

ABOUT A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MENTIONED IN “KNIGHT IN A TIGER’S SKIN” BY SHOTA RUSTAVELI

LORTKIPANIDZE, Ketevan
GÜRCİSTAN/GEORGIA/ГРУЗИЯ

ABSTRACT

1. A word Chagana as a musical instrument was mentioned in the poem “The Knight in a Panther’s Skin” a masterpiece by a 12th century Georgian genius poet Shota Rustaveli.

2. Georgian scientists and lexicographers give the word several definitions; A 18th century

Georgian writer and lexicographer Sul Khan Saba Orbeliani defined Chagana as a song accompanied with musical instruments in his dictionary of Georgian words. In the dictionary made for “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin” Akaki Shanidze, a famous Georgian scientist, Chagana is defined as “castanets”. In the modern Georgian dictionary by Sargis Tsaishvili, Chagana is a string instrument. David Chubinashvili refers to the Rustaveli work mentioned above and assumes that Chagana is both “castanets” and a “string instrument”.

3. Foreign experts failed to come to an agreement about what exactly Chagana is. e.g. according to L. Budagov’s dictionary Chagana is a three string instrument, whereas V. Radloff thinks it is both “castanets” and a string instrument. The same definition can be found in Martti Räsänen’s etimological dictionary.

4. What is more the scientists are not unanimous in the word origin either. They suppose the word might be Turkish, whilst Martti Räsänen supports the idea that Chagana as a word has Farsi roots. Turkish scientists are sure that Chagana is a purely Turkish word.

5. In our opinion the word Chagana is divided into the root-chag-meaning noise, according to old Turkish dictionary. Morpheme-ana derives from verbs, noun-adjectives and nouns, as a Turkish Language expert B. Atalay assumes (Türk Dilinde Ekler ve Kökler Üzerine Bir Deneme, İstanbul, 1942, p#31). To confirm the hypothesis B. Atalay illustrates several examples in his work. e. g. at-ana, kav-ana, bas-ana and chag-ana too.

6. In the Knight in the Panther’s Skin Chagana appears three times with another instrument-changi Turkish “chenk” which doubtlessly is a string instrument of Persian origin. We do not think these two instruments were mentioned accidentally. There is a collocation “chenku chagana” in the Turkish language which means “entertaining, musical evening”. We suppose Rustaveli used the collocation with the same meaning.

7. We would like to take upon the responsibility and assume that: 1) Chagana is not a string instrument, but chenk is. 2) Chagana is castanets or a small drum.

Key Words: Chagana, musical instrument.

The musical instrument “Chagana” was mentioned by Shota Rustaveli in his “Knight in a Tiger’s Skin” (Verse 101, Line 4, Verse 722, Line 4, and Verse 1468, Line 3). All three times “Chagana” was mentioned along with another musical instrument “Changi.”

In a dictionary composed by Justine Abuladze for “Knight in a Tiger’s Skin”– “Chagana” is the string musical instrument (1,387). It is known that “Changi” is also the string instrument and derives from the Persian “Chenk”, which is proved in Turkish language as well (2,180). Another prominent Georgian scientist Akaki Shanidze in his dictionary for “The Knight in a Tiger’s Skin” defined “Chagana” as “a stick” decorated with bells, played by its shaking and it was used to accompany another musical instrument. (3,450).

18th Century great Georgian Lexicographer Sulkhani Saba Orbeliani did not consider “Chagana” as musical instrument and defined it as the equipment needed to play Changi, something like a fiddle (4,816). However, we do not think this definition is correct, because in the poem “Chagana” definitely is a musical instrument.

Georgian Historian Ivane Djavakishvili, after whom Tbilisi State University was named, wrote about the above-mentioned instrument, which was also mentioned in later literary works as well, f. e. Joseph Zelikhaniani’s “The Oldest”, In the 16th c. edition and according to the context, it sounded like Changi so it might have been the string instrument (5, 151). He considered “Chagana” as a Persian origin word.

In a Georgian monolingual dictionary, “Chagana” is defined as a three-string instrument and very interesting for us is its Turkish origin (6, 420) as mentioned above, there is no unanimous idea among Georgian scientists about what exactly “Chagana” is, a string or a belled instrument. It is worth mentioning that Lexicographer David Chubinashvili defined the word as both string and a belled instrument (7,430).

Neither Turkish nor other countries scientists have the same opinion about “Chagana.” In 1977 edition of Turkish-Russian Dictionary “Chagana” is an old musical instrument, nothing is said here about how it looks (2,6). In a big Turkish dictionary, the word is defined as a genetically Turkish, also as a bell or a castanet (8, 201). In a well-known dictionary by the 19th C. Lexicographer Lazar Budagow, “Chagana” is a Turkish word; it is a three-string instrument and geographical location Lebanon is mentioned, where local Armenian

workers used to dance at Easter under the music (9, 458). Marti Räsänen gives two definitions of “Chagana:” 1. a three-string instrument in Lebanon and metal hand castanet. He thinks that the word originated from Persian Chagana (10,94).

In the 1931 edition by D. Magazanik, *Turkceden Ruscaga Lugat* (40 000 words) “Chegane” is defined as a small drum. pg.195.

We suppose that the word must undoubtedly be Turkish because its root chag-as well as its homogen chak-mean noise, chaos or interrupted sound (11,136). As for morpheme ana, it is considered by a Turkologist B. Atalay as a noun and adjective forming suffixes from verbs and nouns. This opinion is proved by several illustrations and the word we are interested in among them. At-ana-following; kal-ana-measuring, bas-ana-weighing; bag-ana-sheep skin sack and chag-ana- a musical instrument.

While working on this article, we found a very interesting book “Encyclopedia of the Planet’s Musical Instruments’ ”, where Chagana is described in details as the three string musical instrument with seven buttons, small round bottom and a longish neck. It was played with a bent fiddle. We think, here the most interesting thing is that Chagana has Dagestaninan origin. It was really surprising to hear that Chagana was also known in Baltic countries as a hammer like instrument (13), which gave food to think not only to us but to Turkish scientists as well, but later we worked out a hypothesis. It is known, that Turkish origin Khumuks live in Dagestan (Kumik in Russian). They speak in Kivcak-Ogusean Turkish language subgroup. These people might have used this instrument. Besides, Turkish origin Kharian people live in Baltic countries, Litvenia and the instrument might have been used by them. Naturally, the above mentioned does not concern the ideas discussed in this article and should be discussed separately.

As for “Chagana” mentioned in “The Knight in a Tiger’s Skin”– three times with another musical instrument Changi, we do not think it might be occasional.

There is a very interesting collocation in the Turkish language *chenku chegane* which means Changi and Chagana and has general meaning. It means entertainment and a party where music is played (2, 180). We would like to mention that in the Georgian language of that epoch mentioning of these two musical instruments meant entertainment, having pleasant time, which was underlined by the author of the masterpiece.

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