

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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THE CAUCASUS CULTURE – 20TH CENTURY

OVERVIEW

Caucasian culture suffered under the rule of the Soviet Union during the 20th century, during which a policy of Russification was imposed but was strongly resisted by many nations in the Caucasus. *Russification* became stricter in the late 19th – early 20th century, and, as a result of this, nationalist movements in the Caucasus increased. Oppressed non-Russians who opposed the tsarist authorities and discrimination joined Russian radicals and played an important role in the revolutionary movements in Russia. This alarmed the government, and, as a result, they adopted stricter discriminatory measures.

Ethnically, the Empire was one of the most complex states in the world in the early 20th century. Towards the end of the 20th century, the population in Russia increased, and was composed of Christians, Muslims, Protestants and Jews who did not share a common history, culture, and religion. Therefore, for the Soviets it was difficult to implement their policies in a multicultural environment.

A great deal of attention was devoted to the development of education and to combating the mass illiteracy amongst the people. The Soviet authorities had to start from ABC to eradicate illiteracy. The entire people had to go through a period of cultural development, and culture meant great achievements in the arts and sciences.

However, in the mid-20th century, art and culture was put under strict state control and public displays of Soviet life were limited to optimistic and positive depictions of Soviet men and women, a style called socialist realism. The imposition of socialist realism made art an instrument of the state and effectively put an end to public displays of any other art style.

In the 20th century, with the establishment of the Soviet socialist system, the ideological content of traditional folklore changed and the new genre of socialist realism and new themes appeared in the Caucasus folklore. Numerous works of art were dedicated to the Revolution, its leaders, socialism, collectivization, the Soviet army and so on. Among all this, the traditional culture of the Caucasian nations was preserved through the efforts of national folklorists for the sake of their countries, and some paid with their lives for their efforts.

LANGUAGE

The Caucasus, for the most part of the 19th century, was occupied by three major powers: the Russians, the Persians and the Ottomans. This dispute between three powers ended when the Soviets came to power. It was the Soviets penetrated deep into the Caucasus through annexation of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the south.

Prior to the Bolshevik rule, during the Imperial period the languages in the South Caucasus, in Azerbaijan, were using Arabic script. The Arabic alphabet had both symbolic and practical importance for the maintenance of religious and cultural ties with the other Moslem peoples in the Empire.

Latinization

Before the Revolution, there were already seven alphabets: Arabic, Latin Cyrillic, Old Mongolian, Georgian, Armenian and Hebrew and many languages did not have scripts at all.

The creation of new alphabets for the languages that had no scripts was the work of Russian Turkologist, Nikolay Ivanovich Ilminsky and these alphabets were all Cyrillic.

The first Latin script had been created in 1917 by Semen Andreevich Novgorodov for Yakut. In 1920s, in the North Caucasus, Ingushetia, Ossetia and Kabarda utilized this Latin script. A conference was held in Pyatigorsk approving a decree on issue of Latin base writing of the North Caucasus people in April 1923. New alphabets based on the Latin script were planned also for Chechnya and Adygea. In Azerbaijan alphabet reform had already been a topic of discussion during the 19th century.

In 1919, the People's Commissariat for Education, Narkompros proposed to switch all the national alphabets from the Arabic and the Cyrillic scripts to the Latin. In 1920s, there were debates on switching the alphabet which would result in the loss of the older literature, would increase illiteracy and it would be costly. The opponents argued that liquidation of illiteracy with the new alphabet would be much faster and would cost much less.

On 21 July 1922, the Central Executive Committee of the Azerbaijan Republic approved a project of the new alphabet based upon the Latin script proposed by the head of the Committee, Samed Agamalyogly.

The Latin alphabet in Azerbaijan was made compulsory for newspapers and official use in 1925. In 1926 the First Turcological Congress was held in Baku. During eight days of debate, the reasons of retaining the Arabic script, the benefits and costs of converting to the Latin alphabet were discussed.

The Latinization of all the Turkic languages of the Soviet Union was proclaimed official policy. Lenin also proposed the Latin alphabet for all languages in the Soviet Union, because he believed that the Cyrillic alphabet was a symbol of isolation and backwardness. During the 1920s, there was a debate over whether the Latin alphabet could replace Cyrillic in the Russian language. The Soviets set up a Commission to promote the Latinization of Russian language under the leadership of the first People's Commissar of Education, A. Lunacharsky.

Lenin pointed out that the Latin alphabet was becoming the uniform world alphabet, the alphabet of the victorious proletariat and to unite revolutionaries in the world it was necessary to switch to Latin alphabet.

Cyrillization

Close relationships between the various Turkic-speaking groups and Turkey itself raised suspicion in Moscow. The authorities changed the alphabet policy in favour of Cyrillization.

In the late 1930s, most minority languages of the Soviet Union had a new writing system based on a modified version of the Cyrillic alphabet.

Switch from Latin to Cyrillic was in the 1940s. From 1938 on, the Soviets decided to universalize the knowledge of Russian. In 1939 - 1940 abandoning the Unified Turkic Alphabet the Soviets decided create variations of the Cyrillic script.

The Unified Turkic Alphabet was replaced with individual Cyrillic scripts for each Turkic language in the Soviet Union in order to linguistically unify the Soviet Union.

Changing the writing system was not restricted to the orthography alone. It affected the inner structure, that is grammatical and lexical. For languages which had minimal contact with western culture and technology, the loan words enriched their lexicon.

With these structural changes which took in every languages of minorities in the Soviet Union, the related languages were distanced from one another and their mutual intelligibility began to disappear.

The imposition of a Cyrillic alphabet injured the pride of the many nationalities in the Caucasus and reminded them their humiliating past and their status in the Russian Empire. It was supposed to unite people, and eliminate ethnic tensions. On the contrary, it increased ethnic tensions.

In the 1940s through to 1980s the written languages of nearly all nations and ethnic groups were based on the Cyrillic alphabet. The Georgian and Armenian languages, and Yiddish were using their traditional scripts.

Stalin's Reaction - Compulsory Russian Abandoned

During World War II, Stalin decided to freeze the compulsory introduction of Russian and let other languages alone, because he did not wish to awaken opposition in the Republics. However, after World War II, Stalin returned to his compulsory introduction of Russian which continued until his death in 1953.

Sovietization

The Soviets' policies during Stalin were designed to create a culturally uniform Soviet population through a universal knowledge of the Russian language.

A government decree of March 13, 1938, made Russian language and literature obligatory subjects in all schools in the Caucasus.

Russian language instruction in schools remained poor as local party officials and bureaucrats delayed the changes.

To require Russian language for minority groups implied that the Soviet Union was becoming more like a unitary nation-state, demanding a common culture for its population.

The Soviets were planning to draft non-Russian soldiers into the Soviet Army and this army required a common language.

In late 1935, the decision to make Russian obligatory appeared to indicate that the Stalin had decided on a policy of Sovietization non-Russian schools.

This decision angered the nationalities in the Caucasus.

In those schools in which Russian was taught, the level of instruction was extremely unsatisfactory.

Narkompros had failed to supervise the training of non-Russian school teachers and had only begun to manage textbook publishing for non-Russian schools in 1933.

Narkompros representatives had to speak to teachers of Russian in the republics through an interpreter. They did not provide any kind of methodological help.

Teachers did not know how or what to study. There were no schedules and no textbooks.

Another factor that complicated the instruction in non-Russian schools was the switch from the Latin to the Cyrillic alphabet between 1939 and 1941.

In the 1939-1940 school year, 37 such alphabets were being created. This required the reprinting of all textbooks that had only just been rewritten the year before.

The textbooks were delayed and many schools were forced to continue to use the Latin-based books.

After 1958, native-language education in the republics was reduced, and a new type of school introduced with Russian as the language of instruction, in which native language and literature remained only a subject.

Nikita Khrushchev introduced a policy which make Russian the language of the Soviet Union. He believed that the Soviet Union should be united both politically and linguistically.

The state encouraged native-language education and make Russian the second national language of all republics.

The Education Reforms of 1958-1959 stated that education in the mother tongue was no longer compulsory and Russian was a required course of study where instruction in the native language was not abandoned.

The consequence of this was that instruction in the national languages suffered in favor of increased Russian instruction.

During Brezhnev and the 1970s Sovietization further accelerated; goal was the establishment of Soviet people (Sovetskiy narod) with a common language.

Russian became compulsory for all children, but still there were problems with qualified teachers and centralized textbooks even for Russian.

The Soviet Union was in reality a *pseudo-federal* state where power came from the center.

Glasnost changed everything. After Gorbachev's support for greater openness, national movements in the republics of the Caucasus sprang up with one goal on their agenda: independence.

As central authority eroded during late perestroika, conflicts erupted over the rights to these territories and their groups' national self-determination.

Soviet Language Policy in the North and the South Caucasus

Soviet language policy in the region was introduced in the region to facilitate the use of Russian as a general lingua franca. But, the linguistic complexity of the languages in the area made it impossible for the language planners to establish Russian as the sole major language of communication.

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA: After the revolution of 1917, Georgia went under control of the Mensheviks.

In 1921, the Bolsheviks invaded Georgia, and Stalin was appointed as the Commissar for the Nationalities in charge of issues related to non-Russian minorities.

By 1921, Stalin urged Georgians to give up ideas of independence. After Lenin, many writers who lead the nationalist movements in Georgia were arrested or executed.

In 1922, Georgia entered the Transcaucasian Soviet Republic along with Armenia and Azerbaijan. It only became a republic of the Soviet Union in 1936.

At the time of the Revolution, Georgia had very high literacy. During Korenizatsia (nativization, indigenization), Georgian language was recognized as the official language of the state.

However, the Soviet authorities attempted to abolish its status of being the state language. This frequently resulted in massive protests led by Georgian dissidents Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava against the Soviet administration with the slogan *Ena, Mamuli, Sartsmunoeba* (Language, Fatherland, Faith) emphasizing the importance of the Georgian language. *The Society for Advancement of Literacy Among Georgians* played an active role to increase literacy among Georgians, and Jacob Gogebashvili's *Dedaena* (Mother language textbook) served as an important textbook in this process.

During Stalin, the Georgian authorities imposed Georgian script for Abkhaz language and all the Abkhazian schools were closed. After Stalin's death, Georgia banned Abkhazian and massive influx of Georgians into Abkhazia began.

During Khrushchev, the Soviets led anti-Georgian campaign and imposed Cyrillic alphabet for Abkhaz and Ossetia. Schools reopened. Violent protests erupted in Tbilisi in 1956.

In the mid-1970s, there was an attempt to make Russian the language of communication and education, promoted by Eduard Shevardnadze, all higher education was to be only in Russian. However, the 1970 census indicated that the Russian language was not dominant: 91.4% in rural and 63% urban areas.

The 1970 census indicated that the Russian language was not as dominant during the Soviets: 91.4% rural Georgians and 63% urban population were not fluent in Russian.

Till 1978, Georgian language was able to maintain its status, and there was an attempt to change part of the constitution to remove Georgian as the official state language of the republic. After a protest held in Tbilisi where thousands of Georgians took the streets to protest the government's decision which proved to be effective, Georgian was retained.

The official *Georgian Language Program* in the 1980s reaffirmed the role of Georgian in education, political life, mass media, and print.

As of 1989, 94% of Georgian children were enrolled in Georgian-language schools.

Georgians, in comparison with Armenians and Azerbaijanis, were more conservative. According to the 1979 census, the percentage of fluency in Russian was the lowest among the union republics: 26.7% of ethnic Georgians were fluent in Russian.

Georgia adopted a language law in 1995 which recognized two official languages - Georgian in Georgia, and Abkhazian and Georgian in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia. Regardless of ethnic background, language or religion, state ensured that all citizens were equal, and minorities could use their languages in private and public life without restriction.

The Russian language in Georgia remained as lingua franca among the minorities. However, the government made Russian an elective class like French or German. In general, English was a mandatory foreign language class.

ARMENIA: In 1936, the Armenian Soviet Republic was proclaimed and Armenian became the state language.



During Korenizatsia, in education Armenian was the language of instruction.

Russian language was stressed as the lingua franca in 1938 and Russian language study was made compulsory for all students in the Soviet Union.

The Russification spread to literature and arts. Intellectuals and writers were arrested.

After Stalin, during Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, the literacy level was increased, and the fluency of Russian.

In 1978, the Soviets tried to cancel the official status of Armenian. In 1978, a protests held in Yerevan reversed attempt to remove guarantee of Armenian as official language, and Armenian protected its status.

The knowledge of Russian was a requirement for government jobs, and therefore some parents preferred to send their children to Russian-language schools. Russian language was a marker of “social prestige”.

The 1979 census indicated that 99.4 % of Armenians considered Armenian as their first language. At the time of



independence in 1991, almost half of the population were fluent in Russian.



Until the early 1990's, schools in Armenia conducted their classes in either Russian or Armenian. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the number of Russian schools declined due to a legislative ban on education in foreign languages initiated in the early 1990s.

The Armenian language law was adopted in 1993. Armenian was the official language of Armenia. State institutions, organizations and officials were required to use Armenian, and broadcasting in Armenia was conducted in Armenian.

The state law guaranteed minorities to gain free access to the mass media, and granted the right to establish their own mass media.

Publishing and study in minority languages was permitted. Yet, the government allocated minimal resources to maintaining minority-language schools. It resulted in decreased number of Russian language schools.

In Armenia, Russian had no official status. But, Russian was still the first language for many Armenians.

The language of instruction in schools was Armenian, and Russian was a required language at schools as a second language in the first grade. A third foreign language was compulsory in second or third grades.

AZERBAIJAN: Towards the late 19th century, all Turkic periodicals were banned by the Empire until 1904.

Azerbaijani's were forced to get their education in Christian Russo-Tatar schools. They showed resistance and wanted to increase native language instruction.

In 1905, in Azerbaijan many Moslems were attracted to the socialist in opposition to the Russian Empire. One important leftist organization the Himmat was established in 1904 and dedicated to awakening Azerbaijani culture and language, and opposing Russian influence. In 1907 the Himmat was suppressed by the Russian forces.

In 1910, the Musuvat was established. It was attracted to revolutionary ideals on behalf of the proletariat, and regard the Bolsheviks as the enemy of Azerbaijanis. The question of language was a central part of their activity.

In 1918, Azerbaijan declared itself independent. The status of Azerbaijani fluctuated rapidly.



In 1920, the Soviets invaded and retook control over Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan was incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1922 with Armenia and Georgia as part of the Transcaucasian Socialist Soviet Republic.

Azerbaijan benefited from the liberal policies of Korenizatsia by which local culture and language were encouraged.

An order issued by the Education Commissariat made Azerbaijani the language of instruction in universities.

In 1924, the old Arabic alphabet used for the Azerbaijani language was officially replaced with a Latin script. In 1940, Latin alphabet was replaced by the Cyrillic. The effects of the alphabet change in Azerbaijan was an increase of literacy.

Russian officially designated as the language of interethnic communication in Azerbaijan, and also remained the language of government administration.

In 1938, the study of Russian was made mandatory from the fifth grade on.

In 1958, abolished a law within the Soviet Union that had mandated the study of titular languages in the Russian schools of the republics.

In 1970s, teaching Russian began in the first grade.

During glasnost, many topics not previously open for discussion were raised, including language. Several articles began to appear in Azerbaijani press criticizing the Cyrillic alphabet as part of Russian colonialism.

In 1978, the Constitution stipulated that Azerbaijani was the state language. Russian and other languages would also be used without any discrimination.

In 1989, a Resolution on Language was passed supporting the development of the titular language.

In Azerbaijan 99.1% of the Azerbaijanis claimed that Azerbaijani as their native tongue, and 37% claimed fluency in Russian.

In 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted a modified Latin alphabet with few new special letters. The transition to Latin script has been completed in 2001.

In Azerbaijan the state language law was adopted in 1995. Since 1 August 2001, the official alphabet has been the Latin alphabet in Azerbaijan.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA: Many North Caucasian languages, although in close physical proximity, are not mutually intelligible.

In order to interact for economic, political, and social reasons, some kind of lingua franca was needed for society to function; and it was Russian.





In 1920's, the result of Korenizatsiya was a general flowering in local languages in the North Caucasus.

Chechen-Soviet newspaper "Serlo" written in the Latin script during Korenizatsiya

Until the late 1930's, Russian language teaching continued to be rare in many areas, including Dagestan and Checheno-Ingushetia.

In the 1920's there was a development of writing systems for many small languages which had not had written forms before the

Revolution.

Under the development of writing systems and education many written languages were created (over 50 groups) and national schools were established.

In 1929, the Latin script was made compulsory for all nationalities that had previously used Arabic.

The Soviet government first chose Latin script rather than Cyrillic, because such a perception might provoke a violent, anti-Russian reaction.

By 1934, the Soviet government was printing textbooks in 104 languages.

By 1939, all languages in the North Caucasus were printed in the Cyrillic alphabet.

The scholars Nikolai Yakovlev, Zaindi Dzhambalkhanov and Akhmat Matsiev made great contribution to the development of the Chechen language and they worked on the grammar of the Chechen language and published textbooks on language and literature in the 1940s.

In the 1958-1959 educational reforms removed the requirement that non-Russian children study Russian, but also removed the requirement that Russian children study local languages.

In spite of everything, native language retention rates among the North Caucasian peoples were high, and very few people consider Russian their native language.

The development of Russian-native language bilingualism was a success.

Of the 120 linguistic groups which existed in 1934, by the 1980's only 18 national languages were being taught in Russian schools at all.

During 1989-1990 school year, no indigenous North Caucasian people had instruction available in its native language beyond the second grade, and the Chechens had no native language instruction at all.

The republics declared both titular and Russian as their co-official state languages. But, sometimes other languages were also given official status.

SCRIPT

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA: The modern alphabet is called *Mkhedruli*. It is the secular alphabet, there is no distinction between upper and lower case letters, each Georgian sound is represented by only one letter and it is fully phonemic.

The Soviets did not change the Georgian alphabet since Georgia had a deep attachment to their national identity and heritage and had very high literacy rates. Also, the Georgians fought hard to preserve linguistic

separatism and self-determination. They continued publishing books in the Georgian alphabet, and in 1929, 71% of the books were printed in Georgian. By the mid-1970s, Georgian was still the first language of the Georgians, Svans and Megrelians and 94% of Georgian children attended Georgian language schools. In 1989, 98% of the population was fluent in Georgian. Therefore, by the end of the Soviet Union, Georgians were one of the least Russified nations.

ARMENIA: During the Soviet era, Armenia was an ethnically and linguistically homogeneous country. As in the case of Georgia, the Soviet authorities did not replace the Armenian alphabet with Latin or Cyrillic, since the Armenians had high literacy, a well-established literary tradition and a strong ethnic identity and heritage.

During the Soviet period in Armenia, an orthographic change was implemented in 1922. The government passed a decree to revise the classical etymological writing through measures such as the unification of some symbols, the discontinuation of the standardized norm of writing of diphthongs which were no longer pronounced etc. and to make Armenian orthography more phonetic.

Classical Armenian Grabar is used today only in the Armenian Apostolic Church as a liturgical language.

AZERBAIJAN: The Bolsheviks regarded education as a vital tool in their efforts to combat illiteracy and disseminate their propaganda. One of their first moves after the revolution was the inauguration of a social policy known as *korenizatsija* (nativization or indigenization). Its goal was to create a single socialist community out of all of the Soviet Union's diverse minority nationalities by means of a uniform national culture. Moreover, because widespread illiteracy was seen as a major obstacle to creating both a socialist worldview and a socialist state, the drive to increase literacy was thought essential in spreading socialism among the minority nationalities.

In 1919, the People's Commissariat for Education, Narkompros proposed switching all the national alphabets from Arabic and Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet. In the 1920s, opponents of switching the alphabet argued that it would result in the loss of the older literature, would increase illiteracy and would be costly. Supporters of alphabet change argued that the liquidation of illiteracy with the new alphabet would be much faster and would cost much less.

On 21 July 1922, the Central Executive Committee of the Azerbaijan Republic approved the project to adopt a new alphabet based upon the Latin script proposed by the head of the Committee, Samed Agamaly-ogly. The Latin alphabet in Azerbaijan was made compulsory for newspapers and official use in 1925. In 1926 the First Turcological Congress was held in Baku. During eight days of debate, the reasons for retaining the Arabic script, the costs and benefits of converting to the Latin alphabet were discussed. The congress envisaged a common Latin-based Turkic alphabet, and this New Turkic Alphabet was later approved in 1927–1928 by the All-Union Central Committee on the New Turkic Alphabet. Between 1927 and 1930, the five major Central Asian languages substituted the Latin alphabet for the Arabic.

Despite the efforts spent to create a common Latin alphabet for the Turkic languages, the new, i.e. Latin, alphabet was replaced with modified versions of the Cyrillic alphabet throughout Central Asia between 1938 and 1940. In addition, beginning in 1938, all non-Russian schools were required to teach the Russian language. The Soviets claimed these changes were necessary to combat illiteracy, particularly in the countryside, and to bring the minority peoples of the Soviet Union up to the cultural level of the Russians. While these claims may have had merit, another purpose was to isolate the Turkic republics from the influence of Turkey.

With the passage of the state language law in 1995, Azerbaijan became the first Turkic republic to adopt the Latin alphabet. This change was carried out with relative ease as the language is quite similar to Turkish, and the switch was supported by the former president Ebulfez Elchibey as both a way to move closer to Turkey and to reassert Azerbaijan's Turkic identity. Azerbaijan's next president, Heydar Aliyev, likewise supported the transition to the Latin alphabet, seeing it as a means to create a distinct Azerbaijani identity, and on 1 August 2001 announced a deadline for the mandatory alphabet change. The leadership's commitment to this policy combined with the country's high rate of literacy both contributed to a smooth transition as well as bringing Azerbaijan closer to Turkey and Europe.

The state language written with the Latin alphabet is used in books, education, and all official documents, as well as in the press and other media. Although minority languages can be used in education, provided that there is a need and that such use conforms with national laws, a 2002 law passed by the Milli Mezhlis required the use of Azeri for all government work.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA:

In the 1920's, the Soviets also worked on the development of writing systems for languages which did not have an indigenous written form before the Revolution. In 1925, the Latin script was made obligatory for the North Caucasian people that had previously used Arabic. Chechens used Arabic until 1937 and switched to Cyrillic thenceforth.

The Soviet government preferred the Latin script rather than Cyrillic so as not to provoke any anti-Russian reaction among the Muslim peoples in the North Caucasus, since the switch to the Cyrillic alphabet would be considered an attempt at Russification.

In 1992, Chechnya declared independence from Russia and demanded the Latin alphabet henceforth be used for Chechnya, but this was never realized. Cyrillic is still used in Chechnya.

Questions:

- 1- Why was the transition from Arabic to Latin and then to Cyrillic considered necessary?
- 2- Why didn't the Soviets change the Georgian and Armenian alphabets to Cyrillic?
- 3- How many North Caucasian languages survived even after the imposition of compulsory Russian language use?

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MYTHOLOGY

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA: Although the Georgians are Orthodox Christians, pagan folk customs such as the use of songs in rituals for healing purposes chanted over sick children, were still practised in the 20th century. For example, the Georgians believed, that the spirit of disease, *Bat'onebi* visited the houses of the sick in the evening and lived in the bodies of the sick children.



Kopala was the deity of lightning worshipped by the mountain people in Georgia.

A temple to Kopala in Pshavi, in the village of Udzilaurta in an open place called Iremtkalo.

Iakhsar was deity of the Pshav-Khevsur pantheon, the cult of which was centred in the village of Shuapkho. He was also a deity of the wider Kistauri community.

The *bat'onebi*, for example, are spirits who are believed to live beyond the Black Sea, and they are sent out by their superior in all directions in order to test the loyalty of mankind. During the daytime, the *bat'onebi* move about on mules. In the evening, however, they return to the houses of the sick and reside in the bodies of the stricken. *Bat'onebi* are to be obeyed without question, as resistance only enrages them.

The blisters from chickenpox (*qvavili*, literally: flowers) and the redness from measles (*ts'itela*, literally: redness) are said to be signs of the arrival of the *bat'onebi*. In preparation for the ritual, the patient's bed and room are decorated with colourful fabrics and flowers. Visitors wear red or white garments and walk around the sick person with presents for the *bat'onebi* in their hands.

A table full of sweets and a kind of Christmas tree are prepared for them too. If the illness becomes worse, the family of the patient turn to the ritual of asking-for-pardon (*sabodisho*) and a *mebodishe* (a woman who has access to the *bat'onebi* and acts as a mediator) is invited to contact them to find out what they want and to win them over. Once the patient recovers, the *bat'onebi* have to be escorted on their way, back to where they came from.

ARMENIA: Although the Armenians are Christian, elements of Zoroastrian and Mithraic beliefs are still preserved in Armenian culture. For example, February 14 is associated with the pagan symbols of sun and fire which is celebrated as a religious holiday *Diarentarach* (Presenting before the Lord) which is dedicated to newlywed and young couples for good fortune and fertility. Young couples dance, sing and jump over flames.



Another pagan tradition that still exists is the tying of pieces of cloth onto trees near a church, in the hope that God would see their wishes.

Another ancient tradition, *Matagh*, the sacrifice of an animal, to give a gift to God and show mercy by helping the poor, also still exists in Armenia. In addition, a church meal with bulgur and meat (or chicken) is served to people 40 days after of the death person who was a member of the congregation.

A pagan figure called the *Arevakhach* (Sun cross – Eternity sign) is still used on buildings, churches, khachkars, memorials, logos, medals etc.

Eternity sign carved on a khachkar for the victims of the 1988 Armenian earthquake

AZERBAIJAN: The mythological elements related to the cosmogonic myths referring the creation of the world, calendar myths referring seasonal processes, and ethnologic myths referring the origin of the ethnic race still exist in Azerbaijani folklore and literature. The mythological elements are found in the ceremony of Sayachy (Blessing Ceremony, counting) and Novruz (celebration of spring).

Mythological elements are also found in ceremonial songs and dances such as Kosa-Kosa, a blessing, fertility and abundance ceremony. Kosa is a mythological male character associated with youth and springtime. In the ceremony Godu-godu, godu associated with the ancient goddess of sun.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA: There are still elements of mythology, elements of cosmogonic myths, some names of deities, Nart saga, totemic beliefs and the folk calendar have survived into the 20th century Chechen mythology. For example, Chechens still name a rain ritual to call the rain-god *Khin-Dela*. A group of children would go from door to door, one of the boys wearing a waterproof bag over his head. The residents of the houses would throw water on the boy and distribute sweets to the children.

Chechen cosmogonic myths are maintained in the genesis of Earth, Sun, Moon and stars. The name of the *Milky Way* corresponds to *Cha Takhina Tacha* (the route of scattered straw) and Great Bear to *Vorkh Veshin Vorkh Seda* (the seven brothers' seven stars).

The names of deities appears in animistic ideas. For example, *Latta-nana* corresponds to *Mother of Earth*; *Mekha-nana* corresponds to *Mother of Winds*, *Khi-nana* corresponds to *Mother of Water* and *Un-nana* corresponds to *Mother of Diseases*.

FOLKLORE

SOUTH CAUCASUS



GEORGIA: The Christian and pre-Christian aspects of Georgian folklor coexist together. There are many festivals in Georgia where both aspects are intermingled. Some of these are:

Kopala is the pre-Christian deity of lightning and the holiday *Kopaloba* is still celebrated in his honour. *Kopala* is a man armed with a mace and an iron bow was made especially for him by the blacksmith god *Pirkusha*.

Also, in Georgia folk festivals such as the pagan festivity of fertility, *Berikaoba*, a folk theatre performance with masked players, and another pagan festivity of the awakening of nature, *Keenoba*, were used in organizing revolutionary activities held in Telavi in 1905.

Berikaoba festivity on a Soviet stamp (1991)

There are other folk festivals such as *Tbilisoba* which is celebrated as the official day of the foundation of Tbilisi, first held in 28 October 1979 when the harvest is over.

Alaverdoba is a religious and folk festivity in Kakheti and it is a harvest festival. The festival's name comes from the Alaverdi Cathedral.

Shuamtoba is another folk festival held in summer in the mountain pastures of Khulo and Shuakhevi, in the first weekend of every August which pays tribute to the region's heritage.

Eliaoba is also a folk festival held on 28 August, on the day of St. Elia, the master of the weather.

Chabua Amirejibi was a Soviet writer who authored the novel *Data Tutashkhia* (1973). In his novel, he portrayed a hero based on the pagan god Tutashkha in Georgian folklore.

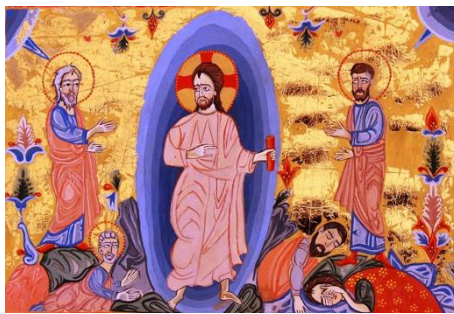
The 20th century Georgian writer Goderdzi Chokheli combined the elements of Pagan mythology and Orthodoxy in his novels *Wolf* (1988) and *Priest's Sin* (1990).

The bird *Paskunji* is a phoenix-like animal that helps and protects heroes, and heals wounds and illnesses in Georgian folk tales. There are also various kinds of witches in Georgian folk tales like the *devis deda* (the mother of the *devi*), *Ali* (a beautiful woman with blond hair living in water, forests or in huge rock caves), *rokapi* (a demonical, ugly woman), and *dedaberi* (wise, old woman).

In Georgian villages, there are rituals and dances like *Perkhulis* (round dances) glorifying the Sun.

ARMENIA: There are festivals that were associated with pagan tradition such as the *Vardavar*, a festivity where people throw water on each other. It is held on July 8. The *Vardavar* has connection with a legend in which the goddess *Astghik* spreads love in all Armenia by sprinkling rose water and the god *Vahagn* defends love fighting Evil.

The other festival which has pagan origins is *Trndez*, a feast of purification celebrated on February 13. In this festivity newly married couples are blessed, and a fire is lit for the newly married couple and other members of the community to jump over.



Vardavar (Transfiguration) is also a pagan holiday, celebrated in July. This pagan festival is linked to the ancient goddess of water *Astghik*. During this festivity people throw water on each other.

The Feast of Hampartzoom is one of the feasts celebrated by the Armenian Church forty days after the Resurrection of Jesus.

On February 26, there is a pagan festival dedicated to the god of fire, *Mihr*. On this day a newlywed young man brings bushes and pile them in the yard of the church. In the evening, the priest sets fire to the pile. All the residents of the village dance around the fire, and the young men jump over it.

Ashugi (wandering poets and singers) perform folk songs and poems with violins and mandolins. They write their own verses to sing during the festivals and in markets.

Many epics played a central role in the folklore of Armenia. In Armenian folklore David Sassoun is the most popular hero fighting against the Arabs. In 1902, the Armenian writer Hovhannes Tumanyan wrote a folk epic using the heroic poem of David of Sassoun.

AZERBAIJAN:

In the first half of the 20th century, the Soviets hampered the progressive development of Azerbaijani folklore and forced folklorists to bring Azerbaijani folklore in line with Soviet-socialist ideology. In 1920, the Institute of Folklore was established within the Organization of Investigation and Study of Azerbaijan, and became active in 1994 under the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences (ANAS). Eynali Sultanov, Mahmudbey Mahmudbeyov, Firudin bey Kocherli, Hanafi Zeynalli and Salman Mumtaz are a few of the distinguished folklorists researching and collecting samples of oral folklore and publishing them.

Even during the Soviet period, traditional *ashiqs* continued to exist in Soviet Azerbaijan's national folklore. The *ashiqs* performed their poems with a stringed instrument, the *kobuz*. With the continuation of this tradition folk tales such as *Koroğlu* and the *Book of Dede Korkut* were preserved. Among the *ashiqs* of the 20th century, the most popular ones were *Ashiq Hussein Bozalqanlı*, *Ashiq Mirza*, *Ashiq Islam*, *Ashiq Shamshir*, *Ashiq Kamandar*, *Mikail Azafli* and *Akbar Jafarov*.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA: In the 20th century, the Chechen folk epics of the *Narts* maintained archaic motifs and the *Nakh* legends depict the *Narts* as warlike bandits who fought against good local heroes. Chechen folklore also popularized the folk figure *Mullah Nasreddin*.

In Chechen folklore the *Abrek* was a warrior struggling for a cause he believed in. One of the most popular abreks of the 20th century was *Zelimkhan Gushmazuko*. He was a hero fighting for freedom against foreign domination. Zelimkhan was killed in 1913 during his resistance against the Russians.



The last Chechen *Abrek* was *Khasukhi Magomadov* who avoided being deported in 1944 by escaping to the mountains, and starting a guerrilla war against the Soviet armies stationed in Chechnya until he was caught in 1979.

The Chechen heroic *Ilili* continued to survive as one of the most important genres reflecting true friendship, courage, morals, modesty and so forth. In the 20th century, *Illesh* depicted the struggle against the Russian occupation and tyranny over the Chechens.

Questions:

1- Which deities and customs from early Caucasian culture have survived into the 20th century?

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VISUAL ART

PAINTING

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA:

Niko Pirosmani: Pirosmani was a naïve painter focused mostly on the environment, people, animals, and food. He was the only Georgian animalist.



During the Soviet rule, the main themes of the artists were the life of the workers, patriotism, the historical events, and the harmony between the surroundings and people.

Bagrat Shvelidze: Bagrat Shvelidze depicted the strong patriotism of young Georgians as in the *Remembering the Fallen Sons* (1972).

Radish Tordia: Tordia was a painter of figurative art. His romantic female portraits such as *Woman in Green* (1999) and *Melancoly* (1998), provided all the details of a woman's life, her mood, her feelings, and her expectations.



ARMENIA:

Alexander Bazhbeuk-Melikian: Melikian was a painter and sculpture depicted female figures dancing, working in a circus, magicians, jugglers, exotically dressed women, women at stage performances etc.



Martiros Sarian: Sarian was the best Armenian landscape painter who was also the founder of a modern Armenian national school of painting. Her paintings were known with their rich colors and simple natural forms.

Minas Avetisian: Avetisian was nature painter, who depicted the nature of his birth place Jajur, the religion, poor people, mountains, and fields.



AZERBAIJAN:



Azim Azimzade: Azim Azimzade was an illustrator, painter and caricaturist. In his paintings, he often used the themes of society's injustices, educational opportunities and women's rights. Azimzade created a thematic series where he examined social inequality, as in *Wedding of the Rich People* and *Wedding of the Poor People*.

Wedding of the Poor People, 1931

Gazanfar Khalykov: In his paintings, Khalykov depicted historical and modern themes.



Khalykov's self portrait



Sattar Bahlulzade: Bahlulzade was an artist of landscape painting who depicted nature with his surrealistic style.

Tahir Salahov: Salahov depicted real life without any idealization as in his *At the Caspian Sea*, 1967. He became the First Secretary of the Artists' Union of the USSR (1973–1992), Vice-President of the Russian Academy of Arts.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA: Painting and graphic art in Chechnya were born only after 1917. The Union of Painters of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR was established in 1943.

Amandi Asukhanov: Asukhanov was a landscape painter who depicted his native land in his works as in *Lilac Castle*, and *Views of My Native Land*.

Zamir Yushaev: Yushaev was a surrealist artist. He depicted his people and his native land as in *the Letter on Mother*.

SCULPTURE

SOUTH CAUCASUS GEORGIA:



Zurab Tsereteli: Tsereteli was a painter, sculptor and architect who created the tallest statue in the world, *the statue of Peter the Great* in downtown Moscow. He served as the President of the Russian Academy of Arts since 1997.

Chronicle of Georgia: This monument was built by Zurab Tsereteli in 1985. It is located near the Tbilisi sea. At the top, Tsereteli depicted half features of the kings, queens and heroes, and on the bottom part, there were scenes from the life of Christ.



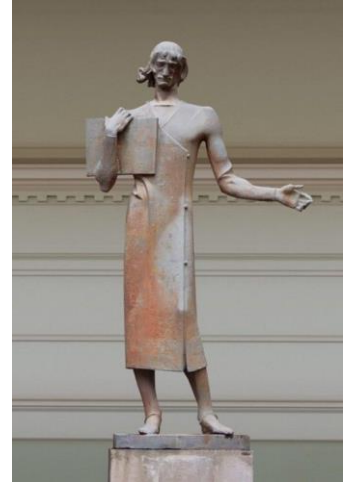
Iakob Nikoladze: In 1922, Nikoladze became the first teacher at the Faculty of Sculpture at the Tbilisi State Academy of Arts. His most famous sculptures were: *The Old Jew* (1896), *The Wind* (1905), *Salomea* (1906), and *Grieving Georgia* (1913).



Iakob Nikoladze Wind 1905

Kartlis Deda was a monument built by Elguja Amashukeli in Tbilisi in 1958. It stands on the top of Sololaki hill.

Merab Berdzenishvili: Georgian sculpture Merdzenishvili's monumental sculptures were monuments of David Guramishvili (1959), Shota Rustaveli (Tbilisi), Giorgi Saakadze (Kaspi), Medea (Bichvinta), Didgori Memorial (Digori), Soldier's Father (Gurjaani), Ketevan (Tbilisi), and King David *Aghmashenebeli* (Tbilisi).



Tamara Abakelia: Abakelia was a sculptor and theatre designer. She made depicting WWII as in *We will revenge* (1944).

Merab Merabishvili: Merabishvili was a sculptor, and an academician. He created the *monuments of Alexander Griboedov* in Tbilisi (1961), *King Erekle II* in Telavi (1972), and *Peter Bagrationi* in Tbilisi (1984) and Moscow (1999).



Aragveli monument, Zhinvali

300 Aragveli Monument was built in 1959 by A. Bakradze to immortalize 300 brave Georgian soldiers from the Aragvi Valley who sacrificed themselves for their country in the Krtsanisi battle near Tbilisi.

King Erekle II



ARMENIA:

Aytsemnik Urartu: Urartu was another 20th century sculptor known with his statue *the Girl with Pitcher* in 1939.

Sargis Baghdasaryan: Baghdasaryan was a sculptor known with his work *We Are Our Mountains* (1967) a monument carved into the tuff outside Stepanakert.

Getik Baghdasaryan: Baghdasaryan was a sculptor in Yerevan created his work with tuff as in *The Pope's Monument* in Echmiadzin (1982), *Hazaran Bibul* in Arzni (1982), *Zitan* symposium in Ijevan (1985), *Zangezur Gateways* (1987) and many more.



Ghukas Chubaryan: Chubaryan was a sculptor of post-Stalin period famous with his basalt *Monument of Mestop Mashtots*, the decorative ornaments on the government building (1950) and the facade of Yerevan Opera House (1980).



Monument of Mesrop Mashtots, 1962

Tereza Mirzoyan: Mirzoyan created the bust of Armenian physician Amirdovlat Amasiatsi and Bronze bust of the father of Armenian medicine of the 12th century *Mkhitar Heratsi* in Yerevan. She also created the sculpture called *Loves me, doesn't love me* in the late 1980s.

Ara Shiraz: Shiraz was an Armenian sculptor. He became the president of the *Artists' Union of Armenia* in 1987. He created many statues like the statue of

Yeghishe Charents in Charentsavan (1977), the statue of Paruyr Sevak in Yerevan (1978), the statue of Aleksandr Miasnikian in Yerevan (1980), the statue of William Saroyan in Yerevan (1984), the statue of Tigran Petrosian in Yerevan (1989), the statue of Hovhannes Shiraz in Yerevan (1989) and the statue of Sergei Parajanov in Yerevan (1999).

The statue of Hovhannes Shiraz



AZERBAIJAN:

In the early 20th century, numerous statues, decorative monuments and busts created by Azerbaijani sculptors.

Ibrahim Guliyev: He was famous with his monument called *Motherland* in Ganja. In 1955 he also created the portrait bust of V. Lenin.

Fuad Abdurrahmanov: Fuad Abdurrahmanov was one of the founders of Soviet monumental sculpture. He created monumental statue of *Nizami* (1946), statue of Samed Vurgun (1961), statue of Mehdi Huseynzadeh (1973) and many others.

Jalal Garyaghdhi: After Fuad Abdurrahmanov, Garyaghdhi's statues made valuable contribution to the development of Azerbaijani monumental statue art. He is famous with his statue of Molla Penah Vagif (1939). Garyaghdhi created a monument to the satirical poet Sabir in 1958 in Baku. He also made a portrait of Niyazi, Rashid Behbudov, Mirza Alakbar Sabir, Jahangir Jahangirov and Khurshidbanu Natavan.



Omar Hasan oglu Eldarov: Eldarov was a another sculptor in Azerbaijan. He sculptured the monument of Sattar Bahlulzade (1975), a bust of Muslim Mogomayev, monument of Huseyn Javid (1993), monument of Mammed Amin Rasulzade (1995), and memorial to Fizuli.

The monument of Sattar Bahlulzade

Tokay Habib oglu Mammadov was a sculptor and the head of the Union of Artists of Azerbaijan in 1970-1972. He was well-known with his bronze busts to veterans of war, Adil Guliyev, Bahaddin Mirzoyev; sculptural portrait of Samad Vurgun (1987), a monument to Nasimi (1979).

Zivar Mammadova: Mammadova was the first woman sculptor of Azerbaijan. Mammadova created portrait sculptures of eminent people in Azerbaijan like the sculptures of Azim Azimzade, Huseynqulu Sarabski, Meshadi Azizbayov, Idris Suleymanov, Uzeyir Hajibeyli and others. She was also known with her sculpture of the *Farmers women* (1940).

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA:

Ilyas Dutaev: Dutaev was a wood-sculptor, and a pioneer in the art of miniature wood-carving. His works reflected national culture and traditions. His works included *Gluttons*, *Expectation of a Son* and *Dancing Son*.

Iles Tataev: Tataev was a wood-sculptor who created *The Tenth Wave*, *When a Man Loses His Head*, *A Radar of the Planet*, *A Lady with a Dog*, *An Idea*, *Danko*, *Salvador Dali—Symphony*, and *Motherhood*.

ARCHITECTURE

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA: The 20th century Georgian architecture shows diversity from Modernism to Neo-Gothic and Neo-Romantic architecture. Radical change in architecture began.

Circular architecture was a common design used in Georgian Soviet architecture as in *Palace of Ceremonies* built by the architects V. Jorbenadze and V. Orbeladze under the influences of German avant-garde expressionism. The similar structure also was used in the *Archaeological Museum*.

Chronicle of Georgia: The monument was built by Zurab Tsereteli in 1985. It was a chronicle of the history of Georgia situated at the top of a large set of stairs. There are 16 pillars, at the top, there are figures of half kings, queens and heroes, at the bottom the life of Christ was depicted.



Late Soviet architecture shows futuristic elements as in the *Institute of Physiology* built in 1986 by architects V. Gelashvili, T. Todradze, D. Kostov, D. Tevdoradze, and O. Phanozashvili.

ARMENIA: One of the architects of the 20th century was Baghdasar Arzoumanian. He built many civil and church buildings in Armenia. He is the architecture of the *City Hall of Vanadzor*, *Erebuni Museum*, *David of Sassoun metro station* and the *Degustation Hall* at Yerevan Brandy Factory.



Erebuni Museum

The other well-known architects were Rafael Israyelyan, G. Kochar, E. Tigranyan, S. Safaryan, etc. Today the masters of Armenian architecture are S.Gurzadyan, S. Kalashyan, L. Khristaforyan, and R. Asratyan.

AZERBAIJAN:



At the beginning of the 20th, during oil boom period, the modern style architecture dominated the buildings in Azerbaijan carrying Mauritanian, Romanic and Gothic elements as in *the Ismailiyye Palace* and *the Theatre of Mailov Brothers*.

Zirvarbay Ahmadbayov was one of the early architects of the 20th century who built the *Baku-Blue Mosque*, *Taza Pir Mosque* and *Murtuza*

Mukhtarov Mosque.

During the Soviet period, working settlements in Absheron, Binagadi, Rasulzade, Bakikhanov, Mammadyarov and Montino were all built by the Soviets.

The *Polytechnical Institute of Azerbaijan* was constructed in 1929. The architects S.Dadashov and M.Useyinov built the *the Oil Academy* in 1932 and *the Pedagogical Technical School in Gazakh* in 1933.

The Nizami Theatre and the former building of the Ministry of Food Industry of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1937-1939) built by S.Dadashov and M.Useyinov combined the techniques of the antique Greek and Renaissance architecture with the national traditional architecture.



The characteristics of the Soviet style architecture were to be found in the building of the *Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan* built in the 50s. Other constructions that were built around the same time were *Lenin's Central Museum* built by H. Majidov in 1955, *M.F. Akhundov's Republican Library* built by M.Useyinov in 1960, and the *Azerbaijan State Theater of Drama* built by G. Alizade and M. Mammadov in 1960.

Nizami Subway

Soviet-engineered metro of the Baku was opened in 1967. Second line, *Nizami Subway* was opened in 1976. These subways have typical features of Soviet style of architecture and fine arts blended with national Azerbaijani motifs. The other lines were completed in 1985 and in 1989.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA: In Chechnya, big towns, especially Grozny had Soviet style of architecture. After World War II, monotonous standard and utilitarian architecture began to appear in Chechnya. In the second half of the century, skyscrapers and prefabricated buildings were erected in Chechnya.

MUSIC

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA:

Dimitri Arakishvili: Arakishvili was a Georgian composer who collected traditional music and 500 folk songs during his travels from 1901–1908. In 1918, he became the director of the Tbilisi Conservatory. He was well-known with his first book on *Georgian folk music* published in 1916 and his second book *East Georgian Folk Songs* published in 1948. He was also the director of the Union of Georgian Composers since 1932. He was the author of the opera *Tqmuleba Shota Rustavelze* (1914).

Zachary Paliashvili: Paliashvili served as a director of the Georgian Philharmonic Society from 1908–1917. In 1922, he became the chief conductor of the Tbilisi Opera Theater. He directed the Tbilisi Conservatory

from 1919–1932. He was the author of the operas *Abesalom and Eteri* (1919), *Dusk* (1923), and *Latavra* (1928).

Meliton Antonovich Balanchivadze: Balanchivadze founded *the Kutaisi Music College* in 1918 and became the director of the Department of Music of the Georgian Commissariat of Education, directed the Batumi School of Music and the Kutaisi Music College from 1921–1937. He made valuable contributions to the development of the modern Georgian opera.

Konstantine Potskhverashvili: Potskhverashvili worked as a director of the State Academic Choir of Georgia between 1921–1935. He was the author of the operas *Manana* and *Armazi*, symphonic works *Overthrow of Idols* and *Amirani*, chorus songs *Song of Victory*, *Lashkruli*, *Adjarian Makruli*.

Vano Muradeli: Georgian composer Vano Muradeli wrote patriotic songs about his motherland. He composed the operas *The Great Friendship* (1948) and *October* (1961). He became the director of the Composers' Union of Georgia in 1938–1939.

Rustavi Ensemble: Rustavi Ensemble was a folk music ensemble established by a folklorist and singer Anzor Erkomaishvili in 1968. He united singers from various parts of Georgia to create choirs and a repertory of regional folk music.

National Anthem: The first Georgian national anthem, *Idide marad chveno samshblor* composed by Otar Taktakishvili was created in 1946 and used till 1991.

The second anthem, *Dideba zetsit kurtkheuls*, was created after the declaration of Georgia's independence in 1991.

Rustavi Choir: Choir was established in 1968. It performs traditional repertoires.

ARMENIA:

Komitas (Sghomon Sghomonian): Priest, composer and musicologist Komitas was the founder of the Armenian national school of music and father of ethnomusicology. He became the director of the Gevorgian Seminary choir. He collected, transcribed and annotated Armenian folk songs, and published a book consisted of 50 folks songs titled *One Thousand and One Songs* in 1903.

Armen Tigranian: Tigranian was a composer and conductor and he was the author of the five act opera *Anush*. His second opera *David Bek* was composed in 1940. He also wrote *Leily and Mejnun*, *Eastern Dance* for symphonic orchestra.

Sergei Zakharovich Aslamazyan: Aslamazyan was a composer, and a co-founder and a member of Komitas Quartet in 1925 - 1968. He created *Suite on Armenian Folk Songs* for string quartet in 1950, and *Variations on a Theme by Paganini* for string quartet in 1961.

Artemi (Harutyun) Ayvazyan: Ayvazyan was a composer, conductor, founder of the Armenian State Jazz Orchestra. He was the head of the Armenian State Estrada (Jazz) Orchestra till 1956.

Arno Babadjanian: Babadjanian was the follower of the Westernization trend combined with folkloric traditions in Armenia. Babadjanian wrote the *Heroic Ballade* for the piano and orchestra, and *Armenian Rhapsody*, for two pianos.

Aram Khachaturian: Khachaturian was another proponent of the Westernization of Armenian music. He wrote the Armenian state anthem, and composed the ballets *Gayane* in 1942 and *Spartacus* in 1956. He also wrote three symphonies and three concertos.

AZERBAIJAN:

Ashugs: The performances of Ashugs accompanied with musician with three-string violin, an eleven-string guitar, and a drum continued in the 20th century. The most popular song competitions among the ashugi called *dyishme*.

Azerbaijani songs were mostly performed solo. The choirs were not popular in Azerbaijan.

Mugham Mugham was Azerbaijani modal system that has its roots in the Eastern musical culture.

There were mugham assemblies like *Mejlis-Faramushan* in Shusha, *Beytus-Safa* in Shamakhy and *Music Assembly of Mahmud Aga* in Baku.

Some Azerbaijani singers performing mugham during the Soviet Union were Alasgar Abdullayev, Gulu Asgarov, Nariman Aliyev, Hagigat Rzayeva, Yavar Kalantarli and Zahra Rahimova.

Fikret Mashadi Jamil oghlu Amirov: Amirov was a composer who was the founder of symphonic mugam which was based on traditional folk songs.

He wrote symphonies *Shur* (1946), *Kurd Ovshari* (1949), *Azerbaijan Capriccio* (1961), *Gulustan Bayati-Shiraz* (1968), *The Legend of Nasimi* (1977) and an opera, *Sevil* (1953).

Uzeyir Gadjibeyov: In the early 20th century, the Azerbaijani musicians began to blend Azerbaijani folk songs with the Western music genres. Uzeyir Gadjibeyov was able combine Eastern and Western traditions and became the first composer of classical music and opera. Under the influence of the Russian opera, he included songs from Russian operas by Ivan Glinka in his works. In 1908, Gadjibeyov composed his first opera, *Leyli and Majnun*, then the second opera *Sheikh* in 1909. The other operas he wrote were *Rustam and Sohrab* (1910), *Asli and Karam* (1912), *Shah Abbas and Khurshid Banu* (1912), *Koroglu* and *Harun and Leyli* (1915). Gadjibeyov also wrote the musical comedy *Arshin Mal Alan* in 1913, and composed the *National Anthem* of Azerbaijan in 1944. During the second half of the 20th century, with the initiative of Gadjibeyov, tar and kamancha performances reached the higher level of development.

Kara Karayev: In the 1930s, Karayev combined the elements of the Western classical music with the elements of traditional Azerbaijani music and included folkloric instruments into the symphonic orchestra.

Muslim Magomaev: Magomaev was an composer and conductor. Magomayev wrote his first opera *Shah Ismail* under the influence of European opera written on the basis of an Azeri folk epic. He composed his second opera *Nargiz* in 1935 which consisted of Azerbaijani folk songs. Magomayev also wrote 15 rhapsodies. He gathered 300 Azerbaijani folk songs in a book called *The Collection of Azerbaijani Folk Songs*.

Afrasiyab Badal oghlu Badalbeyli: Composer Badalbeyli was the writer of librettos for the Azerbaijani opera *Bahadir va Sona* and the ballets *Giz Galasi*, *Garaja Giz* and *Gizil Achar*. Between 1950 – 1960, he wrote books on the history and development of classical music in Azerbaijan such as: *Discussions on Music* and *Musical Dictionary*.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA:

Ch'oedargoi (Bards): *Ch'oedargoi* were *bards* who composed and performed songs (including *illi*) like folk singer İmam Alimsultanov. Many songs were also written by bard Baudin Suleimanov.

Said-Emin Umarovich Dimayev: Folk musician, accordion (komuk or kekhat-pondur) player, composer Dimayev served as an artistic director of the Chechen-Ingush State Philharmonic Society. He wrote chamber music, film music, overtures, and folk music.

Chechen-Ingush Philharmonic Society: Music schools opened in Grozny and in other towns in Chechnya during the Soviet rule. In 1936, the *Chechen-Ingush Philharmonic Society* and the *State Song and Dance Ensemble* were established. Musicians combined traditional Vainakh music with the Western classical music and gave public performances.

DANCE

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA: Iliko Sukhishvili and Nina Ramishvili **was the founders of** Georgian national ballet.

Georgian State Dance Company: The *Georgian State Dance Company* was the first professional state dance company that performed folk dances and toured worldwide founded by Iliko Sukhishvili and Nina Ramishvili in 1945.

The Georgian Folk Dance Ensemble: Nino Ramishvili and Iliko Sukhishvili became artistic directors of this Ensemble. In Georgian folk dances, the men leaps high in the air and turns, clashes the swords and throws the daggers on the floor. The women, in contrast, dances on their toes gracefully. Khevsuruli, Davruli, Khorumi, Suliko, Khanjluri, Kartuli, Svanuri, Mtiuluri, Samaia and Acharuli are among the folk dances performed by this Ensemble.



Rustavi Ensemble: The Rustavi Ensemble was created in 1968 by Anzor Erkomaishvili. Besides polyphonic singing, they perform national traditional dances.

Rustavi Ensemble dancers performing the Khevsuruli

Vakhtang Chabukiani: Chabukiani transformed the classical ballet by including Georgian characteristics. Chabukiani was not only a choreographer but he became an artistic director of the *Paliashvili Theatre of Opera and Ballet* (1941–1973). He became the ballet master and director of the *Tbilisi Choreographic Academy* (1950–1973). They staged the productions *Heart of the Mountains* (1941), *Sinatle* (1947), *Laurencia* (1948), *Gorda* (1950), *For Peace* (1953), *Othello* (1957), *Demon* (1961), *Bolero* (1971), *Hamlet* (1971), and *Apasionata* (1980).

ARMENIA: Traditional Armenian dances were performed with slow steps so that one could easily sing and dance simultaneously. The *barbashi* (dance leader) lead the people by facing and singing to the other dancers in the line. Dancing is always accompanied with a song, clapping of hands of spectators, and musical instruments. Dancers might perform circle, solo or couple dances.

Many dance schools were established in Armenia in the 1920s: the *Alexandropol (Gyumri) Opera-Operetta Theater Group* (1923). *St. Mkhitarian's Household Dances* and *V. Avetikyan's Rhythm and Plastic Schools* (1923-1924). V. Aristakesyan opened the *State Dance Studio* in Yerevan in 1924.

The troupe of the Opera and Ballet Theater was opened in Yerevan in 1933, and in 1934, a ballet studio was created adjacent to the theater by V. Presnyakov.

Sabre Dance: Sabre dance was a dance performed by the dancers to display their skill with sabres as in the final act of Aram Khachaturian's ballet called *Gayane* (1942).

Barekamutyun Ensemble: Ensemble was created in 1987 by Norayr Mehrabyan. The *Barekamutyun* performs national folk dances and dances of various nations.

AZERBAIJAN:

Kilim Arasy (Between the Rugs): During the folk dance *Kilim Arasy*, the dancer hides himself under a carpet makes gestures with his hands and his legs.

Maral Oyun (Deer Game): In *Maral oyun*, dancer wears a deer costume and imitates the animal's movements.

Afrasiyab Badal oglu Badalbeyli: Badalbeyli wrote the first Azerbaijani ballet, *Giz Galasi* (Maiden Tower) in 1940 which was composed on basis of national dance music, mugham and classical ballet. He also wrote *Khalg Gazabi* (The Popular Rage) in 1941, *Nizami* in 1948 and *Soyudlar aghlamaz* (Willows Don't Cry) in 1971. He authored a book on *The Azerbaijan State Opera and Ballet Theatre*.

The other composers Soltan Ismayil oghlu Hajibeyov who wrote second ballet *Gulshen* staged successfully at the Azerbaijan State Academic Opera and Ballet Theater in 1950; and Fikrat Amirov who wrote *Nizami* in 1947 and *Arabian Nights*, which premiered in 1979 were also valuable contributions to the history of the Azerbaijani ballet.

Ismayil Hidayetzade, Mehdi Mammadov, Adil Isgandarov, Sultan Dadashov and Firudin Safarov and conductors such as Niyazi, Ashraf Hasanov, Ahad Israfilzade, Rauf Abdullayev and Kamal Abdullayev were the directors who played a important role in the development of Azerbaijani ballet.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA:

Daymohk: The Children Dance Ensemble Daymohk consisted of 28 dancers who were chosen from school children aged 8 to 16 and five musicians from Grozny performed as duos or solos the traditional dances of Chechnya and other Caucasian nations. The Ensemble was established by Ramzan Akhmadov.

Lovzar: Lovzar was another Chechen children's dance ensemble founded in 1983 consisted of 30 boys and 30 girls performing traditional Chechen dance.

During the Soviet period, dance academies and choreographic institutes were established in Chechen-Ingushetia where the repertoires of the companies consisted of folkloric dances from the various nationalities in the North Caucasus.

State Folk Dance Ensemble Vainakh: The Chechen-Ingush State Folk Dance Ensemble was established in 1939 by Vakha Dakashev, Abdula Khamidov and Vakha Tataev. The Ensemble consisted of 15 dancers and a choir touring in different cities of the Soviet Union.

THEATRE

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA:

Batumi Drama Society: In 1913, a Drama Society was established in Batumi, led by Ivane Meskhi. The management of the Drama Society formed a troupe of professional actors under the director Shalva Dadiani.

The development of Georgian theater was connected to an actor and director, Konstantine (Kote) Mardzhanishvili. He was the founder of the first national theater, which was named after him. Mardzhanishvili believed that the theater was an institution that could serve as a podium to present the most progressive ideas. He produced Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* in 1917. He was the head of the Rustaveli Theater in Tbilisi in 1922. He opened a drama theatre in Kutaisi in 1928. Later, the theatre was named after him and moved to Tbilisi in 1930. He staged his first play Ernest Toler's *Popola, We Are Living, The End of the*

"*Nadezhda*" (1909), Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov* (1910), Ibsen's *Per Gynt* (1912), Offenbach's *Die Schöne Helena* (1913), Mozart's *Entführung aus dem Serail* (1923), Eristavi's *Partition* (1823), Arakishvili's *The Tale of Shota Rustaveli* (1923), Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1925), Kutateli's *Midnight Past* (1929), and Rossini's *William Tell* (1931) and many more. Marjanishvili had close contact with the Russian directors Stanislavsky and Nemirovich - Danchenko. He skillfully blended the features of the Russian and European theatrical tradition with the Georgian traditional features and worked on romantic and heroic themes.

Alexander (Sandro) Akhmeteli denounced Marjanishvili's support of the Soviet realism in Georgian artistic traditions, and he was against Stanislavski's system claiming that it was only suitable to Russian theater, but not to Georgian theater. After Marjanishvili, Akhmeteli became a theatre director of the Rustaveli theatre from 1926 to 1935. He also created his own artistic corporation called *Duruji*. Akhmeteli produced theater plays and operas such as Glebov's *Zagmuk* (1926), Shanshiashvili's *Anzor* (1928), Lavrenyov's *Break-up* (1928) Kirshon's *City of the Winds* (1929), Dadiani's *Tetnuldi* (1931), and Arakishvili's *The Tale of Shota Rustaveli*.

With the establishment of Bolshevik rule in Georgia, due to heavy censorship, theater plays shifted their focus on the life of peasants, workers, and Revolutionaries in the 1930s. During the World War II, Georgian theaters staged the plays that focused on Georgian past and nationalism. In the 1950s, theaters mostly staged works of European authors such as Shakespeare's *Othello*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Richard II*, and Sophocle's *Oedipus Rex* and many others.

In the 1960s–1980s, theaters began to part ways with realism and staged experimental performances.

Robert Sturua was Georgian theater director who became famous with his own interpretation of classics like Shakespeare's plays *Richard III* (1979) and *King Lear* (1987), and Brecht's play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1975). During the civil war in Georgia in the 1990s, the Rustaveli Theater staged the experimental plays such as *ABC*, *Macbeth*, *Lamara*, *Life Is a Dream*, *Irine's Happiness*, *Women-Snake* under the direction of Sturua.

Metekhi Youth Studio Theater: The theater was established in the 70s in Tbilisi in a church. They performed the Russian, Georgian and European classics like Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *People*, a story called *Look at the Vine* which was based on a story by Sandro Mrevlishvili.

Tumanishvili Studio Theater of Film Actors: Theater opened by director Mikheil Tumanishvili in 1977. One of the most popular performances was *Chinchraka* that was based on actors' improvisation.

State Pantomime Theater: It was established in Tbilisi in 1982 under the directives of Amiran Shalikashvili.

Tbilisi Marionette Theater: Marionette theater was the only puppet-show theater established by director and screenwriter Rezo Gabriadze in 1981. Gabriadze made his puppets, costumes and designed the set and directed the shows. They performed not only Georgian, but also European and Russian classics like *Alfred and Violetta*, *The Autumn of my Spring* and *Marshal Fantiere's Diamonds*.

Youth Theater at Rustaveli Theater: The Youththeater was founded by the graduating class of academician Gizo Zhordania in 1986. They performed national and foreign dramas like the *Stepmother Samanishvili* and *The Diary of Anne Frank* in the memorial house where the playwright David Kldiashvili lived and took the actual objects and decoration from the museum.

ARMENIA: Armenian theater was based on the genre of psychological realism which emphasized the emotional environment of their personages.

New theatres were opened in Yerevan and other cities in the early 20th century. The Theatre of A. Mravyan was opened in Leninakan in 1928 and the Yerevan State Azerbaijan Theatre of J. Jabbarly was opened in 1928. Many theatres performed European dramas from Shakespeare, Schiller, Brecht and Ibsen. Playwright Gabriel Sundukyan was the founder of Armenian drama. He wrote his play *Love and Freedom* in 1910. He

opened *Gabriel Sundukyan State Academic Theater* in 1922 in Yerevan, and it was named after him. The theater staged European (Camus's *Caligula*, Brecht's *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*), Russian (Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*) and national plays (Sundukyan's *Testament*), and many others.

In the first half of the 20th century, the other playwrights and directors were Alexander Movsisian who adopted pen-name Shirvanzade who wrote the drama *Namus* (1911). Derenik Demirchian was a playwright who wrote *Nazar the Brave* (Kaj Nazar, 1923). Vardan Ajemyan was a director who opened the *Second Armenian State Theatre* (Gyumri State Theatre). He became a director of *Yerevan Sundukyan Theatre* in 1939 and directed Alexander Shirvanzade's *For the Honour* (1939), Papazian's *Rock* (1944), Nairi Zarian's *Ara Geghetsik* (1946), William Saroyan's *My Heart is in the Mountains* (1961) and Aramashot Papayan's *The World, Yes, Turned Upside Down* (1967).

Paronyan Musical Comedy Theater: Paronyan Theater was founded in 1941 in Yerevan and it was named after Hakob Paronyan. Directors and actors Vardan Mkrtychi Ajemian and Karp Khachvankyan worked in this theater and opened the theater to a wide audience.

Yerevan State Institute of Theatrical Arts: In 1944, the Institute was established by the Armenian director Vavik Vardanyan in Yerevan. The Institute was merged with *State Academy of Fine Arts* of Armenia in 1953. In 1953, this Institute named *Yerevan State Institute of Art and Theater*. In 1994, it was divided into two separate institutions: *State Academy of Fine Arts of Armenia* and *Yerevan State Institute of Theater*.

AZERBAIJAN: In the 20th century, the Azerbaijani writers N.Vezirov, A. Hagverdiyev, J. Mamedgulizade and S.S. Akhundov played an active role in the development of Azerbaijani theater, and the actors and producers such as N. Narimanov, U. Hadjybeyov, M. Magomayev and J. Jabbarly made valuable contributions to continued existence of national theater. Akhundov was the author of first Azerbaijani play *Vizier of Lankaran khanate*. He also wrote satirical plays and comedies.

During the first Russian Revolution of 1905, a realist drama troupe was formed under *Tekamul* newspaper. *Nijat Charity Union* established a united drama troupe in 1908 which performed the plays such as by A.Hagverdiyev's *Agha Muhammad Shah Qajar* (1907), S.Sami's *Blacksmith Gave* (1908), Mammadguluzade's *Robbers* (1907) and *Deadmen* (1916) in Taghiyev Theatre. When *Shafa Society* was established in 1912, they created a theatrical troupe. The Society invited actors from *Nijat's* troupe to take part in their theatrical performances.

Azerbaijan State Theatre was established in 1919 in Baku. All theaters were nationalized and they went under control of the government. In 1920, a *United State Theatre* was created which included Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian drama and opera theatres. Troupes were closed, and Azerbaijani drama troupe was turned into *Azerbaijan State Academic Drama Theatre*. In 1923, this theater was renamed as *Baku Labor Theatre*. Theater staged Azerbaijani and Russian parodies and stage versions of Russian literature like N.V. Gogol's *The Overcoat*, A.S.Pushkin's *The little house in Kolomna*, *The Tale of the Priest and of His Workman Balda*, F.M.Dostoyevski's *The Grand Inquisitor* and many more. *Azerbaijan State Theatre of Young Spectators* opened in 1928 in Baku and *Azerbaijan State Theatre of Musical Comedy* was established in 1938.

Uzeir Hadjibeyov laid the foundation of Musical theater by staging of *Leyli and Majnun* in 1908. Hadjibeyov's musical comedies *Sheikh Senan*, *No matter this or that*, and *Arshyn Mal Alan*, Muslum Magomayev's *Shah Ismayil* and many others were performed in this theater.

Puppet Theatre was founded in 1931 by Jafar Jabbarly. The first play of the theater *Circus* staged in 1932. Puppet Theatre was performed at *Azerbaijan State Theatre of Young Spectators* in 1941-1946 and *Azerbaijan State Philharmonic Hall* in 1950.

There were no women-actress in Azerbaijan, therefore the female roles were played by men. Ahmed Agdamski was one of the actors who played female character *Leyli* in *Leyli and Majnun*, *Asli* role in *Asli and Karam*, *Minnat khanim* role in *Husband and wife* and *Tahmina* role in *Rustam and Zohrab*.

Professional theaters were established during the second decade of the 20th century. In the 1960s, new playwrights like G. Garayev took an experimental approach to theater with his play Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

In the 70s, young playwrights Nabi Khazri's plays like *Echo*, Anar's play *The Last Night of the Last Year* brought success to the development of Azerbaijan State Theater of Young Spectators.

Bakhtiyar Vahabzade made valuable contribution to the repertoire of the theatre with his plays like *The Sword on Our Way-Göktürk Tribe* (1998), *Where is the World Going* (1991), *The Second Sound* (1991).

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA: The beginnings of Chechen theater were associated with Mahomet Mahomaev, Muslim Mahomaev and Nazarbek Sheripov. The writer Said Baduev was considered the founder of the Chechen national theatre. He was the author of the plays *The Red Fortress* (1930), *The Golden Lake*, and *Political Division* (1934).

Professional theater did not exist in Chechnya before 1917. The first Chechen professional theater companies were established in the 1920s performing Sultan Shadiev's and Magomed Gaisanov's *The Murid*, Danilbek Sheripov's *Alibek-Hajji of Zandak* and many others.

The first Chechen playwrights Said Baduyev, Arbi Mamakayev, Bilal Saidov and Khalid Oshayev were considered as the vanguards of the Chechen theater. Baduyev was well-known with his satirical comedies like *Every Day Is Not Bairam Even for a Mullah*, *Eid ul- Fitr* and his plays that he criticized the destruction of old customs, class struggle and collectivization as in his *The Changing Highlands*, *The Bolshevik Sewing Campaign*, *The Shepherd's Family*, *The Awakening* and *The Political Department*.

In 1931, *the Khanpasha Nuradilov Chechen Drama Theatre* was opened with the contributions of the stage directors Vladimir Shatov, Alexander Tuganov and Archil Chkhartishvili. The repertoire of the theater included plays written in Chechen language.

A Puppet Theatre in Grozny was opened in 1935 under the directors Bilal Saidov, Garun Batukaev, and Khasan Shaipov performing the play *The Miraculous Rubber Shoes* and the first Chechen production *The Grey-Winged Dove*.

The *Zhukhurg Theatre* included comedies, dancing, pantomime performed during folk festivals and weddings by the actors wearing animal masks, animal skins or fur coats. Zhukhurg performances takes their inspiration from everyday life or from fairy tales.

The Chechen State Theater of the Young Spectator was established in 1937 in Chechnya. During the Chechen deportation in 1944, stage performances were stopped. It was not until 1958 the theaters began to open their stage in Chechnya.

In the 1980s, the playwrights dedicated their works to Chechen folklore and history as in the plays *The Black Plait* by Lechi Yakhiyev and *God Alone* by Said Hamzat Nunuyev.

CINEMA

SOUTH CAUCASUS

GEORGIA: The first Georgian movie was released on May 15, 1908. There were several movie theaters built in Georgia in the first half of the 20th century. The first documentary film *The Journey of Georgian Poet Akaki Tsereteli to Racha-Lechkhumi* (Akakis Mogzauroba) was released and directed by Vasili Amashukeli in 1912. The first feature film, *Berikaoba Keenoba* was directed by Aleksandre Tsutsunava in 1909. He also directed the other feature film *Christiné* in 1916.

In the 20s, there was a short period of commercialization, when the Soviet monopoly on movies was eased in Tbilisi, and the Georgian directors were able to make their own films, a mix of light entertainment and revolutionary ideology as in Ivan Perestiani's *Arsen Dzhordzhishvili* (1921) and *Little Red Devils* (1923). The Georgian film industry developed and was nationalized due to the establishment of the first film studio, *Goskinprom* (State Film Production organization) at the *Commissariat of People's Education* in 1921. *Arsena Jiorjashvili* (The Murder of General Griaznov) (1921) was the first Georgian-made feature film directed by Ivan Perestiani. Perestiani also directed an adventure and action movie that depicted Civil War, *The Little Red Devils* (Tsiteli eshmakunebi) in 1923.

The Soviets began to crackdown on foreign films for the sake of ideological correctness in the 1930s and reduced the financial support. Movie theaters had material shortages, equipments were old, and the employees were underpaid. National cinema went into a state of dysfunction. The films were mostly Russian productions and made in the Russian language with only limited number being made in Georgian. Socialist realism became the dominant theme especially between the 1930s and early 1950s and the cinema became a propaganda agent for Joseph Stalin. During World War II, the Soviets also started a campaign to promote patriotism. The films produced during the war depicted the Russians and other nationalities fighting together against fascist occupants as in *Georgii Saakadze* (1943).

The Tbilisi Cinematographic Studio was established in 1938. Large-scale historical epics were filmed in the 40s. Mikheil Chiaureli filmed *Georgii Zaakadze* (1943), who was the 17th century Georgian leader who defeated both the Turks and the Persians. Chiaureli also became Joseph Stalin's favorite director for his significant contribution to the creation of Stalin's personality cult. He produced *Velikoe Zarevo* (1938), *Giorgi Saakadze* (1942-1943), *Kliatva* (1946), *Padenie Berlina* (1950), and *Nezabivaemii god 1919* (1952) and the others.

After World War II, in Georgia a new generation of young artists and directors in movie industry was able to produce films free from official ideology. The Georgian film industry began to develop in the 50s - 60s, with the establishment of the *Gruziya Film Studio* and with the appearance of directors and screenwriters like *Tengiz Abuladze* and *Rezo Chkheidze* who together created the feature film *Magdanas Lurja* in 1954.

The directors Otar Ioseliani and Giorgi Shengelaia created short documentaries like *Tudzhi* (1964) without verbal commentary introducing a new wave in innovative feature films.

Between the late 60s and early 80s was considered as the golden age for the Georgian film industry. The film studios produced 60 films a year. *The Faculty of Cinema* was created at the *Shota Rustaveli Institute of Theater* in 1972, and later it became the *Tbilisi Institute of Theater and Film*. The screenwriter Rezo Gabriadze and the film director Eldar Shengelaia's collaborative films *Arachveulebrivi gamofena* (1968), *Sherekilebi* (1973) and *Tsiferi mtebi* (1983) were produced in this period.

This period also witnessed heavy censorship on movies. Some of the films like Otar Ioseliani's and Tengiz Abuladze's films were suppressed and kept away from public view. Abuladze's *Repentance* (1984) was banned for its semi-allegorical criticism of Stalin and its portrayal of the brutality of Stalin's purges. When the policy of *Glasnost* introduced in the Soviet Union in 1985, Abuladze's *Repentance* was released in 1987.

During the Georgian Civil War, due to economic crisis, the Georgian film industry began to decline in the early 1990s. In spite of that, film companies produced number of films and directors continued to stage films in Georgia. Géla Babluani directed *Udzinarta Mze* in 1992. Film director Dito Tsintsadze staged his film *Sakhli* (1991), *Stumrebi* (1991) and *Zghvarze* (1993). Many directors like Otar Ioseliani, Mikheil Kobakhidze, Nana Jorjadze and Dito Tsintsadze emigrated to Europe and Russia. The Georgian film industry began to flourish in 1993 and new film companies and film studios were opened. Private companies and international institutions also began to finance the production of documentaries, educational films and short movies.

ARMENIA: At the beginning the Armenian cinema was under the influence of the foreign filmmakers who traveled through the Caucasus.

The first movie filmed in Armenia was a documentary on the funeral of Khrimian Hayrig, Catholicos of all Armenians (1907), and the second was a documentary on the burial of Catholicos Matheos (1911) filmed in Etchmiadzin. In 1915, the first Armenian feature film directed by A. Minervin *Under the Rule of the Kurds* was released.

During the Soviet rule, the Armenian film industry was put under strict state control. In 1923, the *Armenian State Committee on Cinema, Goskino* was established to monitor all film production. In 1925, the first Armenian full-length feature film, realistic melodrama *Honor* (Namus) directed by Amo Bek-Nazaryan was released. Nazaryan was also the writer and director of *Patricide* (1923), an innovative silent film *Zare* (1927), comedy *Shor and Shorshor* (1928), and the somber *Khaspush* (1928), the first Armenian sound film, the social drama *Pepo* (1935) and *Anahit* (1947).

Goskino (Armenkino, Yerevan Film Studio, Armenfilm, Hay film): In 1922, the *Armenian Council of People's Commissars* (Sovnarkom) passed a decree to nationalize all movie theaters. In 1923, *Sovnarkom* founded the *State Cinema Organization* (Goskino) and it became part of the *Commissariat of Political Education*, and the state appointed Daniel Dznuni as the director of the studio. The studio's name changed over the years. It was renamed as *Armenkino* in 1928, *Yerevan Film Studio* in 1938, *Armenfilm* in 1957 and *Hay film* named after Amo Bek-Nazarian. They also established a *State Photo and Film Factory* (Gosfotokino) was established in Yerevan creating a film laboratory that in 1924. This film factory was renamed as *Armenkino* in 1928.

There are other leading directors like Patvakan Barkhurdyan who directed *Evil Spirit* (1928), *Funeral of A. Spendiarov* (1928), *Five Right in the Target* (1928), *The Sixteenth* (1928), *Under the Black Wing* (1930), *Kikos* (1931), *A Child of Sun* (1933), and *The Guardsman's Wife* (1943); Amasi Martirosyan who directed *Gikor* (1934).

In the 50s and early 60s, every year the studio produced four feature films and they were mostly revolutionary fiction as in Erazm Karamyan's and Stepan Kevorkov's *Personally Known* (1958). Stepan Kevorkov also served as executive director of Armenfilm Studio between 1949-1951 and became the first secretary of the *Armenian Filmmakers' Union* 1956 to 1964.

By the mid-60s, Armenian national cinema experimented a new direction in film industry combining Soviet multinational framework with traditional one as in Frunze Dovlatyan's war story films *Hello, It's Me* (1966) and *The Brothers Saroyan* (1968); Henrik Malyan's *The Triangle* (1967) and *We and Our Mountains* (1970). Artavazd Peleshyan created radical aesthetic innovations by blending documentary film with poetic fiction as in his *The Color of Pomegranate* (1967).

Armenfilm was moved to a new studio in a Yerevan suburb in 1976. Director Edmond Keosayan was one of its directors who directed *The Elusive Avengers* (1966), *The New Adventures of the Elusive Avengers* (1968) and *The Crown of the Russian Empire or Once again the Elusive Avengers* (1971).

In the late 80s, with *Perestroika*, the strict control on the Armenian film industry was eased, however isolation from international markets continued.

After the independence, due to increasing economic hardships, Armenian film industry fell into a crisis similar to that in the former Soviet Union.

Some filmmakers such as Edgar Baghdasaryan, Albert Mkrtychyan, Armen Dovlatyan, and Suren Babayan were able to partner with foreign directors and have their film shown internationally.

AZERBAIJAN: The first Azerbaijani film *In the Realm of Oil and Millions* was produced in 1915 and directed by Boris Svetlov.

During the Soviets, the *Revolutionary Committee* of Azerbaijan issued a decree to nationalize all film studios in the country in 1920. With the Soviet monopoly on film industry, film studios made films combining Soviet

ideology with casual entertainment. The government opened first film studio in Baku in 1922, and *Azerbaijani Photo and Film Administration* was founded in 1923.

The Legend of the Maiden Tower was the first Azerbaijani feature film released in 1924 and directed by Vladimir Balliuzek.

In 1926 - 1930, the studio was called *Azerbaijani State Cinema* (Azgoskino). The films produced in this studio were antireligious in tone as in *In the Name of God* (1925) by Abbas Mirza Sharif-Zade and in Bek-Nazaryan's *Sevil* (1929).

In 1930 - 1933, the studio was renamed as *Azkino*, and in 1933–1934 *Azfilm*. The films produced focused on forced industrialization as in the film *The First Komsomol Brigade* (1931).

In 1934–1935, the studio was called *Azgoskinprom*, and in 1935 - 1940 - *Azerfilm*. The studio produced its first sound film, *Baku's People* (1938) directed by Viktor Turin.

In 1941 - 1959, the studio was renamed as *Baku Film Studio*. One of the films produced in this studio was romantic musical-comedy *The Cloth-Peddler* (1945), based on an operetta *Arshin Mal Alan* written by Uzeyir Hajibeyov in 1910.

During World War II, the government started a campaign to promote patriotism and friendship in films by depicting the Russians and other ethnic groups fighting together against fascism as in *One Family* filmed in Baku in 1943 and to raise national pride by presenting struggles to unify the existing khanates by a hero in the film *Fatali Khan* directed by Efim Dzigan in 1947.

After World War II, film production was dropped drastically in Azerbaijan for more than ten years. By 1950, the film industry entered its most severe quantitative and qualitative crisis. After Stalin's death in 1953, the film industry began to flourish. Instead of state-manipulated propaganda films, the new generation of young directors, actors, and screenwriters began to create outspoken films about real people and their social problems. However, there were also remade movies like *The Twenty-six Commissars* (1965), *The Cloth-Peddler* (1966), and *Sevil* (1970) that showed a continuing financial crisis leading to restrictions on film production.

In the 1990s, with independence, the Soviet censorship was abolished and a new generation of filmmakers created the realist documentaries depicting political turmoil in Azerbaijan as in film *Broken Bridges* (1999) by director Rafiq Pooya.

NORTH CAUCASUS

CHECHNYA: During the Soviet rule, the film industry was controlled by the business of the State Committee of the USSR for Cinematography. This Committee discouraged any initiative and private projects, and the artists became puppets in the hands of the powerful bureaucrats.

There were film studios were built in towns and many villages of Chechen Ingushetia. Early actors were Dikalu Muzukaev and Dagun Omaev. Omaev was an actor played in *Gorets* directed by Murat Dzhusoyty who also directed *Kuryer na Vostok* in 1991.

Film directors, writers and crew of the industry had to be the members of the *Union of Soviet Film-Makers* and the *Union of Soviet Cinema Workers*.

The first national films were created during the Soviet rule, and Iles Tataev was Chechnya's first film director, who directed *Gorskaya Novella* in 1979. He was one of the founder of the Chechen-Ingush film studio (1995) and served as a director. Tataev authored over 30 musical, folklore, feature films and documentaries.

Film director, screenwriter Sulambek Mamilov worked at the Gorky Studio in Moscow in the late 1960s, and produced Russian-language documentary, musical and feature films like *Extremely Dangerous People* (1979), *Ladies' Tango* (1983), *Day of Wrath (Dies Irae)* (1985), based on S. Gansovsky's short story, *A Golden Cloud Spent the Night* (1989) based on a tragic story of deportation, *Murder on Zhdanovskaya Street* (1992), and *Good Luck Gentlemen!* (1992).

Questions:

- 1- Why did the film industry enter its most severe quantitative and qualitative crisis in the 50s?
- 2- By looking at the developments in cultural life in all Caucasus states, can we claim that the Soviets made a significant contribution to the development of the social and political life of all the states, or by introducing Socialist ideology did they separate people from their past?

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