

FEATURES OF CHANT EMBELLISHMENT IN MEDIEVAL GEORGIAN AND EUROPEAN CHURCH MUSIC

ჰანგის გამშვენების ზოგიერთი თავისებურება შუა საუკუნეების ქართულ და ევროპულ საეკლესიო მუსიკაში

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Abstract

The paper discusses one of the most important principles of musical development in Georgian polyphonic chant, which is closely related to improvisation and the embellishment of the tune.

In the context of the three-part realization of the main tune, the Georgian tradition developed both plain and embellished versions of chants. The embellished chants represent the result of variant transformations of models existing in plain chant. This serves as another clear demonstration of the principle of identity, alongside other manifestations of this principle.

The principle of variant development, as a phenomenon of identical thinking, is also a leading concept in European professional music of the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance (first half of the 15th century). In this context, the idea of variety (*varietas*), as described by Johannes Tinctoris in his treatise *Liber de Arte Contrapuncti* (1477), is particularly noteworthy. *Varietas* was achieved by coloring (*coloration*) the main melody through the addition of extra notes, new phrases, and alterations to the melodic line.

The paper examines, on a comparative basis, Georgian and European examples of variant production through *coloration* at different levels - motive, phrase, and entire melodic structures or stanzas.

This research aims to identify commonalities and distinctive features in the Georgian and European traditions of melodic ornamentation, as well as to reveal inherent characteristics of the musical development process within the Georgian tradition.

Key words: Medieval and Renaissance music, Georgian chant, polyphony, principle of identity, *varietas*, embellishment.

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აბსტრაქტი

სტატიაში განხილულია ქართულ მრავალხმიან გალობაში მუსიკალური განვითარების ერთ-ერთი უმნიშვნელოვანესი პრინციპი, რომელიც ძირითადი ჰანგის იმპროვიზებას, გამშვენებას უკავშირდება.

მთავარი ჰანგის სამხმიანი რეალიზაციის პირობებში, ქართულმა ტრადიციამ შეიმუშავა საგალობლების სადა და გამშვენებული ვერსიები. გამშვენებული სტილის საგალობლები სადა საგალობელში არსებული მოდელების ვარიანტული გარდასახვის შედეგია, რაც იგივეობის პრინციპის მოქმედების კიდევ ერთი მკაფიო დასტურია, იგივეობის გამოვლენის სხვა ფორმებთან ერთად.

ვარიანტული განვითარების პრინციპი, როგორც იგივეობრივი აზროვნების გამოვლენა, ერთ-ერთი წამყვანია შუა საუკუნეებისა და ადრეული რენესანსის (მე-15 ს პირველი ნახევრის) ევროპულ პროფესიულ მუსიკაშიც. ამ თვალსაზრისით საყურადღებოა იგივეობის კონცეფცია - *varietas*, რომელზედაც საუბრობს იოჰანეს ტინკტორისი ტრაქტატში *Liber de arti contrapuncti* (1477). *Varietas* მთავარი ჰანგის კოლორირებით (ქორალის საყრდენი ტონების შემომღერება, მისი მელოდიის თავისუფალი ფრაზებით დამთავრება და სხვ.) რეალიზდებოდა. მოხსენებაში კომპარატიული პრინციპით განხილული იქნება კოლორირების მეშვეობით ვარიანტების სხვადასხვა დონეებზე (მოტივის, ფრაზის, მთელი მელოდიური ნაგებობის/ მუხლის) წარმოების ქართული და ევროპული ნიმუშები.

კვლევის მიზანია გამოკვეთოს საერთო და განმასხვავებელი ნიშნები ჰანგის გამშვენების ქართულ და ევროპულ ტრადიციაში, გამოვლინდეს ეროვნული საეკლესიო გალობის მუსიკალური განვითარების პროცესისთვის დამახასიათებელი იმანენტური თვისებები.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: შუასაუკუნეების და რენესანსის მუსიკა, ქართული საგალობელი, მრავალხმიანობა, იგივეობის პრინციპი, *varietas*, გამშვენება.

Introduction

The paper examines a key principle underlying the musical development of Georgian polyphonic chant, namely its close connection to improvisation and melodic ornamentation.¹ The medieval tradition of shaping early Christian hymns upon pre-existing rhythmic and intonational frameworks has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention². Research into the compositional characteristics of the *modus*, or *echos*, in the Georgian tradition shows that the method of combination plays a leading role in the construction of melodies based on such pre-established models-tunes. This research aims to identify commonalities and distinctive features in the Georgian and European traditions of melodic ornamentation, as well as to reveal inherent characteristics of the musical development process within the Georgian tradition.

Western European early professional music has been studied extensively from various perspectives. In this research, we have drawn on encyclopedic and foundational studies. The principle of *varietas* is examined through the works of Zarlino; its significance and role in European professional music is also highlighted by Canguilhem, Lefferts, Evdokimova, and others.

When discussing Georgian-European musical connections, we rely on the studies of S. Jangulashvili and T. Chkheidze. They studied the characteristics of the manifestation of Renaissance thought in medieval Georgian hymnography (Jangulashvili, 2011), as well as the functioning of the principle of identity in the Georgian church chant system (Chkheidze, 2022). The concept of identity, as manifested to varying degrees in the professional music of the European Middle Ages and the Renaissance, has been examined by a number of scholars. This issue has been the specific focus of studies by S. Kasian (1998) and M. Nadareishvili (1997), some of whose findings are reflected in the present paper. While numerous studies address related topics, none have explored the principle of identity through this lens or compared Georgian and European musical traditions in this way - a distinctive approach that defines the study's innovation and scholarly value.

Methodology

The research employs source-study, historical, and music-theoretical methods, complemented by complex, interdisciplinary, comparative, analytical, and synthetic approaches.

Results and discussion

The process of realizing melodies through pre-existing models is inseparable from the method of improvisation, which finds particularly favorable conditions for development within an oral tradition. From the very emergence of polyphony, improvisation became the leading artistic method in ecclesiastical professional musical creativity across all local churches, both in Western Europe and in Georgia.

It is well known that improvisation does not imply spontaneity, but is always based on the free elaboration and development of a given model. At the same time, the norms and rules of improvisation take on different forms across various Christian chanting traditions.

¹ For the origins, principles, and characteristics of ornamentation in Georgian chant, as well as its relationship to "chreli" (colorful or melismatic) chanting, see the works of S. Jangulashvili (2011), E. Oniani (1997), and T. Chkheidze (2022).

² E. Wellesz (1961); E. Wellesz, M. Velimirović (1966-1979).

Before turning to the main topic of this presentation and discussing the different ways of engaging with models in Georgian and Western European ecclesiastical chant, we should first focus on a phenomenon known as the "Eastern Renaissance," the foundations of which were laid in medieval Georgia.

The phenomenon of the Eastern Renaissance historically predates the European Renaissance—it coincides chronologically with the Middle Ages, yet in its forms of thought, ideas, and imagery, it is distinctly Renaissance in character. Accordingly, within the scope of our paper, we will examine musical examples from 11th–12th century Georgia and 15th century Europe, in which the principle of *varietas* will be revealed operating on multiple levels, as well as within both horizontal and vertical dimensions.

The period extending from the late 11th to the early 13th century is often referred to as the “Golden Age” of Georgian Christian art. Marked by exceptional achievements in architecture, literature, philosophy, and sacred music, this era represents one of the most culturally and artistically vibrant phases in Georgia’s history. It coincides with the reigns of prominent monarchs such as King David IV (David the Builder) and Queen Tamar, whose patronage fostered the flourishing of ecclesiastical and intellectual life.

The historical and cultural context of medieval Georgia offers a compelling analog to the phenomenon known in Europe as the Renaissance. Although temporally preceding the European Renaissance, the intellectual and artistic climate of Georgia during this period reflects similar characteristics: a revival of classical ideals, the centrality of human creativity, and the synthesis of spiritual and rational thought. These developments were deeply rooted in a Christian worldview, yet they bore clear signs of an emerging humanistic orientation.

It is thus appropriate to interpret this Georgian phenomenon as a culturally specific, regional reflection of the broader classical Renaissance paradigm. While it did not emerge from the same socio-political conditions as the Italian Renaissance, it exhibited parallel tendencies toward innovation, intellectual autonomy, and the refinement of artistic language. The Georgian Renaissance³, therefore, should be recognized not as a derivative or peripheral occurrence, but as an original and contextually embedded manifestation of Renaissance thought.

One of the most striking examples of Renaissance characteristics within the Georgian Middle Ages can be found in sacred music, particularly in the tradition of Georgian chant. This complex, orally transmitted polyphonic repertoire demonstrates a high degree of structural sophistication and aesthetic intentionality. Features such as the principle of *varietas*, the integration of horizontal (melodic) and vertical (harmonic) dimensions, and the use of motivic development suggest a level of artistic awareness and innovation comparable to that found in later European music of the 15th century. In this sense, Georgian chant may be viewed as a musical embodiment of the Eastern Renaissance, bridging medieval spirituality with proto-Renaissance artistic ideals.

So, the “Golden Age” of Georgian Christian art (11th–13th century) constitutes a regionally grounded Renaissance - distinct in timing and context from its European counterpart, but deeply resonant in intellectual and aesthetic spirit. From the architectural grandeur of Timotesubani and Gelati to the

³ In the 1930s–40s, Georgian philosopher Shalva Nutsubidze (1888–1969) developed the theory of the “Eastern Renaissance,” claiming it preceded and influenced the Western one. Its core was the idea of a “Georgian Renaissance,” based on Christian Neoplatonism (Areopagitic thought). Sh. Nutsubidze viewed the works of Ioane Petritsi and Shota Rustaveli as the peak of this movement, expressing the synthesis of the earthly and the divine - an idea central to the later European Renaissance. He argued that the Renaissance path led from East to West, with Georgia as an essential link. His theory received mixed reactions: some denied an Eastern or Georgian Renaissance, while others - including N. Konrad and A. Losev - supported it. The idea was later developed by Georgian scholars such as Sh. Khidasheli, G. Tevzadze, N. Natanadze, R. Siradze, M. Makharadze, E. Khintibidze, and A. Gvakharia (See in Nutsubidze, 1941, 1947; Losev, 1978; Tevzadze, 1995; Khidasheli, 1988; Makharadze, 2003, Iremadze, 2019, 2023).

nuanced polyphonic structures of chant schools, Georgia's medieval heritage offers a powerful parallel to classical Renaissance ideals - one shaped by its own spiritual and cultural trajectory.

The idea of variety was regarded as a fundamental concept in classical oratory and rhetoric, commonly referred to as *varietas* in rhetorical treatises⁴. This concept became a key aesthetic principle across the arts and, throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, was interpreted and applied with diverse meanings and nuances. *Varietas* is a leading artistic concept, whose essence lies in avoiding direct repetitions and in seeking methods that disguise, soften, or make the repetition unnoticeable. This is the most essential characteristic of the art of the first half of the 15th century. *Varietas* reflect the humanist ideal: music, like eloquent speech, must move and engage through contrast and change, while remaining coherent and expressive.

In the realm of painting, In his treatise on painting, *De pictura* (1435–1436), Leon Battista Alberti examines the foundational principles of art, emphasizing the critical role of variety. He distinguishes between copiousness and *varietas*, attributing different functions to each. Copiousness, he argues, is necessary for depicting the richness of the world through the combination of diverse elements. *Varietas*, in contrast, involve subtle differences among similar objects, such as figures posed differently or employing varied shades of the same color (Markovska, 2013).

“In his 1486 work *De hominis dignitate* (Oration on the Dignity of Man), Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (a proponent of Florentine Neoplatonism) described *varietas* as one of the central characteristics of the protean nature of man, with significant consequences for an understanding of human cultural achievement” (Canguilhem, 2015, p. 63).

Johannes Tinctoris, a 15th-century music theorist, used the term “*varietas*” to describe the diversity and variety within musical compositions, particularly in counterpoint. Tinctoris's concept of *varietas* is linked to rhetorical principles, emphasizing the importance of diverse musical ideas to move the listener's emotions. The manifestation of the *varietas* principle in musical composition can be considered at various levels - from the micro to the macro level. It appears in the development of motifs, phrases, melodies, forms, and even styles. In today's presentation, we will focus on the ways this principle manifests at the level of motifs and phrases.

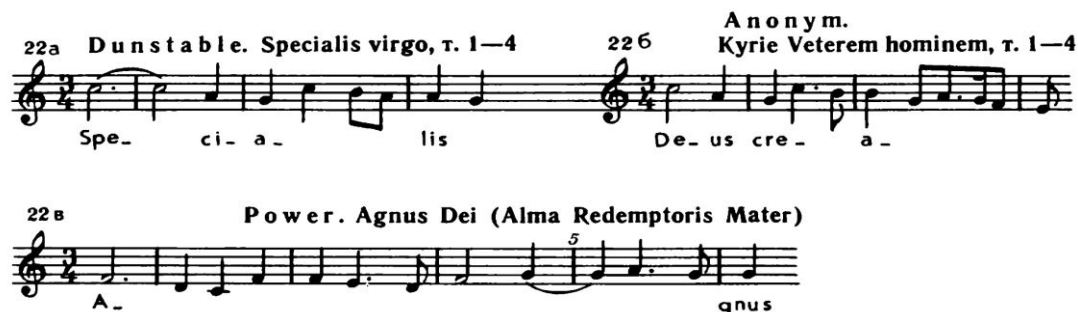
The idea of creating melodic derivatives based on the pivotal tones of a given chant's intonation has existed in artistic practice in the Middle Ages - for example, in the system of improvisational techniques used in melismatic organum. In the first half of the 15th century, this idea was rediscovered as part of a set of compositional techniques, gaining artistic meaning and expressive completeness. In the first half of the 15th century, any repetition implied a veiling of the repetition. If a melodic phrase was repeated, it was varied in such a way that the repetition became difficult to recognize; the dominant idea was variability in repetition (Evdokimova, 2000).

A choral chant can be expanded by stretching its pivotal tones and inserting melismas of varying lengths between them. This is the most common technique of ornamenting chorales. The number of variations based on the same original material is truly limitless. What restrained composers and set the boundaries of their imagination was only the set of characteristic intonations and melodic formulas, from which any combination could be created. This repertoire of melodic formulas from the first half of the 15th century can be derived analytically by comparing many different melodies by various composers.

In the book by Yu. Evdokimova (1989), several examples of such typical melodic formulas from English music are presented:

⁴ Cicero, in his *De Oratore* (circa 55 BC), described *varietas* as an ideal that guided and influenced every phase of speech preparation - from the development of ideas to their practical expression.

Fig. 1. Set of characteristic intonations and melodic formulas, from which any combination could be created (Evdokimova, 1989, p.65)



The principle of *varietas* - the aesthetic of diversity within unity - manifests in Georgian ecclesiastical chant on both **micro-** and **macro-formal** levels. At the micro level, *varietas* is evident in the treatment of melodic models. A single model possesses the capacity for **expansion** and **contraction**, and through improvisation, its invariant core generates numerous phrasal variations.

This process of melodic development demonstrates both creative freedom and structural discipline, characteristic of oral compositional traditions. On the figure below are **six distinct variants** of the **final melodic phrase (cadence)** of the **Troparion for Saints⁵ in Mode IV**, all derived from a single underlying model. This illustrates how improvisational practice, guided by fixed modal frameworks, produces a rich diversity of melodic realizations - embodying the Renaissance principle of *varietas* within a medieval sacred tradition.

Fig.2. Varietas on motive/phrase, melodic structure levels in Georgian tradition

⁵ In the example, the troparia of the saints are presented in the following order: Saint David the Builder, Saint Shio of Mgvime, Saint Nino, Saint Barbara, Saint Andrew the First-Called, and Saint David of Gareji. The musical examples from the Manuscript Q-673, Q-674;

12. ჴმ. დავით აღმაშენებელი
რომ-ლი - სა - ო - ხი - თა მო - ეც სულ - თა ჩვენ - თა დი - დი წყა-ლო - ბა

14. ჴმ. შიო მღვიმელი
მე - ო - ხად მორ-წმუ - ნე - თა და კურ - ნე - ბად სულ-თა ჩვენ-თა-თვის

16. ჴმ. ნინო
ე - ველ-რე ქრის-ტე - სა ღმერთ-სა შე - ო - ე - წა - ლე - ბად სულ-თა ჩვენ-თა-თვისა

18. ჴმ. ბარბარე
და პა - ტი - ოს - ნი - სა ჯვა-რი - სა - თა

20. ჴმ. ანდრია პირველწოდებული
რა - თა-სო-ფელ-სა მშვი-დო-ბა მო-ა - ნი-გოს და სულ - თა ჩვენ - თა დი-დი წყა-ლო-ბა

22. ჴმ. დავით გარეჯელი
და - ო - ა მე - ო - ხო სულ - თა ჩვენ - თა - ო

At the macro level of **melodic structure**, the operation of the *varietas* principle is evident in the **overall form of the chant**. For example, even within troparia that all belong to the same *echos* (specifically *Mode IV*), the number of phrases (verses), their **length**, and their **sequence** vary from one chant to another.

Fig.3. The Structure of different Chants - with Echoes 4

Verbal text	liturgical function/Genre	Number of stanzas	Structure of chant
<i>Bch'eni rvalisani shemusren</i>	Troparia of the Lord, I have cried	4	ABD Final
<i>Romelman jvartsma da sik'vdili</i>	Troparia to Stichera	4	ABC Final
<i>Erman usjuloman</i>	Troparia to Stichera	5	ABCD Final
<i>Angelosni da k'atsni</i>	Troparia of the Lord, I have cried	5	ABCD Final
<i>Ats'ganut'eve</i>	Lord now lettest	6	ABCDE Final
<i>Umet'esad k'urtkheul khar</i>	Dogmatikon	6	ABCDE Final
<i>Mokhede vedrebasa monata shenta</i>	Dogmatikon	8	ABCDEF Final
<i>Romeli igi shen mier</i>	Dogmatikon	8	ABCDEF Final
<i>Kovlisa tskhovrebisa</i>	Troparia	10	ABCDECF Final

As is clearly seen from the given table (fig.3), all examples are composed in the same mode (Mode IV), indicating that they are built from a shared pool of melodic models. However, the formal realization of each chant is distinct, reflecting the principle of *varietas* through differing combinations and structural design. Despite this diversity, certain compositional norms are strictly maintained:

- The **first** and **final** phrases are **stable** and **consistent** across all variants,
- The **middle phrases** may be repeated, but their **ordering** is governed by internal rules, preserving the overall coherence of the chant's structure.

The presented table demonstrates how Georgian chant achieves a balance between **creative variation** and **structural regularity** - a hallmark of both oral musical traditions and Renaissance aesthetics.

It is important to note that within the Georgian chant tradition, chants from a single monastic school often exist in both plain and ornamented melodic-structural variants. This peculiarity reflects not only compositional flexibility but also differences in performance style, where the *varietas* principle is equally active. In the example presented below, the operation of *varietas* is evident even at the **interpretative** and **stylistic level**, showing how a single chant can take on distinct expressive forms within the same modal and structural framework. The paper does not cover the mechanisms and forms through which *varietas* operates across other **types of polyphony** in Georgian chant examples. However, because the principle manifests across **regional stylistic variants**, an example will be presented below, where both the plain and ornamented versions of a single Vespers chant “O come, let us worship from” from the Gelati School are presented.

Fig. 4. Vesper's chant 'O COME, LET US WORSHIP' for Hierarch (Gelati school)⁶

a) Plain style

b) Embellished style

⁶ The fragments from the Georgian Chants Anthology (Jangulashvili, 2016, pp. 98-101)

To grasp the contemporary aesthetics of both plain and ornamented chant styles, it is enough to compare the Georgian monasteries of Jvari and Nikortsminda. In the principles of Hang decoration - its "carving" - one can almost see a reflection of the relief ornamentation techniques used in these churches.

Likewise, contemporary examples of repoussé metalwork demonstrate similarities in decorative methods through the use of expressive techniques inherent to the art form itself.

Illustr. 1. Plain and ornamented style in Georgian architecture

a) Jvari Monastery VI c.⁷



b) Nikortsminda Cathedral (1010–1014)⁸



c) The gilded icon of the Transfiguration from Zarzma (11th century)⁹



⁷ <https://mygeotrip.com/jvari-church> (20.10.2025)

⁸ <https://angi.ge/nikortsmindis-tadzari/> (20.10.2025)

⁹ <https://url-shortener.me/8BL5> (05.10.2025)

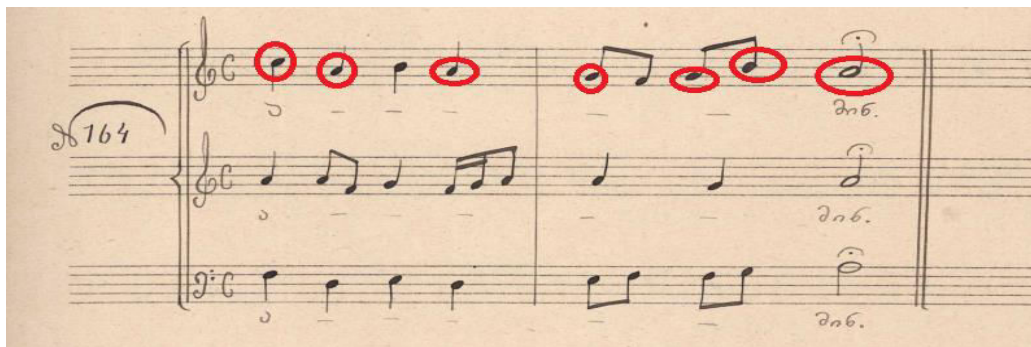
It is a particularly fascinating phenomenon when multiple variations of the same model occur simultaneously in different voices. In such instances of simultaneous variation, a heterophonic or imitative texture emerges. One such example of simultaneous variation is the Motet Regina Coeli, where the notes of one model (see the marked notes in the example) are scattered across different voices.

Fig. 5. Motet Regina Coeli (Evdokimova, 1989, p.73)



Significantly, within the Georgian tradition, there exist chants in which the vertical aspect of texture arises not from distinct model variants, but from various adaptations of a single model. It is noteworthy that in European as well as Georgian tradition, whichever voice carries the flourished *Cantus Prius Factus*, the core principle of interpreting it through embellishment shapes the main features of freely transforming the melodic material and widely utilizing variant relationships between **sections** and **segments**.

Fig. 6. The folio from the Codex - Q 674¹⁰



Also, it is not possible to fully examine the mechanisms and forms through which the principle of *varietas* manifests in polyphony. Interestingly, at a macro level, we can observe the expression of the *varietas* principle in the variants of regional chant styles of Georgia, where the same plain chant is presented in different versions across various regions of Georgia, while the fundamental framework remains unchanged. The presented examples feature chants transmitted by tradition bearers in the late 19th century. Figure 7. (Example from the Svetitskhoveli chant school) referred to as “Karbelashvili chant,” after the family name, and Figure 8, representing the Gelati Monastic Chant School tradition. The first sample shows a distinct transformation of the *cantus* in the upper voice, along with unique features

¹⁰ Manuscript (with shelf numbers Q 674) is kept at the Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of the Manuscripts

of voice harmonization. In the second example, more complex motion predominates, and in the cadential progression, the independence of the voices increases, with the *bani* (bass) becoming more melodic. In contrast, in the first example, the middle voice takes the lead in development and is more melodically active, while the *bani* remains less mobile, maintaining its function as a harmonic foundation until the final cadence.

Fig. 7. Vesper's troparion on 'OH, GOD WE PRAY TO THEE', eighth mode (Jangulashvili, 2019:153)

Fig. 8. Vesper's troparion on 'OH, GOD WE PRAY TO THEE', eighth mode (Jangulashvili, 2018: 60)

These examples clearly reveal the influence of local, regional folk traditions: in the first case, that of Kartli-Kakheti- East Georgia, and in the second, the traditions of Imereti and Guria - West Georgia. As the study demonstrates, the interaction between folk and sacred music can also be observed within European musical traditions, a phenomenon highlighted by Lefferts:

“The medieval polyphony surviving in musical notation floats atop a vast unwritten substrate whose roots undoubtedly go back for millennia before a significant amount of evidence begins to turn up for it in the ninth century. Procedures for making polyphony differ both chronologically and geographically, and depend on the performance milieu as well. And it would not be surprising if the elite practices of professional singers at cathedral and court bore some kinship to local folk polyphony, though this escapes proof for now” (Lefferts, 2011, p.294).

The formation of the rich polyphonic structure in Georgian folk song is expressed through two main historically determined forms: **complex** and **drone-based polyphony**. Both types of polyphony are presented in Georgian folk music in their original as well as their developed forms. This evolutionary path of polyphonic development is clearly reflected in the two main branches of traditional Georgian chant. These influences are evident not only in the types of polyphony and the functional similarities of the parts, but also in the varying levels of development of the mode systems.

In Georgia, the harmonization of the monophonic cantus, influenced by regional stylistic traits, gave rise to two primary forms of polyphony: (a) a drone-based form, inclined toward a “bourdonal” texture, with a developed middle voice, and (b) a form evolving from complexity toward a more structured polyphony.

Therefore, the concept of identity-in-variation - the embodiment of the idea of *varietas* - is also evident in other layers of Georgian chanting art. The principle of *varietas* as a phenomenon of Identical thinking can be manifested at the level of thematism, musical development, polyphonic texture, regional stylistic variants of chants, mode system, chant fixation system, and the Octoechos system.

During Tinctoris’s era, much of the music - particularly in sacred contexts - was partially improvised. The guidelines outlined in his treatises were intended not only for composing written works but also for guiding live performance. Both singers and instrumentalists were trained to introduce variation within the framework of counterpoint rules. Improvisation on a cantus firmus or plainchant demanded a refined use of *varietas* - employing diverse cadences, rhythmic patterns, intervals, and textures. Today, we understand that 15th-century musicians often worked without written notation, instead relying on mental planning and memory to construct complex multi-part pieces. Tinctoris’s texts are methodically structured to support this process of memorization.

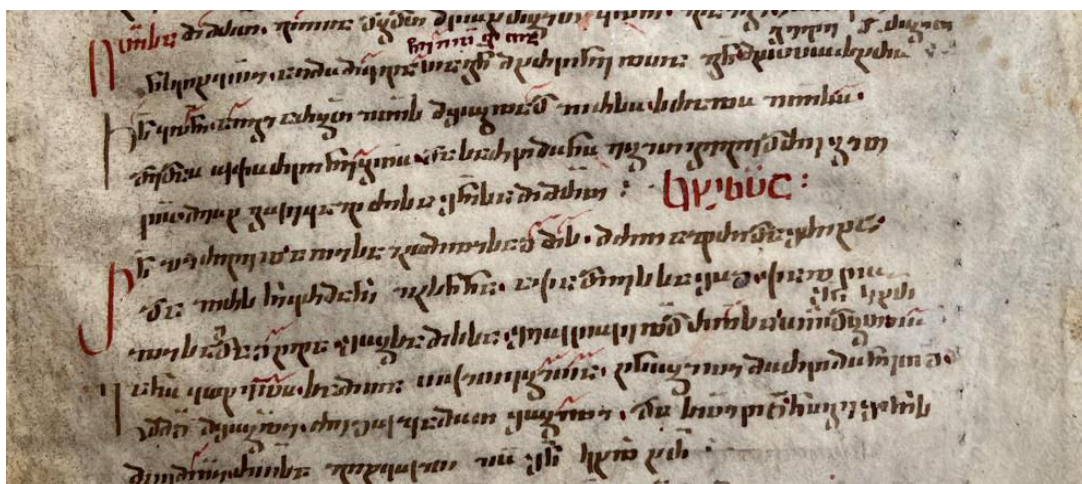
Polyphonic improvisation in fifteenth-century Europe - much like Quintilian’s rhetorical improvisation - was crafted with a clear awareness of recurring contexts and expectations. Instrumentalists who polyphonically ornamented *basse danse* tenors and singers who sang “upon the book” on a plainsong melody were well-versed in these everyday exercises. It’s easy to see how students could draw from their mental repository of learned musical patterns, adapting them spontaneously without needing to refer to notation. Their approach was likely similar to that of visual artists, who memorized motifs from model books and incorporated them into larger compositions. “In his counterpoint treatise of 1477, the composer and theorist Johannes Tinctoris (ca. 1435–1511) considers musical creation as either a **collective action in process** (cantare super librum) or the fruit of an individual activity resulting in a written product (res facta, also referred to as cantus compositus in his glossary of musical terms published ca. 1495)” (Canguilhem, p. 149).

The identical situation was observed in Georgian chant practice as well. The neumes preserved in 11th-century collections served an instructional and practical purpose, helping chanters recall melodies that had already been learned and were familiar to them. Below are two illustrations depicting different notation systems used as a mechanism for memorization in the teaching practice of Middle Ages of Georgian chanting art.

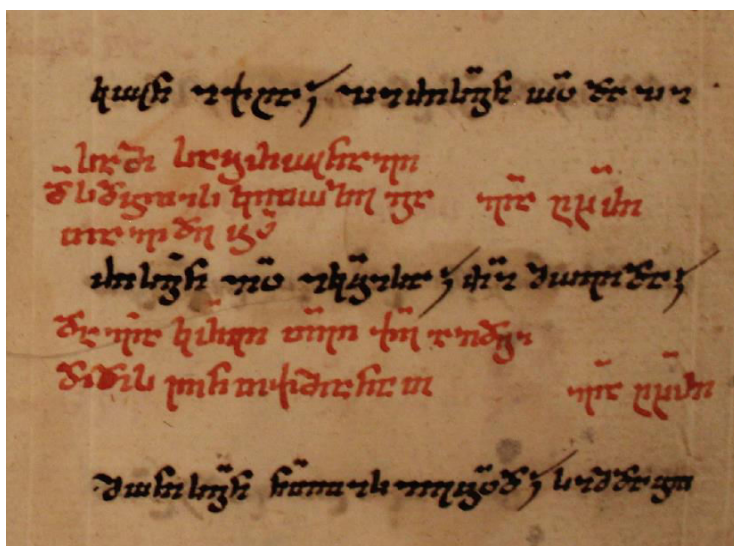
The following two illustrations present different notation systems that served as mnemonic tools in the pedagogical practice of Georgian chant during the Middle Ages.

Illustr. 2. Folio of the manuscript¹¹ with neumatic unpitched notation

¹¹ The Yeli Iadgari - 10th-century hymnographic collection, written on parchment, folio 9r (*Ielis Iadgari*, 10th century).



Illustr. 3. Folio of the manuscript with verbal unpitched notation – *Chreli* (N. Berdzenishvili Kutaisi State History Museum, n.d.)



Conclusion

As a conclusion, the embellishment of the *Cantus firmus* in both European and Georgian traditions corresponded to the polymelodic concept of polyphony, with variant derivation as a method of development - that is, it was part of a system of techniques embodying the artistic principle of *varietas*.

Thus, the development of polyphony in Christian cultural centers, across geographically and chronologically distant periods, unfolded within the context of the Renaissance mode of thought. The aesthetic of diversity within unity found in the Georgian three-part chanting tradition can be seen as a musical analogy to the consubstantial unity of the Holy Trinity.

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