

Editorial

After entering the Byzantine sphere of influence in 337, following Saint Nino's missionary activities and the adoption of Orthodox Christianity, the Kingdom of Georgia had, in its almost two millennia of independence, a turbulent history that came to a close (after waves of Mongol, Arab, Turkish and Persian invasions), with its annexation by the Russian Empire in the early 19th century (1801) and its transformation into the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1921. Another page in Georgia's history would be written in April 1991, as it declared its independence and left Soviet control, alongside other nations that had endured for decades the Communist regimes so adamantly protected by the Iron Curtain.

Musica Sacra continues its journey by presenting a fascinating musical culture, which has enjoyed an oral and written tradition for more than a millennium: Georgian sacred music. Renowned international scholars in Georgian musical palaeography and excellent performers of the polyphonic chant dedicate four studies and two reviews to one of Christianity's oldest and most significant musical traditions.

Manana Andriadze's article (†2013), *Chanting in the Context of Georgian Christian Culture*, investigates the classes of composition and musical terminology of Georgian chant codices by way of the liturgical and typikonal practices present at the turn of the first millennium (the 9th and 10th centuries). The techniques of translating Byzantine hymnography, of adapting it to the specifics of the Georgian language, and of composing original works according to the principles of Byzantine modal practices, are some of the themes discussed in **Magda Sukhiashvili** and **Eka Dughashvili's** study, *On the Interrelation of Byzantine and Georgian Hymnography: Tao-Klarjeti, Mount Athos and the Black Mountain Monastic-Hymnographic School*. Integral to both folk and ecclesiastical chant, the concept of polyphony – as an unique phenomenon of the Georgian chant – is analysed by way of the various local chant schools and Western European medieval theory in **David Shugliashvili's** study *Concerning Polyphony in Georgian Chanting*. Finally, **Ekaterine Oniani's** article, *Georgian Neumatic System in the Context of Orthodox Chant Tradition*, is dedicated to analysing the Georgian musical semiography in relation to Byzantine ekphonic and Paleo-Byzantine signs, while also exploring certain common neumes preserved in the monodic musical practices of the Slavonic world.

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