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ON REVEALING CHRONOTOPIC THINKING IN GEORGIAN VOCAL FOLKLORE

The first ideas about time and space were formed in the archaic society, where time and space represented an indivisible whole. They were sacralized in mythology and an inexplicable, special power was attributed to it. It is clear that the attitude to time-space categories was dissimilar in different eras. Concepts about chronotopes were changed at different times by scientific research by the scientists such as: Newton, Einstein, Koestler and others.

The problem gained special relevance in the 20th century. It also became actual in musical art. Scientific opinions were expressed by Asafiev, Orlov, Martynov and others, who discuss both artistic-aesthetic and musical-structural aspects of time and space categories in music. It should be noted that in 2017, a scientific publication appeared in Georgian musicology, authored by Medea Kavtaradze, which, for the first time, was dedicated to the problem of time and space in choral music.

Thus, the subject of the research is the temporal-spatial aspects revealed in Georgian traditional musical thinking; Hereby, the aim is to determine the artistic parameters of chronotopic categories in national vocal folklore. In this regard, Henrikh Orlov's scientific opinions provide the impulses for researching the peculiarities of identifying chronotopes in Georgian traditional choral music. He differentiates the understanding of time and space according to

continental-regional and related worldviews. Orlov mentions two main perceptions of time: pan-European and oriental. As he says, the word „time“ has different meanings in different cultures. He explains the difference between Western and Eastern understanding of time by Northrop's quote: „To Western person, the symbol of time is either an arrow or the movement of a river flowing from a distant place and past, which is neither here nor now and continues on its way to an equally distant place and future. While to the Eastern person time is a calm, silent reservoir, the surface of which from time to time imperceptibly vibrates and disappears there“. Orlov spreads the idea. He believes that Eastern person has accumulated specific knowledge through meditation. In meditative dimension it follows the passage of time, focusing on the aspects of the world that are attained and perceived through empirical experience. In turn, the West also takes into account empirical experience, although Western knowledge about time is based on the teachings established in logic, scientific and philosophical treatises.

If Eastern thinking does not oppose the flow of time, European one tries to subjugate

time and influence it. The tendency to overcome the continuity of time acquires a conscious character in the artistic thinking of the Middle Ages. It means the set of expressive means developed by European composers, through which it became possible to divide time and influence it, return time or at least „travel through time“ in a musical work. Music is a process, a continuum of time defined by meter, rhythm and tempo, the sense of time passing is provided by changing the musical fabric, which is carried out by means of musical expression forasmuch alteration in music is a measure of time. The relation between these fixed elements of musical structure affects the passage of time in music; thus, Western thinking has made continuity of time and irreversibility of time manageable through musical means of expression (tact, reprise, change of tempo nuances, etc.).

Orlov refers to the form of a musical work as one of the temporal-spatial factors of music. In his opinion, through musical sounds, a hierarchy of construction is created in the work, which is made up of large or small sound blocks (thematic material), precisely, these blocks in other words the harmony of “building material“ that gives the work its form, as well as their interaction - the development creates a complex „package“ of musical time. These „building blocks“ depend primarily on the form of construction of the musical fabric of the piece that is its texture. From standpoint polyphonic texture deserves special attention. Polyphony is not only the greatest achievement of European music, but also „main category of traditional Georgian musical thinking“ (Tsurtsunia, 1998:50-57).

Georgian traditional music is a complex phenomenon which, due to the unique geopolitical location of the country, has reflected the influence of Western and Eastern cultures along with ancient Caucasian roots. Since the categories of time and space express the attitude towards the world by ethnos, nation and society, accordingly, Georgian traditional music also underwent changes in the worldview of the ethnos in the wake of its historical and cultural development.

It is known that long-ago „migratory processes, migration of population were frequent not only in the part of the Caucasus where Georgian people lived, but also in the entire Caucasus and former Asia, because this region is at the junction of Europe and Asia, the south and the north. Over the centuries, Georgian ethnos creatively getting used to more than one cultural achievement from all the people with whom it had contact in the field of both material and spiritual culture. In turn, many cultural achievements of the Georgian people were transferred to all neighbors, to the north, to the south and to the east“ (Topchishvili, 2007:3).

It is also known that two circles of Georgian culture - Eastern and Western - are distinguished when considering it in the context of ancient civilizations. The first Georgian state formations - Diaokh and Kolkha, in fact, already defined two areas of Georgian culture - Eastern and Western (Tsurtsunia, 2020). Ethnomusicologist Nino Tsitsishvili discusses cultural influences as a result of migrations in the region on the example of Georgian traditional music. As Tsitsishvili points out, historical migration processes played

a certain role in the formation of Kartli-Kakhetian the so-called „long songs“, in which „peoples with monodic singing style were involved“ (Tsitsishvili, 2010). The researcher draws parallel between the features of Eastern music and Kartli-Kakhetian songs based on the comparative analysis. She separates tone and rhythm-meter from various parameters. Thanks to the analysis, the scholar concludes that only in the genres where melismatic melodies clearly indicate Eastern influences (in single-part songs “Orovela” and “Urmuli”), the tetrachord tones common in Eastern musical cultures are completely dominant and in polyphonic Bourdon long songs - the fifth diatonics characteristic of East Georgian ancient songs are dominant. She thinks that Kartli-Kakhetian singing style („long“ table-songs, “Urmuli“ and “Orovela“) should have been formed on the emergence basis of two different musical styles – ancient autochthonous polyphonic and monodic styles left by the Indo-European tribes when they passed through the territory of East Georgia. As it is known, drone bass easily gets used to melismatic melody and free

meter-rhythm, therefore, one of the immanent characteristics of Georgian music – bourdon polyphony, naturally adapted to the oriental monophonic melody and in some cases, it was presented in the form of bourdon two-part singing and in most cases it was developed as bourdon three-part singing.

As we see, the understanding of time, characteristic of the East is revealed in Kartli-Kakhetian folk music, where the leading place is held by melismata rendered in free meter and repeating rhythmic groupings of extended melodies. The feeling of infinite time is intensified by extended bourdon which also creates a specific spatial field. The archaic layers of the East Georgian mountain folk music confirm that bourdon polyphony was widespread in Georgian traditional music even before the migration of Eastern tribes through Georgia.

Concerning the aspiration of European musical thinking to overcome the continuity and irreversibility of time, these principles are clearly expressed in the traditional music of West Georgia where complex and contrasting polyphony is widespread, while bourdon type polyphony is found only in fragments. Mainly in the ensemble songs of Western Georgia the meter is regular, the rhythm is divided and the structure bases on the repetition of short rhythmic groupings. Characteristic tendency of European musical thought to overcome time is clearly revealed here.

In addition, as a result of observations, I noted another specific perception of the temporal and spatial which was characteristic of ancient era and is still preserved in the mountains. It is known that the views of highlanders about time and space are much different from the so-called chronotopic perception of the civilized world. It is about the early period when a person perceived the world as one big space and considered his own land as its center. This is perfectly revealed in the myths, disseminated in the mountains, where pagan deities, Christian saints and historical heroes are united (for example, Svan legend about „Giant’s buildings“, which combines different epochal and cultural layers,

where King Tamar, Devhi, Lamaria (Mother of God), Dali the goddess of hunting and the god of weather Kvirike appear as characters. Time in the mountains is voluminous and impacted at the same time, because, memory in the mountains preserves the myths and legends from the time immemorial and perceives them almost simultaneously with real stories. The folklore of East Georgian mountains and Svaneti is the most archaic in Georgian traditional music, in which mythological understanding of time can be observed.¹ As for the space, in general, spatial parameter is characteristic of all types of music both monophonic and polyphonic. However, polyphony has become the most important factor for the growth and development of this parameter. In my opinion, responsorial form of performance defined artistic-musical space along with the real, objective space in ancient secular-traditional music. Polyphony plays a special role in this process, because evolution of spatial thinking was revealed in the polyphonic structure, which was manifested in the increase in the independence of voice-parts, that is, in the increasing polyphonization of texture.

As we see, Eastern, Western and mythological understanding of temporal-spatial categories is interestingly and diversely revealed in Georgian traditional music. The general worldviews, attitudes towards the outside world, influences of other cultures have gradually been reflected in the centuries-old folklore of our nation, which were illustrated in specific musical expressive components.

The results of the research once again have showed the depth, diverse and democratic nature of Georgian traditional music, which became the stylistic basis of national professional choral music. Accordingly, the processes also manifested themselves in new Georgian professional choral music, since it was based on the general principles and language of Georgian traditional polyphonic choral music and found interesting development in the creativity of the 20th-century composers.

¹ For instance, ancient Svan mysteries, which were later fragmented and have been preserved as separate rituals.

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