to texted verses), and transferred these skills to the performance of ornamental genres of liturgical polyphony. The use of familiar vocable patterns such as haralali haralo (measure 4, Figure 137), and abadelo odelo (measure 7, Figure 137), allowed singers not only to concentrate more on improvisational musical patterns, but also to break the unwritten conventions of singing texted passages in synchronous homophony. It enabled the singers to improvise even more freely with the form, as clearly seen in the second half of the folksong, mspindzelsa mkhialulis. In measure 4, a short burst of vocables allows each singer to activate their improvisational singing skills before the text is stated again (measures 5-6, Figure 137). Starting in measure 7, each voice begins a free-improvisation on vocables leading towards the unison cadence in measure 9.

Vocable syllables do not need to be sung the same way by all three voices; each singer is free to choose their own familiar string of syllables that will best facilitate their own ornamental line. As there are many texted verses to this song, singers were encouraged to change their performance of the vocable section with each repetition. Thus, we see a variety of vocable patterns resulting in a true polyphonic passage: three voices moving independently both in “text” and music. Similar improvisational liberties are taken in chant phrases that employ extended vocalizations on open vowels, as explored in the coming sections.

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795 This topic has been explored in an excellent dissertation by Lauren Ninoshvili, “Singing between the Words...” (PhD diss., 2010).
796 The term homophony is used here to mean the simultaneous performance of the same text by all voice parts, which are singing a parallel vocal line to the melody. For more on the use of terms, see Discussion of terms in the Introduction, and Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music.
797 The practice of changing vocable patterns can be observed in the variance in performance of the same songs by the same singers. Eye-witness testimony to these performance practices are also available, such as the report that Varlam Simonishvili sang the untexted song Tsamokruli fifty different times without repeating himself. See Anzor Erkomaishvili, Mival Guruashi Mara [I'm Going to Guria] (Tbilisi: Sakartvelos Matsne, 2006). Personal experience also corroborates the practice of varying both the melodic content and the syllables of untexted sections of folk songs, a tradition that likely influenced the use of inserted phonemes in ornamental chant styles.
The harmonic movement of all three voice parts in the Gurian folk song *maspindzelsa mkhiarulsa*, and the types of harmonizations chosen by singers in this region, are directly analogous to the harmony and ornamentation of liturgical chant from the Shemokmedi Monastery in Guria. The same singers performed both folksongs and chants using the same basic regional methods for harmonizing and ornamenting the melody.

10.4 Regional Harmony: East Georgia

Moving inland from the Black Sea and across the Likhi mountain range, there is a broad territory that was known in ancient times as the kingdom of Iberia, and modernly as Kartli-K'akhetia. The geography of this region is extremely diverse and includes highland glaciated valleys in the Caucasus, high plateau grasslands near Armenia, and excellent lowland agricultural areas along the three river tributary systems—the Mtkvari, Iori, and Alazani rivers—that flow East to the Caspian Sea. A different musical consciousness predominates in the various regions in East Georgia, though both the folk and liturgical music can be said to be fundamentally Georgian in the following regards: they are predominantly organized around the principle of three-voice harmony, prefer close harmony, and employ the non-tempered Georgian heptatonic scale.\(^{798}\)

In East Georgia, there are several monastic centers where chant was cultivated and inherited in the eighteenth century (see Map of Georgia, Figure 130).\(^{799}\) Returning to the example of the Paschal troparion, *aghdgomas a shensa* [To Your resurrection], we examine the

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\(^{798}\) For more on questions of defining the social function of various genres of Georgian folk polyphony, see for example, the excellent scholarship of Edisher Garaqanidze, "Kartuli musik’aluri dialek’t’ebi da mati urtiertimarteba" [Georgian musical dialects and their interrelationship] (PhD diss., Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1990). Edisher Garaqanidze, "Kartuli khalkhuri simgheris ganvitarebis erti adreuli et’ap’is shesakheb" [On one of the earliest stages in the development of Georgian folk song], *Musik'ismsodneobis Sak’iikhebi* [Issues in Musicology] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1997), 18-38. Edisher Garaqanidze, "Improvizatsiis sakheebi kartul khalkhur simgherebshi" [Types of Improvisation in Georgian Folk Songs], *Kartuli musikis poliponiis sakitkhebi* [On the Polyphony of Georgain Music] (Tbilisi: Tbilisi State Conservatory, 1988), 62-76.

\(^{799}\) In Georgia, no musical distinction has been made between the rural monastic tradition and the urban parish tradition, as in other Christian cultures. For convenience, I refer to the harmonic style of East Georgian chant as the "Svet'itskhoveli Cathedral style," simply because this was the most prominent cathedral in the region and the location of a major seminary in the eighteenth century. In reality, there were many centers where chant was taught, including the David Gareja monasteries, Bodbe Monastery, Samtavisi Monastery, and others. For discussion on these important hymnographical centers, see the section, 3.1 The Historical Context. For more on the unique history and importance of the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral, which has a feastday dedicated to it in the Georgian Orthodox tradition, see Zakaria Machit'adze, “Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral,” *Lives of the Georgian Saints...* (2006).
ways in which the harmony of the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral chant tradition is similar, but also
different, from the Gelati monastery and Shemokmedi monastery chant styles from West
Georgia. Two folk songs also illustrate the types of harmonic and ornamental singing
characteristic of the region of Kartl-K’akheti in East Georgia.

10.4.1 Liturgical Harmony: Svet'itskhoveli Cathedral Style

The melody of aghdgomasa shensa, as inherited and notated by Vasil K’arbelashvili in
the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral style (Figure 138), displays strikingly similar features to the two
examples previous examined (Figure 131 and Figure 136). The cadence pitches are the same
except for the final cadence on unison, and the lengths of phrases are very similar after taking
into account the characteristic East-Georgian elongated cadence type. The bass voice also
displays (now familiar) patterns of counter-motion, moving between octave and fifth intervals
below the melody. The text of the third phrase is slightly different.

The main difference that we see between the East Georgian variant of the chant,
aghdgomasa shensa, and those from West Georgia, occurs in the middle-voice ornamentation
(Figure 138). A simple glance at the transcription reveals that the middle voice sings nearly
twice as many notes as the outer voice parts. This florid ornamentation style affects the
performance of the chant in several ways: it slows the tempo, fills in the harmony on held
melodic notes in the outer voices, and disguises the fact that the outer voices continue to sing in a
simple style.

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800 Aghdgomasa shensa [To Your resurrection], Paschal troparion (Tbilisi: National Center of Manuscripts, Vasil
K’arbelashvili fund).
801 Cadences in the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral style are often longer than cadences in the West Georgian chant styles.
802 Instead of the canonical text that should be sung in the third phrase—da chvensa ghirs mkven kveqanasa zeda
[and for those of us worthy here on the earth]—the K’arbelashvili variant states, da chvensa kveqanasa zeda krist’e
[and for those of us on the earth, O Christ]. It will be interesting to investigate the ways in which differences in
transmitted texts affected the musical setting of those texts to model melodies.
803 It must be said that this Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral variant is ornamental in style (to my knowledge, a simple style
variant does not exist in the K’arbelashvili transcription record): any comparison with the West Georgian simple
style variants should take this difference in ornamental style into account.
804 For example, see the syllable -sa at the beginning of phrase 1; the syllable -ni at the beginning of phrase 2; the
syllable da at the beginning of phrase 3; and the syllable -di at the beginning of phrase 4.
Figure 138. Aghdgomasa shensa, Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral ornamental style
The ornamentation is further characterized by step motion (there are hardly any interval jumps of a third or larger), and maintains a narrow range even when the outer voices are only separated by the interval of a fifth (see the word u-ga-lo-be-n in the second phrase, Figure 138). To hear a recording of this chant by the women's ensemble, Sathanao, see, Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #15.

But though the middle voice looks quite elaborate, a closer look reveals that it follows many of the characteristic movements observed in the harmonic movement of the West Georgian examples. For example, almost all of the passing tones in the third phrase are merely ornamentations of a parallel-third harmonization of the melody (Figure 138). The result of an ornamenting style that includes upper-lower neighbor notes when already singing in close-harmony is an abundance of whole-tone intervals that occur in passing. For example, see the series of whole tone intervals formed between the upper voices in the passage sung to the word - u-ga-lo-be-n in the middle of the second phrase (circled, second phrase, Figure 138).

**10.4.2 Folk Harmony: Kartl-K’akheti Region**

The folk music of East Georgia displays several clear developmental stages, according to Georgian ethnomusicologists. The earliest songs were simple melodies sung over a moving drone that oscillated between two pitches. According to ethnomusicologist Joseph Jordania, as the music of this region developed from two-voiced polyphony to three-voiced polyphony, the principle of the moving drone remained the same. The following two music examples exhibit this principle feature, which also affected the regional harmonization of liturgical chant.

The antiphonal wedding song, maqruli [wedding song] demonstrates the basic structure of a descending melody over drone-like harmony (Figure 139). This harmonic structure can be seen at the end of each short phrase of text (first beat, measures 3, 6, 9, 12, etc.) as the harmony moves from pitch classes E to D, then back to E for the cadence. As in most Georgian folk songs, the cadence occurs on an open fifth interval with the lower two voices harmonizing at the

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807 The cadence type is a chord progression best represented as I-VII-I.
interval of a fifth below the top voice. This type of cadence is ubiquitous in the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral chant style, differentiating it from West Georgian monastery chant styles. The roots of this cadence type can be clearly seen in the regional folk music of East Georgia. To hear a performance of the folksong *maqruli* (wedding song), see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #16.

**Figure 139. Maqruli, wedding song (Kartli region)**

![Musical notation](image)

Eastern Georgian folksongs such as *maqruli* are typically performed by two choirs. Each choir consists of two soloists and a chorus of basses. The basses may perform in both choirs, but the soloists sing antiphonally (as indicated by "Choir 1", "Choir 2", Figure 139). In the wedding song, *maqruli*, the melody is sung by the middle voice, while the lower voice sings the texted drone, and the top voice doubles the drone at the octave and ornaments the melody. While there is very little improvisation in the bass ostinato, endless minor variations are possible in the upper voices, whose soloists often applauded for their ability to add individual timbral and improvisatory flavor. The texts were also drawn from a wide base of folk literature, and were initiated by the first-choir soloists and repeated by the second choir.
In the liturgical chant from East Georgia, similar principles of harmonization are active. Melodies in the top voice are often harmonized by quite simple bass parts, which double the melody at the lower octave or the fifth interval (compare to Figure 138). The harmonically simple bass-lines in East Georgian folk and liturgical music contrast with the active bass movement in West Georgia, where active harmonization in all three voices is characteristic. These differences present compelling evidence that the bass voice was a semi-improvised harmonization of the top-voice melody, and not a critical element in the transmission of Georgian chant (though of course it is fundamental to the performance of chant).

One of the most intriguing evolutions of the liturgical chant artform is the second voice harmony in East Georgia, and its interaction with the first voice melody. As we have already seen, all three voices in West Georgian chant interact with an equal amount of improvisatory elements. By contrast, the bass voice in East Georgian folk and liturgical music is quite simple. But the second voice in East Georgian chant (especially in the transcriptions by Vasil K’arbelashvili) is a liberated entity that playfully anticipates, entwines, and disguises the melodic voice. To understand why the middle voice is so ornamented, it is instructive to examine other sources from the local folk tradition. To hear a performance of the folksong shemodzakhili (feasting song), see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #17.

The feast-song shemodzakhili (feast-song), sung as friends gather to commemorate a special occasion, is an example of the ornamental type of folk song prevalent in the East Georgian region of K’akheti (Figure 140). Songs such as shemodzakhili are typically sung by two highly accomplished soloists, and accompanied by a group of people singing drone. The bass moves by whole-step, though this move can be anticipated by the jump of a third (see transition from measures 4-5), and may have a range of up to five or six notes. The drone movement is signaled by subtle modal shifts by one of the soloists, or by singing the upper-neighbor note. For example, the melismatic middle-voice in the song, shemodzakhili, descends to pitch class G at the end of measure 4, signaling the bass to shift up one whole tone (Figure

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809 New drone pitches typically signal a new modal scale that is anticipated in the middle voice. This can be observed in the modern performance of K’akhetian folk songs when the middle voice sings an augmented fourth (the major third of the new key) to pull the drone up by whole step. By the same token, the middle voice sings a diminished second (minor third of the new key) to push the drone down by one whole step. In Georgian tuning, the augmented fourth and diminished seconds are not as pronounced as in equal-tempered tuning, but are still audible for attentive singers.
140). When the drone shifts to pitch class G (via a short anticipatory jump to pitch class A), the upper voices modulate to the new modal center (measure 5, Figure 140).\textsuperscript{810}

**Figure 140. Shemodzakhili, feast-song (K’akheti region)**

The structure of the ornamentation in the upper voice parts of the folk song, *shemodzakhili*, is quite simple. Its execution is far more complex. Analysis shows that the voice parts are sung as a pair of descending parallel thirds over the drone, while the predominant ornamentation style is characterized by a series of very fast vocal flourishes between each descending pitch. The dexterity and skill with which a singer performs these ornamentations is

\textsuperscript{810} When the drone establishes a new modal center, the upper voices create a new modal scale above it, tuning neutral intervals to the new drone.

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fundamental to local performance practice. In the folksong *shemodzakhili*, the melody is sung by the middle voice, even though the top voice begins the song. This is evident in the way that the middle voice leads the tempo through its ornaments, and its fundamental role in either prolonging the drone (as at the end of measures 1-3, Figure 140), or in signaling a shift in drone (measures 4-5, Figure 140). In East Georgian folk music, the middle voice is predominantly responsible for leading the song, while the top voice provides a parallel-third harmony above the melody. This fundamental role may be one clue to understanding why the second voice in the liturgical music of the region also has the most ornamented voice part.

Harmonically, the folk song *shemodzakhili* is quite simple. The ornamental upper voices sing parallel third descending lines over a static drone part. The interest here is found in the extraordinary skill with which the soloists sing the upper voice parts, and not in the complexity of its harmony. A similar tenet is visible in the liturgical music of the region, where harmonies are far simpler than in West Georgia, while the ornamental style can be far more complex, especially as noted in the second voice.

The reasons for the increased activity in the middle voice of the chant, *aghdgomasa shensa* [To Your resurrection] are debatable (Figure 138), but may have something to do with the already developed skill set of solo folk-singers in East Georgia. This analogy makes sense to singers. But it also begs the question; why wasn't the top voice similarly ornamented? After all, the singers of the folksong *shemodzakhili* clearly ornament both of the upper voice parts, not just the middle voice. This is a difficult question to answer, and one that hasn't been posed in the academic literature. My own suspicion is that the first-voice melody was maintained as a referent in the transmission of liturgical chant, and that the conventions of oral transmission prevented its over-ornamentation in East Georgia. But in West Georgia, all three voice parts, including the top voice melody, were equally ornamented, so it is curious that the East Georgian chanters restricted their ornamentation to the middle voice.

Another possibility is that such florid middle-voice ornamentation is not actually characteristic of historic East Georgian chant, but representative only of Vasil K’arbelashvili.

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811 Another performance practice element controlled by the middle voice includes slightly delaying its ornaments in order to allow the top voice to descend within a whole tone before resolving down. This subtle performance practice results in a series of suspension-resolutions on alternating beats within the phrase. These happen so quickly that they are difficult to notate, but can be sung wherever parallel thirds occur.

812 I have personally spent many years singing with Eastern Georgian chanters, whose ability to improvise in folk songs assists their ability to ornament chants that they know well.
whose chant transcriptions demonstrate prodigious ornamentation of the middle voice (see Figure 42 and Figure 68).\textsuperscript{813} Other sources of East Georgian chant are far more simple, in general, than the sources notated by Vasil K’arbelashvili. But it is more probable that, as an accomplished chanter and transcriber, he was almost the only one capable of notating such variants. Until further evidence proves otherwise, these are the present conclusions that can be drawn from the transcription evidence of the advanced liturgical chant of the Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral school.

10.5 Chapter Conclusion

In this section, an analysis of the differences and similarities between the various geographical centers of Georgian chant yielded several conclusions about the oral transmission of liturgical chant. These included the observation that, despite wide musical differences between variants from different regional centers, the remarkable stability of the melody across all regional liturgical variants marks it as a stable or fixed element. Conversely, the wide variation of the harmony in the lower two voice parts suggests processes of harmonic adaptation and improvisation as influenced by local folk tradition. This section has presented several examples of folk music from each of the three regions from which liturgical chant survives. These folk sources demonstrate the harmonic and ornamental precepts of each local music system, and provide a glimpse into the musical context in which each liturgical chant system evolved.

The chant example, \textit{aghdgomasa shensa}, has been presented as a way to show the continuity of the melody between regional variants. The folk songs, meanwhile, show the influences of these genres on the harmonization of \textit{aghdgomasa shensa} in each region. As singers often performed both liturgical chant and folk songs, it makes sense that both singing traditions evolved together over centuries of oral transmission in political disjunct regions. This point having been established, it is also worth noting that the two singing traditions remained distinct. Where folksongs might rely on melodies in the middle voice, liturgical chant always refers to the melody in the top voice. The following sections will explore these differences,

\textsuperscript{813} Among the sources contained in the Vasil K’arbelashvili archive (National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi), there are several manuscripts where he experiments with expanding the three-voiced structure of Georgian chant to 4, 5, 6, even 12 voice parts. He also experiments with different types of neume notation, vowel notation written diastematically, etc. See the section, 4.5 K’arbelashvili Family Transcriptions.
isolating and examining each of the complex musical parameters that contributed to the memorization and performance of any single chant.
Chapter XI: Model Melodies and Ornamentation

For centuries, the musical content of the liturgical worship of the Georgian Orthodox Church was placed in the care of professional chanters. This was a deep responsibility because unlike other traditions, nearly the entire Vespers-Matins-Divine Liturgy cycle in Orthodox worship is chanted either by choir, deacon, or priest. The repertory of a Georgian master chanter demanded knowledge of at least 3500 chants.\footnote{814} Their role was not limited to performing in the numerous weekly services, but included another extremely vital function: that of training the next generation of chanters. This was not an inconsequential process; indeed the stakes could not have been higher.

The absence of a viable written notation of the liturgical repertory meant that the failure to transmit accurate and accessible information to new students represented the complete loss of the repertory within one generation. Considering the modern obsession with saving data, this sobering reality is somewhat shocking. But consider the fact that master teachers were capable of training dozens of students in a relatively short time (four-six years), a process that if repeated, occasionally resulted in the training of hundreds of students, each one capable of starting a new chant school.\footnote{815} But what prevented these hundreds of students from teaching entirely new variations of chant? What sustained a unified chant tradition through generations of teachers, and across centuries of time? These are the questions pursued this chapter.

As one might suspect of a repertory that included at least 3500 separate chants, the successful transmission of accurate and accessible musical information relied upon a sophisticated organization of musical material. At the core of this study is the argument that the three voices in Georgian chant have a hierarchical relationship: the melody in the top voice is primary, while the lower two voices serve a secondary harmonizing role. This claim is supported by comparative studies of the melodic voice, as well as the three-voiced harmonic structure. A

\footnote{814} Dimit'ri P'at'arava, student of Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze, stated in 1949 that he commanded knowledge of 3500 chants, while Art'em Erkomaishvili calculated that he knew 2500. See interview as reported by Samuel Toidze, "The Unique Treasure..." (1981), republished in Shugliashvili, \textit{Eleven Pearls} (2004). Discussed in the section, 9.2.1 The Last Grand-Masters: 1949.

\footnote{815} Giorgi Dumbadze (1788-1886) and Ant'on Dumbadze (1824-1907) were both credited with training hundreds of chant students during their lifetime careers as teachers. See the sections, 3.5.3 The Shemokmedi Monastery and Giorgi Dumbadze and 3.5.4 Ant'on Dumbadze, Master Teacher.
mutually reinforcing relationship exists between regional chant schools and the local folk music tradition, a correspondence especially striking in the harmonization of model melodies. Thus, each chant variant can be identified by a set of regionally specific harmonic characteristics. A third element of chant performance that reflects the hierarchical relationship of the three voice parts is the process of semi-improvisatory ornamentation. In the most advanced forms, the 'model' or 'referent' melody is only implied, as all three voices improvise.

11.1 Georgian Model Melodies

In this section, I argue that the polyphonic structure of Georgian chant is based on the concept of the k’ilo melody [model melody]. The transcription record shows that the singer of the top voice in the tripart structure—the mtkmeli [speaker]—commands a structurally significant role for the organization and the transmission of Georgian liturgical chant. Many different sources attest to this reality. For example, in the transcription projects of 1893 and 1903, Pilimon Koridze transcribed only the mtkmeli voice, knowing that with at least this voice part notated, the rest of the chant could be extrapolated later.\(^{816}\) Art’em Erkomaishvili indicated in the 1960s that his unique neume notation represented the first voice only; this shows that knowledge of the melody was the most critical aspect of recalling a chant tune, even though documentary evidence confirms that Erkomaishvili was a singer of the bass voice.

While the regional harmony of chant varies widely (as discussed in the previous chapter), the melodies in the first voice remain relatively stable. In a three school comparison of the first phrase of the chant, aghdgomaša shensa, it is easily seen that the first voice remains relatively stable, while the lower two voices differ (Figure 141). In more complex chants, this effect is augmented. This example suggests that over time, the oral transmission of chant allowed for harmonic variation. But this same process of oral transmission did not allow for the 'evolution' of the model melody, only its variation. In fact, the stability of the melody is the cornerstone of the

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\(^{816}\) The idea that Georgian chant could be reconstructed from the model melody proved to be problematic, but the point is that the first voice was considered primary. For more on the transcription of model melodies, see the sections: 6.2 The Dumbadze Transcription Project, 1893, and 6.4 The Kutaseladze Transcription Project: 1903-1905. For both of these projects, only the top voice melodies were transcribed. K’ereselidze later commissioned the harmonization of these melodies in a project covered in the Chapter VIII. For a clear example of the the process of notating voice parts independently, with the second voice written last, see Vasil K’arbelashvili, Figure 42.
structure of Georgian liturgical chant, and the key to understanding its fortuitous and robust survival.

Figure 141. Aghdgomasa shensa, Three School Comparison (first phrase)
11.1.1 Memory Archive

The creation of a 'memory archive' of model melodies, as postulated by Mary Carruthers, may have assisted Georgian chanters to command such a large and complex repertory. It is more likely, however, that only the basic contour (as opposed to the details) of each model melody was memorized by chanters. Any individual performance of a model phrase in the context of its setting for a specific chant would alter it dramatically, and be determined by the factors such as the length of text, liturgical function, skill of fellow chanters, chosen ornamentation level, regional harmony, and other parameters.

Nearly the entire Georgian chant repertory is composed of collections of model phrases (mukhli) uniquely assigned to the various genres of chant in the Georgian Oktoechos. These have been usefully detailed in a dissertation by Davit Shugliashvili. But it is useful to distinguish between the various types of melodies that can be found in the repertory. Paolo Ferretti, building on research pioneered by Francois-Augustus Gevaert in the 1880s, identified three types of model melodies in his study of Gregorian (Latin) chant: cento melodies, 'original melodies', and 'prototype melodies'. These, as it turns out, become useful in describing similar melody types observed in Georgian liturgical chant.

The first model type noted by Ferretti, cento, is described as melodic fragments that are well known to chanters and may be borrowed for use in other chants. This type of phrase borrowing is easily observed in Georgian chant. For example, the untexted stock phrases called

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818 Dimitri Pat'arava reportedly knew 3500 chants in all three voices, while Art'em Erkomaishvili reported knowing 2500 chants. Many of these were extremely complex, as evidenced by the surviving examples of the Erkomaishvili repertory in audio and/or notated sources. See Shugliashvili, ed., *Kartuli saek'lesio galoba, shemokmedis sk'ola...* (2006).
819 The Oktoechos system first appears in the 8th century and has been attributed to John of Damascus. It became useful as a way to organize chants in many Christian chant repertories including the Latin West, Byzantium, West Syrian, Coptic, Armenian, and Georgian. The Georgian Oktoechos differs from other systems in that it is entirely composed of melodic fragments rather than modal scales or cadential patterns. The organization of Georgian chant is centered on a unique Oktoechos system, which determines the melodic templates for the various genres of chant: troparia, kondakia, heirmoi, etc. For example, a student who mastered just six or seven melodic phrases pre-assigned to the Tone 4 troparia genre would be able to adapt and sing dozens of different texts to these same melodic templates.
820 The only comprehensive treatment of this subject is the dissertation by Davit Shugliashvili in which he charts the model melodies of the various genres of chant. Shugliashvili, "Rva khmis sist'ema..." (PhD diss., 2009).
ch’reli (not to be confused with the referential index described in the section, 9.1 The Ch’reli System), which seem to exist outside the organization of the Georgian Oktoechos, may be added to the cadence patterns of almost any chant for purposes of ornamentation and elongation. Such ch’reli model phrases, sung to an open vowel, are often the sites of ornamental experimentation such as elaborate voice crossings. An example of this type of added musical material can be seen in the Ant'on Dumbadze variant of the cherubic hymn, romelni kerubimta (measures 6-8, and measures 12-15 of Figure 89).\textsuperscript{822}

The other two model types identified by Ferretti include a class of 'original melodies,' that are uniquely paired to a single text, and 'prototype melodies,' which are melodic templates that can be adapted for new texts. In Georgian chant, these two types are also easily identified: 'Original melodies' are observed in the uniquely assigned (tvitkhmovani) model melodies for chants such as the cherubic hymn, romelni kerubimta and other Matins, Vespers, and Divine Liturgy chants. Prototype melodies, meanwhile, describe the great majority of melodic phrases assigned to the eight tones of the Georgian Oktoechos (in this chapter, the model melodies of troparia tone 6 are described within the context of the Paschal hymn, aghdgomasa shensa). Scholar Kenneth Levy has further linked 'prototype melodies' with the Byzantine automela-prosomoia chant forms. These melodies were so well known that, “it was sufficient to identify the model by its text-incipit (first two words) and supply the fresh text.”\textsuperscript{823} Interestingly, this type of adaptable, 'prototype melody' became the cornerstone for the organization and transmission of liturgical chant in Georgia.

Given the points discussed so far, it seems appropriate to attempt to list the basic tasks of the master chanter when setting a new text to three-voiced Georgian liturgical chant. At first, the text needed to be divided into phrase-length segments. Then, it would have been assigned to a category, in this case, one of the eight modes of the Oktoechos, in the appropriate genre of the chant (troparia, kondakia, heirmoi, etc.). Following, a master chanter would have been expected to complete the following tasks:

\textsuperscript{822} The presence of added musical phrasing to the performance of the cherubic hymn is particularly interesting because this melody is not contained within the archive of model melodies that belong to the Georgian Oktoechos. The cherubic hymn possesses its own unique melody. But the insertion of additional musical phrasing of the untexted ch’reli variety can perhaps be explained by the liturgical function of this particular chant, which must be stretched out over a long duration while the communion is being prepared by the clergy.

1. Recall the correct model melodies of the assigned tone and genre.
2. Choose a sequence of model melodies (not every tone 4 troparia chant contains the same sequence of model phrases, in fact, variance is high).
3. Set the new text to this sequence of melodies, i.e. assign points of cadence, recitative, and melodic beginnings for each phrase of text.
4. Employ the regionalized skill of shets’qobay, referred to by Giorgi Mtats'mindeli, i.e. the harmonization of the melody.
5. Employ the regionalized skill of ornamentation to beautify the basic three-voiced structure of melody and harmony.

Crucially, the only step requiring mnemonic function in this short list is #1: the recall of the model melodies. Otherwise, three chanters skilled in the cultivated arts of harmonization, ornamentation, and text setting, could hypothetically 'sight-sing' a brand new text directly into complex three-voiced Georgian polyphony. Indeed, I have witnessed this very process (described in section, 11.1.7 Syllable Counting: An Experiment in Text-Setting).

### 11.1.2 Pedagogical References

Medieval references prioritize the first-voice melody as the structural core upon which the other voices improvise or harmonize. The earliest reference to such a relationship emerges in the hagiography of the eleventh-century hymnographer, Giorgi Mtatsmindeli, who is described as being exceptionally gifted at learning not just chant, but the distinct entities of melody and harmony. The hagiography states, “Young Giorgi quickly and easily memorized the harmonization of the voices to the chant melodies.”\(^\text{824}\) The philological exegesis of the original terminology is referenced in the section, 2.1.2 Giorgi Mtats'mindeli (1009-1065). For modern scholars such as Davit Shugliashvili, the fact that chant melodies are distinguished from harmonizations (my emphasis) establishes a significant hierarchy of musical difference, and may reflect a medieval pedagogical process that can still be discerned in nineteenth-century references to the oral transmission of chant.\(^\text{825}\)

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\(^{825}\) For discussion on the pedagogy of Georgian chant, see Shugliashvili, ed., “Introduction,” *Kartuli saek'lesio galoba, shemokmedis sk'ola* (Georgian and English: trans. Iashvili, Graham) (Tbilisi, 2006). Also see Magda Sukhiashvili, "Saek'lesio galobis st'savlebis metodik'is sak'itkhisatvis: XIX-XX sauk'unis mijnis ts'erlobiti da bech'duri ts'qaroebis mikhedvit" [On the issue of the pedagogical methodology of studying ecclesiastical chant: based
The following reference from Pilimon Koridze is instructive on the methods of study. Writing in 1896, he observed the following:

In a process called sasts'avlebeli khmebi [study-voices], new pupils initially learned the first voice, then learned to sing the bass and middle voices. The second voice followed the first voice a fifth below, while the bass followed the melody an octave below.  

These parallelisms, called "study voices," were probably only used as a preliminary pedagogical step in a student's musical education, as such predictable harmonizations (e.g. a fifth below) are rarely found in the transcription record. Simple variations, on the other hand, are widespread. Such development of the art of chanting required, as Koridze explains, an expanded ornamental role from all three singers:

The top voice was given a more interesting melodic movement, while the bass and middle voice were given greater freedom to move independent from the top voice. The increased independence between the three voices also distinguishes them from one another and improves the chant from stage of initial study.

Parallelism seems to have assisted students in the critical memorization of the primary melodies, however, and could later be discarded in favor of regionally stylistic variation (see the section, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison).

11.1.3 Degrees of Complexity: Ornamentation

Koridze also made insightful observations about the levels of complexity in the performance of chant:

Several centuries ago sada k'ilo [simple style] was in practice in Guria, but now varjishi galoba ['Exercised chant’ or ornamental chant] is common. When Mamia IV, the Governor of Guria [in the seventeenth century], became dissatisfied with the singing of...
sada k'ilō, he invited chanters from Gelati Monastery, members of the Tskvit'ishvili aristocratic family, to come and teach more complicated variants. These singers brought the tradition of ornamental style chant with them to Guria.828

The basic variation of parallel harmony proceeded through various stages of complexity depending on the competency of the singers (see Figure 142).

Figure 142. Chart of Ornamentation Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Sabavshvo k'ilō</strong> [Children's Style] Pedagogical term denoting the most simple (parallel) harmonization of the basic melody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sada k'ilō</strong> [Simple Style] Demonstrates the fundamental pitches of both the referent melody, and the regional harmony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Namdvili k'ilō</strong> [&quot;True&quot; Style] Typified by counter-motion and light ornamenting of all three voice parts. Common chant style performed in parish and monastery churches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Gamshvenebuli k'ilō</strong> [Ornamental Style] Manifests in different ways in each of the regional schools of chant. Typified by elaborate ornamentations of all three voice parts including voice crossing, elongation of the phrase, the addition of pitches, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Gavarjishebuli k'ilō</strong> [&quot;Exercised&quot; Style] Used synonymously with Ornamental style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ch'reli</strong> [&quot;Ch'reli&quot; (idiomela) Style] In this usage (see K'ereselidze), the term ch'reli refers to phrases of musical material added to ornamental chants for the purpose of elongating particular words or syllables. Typically highly ornamented.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Pilimon Koridze’s observations, “gamshvenebuli k'ilō [ornamental style] chant is an elaboration of namdvili k'ilō chant [true style] and consists of the independent and orderly ornamentation of each voice.”829 Such variation and ornamentation allowed singers to employ their own creativity, while being bound to the memorized model melodies and the


vocabulary of their regional harmonization style. In this way, the process of variation actually assisted the transmission of the model melodies, as each twist and turn reaffirmed the implicit structure of the fundamental melodic and harmonic structures of the chant.\footnote{As already discussed, the top-voice melody remained intact through the oral transmission of chant in various regions, implying its importance in this regard. Meanwhile, regional styles of harmonization were also reinforced through constant variation of the same basic harmonic principles. See the section, 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison.}

Ekvtime K’ereselidze elucidated his perspective on the importance of the standard, unornamented melodic line in an informative note written on page 189 of manuscript Q-674:

If there were not a k’ilo [standard model melody], how could we ornament it? Every movement of the voice is dependent and connected like veins to the structure of the k’ilo, which is therefore the foundation of any chant. Only that person who has learned the k’ilo expertly, will be able to guess where and how it is suitable to ornament the movement of the voices.\footnote{Ekvtime K’ereselidze, marginalia, manuscript Q-674: 189, National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi. The word k’ilo is used in several different ways in nineteenth century sources. Depending on context, it can mean standard melody, correct tuning, authentic voice, regional harmonic style, etc.}

With this insight, K’ereselidze identifies the most fundamental structures of Georgian chant. He explains how ornamental variants must be based on basic musical structures, and identifies the k’ilo—the "model melody"—as the cornerstone of this system. The art of variation was prized among chanter, so in many cases, ornamental variations were chosen for transcription.\footnote{For more discussion on the transcription of ornamental chant, see the section, 5.5 Kutaisi Transcription Project, 1885-1886.} Only later, K’ereselidze and others realized that without the simple style, or basic variant of the melody, the original chant could be lost.

Ekvtime K’ereselidze often penciled in the basic model melody in the simple style above an ornamental melody in the original Koridze transcriptions. See for example, the small noteheads in the melody line of the chant, \textit{khenebisa sark'ino} (arrows, Figure 143).\footnote{\textit{Khenebisa sark’ino}, troparion in tone 8, manuscript Q-672: 528, National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi.} He explained his process in a marginalia note in another manuscript:

Remark: chants must follow from the model melody. In those places where notes are written both above and below, the model melody is shown in the upper notes, while the lower notes represent an ornamental variation. The bass and middle voices are also performed with ornamentation.\footnote{Ekvtime K’ereselidze, marginalia, manuscript Q-692: 59, National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi. The transliteration of the quote is as follows: "shenishvna: galoba its'geba k'ilos khmit, kholo romel pardshiats zemot da}
K’ereselidze demonstrates remarkable foresight in notating both the ornamental and simple variants of each chant. It is true that without the model melody, it would be difficult for modern scholars to determine which pitches are fundamental to the chant structure and which are ornamental to that structure. Understanding the structure of the ornamented melody is critical to understanding the transmission of Georgian chant.

**Figure 143. Khenebisa sark’ino (Q-672: 528)**

Another critical reference to the predominance of the top-voice melody is found in a discussion about neume notation (recorded by Anzor Erkomaishvili and cited in the section, kvemot orgvarad ts’eria not’ebi, zemoti not’ebis khmarebit, galoba sul k’iloti gavabolomdis. da kvemoti not’ebis khmarebit k’i vardishit gava bolomdis. da banisa da modzakhilis khmebi mits’qobilia vardishzed."
9.3.1 Art’em Erkomaishvili: Neumes Represent Melody. Following an interview with his
grandfather, Art’em Erkomaishvili (1887-1967), Anzor Erkomaishvili reported: “Grandfather
Art’em specifically stated that neumes were used only for the first voice. The other voice parts
would remember their parts by ear, following the first voice's lead.” Here again, it is clear that
the master chanter considered the top voice as having a special role in the transmission of chant
such that the notation of this voice part alone represented the successful transmission of the
entire chant in notation. As Erkomaishvili reports, the other voices were extrapolated from this
fundamental melodic voice.

11.1.4 Model Melodies: Similarity and Difference

Another hurdle in the successful transmission of Georgian chant concerns the matter of
similarity: many melodies in the Georgian chant tradition closely resemble one another. In a
music tradition that relied on oral transmission, how were similar melodies distinguished?
Pursuing such a question brings us to the crux of one of the most vexing issues in Georgian chant
studies; that of understanding how complex musical repertories resist change through oral
transmission. As discussed, the basic skills required of chant students included the accurate
retention of model melodies, and the skill of harmonizing these melodies in accepted regional
harmonization styles. The process of distinguishing one melody from another was a matter of
extreme importance for the successful transmission of the repertory, and our understanding of
such processes should help to answer questions of how transmission affected musical change
over time. Similarity can be determined by a number of factors including the contour of the melody,
its starting and ending pitches, and the context for the harmonization of the melody. These

835 Anzor Erkomaishvili, "Introduction," Kartuli Khalkhuri Musika, Artem Erkomaishvilis sanoto krebuli, Guria
[Georgian Folk Music, transcriptions from Artem Erkomaishvili, Guria] (Tbilisi: The International Center for
Georgian Folk Song, 2005), 24.
836 This section has been informed by studies on oral transmission such as: Albert B. Lord, The Singer of Tales
1980). Walter J. Ong, Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word (London and New York: Routledge,
2002). For more on the transmission of model melodies in the Latin and Greek churches. See for example, Peter
Jeffery, Re-envisioning Past Musical Cultures: Ethnomusicology in the Study of Gregorian Chant (Chicago:
qualities can also represent difference. Some research in this area is helpful to this discussion. In laboratory studies to test how to distinguish two musical phrases sharing similar melodic contour, cognitive psychologist Jay Dowling found that: “When listeners are asked to say if a melody is an exact transposition of a previously heard novel melody, they often give false positive responses to melodic ‘lures’ that share the same contour as the original, but not its precise intervals.”\(^{837}\) Thus, melodies with similar contour can be easily mistaken for one another. Indeed, the whole history of neumes shows that contour information comes before pitch information.

This raises the question: if two distinct melodies share the same contour, how do singers distinguish between the two? Presumably, discriminating between similar melodies, even highly ornamented melodies, would have been critical for the transmission of chant. Indeed, as melodies are ornamented, their similarities might become accentuated as the fundamental melodic contour is even more obscured. Another observation by Dowling’s team is useful here. After allowing an interval of time to pass, they found that discrimination improved:

As more time is given between the two melodies, the tendency for false positives declines and discrimination of exact transpositions from same contour lures improves, suggesting that the mental representation of a novel melody is gradually consolidated in terms of pitch interval categories.\(^{838}\)

According to this finding, a time delay in the playback of a melody improves the quality of retention. At first, only contour is understood. But over time, the original melody is remembered more precisely according to its intervallic content. As one might expect, this effect is radically increased through the frequent repetition of the original melody.\(^{839}\) The study of Georgian chant supports these findings, but adds new context. Ekvtime K’ereselidze recognized the danger of notating only the most ornamental versions of chants, and remedied the situation by penciling in the fundamental melodic pitches that serve as the basis for that ornamentation (Figure 143).

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\(^{838}\) Ibid.: 194.

\(^{839}\) The study of written notation can be misleading: the relative importance of one melodic pitch over another is lost, forcing musicologists to rely on comparative analysis between multiple variants to extrapolate the contour of the original melody. In this regard, it is extremely useful to possess transcriptions of both the simple and ornamental versions of chant examples.
He understood that even a small difference in the intervallic order of essential melodic notes (the contour) would result in changes to the harmony and ornamentation that depend upon it, and eventually to the integrity of the transmission of the chant. Here, a reflection from Charles Seeger is instructive: “on the one hand, melody may be conceived as a succession of separate sounds, on the other, as a single continuum of sound—as a chain or as a stream.”840 From this, we are reminded to recognize that melodic phrases were not learned as a series of discrete pitches, but rather as phrase-length melodic archetypes.

Oral transmission is a relatively stable method of learning and retaining information, given optimum conditions. But some methods are better and worse. Psychology experiments on the so-called “chain” method of transmission—as in the children’s game, “telephone”, where one subject whispers a sentence to the next subject on down the chain—have shown that this type of transmission is highly inaccurate. According to David Rubin, a neuro-scientist that studies the affects of memory on oral transmission, oral transmission of traditional musical or poetic repertories are not typically transmitted via such a chain, but rather through a collective aggregating of knowledge that could best be described as a net.841

In this conception, the singer may hear one variant of a chant several times from one primary teacher, but crucially, also hear it several times from other singers such as a neighboring church choir. Each of these listenings is likely to be somewhat different, even those from the same singer. Over time, the student learns what is common to the plot of the poem, or the structure of the chant, and what is variable according to the particular style of the performer. We observe just this style of transmission in Georgian chant. For example, similar melodies that are almost identical in contour will be harmonized in slightly different ways. Broadly speaking, the melodies and harmonies are very similar, but it is in the finer differences that we observe the nuances of the ornamental practice. These subtle differences are significant for understanding how certain musical aspects of the chant remained stable over time, while other elements were varied.

Feedback from more experienced singers may have played an influential role in limiting the ornamentation of model melodies. For example, when Pilimon Koridze performed his first

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collection of chant transcriptions in 1884 in the city of Kutaisi, the master chanters in attendance complained about certain discrepancies in the organization of the model melodies.\textsuperscript{842} In this historically recorded instance of peer review, the attending master chanters served as a discerning audience who publically criticized the performance of incorrect model melodies and other nuances of performance. David Rubin states that, “an audience knowledgeable in a tradition is a strong conservative force that keeps the singer within traditional bounds by voicing its approval, by offering alternative versions it thinks are preferred, or even by providing corrections.”\textsuperscript{843} Historically, the Georgian parish served as this conservative voice of constraint for the performance of the inherited oral chant tradition.

The lesson from the study of Georgian chant is that phrase association matters. The unique genre assignment of each melodic phrase in the Georgian \textit{rva-khma} (eight-voice) system ensures that each phrase is only heard and sung in the immediate proximity of the other phrases with which it is paired. For example, if melodic phrase '100' is assigned to the genre of troparia, Tone 4, then it is only ever performed with melodic phrases '99', '101', '102', that are also similarly assigned. Even if the contour of phrase '100' is very similar to phrase '200' (or any other phrase), its context within a specific nexus of associative melodies prohibits musical contamination from other similar melodies. Indeed, confusion between similar melodies is surprisingly rare.\textsuperscript{844} This is not a product of excellent memory, but rather the associative context of the groups of phrases in which the melody is heard, performed, and memorized by students.\textsuperscript{845}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item[842] See the section, 5.4 Chant Performance in Kutaisi, 1884.
\item[844] There are exceptions. Certain Tone 8 troparia chants 'borrow' the final cadence melody from Tone 1 troparia chants instead of singing the assigned final melody assigned to Tone 8. This is one example of confusion of model melody assignment in the oral transmission of chant. It is surprising that other such 'borrowings' do not occur, however, as so many of the phrasal melodies are similar to the unspecialized ear. I am indebted to Zaal Ts'ereteli and Davit Shugliashvili for the many conversations that we have had on the subject of phrase order. In conversation, Zaal Ts'ereteli has suggested revising these particular chants in order to make their melodies conform with the majority of chants within the Tone 8 genre. Such a revision has not gained traction among chantbook editors, however, due to the early stages of academic research on the question of melodic assignments and transmission issues. Editors Malkhaz Erkvandze and Davit Shugliashvili have both expressed conservative positions when it comes to revising existing nineteenth century chant transcriptions for melodic content. Both use extensive revisions on key signatures (due to the transcription issues with Georgian tuning), but melodic and harmonic content is generally preserved unless it is obviously a scribal error.
\end{itemize}
11.1.5 Model Melody Ornamentation

Phrase-length motives sung in the top voice serve as the basis for the polyphonic realization of Georgian traditional chant. These melodic phrases can be observed throughout the Georgian canon in abundant examples in this dissertation. Chant texts are set to a collection of between three to eight of these phrases, each uniquely assigned to a particular tone and chant genre. For example, only six out of a possible ten phrase-length motives assigned to the tone 4 troparia might be used for any given chant. The order of motives can be shuffled, though a signature motive typically begins the chant. Together, a collection of these phrase-length motives can be called a model melody.

Model melodies in the Georgian canon range from simple to complex. Their typical range may embrace just five notes, but in ornamental variants may expand to ten or more notes. A typical phrase is between eight to fifteen notes long, a length predicated on being able to sing the phrase in one breath. In other cases, multiple phrases may be elided together by avoiding phrasal cadences. Each melody is unique, and only occurs in the chant genre and tone to which is has been assigned (see discussion of troparia melodies in tone 8, with examples, in the section, 5.3.2 Model Melodies of Tone 8 Troparia).” The basic form of the tone 6 troparia model phrases can be analyzed from the example, aghdgomas shensa [To Thy Resurrection] (for the three-voiced transcription, see Figure 131). Its musical features include the following: the melody begins on pitch class D and comprises two halves; its range occupies the descending tetrachord D-A; and the medial and final cadences end on pitch class B.

When model melodies are ornamented, certain musical parameters may change while other features must remain fixed. In the following discussion, we illustrate the variable and fixed elements of Georgian chant, as the ornamentation level increases. In the first phrase of the chant,

846 For more on the Georgian Oktoechos, see Shugliashvili, "Rva khmis sist'ema..." (PhD diss., 2009).
847 Longer phrases that require more than one breath are the result of ornamental variations that slowed the performance tempo in order to accommodate the addition of more passing notes.
848 Almost all modern publications of Georgian liturgical chant, and hence the performances that are generated from them, fastidiously emphasize medial cadences. But the transcription record, and the audio record, is more flexible. For example, in many of the Koridze transcriptions, no break of tempo or breath is indicated at the musical cadence. In the Art’em Erkomaishvili audio archive, furthermore, one can hear that he sings straight through some musical cadences without taking a break. In the Vasil K’arbelashvili transcriptions, there are numerous examples of the middle or bass voice avoiding the musical cadence by prolonging the phrase through additional ornamentation, ostensibly forcing the other voices to quickly rejoin the phrase. More research is needed on traditional performance practice, which has been buried under heavily edited modern editions emphasizing medial cadences with fermate and other hard breaks.
aghdgomas shensa, three different variants show that the pitches of the melody are variable (Figure 144). In example A, the simple style of the Gelati monastery variant displays the basic model melody. In example B, an ornamental variant as sung by Art’em Erkomaishvili in 1966 shows the most basic ways that the melody can be ornamented, especially before the medial and final cadence of the phrase (boxed, Figure 144B). 849 In example C, the most radical form of ornamentation is illustrated: the second half of the phrase is sung at a lower range in a voice-crossing gesture. Such a descent by the singer of the melody—into the range of the other voice parts—requires a great deal of skill and initiates a formulaic response from the other two voice parts (see the section, 11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing).

Figure 144. Aghdgomas shensa, melodic ornamentation comparison

Example A, Simple Mode

Example B, Ornamental

Example C, Ornamental with gadajvaredineba

By comparing all three variants of the melody of the first phrase of aghdgomas shensa, several interesting points emerge. First, there is significant difference between the addition of light ornamentation such as the passing tones in Figure 144B, and abandoning the melody as in the variant shown in Figure 144C. But this difference is superficial: structurally, the two variants are nearly the same because the phrase has not been altered very much. Each phrase is the same length and cadences on the same pitch. These musical parameters remain rigidly the same. It

849 This transcription of the melody of the chant, aghdgomas shensa, as sung by Art'em Erkomaishvili, can be found in, Shugliashvili, ed., Kartuli saek'lesio galoba, shemokmedis sk'ola... (2006), 2.
seems that these features remain stable within different levels of variation, and across diverse geographical and stylistic monastery traditions. The stability of certain features, such as the phrase length and cadence note, allows all three voices to improvise away from their standard melodic or harmonic role.

11.1.6 Importance of Tripart Structure

Despite the critical structural role of the mtkmeli voice in the transmission of chant, only a three-voiced harmonization of this melody is considered an appropriate performance. Indeed, the lower two voices are not mere accompaniment: a performance of Georgian chant is an interactive affair in which each singer listens carefully to the other two voices, making quick adjustments according to conventions of tuning, variation, and ornamentation.

Scholar Malkhaz Erkvanidze pre-empts any inclination to reduce the inherited polyphonic tradition to a group of model melodies in an essay published in the introduction to Kartuli Galoba [Georgian Chant], the first of a series of chantbooks officially endorsed by the Patriarchate of the Georgian Orthodox Church. After acknowledging the indispensible role of the melodic voice, he offers this cautionary instruction:

The Georgian upper voice –tkma, was not created independently and does not exist separate from the other two parts. The consideration of the function of the second and third voice parts is demonstrated in the limited range of the first and upper voice, which differs from the harmonized melodies of the West European and Russian traditions. The function of the upper voice cannot be discovered when it is sung independently of the other two voices, and the same can be said for any of the voices that are sung divorced of their three-part context. 850

According to Erkvanidze, the functionality of any individual voice part cannot be discerned through a reductive process of isolating one or the other voices from its inherent polyphonic structure. Understandably, the point here is that reducing the structure of Georgian chant to a basic form of a single voice part leaves out essential information about the sounded music, as well as inherited performance practice. But for purposes of understanding how Georgian chant is organized, the predominance of the top voice must be acknowledged. Furthermore, the fact that Georgian polyphonic chant is structured on single melodic phrases

850 Malkhaz Erkvanidze, "Introduction," Kartuli galoba... Vol. IV (Tbilisi, 2006). Note that the words mtkmeli [speaker] and tkma [speaks, says] are cognate.
supports the idea that the Georgian tradition evolved from an early Christian chant tradition in the (monophonic) Byzantine sphere of musical influence.

Davit Shugliashvili, a musicologist at the Tbilisi Conservatory who has done substantial work on the model melody system, has shown that the melodies of troparia are not specific to a geographic region. Rather, they are common to each of the regional monastery schools. In one study, Shugliashvili compares the model melodies of Tone 4 troparia between each of the three extant regional chant schools to show that, while harmonization varies considerably, the model melodies remain consistent. This theme is further argued in a series of publications. In the following section on ornamentation, the role of the model melodies are further elucidated, while heeding Erkvanidze's warning not to ignore the tripart context of Georgian liturgical polyphony.

11.1.7 Syllable Counting: An Experiment in Text-Setting

In 2009, I was invited to give a workshop to Slavei, an avid group of singers of Eastern European traditional music at Wesleyan University. As an experiment, I taught the model melody of kondakia, tone 3, from the eight-tone system of Georgian liturgical chant. This genre and tonal assignment is a useful template because it only contains two melodic phrase archetypes, each one containing about twenty notes of various durations. In this section, I describe the process of teaching this chant, and the lessons learned from the experience.

First, I taught the two phrase-length melodies of kondakia, tone 3. We sang by ear, using only Handout #1 (Figure 145). The first note of each phrase we sang to the text "chanting note," with each subsequent group of notes sung to the text, "one, two, three, ... nine." After the

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853 The concept of a "chanting note" is common to many chant traditions that involve singing large amounts of text. In the Georgian case, the chanting note is most often one of the first notes of the model melody, but less commonly also occurs in the middle of a phrase. To determine how many texted syllables to sing to the chanting note, chanters must count the number of syllables in the text phrase, and compare this number with the prescribed number of syllables that can be accommodated by the model melody phrase. For example, if the model melody contains pitches that can accommodate eight syllables of text, a hymn phrase of ten syllables will map easily onto this melody with only two “pick-up” syllables sung to the initial chanting note. If the texted phrase has twenty syllables, however, some adjustment might be necessary. In this case, we see several text-setting options. Commonly, twelve syllables are sung in recitative followed by eight syllables sung to the model melody phrase. Another option requires that a smaller number of syllables be sung to the initial chanting note, with the remainder to be sung in the eight-syllable model melody phrase followed by a short recapitulation of the cadence to accommodate the additional texted syllables. The most rare text-setting option involves singing a smaller number of syllables on the first recitative, and
entire choir had memorized the two model phrases, A and B, we learned the basic three-voiced harmonization of these melodies in the Gelati Monastery style. Then I taught an easy variant to both phrases in all three voice parts, calling these A1 and B1, and the Finale phrase.

**Figure 145.** Handout #1. Text-Melody Template for Kondakia, Tone 3

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. <em>Chant-ing note</em>… one, two, three, four, five, six, sev’n, eight;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. <em>Chant-ing note</em>… one, two, three, four, five, six, sev’n, eight, nine.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1. <em>Chant-ing note</em>… one, two, three, four, five, six, sev’n, eight;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1. <em>Chant-ing note</em>… one, two, three, four, five, six, sev’n, eight, nine.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This process took about 45 minutes: a surprising amount of time, perhaps, but entirely necessary for learning moderately complex melodies in three-voiced manifestation, by ear. Though unfamiliar with the Georgian chant idiom, the members of *Slavei* displayed excellent facility with learning new repertory by ear, a result of their experience singing various unusual world musics. When the choir felt relatively confident singing the model phrases to the text of "chanting note, one, two, three, … nine," I produced a Georgian chant text and introduced the concept of text setting (the text was the kondakion for the Matins service of the Nativity in tone 3, *Kalts'uli dghes arsebad* [Today a Virgin]). As the group looked at Handout #2, (Figure 146), I asked them, how would you set this text to the musical phrases that we just learned?

adding a second recitative at a designated point within the melody. These text-setting innovations are extremely interesting, and offer potentially important clues to a better understanding of the medieval Georgian processes of text setting and the evolution of model melodies.

854 The full translation of the kondakion for Nativity, *kaltsuli dghes arsebad*, is as follows: “Today a Virgin brings forth the Super-substantial, and the earth offers a cavern to the Unapproachable. Angels, together with the shepherds, sing praises; the wise men journey onward with the star. For, for our sakes, God, who is before all the ages, is born a little child.”
First, we used the natural commas within the text to mark off phrase endings, thus setting our phrasal cadence points. Then I assigned musical phrases to each texted phrase in the following order: A, B, A1, B1, B1, Finale (which happens to be the phrase order of this particular chant, as inherited and transcribed in the nineteenth century). Next, we puzzled out how to set each phrase to the melodies that we had learned. Because each of the six texted phrases varied in length, we needed to adapt them to the constraints of the model melodic phrases. This was accomplished by locating the commas in the text and counting backwards eight or nine syllables (where there are no commas, one must create them based on the natural pauses in the meaning of the text). Note: phrase A allows for eight sung syllables, while phrase B allows for nine. Whichever syllable we arrived on, counting backwards in this manner, we made a small neume sign above the syllable (Handout #2, (Figure 146). This neume indicated where
we must start singing the text "one" of the model melody, as learned initially. All text before the showing the neume must be sung to the text "chanting note."

For example, in the first phrase of the chant, kal-ts'u-li dghes ar-se-bad ți-zes-ta-e-sa shobs chven-tvis, there are a total of fifteen syllables. Only eight of these syllables may be sung to model melody A. Counting backwards eight syllables from the comma after -tvis, we made a small mark over the syllable -u-, indicating the syllable where the model melody should begin, or "one" (see neume above the syllable u-, Figure 146). Before the neume, however, there are seven extra syllables. I suggested that these syllables be sung as recitative to the pitch of "chanting note." In phrase B, nine syllables can be accommodated by the model melody. Counting back from the comma after -ven, we made a small mark over the syllable -she- (see second line of text, Figure 146). The extra six syllables of the second line of text must also be sung as a recitative at the beginning of the phrase. With our single neumes marking the place in each line of text where the melody must begin, we practiced the pronunciation of the text for five minutes and then attempted to perform the chant. The resulting sound was probably not concert-worthy, but from a pedagogical standpoint, the lesson learned was nothing less than spectacular.

Remarkably, the choir was able to perform the unknown Georgian text in three-voiced harmony, without notation, on the first pass. They recalled the three voice parts of model phrase A, and in the place of "chanting note," they inserted the first seven syllables of text in recitative. In the place of "one, two, three, four, five," they sang the text u-zes-ta-es-sa. After the run-through, and because we had now spent the better part of our entire session learning just one piece, I asked them if they realized the gravity of their accomplishment. I can't blame them if they weren't as enthusiastic as I was, but I explained as conspiratorially as possible that the product of our afternoon had not been the study of one chant. On the contrary, we had just learned fifty chants. Any of fifty kondakia texts could now be set to the tone 3 model melodies learned, and performed as required by rubric and service.

This experiment proved (at least to me), that given the correct training in the oral tradition of chant, with its attendant skills, average singers could easily perform completely unknown texts with minimal rehearsal. But what are these essential skills? Here is a working list of the skills that must be developed by the chant student, in order to fulfill the duty of setting and singing unknown texts, a requirement of nearly every service. Singers must have the:

1. Ability to memorize and recall the model melodies (300-400 phrases).
2. Ability to learn the technique of harmonizing model melodies in three-voices.
3. Ability to quickly divide texts, and mark the beginning of the model melody.
4. Ability to listen, in order to sing in tune.
5. Ability to master the technique of ornamenting each voice-part.

For comparative purposes, I provide a transcription of the first two phrases of the chant, *kalts'uli dghes arsebad* as learned and performed by the Slavei ensemble (Figure 147). Note: the choir did not see this notated transcription, they only possessed the Handouts (Figure 145 and Figure 146). To hear a performance of the entire chant by the Anchiskhat'i Church Choir, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #18.

**Figure 147. Kalts'uli dghes arsebad [Today a Virgin], first two phrases**

![Choral score image](image-url)
11.1.8 Model Melodies Conclusion

In summary, the medieval Georgian practice of shets'qobileba, associated with Giorgi Mtats'mindeli and the nineteenth-century pedagogical technique of sasts'avlebeli khmebi described by Pilimon Koridze, refer to the harmonization of a series of pre-learned model melodies. The oral transmission of such a large number of chants by masters such as Simonishvili, Pat'arava, and Erkomaishvili was possible through the use of adaptable, prototype melodies, which to a lesser degree are also found in early European and Byzantine sources. It is observed that the first-voice melodies remained relatively stable across diverse regions of Georgia, while the three-voiced harmonic structures varied widely. This suggests that while both were to some extent memorized, the first voice commanded a dominant mnemonic function in the transmission of chant. The lower voice parts, serving a secondary function in the transmission of chant, were therefore susceptible to the harmonic influence of local folk music traditions.

In short, the existence of a highly developed oral chant tradition in Georgia as recently as the turn of the last century is a treasure trove for comparative study with other early Christian chant traditions, and has the potential to contribute significantly to international scholarship on issues of chant transmission.

11.2 Ornamentation: Voice Crossing

Interest in Georgian chant has been increasing in recent years, and it is the unusual harmony of the liturgical and folk traditions that have attracted the interest and enthusiasm of chant scholars. Indeed, Georgian liturgical harmony is a fascinating musical anomaly among early Christian music systems. But several studies in recent decades have shown that the structure of Georgian Orthodox liturgical chant is organized not around this harmony, but rather around the genre assignments of model melodies sung in the highest voice part.\(^855\) To review, not only are the approximately three-to-four hundred phrase-length melodies preserved through oral tradition

\(^855\) The early stages of this research were published in, John A. Graham, “The Role of Memory in the Transmission of Georgian Chant,” Proceedings... (2010).
significant place markers for the three-part polyphonic realization of each chant, but the entire Georgian *oktoechos* is based on the tonal and genre assignment of these melodies.\footnotemark[856]

### 11.2.1 The Concept of the 'Referent' Melody

In this section, the concept of the 'referent' melody is introduced, as a function of the model melodies. As discussed in the previous sections, the comparative analysis of examples between different geographical schools of chant shows that the commonality between variants can be observed in the primary contour of the top voice model melodies. Furthermore, the analysis of advanced ornamentation techniques, such as voice crossing, show that the melody is the key structural component of Georgian chant, especially in the context of its original oral transmission. Even when it was not sung explicitly, its position as the reference for all three improvising voices can be unequivocally established.

Given the importance of the melody part, it is very surprising that in many manuscript transcriptions, the first voice does not sing the model melody at all. In certain cases, entire chant phrases appear to have been sung without any trace of the melody. This anomaly raises a number of questions about performance practice in the oral tradition. For example, how was it possible, in the absence of notation, to realize the musical phrase without hearing or singing the melody? In such cases, were there other musical parameters that enabled singers to maintain the form and if so, what were they? The following discussion and examples examine this phenomenon in an attempt to understand the role of model melodies in the transmission of the polyphonic tradition, and to introduce the concept of a 'referent' melody, even one that is unsounded by any active singer.

The deliberate avoidance of the melody is common only in advanced ornamental style chant transcriptions (refer to chart, Figure 142). For example, when the upper two voices temporarily switch ranges in a voice crossing motion known as *gadajvaredineba* [lit. “to traverse the cross”],\footnotemark[857] the first voice descends into the range of the second voice. In response, the second

\footnotetext[856]{For more on the Georgian *rva-khma* [eight-tone] system see, Shugliashvili, "Rva khmis sist'ema... (PhD diss., 2009).}

\footnotetext[857]{The etymology of the word *gadajvaredineba* is as follows: *gada* is a preverb meaning 'to traverse, go across'; *jvari* is the noun-root which means 'the cross'; -*dineba* is a suffix meaning 'going with the flow' (*moedineba* - flows towards, *chaedineba* - flows down), which gives the cumulative literal meaning of 'to traverse the cross going with...
voice increases its upper range, instead of descending below the first voice to maintain its habitual harmonic position between the outer voices. While engaged in gadajvaredineba, the middle voice does not sing the referent melody, instead ‘vamping’ in a static position while waiting for the first voice to initiate the cadence. Thus, for the duration of the voice crossing, the referent melody is unsounded, unheard, imagined.

Andria Benashvili, in the introduction to his publication of East Georgian chants, noted several features of the performance practice of Georgian liturgical chant. Among the list is one of the few references to the phenomenon of voice crossing, which is so ubiquitous in the transcription record.

The bass voice in Georgian chant can be sung by a group of people, but the upper voices should be sung by individual singers. There is just one thing, which is that during the singing of the chant, the upper voices may cross one another as if they are exchanging places. Besides this, if there are a number of chanters in church, then they will split into two choirs and take turns singing, first one, then the other.\textsuperscript{858}

This citation is particularly interesting for its reference to voice crossing, which was an uncommon feature in the East Georgian chant contained in the Benashvili publication. By referring to the performance practice in his introduction, Benashvili demonstrated that he was also familiar with West Georgian performance practice, where voice crossing appears to have been a regular feature of the ornamental chant variants performed by the master chanters in the Gelati monastery area.\textsuperscript{859}

The practice of "crossing" two voice parts in range can be found among many polyphonic folk traditions in the world, especially vocal traditions.\textsuperscript{860} It was also a technique used by eleventh-to-thirteenth-century medieval Western composers including Perotin and Machaut, whose pieces often feature voice crossings and voice-exchanges.\textsuperscript{861} In the Georgian

\textsuperscript{858} Andria Benashvili, “Introduction,” Kartuli Khmebi... (1886).

\textsuperscript{859} During the mid-1880s, Benashvili lived in Kutaisi, serving as music teacher at the Patriarchate School of Ladies, and as the director of Bishop Gabriel Kikodze’s cathedral choir. See the section, 4.6 Andria Benashvili Transcriptions, 1885. He served in these capacities during the first of Pilimon Koridze’s highly publicized transcription projects, see 5.5 Kutaisi Transcription Project, 1885-1886.

\textsuperscript{860} Voice crossings can be found, for example, in the vocal polyphony of the Ba’aka people in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Albanian drone polyphony, Lithuanian sutartines, etc..

\textsuperscript{861} There is extensive literature on the use of voice crossing and voice exchanges in eleventh to fourteenth century Western polyphony. See for example, Anna Zayaruznaia, “‘She has a Wheel that Turns...’: Crossed and Contradictory Voices in Machaut’s Motets,” Early Music History 28 (2009): 185–240. Unlike medieval voice
case, voice crossing is a natural development of a polyphonic vocal culture that prized ornamentation and improvisation. Even so, its use is governed by conventions of variation that, I argue, could have preserved the structure of the chant over time. The strict transmission of these rules, and the techniques that bound them, became the special purview of the master chanter’s art, as the successful transmission of Georgian chant depended upon students being able to accurately remember each chant in its most basic form while singing it in its most complex.

11.2.2 Simple Voice Crossing (gadajvaredineba)

Georgian traditional music, both sacred and secular, is characterized by three-voiced, close-harmony singing, sung in the twelve highland and lowland regions. There is a wide range of vocal styles including drone polyphony, homophony, and heterophony, as well as stylized vocal techniques such as yodeling. The richness of regional folk-singing cultures throughout Georgia is also reflected in the ornamental variations of liturgical polyphony. Certain techniques act as regional signatures, allowing listeners to easily recognize a chant or folk song from a particular region or monastery. Voice crossing, or gadajvaredineba, is one such technique, as it is only found in the Gelati and Shemokmedi monastery chant traditions in West Georgia. In the following examples, we examine the ways in which voice crossing manifests in the chant tradition, progressing from simple variants to the most complex.

The technique of gadajvaredineba is an advanced form of ornamentation distinguished from other forms in that it requires chanters to sing without reference to the melody. To perform gadajvaredineba without notation of any kind required a thorough knowledge of the referent melody, the structure and length of the chant phrase, and mastery of the art of improvisation. Its use seems to have been widespread by chanters throughout West Georgia, but not in East Georgia. “In the simple style from the K'arbelashvili brothers, one characteristic is that they do exchange, however, the second voice in Georgian chant never replaces or duplicates the melody of the first voice. Rather, each voice part remains independent even when ranges overlap. Another important feature in the Georgian case concerns the fact that instances of voice crossing are initiated by the primary melodic and harmonic referent (the first voice). Thus this referent is unsounded in the process of voice crossing.


863 The early stages of this research were first published in John A. Graham, “Without Parallel: Voice Crossing and Textual-Rhythm in West Georgian Chant,” Proceedings... (Finland: Joensuu Theological Center, 2013), 164-177.
not use voice crossings,“864 noted Davit Shugliashvili, referring to the K’arbelashvili family from East Georgia. This is not surprising considering that voice crossing is also rare in the folk music of those regions, while it is relatively common in the West Georgian regions.

_Gadajvaredineba_ is generally a feature of feast-day chants in the heirmoi and troparia genres. While many individual chant texts in these genres are performed for just one feastday per year, their melodies are ubiquitous as part of the _oktoechos_ system. Many texts are set to the same groups of model melodies, which are flexible enough to accommodate texts of different lengths.865 This system made it possible for master chanters to apply skills of advanced musical ornamentation developed within one group of melodies, to all the other chants that used those same melodies, thus explaining how rarely performed chants could be so ornamentally complex.

The origin of _gadajvaredineba_ is not well understood. One explanation suggests that the _mtkmeli_ [speaker] (top voice) avoided fatigue by occasionally singing in a lower range. Another explains that the timbral differences created through voice crossing became a prized quality among chanters. Others point to traditional folk music, where the arts of variation and improvisation were honored in equal measure to voice quality and memory. Master chanters seeking increased opportunities for improvisation likely enjoyed the momentary lapses of the standard chant form created by voice crossing, as the departure from the canonical melody allowed for spontaneous improvisational experimentation. In response to the question, what is the origin of voice crossing in Georgian liturgical chant, the musicologist Malkhaz Erkvanidze remarked, "voice crossing is just one manifestation of the development of vocal polyphony."866 Perhaps it is just that simple. But certain chants were better suited to experimental evolution, and those in the heirmoi and troparia genres fit the criteria because of their celebratory themes within the liturgy.

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866 Malkhaz Erkvanidze, personal interview, June 1st, 2011.
11.2.3 Simple vs. Ornamental Voice Crossing

To understand the phenomenon of voice crossing, it will be helpful to compare several examples. Using the familiar Paschal troparion, aghdgomasa shensa [To Your Resurrection], we can compare the simple variant and the ornamental variants from the Gelati Monastery chant tradition.\(^{867}\) In the first phrase of the simple variant, all three voice parts occupy a narrow range of just four to five notes (Figure 148). But in the ornamental variant, range is increased (Figure 149). For the full transcription of the Gelati monastery simple-style variant of aghdgomasa shensa, see Figure 131.

In the ornamental variant, the bass voice is rhythmically and harmonically more active, while the middle voice employs a series of upper and lower neighbor notes to ornament its line. In the second half of the phrase, the mtkmeli [speaker] singer initiates a voice crossing with the middle voice by descending into its range. Despite this 'intrusion,' the second voice simply ornaments the pitch classes G-A-G-F-E, the same set of notes it sang in the simple variant (compare middle voice in Figure 148 and Figure 149). This voice crossing is so short that the second-voice does not need to respond in any radical manner.

Figure 148. Aghdgomasa shensa, Gelati simple style, first phrase

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\(^{867}\) To understand why the simple variant of the chant, aghdgomasa shensa [To Your resurrection] was written in a key signature with one sharp, while the ornamental variant was written in a key signature with two sharps, please see the section, 7.4 Key Signature Debate: Romelni kerubinta [Let us, the Cherubim].
But as voice crossings become more complex, the second voice is forced to improvise away from its own line. In the second phrase of *aghdgomasa shensa*, for example, the voice crossing *mtkmeli* lead voice not only descends into the range of the middle voice but physically takes over its line, singing the notes A-G-F on the syllable *-lo* (boxed, Figure 150, compare to first voice in Figure 151). The middle-voice is forced to remain in a higher range and improvise for the second half of the phrase (boxed, Figure 151). In such moments, the middle voice does not sing the referent melody in place of the *mtkmeli* voice, as one might expect. Instead, the second voice must improvise a unique ornamental line in the upper register, a phenomenon that only occurs in the context of *gadajvaredineba*.

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868 The same phenomenon—the *mtkveli* replacing the second voice in harmonic and melodic positioning—occurs in the middle of the first phrase of the chant *jvarsa shensa* [To Your Cross] (Figure 153).
Unlike the middle voice, the bass voice does not have to change its normal harmonization role in response to *gadajvaredineba*. If its original role was to harmonize the *mtkmeli* voice with intervals of a fifth or octave, it continues to do so in *gadajvaredineba*, maintaining distance between the lower range of the *mtkmeli* by increasing its own lower range. In short, when the melody voice descends, the bass voice must also descend.

For example, in the second phrase of the ornamental variant of *aghdgomasa shensa*, the bass voice is forced to leap uncharacteristically down the scalar ladder from pitch class F (on the syllable *-lo-*) to pitch class B, to avoid an overlap between the outer voices, a type of mishap that seems to have been widely discouraged (boxed, Figure 151). This obligatory reaction increases the range of the bass voice and provides additional improvisatory space (note the increased bass range from 3 notes to 7 notes between the simple and ornamental variants, Figure 150, Figure 151). In this way, the bass voice must also be vigilant to respond to voice crossings initiated by the *mtkmeli* voice at any time, responding by immediately increasing its lower range.

But what of the harmony? As the *mtkmeli* voice leaves the referent melody, descending into the fabric of the polyphonic sound-tapestry, its melodic function ceases. This loss of the referent melody leads one to expect a certain degree of compensatory stability from the harmonic relationships of the other voice parts. The opposite possibility—the disruption of the basic harmonic framework—would seem to further destabilize the structure of the phrase, and call into

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869 While voice crossing in the upper two voices is relatively common, it is almost never encountered between the outer voice parts.

870 Similarly, in the first phrase of the Tone 6 troparion, *jvarsa shensa* [To Your Cross], the bass voice also quickly and radically increases its lower range in response to the voice crossing (Figure 153).
question the overall importance of harmony as a critical factor in the transmission of Georgian chant.

11.2.4 Advanced Voice Crossing

Following on the question posed at the end of the previous section, what is the harmonic response to voice crossing, let us review some more advanced examples of the gadajvaredineba [voice crossing] phenomenon. In the troparion for the feast of the Raising of the Cross, jvarsa shensa [To Your Cross], we see that the chord progressions during periods of voice crossing can be altered significantly. For example, the triad B-G-E on the word tsemi in the middle of the first phrase is unrelated to the triad A-F-D in the same position in the ornamental variant (compare Figure 152 and Figure 153). The series of chords that follow are also fundamentally different from each other.

The observation that the harmonic structure of the chant changes fundamentally during moments of voice crossing raises several questions. Do the notes sung by the mtkmeli during voice crossing have any relationship to the referent melody, and if so what is the precise nature of that relationship? This example demonstrates that a pitch relationship cannot be established. When comparing the pitches sung by the mtkmeli in the referent melody versus in voice crossing, they seem to have no relationship (compare Figure 152 and Figure 153).

Figure 152. Jvarsa shensa, Gelati simple style, first phrase

871 The chord charts above the examples of jvarsa shensa reflect pitches as heard. Because of voice crossing, the top voice might be singing the note heard as the middle of the chord.
Furthermore, as the chord graphics indicate, the lower voice parts do not honor the manner in which they originally harmonized the referent melody. Rather, they create a new harmonic progression to the cadence, supporting the hypothesis that the standardization of harmony is not a determining factor in the successful performance of ornamental chants.\textsuperscript{872} So what musical parameters hold this phrase together, despite the absence of the melody and a completely new harmonization? These questions are pursued in the following discussion (to hear a performance of the simple style of jvarsa shensa by the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Track #19).

In the most extreme cases of gadajvaredineba, entire phrases of chant are performed without anyone singing the referent melody.\textsuperscript{873} For example, in the third canticle of the Paschal kanon, movedit da vsvat [Come, let us drink], the entire final phrase is sung in an extended voice crossing (Figure 155). Compared to the same phrase in the simple style, there seems to be little harmonic similarity (Figure 154). Even the first chords seem unrelated (E-C-E in the simple variant, Figure 154; D-A-D in the ornamental variant, Figure 155). This again leaves the question, if harmonic predictability did not compensate for the instability of losing the melodic referent, what other musical parameters assisted chanters in the performance of increasingly difficult ornamental forms?

\textsuperscript{872} This point is further argued in Graham, “The Role of Memory...” (2010).
\textsuperscript{873} While hundreds of chant transcriptions from the Gelati and Shemokmedi monastery schools display some degree of voice crossing, suggesting that the technique was widespread at least among the most accomplished chanters in West Georgia, entirely inverted phrases are still quite rare in the archival record. In addition, these chant variants were transcribed from chant masters, so it is difficult to judge to what degree they represent the common chant tradition.
Careful observation suggests two other factors, besides melody and harmony, that may be significant in the organization of chant phrasing while ornamenting in gadajvaredineba. First, the text is always sung by all three voices at the same time, so the rhythm of the chant—the long and short emphasis of individual syllables—remains consistent between the simple-style and ornamental-style performances. Could the stability of the syllabic distribution of the text (the textual rhythm) be a significant factor in the real time performance of ornamental variants? Second, the final pitches of each phrase are always the same, despite a high degree of ornamentation (see cadences, measures 4 and 7, Figure 154, Figure 155). It seems clear that to perform such voice crossings, chanters needed to hold several referential cues in mind. It’s possible that syllable distribution, time, and the melodic endpoint of cadential formulas provided these structural starting points, especially when singing in the absence of the referent melody or familiar harmony.

Malkhaz Erkvanidze, a teacher at the College for Chant Studies of the Georgian Patriarchate, agrees with these observations. “Chanters have to understand where they are going. The final chord or note of the phrase is the kanon and the rule of any chant. Each phrase has its own final ending note that cannot be changed.” So perhaps the rhythmic delivery of the text prescribes the length and timing of the chant phrase, while the cadence pitch determines the destination. If these two parameters are immutable, other parameters such as harmony, ornamentation, and even the referent melody could be improvised according to the skill and inspiration of the chanters. Such advanced techniques as gadajvaredineba could be learned through the incremental stages presented in these examples.

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874 There are various ways to set texts to melodies in the Georgian liturgical chant system. These can be divided into two types: 1) texts set to fixed melodies; 2) texts set to the system of model melodies in the Georgian rva-khma [Oktoechos] system. Certain rules of text setting apply to both types, but there are also important differences. There are approximately forty fixed-melody chants sung during the weekly Vespers-Matins-Liturgy service cycle. There are also many texts set to the rva-khma melodies during these services. Almost all of the additional texts sung during the special feasts of the Orthodox calendrical year, numbering in the thousands, are set to the rva-khma melodies. Texts that have fixed melodies, such as the liturgy chants romeni kerubimta [Cherubic Hymn] and shen gigalobt [We Praise Thee], are typically set with either one syllable per note, or two syllables per note.

875 Malkhaz Erkvanidze, personal interview, June first, 2011.
Figure 154. Movedit da vsvat, Gelati simple style, first phrase

Figure 155. Movedit da vsvat, Gelati ornamental style, first phrase


11.2.5 Retrospective on Voice Crossing

Despite these conclusions, a lingering question remains. How did master chanters know what harmony to sing during the unstructured space of an extended phrase of voice crossing, such as seen in the chant example, *movedit da vsvat*? Clearly, the harmony may be changed to some degree, but does this mean that it could be completely improvised? If that is the case, how would the bass voice be able to anticipate if the *mtkmeli* voice planned to go up or down at any given moment, and how could the middle voice avoid forming uncharacteristic chords while suddenly thrust into the most exposed and audible position as the singer in the highest register? It is hard to imagine that these singers did not use other clues, signals, or structural references to guide such improvisational singing. With these persistent questions in mind, it bears looking at the examples again for more clues into how these difficult ornamental forms were performed.

Examining the chant *movedit da vsvat* [Come, let us drink] once again, we notice that there are several surprising and subtle concurrences between the simple and ornamental variants (compare Figure 154 and Figure 155). For example, on the opening two words of the ornamental variant, *kmni-li kris-tes*, the top voice appears to sing the referent melody, only in a much lower range: the contour of the *mtkmeli* pitches, D-D-E-D-C (referent melody on the half beat rhythm, boxed, measures 1-2, Figure 154) is identical to the contour of the *mtkmeli* pitches, G-G-A-G-F in the ornamental variant (boxed, measure 1-2, Figure 155). Both lines go up one pitch then down two pitches. With the choice to invert the whole phrase, the *mtkmeli* voice appears to have "quoted" the referent melody, even though it would not have been heard as such, being lost inside the new harmonic framework. If this is indeed a quotation, we’re witnessing a game within a game, a personal reminder of the true referent melody not necessarily intended to be recognizable for anyone but the chanters themselves.

Harmonically, there are also some references between the simple and ornamental variants of the chant *movedit da vsvat*, though these again seem more private than overt. The first occurs on the third quarter note of the second measure on the syllable *sa-*, when the same type of chord occurs in both the ornamental and simple variants (third quarter note, measure 2, Figure 154 and Figure 155). In both cases, the bass voice makes a definitive rise to pitch class E, the highest pre-cadential note in the entire phrase. Critics might be quick to point out that by the next beat, all three voices have moved on in their respective melodic and harmonic improvisations, and display little similarity between the simple and ornamental variants. Nonetheless, the concurrence
on the syllable *sa*- may be significant because it is a marker of concurrence within the
improvisational space of *gadajvaredineba*. As it occurs on a strong beat, in a prepared bass
movement, it seems too much of a concordance to be considered mere coincidence.

Another unusual harmonic concordance happens in the second half of the phrase on the
syllable *-vit* (third quarter note, measure 3, Figure 154 and Figure 155). In this case, the pitch E,
sung in both the mtkmeli and middle voice in the ornamental variant, match a medial cadence on
the pitches B-G-E in the simple version. At first this does not appear to be significant in any way,
as the E pitches are disguised within a series of ornamental pitches (and don't seem particularly
harmonically strong in a sixth interval position above the bass drone on low G). Likewise, to the
ear, these E pitches seem insignificant as passing tones in the context of the larger voice-crossing
event. But the visual comparison reveals a potentially significant referential relationship. It could
be argued that the E pitches sung in the upper voices at this moment were internal reference
points for singers 'remembering' the medial cadence as a place to take stock of their positions
within the phrase.

Such a concordance can also be found on the syllable *gan*-, where the prepared arrival of
the second voice on pitch class B (beat 1, measure 6, Figure 155), mimics the pitch B seen in the
upper voice of the simple variant (beat 1, measure 6, Figure 154). Even though the three-voiced
harmony is not the same between the simple and ornamental variants, the stress on this particular
note of the melody may well be another example of an internal cue or personal reminder of the
structural importance of the melody in the final cadence preparation.

The moments of tension that result from improvising during *gadajvaredineba* often yield
surprising results. In this space of limbo, each voice experiments outside the established
harmonic framework. In this act of improvisation, it is difficult to judge if harmonic references
are merely coincidental, or whether they are specific, personal reminders of the original referent
melody and its basic harmonization. Either way, the textual rhythm, length of phrase, and
cadential pitches served as important guideposts for determining the improvisational space of
*gadajvaredineba*, allowing chanters to both test their knowledge and push the boundaries of
Georgian chant form.
11.3 Chapter Conclusion

Georgian polyphonic chant is hierarchical in nature. The melody, sung in the top voice, is the most essential of the three voices, and its loss constitutes the loss of the chant. The lower two voices, however, can be extrapolated from the melody through common practice, following local conventions for preferred chords. The style of harmonization has a wide degree of variation, however, and there is reason to believe that every single performance was unique. The polyphony of local folk music traditions are shown to have a distinct relationship with liturgical polyphony, though it is likely that the musical influence was not one way. Indeed, para-liturgical texts are often sung to the model melodies of regular church hymns, and variation technique is common to both repertories.
Chapter XII: Epilogue

The resurfacing of the Koridze/K'ereselidze/K'arbelashvili transcriptions in the early 1990s precipitated a revival of traditional liturgical singing in Georgia. This 'discovery' fortuitously coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union and its suppressive policies governing the performance of traditional chant in the Georgian Orthodox Church. These source transcriptions remain relatively unknown outside of Georgia but promise to raise considerable appreciation among international scholars concerned with early medieval liturgical music.

12.1 The Modern Revival of Chant in Georgia

The popularization of traditional chant has coincided with a revolution in performance practice aesthetics in which the refined classical style of most mainstream church choirs has been abandoned in favor of a ‘neo-traditional’ style miming the aesthetics of Georgian folk singers. Yet these new ideas about performance practice from within the neo-traditional music community neglect the emotional attachment of congregations to their former repertories, alienating older community members and clergy. In addition, the neo-traditional performance aesthetic has not been embraced by the secular mainstream. This may be because the nostalgia for the idealized sound of Georgian chant that typically accompanies scenes of national struggle, loss, or endurance in mainstream television media, is associated with the western classical performance aesthetic. In order to better understand the difference I am attempting to point out, it will be helpful to take a look at the current situation in Georgia.

12.1.1 A Walk Through Tbilisi

On a crisp Sunday morning in Tbilisi, Georgia, throngs of the newly religious crowd into downtown churches, some of which were until recently used as storerooms, museums, stables, or

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876 For example, the chant shen khar venakhi [You are the Vineyard] may be heard at least a dozen times on any given day as the background music for shows on television concerning past civil strife in South Ossetia or Abkhazia, reproductions of historical battles, Orthodox Christian programs, or commercials aimed at tourists highlighting the many medieval churches hidden throughout Georgia’s rural highland regions.
even public baths. Among the church choirs that serve the growing demand for daily services, one may observe a remarkable diversity in age, gender, and number of singers. A quick tour of four downtown churches reveals some startling differences: beginning at the popular and crowded Kashweti Church on Rustaveli Prospect, two mixed gender, mixed-generation amateur choirs sing a combination of classical and traditional repertory in an unrefined, classical style. In the Anchiskhat’i Church, a nondescript brick and stone basilica recessed several meters below street level, a trio of men with reedy, unadorned voices sing complex polyphony while the congregation stands in restful, patient attention, men on the right and women on the left. The music is startlingly different from the Kashweti Church, as is the congregation.

Just a few hundred yards away, young and old parishioners mass outside the large cross-and-dome cathedral of Sioni, recessed into the hill alongside the river that runs through Tbilisi. Inside, three mixed choirs of a dozen singers each take turns singing three and four voiced repertory from the late Communist period, mixed with chant arrangements from the early twentieth century and a few samples of recently published medieval chant. In contrast, the massive new Sameba Cathedral across the river, a professional sixty-man choir sings from an invisible balcony where their voices are amplified throughout the booming space. This choir sings a combination of ornate arrangements of medieval chant interspersed with new compositions by Ilia II (Gudushauri-Shiolashvili), Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church.

12.1.2 The Anchiskhat’i Church Choir

In the early 1990s, as the cultural and political arena in the Caucasus collapsed into a period of civil unrest, radical changes in the performance of chant were not always welcome amongst the Orthodox laity. But it was into this climate that the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir staged a quiet revolution in chant performance practice. With a conservatory background in

877 In 2009, these choirs were replaced with two neo-traditional men's choirs that include graduates of the College of Traditional Chant, an organization that began in 2006. I am a member of one of these choirs, and sing in services while in Tbilisi.
878 The Anchiskhat’i Church was built in the sixth century in the 'garden of the kings.' It is famous for once housing the miracle-working icon from Anchi (a town in Anatolia) that is now housed in the National Gallery. The resident chanters in the Anchiskhat’i Church lead the performance revival of Georgian traditional chant. For a sample of their recordings, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc.
879 Sameba Cathedral in Tbilisi was officially opened and dedicated on November 23, 2004. I performed in the choir during that first service.
880 Georgia fought two civil wars with separatist regions South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 1991 and 1993 respectively.
which members of the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir had been influenced by the pioneering work of ethnomusicologist Edisher Garaqanidze and his Mtiebi ensemble, the members of the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir turned to early twentieth century wax cylinder and Gramophone recordings housed in the Conservatory archives to discover the nuances of traditional tuning, timbre, and ornamentation. They produced several chant recordings in the mid-1990s, and eventually began researching and publishing some of the vast stores of liturgical chant transcriptions housed in the National Center of Manuscripts in Tbilisi.

In this effort, Patriarch Ilia II became their greatest supporter, blessing the choir to begin chanting in the newly reopened sixth century Anchiskhat’i basilica, where their chant studies could be based in practical chant practice. Founding director Malkhaz Erkvanidze played an extremely significant role in enabling the choir to sing the most complex traditional repertory in authentic tuning. Since 1988 the choir has produced a dozen recordings and half a dozen republications of the church chant from the transcriptions and publications of Koridze, Sharadze, Khundadze, Dumbadze, K'arbelashvili, and K'ereselidze (Appendix F: Published Notation of Georgian Chant).

The neo-traditional manner of singing chant was not embraced by the entire chant community, as many people found the unrefined, nasal quality of the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir’s chanting unappealing and too folksy for the aesthetics of the liturgy. To this way of thinking, the supposed authenticity of the archival chant sources did not legitimize a complete difference in performance aesthetic. Perhaps for this reason, conservative choirs such as the Kashweti Church choir were at first resistant to the new repertory, while neo-traditionalist students of the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir delighted in singing the old repertory of the master singers.

12.1.3 Performance Practice Debate

The debate about performance practice was sharpened in the late-1990s by the emergence of a Byzantine chant movement, which polarized those already involved in the revival of traditional chant. Proponents of the Byzantine movement argued that Orthodox Christian chant

881 The ‘Byzantinists’ declared that Greek-Byzantine monody was the only true Christian chant style, rejecting all other forms of chant including Slavonic or Georgian traditional or composed chant. In several churches in Georgia, one can still hear Georgian texts sung to Greek-Byzantine melodies.
had originally and properly been sung to monophonic melodies and advocated adapting the entire Georgian liturgy to borrowed Greek-Byzantine melodies. Basing their credentials on the dubious scholarly claim that all Christian chant traditions should be supplanted by modern Greek monophonic melodies (which have themselves sketched an extraordinarily complex development), the Byzantine chant movement in Georgia was short lived, and ultimately fell victim to a strong backlash from the Georgian liturgical music community.

On the other side of the debate, scholars and chant revivalists in the mid 1990s galvanized around the need to publicize and promote the history of traditional chanters such as the K’arbelashvili brothers, who had received little if any public attention since the first decade of the twentieth century. As a result, recordings, articles, and public lectures generated a wide degree of public support and culminated in a Patriarchal decree in the year 2000 advocating for the integration of traditional Georgian chant into all parish choir repertories.

In 2003, the Holy Synod of the Georgian Orthodox Church adopted stronger language: “Georgian traditional polyphonic chant always has been, and continues to be, the canonical chant of the Georgian Orthodox Church. Its performance is compulsory in every Georgian church and everywhere the divine services are celebrated in the Georgian language.” This degree not only signaled the failure of the Byzantine movement, but also gave a strong boost to the neo-traditional chanters led by the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir, who were put in charge of a commission to oversee the editing and publishing of new chant-books, and assigned with monitoring the progress of parish and monastic choirs across the nation.

12.1.4 Recordings

Two of the first recordings of church chant to emerge after the demise of Communist censorship on religious music illustrate the dichotomy between the classical and neo-traditional performance styles:

1. “Sacred Music and Chorales,” released by the Rustavi Ensemble in 1995, highlights the dynamic control and blend for which the choir had become internationally famous throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The repertory of chant and para-liturgical hymns on this album represents four distinct sources: three-voiced adaptations of mixed SATB choral arrangements

by the early twentieth century composer Zakaria Paliashvili, sung in classical style; chants inherited by Anzor Erkomaishvili (Rustavi director) from his family in Guria, also sung in classical style; modern compositions, sung in classical style; and finally a selection of para-liturgical folk hymns, sung in a folk style.

2. “Celebration Hymns,” released by the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir in 1995 is a stellar example of the neo-traditional performance style promoted by the Mtiebi Ensemble in the 1970s, here applied to sacred music. The diction is clean, tempos normalized to be more speech-like, and individual voices stand out from the choir in the upper voice parts, which are sung by soloists for a free range of ornamentation. The repertory is entirely composed of chants recovered from the archival transcriptions of 19th and early twentieth century chant-masters.

One of the only chants that appears on both albums, shen khar venakhi [You are a Vineyard], may serve as an interesting case study for these questions. The Rustavi Ensemble performance of the hymn is deliberately slow, sweet, and delicate, while the straightforward, folksy rendition by the Anchiskhat’i Church Choir is performed at the tempo of most liturgy chants; that is to say, at the speed in which it is natural to sing and understand a text. The secular mainstream society associates this chant with weddings and celebrations as well as moments of deep cultural pathos, such as the death of a dignitary or the loss of a battle. Both choirs sing in the style of their own performance aesthetic, and it is curious that there is very little overlap in the selection of repertory for the two albums. The correlation of repertory and performance practice for both the classical and neo-traditional models begs examination.

Meanwhile, the newly religious have reclaimed the hymn, shen khar venakhi, as a text by the twelfth century King Demet're II dedicated not to wedding brides, but to the Holy Theotokos. Besides the subtle but not insignificant differences in arrangement (discussed in Examples 1 and 2), the fundamental signifier of this reclamation by the neo-traditionalists is

883 The Theotokion hymn, shen khar venakhi [You are the Vineyard], is a widely popular hymn whose performances over the last five decades have been at the center of the renewed awareness of Georgian sacred music.
884 During the conflict between Russia and Georgia in August, 2008, the chant shen khar venakhi was performed by the Basiani Ensemble and televised live by CNN and local networks, carrying the local signification of ‘We Shall Overcome.’
885 In a bizarre twist, a Russian arrangement (c. 1995) used the melodies of the Paliashvili shen khar venakhi for a setting of the Cherubic Hymn. This was subsequently translated into English and has since become one of the most popular arrangements of the Cherubic Hymn in the Orthodox Church of America. Georgians are baffled at the combination of the melody from one chant with the text of another, especially considering that several versions of the Cherubic Hymn survive in the transcription record, and because the model melody of the Cherubic hymn was strictly assigned in the oral tradition (see discussion in 5.3.1 Romelni kerubimta [Let us, the Cherubim], 1883).
through performance practice. A curious phenomenon occurs when, for example, the Patriarch’s Choir performs in a western classical style at official events in public, but in a neo-traditional manner during church services. In the performance of *shen khar venakhi* (and other chants like it), therefore, this hymn is actively appropriated to serve both a secular nationalist and conservative religious function. To hear the Anchiskhat'i Church Choir and the Rustavi Ensemble interpretations of the chant, *shen khar venakhi*, see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Tracks #20 and #21.

12.2 The Georgian Orthodox Church in Revival

In Georgian history and especially since the Mongol invasions of the early thirteenth century, the Orthodox Church has served a unifying role as an institution of cultural preservation and political conciliation. In the post-Soviet space, a clear memory of these traditional roles has allowed the Church to quickly reassert itself as one of the most dominant political forces in the South Caucasus. The mechanisms for a Church-dominated reformulation of cultural allegiances echoes past revival movements of the mid-eighteenth century and again in the late nineteenth century, when art forms such as iconography, polyphonic singing, and architecture became the cultural basis for nationalist movements.\(^{886}\)

12.2.1 Authenticity and Nationalism

Philip Bohlman has argued that the “authenticity of music is erased when meshed with nationalism,” because of an “aesthetic leveling” to share the language of the majority.\(^{887}\) However, the championing of liturgical music by Georgian nationalists has not significantly damaged the repertory, and the current revival of Georgian chant demonstrates a plurality of performance practices that do not seem sequestered by nationalist aesthetic. At the same time, Bohlman’s warning about the ‘museumizing’ of folklore is apt, considering the close mimicry of

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\(^{886}\) In the 1760s, King Erekle II and Patriarch Ant’on I resurrected a number of chant schools and orphanages in Eastern Georgia in an effort to rebuild cultural and political unity among disparate Georgians communities. In the 1860s, a similar process of cultural unification initiated by returning Georgian nobility from Russia gave rise to a new sense of Georgian nationalism (see the section, 3.4.1 The *Tergdaleulni* Enlightenment).

Gramophone recordings from the pre-Bolshevik period in the current Georgian chant revival. Authenticity, in this regard, “is a means of persuading insiders/outsiders of what is valued.”

Europeanized chant from the 1960s-1980s period has certainly gone out of fashion in recent years in favor of a revival of traditional chant forms.

The rapid growth of the Orthodox Church in Georgia may be attributed to several factors: the dissolution of State culture institutions following the Soviet collapse, the articulation of spiritual faith as an alternative to despair during a time of civil war and economic depravation, and the reinvigoration of traditional Georgian values and culture systems rooted in a pre-Communist past. The re-emergent presence of the Church as an alternative institution of national culture production (a role served by the State during the twentieth century) has resulted in a plurality of competing cultural institutions serving the same function.

Nearly twenty-five years ago, when Katherine Verdery described how “images of Romanian identity entered into battle with one another in the politicized world of Romanian culture,” the concept of competing state and religious institutions was only beginning to be analyzed by social scientists. Today, the manifestations of this dichotomy in Georgia indicate a set of potentially competing cultural allegiances. This chapter will analyze the role of Georgian liturgical chant as a medium for competing strategies of influence between Church and State in the immediate post-Soviet period.

The influence of the Church in shaping national identity through historical narratives and cultural demonstration has seen a marked increase in participation over the last fifteen years. As political and economic structures crumbled during the early 1990s, popular trust turned towards the Orthodox Church, no doubt in part to the widespread respect for its longtime figurehead, Patriarch Ilia II. While the governments of both Dimitri Shevarnadze (1993-2003) and Mikhail Saakashvili (2004-2012) attempted to capitalize on this widespread popular support by aligning themselves with figures and functions of the Church, control of cultural interfaces—such as television stations, radio, and public concerts—the Church remains more popular than any State or Governmental figure.

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890 For an example of political leveraging of Church popularity, President Mikhail Saakashvili delivered a highly politicized speech in the middle of the service at the opening Eucharist of the Sameba Cathedral in Tbilisi on Nov.
The Church holds an increasingly powerful role in society as an ever greater number of young people attend services and identify strongly with culture elements such as liturgical music and iconography, and form habits of dress and fasting based on the cultural practices of the Church. As its cultural influence grows, the Church may wield an equalizing or even destabilizing position towards state sponsored cultural structures that somehow defy or contradict Church interests. A detailed analysis of the historical precedent for Church-State relations, especially in regards to cultural production, must necessarily inform our understanding of processes at work today.

In past eras of Georgian political agitation, nationalist rhetoric has repeatedly identified culture elements relating to the Orthodox Church as central to gaining the hearts and minds of the Georgian public. For example, during the Georgian cultural revival orchestrated by King Erekle II in the years 1764-1780s, one priority involved the re-establishment of regional chant schools, seminaries, orphanages, and schools in Eastern Georgia. A century later, following the sacking of Tbilisi in 1795 and the restrictive reorganization of the Georgian Church by Exarch Teophilaktos Rusanov in 1818, a nationalistic movement of radicalized Georgian intelligentsia (called the tergdaleulni) also found it advantageous to champion Georgian church chant as an enduring icon of Georgian longevity and values during their pro-nationalist campaign of the 1860s-1890s.891

Alongside other major issues such as judicial reform, language codification, and the emancipation of the serfs, the prioritization of the liturgical music revival by the tergdaleulni may seem out of place. But for Ilia Ch’avch’avadze, a well-educated statesman and “father of the Georgian language,” championing chant as an ancient and unique expression of Georgian-ness became a means to legitimize the age and sophistication of the Georgian Church (and by extension, Georgian Nation) in a bid for the reinstatement of Georgian Church autocephaly and right to self-governance.892

23, 2003. Similarly, during a pro-Georgia demonstration during the "5-day War" with Russia, August 11, 2008, Saakashvili called for a procession to the Sameba Cathedral, en masse, to venerate Orthodox icons. 891 See Stephen F. Jones, Socialism in Georgian Colors (2005), 32-40. The tergdaleulni, literally those who had “drunk from the River Terek,” were the sons of nineteenth-century Georgian intelligentsia sent to universities and seminaries in Russia in order to bring European values back to Georgia. Instead, they returned with revolutionary ideas and initiated a great deal of change in Georgia. See the section, 3.4.1 The Tergdaleulni Enlightenment. 892 For more on these issues, see the section, 3.3.1 The Russian Church in the Caucasus.
Later, despite suppression, chant served as a means to define a posture of anti-censor defiance: members of the Rustavi Ensemble recorded para-liturgical chants in the 1970s, for example, and in the late 1980s, members of the Anchishkhat’i Church Choir began singing medieval chant in secret in the Betania Monastery. In the modern era, chant has arguably lost its political subversiveness as censorship is hardly practiced any longer, yet the re-publication of five books of canonical chant and the dissemination of more than a dozen recordings since the year 2000 undoubtedly serves a conforming function for binding together more than a thousand parishes scattered throughout twenty-five dioceses.

The politicization of Georgian liturgical chant for various social agendas throughout these historical periods is just one example of how the cultural institutions of the Church have been recognized by various state and non-state actors as powerful means of social empowerment and influence. In its association with the commemoration of Georgian martyrs and historical events of significance, such as the death of the eleventh and twelfth century founding father, King David the Builder, chant carries special significance in Georgian history and is a vital artery in the circulation of cultural capital supporting the concept of a single Georgian state.

12.2.2 Traditional Chant in the Soviet Era

In the twentieth century, the knowledge of Georgian church chant, as it had been taught and passed down for thirty generations, disappeared. The effects of urbanization, widespread cultural change, and an era of socialist revolution and communist ideology combined to create an inhospitable climate for the natural development of liturgical chant. On April 15, 1921, the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia adopted Decree № 21, which instituted the separation of church and state. Articles XIV and XV of this law read as follows: “Neither the church nor any religious organization…has the right to own property. They likewise do not have rights as a legal entity. All properties of the Church, and any religious organizations that exist in the Georgian

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893 The chant shen khar venakhi [You are the Vineyard] does not contain words such as “God” or “Theotokos” and therefore escaped the disapproval of Soviet censors. Even though it was commonly known as a hymn written in veneration of the Virgin Mother, it was rebranded as a "sacred chorale" for performance at weddings.

894 Personal interview with Davit Shugliashvili, July 2007, who described the thrill of singing the recently rediscovered Paschal heirmoi in preparation for a service. In 1988, the choir rehearsed at the remote Betania Monastery for fear of being censored or reported.

895 The death of King David the Builder in 1125 is celebrated every January 24 through elaborate church rituals. Dedicatory chants hold a primary role in conveying the sanctity of the service and as a result, take on significant cultural value.
Republic, are hereby declared the property of the people.”

In effect, the Orthodox Church of Georgia was decreed to exist outside the protection of the law.

The effects of this degree were disastrous for traditional chanters. Not protected by law or civil authority, they became targets for the brutality of the new regime. In 1924, P’et’re and Andria K’arbelashvili (brothers of Vasil and P’olievkt’os), were executed along with twenty other people near their home in Ch’ala, East Georgia. Ekvt’ime K’ereselidze was forced to flee the Gelati Monastery, hiding the Koridze chant transcriptions in a nearby basement. Later, he buried the manuscripts in tin boxes in the yard of the Zedazeni Monastery, high on a ridge in the forests of East Georgia.

Traditional choirs were suppressed. Carl Urushadze, whose parents sang in a folk choir in the 1930s directed by Varlam Simonishvili and including many former students of Ant’on Dumbadze, recalls singing sessions behind closed doors: “We would listen at the door, and learn their chants, and later, when we asked them what songs they had been singing, they would say, ‘oh nothing, they were only lullabies.’” During these years, Melkisedek’ Nak’ashidze, champion of chant and teacher of many students, was dispossessed of his title and land, dying in poverty. Fr. Nest’or K’ontridze, his longtime friend and fellow chanter, was beaten to death by a Young Communist in 1931.

In 1937, a terrible year of state purging attacked all levels of artistic, religious, and intellectual society. Two of Vasil K’arbelashvili’s sons were killed. Half of the members of the Simonishvili folk choir in Guria were rounded up one night and threatened with permanent exile if they continued to sing folksongs not in line with cultural policy. If any chants were being sung, they were completely hidden behind closed doors, or surviving in remote monasteries. Four or five convents continued to serve the liturgy in secret through the Communist times. These nuns continued to chant in secret, but the last of the older generation died in the 1970s without passing on their chant knowledge because there were no novices.

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897 All five K’arbelashvili brothers—P’olievkt’os, Vasil, and P’et’re—were canonized Orthodox saints by decision of the Holy Synod of the Georgian Orthodox Church on December 20, 2011.
12.3 A Story of Twentieth-Century Transmission: *Shen khar venakhi*

Transcriptions of the chant, *shen khar venakhi* [You are the Vineyard], provide an excellent case study to illustrate the complex history of the transmission of Orthodox chant through the Soviet era. All three variants of the chant, *shen khar venakhi*, that are discussed in this section can be heard on the accompanying audio recording; see Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc, Tracks #20, #21, and #22.

**Figure 156. Shen khar venakhi** [You are the Vineyard], Vasil K'arbelashvili, 1898

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12.3.1 Traditional variants

The Anchiskhat’i Church Choir sings the East Georgian variant as transcribed by the master chanter Vasil K’arbelashvili at the turn of the twentieth century (Figure 156). For comparison, we provide the four-voiced variant as recorded by the Rustavi Ensemble in 1996 (Figure 157). With a quick glance, the two variants appear to contain only superficial differences, such as the middle voice ornaments, doubled bass, and alternate ending in measures 1-4 (Figure 157). In reality, these subtle differences reveal intriguing clues about the transmission of this chant through the twentieth century.

Figure 157. Shen khar venakhi [You are the Vineyard], Rustavi Ensemble, 1996
12.3.2 The Paliashvili Arrangement

An arrangement of the chant, *shen khar venakhi* [You are the Vineyard], was published by Zakaria Paliashvili in 1909. This source provides an intermediary witness to the evolution of chant repertory in Georgia (Figure 158). Close comparison between the Paliashvili six-voiced mixed arrangement for SATTBB, and the Rustavi Ensemble arrangement for TTBB reveal striking correspondences. For example, the ornamental middle voice parts in each transcription indicate that the Rustavi Ensemble variant was likely reconstructed from a Paliashvili score. I posit that the Rustavi Ensemble reconstructed the six-voiced Paliashvili arrangement for three voices, as indicated by the arrows in Figure 158.

For example, in bar 10, the Rustavi arrangement is clearly derived from the soprano, alto, and bass parts of the Paliashvili arrangement, and not the original K’arbelashvili original. Just to make this point clear, I placed small note heads in Figure 157 and Figure 158 for the pitches that *do not occur* in the K’arbelashvili original (Figure 156). It is not particularly surprising that the Rustavi Ensemble would choose this arrangement style, given the inaccessibility of the K’arbelashvili transcriptions housed in the National Center of Manuscripts (formerly the K’ek’elidze Institute of Handwriting) during most of the twentieth century. But it is also an indication of a link between early twentieth century arrangements for classical chorus and the enduring classical performance tradition through the Soviet period.

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900 Zakaria Paliashvili, *Liturgia, Ioane Okrop’iri* [Liturgy of John Chrysostom] (Tbilisi: Sharadze Press, 1911). A number of settings for the 'Liturgia' were composed during this period, including settings by Tchaikovsky (Op. 41, published in 1878), Ippolitov-Ivanov (Op. 37, published in 1903), as well as two settings by Aleksandr Archangelsky (in 1890 and 1894) and Alexander Gretchaninoff (in 1899 and 1902). Additional settings continued to appear after Paliashvili left Moscow in 1903, including settings by Kastalsky, Kompaneisky, Aleksander Chesnokov, two settings by Pavel Chesnokov, and Sergei Rachmaninoff.

901 The early twentieth century witnessed an outpouring of Georgian classical music from composers such as Melit’on Balanchivadze (born in 1862 and the father of George Balanchine), Dimit’ri Araqishvili (born in 1871), and Zakaria Paliashvili (1871-1933). Vocal music, both folk music and opera, were major interests of these composers. Balanchivadze, for example, was active in both the folk and opera realms. He founded a Georgian folk ensemble and traveled to various parts of Georgia between 1883 and 1886, collecting folk songs and training folk choirs. He was also the composer of one of the first Georgian operas. See Elizabeth Kendall, *Balanchine and the Lost Muse: Revolution and the Making of a Choreographer* (Oxford University Press, 2013).
Figure 158. *Shen khar venakhi* [You are the Vineyard], Zakaria Paliashvili, 1909

SOPRANO

1. Shen khar ve no khar

2. Nor chi bu

3. Al va su ne

4. Ghmert man sa

5. Da ta vit

ALTO

1. Shen khar venakhi

2. Nor chi bu

3. Al va su ne

4. Ghmert man sa

5. Da ta vit

TENOR 1

1. Shen khar venakhi

2. Nor chi bu

3. Al va su ne

4. Ghmert man sa

5. Da ta vit

TENOR 2

1. Shen khar venakhi

2. Nor chi bu

3. Al va su ne

4. Ghmert man sa

5. Da ta vit

BASS 1 1/2

1. Shen khar venakhi

2. Nor chi bu

3. Al va su ne

4. Ghmert man sa

5. Da ta vit
Zakaria Paliashvili (1873-1933), a contemporary of Rachmaninoff and a student of Sergei Taneyev at the Moscow Conservatory during the years 1900-1903, became a major music figure in Georgia during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Inspired by the vibrant compositional atmosphere in Moscow, where figures such as Alexander Kastalsky and Stepan Smolensky were actively arranging znamenny chant for contemporary performance, Paliashvili returned to Georgia in 1903 with a vision of collecting and arranging Georgian folk and sacred music for large chorus. He was one of the first ethnomusicologists to travel into the remote mountain regions of Georgia, recording and transcribing folk songs with the use of an early Gramophone. In 1909, many of these folksongs were published, and in 1911 he published the Liturgia, a selection of traditional eastern Georgian chant melodies arranged for six-part mixed chorus.

12.3.3 The Paliashvili vs. K'arbelashvili Debate

The publication of Paliashvili’s Liturgia provoked accusations of plagiarism from members of the oral chant community. Vasil K’arbelashvili, one of the leading advocates for the preservation of Eastern Georgian chant, was disappointed in Paliashvili, writing: ‘Somehow you’ve changed the soul of our chant. How have you done this?’ Paliashvili defended himself in a forward to the Liturgia publication, pointing out that most of the traditional chant melodies in his arrangements remained intact:

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902 Zakaria Paliashvili (1873-1933), a contemporary of Rachmaninoff, studied at the Moscow Conservatory for three years with Sergei Taneyev from 1900-1903 and achieved widespread fame through the composition of ‘folk’ operas, including Abesalom da Eteri (1919) and Daisi (1923). His contemporary generation attending the Moscow Conservatory included Gretchaninoff (b. 1864), Rachmaninoff (b. 1873), Scriabin (b. 1872), Gliere (b. 1875), Chesnokov (b. 1877), and Medtner (b. 1880). For more on Paliashvili’s biography, see Vladimir Donadze, Zakhariy Paliashvili, (2nd edition, in Russian) (Moscow: Muzika Publishing, 1971). Shalva K’ashmadze, Zakaria Paliashvili (Tbilisi: Khelovneba Publishing, 1948). Ant'on Ts'uluk'idze, Zakaria Paliashvili (Tbilisi, 1971). P'avle Khuch'ua, Zakaria Paliashvili (Tbilisi, 1974).

903 Paliashvili had been exposed to Georgian folk music via the Tbilisi Ethnographic Choir, the first choir to perform Georgian folk music on stage. This choir was founded by Vladimir Agniashvili in Tbilisi in 1886 and later directed by the Czech expatriot, Joseph Ratil. The experience of singing in this choir was very influential for Paliashvili, who went on to collect, transcribe, and publish Georgian folksongs, as well as to incorporate many of them into his operas.

904 Zakaria Paliashvili, Kartuli saek lexiio sagaloblebi: Kartl-Kakhuri k'iilo [Georgian church chant: Kartli-Kakhetian mode]. Twenty-two chants adapted for men’s and women’s chorus, St. John Chrysostom liturgy. No. 3 (in Russian and Georgian) (Tbilisi: Publication of the Georgian Philharmonic Society, 1909). For a transcription of the chant, shen khar venakhi, from this publication, see Figure 158.

905 Vasil K’arbelashvili letters. This was brought to my attention by Luarsab T’ogonidze, Personal Interview, April 2005.
I left the first voice reasonably untouched except for several chants, such as *romelni kerubimta* (Cherubic Hymn) and *shen gigalobt* (We Praise Thee), in which I lengthened or shortened the melody, and re-harmonized the second and third voices. In the preparation of these arrangements, I have to confess that I have been thinking mostly of performances for large mixed chorus, which is why most of the chants are arranged for five, six, or seven voices. I hope that these chant compositions will not only be famous in Georgia, but in Russia as well, where there are many mixed choirs. To that end I have included the Russian text as well as the Georgian text.\(^\text{906}\)

In a comparison of Figure 157 and Figure 158, it is clear that Paliashvili indeed left the first voice melody intact, but took creative liberties in weaving the traditional middle voice between the alto, tenor 1, and tenor 2 parts, and filling out a three octave range through simple devices such as doubling and parallel-third motion in the tenor voices. The bass is also doubled at the octave wherever possible, in the preferred manner of Russian chant choirs of the period.

The nature of the argument between Paliashvili and K’arbelashvili boiled down to a debate on the inviolability of the oral tradition. Paliashvili argued that his six-voice arrangements of traditional three-voiced chant would popularize chant beyond the borders of Georgia, presumably in Russia, Europe, and America, where choirs were more accustomed to singing SATB arrangements. The K’arbelashvili brothers, who were literally in a race against time to preserve and notate the eastern Georgian oral chant tradition before all of the masters died, welcomed the concept of widespread popularization and support. But sacrificing the integrity of the musical structure, melody, and system of harmonization passed down through oral transmission was obviously unacceptable. Therefore, as someone with entirely different aims, K’arbelashvili rebuked the altruistic undertones of Paliashvili’s argument, noting that changing or removing portions of the chant melodies or harmonies fundamentally changed the internal harmonic structure of the chant (often compared to the tripartite structure of the Holy Trinity), and ultimately lead to the degradation of the music itself.\(^\text{907}\)

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\(^{907}\) For more on the importance of model melodies and harmony, see the section, 11.1 Georgian Model Melodies and 10.1 Harmony: Monastery School Comparison. For discussion on the comparison of the tripart structure of Georgian chant with the Holy Trinity, see the section, 2.5.1 Ioane P’et’rits’i.
12.3.4 The Rise of the 'Sacred Chorale'

Paliashvili’s chant arrangements continued to have an impact on sacred music performance throughout the twentieth century, while the transcriptions of the K’arbelashvili brothers and others were locked in inaccessible Soviet archives for the rest of the century. In the 1960s, the small ensembles Gordelo and Shvidkatsa ushered in a new era in performance style by abandoning the large choir format of the 1940-1950s, refining their western classical vocal technique, and adding classical composed music to their repertories. In 1968, several members of the disbanded Gordelo ensemble founded the Rustavi State Ensemble, which became the most well known Georgian ensemble domestically and internationally. Renowned for their incredible dynamic control, superb blend, and virtuosity in unique vocal techniques such as Georgian yodeling, the Rustavi Ensemble went on to record dozens of albums, and commanded enormous influence over performance aesthetics in popular culture throughout the 70s, 80s, and 90s.

The performance style of the 'sacred chorale,' made famous by the Rustavi Ensemble, has come to be associated with the Soviet ensembles. In recent years, a young generation of neo-traditionalist chanters has begun to openly question the classical aesthetic of these chorales. For example, in a flurry of posts on an online forum dedicated to the popularization of Georgian traditional folk and sacred music (in 2008), anonymous posters accused the Rustavi Ensemble of deliberately tailoring Georgian folk and sacred music to international audiences through an over-emphasis on dynamics, head voice, and gimmickry.908

Anzor Erkomaishvili, a folklorist and longtime director of the Rustavi Ensemble, has himself been a tireless advocate of Georgian traditional music, researching and publishing catalogs of Gramophone recordings from the beginning of the twentieth century, and directing the International Centre for Georgian Folklore.909 To distinguish these activities from the performance style cultivated by the Rustavi Ensemble over the last four decades of his directorship, he had this response to the critiques:

Besides, when a large state ensemble comes on stage, it is hard to speak about authenticity. It was exactly this academic manner of singing that roused the interest of

young people to our national treasury [of folk music]. It is not fair to blame Rustavi for its singing manner; it cannot sing differently. An academic manner of singing is one thing, and scenic performance is quite another. Thanks to Rustavi’s academic singing, UNESCO named Georgian polyphonic singing, 'A Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity'.

Erkomaishvili defends the performance aesthetic of the Rustavi Ensemble partly on the grounds of its international appeal (to UNESCO), an argument oddly reminiscent of Paliashvili’s argument to K’arbelashvili in 1911, and demonstrating the currency of the debate. It is true that Paliashvili’s arrangements have helped to popularize Georgian chant internationally throughout the twentieth century, and also that the recordings and performances of the Rustavi Ensemble have contributed to world recognition through organizations such as UNESCO. For these reasons, many members of the online forum were loath to criticize the current Rustavi Ensemble, however, hardly anyone was willing to defend the ensemble on aesthetic grounds either. At least for this group of commentators, the ‘academic’ style of performance is no longer representative of traditional folk and sacred music.

Georgian religious chant is at the heart of the Orthodox resurgence in Georgia, and at the same time, intimately bound up with secular Georgia culture. For example, during the August conflict of 2008, the chant *shen khar venakhi* was performed publicly as a sign of national unity and pathos. This chant is a salient example of how liturgical chant can come to have many cultural associations for varying segments of a civil and religious society. As a result, the average singer learns to sing not only several variants of the hymn, depending on the context, but also several mannerisms of performance. As the hegemonic state culture of former decades is slowly dismantled, perhaps the acceptance of these multiple signifiers is a significant marker of a growing pluralism in Georgia.

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910 Tamaz Gabasonia, Interview for the International Research Center for Traditional Polyphony, Tbilisi State Conservatory, Summer 2009.
911 The forum has a fluctuating membership of about 450 individuals, many of whom are (likely) urban and under 30 years of age (due to their familiarity with, and access to, internet resources).
12.4 Future Research

A variety of methodological avenues await the next generation of researchers, and this generation will no doubt include international scholars. Each manuscript needs thorough analysis to understand its contents, transmission, and production. Comparative studies with Byzantine, Armenian, and Russian sources will continue to shed light on the role of Georgian chant in the wider cultural sphere of Eastern Christianity. Processes of oral transmission of chant are extremely intriguing given the recent provenance of such masters as Art'em Erkomaishvili (d. 1967), who left a variety of rich sources including audio recordings, video, numerous interviews, and a personal neumed chantbook. This dissertation provides an introduction for international scholars to enter the field of Georgian chant studies.
Appendix A: Recordings List: Accompanying Compact Disc


5. *Isaia mkhiarul* [Rejoice, Oh Isaiah]. Shemokmedi Monastery school. Recorded by Art'em Erkomaishvili in 1966 (all three voices).


30. *Shen khar venakhi* [You are the Vineyard]. Svet'itskhoveli Cathedral school. Recorded by the Mughashvili Choir, 1952.


Archival Recordings
33. *Ver shemdzlebel vart* [Unable are We]. Shemokmedi Monastery school. Recorded by Art'em Erkomaishvili (all three voice parts), at the Tbilisi Conservatory, 1966. Mixed into three voices by Rob Wegman.

34. *Aghdgomasa shensa* [To Your Resurrection]. Shemokmedi Monastery school, recorded by Yvette Grimaud in 1967.

**Figure 159.** Chavleishvili Trio, Recording Session, 1909
## Appendix B: Audio Recordings of Traditional Chant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chant(s)</th>
<th>Chanter(s)</th>
<th>Regional Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1903 | 1 eucharist chant (audio):  
- *Shen gigalobt* [We praise Thee]. | Ap'olon Tsamtsishvili Choir | Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East) |
| 1907 | 1 eucharist chant (audio):  
- *Mamao chveno* [Our Father]. | Sandro K'avsadze Choir | Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East) |
| 1907 | 2 chants (audio):  
- *Shoba sheni ukrts'nel ars* [Your nativity is everlasting];  
- *Didbe ghmerta* [Glory to God]. | Gigo Erkomaishvili,  
Art'em Erkomaishvili,  
Giorgi Iobishvili | Shemokmedi Monastery (West) |
| 1909 | 2 heirmoi (audio):  
- *Sigvarulman mogiqvana* [Love has brought Thee] (incomplete);  
- *Shen romelman gananatle* [You have enlightened us]. | Samuel Chavleishvili,  
Besarion Ints'k'irveli,  
Varlam Simonishvili | Shemokmedi Monastery (West) |
| 1949 | 11 heirmoi (audio). | Dimit’ri Pat'arava,  
Varlam Simonishvili,  
Art'em Erkomaishvili | Shemokmedi Monastery (West) |
| 1952 | Assorted chants (audio):  
*Shen khar venakhi* [You are the Vineyard] | Mughashvili Choir | Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East) |
| 1956 | 1 assorted chant (audio):  
*Shen khar venakhi* [You are the Vineyard] | Art'em Erkomaishvili,  
Anania Erkomaishvili,  
Vladimir Erkomaishvili | Shemokmedi Monastery (West) |
| 1960 | 1 chant (audio):  
*Motsikuli krist'esagan* [Apostle sent by Christ]. | Art'em Erkomaishvili,  
Badri Toidze,  
Anzor Erkomaishvili | Shemokmedi Monastery (West) |
| 1960s | 10 assorted chants (audio): Recorded in Ozurgeti, only 4 extant. | Art'em Erkomaishvili | Shemokmedi Monastery (West) |
| 1965 | 1 heirmos (video):  
- *Sigvarulman mogiqvana* [Love has brought Thee]. | Art'em Erkomaishvili,  
Anania Erkomaishvili,  
Vladimir Erkomaishvili | Shemokmedi Monastery (West) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chants Details</th>
<th>Artist/Choir</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>107 assorted chants (audio):</td>
<td>Art’em Erkomaishvili</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>3-5 assorted chants by Yvette Grimaud (audio): - <em>Aghdgomasa shensa</em> [To thy Resurrection Lord];</td>
<td>Gurian Choir; Mughashvili Choir in Gurjaani</td>
<td>Shemokmedi Monastery (West); Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>78 eucharist and other chants (audio).</td>
<td>Vaziashvili Choir, Kashweti St. George Church, Tbilisi</td>
<td>Svet’itskhoveli Cathedral (East)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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912 I am grateful to Davit Shugliashvili for reviewing this list.
## Appendix C: Sharadze & Friends Chantbook Publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Transcriber</th>
<th>Singers</th>
<th>Chantbook Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Pilimon Koridze</td>
<td>Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze, Razhden Khundadze,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ivliane Ts’ereteli, Ant’on Dumbadze</td>
<td>Kartuli galoba: Lit’urgia Ioane Okrop'iris [Georgian chant: liturgy of St. John</td>
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<td>1897</td>
<td>Vasil K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Vasil K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Kartl-K'akhuri Galoba K'arbelantaant k’iloti: mts'ukhri</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Kartl-Kakhetian chant in K'arbelantaant mode: Vespers]. Part I. Tbilisi:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M. Sharadze &amp; Friends Press, 1897.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Vasil K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Vasil K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Kartl-K'akhuri galoba K'arbelantaant k’iloti: tsisk'ari [Kartl-K'akhetian</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>chant in K'arbelantaant mode: Matins]. Part II. Tbilisi: Tsnobis Purtseli Press,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1898.</td>
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<td>1899a</td>
<td>Mikheil Ippolitov-Ivanov</td>
<td>Polievkt'os and Vasil K'arbelashvili,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alexander Molodinashvili, Grigol Mghebrishvili</td>
<td>Kartuli galoba, Kartl-K'akhuri k'iloti. Lit’urgia: ts’minda Ioane Okrop'iris</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ts'irvis ts'esi [Georgian Chant, Kartl-K'akhetian mode. Liturgy of St. John</td>
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<td>1899b</td>
<td>Pilimon Koridze</td>
<td>Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze, Razhden Khundadze,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ivliane Ts’ereteli, Ant’on Dumbadze</td>
<td>Kartuli galoba: Mitsvalebulis [Georgian Chant: Requiem]. Vol. No. 3. T’pilisi:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M. Sharadze &amp; Friends Press, 1899.</td>
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<td>1899c</td>
<td>Pilimon K'arbelashvili</td>
<td>Polievkt'os K'arbelashvili, Alexander</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Molodinashvili</td>
<td>Kartuli galoba: shobis dghesasts'aulisa [Georgian chant: Nativity Feastday</td>
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<td>1901</td>
<td>Pilimon Koridze</td>
<td>Dimit’ri Ch’alaganidze, Razhden Khundadze,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Ivliane Ts’ereteli, Ant’on Dumbadze</td>
<td>Kartuli galoba: sagalobelnii p’irvel shets’irulisa, Vasil didisa, mghvdalis</td>
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<td>k’urtkhevisa da korts’inebisa [Chants of the First Martyr, Basil the Great, the</td>
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<td>ordination of priests, and weddings]. Vol. No. 2. T’pilisi: M. Sharadze &amp;</td>
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<td>Friends Press, 1901.</td>
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<td>Ivliane Ts’ereteli, Ant’on Dumbadze</td>
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<td>Pilimon Koridze</td>
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<td>Sadghesast'saulo ganitsadebi [Feastday communion hymns]. T’pilisi: Dzmobisa</td>
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I am grateful to Magda Sukhiashvili and Davit Shugliashvili for reviewing this list.
Appendix D: Lexicon of Georgian Liturgical Music

***This glossary has been adapted from a list compiled by ethnomusicologists Joseph Jordania and Tamaz Gabisonia.\(^{914}\)

AELEBA \(\text{æleba}\) (non-translatable). This old Georgian term, known today only from the “Dictionary of the Georgian Language,” compiled by the eighteenth century scholar Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani (eighteenth Century). The term means “nicely concordant (polyphonic) singing of the flock of the birds.” See synonyms chrinva and galoba.

AVAJI \(\text{avaji}\) (meaning is not clear). Medieval Georgian term for the older and simpler syllabic-singing style in the Georgian Church, where each syllable was tied to one musical sound. See also tvitavaji.

BAMI \(\text{bami}\) or BAM \(\text{bam}\) (meaning not clear). Possibly the earliest reference for the bass voice, the lowest voice in Georgian church-singing. The term was mentioned by the eleventh century philosopher, Ioane P'et'rit's'i, together with the terms mzakhr and zhir.

BANI \(\text{bani}\) (bass). Musically, it is a generic name for accompanying singing (by voice/voices or instrument). It does not necessarily mean the lowest voice (though that is its typical usage). In some cases, for example, there were lower voice parts than bani, and in other cases, the term maghali bani meant 'high accompaniment,' thus being the middle voice in three-part harmony. Bani is the only part that is traditionally performed by a group of singers, and at large social events (weddings, religious feasts) every member of a community was expected to contribute. The bani voice in East Georgian polyphony is the most “democratic” part to join in singing, as it is often either a drone, or is based on repetitive ostinato formulas. “He can’t even sing a bass” is a traditional saying in Georgia about a person who cannot sing in tune. The bani voice in the West Georgian "trio" genre of folksongs and gamshvenebuli chant can be highly ornamented, however, requiring performance by the most skilled singers. At a meeting of distinguished singers in Guria, for example, the most revered singer would be asked to sing the bani part. There are more than twenty traditional terms for the accompanying voice parts in different regions of Georgia, including: dabali bani, bami, dvrini, bokhi, bukhvi, ertiani bani, bani ertnairi, banis mtkmeli, damjdari, mebane, mebanave, p'ent'ela, shebaneba, shemdegi, ubanebs, zruni. See also terms shemkhmobari and maghali bani.

\(^{914}\) This glossary has been adapted and updated from a list compiled by ethnomusicologists Joseph Jordania and Tamaz Gabisonia, who in turn updated previous unpublished lists collated by Otar Chijavadze, Lia Gabidauri, and a wide range of scholars including the historian Ivane Javakhishvili, music theorist Shalva Aslanishvili, ethnomusicologists Grigol Ch'khik'vadze, Mindia Jordania, K'akhi Rosebashvili, K'uk'uri Ch'okhonelidze, Edisher Garaqanidze, Nat'alia Zumbadze, and others. It has been condensed to display terms relating to the Georgian liturgical chant tradition, with only select terms retained from the folk tradition. For the sake of brevity, more than one hundred additional terms denoting the names of specific voice parts and instruments from the various regional folk traditions in Georgia have been omitted in this list.
BGERA [ბგერა] (lit. “sound, noise”). This is the modern way to describe specific pitches in a scale.

BGERAT-TS'QOBA [ბგერატ-სყობა] (lit. “arranged sound”). This is the modern term for musical scales, including modal scales in Georgian tuning.

CH'RELI [ჩრელი] (lit. “colorful”, “striped”). This is a medieval term first seen in a thirteenth century manuscript. In eighteenth and nineteenth sources, the term has several meanings: 1) ornamental singing; 2) phrases of music sung with no syllables; 3) a specific list of named melodic formulas, found in the Pitareti Heirmologion.

DABALI BANI [დაბალი ბანი] (lit. low bass). From the description of Ioane Bat'onishvili at the beginning of the nineteenth century, dabali bani was one of the voices in six-part liturgical singing in Georgian churches (no sources of this singing style remain). According to this source, the term dabali bani was a synonym of shemdegi and was sung in a lower range than bani.

DAMTS'QEBI [დამტყები] (lit. “the one who starts”). This was a term for the singer who began a song. There are numerous terms to indicate the voice (or singer) that starts a song, including: ak'ideba, amodzakheba, aqvana, damdzakhnelli, dats'qebiti khmai, dats'qili, gemach'qapali, metave, motave, ts'ina khma, ts'qebia. See also tavk'atsi, tavkali.

DASDEBELI [დასდებლი] (Gk. troparion). This is a medieval term for the troparion chant genre.

DVRINI [დვრინი] (lit. "low intensity, trembling"). According to Ioane Bat'onishvili, Davit Machabeli, and Davit Guramishvili, this voice was the lowest of the six-part chant tradition in Georgian churches.

DZLISP'IRI [დზლისპირი] (Gk. heirmos). This is the name of the heirmos chants, part of the kanon chant genre. Plural forms in Classical Georgian: dzlisp'irni or dzlisp'irta.

DZNOBA [ძნობა] (from “dzna” – “haystack”). One of the best known medieval Georgian terms for a group activity – singing and (particularly) dancing. It is generally accepted that this term was denoting dance (most likely a round dance) accompanied by a group singing. See also mtskobri. According to the eighteenth-century Orbeliani lexicon, this term denotes harmonious singing.

EBANI [ებანი] (possibly from bani, to accompany). This is the name of an instrument specifically mentioned in medieval Georgian sources, and is also used to refer generally to different types of instrumental accompaniment.

ERTOBAI SHEQOVELBISAI [ერთობაი შეყოველბისაი] (lit. “unity of different elements,” in old Georgian). This term was used by the eleventh-century philosopher, Ioane P’et’rits’i, to refer to the phenomenon of “polyphony” and “harmony.” P’et’rits’i did not use the existing Greek term harmonia as the Platonic sense of the word did not describe multi-voice singing. P’et’rits’i may have created the term ertobai shekovlebisai to describe musical experiences he witnessed (according to Mzia Iashvili, 1977). The terms “rtva” [lit. knitting] and “mortuloba” [lit. beautified] in the P’et’rits’i sources are also considered to be related to the description of polyphonic singing.
GADAJVAREDINEBA [גְּדַגְּוַּרְדְּיַרְדְּנֶבֶּא] (lit. "traversing the cross"). This is a term used to denote the specific variation technique of voice crossing between the upper voice parts. It is likely a twentieth-century term.

GALOBA [גַּלוֹבָּא] (lit. “singing of birds”). In contemporary usage, this term refers to liturgical chant. Also see galobani.

GALOBANI [גַּלוֹבָּנִי]. In medieval sources, the term refers to the "ode" or "canticle" of the canon.

GAMQIVANI [gambaruni] (from "qivili" – "cock-a-doodle-doo"). This term refers to a type of high-pitched singing that occurs in folk songs from the regions of Guria and Adjara in West Georgia. It is more melodic, with less intervallic leaps, than k'rimanch'uli type yodeling.

GAMSHVENEBEBA [gamsvenebba] (lit. "to beautify"). This term refers to ornamental singing in both folk and sacred music. Contrast with sada (simple) and namdvili (true) levels of ornamentation.

HANGI [חֲנִי] (translation unknown). This term is used to refer to the melodic contour of chant phrases, usually for the first voice canonical melodies in liturgical chant.

KHMA [קַהַמַּה] (lit. "sound," "voice"). This term has many applications. In medieval usage, it meant melody, while in later usage it refers to the tonal assignment of chants. For example, in liturgical rubrics, a designation of galoba a, khma b would mean, ode 1, tone 2.

K'ILO [קִלוֹ] ("mode," "regional style," "model melody," "intonation"). This is perhaps the most complex term in Georgian liturgical music. It was used by Ekvtime K'ereselidze to mean the model melody: "if a chanter does not know the k'ilo (melody) khma (voice), how can he ornament it?" The term also means modal style or regional style, in the sense that singers needed to know 'the k'ilo of a chant' in order to sing together in the correct regional harmony. "That wasn't sung in the correct k'ilo (regional style)." The term also refers to ornamentation, as in manner of complexity. "After singing this chant in simple k'ilo, we will sing it in ornamental k'ilo (style)." The term is used modernly to differentiate modern tuning from traditional tuning: "Will we be singing this chant k'iloti (in traditional tuning), or not?"

K'RIMANCH'ULI [קרימאכן'אלו] (lit. "twisted falsetto", or, another possible meaning is "twisted jaw" —k'rint-manchuli). This term refers to a specific yodeling technique found in West Georgian folk music. It is characterized by wide intervocalic leaps and rhythmic ostinato formulas. It is performed on nonsense-syllables such as i-a-i-a, or i-ri-a, i-ri-a, or i-ri-a-ho, u-ru-a-ho, with "i" and "u" vowels always sounded on the highest pitches.

K'RINI [קריני] (lit. "falsetto"). According to nineteenth century sources that refer to an unattested six-voiced liturgical chant tradition, this term refers to the highest voice-part.

KTSEVA [קְטִיסֶבֶּא] (lit. “change,” “shift”). According to Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, this term referred to a change of a mood in liturgical chant. The same term was also used for the repeated musical phrase (see saksevi).

LOT'BARI, or LODBARI [לֹטְבָּרִי, לֹדוֹבָּרִי] ("choir master"). According to Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, this term denotes “expert church-singer”, or the “complete singer;” a singer who knew and could teach the complete liturgical repertory and skill-set. The term lot'bari was
widely used in Soviet Georgia (1921-1991) for "choir master", and is still common. (see also sruli mgalobeli).

MAGHALI BANI [ⴝㇾ ⴚⴝ ⴚ新京](lit. “high bass”). This term typically refers to the singer of the middle voice in liturgical chant (see definition of the term bani as meaning both bass and accompaniment).

MEBANE [ⴝColumnsMode] (lit. “the one who sings the bass”). This term refers to the singers of the bani voice-part. Besides vocal music, this term also refers to one of the pipes on the Georgian panpipe in West Georgia. All the pipes of the panpipe had the parallel terms from Georgian traditional polyphonic singing. This one (mebane) was the longest and accordingly the lowest pitched pipe, positioned in the middle of the traditional six-piece panpipe.

MEKHURI [ⴝۍ ⴚ新京]. The noun form of this medieval term, mekhelni, was used by the eleventh-century hymnographer Giorgi Mtats'mindeli to describe his learned teachers. Elsewhere it was used to describe hymnographic books containing neume notation. Etymologically, it may derive from the root of the word khma, meaning voice, tone, or melody.

MGALOBELI [ⴝ甚么 umo ⴚ新京] (“chanter”). This relatively modern term refers to liturgical singers, i.e. those who perform galoba.

MODZAKHILI [ⴝすで ⴚ新京] (lit. “the one who follows the call”). In folk music, this term refers to the top voice (who follows the folk melody sung by the middle voice), or to the middle voice (who follows the canonical liturgical melody sung by the top voice). Nineteenth century writers including K'ereselidze use it to refer to the middle voice in liturgical chant (synonym maghali bani).

MOK'AZMULI [ⴝすごい ⴚ新京] (phrase). This tenth century term is not completely understood but was used by Mikael Modrek'ili in reference to arranging heirmoi.

MOMGHERALI [ⴝ甚么 ⴚ新京] (“singer”). This is a general term for a singer in both the classical and folk genres.

MORTULOBA [ⴝすで ⴚ新京] (lit. “decorated,” “beautified”). This term first appears in the writings of the eleventh-century philosopher Ioane P’et’rits’i, where it denotes harmony. See also rtva and ertobai shets'qobay.

MRAVALKHMIANOBA [ⴝ甚么 ⴚ新京] (lit. “many voices”). In modern Georgian usage, this term refers to multi-voiced singing.

MTKMELI [ⴝ除此 ⴚ新京] (lit. “the one who speaks”). This term is used for the lead singer in both folk and liturgical music, whether that singer sings the top or the middle voice. In liturgical chant, the mtkmeli was the singer who performed the top-voice canonical melody. There are around twenty traditional terms for the leading middle-voice: melekse, dabali melekse, mazhogh, momchivani, momgherali, mubne, zhir, p’irveli, meore, tavi mtkmeli, tavk'atsi, tavraki, gamt ani, tkma, ts'ina khma, ts'inata mtkmeli, ts'qeba, upirobda, ban lighrelash.

MUKHLI [ⴝ除此 ⴚ新京] (lit. elbow, also 'musical phrase'). This term is used modernly to refer to single phrase-length motives.

MZAKHR [ⴝ甚么 ⴚ新京] (meaning is unclear). This term is known from the eleventh-century writings of Ioane P'et'rits'i, where it denotes the highest voice of three. P'et'rits'i likened the
Trinity to the three voices: mzakhr, zhir, and bam. Some scholars think the word may have etymological connections with the modern term modzakhili.

NAMDVILI [namdvi] (lit. "true"). This term refers to a class of ornamentation, which is more complicated than the sada (simple) style but less than the gamshvenebuli (ornamental) style. namdvi k'ilo (true style) chant was considered the day-to-day ordinary performance style expected of parish choirs.

NARTI [narTi] (lit. "woven", "knitted"). This medieval term (from Ioane P’et’rits’i) was used to refer to polyphonic singing. According to Sulkhan–Saba Orbeliani (eighteenth century), narti refers to the well-tuned strings of a musical instrument.

ORGANO [organo, orRano] (from “Organ” or “Organum”). This European term is found in several Georgian medieval sources, with an unclear meaning. In the seventeenth-century lexicon of Sulkhan–Saba Orbeliani, he refers to organo as the European musical instrument, having seen these instruments himself on travels to France as ambassador of the Kartl-K'akhetian king.

ORP’IRULI [orpiruli] (lit. “two-sided,” “responsive”). Out of numerous terms for the antiphonal alternation of two choirs, this is the best known term in different regions of Georgia. See also gadabmuli, gamortmeuli, chamortmeuli, gak’idebuli simghera, orp’art’iad simghera.

RTVA [rtva] (lit. “knitting”). One of the terms used by the eleventh-century philosopher, Ioane P’et’rits’i, rtva is also considered to denote harmony and polyphony. See also mortuloba and ertobai shekovlebisai.

SADA [sada] (lit. "simple"). This term most often refers to the basic manner or style of singing. "This chant is sung in sada k’ilo" (simple style).

SAKTSEVI [saqcevi] (from ktseva, “a portion,” “section”). This term refers to a musical phrase or couplet that can be repeated.

SHAIROBA [Sairoba] (lit. “to tell shairi”, from “shairi” – short poetic verse). This term refers to the tradition of competitive bardic poetry. Masters of shairoba were individuals who could impromptu come up with humorous verses (both men and women), singing antiphonally to the drone of attending friends. This tradition is still popular, particularly in mountains of East Georgia.

SHEBANEBA [Sebaneba] (lit. "to accompany", "to give the bass voice"). This medieval term refers to the art of harmonizing with accompanying voices or instruments. It has the same meaning in contemporary usage.

SHEDGMULEBA [sedgmuleba] (from "shedgma" – “to put under something” “to insert”). This term appears in the eighteenth-century lexicon of Sulkhan–Saba Orbeliani in reference to harmony and polyphony. Not in current use.

SHEMTS’QOBNI [shems’qobani] (lit. “those who sing in a good harmony”). According to the eighteenth and nineteenth century writers Ioane Bat’onishvili and Davit Machabeli, the shems’qobni were much appreciated for their ability to sing together in harmony. Cognate with the medieval terms shets’qobay and shets’qobileba.
SHETS'QOBA (lit. to put, to arrange). This medieval term can be found in eleventh-century texts by Ioane P'et'rits'i and Ephrem Mtsire. It is cognate with shets'qobileba.

SHETS'QOBILEBA (lit. to put, to arrange). This medieval term can be found in eleventh-century texts by Giorgi Mtsire, for example the historically significant hagiography of Giorgi Mtats'mindeli. It is cognate with shets'qoba.

SRULI MGALOBELI (lit. "complete chanter"). This term appears in the writing of the eighteenth and nineteenth century authors Ioane Bat'onishvili and Davit Machabeli referring to those chanters who could teach the entire canonical repertory. See also mgalobeli and lot'bari.

TANAMGALOBELI (lit. "co-chanter"). A term used for the members of the same church ensemble.

TAVK'ATSI (lit. "head-man"). A male leader of a traditional village singing group, the most acknowledged singer of a community, the tavk'atsi would start and lead the performance of traditional singing at different social events.

TAVKALI (lit. "head-woman"). The tavkali was a female leader of women’s singing groups. Distinguished female singers on rare occasions could also become leaders of male ensembles as well (the twentieth-century K'akhetian singer, Maro Tarkhnishvili, was possibly the best-known figure among them, brought to prominence by the social politics of the Communist government, who declared equal rights for women and men).

TKMA (lit. "to say," "to speak"). This is another very common term for the leading voice part in a song.

T'RIO (three singers). This European term was adopted by traditional singers in the nineteenth century, especially those from the West Georgian region of Guria. "T'rio songs" in Guria became a folk song genre characterized by elaborate improvisation that could only be performed by three expert singers.

TVITKHMOVANI (model phrases). The modern meaning of the cognate, khmovani means vowel, but tvitkhmovani in medieval usage implies model melody phrases.

UPIROBDA (meaning not clear, possibly “leading”). According to the eighteenth-century lexicon by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, this rarely used term refers to the highest voice part in liturgical singing.

ZARI (lit. "the bell," also "a great tragedy"). This term refers to a group of lamenting people, or to the songs that they sang at funerals. These songs were sung to vocables such as the "vai".

ZHIR (unknown meaning). This term appears in the writings of the eleventh-century philosopher, Ioane P'et'rits'i, in reference to the second voice. Compare with mzakhr and bam. In the eighteenth-century lexicon by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, the word zhir is defined as the middle string on a three-stringed instrument. Etymologically, it may refer to the term “zhir” (meaning 'second' in the Megrelian language).

ZILI. This rare, non-Georgian (Persian) term, which appears in the eighteenth and nineteenth century writings of Ioane Bat'onishvili and Davit Machabeli, referred to one of the
upper voice parts of the six-voiced chanting tradition. It also refers to the shortest (fixed) string on the four-string lute *chonguri*.

ZRIALI [zɾial][q] (onomatopoetic term for unpleasant noise). According to Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, this term denoted “terrible (scary) polyphony”.

Appendix E: Original Notated Sources of Georgian Chant

Abbreviations:915

ATHOS - Library of the Iveron Monastery, Mount Athos, Greece
CHA - Central Historical Archive, Tbilisi, Georgia
KSM - Kutaisi State Museum, Kutaisi, Georgia
MNM - Mestia National Museum, Svaneti, Georgia
NCF - National Centre of Folklore, Tbilisi, Georgia
NCM - National Center of Manuscripts, Tbilisi, Georgia
SIN - Library of St. Catherine's Monastery, Egypt
TSC - Tbilisi State Conservatory, Tbilisi, Georgia

ATHOS 85. neumed mss. 11th century.

CHA Fund 1446, file 172, neumed fragment, 11th century. *dzlisp'irni da ghvtismshoblisani* [Heirmologion and Theotokion]. Copy of Athos #85.

KSM 467. *ch'reli* mss. 19th century.
KSM 368. *ch'reli* mss. 19th century.

Mart'vili Monastery Museum. Manuscript 5099/1_B17. Dimit'ri Ch'alaganidze personal neumed manuscript.

MNM "Ts'virmi", neumed iadgari. 10th century.

MNM "Ieli", neumed iadgari. 10th century.


NCF #2100. Razhden Khundadze Archive. 20th century.
NCF #2106. Razhden Khundadze Archive. 20th century.

NCF #2110. Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions from the K'arbelashvili brothers. 1880s.
NCF #2111. Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions from the K'arbelashvili brothers. 1880s.
NCF #2112. Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions from the K'arbelashvili brothers. 1880s.
NCF #2113. Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov transcriptions from the K'arbelashvili brothers. 1880s.

915 I am grateful to Magda Sukhiashvili for her review of this list.
NCF #2125. Grigol Chkhik'vadze Archive (transcriptions from P'olievkt'os K'arbelashvili dated to 1936). Additional commentary on this project (without notation) is available in Fund No. 1461, Georgian National Historical Archive.

NCF #2126. Grigol Chkhik'vadze Archive (transcriptions from P'olievkt'os K'arbelashvili dated to 1936).

NCF #2127. Razhden Khundadze Archive. 20th century.


NCM A-596. Sadghesasts'auro [sticherarion], neumed. 11 century.

NCM A-603. Iordane neumed heirmologion. 10th century.


NCM H-154/7. Sadghesasts'aulis da dzlis'iri sa galoblebi [Feastday and heirmoi chants]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Ant'on Dumbadze. rough drafts. 270 pages. 1893.


NCM H-2282. ch'reli mss. 18th century.

NCM Q-103. ch'reli mss. Mamia Gurieli. 18th century.

NCM Q-104. "Guriantul Gulani". ch'reli mss. Bezhan and Giorgi Nak'ashidze. 18th century.


NCM Q-634. neumed chantbook from the Shemokmedi Monastery. 19th century.

NCM Q-651. Zat'ik'i [Pentacostarion]. neumed mss. 190 pages. 19th century.

NCM Q-666. Sadghesasts'aulo sagaloblebi [Feast day chants]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Dimit'ri Chalaganidze, Ivliane Ts'ereteli, Razhden Khundadze, and Ant'on Dumbadze. rough drafts. 230 pages. 1885.

NCM Q-667. Aghdgomis sagaloblebi [Paschal chants]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Dimit'ri Chalaganidze, Ivliane Ts'ereteli, Razhden Khundadze, and Ant'on Dumbadze. rough drafts. 218 pages. 1885.

NCM Q-668. Didmarkhvis sagaloblebi [Lenten Triodion]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Dimit'ri Chalaganidze, Ivliane Ts'ereteli, Razhden Khundadze, and Ant'on Dumbadze. rough drafts. 230 pages. 1885.

NCM Q-669. Saek'lesio sagaloblebi [Church chants]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Dimit'ri Chalaganidze, Ivliane Ts'ereteli, Razhden Khundadze, and Ant'on Dumbadze. rough drafts. 107 pages. 1885.


NCM Q-673. Sadghesasts'aulo, parak'lit'oni, aghdgomisa, rva khmani [Feast day chants, paraklesis, Paschal, oktoechos chants]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from Koridze sources. good copy. 1340 pages. 1920.

NCM Q-674. Sami ts'irvis ts'es'i sagaloblebi [Chants for the three divine liturgies]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from Koridze sources. good copy. 840 pages. 1931.

NCM Q-676. Ts'irvis ts'es'i sagaloblebi [Divine liturgy chants]. Copied by Pilimon Koridze from non-extent rough draft transcriptions he notated from Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze in 1883. good copy. 131 pages. 1884.
NCM Q-677. *Mitsvalebulis sagaloblebi* [Funeral chants]. Copied by Pilimon Koridze from Q-666, Q-669, etc. good copy. 200 pages. 1885.

NCM Q-678. *Aghdogmis sagaloblebi* [Paschal chants]. Copied by Pilimon Koridze from Q-667, Q-669, etc. good copy. 270 pages. 1885.

NCM Q-679. *Sadghesasts'aulo* [Feast day chants]. Copied by Pilimon Koridze from Q-669, etc. good copy. 200 pages. 1886.

NCM Q-680. *Dzlis'irni* [Heirmoi]. Copied by Pilimon Koridze from Q-668, Q-670, etc. good copy. 188 pages. 1886.

NCM Q-681. *Shobis galobani* [Nativity chants]. Copied by Pilimon Koridze from Q-666, etc. good copy. 190 pages. 1886.

NCM Q-682. *Sadghesasts'aulo, parak'lit'oni* [Feast day chants, paraklesis chants]. Copied in pencil by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from Q-666, Q-685, Q-693, etc. rough draft of Q-673. 300+ pages. Undated.

NCM Q-683. *Ts'irva, rva khmani, dzlis'ir sagaloblebi* [Chants for the Divine Liturgy, Oktoechos, and heirmoi]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from Q-668, Q-154 Q-691, etc. rough draft. Recopied into Q-687, Q-688. 168 pages. Undated.

NCM Q-684. *Dzlis'irni* [Heirmoi]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from H-154, Q-691, etc. (transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Ant'on Dumbadze in 1893). Later, this mss was harmonized-edited by Razhden Khundadze and Ivliane Nik'oladze between 1912-1915. Also seems to be a copy of Q-1475. 173 pages.

NCM Q-685. *Ts'irva, rva khmani, dzlis'ir sagaloblebi* [Chants for the Divine Liturgy, Oktoechos, and heirmoi]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Ant'on Dumbadze. rough draft. Recopied by K'ereselidze into Q-687, Q-688. 365+ pages. 1893.

NCM Q-686. *Didi markhvis sagaloblebi* [Chants for Great Lent]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Ant'on Dumbadze. Other chants were copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from Q-668, etc. Concordances with NFC #2128 by Razhden Khundadze. rough draft. 195 pages. 1893.

NCM Q-687. *Dzlis'irni* [Heirmoi]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from H-154, Q-683, Q-685, etc. Later, this mss was harmonized-edited by Razhden Khundadze and Ivliane Nik'oladze between 1912-1915. 217 pages.

NCM Q-688. *Dzlis'irni* [Heirmoi]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from H-154, Q-683, Q-685, etc. (as transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Arist'ovle Kutateladze in 1903-1905). Later, this mss was harmonized-edited by Razhden Khundadze and Ivliane Nik'oladze between 1912-1915. 820 pages.

NCM Q-689. *Dzlis'irni* [Heirmoi]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from H-154, Q-683, Q-685, etc. (as transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Arist'ovle Kutateladze in 1903-1905). Later, this mss was harmonized-edited by Razhden Khundadze and Ivliane Nik'oladze between 1912-1915. 280+ pages.

NCM Q-690. *Dzlis'irni* [Heirmoi]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from H-154, Q-683, Q-685, etc. (as transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Arist'ovle Kutateladze in 1903-1905). Later,
this mss was harmonized-edited by Razhden Khundadze and Ivliane Nik'oladze between 1912-1915. 580 pages.

NCM Q-691. *Sruli sadghesasts'auli sagaloblebi* [Complete chants for the feastdays]. Transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Ant'on Dumbadze, Melkisedek' Nak'ashidze, Davit Dumbadze, and Svimon Molarishvili. rough draft in one voice-part. 900+ pages. 1906-1908.

NCM Q-692. *Brets'qinvale krist'es aghdgomis sagalobelta* [Chants for the Bright Resurrection of our Lord]. Copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze. good copy. 220 pages. 1923.

NCM Q-693. *Sadghesasts'auli sagaloblebi* [Feastday chants], copied by Ekvtime K'ereselidze from Q-694 (rough drafts transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Arist'ovle Kutateladze in 1904). The second half of the book includes *Parak'lit'oni sagaloblebi* [Paraklesis chants], transcribed by Pilimon Koridze from Davit Dumbadze (rough drafts). 400+ pages. 1904-1908.


NCM Q-833. *Mtavar-dia'konis k'iloti galoba* [Modal chant for Hierodeacons]. Original notation and texts written by Ekvtime K'ereselidze. one-voiced, good copy. 1941.


NCM Q-1287. Chantbook. Transcribed by Andria Benashvili from East Georgian chanter's, for women's chorus. 78 pages. 1902.


SIN 1. neumed iadgari. 9th-10th century.

SIN 14. neumed iadgari. 10th century.

TSC - Mach’avariani, Mikheil. *Samshoblo Khmebi* [Voices of the Homeland]. Handwritten manuscript held in the Tbilisi State Conservatoire. Transcribed and collected by Mikheil Mach’avariani, 1878.
Appendix F: Published Notation of Georgian Chant


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