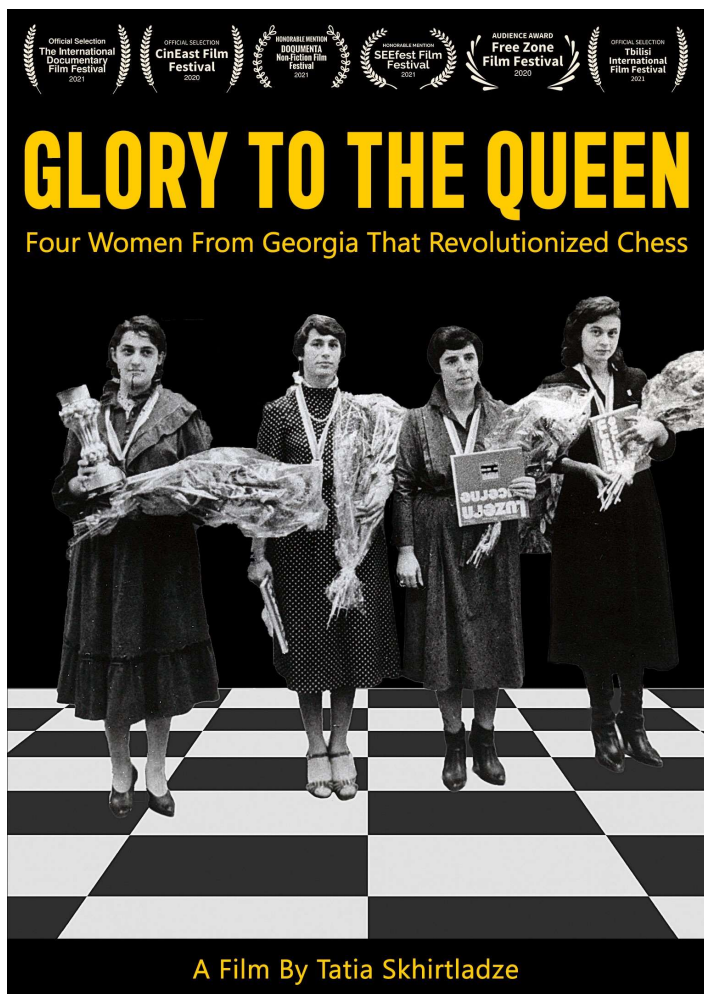


Glory to the Queen—A 21st Century version of The Three Musketeers

Review by Joshua Anderson



Few will confuse four Georgian women of retirement age with the three Musketeers, but the four stars of the documentary “Glory to the Queen” have much in common with the famed Dumas characters. Though the parallels are by no means perfect, we can find similarities between both groups’ sense of duty, love of something greater than themselves, and comradeship.

Just as Dumas introduces the characters separately before bringing them all together, the film also starts with each lady being given some screen time to show a bit about herself. Nona Gaprindashvili’s strong competitive drive comes across whether she is playing chess, talking soccer, or playing billiards. An opening scene has her playing in a Senior Women’s Championship, which she asserts causes her to live longer due to the positive emotions she experi-

ences, stating, “This (chess) is my world.” Alexandria talks honestly about the difficulties of being a chess player and having a family, and how a true balance of the two (at least for her) is impossible. She also talks about the necessity of balancing energy and health. Chiburdanidze, who is interested in medicine and home remedies, seems truly overwhelmed with emotion as she opens up about her school and seeing the excitement of all the young children. Ioseliani laments the great pressure put on small children especially those competing for World Championships in categories as young as Under 8, as she gleefully spends time with her granddaughter and visits family upon her return to Georgia..



Just as Dumas presents the Musketeers through their adventures, we see the four women through various battles

¹Please note that I am in no way a French Literature specialist, and my knowledge of, and experience with, Alexandre Dumas' characters are more from American movies than from reading the entire series of Dumas' work.

(mostly in one-on-one matches). However, the four are also shown receiving their medals for their domination of the 1982 Olympiad. We begin to see more interactions between them, and more tournaments are mentioned as the film progresses. Events where they play each other or that are key team events are highlighted. There is old footage of simulcs and World Championship matches mixed in with the four women interacting or remembering various events, like Nona talking about Lone Pine 1977 where she made a Grandmaster norm thanks to games like her victory over James Tarjan. At another point, Alexandria and Ioseliani are speaking about Ioseliani breaking Fischer's record of 13 straight victories. (In fact, Fischer's record is 20, but for some reason the Georgians/Soviets did not seem to count the 7 last rounds of the Interzonal tournament that started the streak.)

Just as Dumas developed characters that have a love of country, each of his characters also has a love or strong interest of their own. For our heroines, this is also true: for Gaprindashvili, that was the party and the state (Soviet Union); for Chiburidanidze, it was her religion; for Alexandria, it is her family and opposition to the state; and for Ioseliani, family is key. These other interests, however, took a back seat to working as a team for the country, Alexandria several times acting as team captain. Initially several of the women (sometimes all) worked to bring home the Olympiad gold for the Soviet Union, and then later they did the same for the country of Georgia.

Dumas uses history to pay respect to, but also comment on, the past and government by showing how the people interacted with the king of France. In several of the looks back at the Soviet Union, the film does not comment on the state per se, but on the rather ridiculous way it portrayed female chess players, (i.e. filming Gaprindashvili as a happy homemaker cooking in the kitchen, when in fact she cannot cook), while also looking back and pointing to the overall ridiculousness of the time. The film also shows the cultural effect of this on women by giving many (perhaps too many) examples of women who are named after these champions. They run the gamut of professions from housewives to chess players, and range in age from 20s through their 40s.

Both groups of characters are shown through an

“outsider’s lens.” Dumas does this in part simply by being the author, while the film provides a storyteller- Milunka Lazarevic. Lazarevic (who played on 6 Olympiad teams for Yugoslavia, and knew all four women), acts as the storyteller, providing a little bit of a framework and some background for each of the documentary’s “queens”.

As a historical work, it suggests, rather than provides, hard concrete answers, but also entices the viewer to research more on their own. The most obvious question, why 4 such extremely strong women came from the state of Georgia in the Soviet Union, is answered with both cultural and concrete explanations. (Spoiler alert—there is a history of strong women in Georgia, and a chess set is a traditional dowry gift.) After becoming World Champion, Chiburidanidze speaks highly about the regional chess school and chess focus within the country, giving credit for the quality of both to Gaprindashvili. There is also clearly an attempt

Nana Alexandria

- ◆ 2-time World Vice-Champion (1975-1978, 1981-1984)
- ◆ World Champions Match Chiburidanidze-Alexandria (1981) - the only equal match (8:8) in the history of women's chess!
- ◆ Participant of 8 World Championship Candidates' cycles (1966 - 1988)
- ◆ Winner of the European countries Champions' Cup (1970)
- ◆ 6-time winner of the World Chess Olympiads (1969, 1974, 1980, 1982, 1986)
- ◆ Captain of the World Chess Olympiad winner Georgian women's team (1992, 1994, 1996)
- ◆ FIDE Central Committee member (1994-1998)
- ◆ Chairperson, FIDE Committee on Women's Chess (1986-2002)
- ◆ Chairperson, international Grandmasters' Association (GMA) Women's Council (1989-1991)
- ◆ President, Chess Club NTN winner of the European Club Cup - 2004, 2005
- ◆ National Ambassador on Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play in the Council of Europe

to show how the game has changed from a room full of male spectators watching the two women play for the title, to matches where both men and women came to cheer them on.

There are a few minor drawbacks. Occasionally other characters enter into discussions with the four Queens, and the viewer is left wondering who they are, and why they are included. At the dinner celebrating Gaprindashvili's 80th birthday party, there are three stars and a fourth lady who is clearly known and welcomed to the party... but the audience has no idea who she is. Also, occasionally,

stories are simply hinted at, but not fully developed. For



Nana 1986, Switzerland: The Biel International Chess Festival

instance, in one discussion, Alexandria asks Ioselini if she still remembers when Kasparov came to their hotel in Malta. They both laugh, and then move on to other topics of conversation. This is perhaps understandable as the focus was supposed to be on the four Georgian women, but the viewer is left wondering, What did Kasparov say? What did he do?

As an artistic piece, the documentary is entertaining, even uplifting. It was the artist's energy for this project that allowed the four women (none of whom had any interest in the project at first), to agree to do the work and in the end, enjoy the process. This is clearly seen in the final scene of the film which shows the four women arriving at their destination, de-boarding a train and walking off together, ready for their next adventure. While it's true that the four rarely get to work all together, we are left with a heartwarming image of four women who, in part because their lives have been so tightly woven together, have already accomplished so much, and will continue to accomplish even more in the future.

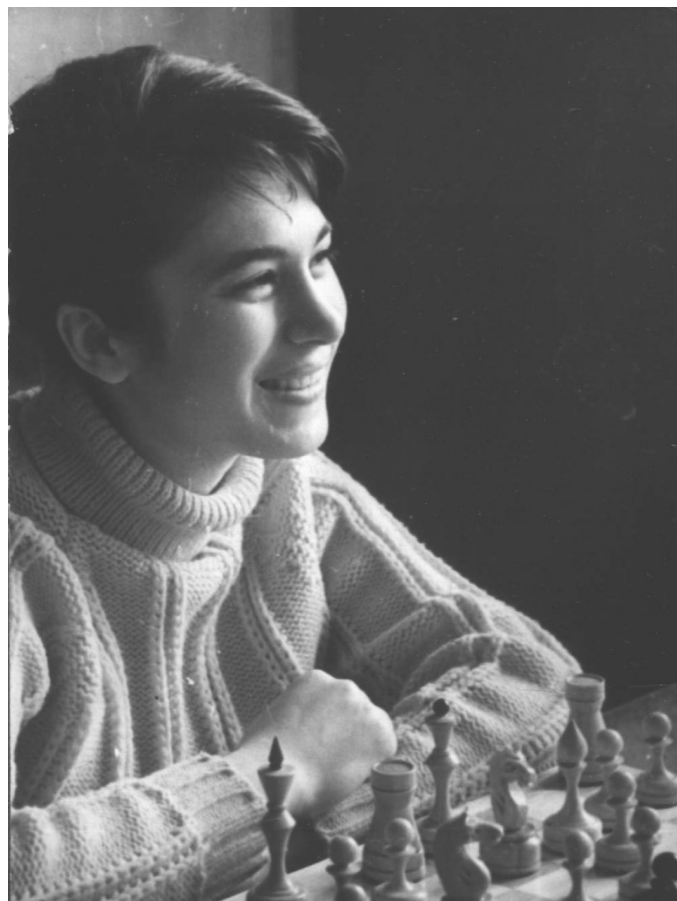
The film can be rented or bought at Google Play, YouTube, Apple TV, Amazon, Dafilms.com (rented only) or Vimeo On Demand.

On Vimeo on demand "Glory" can be seen with 10 different subtitles: English, Spanish, Georgian, Russian, Turkish, Croatian, Portuguese, German, Chinese, and Arabic.

Tatia Skhirtladze

Photo is by Jerzy Palacz, one of the DOPs of the film.

In the background we see the facade of Nona Gaprindashvili Chess Palace with crowns, only chess palace in the world which is named after a female chess player.



Nana 1970, Vrnjačka Banja, Yugoslavia, European Countries (or Nations) Champions' cup.

Below are many of the games that are mentioned or highlighted in the film (sans commentary):

Game 1:

Aulikki Ristoja (1551) - Nona Gaprindashvili (2294) [A40] (9). European Championship Senior 65+, Rhodes, Greece, April 14, 2019

1. d4 g6 2. Qf4 Qg7 3. Qc3 d6 4. e3 Qd7 5. Qc4 e6 6. Qf3 Qe7 7. Qb3 b6 8. O-O Qb7 9. Qe2 O-O 10. Bc1 a6 11. e4 h6 12. Bfe1 Qh7 13. Qg3 Qe8 14. Qb1 Qf6 15. e5 Qh5 16. exd6 Qxg3 17. hxg3 cxd6 18. c3 b5 19. Qbd2 Qd8 20. Qc2 Qb6 21. Qh4 a5 22. Qf1 b4 23. g4 Bc8 24. Qd2 Qf6 25. Qf3 Qxf3 26. gxf3 bxc3 27. bxc3 Qc6 28. Bc1 Qxf3 29. Qh2 Qh3 30. Qe4 Qg5 31. f4 Qg3+ 32. Qg2 Qxf4 33. Qxg3 Qxg3 34. Bc2 Bc7 35. Bc2 Bfc8 36. Qg2 Qf4 37. Bf1 e5 38. Qf3 Qg7 39. dxe5 dxe5 40. Bd1 f5 41. gxf5 gxf5 42. Qd5 Bd8 43. c4 Bxd5 44. Bxd5 Qxd5 45. Bc2 Qe3+ 46. Qh3 Qf6 0-1

Game 2:

Nana Alexandria (2295) - Maia Chiburdanidze (2425) [E15] (16). World Women's Championship, Tbilisi, USSR, September 7, 1981 (event date)

1. d4 e6 2. c4 Qf6 3. Qf3 b6 4. g3 Qa6 5. Qbd2 Qb4 6.

♖b3 ♗e7 7. ♙g2 ♘b7 8. O-O ♙xd2 9. ♙xd2 O-O 10. ♚ad1 d6 11. ♙c1 ♘bd7 12. ♗a3 c5 13. ♚fe1 ♚fc8 14. d5 exd5 15. ♘h4 ♗e6 16. cxd5 ♙xd5 17. e4 ♙xa2 18. ♘f5 ♚e8 19. ♘xd6 ♚e7 20. e5 ♚f8 21. exf6 ♗xe1+ 22. ♚xe1 ♚xe1+ 23. ♙f1 ♙e6 24. ♗c3 ♘e5 25. ♗g2 ♙d5+ 26. f3 ♘xf3 27. ♗f2 ♚e6 28. fxg7 ♚d8 29. ♘f5 ♘e5 30. h3 ♙e4 31. ♘h6+ ♗xg7 32. ♘g4 f6 33. ♘xe5 ♚xe5 34. ♙f4 ♚e7 35. ♙c4 ♚d1 36. g4 ♗g6 37. h4 h5 38. gxh5+ ♗f5 39. ♙h2 {time} 1-0

Game 3:

Milunka Lazarevic - Corry Vreeken [B96] (8)

2nd Women's Olympiad, Split, Yugoslavia, September 30, 1963

1. e4 c5 2. ♘f3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♘xd4 ♘f6 5. ♘c3 a6 6. ♙g5 e6 7. f4 b5 8. e5 dxe5 9. fxe5 ♗c7 10. exf6 ♗e5+ 11. ♙e2 ♗xg5 12. O-O ♚a7 13. ♗d3 ♚d7 14. ♘e4 ♗e5 15. c3 ♘b7 16. ♗g3 ♗xg3 17. ♘xg3 gxg6 18. ♘h5 ♙e7 19. ♘xf6+ ♙xf6 20. ♚xf6 ♚g8 21. ♚f2 ♘c6 22. ♘b3 ♚d5 23. ♙f3 ♚dg5 24. a4 ♘d8 25. ♙xb7 ♘xb7 26. axb5 axb5 27. ♚a8+ ♘d8 28. ♚d2 ♗e7 29. ♘a5 ♚d5 30. ♚xd5 exd5 31. ♚b8 ♚g5 32. ♚xb5 ♘e6 33. ♘4 ♗d6 34. cxd5 ♚xd5 35. ♘c4+ ♗c6 36. ♚xd5 ♗xd5 37. ♘e3+ ♗e4 38. ♗f2 ♘c5 39. ♘d1 ♘d3+ 40. ♗g3 ♘e1 41. ♘f2+ ♗d4 42. ♘h3 ♘d3 43. ♘g5 ♘xb2 44. ♘xf7 ♘d3 45. ♘g5 h5 46. ♗h4 ♗e3 47. g3 ♗f2 48. g4 hxg4 49. ♗xg4 ♗e3 50. h4 ♘f4 51. ♗f5 ♘h5 52. ♘e6 ♗f3 53. ♗g5 ♘g3 54. ♘c5 ♗g2 55. ♗g4 ♗f2 56. ♘d3+ ♗g2 57. ♘f4+ ♗f2 58. ♘h5 ♘e2 59. ♘g7 ♘g3 60. ♘f5 ♘e4 61. ♗f4 ♘f6 62. ♗g5 ♘h7+ 63. ♗g6 ♘f8+ 64. ♗f7 ♘d7 65. h5 ♘e5+ 66. ♗f6 ♘g4+ 67. ♗g5 ♗f3 68. ♘h6 ♘f2 69. ♘f5 ♘h3+ 70. ♗f6 ♗g4 71. ♚6 ♘g5 72. ♗g6 ♘e6 73. ♘e3+ ♗h4 74. ♗f6 ♘f8 75. ♗f7 ♗h5 76. ♘g4 ♘h7 77. ♗g7 ♘g5 78. ♘f6+ ♗h4 79. ♘e4 ♘e6+ 80. ♗g8 ♘f4 81. h7 ♘g6 82. ♗g7 ♗h5 83. ♘f6+ 1-0

Game 4

Nona Gaprindashvili (2430) - Leonid Shamkovich (2485) [B42] (7). Lone Pine Open - Louis D. Statham Masters, Lone Pine, California, USA, March 27, 1977

1. e4 c5 2. ♘f3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♘xd4 a6 5. ♙d3 ♘f6 6. O-O d6 7. f4 ♙e7 8. ♗h1 ♘bd7 9. ♘d2 ♗c7 10. ♘2f3 O-O 11. ♗e2 ♘c5 12. e5 ♘xd3 13. ♗xd3 dxe5 14. fxe5 ♘d7 15. ♙f4 b5 16. ♚ae1 ♘c5 17. ♗e3 ♘b7 18. ♘g5 ♗d7 19. ♚d1 ♗d5 20. ♘df3 ♗xa2 21. b4 ♙xg5 22. ♘xg5 ♗xc2 23. ♗h3 h6 24. bxc5 hxg5 25. ♙xg5 ♗g6 26. ♙e7 ♚fe8 27. ♙d6 ♙e4 28. ♚f4 ♙f5 29. ♗f3 ♗h6 30. ♚f1 a5 31. c6 b4 32. c7 ♗g6 33. ♚c1 ♚ac8 34. ♚a1 ♙c2 35. ♚xa5 b3 36. ♚b5 ♗h6 37. h3 ♗g6 38. ♗h2 ♗g5 39. ♚xf7 ♙e4 40. ♚xg7+ ♗xg7 41. ♗xe4 ♗f5 42. ♗e3 ♗f7 43. ♚b4 b2 44. ♚xb2 ♗g7 45. ♚f2 ♗h5 46. ♚f4 ♚h8 47. ♗g3+ 1-0

Game 5:

Nana Alexandria (2340) - Nana Ioseliani (2240) [D61] (4) Women's Interzonal - 04b, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, September 28, 1979

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5 4. ♘c3 ♙e7 5. ♙g5 O-O 6. e3 ♘bd7 7. ♗c2 c6 8. O-O-O b6 9. cxd5 exd5 10. ♙d3 ♘b7 11. ♘e5 h6 12. h4 c5 13. ♙f5 ♚e8 14. ♘xd7 ♘xd7 15. ♙xe7 ♚xe7 16. g4 cxd4 17. exd4 ♘f8 18. ♗b1 ♙c8 19. ♘xd5 ♗xd5 20. ♙xc8 ♘e6 21. ♙xe6 ♚xe6 22. ♚h3 ♚ae8 23. ♗f5 ♚e5 24. ♗f3 ♚e4 25. g5 h5 26. ♚hh1 ♚d8 27. a3 ♚xd4 28. ♚xd4 ♗xd4 29. ♗a1 ♗d5 30. ♗xd5 ♚xd5 31. ♚e1 ♚f5 32. ♚e2 ♚f4 33. b4 ♚xh4 34. ♚e8+ ♗h7 35. ♚e7 ♚f4 36. ♚xa7 h4 0-1

Game 6:

Nana Alexandria (2295) - Nana Ioseliani (2345) [A45] (8) Woman's Candidates Final, Tbilisi, Soviet Union, January, 1981

1. d4 c5 2. dxc5 ♘f6 3. ♘c3 e6 4. e4 ♘c6 5. ♙e3 ♗a5 6. f3 ♙xc5 7. ♙xc5 ♗xc5 8. ♗d2 O-O 9. O-O-O d5 10. exd5 exd5 11. ♘ge2 ♚d8 12. ♘d4 ♙d7 13. ♙e2 ♚ac8 14. ♚4 ♘a5 15. ♘b3 ♘xb3+ 16. axb3 ♗a5 17. ♗b1 ♗c5 18. g5 ♘e8 19. ♗xd5 ♗e3 20. ♙c4 ♙e6 21. ♗xd8 ♚xd8 22. ♚xd8 ♙xc4 23. bxc4 ♗f8 24. ♚hd1 ♗xg5 25. ♚b8 ♗g2 26. ♚e1 g6 27. ♚exe8+ ♗g7 28. b3 ♗xf3 29. ♗b2 h5 30. ♚e7 ♗h3 31. ♚bx7 ♗xh2 32. ♘e4 ♗h6 33. c5 ♗g2 34. c6 1-0

Game 7:

Maia Chiburdanidze (2340) - Nona Gaprindashvili (2425) [B08] (15). Women's World Championship, Pitsunda, Soviet Union, 1978

1. e4 d6 2. d4 ♘f6 3. ♘c3 g6 4. ♘f3 ♙g7 5. ♙e2 c6 6. O-O O-O 7. a4 ♘bd7 8. a5 ♗c7 9. h3 ♚d8 10. ♙e3 ♘f8 11. ♗d2 ♙d7 12. ♚fd1 ♙e8 13. b4 e5 14. dxe5 dxe5 15. ♗e1 ♚xd1 16. ♚xd1 ♘e6 17. ♙c4 ♗e7 18. ♙xe6 ♗xe6 19. ♙c5 ♘d7 20. ♙d6 f6 21. ♗e2 ♙f8 22. ♙xf8 ♘xf8 23. ♘d2 ♗e7 24. ♗c4+ ♙f7 25. ♗c5 ♗xc5 26. bxc5 ♚d8 27. ♗f1 ♚d4 28. ♗e1 ♘e6 29. ♘b3 ♚c4 30. ♗d2 ♘f4 31. a6 bxa6 32. ♚a1 ♘xg2 33. ♚xa6 ♙e8 34. ♚xa7 h5 35. ♚b7 ♘f4 36. f3 ♗f8 37. h4 ♘e6 38. ♘d1 ♘xc5 39. ♘xc5 ♚xc5 40. ♘e3 ♚a5 41. ♚c7 ♚a8 42. ♘c4 ♚a4 43. ♘e3 ♚d4+ 44. ♗e2 ♚d6 45. c4 ♚d8 46. c5 ♚d4 47. ♗e1 ♚d7 48. ♚xd7 ♙xd7 49. ♘c4 ♗e7 50. ♗f2 ♙e6 51. ♘d6 g5 52. ♗g3 ♗d7 53. ♘b7 ♙b3 54. hxg5 fxg5 55. ♘a5 ♙d1 56. ♘c4 ♗e6 57. ♗f2 ♗f6 58. ♘a5 ♙a4 59. ♘c4 ♙b5 60. ♘d6 ♙a6 61. ♘e8+ ♗g6 62. ♘d6 ♙d3 63. ♗e3 ♙c2 64. ♘c4 ♗f6 65. ♗f2 ♙a4 66. ♘b6 ♙d1 67. ♘d7+ ♗e6 68. ♘b8 ♙a4 69. ♘a6 ♙b5 70. ♘b4 ♗f6 71. ♗g3 ♗g6 72. ♘c2 h4+ 73. ♗g2 g4 74. ♘e3 gxg3+ 75. ♗xf3 ♗g5 76. ♘d1 ♙c4 77. ♘f2 ♙f1 78. ♘h1 ♙h3 79. ♘f2 ♙e6 80. ♘d3 ♙g4+ 81. ♗f2 ♗f6 82. ♘b2 ♙d7 83. ♗f3 h3 84. ♗g3 ♗e7 85. ♘d3 ♗f6 86. ♘b4 ♗e7 87. ♘d3 ♗e6 88. ♗xh3 ♙e8 89. ♗g3 ♙g6 90. ♗f3 ♙h5+ 91. ♗e3 ♙d1 92. ♘b4 ♙a4 93. ♘d3 ♙b5 94. ♘e1 1/2-1/2

Video Librarian – "...a great story that shows girls around the world that they can do whatever they set their minds to." 4.5 out of 5 stars.



1982 Luzern Olympiad



Train station, Tbilisi