

Shavlego - შავლეგო (Georgia, Kakheti)

Shavlego (SHAHV-leh-goh) is the name of a hero. Some stories say the song refers to a glorious army commander named Shalva Toreli-Akhaltiskheli who led great battles in the beginning of the 13th century. Later, especially in the late 1980s (during the national mobilization against the Soviet Union), the song gained a strong patriotic meaning throughout Georgia.

This dance is a *perkhuli* (round dance for a choir) from the Kakheti region of Georgia. *Perkhuli* are dances mostly accompanied by singing. One could say that the dance accompanies the song instead of the song accompanying the dance, so it's important that such a dance not be so lively that it takes breath needed for singing. This *perkhuli* is danced to the song of the same name, sung *a cappella* by the Tbilisi ensemble Georgian Voices (ქართული ხმები or Kartuli Xmebi), who also choreographed this dance. Georgian Voices has been active since 1991 in presenting the rich polyphony of various regions of Georgia to Western audiences. This dance was presented by Caspar Bik at the 2017 Stockton Folk Dance Camp at University of the Pacific.

Music: 3/4 meter. CD: *Georgian Folk Music and Dances 2017*, Track 3. The version of the song used by Caspar can be found on YouTube by searching for "Qartuli Xmebi – Shavlego" (URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NPIf6CQXXI>). It was issued in 2003 on the Georgian Voices CD *The Years*.

Video: *2017 Stockton Folk Dance Camp DVD*. A Stockton Folk Dance Camp DVD can be viewed by contacting a camp participant who purchased it.

Formation: Circle of dancers facing center, hands in V-pos.

Steps and Styling: With every step the rear leg is held stretched until the last moment it is needed for the next movement. The body is straight and proud. Toes are pointed in transitions of movement – i.e., during leading or trailing steps.

Bicycle Touch: Extend foot fwd low (ct 1); bring leg up and toward body with a small, circular reverse-bicycle motion (used for the purpose of kicking the skirt of the man's coat out of the way) (ct &); touch toe next to opposite foot (ct 2).

Measures	3/4 meter	PATTERN
6 meas	INTRODUCTION. No action. Begin when the tenors join in with the word "Shavleg."	
	I. ALONG THE CIRCLE.	
1-3	Facing CCW, beg R, take three steps fwd.	
4	Bicycle Touch L next to R.	
5	Facing ctr, step L to L.	
6	Touch R toe across behind L with R knee turned out.	
7-11	Repeat meas 1-5.	
12	Close R to L (no wt).	
13	Step R to R.	
14	Facing diag R, Bicycle Touch L next to R.	
15-16	Repeat meas 13-14 with opp ftwk and direction.	
17	Facing ctr, step R to R.	
18	Close L to R (no wt).	
19	Repeat meas 1-18 with opp ftwk and direction.	

II. MOVING IN AND OUT.

- 1-5 Repeat Fig I, meas 1-5 except facing ctr.
6 ~~Close L to R (no wt).~~ **Close R to L (no wt).**
7-12 Repeat meas 1-6 moving bkwd.

Sequence: Fig I, Fig II, Fig I meas 1-18.

Lyrics (each line is sung twice)

Georgian

შავლეგ შენი შავი ჩოხა
სისხლში გაგიხამებია
ყაწიმები გიხდებოდა
ომში შესვლა გიხდებოდა
მაშველი არ გჭირდებოდა
შავლეგ შენი შავი ჩოხა

Transliterated

Shavleg sheni shavi chokha, shavlego
siskhlshi gagikhamebia, shavlego
qats'imebi gikhdeboda, shavlego
omshi shesvla gikhdeboda, shavlego
mashveli ar gch'irdeboda, shavlego
Shavleg sheni shavi chokha, shavlego

Translation

Shavleg, your black *chokha**
Colored with blood.
Your *qatsimi*** suited you well.
Fighting the enemy was your job.
You needed no help.
Shavleg, your black *chokha**

* man's traditional outer robe

** belt for a sword