The Harriman Institute at Columbia University

Presents Series of Symposia

Georgia at the Crossroads of European and Asian Cultures

Culture as a tool for the mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue

Monday, May 4, 10:00 am – 19:00 pm
Kellogg Center, 15th Floor, SIPA building
420 W 118th Street. New York, NY, USA

Georgian culture, an integral part of Caucasian civilization, continues to be shaped by the intersection of European and Asian influences. Over the centuries this culture has represented tolerance and mutual understanding. The Georgians have maintained their national identity while emphasizing the importance of intercultural relations.

Today, intercultural understanding is a central and urgent issue, given the cultural and ethnic situation in Georgia’s conflict regions – Shida (inner) Kartli, the so-called “South Ossetia” and Abkhazeti. The topic deserves historical analysis and awareness.

In addition to the political and humanitarian problems there is also great danger for these two regions’ cultural identity and their historical monuments. Academic knowledge in this field is limited and therefore raises the importance of scholarly work and discussion in the fields of culture, history and ethnicity in these territories.

The different historical epochs provide the best historical documentation and evidence of the formation of these regional identities and provides proof of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between these regions and the nations adjoining them. The conference’s thematic timeframe will not be limited to any of these periods but will cover all cultural epochs including the modern day.
PROGRAM

10:00 am – 10:40 am  
Opening Remarks & Moderator  
Catharine Nepomnyashchy, Director, Harriman Institute, Columbia University

Welcome  
Alexander Lomaia, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations  
Temur Iakobashvili, Vice Prime Minister, Minister for Reintegration of Georgia  
Georgia after August war with Russia

Q/A

10:40 am – 11:00 am  
Coffee Break

Session I. The Historical Overview and Cultural Heritage highlights of the Conflict Regions of Georgia  
Chair: Maka Dvalishvili, GACC International Initiative for Georgian Cultural Studies Leader

11:00- 11:20  
Dr. Iulon Gagoshidze, Georgia’s State Minister on Diaspora Affairs  
Abkhazians and Ossetians in Georgia- History and Nowadays

11:20 am – 11:40 am  
Dr. George Otxmezuri, Associated Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University  
Abkhazeti – the integral part of Georgia (based on the historic sources)

11:40 am - 12:00 pm  
Dr. Mariam Didebulidze, Director of Giorgi Chubinashvili National Research Center for Georgian Art History and Monuments Preservation, Professor of Tbilisi Theological Academy.  
Cultural Heritage of Abkhazeti

12:00 pm - 12:20 pm  
Dr. George Otxmezuri, Associated Professor, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University  
Administrative status of Shida (inner) Kartli, and the ethnicity of its population (based on the historic sources)

12:20 pm - 12:40 pm  
Geogre Gagoshidze, Dr. Art History, Georgian National Museum  
Medieval Art and Architecture on the territories of conflict regions of Georgia - Shida (inner) Kartli

Q/A

1:00 pm- 2:30 pm Lunch Break

Session II. Georgia on the Crossroads  
Chair: Dodona Kiziria, Professor, Indiana University
2:30 pm – 2:50 pm
Giuli Alasania, Professor, Tbilisi State University vice-Rector, International Black Sea University, the founder, head of Trustee Board, University of Georgia
*Georgia as a bridge between the West and the East (Advantage and disadvantage)*

2:50 pm - 3:10 pm
Gigi Tevzadze, Professor, Rector of Ilia Chavchavadze State University
*At the Crossroads of European and Asian Cultures: ”A Geopolitical Constant or a Mythical Construct?”*

3:10 pm - 3:30 pm
Giga Zedania, Professor, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Cultural Studies, Ilia Chavchavadze State University
*Georgia as a Part of Black Sea Europe: Towards a New Understanding of Regional Identity*

Q/A

3:50 pm - 4:10 pm  Coffee Break

4: 10 pm  - 4:30 pm
Mzia Chikhradze PhD, Senior Research Fellow at G.Chubinashvili National Center for the Research of Georgian Art History and Monuments Protection
*Expansion/Integration, Georgian-Russian Cultural Relationship in 1910-1980*

4: 30 pm  - 4:50 pm
Tinatin Bochorishvili, Professor, Dr. Philosophy, Director of Rustaveli Foundation for Georgian Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences
*Rustaveli Foundation - Mission and Activities*

4: 50 pm  – 5:10 pm
Carl Linich, MFA, Bennington College
*The Gramophone Comes to Georgia: 1901-1914*
Presentation of the anthology of Georgian folk music; 4 compact discs comprising the complete recordings made by the London Gramophone Company

Q/A

Closing Remarks
Catharine Nepomnyashchy, Director, Harriman Institute, Columbia University

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm: Reception

The third annual Symposium is by the framework of the HI Georgian Studies Center together with GACC International Initiative for Georgian Cultural Studies [www.symposiumgeorgia.org](http://www.symposiumgeorgia.org)
Curator: Prof. Maka Dvalishvili, makaD@symposiumgeorgia.org
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