

UDC 78.01

WINE AND MUSIC IN GEORGIAN PAINTING AND ADVERTISEMENT**Marina Kavtaradze, PHD****Ekaterine Buchukuri, PHD**

V.Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Griboedov str 8-10, 0108, Tbilisi, Georgia

Abstract

Georgia is a country of wine, where vine was referred to as the "Tree of Life." Vine cult was a part of the Georgians' everyday life, which is clearly observed in folklore, mythology, architecture, ornamental art, music. The synthesis of art branches always contributes to the emergence of some new, third artistic phenomenon, approximated to the source, dictated by the conscious or subconscious impulses coming from it. The paper discusses iconographic aspect of "wine and music" on the example of two, epochally distant from each other phenomena: 1) Niko Pirosmeni's 19th -century painting depicting the scenes of feast; main vector of the research is: the music of Tbilisi in the artist's time, the "melosphere" in which Pirosmeni lived and "wine" as a constituent of his compositions (signboards, group compositions, still lifes). 2) Second part of the article deals with the creation of a brand with a new concept by the Georgian Wine and Spirits Company (GWS) in the 21st century, whose labels are made in an original way – performance of particular musical compositions creates the drawings intended for various types of wine "Vismino" ("Listen") and reflected on the label.

Keywords: *Wine and music, Pirosmeni and music, Old Tbilisi music, label of wine "Vismino" ("Listen")*

Georgia is a country of wine; here vine is referred to as the "tree of life". The cult of vine was part of the Georgians' everyday life, which is clearly seen in folklore, mythology, music, architecture and painting. It is also symbolic that the history of Georgia's conversion to Christianity tells about the cross made of vine rods.

On early stages of musical thinking, when song had polyphonic nature and was an inseparable part of syncretic art, religious, domestic, artistic-aesthetic relations were characterized by particular internal unity in the process of understanding and modeling the world.

Thus, we have full basis to assume that the samples of Georgian table genre have existed from the time, when table tradition was formed in Georgia. Georgian table tradition originated in remote past and has largely been influenced by highly developed winemaking and viticulture. Although traces of ancient viticulture are also found in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, we can proudly note that scientists consider Asia Minor and primarily South Caucasus, Georgia, the home of vine. According to paleontological and archeological materials farming counts several millennia of history in Georgia.

It is noteworthy that the term for 'wine' is similar in different languages of the world which is indicative of their common origin. Academician Giorgi Tsereteli supposes that the word has spread from Georgia. Georgian or Western historical and literary sources contain numerous materials related to wine, winemaking and feast.

The etiquette of feast, established in Georgia throughout centuries, as well as Georgian hospitality, inspired foreign travelers, diplomats and writers (Arcangelo Lamberti, Cristoforo De Castelli, Jean Chardin and others wrote about this). Christian worldview further strengthened table traditions in Georgia, repast, supper, banquet, the Savior's meal, acquired the importance of the nation's symbolic familiarization with his blood and flesh.

Renowned Georgian musicologist Shalva Aslanishvili assumed that table songs had originated in pre-Christian era and considered them as the hymns dedicated to the deity of agriculture [Shalva Aslanishvili]. It is not accidental that highly developed examples of table songs are documented in the regions where the culture of vine and wine was especially developed (Kartli and Kakheti) [Chkhikvadze, 1960]. In the paper iconographic aspects of the theme “wine and music” are discussed on the example of the epochally remote events.

In Niko Pirosmashvili's (a self-taught Georgian artist) 19th century painting significant place is attributed to a large number of compositions depicting feast with the “melosphere” (I. Zemtsovsky's term) in which Pirosmashvili lived himself, visual images (musicians, instruments) of Tbilisi music of his time and table with wine (signboards, group compositions, still lifes).

In Pirosmashvili's art, in his drawings of various genres, clearly visible are reiterated themes and existence of “canonical” schemes and attributes associated with them. This definite “canon” is seen in the series of about 20 drawings depicting group “feast”, where similar compositions are repeated, with almost invariable „iconographic program“.

“Constant variation around the once formed scheme, somewhat indicates to the artist's medieval attachment to the original, primary source. Mastery of the past-century artists is manifested in new insonification of old themes within the iconographic scheme and their different colorful-plastic solution” [Anna Shanshiashvili]. Pirosmashvili's “overtime” images remind of medieval ones, a kind of 'memorial' nuance, determined by the peculiarity of time and space expression: here all images are static, each action, process is “suspended”.

Pirosmashvili's painting presents the life mode of old Tbilisi, which in its essence is a multi-layer multicultural phenomenon. Domestic environment and details depicting Tbilisi streets, taverns, representatives of working class including musicians and musical instruments are revived in the “dynamic statics” of frontal-representative compositions.

Musical culture in Tbilisi of his time is distinguished in its polyphonic character, which implies not only simple co-existence of cultures and subcultures, but their diffusion and dialogue as well. On this background visible is the typology of Tbilisi music, as a multicultural phenomenon in the context of the dialogue between Eurasian cultures¹ and the confirmation of this is, uppermost, seen in Pirosmashvili's painting; this is the environment, in which the artist lives, a part of his everyday life, as well as the source of his inspiration with the artifacts of specific epoch.

From this standpoint, by the beginning of the 20th century at least 4 cultures had already existed in Tbilisi: “imperial” Russian and European (as both generally “Western” and European subcultures), “old Tbilisi” and Georgian. By the 1920s “old Tbilisi culture” [Kavtaradze, Buchukuri, 2012] already was an archaic phenomenon, more associated with the eastern branch of urban folklore.

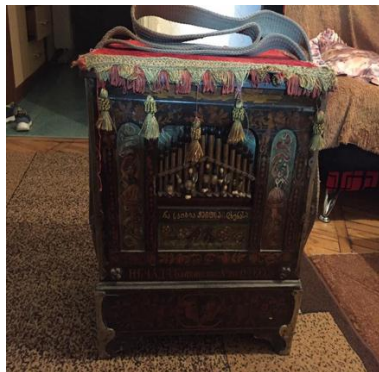
Oriental musical instruments constituted an organic part of the Eastern branch of urban folklore. Usually singing was accompanied with the instruments of non-Georgian origin *zurna*, *duduk*, *tar*, *saz*, *kemenche* (*chianuri*); basically common were two types of ensemble: *sazandari_dasi*, comprised of *saz*, *tar*, *kemenche* and *daira* player-singers, and *dasta*, which, in Pirosmashvili's drawings, was presented with unchanging composition, two *zurna* players and a *daira* player-singer



Dasta or an organ-grinder are always present in “iconic” compositions of Pirosmeni’s feast series (“Feast at the Gvimradzes”, “Feast of five noblemen”, “Feast at organ-grinder Datiko Zemeli”, “Feast of four merchants”) when he depicts wedding ritual with singers, dancers, *daira* and *buzika* (*tsiko-tsiko*) players (“Wedding in old Georgia”); and adorns Georgian rural life mode with shepherd’s pipe *salamuri* (“A shepherd with sheep flock”).

On the one hand, *zurna* and *daira*, *doli* and *garmoni*, inseparable from old Tbilisi life mode, pastime and feast, and on the other hand, a well-established symbol of European civilization – initially roller organ *arghani* (from the early 1800s), and later gramophone² (about a century later, from the late 1800s) coexisted in the same environment in “Eurasian” melosphere of the city. [Kavtaradze, 2010]

Arghani (one of the first songs from “Charmante Catherine”, performed on *arghani*, roller organ) – a mechanical instrument, a variety of portable keyless organ, was disseminated in Georgia from the beginning of the 19th century. [Grishashvili, 1963]



Tavern gramophones were quite popular in pre-revolutionary Georgia, Berliner’s invention which replaced Edison’s phonograph caused a real “boom” of gramophones. In Russia they were introduced from abroad and were manufactured by foreigners until 1917. The gramophones with different configuration of sound enhancements, which appeared on the market, Emil Berliner’s “Grammofon Berliner” was the first firm in Russian market, which was simply referred to as gramophone; “Recording Angel” trademark became very popular in Georgia too. Gramophone with bended horn on Pirosmeni’s drawing presumably has that very shape. Tavern gramophones were quite popular in pre-revolutionary Georgia, Berliner’s invention which replaced Edison’s phonograph caused a real “boom” of gramophones. In Russia they were introduced from abroad and were manufactured by foreigners until 1917. The gramophones with different configuration of sound enhancements, which appeared on the market, Emil Berliner’s “Grammofon Berliner” was the first firm in Russian market, which was simply referred to as gramophone; “Recording Angel” trademark became very popular in Georgia too. Gramophone with bended horn on Pirosmeni’s drawing presumably has that very shape. [Kavtaradze, 2014]



I think the analysis of one drawing – “Feast of Tbilisi merchants with gramophone”, will shed light on Pirosmani’s ideological conception.



Two epochs meet each other on this canvas; this is emphasized not only by Asian and European garments of the personages and color palette, but also by the instruments: as represented by old transient Oriental kemenche and *daira*, and European gramophone invented in the 1880s. Oriental instruments in gray tones, displayed on the wall like museum exhibits are interpreted as the symbol of the passing time, whilst from the brass horn of the gramophone, as if clearly heard are operatic arias; tempting, fashionable tunes of foxtrot or tango. Two men dressed in European frock coats and wearing top hats, one holding a gramophone; are seated at Georgian traditional table laid for “Bego’s Friends”

(The feast of Tbilisian merchants accompanied by the gramophone). With this figure Pirosmani replaced the figure of a roller organ-grinder frequently used in his compositions earlier. Unlike those sitting at the table, dressed in traditional black clothes, the man wearing a yellow straw hat with wide brim in the color of the gramophone, adds particular beam to the composition.

Confronted with each other *daira-kemenche* and *gramophone*; transient time and future; Asia and Europe. This is the artist's main message, imprinted with the archetypal conception "dozing" in Georgian man's collective sub consciousness.

Music, Colour and Wine Etiquette

If at the time large part of Pirosmani's drawings were created by order to decorate the interior of taverns and stores, or as sign-boards, in the late 1900s wine business applied his drawings to advertise its products, using them as labels.

Over 50 million bottles of wine are exported from Georgia. They have to compete with each other and wines from other countries. Customers have to choose the desired product from thousands of wines. Label on the bottle is what helps them make choice and create first impression about the wine together with the shape and colour of the bottle.

Production of etiquette in today's form started at the end of the 18th century. Initially, the label had only informative function. But over time, it acquired artistic function as well. At various times, wine labels were created by the world-renowned artists. For instance, Baron Rothschild invited greatest artists of his time from Picasso to Miró and each year's harvest was decorated with a new label created by any of them.

In Georgia wine etiquette was introduced in the second half of the 19th century, following the massive production of Georgian wine. The art of etiquette developed with the development of wine business. The 1880s are the classics, distinguished in absolutely European, but at the same time Georgian vision. For instance Ananov's wine etiquettes in Parisian style, Kipiani's etiquettes with the indication of its "licensed sellers", etc. This is how Pirosmani's drawings appeared on the etiquettes.

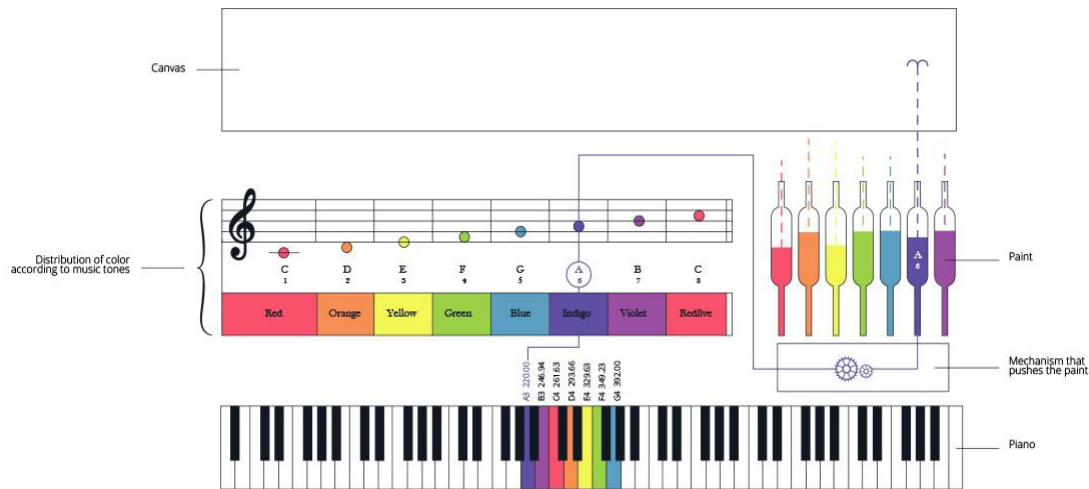
After the disintegration of the Soviet Union national elements appeared in the foreground in the design of Georgian wine. This tendency has survived to this day and acquired sort of stereotyped character, however, as specialists say, more creative approach and diversity of Georgian wine labels is observed in recent years. Main thing for the label is to, more or less express the nature of the wine. Etiquette and wine should not be distanced from each other; i.e. the external and internal should be in harmony. The designer is responsible for the artistic side of the label.

In addition to dry information, etiquette requires creative approach. Different markets have different aesthetics; this is why they often try to adjust wine label to the interest of a segment. However, what everyone recognizes is Western standard. [Buchukuri,2012]

Second part of the paper deals with the production of new brand of wine by the Georgian Wine and Spirits Company in the 21st century, the etiquettes of which are produced in original way – performance of specific musical compositions results in the creation of drawings, which is reflected on the etiquettes for different kinds of wine. The name of the wine is Vismino which expresses the essence, character and conception of the brand; it comprises associative elements of both wine drinking and (music) hearing (*vismino*: wine, *vino*, drinking, *sma*, hearing *movismino*, *vismino*). The drawings are obtained by playing the prepared piano. Conceptually it is not new to combine wine and music. But, here there are more links between wine [which dissolves into colors] and music, which creates harmony via sound combinations.

Sound affects various substances (water, different liquids and plants) and as scientific researches show, it changes the structure of water crystals according to its frequency, tonality and disposition; it also affects gustatory qualities.

Music and fine wine being two of life's sensual pleasures, it's only natural that the two be combined from time to time, as „Windfor's“ Communication has done so playfully here with GWS's Vismino wines, and more importantly, its labels. First, a special piano was built, linking every note to a specific tube.



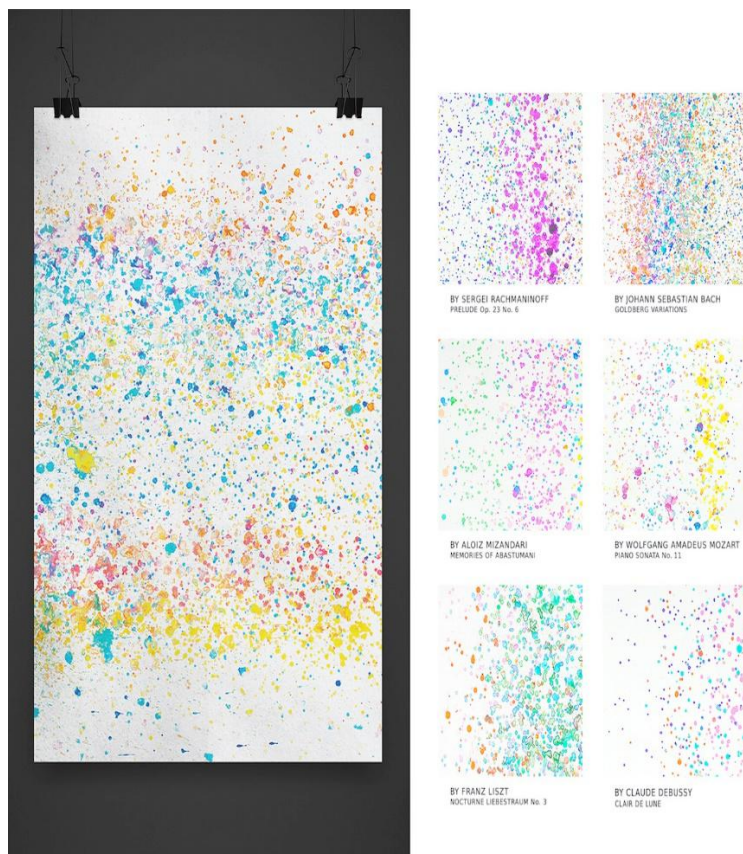
Meanwhile, a great deal of thought was put into how best the vintners could tie music to their wine even before the bottling process. One way: Placing “loudspeakers playing classical music in the vineyards to influence cultivation of grapes.” When it came time to create the labels, they came up with a piece of classical music that they thought best conveyed the character of each wine, and had that music played on the special piano. Every time a chord was struck, a dot of ink dripped onto a paint canvas. By the time the piece had been played in its entirety, the canvas boasted a unique design, which was then reproduced on that particular wine's label. A special QR code appears on each bottle, allowing you to scan it and listen to the music that inspired the wine.

As for bottle packaging, it was created on the basis of the synthetic concept of combining sound and color. Visualization of color and sound combination is possible not by the design in graphic program, but thanks to packaging “drawn” by real musical instrument, which made each bottle design unique. That is how prepared piano was created; by playing which unique drawings are obtained. Main part of the experiment lasted 4 days and nights. Despite numerous preliminary checkups, no one was sure until the last minute that the instrument would work and the composition played on it would “draw”.

It was communication agency „Windfor“'s that worked on the creation (strategic branding, creative concept, name, design and materialization) of Vismino. The agency says that this project is one of the most outstanding and favourite for them, as initially it looked more like an unrealized dream than a real project.



Labels of wine "Vismino"



The video about creating the etiquette consists of several parts. At first we hear the theory of combining light and sound, then we get to know the brand, we learn the working mechanics of the piano and finally, performance of specific musical compositions results in the creation of unique drawings intended for different kinds of wine, reflected on the etiquette accordingly. [Vismino]

Thanks to special equipment installed in the vineyards of GWS, vine listens to music. Music will also accompany all stages of wine-making (Tornike Akhobadze, brand manager) [Vismino].

The experiment was successful, and 14 different compositions were performed for 14 different kinds of Vismino. The Company says that the experiment is not over. This is only the first stage and this seemingly strange experiment will have an even more ambitious development.

Finally, we would like to note that the synthesis of art branches always generates something new, third artistic event, approximated to the initial, which is dictated by the conscious or subconscious impulses coming from it.

References:

1. Aslanishvili Sh. The Harmony of Kartli-Kakhetian Folk Choral Songs. Tbilisi, 1970, p. 187
2. Chkhikvadze Gr. (editor-compiler). Georgian Folk Song (1960), vol.I. Tbilisi: *Sabchota sakartvelo*
3. Shanshiashvili A., *Niko Pirozmanashvili's creations and artistic tradition of Georgian art* <http://georgianart.ge/index.php/ka/2010-12-03-16-25-41/116-2012-02-20-06-15-47.html>
4. M. Kavtaradze, E. Buchukuri., Interrelation Problem between Polyphony and Monophony on the Example of Georgian Urban Culture. Proceedings of the 5th International Symposium on Traditional Polyphony, Tbilisi, 2012, 64-72
5. M. Kavtaradze, Music in Tbilisi and Tbilisi in Music. *Literatura da khelovneba*, 2010, #4, 66-70
6. Grishashvili I., "Literary Bohemia of Old Tbilisi", Tbilisi, 1963
7. M. Kavtaradze. Pirosmeni and Music. Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference "Pirosmeni and Georgian Culture" 2014, pp.208-217
8. Buchukuri E., Classic Music in Georgian Advertising. Buchukuri E., Classical Music in Advertising. Collection of scientific works "Musicological explorations", Tbilisi, 2012
9. Cool Packaging: Vismino Wine Labels
<https://www.paperspecs.com/caught-our-eye/vismino-wine-label-packaging/>
10. "Vismino" - a wine created in harmony with the sound
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQyQt5HHCCw>

Article received: 2019-27-12