GEORGIAN FOLKLORE

The course
This course views the traditional oral (myths, legends, tales, poetry, songs), customary (folk religion, festivals, dances, “law of love”) and material (architecture, food, costume) culture of different and mostly less known socio-cultural groups and border regions of Georgia. Special emphasis is given to the traditional regional folklore as a peasant culture of the peripheries. The course also presents a history of folklore and ethnographic studies in Georgia. Among different topics, the course discusses how the broadening of anthropological knowledge created a basis for the development of a widespread criticism towards different elements of the traditional life-style, and how this criticism aided a process of innovation of some of the old traditions.

Readings
Required readings include a reader “Georgian Folklore,” Part I (Book Chapters, Articles and Essays, pp. 1-558; abbrev. GF1), and Part II (Folk Narrative Materials, pp.1-511; abbrev. GF2)
There is also a list of suggested readings (see GF2, pp. 507-511).
Most reading assignments will consist of articles and folk narratives.
Additional handouts (abbrev. HO) will be given on selected topics.

Visual materials
Slide shows, ethnographic films, documentaries and movies play important role in this course. Students are encouraged to actively take notes during the lecture and visual presentations.

The Grade
There is no midterm, but discussion on selected topics.
There will be a final paper (6-10 pages; topic of student’s choice) as a home assignment; due date: May 18, 2005.
Students may consult with the instructor about a selection of the topic of their final paper. Classroom attendance is essential. Questions and participations in classroom discussions are strongly encouraged.
COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1
Introduction
Socio-Cultural Groups of Georgia:
Georgians: Megrelians, Svans, Khevsurs, Ajarians, Laz, Meskhetians, Ingilos and others. Georgian Jews, Abkhazians, Ossets, Armenians, Azerbaijani Turks

Visual Material
Documentary Film “Republic of Georgia,” 1997
Readings: GF1, 15-37
Recommended:
Encyclopedia of World Cultures, vol. 4, 1994, by Human Relations Area Files, Inc.
Ajarians, by Nugzar Mgeladze, translated by Kevin Tuite, 12-15
Armenians, by Stephanie Platz, 27-31
Azerbaijani Turks, by Audrey L. Altstadt, 47-51
Chechen-Ingush, by Johanna Nichols, 71-76
Georgian Jews, by Zoia Dzhindzhikhashvili, translated by Dale Pesmen, 126-128
Ingilos, by Nugzar Mgeladze, translated by Kevin Tuite, 149-151
Khevsur, by Achim Schyboll, 93-197
Laz, Robert H. Hewsen, 238-241
Meskhetians, by E.K.Panesh and L.B.Ermolov, translated by Kevin Tuite, 259-262
Mingrelians, by Stephen E. Jones, 262-265
Svans, by Kevin Tuite, 343-347

Week 2
Folklore of Socio-Cultural Groups of Georgia:
Religious Beliefs and Folk Law of Georgian Highlanders

Visual Material
Readings: GF1, 38-55; GF2, 190-215
Recommended:
Custom and Justice in the Caucasus: The Georgian Highlanders, a Dissertation in Anthropology, Alexander Grigolia, Philadelphia, 1939
Introduction and Background, 1-5
Crime and Punishment, 140-161
Week 3
Folk Religion and Customs of Highlanders: Archaism and Innovation
Material Culture and Mythology
Georgian Folklore and Literature

Visual Material

Readings: GF1, 189-201, 365-378, 479-484;
GF2, 392-399, 415, 416-427, 428-468, 469-488, 332-338

Recommended:
Folk Traditions in Khevsureti, by Sergi Makaltia, 120-129, HO
Folk Traditions in Tusheti, by Sergi Makalatia, 131-149, HO
The Rural Community of Georgian Mountaineers by Ethnographic Materials, by R.L. Kharadze, The 7th International Congress of Anthropological Sciences, Moscow, August 3-10, 1964, Volume 6, Moscow, 1969, 357-362

Week 4
Folk Version of the Feudalism in the Highlands of Georgia

Visual Material
Ethnographic film “Georgia’s Tree of Life,” 1990

Readings: GF1, 171-188, 62-68

Recommended:

The Political Symbolism of Folk Festivals of Georgian Highlanders
Sacrificial Rituals in the Religions of the Highlanders of Caucasus
Milkrelationship in Caucasus

Readings: GF1, 202-216, 217-233, 234-241, 69-78; GF2, 298-299

Recommended:

Week 5
“Law of Love” and Love Poetry

Visual Material
Movie as Ethnography: Image of Rural and Urban Folk - Lower Class and Their Culture in Georgian Cinema
Episodes from the movie “Tush Shepherd,” 1974

Readings: GF1, 266-280, 281-303, 305-308, 362-365
An Anthology of Georgian Folk Poetry, Translated and Edited by Kevin Tuite, Associated University Presses, Inc., 1994

Love Poems, 118-122, HO
GF2, 361-380

Recommended:
Custom and Justice in the Caucasus: The Georgian Highlanders, a Dissertation in Anthropology, Alexander Grigolia, Philadelphia, 1939
Marriage, 63-89
Sex and Religion, 90-115
Rural Families in Soviet Georgia, A Case Study in Ratcha Province, Tamara Dragadze, Routledge London and New York, 1988
Introduction, 1-17
Kinship and Marriage, 99-133

Week 6
Traditions of Verbal Dueling in Rural Georgia
Poetics of Mourning Rituals
Visual Material
Episodes from the silent movie “Salt for Svanetia,” 1929
Readings: GF1, 309-321, 322-346
An Anthology of Georgian Folk Poetry, Translated and Edited by Kevin Tuite, Associated University Presses, Inc., 1994
Funerary Poems, 116, HO

Week 7
Georgian Epics:
Amiran-Prometheus
Abesalom and Ether
Arsena’s Poem
Visual Material
Visual Anthropology and Folklore of the Peripheries, Part Three, Provinces of Georgia in the Ethnographic Sketches of Nino Brailashvili, 1930-80ies
Readings: GF1, 98-115, 116-117, 118-123, 124-136, 137-146, 147-169, 244-265; GF2, 176-183, 184-199, 339-360

Weeks 8-9
Georgian Folk Tales, Poetry, Charms, Legends and Proverbs
Visual Material
Episodes from the movie “Legend of Surami Fortress,” 1983
Readings: GF1, 345-346; GF2, 12-189, 216-252, 311-331, 381-391, 489-506
GF2, 275-299
GF1, 346-361

Week 10
Folk Traditions in West Georgia
Megrelian Folk Tales and Proverbs
Visual Material
West Georgian rural culture in the 17th century drawings of Castelli.
Folk Architecture of the West Georgian Provinces: Ajara, Guria, Imereti, Samegrelo, Abkhazeti, Svaneti, Lechkumi and Ratcha

Readings: GF1, 56-62; GF2, 253-274

Week 11
Religious Beliefs and Oral Folklore of Abkhazians and Ossetians

Visual Material
Movie as Ethnography:
“Wonder Tree,” 1978, Episodes: medicine man, seeking for miracle stone and magic fish, death on the wonder tree, and punishment for adultery

Readings: GF1, 392-394, 395-432, 433-435, 436-456, 460-465, 466-477; GF2, 300-310
Recommended:
Male Dress in Caucasus: With Special Reference to Abkhazia and Georgia, by George Hewitt and Zaira Khiba, from ‘Languages of Dress in the Middle East,’ edited by Nancy Lindisfarne-Tapper and Bruce Ingham, Curzon Press, 1997, 93-105
Tengiz Abulaje and Flowering of Georgian Film Art, by Goldie Blankoff-Scarr, Central Asian Survey, Vol. 8, no.3. 1989, 61-86

Week 12
Traditions of Hospitality and Folk Songs of Georgia

Visual Material
Ethnographic film “Wine-press”

Readings: GF1, pp. 79-97
Recommended:

Week 13
Georgian Traditional Folk Music and Dance

Visual Material
Documentary film about Georgian folk customs and singing “Phenomenon,” 1992
Documentary film “Bagpipe,” 1990
Documentary “Georgian Folk Dance Ensemble Sukhishvili”

Readings: GF1, pp. 379-393
Recommended
Folk-Lore as the Basis of Modern Georgian Music, by P.V. Khuchua, XXV International Congress of Orientalists, Moscow, 1960, 1-7
Lost Hymns of Georgia, by Pavle Ingorokva, The Unesco Courier, no. 5, May 1962, 24-27
Some Specific Features of Georgian Folk Dance, by E.L. Gvaramadze, The 7th International Congress of Anthropological Sciences, Moscow, August 3-10, 1964, Volume 6, Moscow, 1969, 135-139, HO
Week 14
From the History of Folklore Studies in Georgia (2nd half of the 19th century to present)
The Golden Fleece: Georgian Interpretation of the Classical Myth

Visual Materials
Movie as Ethnography:
Short film “Wine Jar”
“You Will Never See What You Have Seen Before,” 1968, Episodes: urban folk dancing and music
“Keto and Kote, 1948, Episodes: Georgian urban folk singing, dancing and music

Readings: GF1, 485-532, 533-558
Recommended:
The Jason Voyage, the Quest for the Golden Fleece, by Tim Severin, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1985
Georgia, 193 - 213
The Golden Fleece, 214 - 239
Summary of the Text of Apollonius Rhodius, 244 - 259
Mythological Motifs on the Bronze Articles of the Caucasus and Luristan, by M.S. Khidasheli, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Alten Vorderasen Herausgegeben Von J. Harmatta und G. Komoroczy, Akademia Kiado, Budapest, 1976, 253-261