

**АДЫГЭ/ИНДЖЫЛЫЗ ЖУРНАЛ**

# **АДЫГЭ ПХЪЭЛЪАНТХЪУЭ**

**АДЫГЭ ЦЭНХАБЗЭМ И ЖУРНАЛ**

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**Circassian Culture & Folklore**

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## Псалъащхьэхэр

[Contents]

**Ди хэщIаплэ хэтхэр** 7  
[Editorial Board]

**Редколлегием къыбгъэдэкIыу** 8  
[From the Editorial Board]

**«Пхъэлъантхъуэщ» мы журналым и темэр** 13  
[On the Theme of the Journal]

### НАРТ ХАСЭ

[Nart Council]

Нартхэм я жьыукI хасэ!: Нарт псысэ хьэлэмэт: «Нартхэ зыхана  
хабзэ» (Къэбэрдей псысэ) 23  
[The Nart Tribunal of Doom!: Intriguing Nart Tale: 'The Custom  
Renounced by the Narts'] (Kabardian text)

Нарт псысэ кIэщI: «Лъэпщ дунейм и гъунэ зэрылтыхъуар»  
(Къэбэрдей псысэ) 31  
[Short Nart Tale: 'How Lhepsch Sought the Edge of the World']  
(Kabardian tale)

Сэтэней гуашэм и Iуцагъэмрэ лъэкIыныгъэмрэ ящыщ зы шапхъэ:  
«Тыгъэр пщыхъэрэ къызфызэтеуцогорэр»  
(Абэзэхэ псысэ) 37  
[From the Quick Wit and Craft of Lady Seteney: 'Why does the sun slow  
down towards the end of the day?'] (Abzakh tale)

### АДЫГЭ ПШЫНАЛЪЭ

[Circassian Music and Songs]

Уэрэд гъэщIэгъуэн: Дадэ щхъэкIэ «гушэ» уэрэд!: «Думэ лэлей-  
лэлей, дадэ изогъэщI!» (Къэбэрдей уэрэд) 41  
[Astonishing Song: A 'Berceuse' for Grampa!: 'Dume leley-leley, I am  
lullabying grampa!'] (Kabardian song)

Нысэгъашло орэд: «Ашгаемэ...» (Шапсыгъ уэрэд) **46**  
 [Song in Praise of the Bride: 'The Aschay family...'] (Shapsugh song)

КIапщ: Шьорэки орэд: «Тэпырагъошъы пкIэгъуала...» [ЩIапщэ:  
 Фэрэки уэрэд] (Бжьэдыгъу уэрэд) **51**  
 [Vigil over the Sick: Smallpox Chant: 'Swift White Horse...']  
 (Bzchedighw chant)

## **АДЫГЭ ФІЭЩХЪУНЫГЪЭРЭ ФОЛЬКЛОРРЭ**

[Circassian Religion and Folklore]

Адыгэ Тхъэ Хасэ (Пантеон) **57**  
 [The Circassian Pantheon]

Адыгэ календарь: Сыт «джыл» зищIысыр? **65**  
 [Circassian Calendar: What Is 'Jil'?]

Адыгэ хъуэхъу: «Ди нысэ фо!» **68**  
 [Circassian Toast: 'Our Sweet Daughter-in-law!']

## **АДЫГЭ ХАБЗЭ**

[Circassian Customs and Traditions]

Адыгэ фIэхъусхэр **71**  
 [Circassian Greetings & Salutes]

Адыгэ хабзэрэ адыгэ литературэ: «АДЫГЭ ХАБЗЭ»: Къагъырмэс  
 Борис и усэ купщIафIэ **75**  
 [Circassian Customs and Traditions and Circassian Literature:  
 'Circassian Etiquette': A poem by Boris Qaghirmes on Circassian  
 hospitality]

Адыгэхэм я деж хъэшIэхэр лъэпкъкIэ зылъэтауэ дапщэ хъурэ? **80**  
 [How many kinds of guests are there in traditional Circassian society?]

## **ХЭХЭС АДЫГЭХЭМ Я ІУЭХУХЭР**

[Diaspora Cultural Scene]

Адыгэ хэхэс тхакIуэхэри къэхутакIуэхэри: Батырай Ойзбек  
 (Едыдж). (Абзэхэ тхакIуэ) **84**

[Circassian Diaspora Writers and Researchers: Batıray Özbek (Yedij)]  
(Abzakh writer)

НАРТ: Иорданием кыщаухуа адыгэ спутниковэ ТВ станциер **87**  
[NART: New Circassian Satellite TV Channel in Jordan]

Кыфщхьэпэфын онлайн хэхэс радио станциехэр, журналхэр,  
интернет куэбжэхэр **89**  
[Useful Online Diaspora Radio Stations, Magazines, and Internet  
Portals]

### **АДЫГЭ ТЕДЗАПІЭМ И ЛЪЭНЫКЪУЭМКІЭ**

[From the Circassian Publishing Houses]

Онлайн тхылъыщІэхэр: «АДЫГЭ ПСАЛЪЭЖЪХЭРИ  
ПСАЛЪАФЭХЭРИ»; «АДЫГЭ БИБЛИОГРАФИЕ» **94**  
[New Online Books from SPINDOX: *Circassian Proverbs and Sayings*;  
*Circassian Bibliography*]

Онлайн адыгэ тхылъхэри газетхэри **101**  
[Online Circassian Books and Newspapers]

Адыгэ литературнэ журналхэр **108**  
[Circassian Literary Journals]

### **ДИ АДЫГЭБЗЭ ЛЪАПІЭ**

[The Circassian Language]

Адыгэ щакІуэбзэ: Кавказым и щэху пщыкІутІхэм ящыщ зыщ **109**  
[The Secret Language of the Hunters: One of the Twelve Secrets of the  
Caucasus]

«АДЫГЭБЗЭ – АДЫГЭПСЭ»: Мэргъущ Іэсият и усэ телъыджэ **123**  
[‘Circassian Language – Circassian Soul’: A fine poem by ’Esiyat  
Merghwsch]

Псалъэ щІагъуэхэр **125**  
[Significant Words in This Issue]

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[Personnel]

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## РЕДКОЛЛЕГИЕМ КЪЫБГЪЭДЭКЫУ

[From the Editorial Board]

This is the first volume (pilot edition) of the new journal *The Hearth Tree: Circassian Cultural Miscellany*. It is the first online periodical that is designed to systematically publish in Circassian and English. The bilingual publication is devised to be legible by readers of either language (readers of both languages get double benefit). Circassian materials are presented in the literary languages used in Circassia, namely Adigean and Kabardian (strictly speaking Kabardian-Cherkess), and other extant dialects. Cyrillic orthography is used throughout for Circassian texts. Latin transcription for Circassian is used at times in addition to Cyrillic.

SPINDOX for Research and Publication has as one of its principal missions the dissemination and development of Circassian language and culture. All workers in this enterprise firmly believe in the richness of Circassian culture and deem it as deserving a decent place amongst world cultures. That it is relatively obscure on the world stage is the result of several factors, not least of which is the severalty of the Circassian republics and regions in the Caucasus and the non-existence of a unified and strong Circassian state. The Circassians are divided into no less than six entities (the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic, Karachai-Cherkess Republic, Republic of Adigea, Shapsugh Region, Stavropol Krai, Krasnodar Krai, and the Mozdok Region of the Republic of North Ossetia, where Christian Circassians live). The reintegration of these republics and regions is a necessary first step towards the regeneration of the Circassian nation and civilization.

The Circassian language is subject to tremendous pressures and challenges, even in the heartland of Circassia. Simply put, the factors that facilitate the acquisition of the Circassian language as a utile language are being diluted. In the diaspora the language is being lost at



an alarming rate due to the assimilative forces at play. In Circassia, Circassian is gradually losing the competition against Russian as the first language of the Circassian people. This sorry state of affairs needs to be taken stock of and measures should be taken by the Circassians in the Caucasus and the diaspora to stem the tide of Russification and loss of national culture and heritage.

The idea behind this journal was born in the context of this imbalance. Circassian culture should be preserved and developed in its natural vessel: the Circassian language. Of course, ultimately the longevity of Circassian language and culture are dependent on the will of the political and intellectual elites in Circassia to grapple with this national issue. Circassian should be made the first language in the educational and public spheres. In addition, Circassian youth in both Circassia and the diaspora ought to be given additional cause to feel proud of their language and culture. Deliberately marginalizing and actively discriminating against the native language and culture are having pernicious effects on them and on Circassian society in general.

All Circassian youth across the world are faced with the bleak prospect of losing their native language and culture. Other cultures and languages are taking advantage of this void and are earnestly taking over their minds and hearts. This is creating myriad problems for authorities in Circassia: in the absence of a solid grounding in Circassian culture some young people may elect to adopt foreign ideas and ideologies that could lead to extremism. The best way to fight this tendency is to instil Circassian language and ethos in the young ones. It is in the interest of Circassian governments to promote all things Circassian and reduce dependence on Russian and eschew the Russian ethos.

The decision to launch this journal came hot on the heels of a study commissioned by SPINDOX to determine the cyber manifestations of Circassian language and culture as an indicator of their status in Circassia. The results of the study were appalling: less than five portals in cyber space systematically publish in Circassian in all the three Circassian republics (and other Circassian regions)!

Beyond the doom and gloom, we hope that the readers of this volume enjoy the presented materials and that they get linguistic and cultural benefit out of it. Fortunately, the sources of Circassian culture are rich and there is no shortage of publishable materials. Fresh and original articles and papers (in Circassian and English) from cultural writers and workers are very important in a work of this nature, and this is an open invitation for contributions in this regard. Maintaining good working relations with similar institutions in Circassia and the diaspora is most essential for the free flow of ideas and materials.

The feedback received upon launching this pilot edition is crucial to the development of the journal, as it would help the Editorial Board to improve subsequent issues of the journal and bring them up to par. Of particular importance in this respect is the novel format of presentation of materials in Circassian and English. It is hoped that the ‘cumbersomeness’ of presentation is offset by the benefit of having simultaneous access to texts in both languages, and that associating Circassian with the undisputed global language of the day would be a step towards leading the language out of its isolation and into common usage by the Circassians. The order of presentation of the Circassian and English texts is configured individually for each section in a manner that would ease access to the English translation of the Circassian texts. We beg the pardon of monoglots (with respect to the languages utilized herein) who find in the ‘lacunæ’ a source of major bother.

The true ‘masters’ of the Circassian language – those who can write it in its full glory and wield it at will – are an esoteric group consisting of the students and graduates of the language and literature faculties of universities in Circassia. The same ‘esoteric’ argument can be levelled at cultural workers in Circassia. Presently, these are the custodians of the Circassian language and culture. The editorial board of the journal aims to enhance co-operation ties with this elite group of linguists and culturalists to further enrich the content of this nascent publication.

The success of this endeavour plainly depends in the first place on the quality and literary merits of the journal. Scholarly institutions in the West shall judge this enterprise according to long-established standards concerning excellence and worthiness (of acquisition). This journal is

intended both for the academic and scholarly institutions and communities around the world and for the Circassian societies strewn across our globe. The role of Circassian institutions and individuals in Circassia and the diaspora in spreading the word, so to speak, is also crucial. Hopefully, the political, societal, cultural, linguistic and temperamental barriers that divide the Circassians (and perpetuate their obscurity and absence on the world stage) would be lifted in face of purely cultural and literary vehicles.

A small note on Circassian materials and texts used in this journal would not be out of place at this early stage of its development. Every effort shall be made to strike a balance by including materials not only in the literary Circassian languages used in Circassia (Adigean in the Republic of Adigea and Kabardian-Cherkess in both the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic and the Karachai-Cherkess Republic), but also from other Circassian dialects with developed literary traditions that are still in use, such as Shapsugh, which is used in the Shapsugh Region on the Black Sea coast, but which lacks (or is being deprived of) the status of an official and literary language.

Like the icon of Sozeresh, the emblem of this journal, each issue of *Circassian Cultural Miscellany* shall have seven branches. Beyond the immediate interest to Circassians in both Circassia and the diaspora, this publication should also be of relevance to anthropologists, ethnologists, culturalists, and folklorists interested in the Caucasus region and those specialised in comparative studies. Musicologists would also find musical materials (including sheet music of some musical pieces) in the regular section dedicated to ancient and traditional Circassian music. Linguists may also find the unique dual presentation in Circassian and English useful for comparative purposes, and learners of Circassian should find it a boon. Finally, the 'lay' reader would also probably find a tale or two to titillate his palate and stir his/her curiosity.

This is the first publication of its kind, taking on a challenge that should in an ideal world be met by state institutions in Circassia, and it is essentially a 'diaspora' enterprise, lacking any governmental support. All efforts shall be made to maintain the standards expected of international

scholarly journals. Your comments, suggestions, and literary contributions are earnestly sought.

This publication is a complement of the SPINDOX portal ‘Circassian Culture and Folklore’ <<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha>>, <<http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/>>, and <<http://jaimoukha.blackapplehost.com/>>. Although it is principally designed to be autonomous and self-contained, it is recommended that this journal be used ‘online’ for optimum benefit. The songs and chants featured in this issue of the journal (for which audio files are available) can be heard at <<http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/circassian-journal.php>>.

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## «ПХЪЭЛЪАНТХЪУЭЩ» МЫ ЖУРНАЛЫМ И ТЕМЭР

[The Theme of the Journal]

### Пхъэлъантхъуэрэ Созэрэшрэ

Адыгэ пщIантIэхэм иджыри къэс ущрохьэлIэ къудамэ цIыкIу куэд зытет пхъэ джафэхэм. «ПхъэлъантхъуэкIэ» йоджэ абыхэм («пхъэлъантхъуэ» жыпIи хъунуш). Лы, унагъуэм кыщагъэсэбэп хьэпшып фIадзэу шытащ пхъэлъантхъуэм нэхъапэм. Нэхъ узэIэбэкIыжыIуэмэ, пхъэлъантхъуэм тхыдэ хьэлэмэт иIауэ кыщIокI...

Адыгэхэм иджыри къэс ягъэлъапIэ гъэрэ щIырэ шызэхэкI махуэр, ар илъэсыщхъэу ялгытэ.

Хъан-Джэрий зэритхыжамкIэ, унагъуэ къэс пхъэлъантхъуэ зырыз зэрэхьэрт, Созэрэш (Созырэш, Созэрэш, Созрэш) и пхъэлъантхъуэкIэ еджэу.<sup>1</sup> Созэрэш и пхъэлъантхъуэр хьэмкIутIейм е кхъужейм кыхащIыкIырт, илъэс хъурейм гуэным щахъумэрт, гъэрэ щIырэ шызэхэкI махуэм и пщыхъэщхъэм ар гуэным кърахьрт. Пхъэлъантхъуэр гуэным кыщрахкIэ я пашэр нысащIэт. Гуэныбжэм бгъэдыхьэрти, нысащIэм жиIэрт: «Созэрэш, бжэр Iухи, дыныщIэгъыхьэ!» Бжэр «кыызэIукIырти», нысащIэм пхъэлъантхъуэр кыиштэрт, пхъэлъантхъуэм и къудамиблым тегъэпщIа шэху уэздыгъэхэр пагъанэрти, унэм щIахьэрт, жыхафэгум трагъэувэрти, езыхэр къетIысэкIыжырт, пхъэлъантхъуэм зыхуагъазээрэ тхьэ елъэIурт: «Я дэ ди тхьэу тхьэшхуэ, гъэфI кыдэт, ди гъавэр гъэбагъуэ, мафIэм дыщыхъумэ...».

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<sup>1</sup> Созэрэш жьэгумрэ гъавэ гъэбэгъуэныгъэмрэ я тхьэуэ шытат адыгэ пантеоным. Абы дэщIыгъуу, узыншагъэмрэ узыгъуэхэмрэ я тхьэуэ илгытат Созэрэшыр пасэррей адыгэхэм.

А пщыхьэщхьэм Созэрэш кыгъэзэжауэ ялътэрт, илъэс хьурейм хы гущылым тетауэ; Созэрэш кыщигъэзэжа махуэм гьэрэ щырэ зэхэлауэ ялътэрти, жылэм я гуфIэгъуэт, джэгушхуэ, тхьэлъэIу ящырт.

— Къэрмокъуэ, Хь. (Н. Qermoqwe), *НАРТХЭР: ПАСЭРЕЙ ЛЫХЪУЖЪХЭМ Я ХЫБАР*. *Nartxer: Paserey L'ix'wzchxem ya X'ibarxer* [The Narts: Tales of the Heroes of Yore], Налшык: «Эльбрус» тхыль тедзапIэ [Nalchik: Elbrus Book Press], 2001, р76. [Щалэгъуалэм папщIэ зытхыжар: Къэрмокъуэ Хьэмидщ]

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## Lord Sozeresh and the Seven-branched Sapling

Sozeresh (Soziresh, Sozeresch, Sozresch), the god of fertility, family hearth, well-being and illness, had the winds and waters at his command. Sozeresh and Zchegwpathe (patron of the domestic hearth), as a collective, correspond to the Lares and Penates in Roman mythology.

Sozeresh was adored on the first three days of spring, starting on the Circassian New Year's Day, which fell on 22 March. The Circassians mark this day as the end of winter and the beginning of summer (*ghere sch'ire schizexech' maxwem*; гьэрэ щырэ щызэхэкI махуэм). It was believed that the soul returned first to air, then to water and finally to earth, with an interval of one week in between. In the ceremony of worship of Sozeresh, a hawthorn or pear sapling was cut down in the forest and configured so that seven branches were left intact ('seven' was a particularly significant number in ancient Circassian folklore). Almost all households had such an image.

The Sozeresh tree (пхьэлъантхьуэ; *px'elhantx'we*) was kept in the granary in the yard. On the day of his festival, it was brought out of the granary in the evening in a solemn ceremony presided over by the newest daughter-in-law. As the members of the family approached the

granary, the daughter-in-law addressed the deity: ‘Sozeresh, open the door and let us in!’ The daughter-in-law fetched the tree out of the barn, and the effigy was brought inside the house in a grand ceremony, with accompanying music and to cheers from all the members of the family, who complimented him on his arrival after spending the whole year on the surface of the sea. Little candles were stuck to the branches and a piece of cheese was attached to the top.

The tree was placed upright in the middle of the living room in front of the hearth, and the family members sat around the tree and supplicated thus: ‘Our god, the supreme god, bless us with a propitious year, multiply our harvest, protect us from fire...’ The participants then indulged in revelry in which *makhsima* was had, songs sung, and a grand dance part held. Afterwards, the idol was taken to the yard (and Sozeresh returned to his abode on the surface of the great sea), where it stayed without any mark of reverence until the next holiday. There is another meaning for ‘*px’elhantx’we*’ in the Circassian language: ‘A tree trunk with twigs for hanging up articles and utensils in a courtyard, field-camp, etc.’ Thus, ‘*px’elhantx’we*’ – the theme of the journal – is both an object of reverence and utility.

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## **Circassian Hearth: The Inner Sanctum**

In Circassian (and in general North Caucasian) cosmology everything was held in place by the universal chain. The hearth-chain (жъэгъу лъахъш; *zchegw lhax’sh*) was the household’s link to the cosmos – the coupling to the universal scheme of things. Every home had a permanently lit hearth with a wrought iron chain hanging down the chimney. All native North Caucasian religions regard the family hearth with special reverence and it was the principal place at which family rituals were conducted, principally offerings and sacrifices and the rites associated with the cult of Dade (Weriydade; Дадэ; Уэридадэ), the clan hero, the head of the household, whose immortal soul transmigrated to *hedrixé* (хъэдрыхэ; the world beyond) after death. The patrons of the domestic hearth were the deities Sozeresh and Zchegwpathe (Жъэгупатхъэ; literally: God of the Hearth). A new bride was

‘unchained’ from her father’s hearth and then ‘joined’ to that of her father-in-law in special circum-ambulatory ceremonies. Vestiges of the cult of Dade are come upon in the corpus of ceremonial songs collectively referred to as ‘Weriydade’, the most famous of which being the one chanted during the bridal homecoming. The hearth chain still retains symbolic functions and significance.<sup>2</sup>

The hearth was built in the middle of the inner or outer wall of the spacious kitchen/living room, or in a corner, where it had a special triangular shape. Beyond the cultic realm, it was used both for warming and for cooking. About 125 cm above the hearth, a piece of wood was placed to which a metal ring was fixed to support the hearth-chain (лъахъш; *lhax’sh*) of the cauldron (шыуан, лэгъуп; *shiwan*, *leghwp*=copper cauldron that tapers towards the top). The cauldron had a metal grip/handle (лэгъупыкъу; *leghwpiqw*) for hanging and carrying, and was supported on an iron trivet (шыуанлъакъуэ, шыуанцIэт; *shiwanlhaqwe*, *shiwansch’et*).<sup>3</sup>

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## Pyrolatry

Intimately connected with the cult of the hearth was fire-worship. The Ancient Circassians venerated fire. One of the deep-rooted traditions of the Circassians was to keep their hearths afire, never allowing them to get cold. This sacred and onerous task was fulfilled by the household matriarch (унэ гуащэ; *wine gwasche*). In fact, ‘Унэ гуащэ’ was the protectress of the domestic hearth in the Circassian Pantheon.

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<sup>2</sup> For further information on the cult of the hearth of the Circassians, refer to M. A. Meretukov (Meretiqwe), ‘Kult ochaga u adigov [The Cult of the Hearth of the Circassians]’, in *Scientific Transactions of the Adigean Science and Research Institute, Ethnography*, Maikop, vol. 8, 1968. See A. Jaimoukha’s *The Circassians: A Handbook* (Routledge, 2001, pp 179-80, p182, and p228), and *Circassian Culture and Folklore* (Bennett and Bloom, 2009), for yet more information on cultic practices of the Circassians associated with the hearth and fire-worship.

<sup>3</sup> ‘*Leghwpiqw*’ also designates ‘the (arch of the) rainbow’ in Circassian.



The quality of a housewife was assessed by the upkeep of her hearth fire. A woman was complimented in this manner: 'That woman's fire never went out all her life. Is there a housewife like her?!' In contrast, about a lazy housewife it was said: 'Isn't she a slothful hag, letting her hearth grow cold!' The technique for perpetuating fire was to feed it with logs for cooking and heating, the embers collected in one corner of the hearth and covered with ash when not in use.

A warm Circassian greeting went thus, 'May your fire be blessed!' If somebody's fire went out, it was considered a sign of his impending doom. To this day, the Circassians use the following maledictions: 'May your fire go out!', 'May your hearth be extinguished!', 'May your fire be washed by water!'

The family whose hearth had remained alight for a whole year held ceremonies on the day the soul returned to Earth, which fell on March 22nd, according to the modern calendar. The Circassians considered this day, when winter was over and summer began, as New Year's Day.

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### **'Seven' and 'three'**

There is a duality, a perceived competition, in the significance of the numbers '7' and '3' in Circassian folklore. It seems that the former numeric is the more ancient of the two, going back to the 'classical era' of Circassian civilization. For example, the ancient saying, '*L'ewizchir bzchiyblch'e mawe*' («Л'эужьыр бжьиблк'э майэ»; in Adigean: Л'эпкьыр блэ майэ; 'Heredity is passed on for seven generations'; literally: 'Heredity's strike reaches seven spans'), encapsulates the Circassian custom of interdicting marriage between persons related up to the seventh ancestor so as to minimize the chance of genetic defects due to inbreeding. This was perhaps the next stage of prohibition of incest after the interdiction of close-relative marriages.

One interpretation of the salutatory expression, '*Yeblaghe!*' («Еблагъэ»; 'Welcome!'), is the wish on the part of the host for the guest to become a

relative (*blaghe*; благъэ) (subject to the ‘seventh-ancestor’ rules and prohibitions).

The number ‘3’ is encountered in more traditional (recent) settings. Yet, even in apparently homogeneous settings, both numbers seem to make strong showings, for example in the Nart tales. One explanation would be that in some tales the latter number was able to replace the former to incorporate some cultural novelty. Perhaps number ‘3’ (a significant number in Indo-European folklore) was one of the introductions of the Indo-European invaders in the North Caucasus, particularly the (Iranian) Scythians and Sarmatians (ancestors of present-day Ossetians and most probably contributors to Circassian ethnic make-up), with whom the Circassians had a fertile interaction for hundreds of years. The presence of number ‘3’ in some Circassian versions of the Nart tales was cited by the Caucasologist Georges Dumézil as evidence of the Indo-European origin of the epos, obviously not taking into account the possible explanation of the phenomena and processes stated here.

In each edition of this journal there shall be seven principal branches, each forking into three articles. Symbolically, this is an amalgamation of two cultures: the ‘seven’ of ancient Circassian traditions is seamlessly intertwined with the more recent folkloric significance of the number ‘three’.

## НАРТ ХАСЭ

[The Nart Council]

## НАРТ ХАСЭ

Нартхэм унафэ щашIыр хасэрщ. Нарт псысэхэмрэ пшынальэхэмрэ я нэхъыбапIэм кызырыхэщымкIэ, нарт хасэр щызэхыхьэр Алыджхэ я унэрщ. Алыджхэ я унэр Къургъутам бжэпэ (хы Iуфэм) тетауэ жаIэ, щIытI лъагэкIэ къэщIыхьауэ. Къаблэ лъэныкъуэмкIэ куэбжэ хэлыщ. Унэ хужь кIыхьт Алыджхэ я унэр, щIэсэныбэт, зы щIэсэныр вийм яхуэгъэхьей къудейт. Гъуапльэм кыхэщIыкIауэ бжэ хэлыщ унэм, лIы тIощI емыувэлIауэ, бжэр яхуIухыртэкъым. Езы Алыдж нарт псысэхэм кызырыхэщ щIагъуэ щылэкъым, и цIэ кыхэхуэ фIэкI: зекIуэми хыхьэркъым, чынтыр къащылъыхьэкIи нартхэм ядэшэсыркъым, итIани Алыджхэ я унэр нартхэм я кIуапIэщ, хасэ, санэхуафэ щашI, лIыгъэкIэ цIэрыIуэ хъуа нартым лIыхъужьыбжэ щрат, жьы хъуар зрашэри Алыджхэ я унэрщ.

Гу лъытэн хуейщ адыгэхэр пасэрей грекхэм алыджкIэ еджэу зэрыщытам. Адыгэ щIынальэм, псалъэм папщIэ, хы Iуфэм, пасэрей грекхэм къалэ зыбжанэ къращIыхьауэ щытащ, а къалэхэм я къутахуэр нобэм къэсащ. Нэгумэ Шорэ итхыгъащ (*АДЫГЭ НАРОДЫМ И ТХЫДЭ*, 1958): «Ди лъахэм члисэжэ куэд къинащ, ахэр алыджхэм зэраIэужьым шэч хэлыкъым. Апхуэдэ члиситI ущрохьэлIэ Псыжыщхьэ. Псыжырэ (Кубанрэ) Тебэрдырэ яку (Къэрэшей-Шэрджэс Хэкум и ипщэ-къуэкIыпIэ лъэныкъуэм) чырбыш унитI дэтщ; зым шонэкIэ йоджэ, адрейм – хасэ мывэкIэ. «Шонэр» кызытекIар «шу унэ» псалъэхэрщ – «шухэм я унэ» жыхуиIэщ. Абдеж ноби ущрохьэлIэ мывэ шхалъэрэ шыфIэдзапIэрэ. Хасэ мывэм шы лъакъуапIэрэ хэ лъакъуапIэрэ тельщ. ЗэрыжалэмкIэ, хасэ мывэр гъуанэщ; къуаншэмрэ захуэмрэ зэхагъэкIын щхьэкIэ, а мывэ гъуанэм ирагъэпщ: къуаншэр, псыгъуэ дыдэми, мывэ гъуанэм ипщыфынукъым; захуэр, гугъу дехьми, мывэ гъуанэм йокI». Нэгумэ

Шорэ гу зэрылгыташи, Алыджхэ я унэм, нэгъуэщIу жыпIэмэ, члисэм (тхьэм и унэм) пасэрей адыгэхэм я деж пщIэ лей зэрыщиIар нэрылгыагъущ; къуаншэмрэ захуэмрэ абы щызэхагъэкIыу – тхьэм и пашхьэ зыщаумысыжу щытащ.

Нарт хасэм ушрохьэлIэ нарт цIэрыIуэхэм: нарт хасэм и тхьэмэдэр Нэсрэн (Насрэн, Нысрэн) ЖьакIэ, Бэдынокъуэ, Ашэмэз (Ашэ и къуэ), Имыс, Исым, Уэзырмэс, Уэзырмэдж, Сосрыкъуэ, Сосым, Жьынду ЖьакIэ, Сыбылши, Батэрэз (Хьымыщ и къуэ), Тотэрэш (Албэч и къуэ), Арэкъ Шу сымэ, нэгъуэщIхэми. Хасэм унафэ щаци къудейкъым нартхэм: хасэр щызэхыхьэ махуэм нарт шауэхэр шурылгъэс мэджэгу, лIыгъэ-шыгъэкIэ зэпоуэ.

— Къэрмокъуэ, Хь. (Н. Qermoqwe), *НАРТХЭР: ПАСЭРЕЙ ЛIЫХЪУЖЪХЭМ Я ХЪЫБАР*. *Nartxer: Paserey L'ix'wzchxem ya X'ibarxer* [The Narts: Tales of the Heroes of Yore], Налшык: «Эльбрус» тхылъ тедзапIэ [Nalchik: Elbrus Book Press], 2001, pp 16-17.

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## The Nart Council

The Narts made their collective decisions at the Nart Council. The extant Nart tales and epic songs and ballads make it clear for us that the Nart Council was held at the Mighty House of the Alijs, which was located on the Qwrghwtam Precipice on the sea shore.<sup>4</sup> It was verily a grand structure, a lofty white edifice with a great portal facing south and a copper gate that required twenty men to open and shut it. Practically, no mention is made of the life and exploits of the Alijs, despite the fact that their residence was one of the principal arenas in the Epos. The Alijs are never referred to in the myriad expeditions nor do they ever take part in the military campaigns of the Narts, yet the House of the Alijs is the popular meeting place of the Narts, the venue of their Council, where

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<sup>4</sup> Alij is the name of a family mentioned in the Nart Epos, but without much detail. 'Alij' is Circassian for 'Greek'.

(white-)wine drinking festivals were held and games played, the place where the Narts who had distinguished themselves in battle were presented with heroes' goblets and toasts were pronounced in their honour, and where the 'Nart Tribunal of Doom' condemned the aged and frail to a free fall down the Yinzhi Gorge (if intrigued by the last bit, read on!).

The Circassians called the ancient Greeks who established colonies on the Circassian eastern shores of the Black Sea 'Alij'. The ruins of these Greek littoral colonial towns can still be visited in Western Circassia.

According to Shora Nogmov (1861), the first published Circassian historian in the modern era, there were many ancient church relics in Circassia. Two such brick edifices are (still) located between the (upper reaches of the) Kuban and Teberda (in the southeast of the Karachai-Cherkess Republic): 'Shone' ('The House of Horsemen') and 'Xase Mive'. The Council Stone (*Xase Mive*) had a mythical rock with inscriptions of a horseshoe and the paw of a dog. Carved in the rock was a narrow aperture, which was used as a touchstone of truth and innocence. The accused was required to pass through the hole. If guilty, he got stuck, even if lean as a rake. Otherwise, he wriggled through without much difficulty. This was the Circassian equivalent of the 'Judging Mirror.' A stone (feeding-)trough and a horse tethering post can still be found at the site of the Council Stone.

A national Church never developed fully in Circassia, and it certainly disappeared in medieval times, probably after the end of Georgian hegemony. No lasting priestly class formed to maintain literacy and preserve written records, although the bards preserved some religious chants for posterity. Yet, it is thought the reference to the House of the Alijs in the Nart tales is a reverential retro-projection of a mediæval Christian sacred institution to a much earlier pagan-polytheistic period, probably replacing the original name of the place where the Narts met to deliberate.

In the Nart Council you would have found the Nart characters in the Epos, including Nesren (also Nasren and Nisren) Zchach'e (the leader of the Narts), Sosriqwe, Bedinoqwe, Baterez (son of X'imisch), Yimis,

Yisim, Sibilshiy, Sosim, Zchindu Zchach'e (Owl Beard), Areq Shu, Toteresh (son of Albech), Ashemez (son of Ashe), Wezirmes, and Wezirmej. Each one of these heroes embodied unique attributes besides the common Nart qualities. All are worthy of being admitted to the Nart Hall of Fame.

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## НАРТХЭМ Я ЖЬЫУКИ ХАСЭ!

НАРТ ПСЫСЭ ХЬЭЛЭМЭТ: «НАРТХЭ ЗЫХАНА ХАБЗЭ»  
(Къэбэрдей псысэ)

[The Nart Tribunal of Doom!: Intriguing Nart Tale: 'The Custom Renounced by the Narts'] (Kabardian text)

### НАРТХЭ ЗЫХАНА ХАБЗЭ

Кхъахэ хъуар, и лӀэгъуэ кыщысым, бгым щадзыж я хабзэт нартхэ.

Бэдынокъуэ и адэри жьы хъуаш. «Жьыгъэибг схьынщи, бгым щыздынщ», – жери, и адэр и дамашхэм игъэшэри, Бэдынокъуэ Жьыгъэибг дэклӀаш, тажъджэ ищӀри и адэр иригъэтӀысхъаш, еӀунщӀри тажъджэр бгым иригъэжэхащ.

бгым щежэхым, тажъджэр жыг лъэдакъэ хуэзэри фӀэнащ.

– И лӀэгъуэ къэсакъым, и лӀэгъуэ къэмысауэ бгым щыздынкъым, – жери Бэдынокъуэ и адэр бгым кыдыхыжащ.

– Унэм сыпхыж хъунукъым, – кыжриӀаш и адэм. – Нартхэ кыпхуадэнкъым – хабзэр домьгъэкъутэ.

– Дэнэ усхын? – еупщӀаш Бэдынокъуэ и адэм.

– БгъуэнщӀагъым сыхъ, – кыжриӀаш и адэм. – Сыпсэхуу бгъуэнщӀагъым сисынщ, гъуэмылэ кысхуэпхурэ сыбгъэшхэнщ, нартхэ закъедгъэщӀэнкъым.

БгъуэнщӀагъым ихъри щӀигъэтӀысхъаш Бэдынокъуэ и адэр, нартхэ бгым щидзауэ фӀэкӀ ящӀакъым, гъуэмылэ хуихурэ егъашхэ.

ЕкӀуэкӀыурэ, нартхэ я пхъэщхъемыщхъэр зтегъэуаш. Зы гъи кӀуаш, гъитӀи кӀуаш – пхъэщхъемыщхъэм заужыжыркъым.

Махуэ гуэрым, и адэм гъуэмылэ хуихурэ пэт, Бэдынокъуэ псым щызэпрыкӀым зы мы цӀыкӀу

кыиэщхьэмыщхьэ жыгхэр зэрыгъужари жриIащ. «Ди адэм хуэсхьынщ», – жери зригъэзыхаш Бэдынокъуэ, зыщригъэзыхым, псым зыщIигъэмбырууэри мыр кIуэдыжаш. БгъуэнщIагъым нэсри мым и гугъу хуищIащ и адэм, нартхэ я пхьэщхьэмыщхьэ жыгхэр зэрыгъужари жриIащ.

– Мыр мэзым кыиэщхьэмыщхьэ псым, – кыгъужариIащ и адэм. – Мэзым фыщIыхьы, мей жыг къэвгъэIэпхьуэ.

Бэдынокъуэ нартхэ яхыхьэжри:

– Мей жыг къэвгъэIэпхьуэ, – яжриIащ, – ар жыг фхуэхъунуш.

Мей жыг кыагъэIэпхьуэри, пхьэщхьэмыщхьэ кыадэхъужаш нартхэ. «Мы Iэрысэ» жалэ щыхъуари абы лъандэрэщ.

ЕкIуэкIыурэ, уз кыыхыхьэри нартхэ я мэл хъушэр зэтэлэ хъуаш, хъушэм тIы кыыхэнэжакъым, мэлыбгъэ зыбжанэщ кьелар. Нартхэ гузэвгъуэ хэхуауэ, гъуэмылэ ихьри Бэдынокъуэ бгъуэнщIагъым кIуащ, нартхэ я мэл хъушэр зэрызэтэллар жриIащ.

– Псэууэ къэна мэлыбгъэр Амыщ и тIы хъупIэжъым фху, абы щыхъуакIуэмэ, щIэжъей кыащIэхъуэнущ, – жиIащ Бэдын. Бэдынокъуэ нартхэ кыаыхыхьэжри:

– Мэлыбгъэр Амыщ и тIы хъупIэжъым фху, – яжриIащ. Амыщ и тIы хъупIэм зы гъэкIэ щагъэхъуакIуэри, мэлыбгъэм щIэжъей кыащIэхъуащ, нартхэ я мэл хъушэми зиужыжаш.

ЕкIуэкIыурэ, уэгъу кIыхь хъури нартхэ я мэшыр ихьаш, жылапхьы кыахуэнэжакъым. Нартхэ кьехъуллар жриIащ Бэдынокъуэ и адэм.

– Гъатхэм Тхьэгъэлэдж и мэшыпIэжъыр иревэ нартхэ, – жиIащ Бэдын. – Жылапхьэ ягъуэтыжынщ.

Тхьэгъэлэдж и мэшыпIэжъыр яващ нартхэ, абы мэш кыитекIэри, жылапхьэ яхуэхъуащ, мэши ящIэ хъужаш.

– Ди пхьэщхьэмыщхьэ жыгыр щыгъужым, уи чэнджэщ кыдэпхьэлэри жыг дгъэкIыжаш, – жалаш нартхэм, Бэдынокъуэ деж кIуэри. – Мэл



кытцІэхъуэжами мэш кытцІэхъуэжами, зи фІыщІэр уэращ. Сыт пхуэтцІэжын?

– Зи фІыщІэр сэракъым, – къажриІащ Бэдынокъуэ нартхэ. – Зи фІыщІэр ди адэращ. Жъы щыхъум, ди адэр бгым щыздыжакъым: хабзэм себакъуэри бгъуэнцІагъым схъауэ исщ.

Нартхэ кІуэри Бэдын бгъуэнцІагъым кърашыжащ, кхъахэ хъуаи бгым щадзыжакъым абы щегъэжъауэ.

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— Къэрмокъуэ, Хъ. (Н. Qermoqwe), *НАРТХЭР: ПАСЭРЕЙ ЛІЫХЪУЖЪХЭМ Я ХЪЫБАР*. *Nartxer: Paserey L'ix'wzchxem ya X'ibarxer* [The Narts: Tales of the Heroes of Yore], Nalchik: Elbrus Book Press, 2001, pp 110-11.

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**Жъыгъэибг:** Кхъахэ хъуар, и лІэгъуэ кыщысым, бгым щадзыж я хабзэт нартхэ. Сэ си фІэщІымкІэ Жъыгъэибгыр Инжыдж Аузым и лъагапІэхэм ящыщ зыбгщ.

**ЖъыукІ Хасэ:** Жъы хъуар ЖъыукІ Хасэм яшри ар яукІын (Жъыгъэибг щадзыжын щІыкІэу) унафэ ящІэу щытахэт.

**Бэдынокъуэ:** Нарт лІыхъужъхэм ящыщ хахуэ цІэрыІуэ гуэр.

**Бэдын:** Бэдынокъуэм и адэ. Езыри нарт лІыхъужъу щытат.

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## The Custom Renounced by the Narts

Those smitten by the slings and arrows of time and enfeebled by the burdens of old age, when it was time for their death, the Narts used to have the custom of throwing these frail ones down the mountain.

Bedinoqwe's father turned old and decrepit. "I shall carry him to the Mount of Old Age and push him into the abyss," he said, and, placing his father on his shoulders, Bedinoqwe

set out to the Mount of Old Age, plaited a wicker basket and seated his father in it, and pushed the wicker basket, running it down the mountain.

As it raced down the precipice, the wicker basket hit a tree stump and got stuck.

“His time has not come, and since his time has not come, I will not throw him down the mountain,” Bedinoqwe said, and he pulled him back up the mountain.

“You can’t take me back home,” his father told him. “The Narts won’t have this – let’s not break with our customs and traditions.”

“Where shall I take you?” Bedinoqwe asked his father.

“Take me to the grotto,” his father told him, “I shall remain in the grotto for the rest of my days. You shall bring me provisions to nourish me, and we shan’t let the Narts know about this affair.”

Bedinoqwe carried his father to the grotto and seated him inside. The Narts had no reason to believe that Bedinoqwe had not thrown his father down the mountain. Bedinoqwe kept his father fed by bringing him provisions.

Time went by, and the fruits of the Narts shrivelled up. A year went by, and then another – however, the fruits did not prosper.

One day, as he was taking provisions to his father, Bedinoqwe happened to see a small wild apple as he was crossing the river. “I shall take it to my father,” said Bedinoqwe, and bent down to reach the apple. As he made to reach the apple, the apple sunk in the river and was lost. When he reached the grotto, he mentioned the apple to his father and told him about the shrivelling up of the fruit-trees.

“The apple was brought by the river from the forest,” his father said to him. “Go into the forest and transplant one wild apple-tree.”

Bedinoqwe rejoined the Narts, and told them: “Remove a wild apple-tree from the forest and plant it. It shall become a tree for you.”

The Narts transplanted an apple-tree from the forest, and they had fruit again. Henceforth the apple started to be known as ‘*mi ’erise*’ (‘the forest apple planted by hand’).

More time went by, and disease struck the land of the Narts and smote their flocks of sheep, killing off the rams and sparing only a few barren ewes. The Narts fell into anxiety, and then anxiety gave way to panic. Bedinoqwe took provisions to the grotto and related to his father what had happened to the Nart flocks of sheep.

“Herd the remaining barren ewes to Amisch’s great ram pasture-land.<sup>5</sup> If they graze there, they shall engender lambs,” said Bedin.

Bedinoqwe went back to the Narts and told to them: “Take the barren ewes to Amisch’s ram grazing-ground.”

The Narts led their barren ewes to pasture for one year on Amisch’s great ram grass-land. The ewes gave birth to lambs, and the Narts’ flock of sheep multiplied.

Yet more time by. A long-drawn draught caused the millet of the Narts to perish and depleted their seed-fund. Bedinoqwe related to his father the misfortune that befell the Narts.

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<sup>5</sup> Amisch was the god of sheep in the Circassian Pantheon.

“In spring, let the Narts plough the great millet field of Theghelej,”<sup>6</sup> said Bedin. “They shall renew their seed-fund for sowing.”

The Narts ploughed the great millet field of Theghelej. Millet grew in the field and the Narts built up their seed-fund anew, allowing them to make millet once again.

“When our fruit-tree withered, you brought us your wise counsel, and we were able to grow trees once again,” said the Narts after going to Bedinoqwe’s house. “It is grace to you that we have sheep and millet anew. What can we do for you in return?”

“It is not to me that you should be grateful,” Bedinoqwe replied to the Narts. “It is towards our father that you should direct your gratitude. When he had grown old, I did not send our father down the hill: I broke the custom and carried him to the grotto, where he is staying now.”

The Narts went over to the grotto and led Bedin back home. It was there and then that the Narts desisted from hurling old people down the chasm.

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## The Nart Tribunal of Doom

At one stage of their social development, the Circassians used to practise geronticide, or the ritual killing of old people when they reach a certain age. This might have been an ancient form of mercy killing, euthanasia, which allowed the old and feeble to die in dignity. Some societies in Eastern Europe kept this tradition until the 1930s.

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<sup>6</sup> Theghelej was the god of flora in the Circassian Pantheon.

The Narts had a special council of doom, *Zchiwich' Xase* (ЖыыкI Хасэ), whose duty was to summon people whose time had come on the eve of their execution, and to inform them of the council's verdict. The Nart Tribunal of Doom used to be held at the mighty house of the Alij, where the Nart Council usually held its sessions. At the end of the meeting, the doomed one was presented with a glass of wine as a toast. He was allowed to spend the eve with his loved ones. On the day of execution, the condemned was thrown down the Yinzhiy Gorge.<sup>7</sup> The height from which the doomed ones were pushed to their death was called '*Zchigheyibg*' («Жыгъэибг») ['Mount of Old Age'].

Legend has it that one elder on death row managed to save the people from a number of impending disasters and, in gratitude for the feat, the custom was scrapped, and the wisdom of the old started to be appreciated. Subsequently, Circassian society held its elders in great esteem, and appreciated their wisdom and perspicacity. According to another version, a young Nart forcefully saved his doomed father and the custom consequently fell into disuse, as the council lost some of its prestige.

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<sup>7</sup> Yinzhiy (Инжыдж) is the Zelenchuk River, a left tributary of the Kuban (Psizh). Located in the Karachai-Cherkess Republic, the Yinzhiy River has its source in the Caucasus Mountains.

[Compiled in accordance with the legends and oral traditions of the Kabardians]

- *Geschichte des Adygejischen Volkes. Die Sagen und Lieder des Tscherkessen-völks*, translated by A. Bergé, Leipzig, 1866.
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### **Interesting links:**

**Адыгэ нарт псысэхэр** (The Nart Tales of the Circassians)  
<<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/narttales.html>>

**Сосрыкъуэ мафӀэ къехъ** (Sosriqwe Fetches Fire)  
(Circassian equivalent of the Prometheus legend)  
<<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/sosfetchfire.html>>

**Лӕпш и гъушӀ Ӏдэм и хъыбар**  
(The Story of Lhepsch's Iron Tongs)  
<<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/narttale1.html>>

**More Nart tales**  
<<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/nartsaga3.htm>>

## НАРТ ПСЫСЭ КІЭЩІ:

### «ЛЪЭПЩ ДУНЕЙМ И ГЪУНЭ ЗЭРЫЛЪЫХЪУАР»

(Къэбэрдей псысэ)

[Short Nart Tale: 'How Lhepsch Sought the Edge of the World']  
(Kabardian tale)

The original Kabardian text shall be given in both Cyrillic and Latin transcriptions.<sup>8</sup> The tale is also rendered into English.

## ЛЪЭПЩ ДУНЕЙМ И ГЪУНЭ ЗЭРЫЛЪЫХЪУАР

(Kabardian text, tale no. 53, third cycle, in Asker Hedeghel'e (Хъэдэгъэлэ Аскэр) (compiler), *НАРТХЭР: АДЫГЭ ЭПОС. Nartxer: Adige Épos. Narti: Adigski épos* [The Narts: Circassian Epos], Maikop: The Adigean Science and Research Institute, vol. 1, 1968, p217. Томибл хъу тхылъышхуэ щІагъуэ)

— Сэ дунейм и гъунэ къэзыгъуэтынщ, къызэгъэлъэгъунщ, — жиІэри, гъушІ вакъэ ещІыри, гъушІ баш ещІыри дунейр къызэпикІухъыну нарт Лъэпщ йожьэр.

Куэдрэ кІуащ, куэдрэ плъащ. И вакъэр лажьэри и лъапщэм къыфІэхуэжаш, и баш лажьэри и цыпэр Іэдакъэм къыкІэмыщыжъу хъуащ.

Куэдрэ кІуащ, лъыхъуащ, ауэ уафэмрэ щІыльэмрэ зыщызэгъэкъуам нэсаІым.

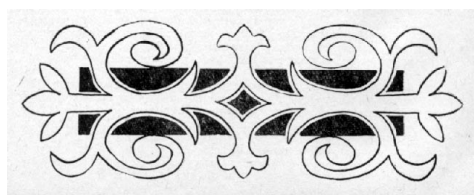
Абы щхъэкІэ нобэ къызынэсами:

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<sup>8</sup> The system used for the [Latin transcription of Circassian](http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/latinizedkabardian.html) texts is available in 'Appendix 2: Latinized Kabardian Alphabet', in A. Jaimoukha, *The Circassians: A Handbook*, London and New York: Routledge, 2001, pp 320-4. It is also found online: <<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/latinizedkabardian.html>>.

— Лъэпщ щы́м и гъунэ нэса́ым! — адыгэ  
лъыжхэм жа́лэ.

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### **Lhepsch Duneym yi Ghwne zerilhix'war**

— Se duneym yi ghwne qezghwetinsch,  
qizezghelheghwansch, – zhiy'eri, ghwsch' vaqe yesch'(i)riy,  
ghwsch' bash yesch'(i)riy duneyr qizepiyk'whinu Nart  
Lhepsch yozcher.

Kwedre k'wasch, kwedre plhasch. Yi vaqe lazcheriy yi  
lhapschem qif'exwezhasch, yi bash lazcheriy yi tsiper  
'edaqem qich'emischizchu x'wasch.

Kwedre k'wasch, lhix'wasch, awe wafemre sch'ilhemre  
zischizegheqwam nesa'im.

Abi schhech'e nobe qizinesamiy:

— Lhepsch sch'im yi ghwne nesa'im! — Adige  
l'izchxem zha'e.

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## How Lhepsch Sought the Edge of the World

— “I shall find the edge of the world. I will see it with my own eyes,” said Nart Lhepsch.

He fashioned a pair of iron boots and formed a walking stick to roam the World.

He travelled here, he travelled there, he travelled everywhere. He saw a few, he saw a lot, there was nothing under the skies that he did not see.

His boots wore out and fell round his ankles. His staff shortened to lesser than a span.

He roamed and roved. His quest took him to all corners of the World, but he never arrived at the place where Earth meets Heaven.

To this day Circassian elders have a saying about this vain endeavour: “Lhepsch did not reach the edge of the world.”

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## Лъэпщ

Лъэпщ мафIэм, Iэщэм, гъукIэхэм я тхьэуэ лъытахэт пасэрей адыгэхэм. Нарт эпосым кыхош Лъэпщыр нартхэ я гъукIэу зэрыщытат. Лъэпщым и гъусэу Хъудымыжъ гъукIэу лэжъат, тIури зы кIыщым щылажъэу. Лъэпщ нартхэм кыхуищIу шыта гъушIым кыхащIыкIа Iэмэпсымэ пщхьэпэхэр, Iэщэ зэмылIэужьыгъуэхэр, псалъэм папщIэ джатэ, къамэ, бжы, мэлуху, нэгъуэщI Iэджэхэри, гъушI фащэ, псалъэм папщIэ афэ джанэ. НэгъуэщIу жыпIэмэ, Лъэпщыр нартхэм я Iэщэ-фащэщIт.

Лъэпщ гъушI тхьэмпэ адакъэкIэ хуэдэ кыгъэшри, къазшырыдзэ хуэдэ дипкIыкIыжри нартхэм гъубж кыхуищIащ. Абдейжым

гъубжыр ящӀу къежъащ. Абы ипӀкӀӀ мӀш зых ӀмӀпсымӀ щыӀакъым. НӀгъуӀщӀ версиехӀм къытӀуатӀ мазӀкӀӀр гъубжым и шапхӀӀу зӀрыщытар. АпхуӀдӀуи, и кӀапитӀыр зӀблӀдзауӀ блӀ укӀам и теплӀӀэр шапхӀӀу къегъӀсӀбӀпри ЛӀӀпщ ӀдӀӀ ищӀащ. АуӀ гупсысӀр зейр ЛӀӀпщым и щхӀӀӀгъусӀращ.



МывӀм къыкӀуӀцӀахӀ СосрыкӀуӀ дӀп зӀрыжӀӀражӀӀти  
ЛӀӀпщ щӀалӀм и лӀӀгуажӀытӀыр ӀдӀкӀӀ иубыдри,  
псым блӀнейрӀ ипсыхъащ. И лӀӀгуажӀытӀым фӀӀкӀ  
къӀмынӀу, СосрыкӀуӀ и ӀӀпкӀӀӀӀпкӀыр жыр хъуащ.  
СӀтӀней гуащӀ и къуӀ цӀыкӀум хуогузавӀ.

Lhepsch, the patron of the smiths, tempers fiery Sosriqwe  
seven times in the water in the presence of Lady Satanay.  
The places where the tongs were applied (the knees) were to  
become the ‘Achilles Heels’ of the otherwise invincible hero.

The Nart Epos is worthy of being considered as an  
integral component of world heritage.

(Photograph courtesy of adygaunion.com)

ЛӀӀпщ тхӀӀуӀ къыщальхуакъым, ауӀ абы и ӀӀцӀагъӀм хуӀӀӀзӀу щытам  
щхӀӀкӀӀ, гъукӀӀм щӀыхъышхуӀ къыхуащӀа тхӀӀ пӀлӀытӀу ябжурӀ. Зы  
махуӀ гуӀрым Имыс къӀгубжӀри джатӀмкӀӀ ЛӀӀпщым и лӀакӀуӀр  
пихащ лӀӀгуажӀӀм дежкӀӀ. Мы ӀуӀхум зытехуӀ Нарт псысӀхӀм

языныкьуэхэм кьытIуатэ Лъэпщ фэбжьым кьызэрелар. Ауэ зы хьэтыкьуей нарт псысэ гуэр кьытжеIэ а уIэгъэ хьэлъэм кьыхэкIкIэ Лъэпщ и гъащIэм кIэ кьызэрыгъуэтар.<sup>9</sup>

Лъэпщ и Iэгъуапэм зыри иригъаплъэу щытакъым. И кIыщыр сыт щыгъуи гъэбыдауэ, абы и кIуэцIым езыр щылажьэу щытащ. ФIиплъа нэужь и IэщIагъэм щинэжащ. Лъэпщ алыджхэм я тхьэ Хефаестус пальэщи, урымхэм я тхьэ Вулкан пэлъытэщ.

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## Lhepsch

Every deity in the Circassian Pantheon had his/her special attributes. In the Nart universe, Lhepsch was the Patron of smiths, iron, weapons and fire. He manufactured metal implements and arms for the benefit of the Narts. In one story, his wife gave him the idea of making tongs when she saw a dead snake doubled on itself. In another, the shape of the crescent moon provided the blueprint for the sickle. At one time Lhepsch shared the smithy with X'wdimizch. The metallic exploits of the assiduous smith engendered universal veneration. It was in appreciation of his extraordinary feats that he was elevated to the rank of the gods. It is believed that the god of the smiths started out on his life as an ordinary human being, a mere apprentice.

Some of the gods had human forms, and a few were even mortal, as was our protagonist. The fleeing of Lhepsch from a dissatisfied 'customer' in one tale is indicative of this—an attempted deicide, so to speak. In another tale, an angry client (Yimis) severs Lhepsch's legs at the knees. Thenceforth tales fork in their accounts. Some state that the legs were sewn back on again and that Lhepsch recovered following a period of intensive care rendered by the Narts to their beloved smith, including holding vigils (щIапщэ; *sch'apsche*) by his sick bed. However, in a

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<sup>9</sup> «НАРТ ЛЪЭПШЪЫ ИЛИАКИ», ХьэдэгъэлIэ Аскэр зыхуэхъэсыжа «НАРТХЭР: АДЫГЭ ЭПОС» (Мейкъуапэ, 1968) зэджэр тхылъым щыщщ. Япэрей том, ещанэрей цикл, псысэ 77, н. 265-6. Псысэр хьэтыкьуейщ.

Hetiqlwey tale the assiduous efforts of the Narts to heal Lhepsch proved unsuccessful, as he succumbed to fate and gave up the ghost.<sup>10</sup>

Around each god and goddess, there arose a cult and special rites of worship and supplication. The ceremony of worship of Lhepsch consisted of libations over a plough and an axe, symbols of plenty and might, respectively. Lhepsch corresponds to the Roman god Vulcan and to Hephæstus in the Greek Pantheon.

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<sup>10</sup> The Hetiqlwey tale is found in A. Hedeghel'e, *Nartxer* (The Narts), vol. 1, third cycle, tale no. 77, Maikop, 1968, pp 265-6. The Hetiqlwey make up one of the (still extant Western) Circassian nation-tribes.

**СЭТЭНЕЙ ГУАЩЭМ И ІУЩАГЪЭМРЭ  
ЛЪЭКІЫНЫГЪЭМРЭ ЯЩЫЩ ЗЫ ЩАПХЪЭ: «ТЫГЪЭР  
ПЩЫХЪЭРЭ КЪЫЗФЫЗЭТЕУЦОГОРЭР»**  
(Абэзэхэ псысэ)

[From the **Might and Craft of Lady Satanay**: ‘Why does the sun slow down towards the end of the day?’] (Abzakh tale)

**Сэтэней гуащэ**

Сэтэней нартхэр зэреджэр гуащэщ: «Сэтэней гуащэ, гуащэхэм я лей». Сэтэней и пщІэр зэрылѡагэм, абы пащІ зэрыщымыІэм и щыхъэтщ ар. «Сэ нарт шу сыпащІ», — жеІэ езы Сэтэней, нартхэм я пащхъэ щиІэ пщІэмрэ лъытэныгъэмрэ и напщІэ телъщ, абы ирогушхуэри. Нартхэм я лъэхъэнэми иужькІи «гуащэ» псалъэм «пашэ» мыхъэнэ иІащ. Тхъэпэлъытэуц Сэтэней гуащэ нартхэм къазэрыщыхур: нартхэр зекІуэ ежъэnumэ, абы йочэнджэщ, ар нартхэ я ушиякІуэщ, Іушагъэрэ губзыгъагъэрэ зыдалъагъу тхъэпэлъытэ гуащэщ.

Сэтэней гуащэр дахэ дыдэу щытащ. Ар нарт Сосрыкъуэ и анэщ. И къуэ лъапІэр ихъумэн папщІэ, Сэтэней зэзэмызэ удыгъэрэ хъуагъэщагъэрэ къагъэсэбэпащ.

**ТЫГЪЭР ПЩЫХЪЭРЭ КЪЫЗФЫЗЭТЕУЦОГОРЭР**

(ХъэдэгъэлІэ Аскэр зыхуэхъэсыжа «НАРТХЭР: АДЫГЭ ЭПОС» зэджэр тхылъым щыщц (Мейкъуапэ, 1968). Япэрей том, япэрей цикл, епщІанэрей псысэ, н. 108-9. Псысэр абэзэхэщ)

Тыгъэр пщыхъапэм, зы лъэхъан горэм, къэуцугоу,  
ошъо чапэм заулерэ итэу зэрэщытым гу лъыптагъа?...  
Арэуштэу зыкІэхъурэр мары.  
Сэтэнаерэ зы нарт шъошІэ Іялэрэ зэныкъокъугъэх.  
Зым: «Непэ сае сыдын», — ыІуагъ.

Ар ышIэу, Сэтэнае фэшъхаф, щыIэгъэщтэп аIо!

Адырэм: «Зы мафэIе уанэ сшIын», — ыIуагъ.

Мэфэ ренэм, шъхъажъ зыфэгъэзагъэм ыужъ итэу, щысыгъэх.

Нарт Iэлэр шъошIэ Iэзэ блэIигъэу щытыти, ишIэн зэIикъуи Iысыжъыгъэ.

Тыгъэр ошъо чапэм нэсыгъэу, IофшIэнэу кыфэнагъэр тIэкIу ымыухыIоIе енэгъе зэхъум:

— О Тыгъ, зэ укызэтеуцагъэемэ! — ыIуагъ Сэтэнае.

А лъэхъаным нартмэ аIорэр хъу хабзэти, тыгъэр тIэкIу кызэтеуцуи, идын кыпапльэу зы шIыпIэ итыгъ.

Мафэм бэрэ зтесыгъэти, Сэтэнае хъазэрэу пшъыгъэн, пэгъэн фае. Къэтэджи, лъэшэу зиукъудый сэе шIыгъаIер зышилъи нарт Iэлэр кыыригъэплъыгъ.

— ЗэраIорэм утет, Сэтэнай! ШIоу бгъэшыгъэ! — нарым кыыриIуагъ.

Ащ кыщегъэжъагъэу, пщыхъэрэ а уахътэм тыгъэр зихъэIе, шэны фэхъугъэу кызэтеуцогъы, ошъо чапэм заулэрэ еты.

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## **Why does the sun slow down towards the end of the day?**

(Translated from an Abzakh original, tale no. 10, first cycle, in Asker Hedeghel'e (compiler), *The Narts: Circassian Epos, vol. 1*, Maikop: The Circassian Research and Science Institute, 1968, pp 108-9)

Have you ever wondered why the sun stops for a while  
at some time towards the evening? ...

This started to happen after the following incident:

One day Satanay and a young Nart got into an argument and then challenged one another as to who was more adept at his art.

One said, "I can weave a Circassian coat in one day."<sup>11</sup>

It is said that Satanay was the only person capable of performing such a feat.

The other, "I can make a saddle in one day."

All day (of the appointed date) each was busy making the object of the challenge.

The young Nart artisan set to his work diligently.

As the sun was about to go down, seeing that she still needed some time before her work was finished:

— "Oh Sun, if only you come to a standstill for a while!" entreated Satanay.

At that time it was usual for the Nart wishes to come true. The sun stopped for some time, giving Satanay a chance to finish weaving. Since she had been working all day long, Satanay must have become very exhausted. She stood up and stretched her body. She put on the new coat to show it to the young Nart.

— "You are as dexterous as they say! You have really done a magnificent job!" conceded the young Nart.

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## Lady Satanay

Lady Satanay, the mother of all the Narts, was born of a lovely flower which still bears her name (the drop-wort, *Filipendula*). Her beauty was legendary. She was sought after by all notable Narts for marriage. The story of the birth of (her son) Sosriqwe bears witness to the uncontrollable effect she had on men. As she sat on her haunches doing the laundry by the river, the cowherd, Zhemix'we, who was tending his

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<sup>11</sup> Circassian coat: long-waisted outer garment, best known as 'Cherkesska'. It is called 'saye' («cae») in Abzakh, 'tsey' («цей») in Kabardian.

bevy on the other side of the stream, seeing her uncovered curvaceous limbs, was unable to hold back his semen (*nafsi*; нафсы) as it was ejected across the water on the stone beside her. The stone later engendered Sosriqwe. She was also famous for her inventiveness. She discovered winemaking and gave the Narts their first taste of the elixir. She was the epitome of wisdom and sagacity. The Narts turned to her for council and advice in times of national calamities, and she was able to avert many disasters that could have annihilated the Nart nation. Perhaps the heyday of her power represented the acme of North Caucasian matriarchism. The Narts elevated her to the rank of a godhead.

On the other hand, Satanay was accused of witchcraft and slyness. Her bitchy invective against Lhepsch in the tale ‘How Satanay and Lhepsch fell out with one another’ is an illustration of this.

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## АДЫГЭ ПШЫНАЛЪЭ

[Circassian Music and Songs]

### УЭРЭД ГЪЭЩІЭГЪУЭН:

ДАДЭ ЩХЪЭКІЭ «ГУЩЭ» УЭРЭДІ: «ДУМЭ ЛЭЛЕЙ-  
ЛЭЛЕЙ, ДАДЭ ИЗОГЪЭЩІ!»

(Къэбэрдей уэрэд)

[**Astonishing Song:** A ‘Berceuse’ for Grampa!: ‘Dume leley-leley, I am  
lullabying grampa!’] (Kabardian song)

Зи гугъу тщІын уэрэдыр гущэ уэрэдщ. Ауэ мы гущэ уэрэдым зи  
гугъу ищІыр дадэращ (мыбдежым: нысэм и щхъэгъусэм и адэр  
аращ), нанукъым!

The following Kabardian ‘berceuse’ takes the form of a miniature musical. Old men smitten by the slings and arrows of time and reduced to decrepitude and senility were expected to be taken care of by their daughters-in-law. As the case with small infants, they were confined to cradles (though of a large size) and strapped so as to prevent them from falling off. Fascinatingly, they were sung lullabies by their care-takers – reprise of the cradle songs sung to them all those years ago!

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>«ГУЩЭ» УЭРЭД: «ДУМЭ ЛЭЛЕЙ-ЛЭЛЕЙ, ДАДЭ ИЗОГЪЭЦІ!»</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>Нысэ нэхъыжбьм</b> Думэ лэлей-лэлей, дадэ изогъэцІ! Думэ лэлей-лэлей, дадэ изогъэцІ! Пхъу симыІэр къэслъхум, ар езгъашэм,  Уасэшыр дадэ ей!</p> <p><b>Тхъэмадэм</b> Ахэр жуІэ, нысэ! ЫІэ, ыІэ, нысэ! Ахэр хъунщ, нысэ!</p> <p><i>(Нысэ нэхъыцІэр къыцІохъэ: «Сэ си къалэнри срукъуж, мы лыжъри хэмытым», — жегІэри цІууныкІэу цІедзэ.)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>‘Cradle’ Song: ‘Dume leley-leley, I am lullabying grampa!’</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>The elder daughter-in-law:</b> ‘Dume leley-leley, I am lullabying grandad!’<sup>12</sup> Dume leley-leley, I am lulling grandpa to sleep! If I have my yet unborn daughter, when I marry her off,  The dowry steed will be grampa’s lot!’</p> <p><b>The father-in-law:</b> ‘Speak thou thus, daughter-in-law! Thus, thus, daughter-in-law! This is just great, daughter-in-law!’</p> <p><i>(Enter the younger daughter-in-law in a plaintive mood: ‘I already have my work cut out for me, without having to bother with this decrepit old man,’ she says, as she starts rocking the cradle.)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>Нысэ нэхъыцІэм</b> Думэ лэлей-лэлей, дадэ изогъэцІ! Думэ лэлей-лэлей, дадэ изогъэцІ! Щыхъ кІэбдзыр зи цІыбэ, Домбеифэр зи гуцэпс, Зи псэр хэкІын, дадэ!</p> <p><b>Тхъэмадэм</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>The younger daughter-in-law:</b> ‘Dume leley-leley, I am lullabying grampa! Dume leley-leley, I am sending gramps to sleep! [Thou,] whose cradle drain is the thigh-bone of a deer,<sup>13</sup> Whose cradle straps are of aurochs hide, May thy soul leave thine body, grandad!’</p> <p><b>The father-in-law:</b></p>

<sup>12</sup> ‘Dume leley-leley’ corresponds to English ‘hushaby’, ‘lullaby’. ‘Dume’ is stressed on the first syllable; ‘leley-leley’ on the second of each ‘leley’.

<sup>13</sup> North Caucasian cradles had a unique toilet ‘drainage’ mechanism consisting of a shaft of cored thigh-bone (usually of sheep) ending in a clay container.

Хьэуэ, хьэуэ, нысэ! Ар жумыІэ, нысэ! Ахэр хьункъым, нысэ!	‘No, no, daughter-in-law! Speak not thus, daughter-in-law! This is wholly uncalled for, daughter-in-law!’
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— Бэрэгъун, В. Хь. (V. H. Bereghwn; Baragunov), and Къардэнгъуш, З. П. (Z. P'. Qardenghwsch'; Kardangushev), (compilers), *АДЫГЭ УЭРЭДХЭМРЭ ПШЫНАЛЪЭХЭМРЭ, ЯПЭРЕЙ ТХЫЛЪ. Adige Weredxemre Pshinalhexemre, Yaperey Txilh. Narodnie pesni i instrumental'nie naigrishi adigov, tom 1* [Circassian Songs and Instrumental Folk-Tunes, Vol. 1], Moscow: All-Union Book Publishing House ‘Soviet Composer’, 1980, p193. Online. Available [HTTP: <<http://www.circassianlibrary.org/library.php?lang=en&mn=4&sbmn=1>>](http://www.circassianlibrary.org/library.php?lang=en&mn=4&sbmn=1) (accessed 1 December 2008). [Edited by E. V. Gippius. This, and the other volumes in the series, are seminal works on Circassian musical lore. Some of the collected songs and chants are very ancient indeed]

The book is available in the fabulous DjVu format. Musicians and musicologists can find the sheet music of the lullaby on the quoted page.

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## Circassian Musical Renaissance

The three volumes of the series *Circassian Songs and Instrumental Folk-Tunes* perhaps make the most substantive resource on ancient and traditional Circassian music and musicology. Here are the bibliographic details of the other volumes in the series (not available on line, unfortunately):

Бэрэгъун, В. Хь. (V. H. Bereghwn; Baragunov), and КъардэнгъушI, З. ПI. (Z. P'. Qardenghwsch'; Kardangushev), (compilers), АДЫГЭ УЭРЭДХЭМРЭ ПШЫНАЛЪЭХЭМРЭ, ЕТИУАНЭРЕЙ ТХЫЛЪ. *Adige Weredxemre Pshinalhexemre, Yet'wanerey Txilh. Narodnie pesni i instrumental'nie naigrishi adigov, tom 2* [Circassian Songs and Instrumental Folk-Tunes, Vol. 2], Moscow: All-Union Book Publishing House 'Soviet Composer', 1981.

— АДЫГЭ УЭРЭДХЭМРЭ ПШЫНАЛЪЭХЭМРЭ, ЕЩАНЭРЕЙ ТХЫЛЪ. *Adige Weredxemre Pshinalhexemre, Yeschanerey Txilh. Narodnie pesni i instrumental'nie naigrishi adigov, tom 3* [Circassian Songs and Instrumental Folk-Tunes, Vol. 3, Parts 1 and 2], Moscow: All-Union Book Publishing House 'Soviet Composer', 1986, 1990.

Another great resource is:

Бэрэгъун, В. Хь. (V. H. Bereghwn; Baragunov), and ХьэIупэ, Ж. (Zh. He'wpe), *Narodnaya instrumental'naya muzika adigov (cherkesov)* [National Instrumental Music of the Circassians], Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2005. [600 pieces]

A cyber project to make Circassian music and musicology more accessible is under way at <<http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/>>. Ancient, traditional and modern songs, chants, and musical pieces shall be made available with relevant information in both Circassian and English.

The theme of the renaissance of Circassian culture shall be a constant feature of this journal.



Шык'эпшынерэ Іэпэпшынерэ.

*Shich'epshine* (top), traditionally the main musical instrument, and *'eepshine*.

The number of orchestras incorporating ancient and traditional instruments is on the rise, resurrecting ancient and traditional musical compositions in the best traditions of the bards of yore. There is an increased interest in Circassian folk music all over Circassia.

## НЫСЭГЪАШИО ОРЭД: «АШЪАЕМЭ...»

(Шапсыгъ уэрэд)

[Song in Praise of the Bride: 'The Aschay family...'] (Shapsugh song)

Мы шапсыгъ уэрэдыр хьэгъуэллыгъуэ уэрэдхэм ящыщ. Езы уэрэдыр дахэщ, гуагъуэщ. Ашъаехэр шапсыгъ унагъуэщ.

The mother-in-law (or a designated older lady) would sing the bride's praises in the 'Niseghasch'we' or 'Niseyepch' songs. The following song provides a good example of the genre. It is the Shapsugh 'Niseghasch'we' song 'The Aschay family...' (V. H. Bereghwn and Z. P'. Qardenghwsch', 1980, pp 147-9).<sup>14</sup>

НЫСЭГЪАШИО ОРЭД: «АШЪАЕМЭ...»	Song in Praise of the Bride: 'The Aschay family...' <sup>15</sup>
(Орэдэу! Орэдэу!) Ашъаемэ... Жъыу. Орэдэу! Ашъаемэ я унэшхор дышъэчы! Жъыу. Орэдэу!	(Weredew! Weredew!) The Aschay family... Chorus: Weredew! The great house of the Aschays is cast of gold! Chorus: Weredew!
Дышъэчынэлъакъор гъэужъа! Жъыу. Орэдэу!	She twirls like a golden whirligig! Chorus: Weredew!
Дынэр зыгъэужьырэр синыса!	She is so quick at sewing, my daughter-in-law!

<sup>14</sup> 'Aschayeme...' is in the repertoire of the Adigean State Folk Song Ensemble 'Yislhamiy'. The sheet music is available in the book.

<sup>15</sup> 'Aschay' is the name of a Shapsugh family.

Жъуу. Орэдэу!	Chorus: Weredew!
Синыйсэ зэрэщытэр оџона! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	Let me tell thee about my daughter-in-law! Chorus: Weredew!
Мэээныкъоу-мэээныкъор и тхыльэ! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	Her ornaments are like semi-lunes! Chorus: Weredew!
Дышъэ псыхэльэшъор икыџуа! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	Of pure gold is her shirtfront! Chorus: Weredew!
А сэрмэ уџугъэхэр ынапца! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	Whetted with dye are her eyebrows! Chorus: Weredew!
Ынэпцэкџитџор пџэшхъуанкџа! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	The tips of her eyebrows are like the tail of a swallow! Chorus: Weredew!
Пџаашхъом дэчэрэзырэм укъещэ! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	Soaring with the swallows, they take thee as a wife! Chorus: Weredew!
Укъэзыщэ кџалэм удэжъа! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	May thou live to ripe old age with thy betrothed youth! Chorus: Weredew!
Уигощэ ныожъэр огъашџо! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	May thy reverend mother-in-law honour thee! Chorus: Weredew!
Пщыпхъум игъэшџуагъи бэдэда! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	May thy sister-in-law be overly attentive to thee! Chorus: Weredew!
Бэдэдэ цџыфи къекџуалџэ! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	May many people come to thy wedding! Chorus: Weredew!
Къекџолџэгъуэ истэор гъэщытхъуа! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	May all those who come leave pronouncing thy praises! Chorus: Weredew!
Непэ уимыщытхъор тэ къэпха! Жъуу. Орэдэу!	Today we shall all sing thy praises! Chorus: Weredew!

КъэкIожь аIуи дарыешхор теубгъуа! Жъыу. Орэдэу!	‘Come back home, bridegroom,’ they said, she laid brocade for him! Chorus: Weredew!
Синымэ ицыпхъуанти мытIэкIа! Жъыу. Орэдэу!	My daughter-in-law has not touched her woollen trunk yet! Chorus: Weredew!
Синымэ етIэкIын сэIуи сэуджа! Жъыу. Орэдэу!	I am impatient for my daughter-in-law to undress! <sup>16</sup> Chorus: Weredew!
Сызыфэуджырэр иджана! Жъыу. Орэдэу! Орэдэу! Орэдэу!	What I covet is her dress! Chorus: Weredew! Weredew! Weredew!

At the expiry of the song of praise, the «нысэтын» (‘Nisetin’) ceremony took place whereby the bride gave away the clothes she had on and put on brand new ones instead. She also gave out presents to the members of the family of the bridegroom.

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A recoding of the song by the Adigean State Folk Song Ensemble ‘Yislhamiy’ is available on the CD accompanying Amjad Jaimoukha’s book *Circassian Culture and Folklore: Hospitality Traditions, Cuisine, Festivals & Music (Kabardian, Cherkess, Adigean, Shapsugh & Diaspora)*, London and New York: Bennett and Bloom, 2009. The song can also be heard at <<http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/circassian-journal.php>>.

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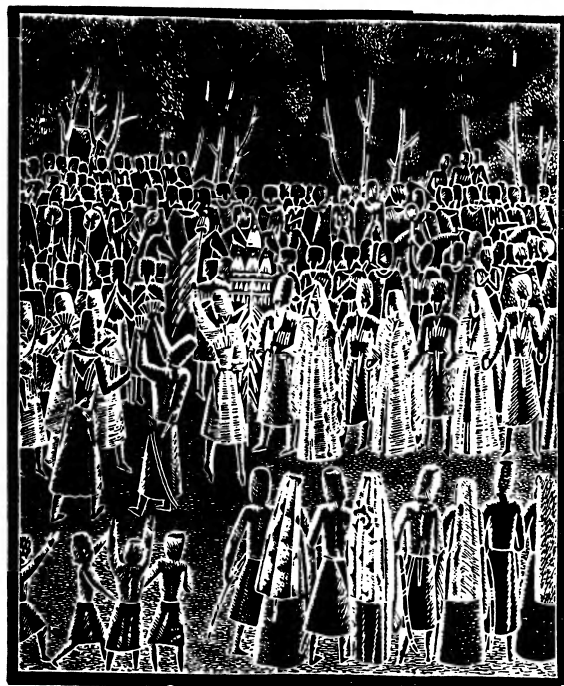
<sup>16</sup> In accordance with the ‘Nisetin’ («нысэтын») ceremony, the bride undressed, gave away her clothes to her in-laws, and put on brand new ones prepared by the kinsfolk of the bridegroom.





Адыгэ джэгуакӀуэр шыкӀэпшынэм йоуэ.  
Адыгэ джэгуакӀуэхэм яхъумащ лъэпкъым  
и ӀуэрыӀуатэхэри пшыналъэхэри  
зы щӀэблэм кыикӀрэ адреим кӀуэуэ.

Circassian bard playing the violin.  
The roving minstrels preserved the nation's  
oral traditions and musical folklore from  
generation to generation.



Адыгэ джэгу. Адыгэхэр мэудж.  
Джэгур къафэкIэ къыщIадзэри, уджкIэ яух.

Circassian dance party.  
The participants are dancing the *wij*.  
A dance party was started with the stately  
slow dance *qafe*, and ended with the solemn  
ritualistic round dance *wij*.

**КІАПЦ:** ШЪОРЭКІ ОРЭД: «ТЭПЫРАГЪОШЪЫ  
ПКІЭГЪУАЛА...»

**ЩІАПЦЭ:** ФЭРЭКІ УЭРЭД  
(Бжъэдыгъу уэрэд)

[Vigil over the Sick: Smallpox Chant: 'Swift White Horse...']  
(Bzchedighw chant)

## **КІапц**

УІагъэр амыгъэчъыеным пае, пчыхъэрэ, чэщырэ фашІырэ джэгур ары. УІагъэм иблагъэхэм, ишъэогъухэм кІапцэр чэзыу-чэзыоу фашІы. КІапцэм чылэм дэс кІалэхэр екІуалІэх, пшъашъэхэри ращалІэх.

ЩІапцэм кыщагъэкІуэкІ джэгукІэхэм (щІопщакІуэм) ящыщ зы щапхъэ къэтхъынуш:

**Пхъэш:** КІапцэм зэрэщыджэгухэрэ щхэнджэгукІ. Пхъэ кІыхъэм ыІэпакІэ кІапсэ ишІагъэу пчэгум дэжъ кІэбгыкъум пашІэ. Ащ шым фэдэу зыгорэ тетІысхъэ, бэщ цыкІу ыІыгъэу, ар зыкІигъакъозэ зыкыригъэфэхрэп. Ащ «Гъогу мафэ уежъ апщ!» — аІомэ дэгущыІэхэзэ, пхъэр агъэсысы, ежъ шыури къадэгущыІэжъзэ ныкъокъефэх мэхъу е къефэхыпэ. КІапцэм пхъэшыкІэ щэджэгух.

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## **ЩІопщакІуэ**

ЩІопщакІуэр адыгэхэм ижъ-ижъыж лъандэрэ къадекІуэкІ хабзэщ. ЩІопщакІуэ зыхуашІыр зи къупщхъэ къута е уІэгъэ хъэлъэ зытель

цыхурт. Сымаджэр (зи кьупщхьэ кьутар, улэгъэ хьэлъэ зытелъыр) зэрыс унагъуэм пщыхьэщхьэкIэ щызэхуэсурэ, щIалэгъуалэм сымаджэр трагъэурт. БжэщхьэIум вабдзэ тралъхьэрти, унэм ихьэр абы уадэкIэ теуIуэрт (уадэри бжэщхьэIум телът) – жэщкIэ ятэ «бзадженаджэр» ягъэштэн щхьэкIэ. Унэм ихьамэ, сымаджэм кьетIысэкIырти, уэрэд жалэрт, гушыIэрт. ЩIопщакIуэм джэгуакIуэхэри кьрихьэлIэрти, шыкIэпшынэм и макъыр нэху щыху зэпагъэуртэкъым – сымаджэр жейм храмыгъэлъэфэн щхьэкIэ: жейм хильафэрэ къаскIэмэ, сымаджэм и кьупщхьэ зэпцIыжагъащIэр кьутэжын къафIэщIырт.

ЩIопщакIуэ уэрэд зэмылIэужыгъуэ зыбжанэ къэсащ ди деж, абыхэм я нэхьыбэр щIопщакIуэм ирихьэлIа щIалэгъуалэм яусащ. ЩIопщакIуэ уэрэдхэм ягъафIэ зауэм лыгъэ щызезыхьа цыхур, кьэрабгъагъэ кызыкъуэщар ауан ящI.

Сымаджэр кызэфIэувэжыху, щIопщакIуэр зэпагъэуртэкъым – зы жэщи дагъэкIыртэкъым сымаджэм деж имыхьэIауэ. АпхуэдэпцIэ зыгъуэтар, псом япэрауэ, зауэм улэгъэ щыхьуа, лыгъэ щызезыхьа цыхурат. Сымаджэм и нэгү зрагъэужькIэ зэфIэкIыртэкъым щIопщакIуэр: сымаджэм кыхуашэрт Iэзэхэр, кьупщхьэ кьутар ирагъэшхэн, улэгъэр е ирамыгъэкIуэн щхьэкIэ.

— Къэрмокъуэ Хьэмид  
(Налшык: «Эльбрус», 2001, н. 242-3)

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## Vigil over the Sick

In the *sch'apsche* (щIапщэ) or *sch'epsche* (щIэпщэ) ritual (кланш [ch'apsh] in Adigean), the friends and relatives of a person with a bone fracture or an illness kept a vigil over him to keep him company and prevent him from falling asleep by making loud clamour, chanting songs, and engaging in games by his bedside. On these evenings, in contrast to others, many witty and lively pranks and jests were played to amuse the patient and keep him alert.

The collective term for the games played at a vigil is ‘*sch’opschak’we*’ (щӀопщакӀуэ). In the game hobby-horse (пхъэш; *px’esh*; Adigean), a long wooden stick was hung by ropes from the (roof) beam in the middle of the room. A player would sit astride the wooden ‘horse’ with a small stick in hand. Upon hearing “May you have a safe journey!”, the other players, in jest, would shake the stick to cause him to fall off, and the player astride the ‘horse’ would try his best to stay up.

The earnest side of the *sch’apsche* ritual consisted of reciting songs and chants of supplication to the lord of the disease in question to cure the affliction and exorcise the disease. The miasmic realm of disease and injury was lorded over by Sozeresh. It was taboo to address the dreaded lords of disease with their proper names, so replacement epithets were used instead. It was considered taboo to utter the word «фэрэкӀ» ‘*ferech*’ («шъорэкӀ»; ‘*schwerech*’, in Adigean). Instead, it was referred to with substitute designations, such as ‘The Nameless One’ («ЦӀимыӀэу»; ‘*Ts’eyimi’ew*’), ‘The Guest Sent by Sozeresh’, or simply ‘Sozeresh’. A typical song-charm to alleviate smallpox (*ferech*), namely ‘Swift White Horse...’ («Тэпырагъошъы пкӀэгъуала...»),<sup>17</sup> from the Western Circassians (Bzchedighw), and which was sung by the bed of the sick, ran as follows (V. H. Bereghwn and Z. P’. Qardenghwsch’, 1980, pp 102-3):

ШЪОРЭКИ ОРЭД: «ТЭПЫРАГЪОШЪЫ ПКӀЭГЪУАЛА...»	Smallpox Chant: ‘Swift White Horse...’
Тэпырагъошъы пкӀэгъуала, Бланэуи чъэрэмэ дэльохъуа.	The swift white horse, Tears along fleeter than the deer.
Лыхъухэр копкъыджэ ефызы, Дэнэгъу бзыери дельэшъуа.	The brave ones are squeezing its thighs, <sup>18</sup> Itself in gilded silk.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Swift White Horse...’ is in the repertoire of the Adigean State Folk Song Ensemble ‘Yislahmiy’. The sheet music of the prayer chant is included in the book.

<sup>18</sup> The horse’s thighs are squeezed so as to subdue it.

Дэнэгъо бзыери дельэшъуа, Ошъогъуанэми шагъэхъуа.	Itself in gilded silk, They pasture it at the edge of the heavens.
Ошъогъуанэми шагъэхъуа, Зыусхъаным ишыгъэхъупІа.	They put it to pasture at the edge of the heavens, Where the Master's horse pasture lies.
Зиусхъаным ишыгъэхъупІэр, Алахъэ, гъэхъунэ даха.	The Master's horse pasture is, By Allah, a lush meadow.
Алахъ гъэхъунэ дахэу, Чъыгъэ дахэри кырокІа.	By Allah, a lush meadow, Where splendid oak-trees grow.
Чъыгъэ дахэри кырокІа, Зибэ гушэ кыкІэри кълъошъхъэ.	Fine oak grows there, As well as more clover than anywhere else.
Зибэ кыкІэри кълъошъхъа, Яунашъхъэри дышъабгъа.	More clover grows there than anywhere else, His ethereal abode is roofed with gold.
Яунашъхъэри дышъабгъа, Бгъэнэуи телъэри къурища.	His roof is covered with gold, The roofing on it – three blades of grass.
Бгъэнэуи телъэри къурища, Чэмищэу дафыри мышыхъуа.	The roofing on top is of three blades of grass, Three of his bovines are perennial milch-cows.
Чэмищэу дафыри мышыхъуа, Зыдафырэ кълэшъы хъурая.	Three of his cows are permanent milkers, His cow-house is a magnificent palace.
Зыдафырэ кълэшъы хъурая, Тыжбыны хъураери шагъэчъа.	His cow-house a resplendent palace, Where silver ingots are cast.
Тыжбыны хъураери шагъэчъа, Зыпчъэ нахъыджэ имыІа.	Silver bullion is founded there, Where there is but one entrance.
Зыпчъэ нахъыджэ имыІи, Зыпсынэ яІэшъы мыжъуакІэ.	It has but one door, The bottom of its spring – shingle.
Зыпсынэ яІэшъы мыжъуакІа,	The bed of its spring is of pebbles,

Ращы кыкIэчъырэр шъоупса.	The welling water is mead.
Ращы кыкIэчъырэр шъоупса, Типсэ-купсэри уихъакIа.	The welling water is honey-sweet, Our souls are guests in thy realm. <sup>19</sup>
Типсэ-купсэри уихъакIа, ХъакIэри мафэшъы къытфакIуа.	Our souls are thy guests, The auspicious guest is coming to us.
ХъакIэри мафэшъы къытфакIуа, КъызыфакIори щыгъища.	The propitious guest is coming to us, Issuing forth from three beads.
КъызыфакIори щыгъища, Щыгъыфищыри зырыза.	He hails from three beads, The three beads issuing forth disjointed brightness.
Щыгъыфищыри зырыза, Зэрызищышъы мэтIыгъуа.	The three beads issuing their light in disconcert, They ripen separately.
Зэрызищышъы мэтIыгъуа, ЯтIыгъуакIэри гухахъуа.	The three beads ripen separately, Their ripening is such a joy.
ЯтIыгъуакIэри гухахъуа, Гум хэзгъахъори зиуза.	Their ripening is a great joy, A delightful bliss for the one with disease.
Гум хэзгъахъори зиуза, Зиузыгъори фэпсынкIа!	A delightful bliss for the ill, May his disease ease up!
Зиузыгъори фэпсынкIа, ПсынкIэ охъушъы охъужъа!	May his illness be mitigated, May thee get better, may thee recover!
ПсынкIэ охъушъы охъужъа, Ухъужьынэуи тхъа еIуа!	May thee get well, may thee recover, May God predestine it for thee to heal!
Ухъужьынэуи тхъа еIо, Тхъам ыIуагъэри нахъышIуа!	May God will it for thee to recover, What God ordains is so much better!
Тхъам ыIуагъэри нахъышIуа,	God's will cannot be surpassed,

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, our souls ought to be inviolable.

Тхьам ишIушIэри IэшIэхэ.	God is so swift in his beneficence.
Тхьам ишIушIэри IэшIэхэ, Тхьам идахэри хьопсагъуа.	God is swift in his beneficence, God is lavish in his mercy.
Тхьам идахэри хьопсагъуа, Чылэ хьопсагъоуи тыкъана!	God is so lavish in his beneficence and mercy, That our village shall remain an object of envy!

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A recoding of the song by the Adigean State Folk Song Ensemble ‘YisIhamiy’ is available on the CD accompanying Amjad Jaimoukha’s book *Circassian Culture and Folklore: Hospitality Traditions, Cuisine, Festivals & Music (Kabardian, Cherkess, Adigean, Shapsugh & Diaspora)*, London and New York: Bennett and Bloom, 2009. The song can also be heard at <<http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/circassian-journal.php>>.



# АДЫГЭ ФІЭЩХЪУНЫГЪЭРЭ ФОЛЬКЛОРРЭ

[Circassian Religion and Folklore]

## АДЫГЭ ТХЪЭ ХАСЭ (ПАНТЕОН)

[The Circassian Pantheon]

Пасерей алыджхэм хуэдэу, адыгэхэм Тхъэ Хасэ (Пантеон) щхъэхуэ ялэу шытахэт. Тхъэ Хасэм хэта тхъэхэр бжыгъэкІэ хыщІ щІыгъуат. Тхъэхэм я зэхуэсыпІэм и адыгэцІэр «Жорытлэ Ант» (Жулат) – антхэм (пасерей адыгэ лъэпкъ) я тхъэ унэр – шытат. ЩІыпІэм и иджырей цІэр «Тэтэртуп» (Тэтэр Іуашхъэ) – тэтэрыцІэщ. Тэтэртупыр Шэрэдж Псыр Балъкъ (Малкэ) Псым шыхуэзэм деж пэмыжыжъэу кышытщ (Къэбэрдей-Балъкъэр Хэкум и ищхъэрэ-къуэкІыпІэ лъэныкъуэм).

<b>Амыш, Амыш, Емыш</b> ( <i>Amisch, Amish, Yemish</i> )	Initially god of fauna, then god of sheep.
<b>Аушыджэр, Аушджэрджий, Даушджэрджий</b> ( <i>Awishijer, Awischjerjiy, Dawischjerjiy</i> )	God of courage and bravery. Circassian version of St. George. Later identified with Jesus Christ.
<b>Афы</b> ( <i>Afi</i> )	God of lightning.
<b>Ахын</b> ( <i>Axin</i> )	God of (large) cattle.
<b>Гуашэ</b> ( <i>Gwasche</i> )	Goddess, protectress, patroness.
<b>Гъуабжэгъуэщ</b> ( <i>Ghwabzheghwesch</i> )	Cosmological deity of righteousness and light.
<b>Джэдыпэ</b> ( <i>Jedipe</i> )	God of rivers and seas (literally: 'hen's beak').
<b>Елэ, Еллэ</b> ( <i>Yele, Yelle</i> )	Prophet (St.) Elijah. Shared the godhead of lightning with Schible in the Christian era.
<b>Емыч</b> ( <i>Yemich</i> )	Demi-god. Had a day consecrated to his worship.

<b>Жыг гуашэ</b> ( <i>Zhig Gwasche</i> )	Goddess of trees.
<b>Жьэгупатхьэ</b> ( <i>Zchegwpathe</i> )	God of family hearth.
<b>Жьытхьэ</b> ( <i>Zchithe</i> )	God of wind.
<b>Зек'уэтхьэ</b> ( <i>Zeik'wethe</i> )	God of campaigns (roads), later, also of horsemanship. He was not set into any particular form by popular tradition.
<b>Исп гуашэ</b> ( <i>Yisp Gwasche</i> )	Protectress of the Yisps (a race of pygmies mentioned in the Nart tales).
<b>Къуэдэс</b> ( <i>Qwedes</i> )	God of sea, in form of fish (literally: 'living in a depression').
<b>Лъэпщ</b> ( <i>Lhepsch</i> )	Patron of smiths, iron, weapons and fire.
<b>Мамыш, Мамыш</b> ( <i>Mamisch, Mamish</i> )	Patron of fortunetellers, specifically of scapula readers.
<b>Мэзгуашэ, Мэз гуашэ</b> ( <i>Mezgwasche, Mez Gwasche</i> )	Goddess of forests and trees.
<b>Мэзытхьэ</b> ( <i>Mezithe</i> )	God of forests, trees, the hunt and beasts. He disposed of the fate of beasts, and brought good luck to the hunt. He is depicted as riding a golden-bristled boar. He took his deer to a meadow wherein a group of virgins milked them.
<b>Мэрэм, Мерэм</b> ( <i>Mereim, Meirem</i> )	Mother of Mighty God (Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ). Patroness of apiculture and grass in (later) association with (native) Merise. In the Christian era in Circassia Mereim shared the magical healing powers of Sozeresh. In Eastern Circassian Friday is named in her honour.
<b>Мэрысэ</b> ( <i>Merise</i> )	Protectress of bees; later associated with Mary, Mother of Christ. Her three sisters: patronesses of family life, warriors and peasants.
<b>Пэкьюэ</b> ( <i>Peqwe</i> )	'False' demi-god - creator of the fields - debunked by Wezirmes.
<b>Псатхьэ</b> ( <i>Psathe</i> )	God of the soul or life. Also denotes icon of Christian Circassians (in Mozdok).
<b>Псытхьэ</b>	God of water.

<i>(Psithe)</i>	
<b>Псытхьэгуашэ, Псыгуашэ</b> <i>(Psithegwasche, Psigwasche)</i>	Goddess of water. Popular tradition had her portrayed as a beautiful maid.
<b>Псыхьуэгуашэ, Псыхьуэ гуашэ</b> <i>(Psix'wegwasche, Psix'we Gwasche)</i>	Goddess of rivers (river valleys).
<b>Созэрэш, Созырэш, Созэрэш, Созрэш</b> <i>(Sozeresh, Soziresh, Sozeresch, Sozresch)</i>	God of fertility, family hearth, well-being and illness. He was a great voyager and controlled the winds and waters. He was also the protector of herds ( <b>Shawzerish [Шаузэрыш]</b> in Shapsugh).
<b>Сотрэш</b> <i>(Sotresh)</i>	God of gaiety and holidays.
<b>Тэтэртуп</b> <i>(Tetertup)</i>	God of war and bloodshed. Equivalent to Grecian Ares and to Roman Mars.
<b>Тхьэ</b> <i>(The)</i>	God.
<b>Тхьэгуашэ, Тхьэ гуашэ</b> <i>(Thegwasche, The Gwasche)</i>	Protectress of women (literally: 'Matron of the gods').
<b>ТхьэгъэгүфIэ шу</b> <i>(Theghegwfe Shu)</i>	God of good news (literally: 'rider who brings joy to the gods').
<b>Тхьэгъэлэдж</b> <i>(Theghelej)</i>	God of fertility and plants.
<b>Тхьэгъуичу</b> <i>(Theghwiychu)</i>	Protector of people. Intermediary between gods and people.
<b>Тхьэкъуафэшу</b> <i>(Theqwafeshu)</i>	God's herald.
<b>Тхьэшу</b> <i>(Theshu)</i>	Protector of horsemen.
<b>Тхьэшхуэ</b> <i>(Theshxwe)</i>	The Supreme God.
<b>Тхьэшырыпхьу</b> <i>(Theshiripx'w)</i>	
<b>Уашхьуэ</b> <i>(Waschx'we)</i>	One of the supreme cosmic deities; god of the skies (literally: 'blue sky').
<b>Унэ гуашэ</b> <i>(Wine Gwasche)</i>	Protectress of the domestic/family hearth.
<b>Утхьуей Къес-Къес</b> <i>(Witx'wey Qeis-Qeis)</i>	God of rain and snow (Black Sea Shapsugh).

<b>Хадэ гуаш(э)</b> ( <i>Xade Gwasch[e]</i> )	Goddess of gardens.
<b>Хы гуашэ</b> ( <i>Xi Gwasche</i> )	Goddess of the seas.
<b>Хьэдрихэ, Хьэдырых</b> ( <i>Hedrixe, Hedirix</i> )	Protector of the dead.
<b>Хьэдрихэтхьэ</b> ( <i>Hedrixethe</i> )	God of the hereafter (Abzakh).
<b>Хьэкусташ</b> ( <i>Hekwstash</i> )	Patron of horsemanship.
<b>ХьэкIуштащхьэ, Хьэкуштыхь</b> ( <i>Hek'wschtaschhe, Hekwschtix'</i> )	Protector of oxen (Shapsugh).
<b>Хьэнцийгуашэ, Хьэнцэгуашэ</b> ( <i>Hentsiygwasche, Hentsegwasche</i> )	Goddess of rain.
<b>Хьэуц-Хьэш</b> ( <i>Hewits-Hesh</i> )	God of seas and demi-gods.
<b>Хьэхь-Мохь</b> ( <i>Hex'-Mox'</i> )	God of cosmic bodies.
<b>Шуу-Муц</b> ( <i>Shuu-Muts</i> )	God of wild animals.
<b>Щыблэ</b> ( <i>Schible</i> )	God of sky, thunder(storms) and lightning; also of war and justice. Equivalent to Thor in Scandinavian mythology.

In addition, the Shapsugh had the following tribal gods: Txaraley, Txatapas, Toxliyt and Chashte.

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## The Circassian Pantheon

Like all polytheistic creeds, classical Circassian religion divided the world into manageable segments, each of which was under the auspices of a deity. The presiding supreme god, Theshxwe, headed a divine cast of three scores or so who controlled the world in a collective manner.

Like their Greek counterparts who had their abode in Mount Olympus, the Adiga gods and goddesses met for deliberations and held festivals on

top of the sacred mountain, Tatartup. According to popular belief, this was located at the confluence of the Balhq (Malka) and Sherej (Cherek) Rivers (in the northeast of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic). Its ancient name was Zhulat (from Zhoritla Ant, Temple of the Ants, presumed ancestors of the Circassians— Shora Nogmov), but this changed (to Tatartup = Tatar Hillock) when the Tatars temporarily occupied the environs in one of their forays into Circassia.<sup>20</sup> It used to have temples for worship and supplication, and at which sacrifices were offered to the gods.



Жулат (Тэтэртуп), адыгэ тхьэхэм я зэхуэсыпӀэ.

Zhulat, or Tatartup, the sanctum sanctorum of the (Eastern) Circassians. Perhaps the essence of Circassianness resides in the ancient edifices of native culture and beliefs, unadulterated by extraneous effects engendered by the vicissitudes of time.

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<sup>20</sup> Nogmov, Sh. B., *Istoriya adikheiskogo [adigeiskogo] naroda* [History of the Circassian Nation], Tiflis (Tbilisi): Kavkazki kalendar' [Caucasian Calendar], 1861; republished: Nalchik, 1947; Nalchik: Kabardino-Balkarian Book Press, 1958 (in Circassian and Russian); Nalchik: Elbrus Book Press, 1982, 1994. Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.circassianlibrary.org/library.php?lang=en&mn=2&sbn=1>> (accessed 8 December 2008); Online. Available HTTP: <<http://nogmov.kbsu.ru/>> (accessed 8 December 2008).

If two persons fell out with one another, Zhulat was the place to go, to heal the breach. Each party took a bow and arrow, which was held between them as they reiterated vows of friendship. Once the pledges had been made, the arrow was snapped in consummation of their renewed bond. This custom was called 'Going to Zhulat.' The expression '*Tetertup be sch'esin*,' 'May I be many times in Tatartup,' was sworn on the truth of an allegation.

Around each god and goddess, there arose a cult and special rites of worship and supplication. Every deity had his/her special attributes. Some of the gods had human forms, and a few were even mortal. The fleeing of Lhepsch from a dissatisfied 'customer' is indicative of this—an attempted deicide, so to speak. It is believed that the god of the smiths started out as an ordinary human being, a mere apprentice. It was in appreciation of his metallic feats that he was elevated to the rank of the gods.

Some gods had control over natural phenomena. Schible was the god of thunder and lightning, and Zchithe master of the wind. Sozeresh (Soziresh, Sozeresch, Sozresch), god of fertility, family hearth, well-being and illness, had the winds and waters at his command. Other gods provided wisdom, guidance and indispensable services to the Narts, and patronized important crafts and professions. Lhepsch manufactured all metal implements and arms. In one story, his wife gave him the idea of making tongs when she saw a dead snake doubled on itself. In another, the shape of the crescent moon provided the blueprint for the sickle. Those dedicated to serving humans included Amisch, Axin, Mezihe and Theghelej. Amisch, god of fauna, occupied his time with catching all kinds of forest animals, which he presented to the Narts to raise and multiply. Later he shared this profession with Axin, but eventually each specialized in a specific species of animals, Amisch becoming the god of sheep, Axin that of cattle. Theghelej, god of flora, found his calling in the search for wholesome crops for the Narts to grow.

There were also some goddesses, but these were lesser in number than their male colleagues. The most famous were Hentsiygwasche

(Hentsegwasche), goddess of the rain, and Mezgwasche, goddess of forests and trees. A minor deity, Merise, acted as the protectress of bees. The story goes that at the time of perdition of bees, Merise saved the last surviving bee, hiding it in her sleeve. The divinity took good care of the bee, which subsequently reintroduced the species. In appreciation of this feat, a festival was held in her honour in summer. Merise had three sisters: one was protectress of family life, another patroness of warriors, and the last of peasants. It is thought that female deities lost some of their significance with the transition of Circassian society from a matriarchate to patriarchy.

The Narts also had their fair share of false gods. In our Greek analogy, if the Pantheon is to be considered cosmos, or 'order', these represent chaos, or 'disorder'. In one of the Nart tales, Peqwe, the demi-god who created the fields, punished the Narts by ordering the clouds to withhold their waters for Wezirmes's ingratitude and disobedience. The fearsome hero had been shocked and greatly disturbed by the obsequious behaviour of his people towards the pusillanimous godhead. He vowed to slay him and rid his people of his tyranny. His bluff having been called, Peqwe took refuge in a spider web that he wove deep in the heavens. Wezirmes chased him on his magic steed and used ruse to sever his holy head.

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**Also of interest:**

**[Ancient Circassian Religion](http://geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circassian_Religion.html)**

<[http://geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circassian\\_Religion.html](http://geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circassian_Religion.html)>

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## Cultural Tours of Circassia

Perhaps it is opportune and propitious to sow the seed of the idea of setting up an organised and regular tour of the ancient cultural sites of Circassia at this place. There are hundreds, nay thousands, of these sites strewn across Greater Circassia, including prehistoric structures, such as dolmens, cromlechs, menhirs, and cairns. A few of these folkloric and sacrosanct locations have already been mentioned in this issue: the House of the Alijs, Shone, Xase Mive, Zhulat, Mount Elbrus, the ruins of Greek littoral towns. More shall be explored in coming issues, and the theme shall be further developed. Just to mention a number of other culturally-charged sites off-the-cuff to whet the readers' appetite: ancient sepulchral mounds (кхъэлэгъунэ; *q'eleghwne*), ancient towers and burial vaults (чэщанэ; *cheschane*), sacred groves, the ruins of Chantchir (the mediæval capital of Kabarda), ancient Circassian hearth, chapels (pagan and Christian), cave monasteries, Mezkurgan (Forest-Tumulus), Mount Hereme, the Tower of 'Ediyixw, Mount Lashinqey, remains of the Belorechenskaya culture (Belorechenskaya is situated to the northwest of Maikop), Qereqeschqetaw, Qenzhalischhe (and other important battle locations), Bgiytxw (The Five Mountains), the statue by the river broken by the Nart, Bgighwanezch (the Mount with the Gaping Hole), Heshir Kilar's (Chilar) trail up Mount Elbrus (from afar!)...

Such tours should acquaint the Circassians with the toponyms associated with their culture, thus the connection between culture and mother earth would be further strengthened in the national ethos.



## АДЫГЭ КАЛЕНДАРЬ: СЫТ "ДЖЫЛ" ЗИЩЫСЫР?

[Circassian Calendar: What Is 'Jil'?]

### Джыл

[The Adigean Twelve-Year Animal Calendar]

Цыфым ыныбжъ къызэрашIэрэ илъэс лъытэкIэжъ. Джылхэр 12 мэхъу:

1. **Щэщкъан** — (цыгъо; mouse) — 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008.
2. **Сир** — (чэмы; cow) — 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009.
3. **Барс** — (псыкIыIу хьамлыу; water-surface worm) — 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010.
4. **Къуян** — (тхьакIумкIыхъ; hare) — 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011.
5. **Улын** — (ожъубэнэ хьамлыу; earthworm) — 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012.
6. **Джылан** — (блэ; snake) — 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013.
7. **Джылкъы** — (шы; horse) — 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014.
8. **Къой** — (мэлы; sheep) — 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015.
9. **Мейшин** (хьамлыу къолэн, чэбэхьамлыу; motley worm) — 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016.
10. **Таук** — (чэты; hen) — 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017.
11. **Ит** — (хьэ; dog) — 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018.
12. **Донгъуз** — (къо; swine) — 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019.

Лыжъхэм джылымкIэ цыфым ыныбжь къашIэщтыгъэ. Джылыр нэгъоймэ къахэкIи адыгэмэ къахэхагъэу аIо. Джыл лъытакIэр джы тэ тильэхъанэм къэзышIэжырэ маIэ. Минрэ шыибгъурэ шыэныкьорэ бгъурэ илъэсыр донгъуз иджыл.

The twelve-year animal calendar of the Adigeans was adopted from the Nogai and given a Circassian ‘treatment’. This cyclical system was used to reckon a person’s age. The twelve-year animal calendar is used by many peoples of the East: the Chinese, Tibetans, Tatars, Mongols, Turkic nations and tribes, etc. It is now obsolete in Circassian folklore.

— ХьатIэнэ (Hat’ene), A. A. and КIэрашэ (Ch’erashe), Z. I., *АДЫГАБЗЭМ ИЗЭХЭФ ГҮЩЫПАЛЪ. Adigabzem Yizexef Gwshi’alh* [Explanatory Dictionary of the Adigean Language], Bzem, Literaturem, Istoriem ya Adige Nauchne-Issledovatelske Institut [Adigean Science and Research Institute of Language, Literature and History], Maikop: Circassian Book Press, 1960, pp 161-2.

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## **Къэбэрдей календарь**

[The Twelve-Year Animal Calendar of the Kabardians]

Къэбэрдейхэм я деж, япэрей «джыл» илъэсыр: «жылькы»; ещанэрей илъэсыр: «барс» (=ounce, snow leopard); епланэрей илъэсыр: «донгъуз» (кхъуэм и илъэсыр арац); еханэрей илъэсыр: «жылан»; ебланэрей илъэсыр: «къуян»; еянэрей илъэсыр: «къуей». Ди жагъуэ зэрыхъуци, адрей «джыл» илъэсхэм яцIэхэр тшIэркъым дэ. Фэ ахэр фшIэмэ, куэду ди гуапэ хъунуц къытхуэфхэмэ.

Нахуэщ къэбэрдей хуагъэпса календарнэ зэхэлтыкIэр адыгейм ейм тэмэм дыдэу зэрытемыхуэр.

It could be that the Kabardians obtained their twelve-year animal calendar from the Karachai-Balkars.

## Къэрэшей-балъкъэрхэм я джылыр

[The Karachai-Balkar animal calendar]

1. Year of the Mouse (чычхан джыл);
2. Year of the Cow (сыйыр джыл);
3. Year of the Tiger (къаплан джыл);
4. Year of the Hare (къоян джыл);
5. Year of the Fish (балыкъ джыл);
6. Year of the Snake (джылан джыл);
7. Year of the Horse (ат джыл);
8. Year of the Sheep (къой джыл);
9. Year of the Monkey (маймул джыл);
10. Year of the Eagle (къуш джыл);
11. Year of the Dog (ит джыл);
12. Year of the Pig (тонгуз джыл).

### Еплъ:

Шаманов, И. М., 'Народный календарь карачаевцев [The National Calendar of the Karachai]', в. *Из истории Карачаево-Черкесии*, Труды КЧНИИ, Выпуск УП, Черкесск, 1974, с. 302-25.

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## АДЫГЭ ХЪУЭХЪУ: «ДИ НЫСЭ ФО!»

(КъэбэрдейбзэмкIэ)

[Circassian Toast: 'Our Sweet Daughter-in-law!']

(In Kabardian)

Нысашэ хъуэхъухэм дахэу, кIыхъэу, убгъуауэ заукъуэдий. Мы едзыгъуэ, «Ди нысэ фо», адыгэхэм жаIэу щытахэт нысашэм щыгъуэ. Мы хъуэхъу кIыхьлIыхьым щыщ зы пычыгъуэ шапхъэу къэтхьынуш:



Адыгэ хъэгъуэлIыгъуэр лъэпкъым и гуфIэгъуэщ.  
НысашIэм хуэфашэ хъуэхъухэр, щытхъу псалъэхэр,  
уэрэд дахэхэр хужаIэ нысашэм щыгъуэ.

Circassian wedding.

The ancient ceremony of 'removing the cover' is symbolized for modern convenience. The lips of the bride are then ceremoniously daubed with *'writs'elh* (ГурыцIэль), a mixture of honey and butter used as refreshment at weddings. (V. Vorokov, 1987, p192)

The elaborate and very popular toast ‘Diy Nise Fo’ (‘Our Sweet Daughter-in-law’) was pronounced during the *Nisashe* ceremony. Part of the long toast is reproduced here:

<p><b>НЫСАШЭ ХЪУЭХЪУХЭР: «ДИ НЫСЭ ФО!»</b></p>	<p><b>‘NISASHE’ TOASTS: ‘OUR SWEET DAUGHTER-IN-LAW!’</b></p>
<p>Нысэ цЫкІу кѳатшэр: Фадэм хуэдэу Іушашэу, Мэлым хуэдэу Іушабэу, Джэдым хуэдэу быныфІэу, ХѳэфІым хуэдэу Іумахуэу, ШыфІым хуэдэу цІэрыІуэу, Жыхапхѳэр ильѳфу, Унафэм едаІуэу, ГуашѳкІэ Іэсэу, ПщыкѳуэкІэ гуашѳІэу, Унэр игуу, ЛЫр и псэу, Ди нысэмрѳ ди шауэмрѳ Фомрѳ цымрѳ хуэдэу зѳкІэрыгѳапщІэ, Я лѳакѳуэ зѳхѳгѳуашѳм, ПхѳѳидзѳкІэ ягуѳшыжу, Дунейм фІыгѳуэкІэ тегѳѳт!</p>	<p>The young daughter-in-law we are escorting: May she whisper like smooth liquor, Be soft-spoken as an ewe, Have many offspring like a hen, Be velvet-mouthed like a pedigree hound, Be as famous as a thoroughbred, Dragging the besom through the floor, Obeying instructions, Be on good terms with her mother-in-law, Be kind-hearted to her brother-in-law,<sup>21</sup> The homestead her heart, Her husband her soul, May our bride and bridegroom Be glued together like hair in honey, If their feet should lose their bearing, They are re-allotted by drawing lots, May they find prosperity in this world!</p>

<sup>21</sup> A Circassian woman never called her parents-in-law, husband, or her brothers-in-law by their names. In the last case, she used pet names (пщыкѳуэцІэ; *pschiqwets’e*) to refer to them, for example ‘ДыгѳэцІыкІу’ (*Dighets’ik’w*) [‘Little Sun’]. It was a secretive appellation that she never divulged outside the family circle. A saying prevalent in the olden times was ‘ПщыкѳуэцІэ мыхѳуамѳ, кѳыджѳкІэ щѳхур!’ (*Pschiqwets’e mix’wame, qidzhei’e schexwr!*)—‘Tell us your secret, if it isn’t the pet name of your brother-in-law!’ Among the upper classes, it was considered a mark of courtesy that when the names of a woman’s husband, father, or elder brothers were mentioned, she stood up.

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Here is an Adigean version of the bridal toast:

**КIахэ хьэгъуэлIыгъуэ хьуэхъу**

(АдыгейбзэмкIэ)

ДжэнэКIэхъоу шъэхульфэу,  
Къыльфырэр мыКIодэу,  
Ыдырэр мытIэпIэу,  
Ыбзырэр мыбзэхъоу,  
Тхьа ещI.  
Чэтым фэдэу Iушъашъэу,  
Мэлым хуэдэу Iушабэу,  
ПхъэнКIпхъэр ылъэшъоу,  
Ушашъор римыхэу,  
Унэгум шыгъуазэу,  
Гъогум щымыгъуазэу,  
Тхьа ешI.

## АДЫГЭ ХАБЗЭ

[Circassian Customs and Traditions]

### АДЫГЭ ФІЭХЪУСХЭР

{From the newspaper *АДЫГЭ ПСАЛЬЭ* [Circassian Word], 15 February 2006. Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.adyghepsale.ru/archives15feb.htm>> (accessed 27 November 2008)}

Уэрамым ушрикІуэкІэ, гъуэгу ущытеткІэ узыхуэзэу хъуам шхъэж хуэфашэ фІэхъус епхын хуейщ. Псальэм папщІэ, шууэ цІыхубз ублэкІмэ, пщІэ зэрыхуэпщІыр къэбгъэлыагъуэу уанэгум зыкыпІэтыкІын хуейщ. Машинэ исри аращ: нэгъуэщІ мыхъуми, нэхъ хуэм зригъэщІын хуейщ, сабэр дрипхъейуэ зыблримыгъэху.

Нэхъыжбыр жыжьэу щытмэ, е блэкІмэ, дахэу убгъэдыхъэу фІэхъус епхын хуейщ. НэхъыжбитІ зэпсальэу зэбгъэдэтмэ, занщІэу уабгъэдыхъэ хъунукъым, емыкІуш – хэт ищІэрэ, щэху зэхуаІуатэми пщІэркъым. Я псальэмакыр яухыху уежъэмэ нэхъыфІш. Ауэ мыпхуэдэуи кыщыхъу щыІэщ. ТІум я зым Іуэху пІашІэгъуэкІэ ухуеймэ, а узыхуейм укылыагъун хуэдэу ибгъукІэ къэуви, езыр къоджэху ежъэ. Къоджа нэужь ябгъэдыхыи, «кысхуэвгъэгъу, фи псальэр зэпызудащ» жыІи, фІэхъус ях.

ЦІыхухъурэ цІыхубэрэ зэхуэзамэ, япэу фІэхъус зытри зи Іэр зышийри цІыхухъураш.

Унагъуэ уихъамэ, унэм цІыкІуи ини ису хъуар къэтэджын хуейщ. Япэ фІэхъусыр зэпхынур унэгущэрщ. ЦІыхухъурэ цІыхубэрэ зэхэту гуп уаІушІами, япэ щІыкІэ фІэхъус зэптыр цІыхубзхэр араш.

ГупитI, тIури цIыхубзи цIыхухъуи зэхэту, зэIущIамэ, фIэхъус зэрызэрахыр мыпхуэдэуш. Япэ щIыкIэ кыIухъа гупым хэт цIыхухъухэм мыдрей гупым хэт цIыхубзхэм фIэхъус ирах. ИтIанэ хэгъерей гупым хэт цIыхухъухэм цIыхубз хьэщIэхэм я Iэр яубыд. Ещанэу – цIыхухъухэм фIэхъус зэрах. ЕплIанэу – цIыхубзхэм. ЛлитI я Iэр щызэрыубыдкIэ, литIкIэ убыдын хуейкъым. Япэ щыгъуэ ар адыгэ напэм кърагъэкIуу щытакъым. «литIкIэ Iэ зыубыдыр фызщ», – жаIэрт.

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## Circassian Greetings

[Expanded version of the section in Amjad M. Jaimoukha's book *The Circassians: A Handbook*, London: RoutledgeCurzon (Taylor & Francis); New York: Palgrave and Routledge, 2001, pp 185-6]

Circassian Etiquette was so pervasive that even the minutest social niceties were regulated. It was most important that nothing was left to chance. Graces were intended to smooth social intercourse and foster good working relations and respect in the community. In this regard, rituals associated with greetings were prescribed to the finest detail, and meticulously adhered to. There were more than a hundred ways of greeting, depending on the situation. Although these have been mainly kept in the collective memory of the people, after the collapse of the Soviet Union they were recorded down, together with other aspects of traditional culture, to be preserved for posterity.

Particular groups had special greetings. For example, hunters on meeting saluted one another thus: 'May you have a good bag!' [«Пшэрыхъ апщий!» '*Psherih apschiy!*'], the answer to which being «Упсэу апщий!» [ '*Wipsew apschiy!*']; 'Thank you!'], or «Хьэкъужь апщий!» [ '*Heqwzch apschiy!*'], the answer to which being «Си хьэм къуэжар тхьэм къуит апщий!» [ '*Siy hem qwezhar them qwiyt apschiy!*']; 'May what my hound has fetched be your lot!']. Herdsmen wished each other increased cattle size [«Бохъу апщий!»; '*Box'w apschiy!*'].



It was considered very rude not to greet somebody upon meeting—‘Greeting precedes conversation’ [«Йүэхүм япэр фІэхъусш»; ‘*Wexwm yaper f'ex'wssch*’], as the saying goes. A salute, apart from being a courtesy and a token of peace, implied welcome and an invitation to one’s house. Visitors and strangers would have considered the salutatory words as a godsend, since they entailed plentiful food and cozy lodgings, not only for the night, but for a full week.

Hand-shaking, a seemingly mundane gesture, was a ritual fraught with meaning. Both parties to the event had to perform the rite in standing postures. The hand was not extended at once, but rather raised first to the level of the waist, and then fully extended for the grasp. Only one hand was used, the engagement of both hands being considered unseemly for men, fully acceptable for women. The full palm had to be applied; otherwise, a sign of indifference would be implied and a slight taken.

Embracing was not very common. Men rarely hugged, then only if they were of the same household, or close relatives, and they had not seen each other for a long time. The rite involved one embrace, with no exchange of kisses. It was always incumbent upon a man to make the first gesture when greeting a woman. The lady of the house was greeted first upon visiting a household. This code of chivalry was a watered down legacy from the golden age of feudalism.

It was deemed inappropriate to greet people while seated at a table, as this would cause them the inconvenience of standing to return the salute. Hailing an elderly man from afar was a mark of disrespect. Good conduct dictated that a person first went up to him and then uttered his greeting. It was deemed impolite to break into a private conversation between two elderly people. Good etiquette dictated that one first signalled one’s presence by standing at a distance from the person with whom one wanted to speak, waited for the colloquy to finish, then the approach made when summoned. If the matter at hand was of some urgency, then the dialogue could be interrupted with an appropriate apology.

When joining a group, a person hailed thus: ‘*Gwpmawwe apschiy!*’ [«Гупмахуэ апщий!»; ‘May this be a blessed gathering!’]. The toastmaster wassailed the newcomer «Упсэу апщий, шауэ махуэ ухъу

апций!» [‘Thank you. May you be a lucky chap!’], and offered him a goblet of *makhsima* (махъсымэ). The acknowledgement was reminiscent of the medieval English drink-hail (a toast to health or good luck).

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## **ФІэхъус ехыныгъэм епха псалъэжъхэри псалъахэри**

[Circassian proverbs and sayings related to greetings & salutes]

**Бзаджэр убзэмэ, зыгуэр хуейщ** (Bzajer wibzeme, zigwer xweysch):  
When the wicked starts to suck up, know that he is after something.

**Псалъэ гуапэм пщІэ щІэпткъым** (Psalhe gwapem psch’e sch’eptqim): Nice words are priceless.

**Уи бзэр гъэбыдэ, уи жьэр гъэдахэ** (Wiy bzer ghebide, wiy zcher ghedaxe): Hold your tongue and adorn your mouth.

**ФІэхъус лей хъуркъым** (F’ex’ws ley x’wrqim): It is always opportune to pronounce greetings.

**ЦІыхум и нэгум и гум илъым ухуеузэщІ** (Ts’ixwm yi negwm yi gwm yilhim wixweiwzesch’): A person’s facial expression ameliorates for you what lurks inside of him.

**ИтІкІэ уи Іэр зыубыдыр уи щІыб щопсэлъэж** (’Iyt’ch’e wiy ’er ziwbidir wiy sch’ib schopselhezh): He who greets you with both hands talks about you behind your back.

**ИтІкІэ Іэ зыубыдыр фызщ** (’Iyt’ch’e ’e ziwbidir fizsch): Only women shake hands with both hands.

**Іуэхум япэр фІэхъусщ** (’Wexwm yaper f’ex’wssch): Greeting precedes any other business; greeting precedes conversation.

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## АДЫГЭ ХАБЗЭРЭ АДЫГЭ ЛИТЕРАТУРЭ

[Circassian Customs and Traditions and Circassian Literature]

**«АДЫГЭ ХАБЗЭ»:** Къагъырмэс Борис\* и усэ купщлафлэ  
(КъэбэрдейбзэмкIэ)

[‘Circassian Etiquette’: A poem by Boris Qaghirmes on Circassian hospitality: Circassian hospitality traditions in a nutshell] (in Kabardian)

АДЫГЭ ХАБЗЭ	CIRCASSIAN ETIQUETTE
<p>КъысхуэкIуэм сфIэфIщ сэ хьэщIэ махуэ. «Къеблагъэ!» – жысIэу, сыIущIэнщ, Ирегъемахуэ е шымахуэ, Ар зэрыслъэкIкIэ згъэхьэщIэнщ. ДиIащ адыгэм хабзэ дахэ: Ди унэм щхьэхуэу хэтт хьэщIэщ, Ар хэту щытми, къепсыхахэм Бысымыр гуапэ ухуейт IущIэн. ХьэщIэщым и бжэр зэIухати, КъэкIуам хуэщIапхьэр зэфIагъэкIт. Шы зытесари Iэпахати, Ар фIыуэ шхауэ нэху кърагъэкIт. Сыт IуэхукIэ хьэщIэр къэмыкIуами, Езым жи IуэхукIэ, емыупщIт. Ар махуэ дапцэ щымыIами, КъатехьэIауэ замыщIт IупщI. И Iуэху зэфIэкIыу шэсыжамэ, «Гъуэгу махуэ!» – жаIэу дагъэкIыжт. ЯфIэфIт узыншэу нэсыжамэ, Ар ягу иужькIи къагъэкIыжт...</p>	<p>How I love for the propitious guest to visit. I shall receive him saying, ‘Welcome!’ Be it summer or winter, I shall do my utmost to host him right. We, Circassians, had a wonderful custom: In our home we had a separate guest-room, In which all those who dismounted Were received cordially by the host. With the guest-room door always open, The visitor’s every need was seen to. His horse was taken, To be regaled till the break of the day. No matter what business brought him there, He was never asked about his intention. No matter how many days he stayed for, Never was any sign of fatigue betrayed. When he remounted, with his business done, They saw him off saying, ‘Bon voyage!’ They loved, with him safe back home, To remember him fondly every now and then.</p>

<p>Нэхыжьхэм хабзэу кьагъэнахэм Дытетмэ – шыуэ дымышцІэн. КърекІуэ жэщү, хуеймэ – махуэу: СфІэфІщ хьэщІэм гуапэу сылушцІэн.</p> <p>Къагъырмэс Борис</p>	<p>The traditions bequeathed by the elders, As long as we live, shall guide us through. Let him come at night or in the daytime: I just love to receive the guest with a warm heart.</p> <p>Boris Qaghirmes</p>
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ЗезыдзэкІар: Жэмышхуэ Амджэд  
[Translated by Amjad Jaimoukha]

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### **\*Къагъырмэс Борис**

Къагъырмэс Борис кьэбэрдей тхакІуэ-усакІуэ цІэрыІуэщ. Борис и усэхэри статьяхэри зыбжанэ газетхэмрэ журналхэмрэ кыйтехуаш. Къагъырмэсым и кьалэмыпэм кыщцІэкІахэр:

- Къагъырмэс, Б. (B. Qaghirmes), 'ЕЩТАУЭМРЭ ШТАУЧЫМРЭ. Yeschtawemre Schtawichimre', in *ІУАЩХЪЭМАХУЭ. 'Waschhemaxwe*, no. 4, 1992, pp 107-11.
- 'РАССКАЗ КІЭЩІХЭР. Rasskaz Ch'esch'xer [Short Stories]', in *ІУАЩХЪЭМАХУЭ. 'Waschhemaxwe*, no. 4, 1992, pp 14-17.
- *ЩЫХЪЭТ. Schihet* [Witness's Testimony], Nalchik: Elbrus Book Press, 2006. [«Абы ихуаш Къагъырмэсым иужьрей ильэсхэм итха усэхэр, поэмэхэр, рассказ кІэщІхэр. Гу зылытапхъэщ ахэр цІыхугъэ, гуапагъэ, нэмыс, адыгагъэ жыхуэтІэ гурыщІэ, гупсысэ нэхухэмкІэ зэрыгъэнщІар, фІым зэрыхуэусэр, мыхъумыщІагъэхэм Іушу зэрашІэнакІэр. Тхылтыр бзэ дахэкІэ тхаш, купщІафІэщ, “художественнэ” жыхуаІэ фащэ дахэхэмкІэ кьулейщ» — Шэджемोकъуэ Мурадин, *АДЫГЭ ПСАЛЪЭ*, 8 April 2006]
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Къагъырмэсым и РАССКАЗ КІЭЩІХЭМ ящыщ зы Іуэтэ телъыджэ кьыхэтхаш (*ІУАЩХЪЭМАХУЭ. 'Waschhemaxwe*, no. 4, 1992, pp 15-16):

## ГЪАЩІЭР ЗЫІЭЩІЭКИА

Абы, хъыджэбз цыкІуу, етхуанэ классыр кѣиуха кѣудейуэ, еджэныр хыфІидзэри бэзэр Іуэхум зритауэ щытащ. Жыг хадэ яІэти, мыІэрысэ ищэрт. Унагъуэм сэбэп хуэхъурт, езыми зихуэпэжырт. Апхуэдэурэ ар хъуаш бэзэр цыху. ИужькІэ хыхъат сондэджэрынми. Иджы ар бэзэрым кытекІыжыххэртэкъым.

И шэгъуэр кѣосри, кѣылъыхъу щІалэм кыгъуэтыркъым. «Дэнэ щыІэ?» — «Бэзэрым тесщ». — «Трырес-тІэ быдэу», — жегІэри нэгъуэщІ кѣешэ.

Апхуэдэу бэзэрым тес зэпытурэ, и щІалэгъуэр йокІ.

Жыгъэр кѣыхуокІуэ: «Дэнэ щыІэ мыр?» — «Бэзэрым тесщ». МакІуэ, кѣегъуэтри жьы ещІ.

Ауэ, жьы зэрыхъуауи, и Іуэхур кыгъанэртэкъым абы.

Иужьу кѣыщІоупщІэ ажалыр: «Дэнэ щыІэ?» — «Бэзэрым тесщ». Ажалыр пфІэкІын?! МакІуэри и псэр хех.

«ТхъэмышкІэр лІащ!» — мэІу хъыбар.

«Дэнэ щыІэ и хъэдэр?»

«Бэзэрым телъщ...»

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Адыгэ литературым тыхуауэ Борис ІУАЩХЪЭМАХУЭ журналым (но. 3, 1992, р111) кѣыщитхаш мыпхуэдэу:

Адыгэ литературэр дунейпсо литературэм и зы кѣудамэу зэрыщытыр зэи зыщыдгъэгъупщэ хъунукъым. Дэри дыхущІэкъун хуейщ дунейпсо утыку ихъэфын тхыгъэхэр ди кѣалэмым кѣыщІэкІыным. Пэжщ, ар кѣалэнышхуэщ, ауэ хэт жызыІар тхакІуэм зыхуигъэувыжын хуейр нэхъ кѣалэн цыкІухэр арауэ?! ЦыкІум утекІуэ нэхърэ, иным махуэ кѣэс уезауэмэ нэхъыфІщ: утекІуэмэ — уи насыпщ, кѣыптекІуэмэ — иныращ кѣыптекІуар!

## Boris Qaghirmes

Boris Qaghirmes is a contemporary Kabardian writer and poet best known for his short tales, such as 'The Needle and the Button' and 'The Letter which Came to the Village'. Asked by a friend why he chose this genre, he said, 'Why does a person choose the short way?' The minuscule 'Missed Life' is presented here (ИВАЦХБЭМАХУЭ. 'Waschhemaxwe, no. 4, 1992, pp 15-16):

### Missed Life

Barely finishing fifth grade, she forfeited learning and chose instead to sell apples from her tree-garden in the bazaar to help her folks. She did justice to herself and became a bazaar (bizarre) person. Then she engaged in speculation. Now you cannot get her to leave the place.

Time of marriage arrived, the suitor cannot find her.

'Where is she?'

'In the market.'

'Keep her there forever!' he said, and married another.

Days went by, her youth withered.

Old Age came for her: 'Where is she?'

'In the bazaar.'

He went and made (painted) her old.

Though decrepit and hoary, she never quit her work.

Then (in due time) Death asked, 'Where is she?'

'In the bazaar.'

Is there escaping the Grim Reaper?!

He went and claimed her soul.

'The poor thing is dead!' it was said.

'Where is her body?'

'It is lying in the bazaar ...'

Qaghirmes, who is also a renowned literary critic, is one of the standard-bearers of the movement to internationalize Circassian literature and culture. He is much published in the Circassian language newspapers and journals in Circassia. The spirit of the new age that followed the demise of the Soviet Union was succinctly comprehended by Boris writing in *'Waschhemaxwe* (no. 3, 1992, p111), the literary organ of the Circassian writers in Kabardino-Balkaria:

Circassian literature is a branch of world literature—let us never forget this! We must endeavour to enter the international stage with our literary products. True, this is heavy load. But who said that the yoke on our shoulders should be lightened?! Rather than win the easy battle, it is better to struggle eternally against the seemingly impossible: if you prevail, the mark is forever etched; otherwise—no shame in coming second to a colossus!

Although this is positive thinking at its best and a reflection of the new optimism, one cannot help but suspect that there is a fundamental point that keeps being missed. Veritable literary masterpieces were penned before, during, and after Soviet times, starting with the colossal corpus of the Nart tales and ancient epic songs and compositions, to the liberating and animating post-Soviet literature. The challenge is not in the production, but rather in the presentation of these products to world readership. In the West, considerable investment is made to make the works of its talented writers accessible in different languages. In the same manner, a number of outstanding works in Circassian could be rendered into world languages at the highest of standards, published and distributed with the support of the machineries of government and literary institutions in the Circassian republics. It is then up to international readers to pronounce their judgements.

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## АДЫГЭХЭМ Я ДЕЖ ХЬЭЩІЭХЭР ЛЪЭПКЪКІЭ ЗЫЛЪЭТАУЭ ДАПЩЭ ХЪУРЭ?

[How many kinds of guests are there in traditional Circassian society?]

Хэт кьeблэгъами, адыгэхэм ягъэхьэщІэт, ауэ хьэщІэ псори зэхуэдэу ягъэхьэщІэу щытауэ жьІэгъуейщ. Абы елътытауэ хьэщІэхэр мыпхуэдэу зэщхьэщыхуат:

1. ХьэщІэ лъапІэ,
2. ХьэщІэ кызырыкІуэ,
3. ЦІыхухъу хьэщІэ,
4. Бзылхугъэ хьэщІэ,
5. ХьэщІэщ хьэщІэ,
6. Лэгъунэ хьэщІэ (я Іыхьлы дыдэ е и гъунэгъу дыдэ ныбжьэгъу къакІуэмэ),
7. ХьэщІэ нахуэ,
8. ХьэщІэ щэху (зи цІэ кызымыІуэххэу щытахэр. Апхуэдэхэм еупщІтэкъым),
9. ХьэщІэ благъэ,
10. ХьэщІэ хамэ,
11. Зэджа хьэщІэ,
12. Зэмыджа хьэщІэ,
13. ХьэщІэ лъаІуэ,
14. ХьэщІэ уэкъулэ: МылкъукІэ зэтехуа, мафІэс е зэрыпхъуэ кызылтыса цІыхур хамэ къуажэхэм щалэ ныбжьэгъу, цІыхугъэ хуэдэхэм екІуалІэти, къуажэр къакІухьурэ шхьэж хузэфІэкІымкІэ зыдагъэлэпыкът, мылкъу гуэр яугъуеижт. Апхуэдэ хьэщІэм уэкъулэкІэ еджэт.
15. Бий хьэщІэ: Адыгэ хабзэм кызыэриубыдымкІэ, уи бийри хьэщІэу къокІуэламэ и гугъу умыщІу хьэщІагъэ епхын хуейт. Ар къагъэсэбэпти, лъы зытелъхэр (зытелъыр) зей ІэщІэукІам деж хьэщІэу екІуалІэт, зэкъуэхуауэ зыхуигъазэу унагъуэм я гуащэм и бгъэм ІупэкІэ еІусэн папщІэ. Ар



къехъулэмэ, гуащэм и бын хуэдэ хъути, зыми абы и гугъу ищIын хуитыжтэкъым. А зи гугъу тщIа Iуэхум хуэдэ хэмытми, я бий хъэщIэу къеблэгъар хъэщIэти, абы хабзэкIэ хуащIапхъэр хуащIэт, я унагъуэ исыху зыри еIэбын хуиттэкъыми, уи хъэщIэ и жагъуэ пщIыныр икIагъуэ къалътэти.

— Шэрджэс (Sherjes), A. and Хъэкъун (Heqwn), M., *АДЫГЭХЭМПЭ АХЭМ Я ХАБЗЭХЭМПЭ. Adigexemre Axem ya Xabzexemre* [The Circassians and Their Customs and Traditions], Maikop: RIPO, 2000, p122. [Дунейпсо Адыгэ Хасэм и жэрдэмкIэ ягъэхъэзыраш; sponsored by the International Circassian Association]

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## So many kinds of guests!

Most other cultures may be satisfied by one category for a guest, but the ceremonious Circassians compiled 15 categories through the centuries!

1. **Distinguished guest** (*hesch'e lhap'e*)—The whole village (or a quarter) could be involved in the hosting functions. The quality and number of served dishes were commensurate with the status and influence of the guest. In feudal times princes and noblemen of the higher ranks were accorded the full hosting treatment.
2. **Familiar guest** (*hesch'e qizerik'we*)—One who is a regular visitor.
3. **Male guest** (*ts'ixwx'w hesch'e*).
4. **Female guest** (*bzilhxwghe hesch'e*)—Lodged in the main quarters without fail. This is interpreted as a sign of the great (institutionalized) respect with which women were treated.
5. **Guest-room guest** (*hesch'esch hesch'e*)—Only men were received here; all female guests were received in the house proper and were considered 'bedroom guests'.

6. **Bedroom guest** (*leghwne hesch'e*)—Near relative or close neighbour. Received in the main quarters of the homestead, as opposed to being lodged in the guest-house.
7. **Known guest** (*hesch'e naxwe*)—One whose identity is known to the host.
8. **Anonymous guest** (*hesch'e schexw*)—It was considered very unseemly to ask a guest his name, if he himself chooses not to divulge it. Non-divulgence of one's identity to one's host in no way detracted from the pomp and ceremony of the hosting affair.
9. **Intimate guest** (*hesch'e blaghe*)—This category also embraced members of the master's fraternity or union (kwey).<sup>6</sup> Guests in this category were received in the main household quarters, as opposed to the guest-house.
10. **Foreign guest** (*hesch'e xame*)—A guest from another country or region. In accordance with the saying, '*Hesch'e ghwneghw nex're hesch'e zhizche nex' lhap'esch*', 'A guest from far away is dearer than a guest from nearby', a foreign guest was accorded extra attention and shown great deference in appreciation of the hardship borne by him to make the visit.
11. **Invited guest** (*zeja hesch'e*).
12. **Uninvited guest** (*zemija hesch'e*).
13. **Guest with a request** (*hesch'e lha'we*)—Arose in feudal times, when less well-off people sought presents by lodging with wealthy nobility.
14. **Guest in need** (*hesch'e weqwle*)—Put up following a personal tragedy or disaster, in accordance with the Caucasian traditions of mutual help – a very tight social security net indeed!<sup>7</sup>
15. **Enemy guest** (*biy hesch'e*)—Welcomed and received exactly as any other guest, even if the blood of a member of the household or close relative was on his hands.<sup>22</sup> If during his sojourn he

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<sup>22</sup> A famous anecdote illustrates this point. Whilst a man was working in his yard, a strange young man entered the yard pleading for asylum. The man duly hid the youth in his house. After a while, a posse of horsemen from the same village asked the man if he had seen a fugitive youth, telling him that the youth had killed his son and that they were seeking to kill him in revenge. The man replied that he had seen no one, and the men rode away to continue their search. The man received the youth and hosted him in accordance with proper etiquette for a few days without betraying any emotion or sign that he knew what had

succeeded in touching the breast of the lady of the house with his lips, he would have immediately become her foster-child or milk-son. His transgressions vis-à-vis the household would be instantly forgiven and he would be considered as a member of the household.

In classical times, it was the custom to host one's guests for seven days and seven nights, a number that held special religious and folkloric significance. Only after expiry of this period was the purpose of the visit inquired about. In more traditional times, the enquiry regarding the purpose of the visit was made upon the expiry of the third day. The guest always had the prerogative of not divulging any information to his host, including his own identity.

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happened. One night, when the blood of the village horsemen had cooled down, the man saddled a horse for the youth, gave him provisions and led him to a safe distance outside the village and sent him on his way. Thus, the man protected the murderer of his son and did not allow his hurt to interfere with his duties as a host.

## **ХЭХЭС АДЫГЭХЭМ Я ИҮЭХҮХЭР**

[Diaspora Cultural Scene]

### **АДЫГЭ ХЭХЭС ТХАКИҮЭХЭРИ КЪЭХУТАКИҮЭХЭРИ: БАТЫРАЙ ОЙЗБЕК (ЕДЫДЖ)**

[Circassian Diaspora Writers and Researchers: Dr. Batiray Özbek (Yedij)]

Едыдж (Ойзбек) Батырай Турцием кышчальхуащ 1946 гъэм; Нэмыцэ Хэкум шыпсэуш. Езы Едыджыр щІэныгъэлІш, гупсысакІуэ кууш, тхакІуэ Ізэщ, гупсэхуш, адыгэхэм техуауэ мыхьэнэ щІагъуэ зиІэ тхыль икІи тхыгъэ зыбжанэ итхащ тыркубзэмкІэ, нэмыцэбзэмкІэ, икІи адыгэбзэмкІэ. ЛъэпкъкІэрэ бзэкІэрэ тхакІуэр абзэхэщ. Дэ мыбы белджылы тцІынуш езы къэхутакІуэм и Іэдакъэм кыщІэкІа Іуэху щІагъуэхэр.

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### **Short biography of Dr. Batiray Özbek (Yedic)**

Dr. Özbek was born in Turkey in 1946. He studied German at Ankara University in the years 1966-1971. He obtained his PhD from Heidelberg University (Faculty of Economics and Social Studies) in Germany in 1979. He has written a number of books and booklets on Circassian issues in German, Turkish and Circassian. His PhD thesis, a work of considerable value, was on the Nart Epos. It came out in book form in 1982 (*Die tscherkessischen Nartensagen*).

## Батырай Ойзбек и библиографияе

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*АДЫГЭ КІЭЛЭЦИХЭР; Adige Ch'elets'exer*, [Circassian First Names], Ethnographie der Tscherkessen, 8, Edingen-Neckarhausen, 2003.

34-напэҕуэҕи хуу тхылгыр икхуҕа пщхьэпэщ. Щлэлэҕхэр кириллицэҕэрэ латиницэҕэрэ (латинскэ тхыгъэкӀэ) тхауэ тхылҕым итщ. БжыгъэкӀэ, тхылҕым ит щауэҕлэхэрэ пщашцӀэхэрэ минрэ щитхурэ нэблагъэ мэху.

The 34-page booklet is very useful for people who are interested in choosing Circassian names for their children. There are about 1,500 entries in the booklet arranged alphabetically. The names are given in both Cyrillic and Latin transcriptions. Comments and annotations are in Turkish.

## **НАРТ: ИОРДАНИЕМ КЪЫЩАУХУА АДЫГЭ СПУТНИКОВЭ ТВ СТАНЦИЕР**

[NART: New Circassian Satellite TV Channel in Jordan]

Иорданием щыпсэу адыгэ щӀалэгъуалэ гуп жан гуэр спутниковэ ТВ станцие дэӀэпыкъуэгъуншэу къыщӀаухуаш. ЦӀэ хуэфашэ къыхуащӀащ станцием: НАРТ (Национальнэ Адыгэ Радиорэ Телевидениерэ). НАРТ ТВ-ым и программэхэм я нэхъыбэр адыгэ щэнхабзэмрэ адыгэ фольклорымрэ тохуэ, икӀи станцием и бзэ нэхъыщхьэр адыгэбзэщ. НАРТ ТВ-ым и сайт: [<http://nart.narttv.com/>](http://nart.narttv.com/).

Ди адыгэ культурэр бей дыдэщ, и щӀыхьыр лъагэщ, езы щэнхабзэр, шӀэч лъэпкъ хэмылъу, щӀы хьурейм щыӀэ культурэ лъагэхэм ящыщ. Ауэ, дэ ди жагъуэ зэрыхьуши, ди культурэ адрей лъэпкъхэм ядыгъэлабгъуэн Ӏэмалхэри щыкӀэкӀэхэри тегъэпсыхьауэ тэрэзу зыгъэпэщжауэ диӀэкъым иджыри къэс. Уеблэмэ, дэ ди лъэпкъым хуэгъэза мыпхуэдэ Ӏэмалхэри хуэныкъуэщ. Дэ абыкӀэ ди тхьэусыхэр куэдщ, ди гъуэгуанэр кӀыхьышхуэщ, кӀыфщ, икӀи езы гъуэгуанэм и нашэкъашэхэр куэдыӀуэщ. Ауэ, ди гуапэ зэрыхьуши, НАРТ ТВ ди гугъаӀэ инхэм ящыщ утыкум къытехьащ, адыгэ ныпыр лъагэу къелӀтурэ. Дэ быдэу ди фӀэщ мэхьу НАРТ ТВ и Ӏуэхур зэрыкӀуэтэнур, зэпытурэ езы зыхуильхьэжа мурадыр зэрыхьулӀэнур. Дуней псо щыӀэ адыгэхэ: ФадэӀэпыкъу ди щӀалэгъуалэ жыджэрхэм, жыжӀаплъэхэм! Дэри лъэкӀын къэдымыгъэнэну дадэӀэпыкъуну мы гуп махуэм.

ГъэщӀэгъуэнкъэ Къэбэрдей Къэралым мыпхуэдэ спутниковэ станцие зэрыщымыӀэр?! Дэ куэду ди гуапэ хьунуш, Хэкужьым адыгэ спутниковэ станцие зыбжанэ къыщӀаухуамэ. Адыгэбзэр лъэпкъым и псэщ; псэр кӀуэдыжмэ, лъэпкъым и щытыкӀэм, и гъащӀэм мыхьэнэ иӀэжынукъым.

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## **National Adiga Radio & Television**

[<<http://nart.narttv.com/>>]

NART TV is the first Circassian satellite television channel, initiated by a group of highly enthusiastic young people who are primarily committed to show high quality programmes for the benefit of all Circassians. According to the group's website, the creation of NART TV was prompted by the perceived fear of seeing the Circassian language completely disappear in Circassian societies around the world. Nowadays, the language is rarely spoken within the many Circassian communities and is about to go extinct among Circassian youth. The disappearance of native language would not only be a grave loss to the world's linguistic heritage, it would also precipitate the loss of Circassian culture around the world.

The vision of the group is to bond and connect all Circassian communities around the world through all available and affordable media. The goal they set for NART TV is to reach the dozens of thousands of viewers throughout the Middle East, North Africa and Circassia through a series of academic, social, entertainment and cultural programmes.

### **Frequency**

**NART TV ON**

**NOORSAT1 Satellite**

**Location: 25.5 E**

**Frequency: 11623 MHz**

**Polarization: Vertical**



## **КЪЫФЩХЪЭПЭФЫН ОНЛАЙН ХЭХЭС РАДИО СТАНЦИЕХЭР, ЖУРНАЛХЭР, ИНТЕРНЕТ КУЭБЖЭХЭР**

[Useful Online Diaspora Radio Stations, Magazines, and Internet Portals]

### **ОНЛАЙН ХЭХЭС РАДИО СТАНЦИЕХЭР**

[Online Diaspora Radio Stations]

**[Adige Radio 'Nefine'](#)** [Radio Adiga 'Nafna'] \*\*\*\*

[Адыгэ Радио «Нэфынэ»]

The Radio is part of the World Wide Circassian Association 'Nafna'. The website is presented in Circassian, English, Turkish, and Arabic. It broaches many issues of concern to the Circassians.  
<<http://adg.radioadiga.com/>>

Нэфынэ (= Нэхунэ = 'light of my eye') Хасэм (и сайтым) къыбгъэдэкIу: «Ти пшъэрылъ адыгагъэр къэдгъэгъунэныр е къэдгъэушыжыныр ары, адыгэхэу чIым тетхэр тыдэ щыIэхэми зэпхыгъэхэу къызэхашIэнымкIэ IэпыIэгъу тыхъуныр ары ыкIи къыткIэхъорэ хъубгэм Хэкужым шIульэгъуныгъэ фыриIэнэу хэдгъахъэныр ары.»

**[Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's \(RFE/RL\) Circassian Service](#)** \*\*\*\*\*

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Circassian Service was launched in April 2002, together with Chechen and Avar services. Moscow reacted negatively to this development, perceiving outside broadcasting to the North Caucasus in languages other than Russian as a threat to state security! RFE/RL also publishes the weekly 'Caucasus Report', which is also available on line. The aim of [RFE/RL North](#)

[Caucasus Service](http://origin.rferl.org/listen/ondemand/bd/ca/) is to 'promote democratic values through factual, balanced, and objective information.' RFE/RL's North Caucasus Service attempts to provide independent reporting in an area that is one of the world's most dangerous for journalists.  
<<http://origin.rferl.org/listen/ondemand/bd/ca/>>

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## **ОНЛАЙН ХЭХЭС ЖУРНАЛХЭР**

[Online Diaspora Magazines]

### **Adiga Magazine \*\*\*\*\***

Magazine published by the Circassian community in Israel with articles of interest to Circassians presented in Circassian, English, Hebrew, and Arabic. This publication is very informative and very refreshing. What should be done by the institutions in the Caucasus is being done by the small community of Circassians in Israel.  
<<http://www.adigamagazine.co.il/circassian/>>

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## **ХЭХЭС ИНТЕРНЕТ КУЭБЖЭХЭР**

[Diaspora Internet Portals]

### **ADIGEBZE \*\*\*\***

[АДЫГЭБЗЭ]

An exciting site in Circassian about Circassian culture from Turkey. Supported in both Cyrillic and Latin scripts. Worthy of being solidly supported by Circassian institutions. <<http://adigebze.new-forum.net/>>

### **EuroXase: Federation of European Circassians**

[ЮроХасэ]

Site is in English and Turkish. 'Circassians' in this context refers to all the peoples of the North Caucasus. Consideration should be given to introducing Circassian (Adiga) as another language of service. One of

the principal supporters of the Federation is Cem Özdemir, the famous Circassian politician in Germany, who has recently been elected Co-Chairman of the German Green Party — a great achievement indeed! However, having the most prominent international profile amongst the Circassians entails great responsibilities. <<http://www.euroxase.com/>>

### **CircassianNews.com**

[АДЫГЭ ЦІХЭР]

Electronic news bulletin in English and Arabic concerned with events in Jordan (and elsewhere) that concern the Circassian community. <<http://www.circassiannews.com/>>

### **The Cherkess Fund Organization**

[АДЫГЭ ФОНД]

The Cherkess Fund Organization is a non-profit international organization working for the preservation of Circassian language and culture. It was established in 1991 in Nalchik. <<http://www.cherkessfund.org/>>

### **CircassianWorld**

[АДЫГЭЦІ]

Substantive information portal mainly in English from Turkey. <<http://www.circassianworld.com/>>

### **Justice for North Caucasus**

Information, news and views portal. <<http://www.justicefornorthcaucasus.com/>>

### **The Jamestown Foundation**

Very informative website concerning political developments in the North Caucasus, including Circassia. An event of particular interest: ‘The

Circassians: Past, Present and Future', conference held on 21 May 2007 in Washington DC. <<http://www.jamestown.org/>>

### **Window on Eurasia**

Informative site on political events (that should interest Circassians) in English. The site is run by Dr. Paul Goble. <<http://windowoneurasia.blogspot.com/>>

### **The North Caucasus Research and Heritage Institute**

An elegant and informative cultural portal from Jordan. <<http://www.ncrhi.net/index.html>>

### **Adygga index: Tcherkesse France**

[АДЫГЭ ИНДЕКС]

This is a beautiful and stylish website with lots of information in French. Many interesting links. A paradigm for cultural sites everywhere. <<http://tcherkesse.free.fr/>>

### **Circassian Cultural Institute**

[Адыгэ Щэнхабзэ Институт]

The Circassian Cultural Institute is based in the USA. The site deals mainly with political issues concerning Circassia and the Circassians. Site served only in English. <<http://www.circassianculturalinstitute.org/>>

### **Site of Bibars and Fatima Kaghdou** (Чэгъэду) \*\*\*\*

This is one of the very few Circassian sites in the diasporic cyber space that are served in Circassian, amongst other languages. A very commendable enterprise. <<http://www.mrbnk.com/adyghebze/page01-adyghe.html>>

### **CircassianCanada**

[АдыгэКанэдэ]

Contains solid cultural materials in English and Turkish. Makes available whole online books in Circassian. <<http://www.circassiancanada.com/>>

### **Worldwide Circassian Brotherhood**

[Дунейпсо Адыгэ Зэкъуэшыныгъэ]

Dedicated to preserving Circassian heritage, this site is mainly in Russian and English. <<http://www.adygaunion.com/rus/>>

### **Adigha Story**

A good resource on Circassian culture in English. Comprehensive list of interesting links. <<http://adighastory.tripod.com/index.html>>

### **The Circassian Museum/Kfar Kama**

[Кфар Къамэ щылэ адыгэ музейм и сайт]

Site is in English and Hebrew.  
<<http://www.circassianmuseum.com/English/index.html>>

## **АДЫГЭ ТЕДЗАПІЭМ И ЛЪЭНЫКЪУЭМКІЭ**

[From the Circassian Publishing Houses]

## **ОНЛАЙН ТХЫЛЪЫЩІЭХЭР**

[New Online Books from SPINDOX]

## **АДЫГЭ ПСАЛЪЭЖЪХЭРИ ПСАЛЪАФЭХЭРИ**

[Circassian Proverbs and Sayings]

Сэнджэлей тхыль тедзапІэ, Амман къалэ, 2009. Тхыль зыгъэхъзырар Жэмыхъуэ Амджэдщ (Амышщ).

[By Amjad M. Jaimoukha; Amman: Sanjalay Book Press, 2009]

Ди адыгэ псалъэжъхэри псалъафэхэри дахэщ, шэрыуэщ, гъуэзэджэщ. Ахэр бжыгъэкІэ мин зыбжанэ щІогъу. Адыгэ щІэныгъэлІхэмрэ фольклористхэмрэ адыгэ псалъэжъхэмрэ псалъафэхэмрэ я нэхтыбапІэр зэхуэхъсащ, псалъэм папщІэ КъардэнгъушІ Зырамыку и тхылым «АДЫГЭ ПСАЛЪЭЖЪХЭР» (Налшык, «Эльбрус» тхыль тедзапІэ, 1982). Тхылым псалъэжъ псалъафэ минищ итщ. Псалъэжъхэмрэ псалъафэхэмрэ я мыхъэнэ кыикІхэр инджылызыбзэмкІэ зедзэкІауэ итщ. Абы щхъэкІэ, мы тхылыр къахуэшхъэпэну адыгэбзэмкІэрэ инджылызыбзэмкІэрэ зеджэф псоми. Тхыль псом пщІэншэу онлайн уеджэ хъунуш.  
<[http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circassian\\_Proverbs\\_Book.html](http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circassian_Proverbs_Book.html)>

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There are more than 6,000 proverbs and sayings in the Circassian language, by some accounts much, much more. The book contains about 3,000 proverbs and sayings sorted into a number of categories. The basic orthography is official Cyrillic, but in many cases Latin orthography is

also included. Equivalents and meanings in English are provided. The book is available online and can be downloaded for free. [Online. Available HTTP: <[http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circassian\\_Proverbs\\_Book.html](http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circassian_Proverbs_Book.html)> (accessed 4 December 2008)]

Folklorists and culturalists can obtain interesting materials from the book for research. Teachers of Circassian will find this book useful, as it combines two languages. It is suggested that this book be made part of Circassian language teaching curriculums in both Circassia and the diaspora.

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## **Адыгэ псалъэ шэрыуэхэм ящыщ щапхъэ зыбжанэ**

[Circassian pithy sayings taken from the book]

**Адыгэ мыгъуэ, шыгъурэ пIастэрэ** (Adige mighwe, shighwre p'astere): Even the most indigent of Circassians will prepare food (literally: salt and boiled millet dumplings) for you.

**А псор пщIэмэ, уи дзэр щIэхыу Iухунщ** (A psor psch'eme, wiy dzer sch'exiu 'wxwnsch): 1. Curiosity killed the cat; 2. Too much knowledge makes the head bald.

**Армум хиса жыгыр мэгу** (Armum xiysa zhigir meghw): The tree planted by the clumsy person dies.

**Бэшэчыныгъэр зытемыкIуэн шыIэкъым** (Beshechinigher ziteimik'wen schi'eqim): Patience is a plaster for all sores.

**Бгъэр куэдрэ уэмэ, и дамэр мэкьутэ**: (If the eagle beats his wings very often, they will break) 1. The pot goes so often to the water that it is broken at last; 2. The pitcher goes often to the well (but is broken at last).

**Бгъуэ (блэ) егъапщи зэ пыупшI**: (Measure nine [seven] times and cut once) 1. Measure thrice and cut once; 2. Score twice before you cut once; 3. Look before you leap; 4. Second thoughts are best.

**Бжыхъэм унэмысу уи джэджьей умыбж** (Bzchihem winemisu wiy jedzchey wimbzh): 1. Don't count your chickens before they (are) hatch(ed); 2. Catch the bear before you sell his skin; 3. Never fry a

fish till it's caught; 4. First catch your hare then cook him; 5. To cook a hare before catching him; 6. To run before one's horse to market; 7. Don't eat the calf in the cow's belly; 8. Gut no fish till you get them (Scottish).

**Бзаджэ (е е, е лей, е лей,) пшлауэ (пшлэуэ)(,) флы ушымыгугъ:** 1. Reap as you have sown; 2. As you sow you shall mow; 3. As the man sows, so he shall reap; 4. As you make your bed, so you must lie on it; 5. To lie (sleep) in (on) the bed one has made; 6. To make one's bed, and have to lie in (on) it; 7. A bad beginning makes a bad ending; 8. As the call, so the echo; 9. Every bullet has its billet; 10. Curses like chickens come home to roost.

**Бзэгур джатэм нэхрэ нэхъ жанщ (Bzegwr jatem nex're nex'zhansch):** 1. The tongue is sharper than the sword; 2. The tongue is not steel, yet it cuts; 3. Many words cut (or hurt) more than swords.

**БлэкIам кьэгъээж иIэкъым:** 1. Things past cannot be recalled; 2. Lost time is never found again; 3. What's lost is lost.

**Быдэ и анэ гыркъым (Bide yi ane ghirqim):** (The mother of the hardy does not cry) 1. Fast (safe, sure) bind, fast (safe, sure) find; 2. Caution is the parent of safety.

**Бысымыр хьэщIэм и IуэхутхьэбзащIэщ (Bisimir hesch'em yi 'wexwthebzasch'esch):** The host is his guest's servant.

**Вым уанэ трельхьэ:** (He is saddling the ox) He's such a nitwit.

**Вырэ жэмрэ хузэхэгъэкIыркъым:** (He couldn't tell an ox from a cow) 1. He knows nothing at all; 2. He is so ignorant.

**Гьуэгу благъэ гьуэгу жьжъэ нэхрэ, гьуэгу жьжъэ гьуэгу благъэ (Ghwegw blaghe ghwegw zhizche nex're, ghwegw zhizche ghwegw blaghe):** (Better a short long way than a long short way) The furthest way about is the nearest way home.

**Делэ(м) хабзэ жьхуалэр ишIэркъым (Deile[m] xabze zhixwa'er yisch'erqim):** (A fool is ignorant of Circassian Etiquette) 1. As the fool thinks, so the bell clinks; 2. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

**Ди унэжъ пхъэжъ мафIэ (Уи дей хуэдэ щыIэкъым, жьхуиIэщ. There is nothing like home):** East or West, home is best.

**Дыгъужь ушышынэмэ, мэз умыкIуэ:** (If you are afraid of wolves, don't go into the forest) 1. He that feareth every bush must never go a-birding; 2. He that is afraid of wounds must not come near a battle.



- Дыгьум и пылэр мафIэм ес** (Dighwm yi pi'er maf'em yes): (The thief's cap is on fire) 1. If the cap fits, wear it; 2. The cap fits.
- Ем е и хушхуэжкым** (Yem ye yi xwschx'weqim): (Evil is not the medicine for evil) Two wrongs don't make a right.
- Е улIын, е улIэн:** (Either be a man, or die) 1. A man or a mouse; 2. Neck or nothing; 3. Either win the horse or lose the saddle; 4. (I will ) Either win the saddle or lose the horse; 5. Make or break; 6. Sink or swim; 7. To burn one's boats.
- Ефэ—умыудафэ:** 1. Drink moderately; 2. Drink in measure.
- Жыжъэу бгъэтIылымэ, (нэхъ) гъунэгъуу къэпщтэжынщ (къэбгъуэтыжынщ)** (Zhizchew bghet'ilhme, [nex'] ghwneghwu qepschtezhinsch [qebghwetizhinsch]): Fast (safe, sure) bind, fast (safe, sure) find.
- Жым щытхуи щIэр къаштэ** (Zchim schitx'wiw sch'er qaschte): (Praise the old and take the new) 1. Cast not out the foul water till you bring in the clean; 2. Don't throw out your dirty water before you get in fresh.
- Зауэ ухуэмеймэ, уи джатэр жану шыгъэлъ** (Zawe wixwemeyme, wiy jater zhanu schighelh): If you wish for peace, be prepared for war.
- Зэщыгугъ хужьгъэшхщ** (Zeschigwgh xwzchgheshxsch): (He who relies on other people ends up eating husked millet) Everybody's business is nobody's business.
- Зи бзэ IэфI щынэр анитI (мэлитI) ящIоф** (Ziy bze 'ef' schiner aniyt' (meliyt') yasch'of; щIэфын=to suck [of cubs kittens, etc.]): Soft fire makes sweet malt.
- Зи гупкIэ уисым и уэрэд жыIэ (ежью)** (Ziy gwpch'e wiysim yi wered zhi'e [yezchu]): (Sing the air of the person in whose cart you ride) Do in Rome as the Romans do.
- Зи мыIуэху зезыхуэм и щхъэм баш техуэнщ** (Ziy mi'wexw zeizixwem yi schhem bash teixwensch): (He who interferes in other people's affairs will have a stick falling on his head) 1. Mind your own business; 2. Don't poke your nose into other people's affairs; 3. Every tub must stand on its own bottom.
- Къэрабгъэр и кIэм щоштэж:** (The coward is frightened by his own tail) The coward dreads his own shadow.
- Къуэшрокъуэр пIащIэри унакъым:** 1. More haste, less speed; 2. Fool's haste is no speed; 3. Hasty climbers have sudden falls; 4.

Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow; 5. Slow and steady wins the race; 6. Slow and sure.

**Лыхъужь и лъэужь кӀуэдыркъым** (И цӀэр, игъэхъахэр къонэж, жыхуиӀэщ): (A hero's trail is never lost) Heroes live forever.

**Мыщэм ущышынэмэ, мэз умыкӀуэ:** (If you are afraid of bears, don't go into the forest) 1. He that feareth every bush must never go a-birding; 2. He that is afraid of wounds must not come near a battle.

**НэгъуэщӀым ишхамкӀэ уэ укъэмыкъей:** Do not cackle if someone else gets the food.

**Париных уихуэ** (Париныхыр щӀыпӀэцӀэщ. Балъкъ Ӏуфэрэ Псыхъурей къуажэ щӀыбымрэ я зэхуакурщ. Къэрэкъэщкъэтау зауэм шыгъуэ къэбэрдейм къытеуауэ шыта тургъутхэр Париных деж къэбэрдейхэм хьэлэч зэрыщӀыгъам псалъэжбыр къытекӀащ. *Pariypix is a place name. It lies between the banks of the Balhq (Malka River) and the back of the village of Psix'wrey. During the war of Qereqeschqetaw an epic battle was fought here between the invading Turghwt—ancestors of Kalmyks—and the Kabardians, in which the latter were routed, and hence the saying. In the first part of the 16th century, a combined force of the Turghwt (ancestors of the Kalmyk) and Tatars of Tarki engaged the Kabardians at the confluence of the Malka and Terek rivers. The first encounter went the way of the former party, the Circassians retreating to the Psigwensu River. The Turghwt overwhelmed the entrenched Circassians, who were forced to take refuge in the mountains. At the third meeting, the Circassian forces were on the verge of a total rout when a contingent of 2,000 warriors came to the rescue, and the tide of battle turned. The Turghwt were driven out and all Circassian lands were restored. The battle scene was also named 'Qereqeschqetaw', which means 'fleeing to the mountains' in Tatar).*

**Сымылъагъуу си фӀэщ хьунукъым** (Similhaghwu siy f'esch х'wnuqim): Seeing is believing.

**Тамтаркъей и махуэр къыпхукӀуэ** (Адыгэхэм Тамтаркъей [Тмутаракан] пщыгъуэр зэрызэхакъутэгъам псалъэжбыр къытекӀащ. *Енлъ Нэгумэ, III. Б., «Адыгэ народым и тхыдэ», н. 120. 'May the lot of Tamtarkan befall you!' Refers to the destruction of the Russian Principality by the Circassians in the*

*11th century AD. See Sh. B. Nogmov's History of the Adigey People, Nalchik, 1958, p120).*

**ТIакъуэр закъуэ палъэш, закъуэр лIа пэлъытэш** (T'aqwer zaqwe palhesch(iy), zaqwer l'a (schimi'e) pelhitesch): (Two men are like one man, and a single man is like a dead man) 1. One man, no man; 2. The voice of one man is the voice of no one.

**Уэшх блэкIам щIакIуэ кIэлъумыщтэ(ж)** (Weshx blech'am sch'ak'we ch'elhumischte(zh)): (After the storm, don't put on the felt cloak) 1. After death the doctor; 2. After dinner, mustard.

**Уджалэ нэхрэ ульэпэрапэмэ нэхыфIш** (Wijale nex're wilheperapeme nex'if'sch): A stumble may prevent a fall.

**Укыщальхуари зы махуэш, ущылIэжынуш зы махуэш:** You were born once, and you will die once.

**Хамэ хэку сыщытхэ нэх си хэкужь сыщылIэ:** Better to die in one's homeland than to thrive without it.

**Хэкужьыхэ лъэшш:** 1. Every dog is lion at home; 2. Every dog is valiant at his own door; 3. A cock is valiant on his own dunghill.

**Хэтхэ я унэ кыанжэ тес?:** (On whose roof is a magpie perched?) With whom are you in love?

**Хьэндыркъуакъуэ пэт сызыхэс псыр кууашэрэт, жеIэ** (Hendirqwaqwe pet sizixes psir kwuwascheret, zhei'e): (Even a frog wishes to live in deeper waters) Fish seeks deeper waters, man seeks a better place.

**Хьумэ, зыфI, мыхьумэ, фIитI:** If it happens, that's good; if it doesn't, that's even better.

**ЦIу псори дыщэкъым:** All is not gold that glitters.

**Шыд и псыефапIэ егъэутхуэж:** The jackass muddies the water he drinks from.

**ЩытхукIей нэхрэ убыхIафIэ:** A good calumny is better than a bad compliment.

**Япэ узрихьэлIэр шхыныфIш** (Yape wizriyhel'er shxinif'sch): 1. What you come across first is good food; 2. Hunger is the best spice.

**Iуэхур жыIэгъуафIэ щхэкIэ, щIэгъуафIэкъым:** Easier said than done.

**Iуэху убла зимыIэм Iуэху щIа иIэкъым:** You must start before you can finish.

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[By Amjad M. Jaimoukha; Amman: Sanjalay Book Press, 2009]

Тхылъхэу, тхыгъэхэр, статьяхэу тхылъым итыр минитI щIогъу. Адыгэ щIэнхабзэмрэ адыгэ фольклорымрэ я лъэныкъуэ псори куууэ зыджыну хуей дэтхэнэ цIыхуми сэбэпышхуэ къыхуэзыхьынщ мо библиографиер. Тхылъ псом пщIэншэу онлайн уеджэ хьунуш. [<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circbiblio.html>>]

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There are some 2,000 entries in this compilation, including more than one hundred online books, articles and dissertations. The book is available online and can be downloaded for free. [Online. Available HTTP: <<http://www.geocities.com/jaimoukha/Circbiblio.html>>]

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## ОНЛАЙН АДЫГЭ ТХЫЛЪХЭРИ ГАЗЕТХЭРИ

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<[http://elbrus.smikbr.ru/downloads.php?cat\\_id=1](http://elbrus.smikbr.ru/downloads.php?cat_id=1)>:

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## ОНЛАЙН АДЫГЭ ГАЗЕТХЭР

[Online Circassian Newspapers]

**АДЫГЭ МАКЪ (Adige Maq)**  
[Circassian Voice Newspaper]  
<<http://www.adygvoice.ru/>>



«ТЫЗЭҚЫТМЭ ТЫЛЪЭШ» ('Tizeqwetme tilhesh')  
['There is strength in union']

Адыгэ Республикэм и Къэралыгъо Совет-Хасэм ыкIи  
иправительствэ ягъэзет.

The Newspaper of the Republic of Adigea State Council (Xase) and  
Government.

The republican newspaper *Adige Maq* is published five times a week in both Circassian and Russian ('Голос Адыга'). About 3,600 copies of each edition are published. This is the only systematic cyber publication in the Circassian language in the Republic of Adigea. It deals with political and cultural issues and sports. On 8 March 2008 the Newspaper celebrated its 85th anniversary.

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**АДЫГЭ ПСАЛЪЭ (Adige Psalhe)**

[Circassian Word Newspaper]

<<http://www.adyghepsale.ru/>>

**ФИФИ ФЫМЫГЪЭПУД, ФИ ІЕЙ ФЫМЫГЪЭПЩКИУ.**

***Don't belittle your good qualities, and don't hide your bad ones.***

Къэбэрдей-Балъкъэрым и Парламентымрэ Правительствэмрэ я газет.

Organ of the Parliament and Government of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic.

Circassian language newspaper that is published five times a week. It started publication in 1924. It is also available (in pdf format) at [Mass Information Media Portal](http://ap.smikbr.ru/index1.php). <<http://ap.smikbr.ru/index1.php>>

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## АДЫГЭ ЛИТЕРАТУРНЭ ЖУРНАЛХЭР

[Circassian Literary Journals]

### ІУАЩХЬЭМАХУЭ

Адыгэ тхакІуэхэм я журнал. Минрэ щийбгъурэ тхущІрэ ирэ гъэм лъандэрэ кыдокІ, мазитІ къэсу зэ. Къэбэрдей-Балъкъэр Республикэм и Адыгэ ТхакІуэхэм я Союзым кыдегъэкІ. Журнал щІагъуэм и ужьрей выпускхэм онлайн уеджэ хъунуш. [[http://journals.smikbr.ru/downloads.php?cat\\_id=3](http://journals.smikbr.ru/downloads.php?cat_id=3)]

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### 'Waschhemaxwe [Mount Elbrus]

This is the most prestigious and influential literary journal in the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic, published (until 1991) by the Union of the Writers of the Kabardino-Balkarian ASSR. The first issue of the monthly came out in 1958. The Journal also deals with historical and artistic matters. Since 1991, it has been published by the Union of the Circassian Writers of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic once every two months. Less than 3,000 copies of each edition of the Journal are published. The Journal is available for downloading (in pdf format). Online. Available HTTP: <[http://journals.smikbr.ru/downloads.php?cat\\_id=3](http://journals.smikbr.ru/downloads.php?cat_id=3)>.

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### Zeqweshnigh [Friendship]

In Adigea, *Zeqweshnigh* (Зэкъошныгъ) and its Russian version *Druzhba* are the literary almanacs of the (modern and post-Soviet reincarnation of the) Adigean Branch of the Union of Soviet Writers, Adignatsizdat. They were first issued in Maikop in 1946. These Journals broach literary, artistic, political and social subject matters and issues. About a thousand copies of each edition of the quarterly *Zeqweshnigh* are published. Unfortunately, the Journal does not have a dedicated Internet portal and is not available online.

## ДИ АДЫГЭБЗЭ ЛЪАПІЭ

[The Circassian Language]

«Уи бзэр бзууэ ІэщІэкІамэ, кІэлъылъати къэпхъуэтэж. Ар уи щІэблэм Іурыпчамэ, къатІи мащэ итІысхъэж.»

‘If your language flits away like a sparrow, fly after it and snatch it back.  
If it escapes your young ones, dig your grave and sit in it.’

## АДЫГЭ ЩАКІУЭБЗЭ: КАВКАЗЫМ И ЩЭХУ ПЩЫКІУТІХЭМ ЯЩЫЩ ЗЫЩ

[The Secret Language of the Hunters: One of the Twelve Secrets of the Caucasus]

БзитІкІэ статьяр зытхар: Жэмышъуэ Амджэд  
Amjad Jaimoukha

### Сыт зищІысыр «щакІуэбзэр»?

Адыгэ пщыхэмрэ уэркхэмрэ щакІуэ кІуэгъуэ щыгъуэм бзэ щхъэхуэ къыщагъэсэбэпу шытахэт, хъэкІэкхъуэкІэхэр щакІуэхэм я мурадым ямыгъэцІыхун щхъэкІэ. ЩакІуэбзэр щэхубзэу ялътэрт, адрей адыгэхэр щакІуэбзэмкІэ псэлъэфэртэкъыми. Ауэ ди жагъуэ зэрыхъуши, щакІуэбзэр кІуэдыжаш, бзэжъымкІэ зыпсэлъэфу нобэрей адыгэхэм къахэкІкъыми. ЩакІуэбзэм техуа тхыгъэхэр Адыгэ Къэралым и архивым щыІэ-щымыІэу дэ дыщыгъуазэкъым. Дэ абыкІэ дызыхуейр Хэкужым щыпсэу дэІэпыкъуэгъу, мы тхыгъэхэр (щыІэмэ) къытхуахъыну. БзэщІэныгъэм и хабзэ захуэхэр къэдгъэсэбэпмэ, мы бзэ узджынтам псэ быдэ къыхуэтлхъэжыфынуш, ди адэжхэм я щэхубзэр гъащІэщІэ еттыфынуш, къэдгъэпсэужынщ!

Щаклуэбзэр зэрыклуэдыжа пэтми, зээмызэ уцрихьэлэнуш щэхубзэм и псалъэхэм щхьэхуэ-щхьэхуэу иту пасэрей уэрэдхэмрэ луэрылуатэхэмрэ. ДауикI, пасэрей адыгэ уэрэдхэмрэ луэрылуатэхэмрэ я бзэр нобэрей адыгэхэм я деж гурылуэгъуейщ, дэркIэ апхуэдэуш. Ауэ, ди насыпти, ди джэгуаклуэ жыджэрхэм, псалъэм папшIэ Бэрэгъун Владимирымрэ КъардэнгъушI Зырамыкумрэ, зэхуахьесащ пасэрей уэрэдхэри луэрылуатэхэри. Абыхэм кыдагъэкIа тхыль гъуээдджэхэр адыгэ щэнхабзэмрэ фольклорымрэ я зыужыныгъэр зылэжь кьэхутаклуэ псомкIи икьукIэ пщхьэпэщ. Псалъэм папшIэ, щаклуэбзэм епхауэ шапхьэ зыбжанэ кышщыдгъуэтащ («пэщабэ» = зи пэр шабэ = «кхъуэ»; «бжьабэ» = бжьэхэр зи куэдылуэщ = «бжьо», «щыхь») Бэрэгъунымрэ КъардэнгъушIымрэ я тхыль щIагъуэм «АДЫГЭ УЭРЭДХЭМРЭ ПШЫНАЛЪЭХЭМРЭ, ЯПЭРЕЙ ТХЫЛЬ» (Мэзкуу, 1980).

Мы тхыль дydэм уэрэдитI кыдэтхашщ щаклуэбзэ псалъэхэр иту. ЖанркIэ уэрэдитIыр тхьэлъэлу уэрэдхэм ящыщ. Япэ уэрэдыр «ПШЫМЭЗЫТХЬЭ И УЭРЭД» Мэзытхьэм (мэзым, жыгхэм, мэзым щыпсэу хьэкIэкхьуэкIэхэм я тхьэр араш) хуэгъэзащ. Нахуэщ а уэрэдыр нэхь пасэрей адыгэ уэрэдхэм зэрашщ. ЕтIуанэ уэрэдыр «ДАУШДЖЭРДЖИЙ И УЭРЭД» Даушджэрджийм (щIыхьышхуэ зиIэ, тхьэм и луэхум зыпыль чыристэн нэрыбгэ лъапIэ; Джэрджий = George; Дауш = Saint; Святой) хуэгъэзащ. ПсынщIэу белджылы кыпщыхьуну мы ужьрей уэрэдыр чыристэныгъэм Адыгэ Хэкум тепщэныгъэ кышщIа лъэхьэнэм (эрэм) щыгъуэ зэрыщаусар. Дэ абыкIэ жытIэн хьунуш япэрей уэрэдыр етIуанэрейм нэхьрэ нэхь пасэщ. УэрэдитIыр КъардэнгъушIым гъуээдджэу ягъэзащIэу щытат, икIи ахэр джэгуаклуэшхуэм и репертуар гъунэншэм хэтат.

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## The Circassian Language of the Hunt

A curious aspect of Northwest Caucasian culture is the 'Hunting Language', which used to be spoken by the princes and nobility during their hunting expeditions. The Circassians had their 'Hunting Language' ('Schak'webze') and the Abkhaz had their 'Forest Language'. Circassian

aristocracy donned masks on their hunting expeditions, apparently to confound the prey, and together with the esoteric cant (шакIыэбзэ, *schak'webze* = language of the chase), render the objects of the hunt unaware of the true purpose of the chevy.

The following is extracted from Z. K. Khiba's article 'A Contribution to Abkhaz Lexicography: The Secret Language of the Hunters' (*Bedi Kartlisa*, Paris, 38, 1980, pp 269-77):

"A peculiarity of the West Caucasian lexicon was represented until recently by the presence of a special stock of lexical items, the use of which was socially constrained to the realm of hunting. Both the Abkhaz 'Forest Language' and the Adyghe (Circassian) 'Hunting Language' possessed an important stock of taboo-periphrases and other words, which were absent from the standard vocabulary' (Klimov, 1965, pp 33-4, or 1969, p31). The distinguished Abkhaz ethnographer, Šalva Inal-Ipa, describes the 'Forest Language' as follows (1965, p191): 'The Hunting Language has a special functional role – not to give the prey any possibility of recognising the presence and intentions of the hunters, to lead the beasts into error and to blunt their sensitive awareness, in order that they should not notice the approach of danger and run away, but that it should be easy to hunt and kill them.'

"The 'Forest Language', in the main, differs from the vernacular only in its nominal forms. It was forbidden to call objects by their own names, since it was considered that this impedes good luck in the hunt. For the representation of each taboo-object or phenomenon with which the hunters frequently come into contact, use was made of peculiar word-substitutes. These correspondences manifest in many cases either a lapidary description of the specific qualities of the relevant objects, or a transformed expression of their essential role, and also comparisons or onomatopoeic representations. However, in the majority of instances the meaning and content of the words of the 'Forest Language' is not clear. Thus, on the hunt, an Abkhaz, as though having forgotten part of the lexical component of his native language, all of a sudden begins to communicate with his colleagues of the chase in a different language, the content of the nouns of which is not understood by the mass of the

people, since these words have nothing in common with ordinary colloquial speech.”

### **Language of the chase**

‘A curious aspect of Circassian, which it shares with its sister languages, Abkhaz and Ubykh, is the secret language of the hunters, *Schak’webze*, which was used by the princes and the nobles in their hunting expeditions. It was believed that, by switching to the cryptic tongue, the senses of the animals would be dulled as to the purpose of the hunters, and thus a plentiful bag would be assured.

‘This language was not comprehended by the masses of the people. It was not a different language as such, but rather it had a lexicon made up of transposed and other distorted words with the basic syntactical structure unaffected. The examples given below illustrate that for some animals epithets indicative of striking physical features (‘soft-snout’ for swine, and ‘multi-antlered’ for fallow deer) were used as substitutes for their proper names. Curiously, Circassian scholars have shown that in some cases substitute epithets have become the common names of animals, where the original proper names had been lost in the mist of time. For example, the Circassian name for the wolf ‘*dighwzch*’ («дыгъужъ») [‘the inveterate thief’] is taken from the language of the hunt. The original designation has long been lost.’

— From A. Jaimoukha (2001, p251), with further expansion.

The examples detailed below indicate that (some) ‘substitute’ words for hunted animals referred to their most striking physical characteristics.

### **Examples of Eastern Circassian (Kabardian) secretive words used on the hunt:**

- ‘**Бжьабэ** [*Bzchabe*]’ (literally: ‘multi-antlered’, ‘with branching antlers’ = ‘deer’) affords an example of a word used in the (secretive) language of the chase (щакIуэбзэ, *schak’webze*).



- ‘Deer’ are referred to by the euphemistic appellation (of the language of the chase) ‘**бжъабэ** [*bzchabe*] (literally: ‘multi-antlered’, ‘with branching antlers’). [Re-phrasing of preceding entry]
- In the language of the chase (*schak’webze*), wild boars and hogs were referred to as ‘**пэщабэ**’ ‘*peschabe*’ (literally: ‘soft-snouts’).

These two examples from the Circassian language of the hunt were culled from the following two songs. The words in question are emboldened and underlined in the texts of the songs. The chants, sung by the iconic Circassian bard Ziramikw Qardenghwsch’, are available on the CD accompanying Amjad Jaimoukha’s book *Circassian Culture and Folklore: Hospitality Traditions, Cuisine, Festivals & Music (Kabardian, Cherkess, Adigean, Shapsugh & Diaspora)*, London and New York: Bennett and Bloom, 2009. They can also be heard at <<http://jaimoukha.synthasite.com/circassian-journal.php>>.

### **Songs of the hunt**

[From A. Jaimoukha (2009)]

Prayer songs of the hunt were addressed to the patrons of the activity, namely (the pagan) Mezithe (Мэзытхэ) and (the Christian) Dawischjerjiy (St. George) (Даушджэрджий; *also* Awischjerjiy [Аушджэрджий], Awischijer [Аушдыжэр]). The pagan-Christian duality in Circassian folklore shows itself most vividly in the musical lore. In fact, the penetration of Christianity into the Circassian ethos goes much deeper than mere ‘scissors placed crosswise on the chest of the deceased,’ as this study is making increasingly obvious.

Two songs from the Kabardian repertoire are presented in both Circassian and English [translation by A. Jaimoukha]. They were recorded by the Circassian musicologist and folklorist Ziramikw Qardenghwsch’. The first, ‘Pschimezithe’ (‘Lord Mezithe’), invokes Mezithe, the native deity of the chase (V. H. Bereghwn and Z. P’. Qardenghwsch’, 1980, pp 65-9; the book, which is available online, also includes the sheet music of both songs for musicians and musicologists):

**ЩАКИҮЭ УЭРЭД:  
ПЩЫМЭЗЫТХЬЭ И УЭРЭД**

1. ПщымэзытхьэІэ, (уо уор,) соджэр, (иджы, уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) пашІэ, (уа,) бзиипльрэ...  
Ежью. Уо!  
Санэплъмэ, (уа, уо,) и бзабзэр, (иджы, уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) зыхуа(уо)гъэхыжьи...  
Ежью. Уо!
2. Гъэлъэхью хужъмэ, (уо, уо,) и бжъабэркъэ, (уара уойдэ,) (уа,) зи тыхьэ, (уа уари,) щІасэрэ...  
Ежью. Уо!  
(Уэ,) зи нысэ, (уа-а, уо,) щІасэр, (иджы, уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) зыхуэльэгужьи...  
Ежью. Уо!
3. Дэ недгъэ(уо)жъа гущэр, (иджы, уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) зэрыІэ(уари)щхьэхурэ...  
Ежью. Уо!  
Ерэжьи, (ар, уэ,) махуэт, (иджы, уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) зэрыхуэІэжьи...  
Ежью. Уо!
4. Щыхьыжьи, (уа,) и бжъэпэркъэ тІэ, (уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) зи сотэ(уэ-уа-ри)рэшрэ...  
Ежью. Уо!  
Бланэ пшэрми, (уо, уо, уор,) и щхьэфэркъэ, (уара уойдэ,)

(уэ,) зи фэ, (уо-уэ,) сулыкъуи...  
 Ежъу. Уо!  
 5. Пылыжъмэ, (уо-а, уо,) и пкъыркъэ тІэ, (уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) зи, (уо-уэ-уо,) быдакърэ...  
 Ежъу. Уо!  
 (Уэ,) зи алътыныкІэм,<sup>23</sup> (иджы, уара уойдэ,) (уэ,) зрисэ, ди тхъэмадэжъщ,  
бжъабэц пІэщхъэгъщ...<sup>24</sup>  
 Ежъу. Уо!

### Song of the Hunt: The Song of Lord Mezithe

1. ‘Lord Mezithe’, (wo wor,) is his name, (yiji, wara woyde,) (we,) his moustache, (wa,) is ginger red...  
 Chorus: Wo!  
 Red wine, (wa, wo,) cheery and fine, (yiji, wara woyde,) (we,) is kept to maturity for him ...  
 Chorus: Wo!
2. The white wether, (wo, wo,) fattened and many- horned, (wara woyde,) (wa,) is the offering to him, (wa wariy,) delectable and right...  
 Chorus: Wo!  
 (We,) whose daughter-in-law, (wa-a, wo,) beloved and dutiful, (yiji, wara woyde,) (we,) kneels before him...  
 Chorus: Wo!

<sup>23</sup> ‘АлътыныкІэ’ is a compound word formed of the Turkic ‘алътын’ (‘gold’, ‘golden’) and the Circassian ‘кІэ’ (here: ‘topknot’). In the olden days, Circassian men shaved their heads, leaving only a tuft of hair on the crown of the head. It is evident that not only did Mezithe have red moustaches, but he also had golden-red hair. When he got into a rage, his topknot would stand on end, terrifying all those around him.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Бжъабэ [Bzchabe]’ (literally: ‘multi-antlered’, ‘with branching antlers’ = ‘deer’) affords an example of a word used in the (secretive) language of the chase (щакІуэбзэ, *schak’webze*). ‘Бжъабэц [Bzchabets]’ is the wool of deer.

3. We sent to him, (yiji, wara woyde,  
(we,) the white-sleeved maid...  
Chorus: Wo!  
Custodian of victuals, (ar, we,) blessed protector of people, (yiji, wara woyde,  
(we,) masterly and dexterous...  
Chorus: Wo!
4. The great deer's, (wa,) antler tips, (wara woyde,  
(we,) are his toy sabres...  
Chorus: Wo!  
The fat fallow-deer's, (wo, wo, wor,) skin of head, (wara woyde,  
(we,) is the material, (wo-we,) for his wineskin...  
Chorus: Wo!
5. The mighty elephant's, (wo-a, wo,) hulking bone, (wara woyde,  
(we,) is his, (wo-we-wo,) cudgel...  
Chorus: Wo!  
(We,) whose golden-red topknot, (yiji, wara woyde,  
(we,) stands on end, our great leader,  
From the wool of deer is the head of thy bedstead...  
Chorus: Wo!

The other song of the hunt is addressed to St. George, who shared the patronage of the hunt with Mezithe in the Christian era (V. H. Berghwn and Z. P'. Qardenghwsch', 1980, pp 70-7):

### ЩАКИУЭ УЭРЭД: ДАУЩДЖЭРДЖИЙ И УЭРЭД

1. Си уэройдш, си уэройдш, (уэуиуэу, уареди, уо,) угъурлыжът, угъурлыжъ!  
Ежью. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!  
(Уэреда уей, рауэией,) Псышхуэ и банэт, (иджы, уэ,) хуэгъуа(уэ)бжэт, (уоу, уо,) хуэгъуабжэти, (рауэией)...
- Ежью. Уо, уо!  
Ди хъз гъуа(уэ)бжэжъ гушэхэр, (уэр,) къальэф, (уэу,) я Iуст, я Iуст!  
Ежью. Уо, уо!
2. Си уэройдш, си уэрэдш, (уэуиуэу, уарэди, уэ,) махуэт!

Ежбу. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!  
(Уэрэда уи, рауэиай,) гъуэдыджмэ, (уэ,) ис гуцэхэр, (уэ,) зэдэди,  
(уо-уа,) зэдэдизахуэти, (рэуэией)...

Ежбу. Уо, уо!  
Іэзахуэм дыкІуэмэ, (тіэ, ар,) шытІуэтэ, (уо-уо,) шытІуэтэжынт, шытІуэтэжын!  
Ежбу. Уо, уо!

3. Си уэройдщ, си уэрэдщ, (уэуиуэ, уарэди, уо,) угъурлыжът!

Ежбу. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!  
(Уэрэда уи, рауэиай,) Даушджэрджийт, (жи, уэ,) и тхьэ(уо)шхуэр,  
(уоу, уо,) игъусэти, (рэуэиай)...

Ежбу. Уо, уо!  
**Пэщабэ,**<sup>25</sup> (уэ,) гъусэт, (иджы,) напэ(уо)хур, (уоу, уо,) и кІэст, и кІэст!  
Ежбу. Уо, уо!

4. Си уэройдщ, си уэрэдщ, (уэуиуэу, уарэди, уэ,) махуэт!

Ежбу. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!  
(Уэрэда уи, рауэиай,) бажэ дешэnumэ, (уэр,) шы кьуэ(уэ)гъукІэ,  
(уэр,) дывгъакІуи, (рауэиай)...

Ежбу. Уо, уо!  
Бланэ деуэnumэ, (уэр,) шы пшэ(а)ркІэ, (уо,) девгъажьэт, девгъажьэ!  
Ежбу. Уо, уо!

5. Си уэройдщ, си уэрэдщ, (уэуиуэу, уарэди, уэ,) махуэт!

Ежбу. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!  
Мыр махуэти, (рауэиай,) ди Амэ(уэ)укьуэ гуцэмэ, чыблэркъэ,  
(уо, уоукьэ, уоукьэ, уэ,) шагъэшри, (рауэией)...

Ежбу. Уо, уо!  
Фэ гъуза(уэ) къашэхэр, (ар,) гуфэ зы, (уо-уо,) гуфэ зэтетт, гуфэ зэтетт!  
Ежбу. Уо, уо!

6. Си уэрайдщ, си уэрэдщ, (уэуиуэу, уарэди, уэ,) махуэт!

Ежбу. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!  
(Уэрэда уи, рауэиай,) ди Арыкьыжъ гуцэхэм мыр **бжъабэ(уо)жьхэр,**<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> In the language of the chase (*schak'webze*), wild boars and hogs were referred to as 'пэщабэ' '*peschabe*' (literally: 'soft-snouts').

(уаукъэ, уо,) кыщохъури, (рауэией)...

Ежъу. Уо, уо!

Бланэ е(уэ)хъуахэр, (иджы, ар,) лъэгуа, (уо-уо,) лъэгуажъэ фЫцІэти, (рауэией)!

Ежъу. Уо, уо!

7. Си уэрайдщ, си уэрэдщ, (уэуиуэу, уарэди, уэ,) махуэт!

Ежъу. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!

(Уэрэда уи, рауэиай,) ди фоч фЫ(уэ)цІэжъ гуцэхэм, (уэр,) дызэды,

(уо-уо,) дызэдыщІоплъри, (рауэией)...

Ежъу. Уо, уо!

И нэр зы(уэ)теплъэ гуцэр мыр пшэрыхъмэ, (уо, уоукъэ, уоу, уэ,) ІэщІыкІкъым, ІэщІыкІ!

Ежъу. Уо, уо!

8. Си уэройдщ, си уэрэдщ, (уэуиуэу, уарэди, уэ,) махуэт!

Ежъу. Уо, уоу, уоу рирари!

(Уарэда уи, рауэией,) Бэдзэлэ(уэ)ижъ гуцэхэм мыр блэ фЫцІэхэри,

(уоу, уо,) щызэпропщри, (рауэией)...

Ежъу. Уо, уо!

Сырымэ, (уэ,) Іэщхъэхэр ар зи щхъэм хуи(й)мыт, къритІ зэхуакум

ІэпцэкІэ кыдэзышыжыр Даушджэрджийщ, Даушджэрджий!

Ежъу. Уо, уо!

### **Song of the Hunt: The Chant of St. George**

1. My song, my song, (wewiywew, wareidiy, wo,) is the harbinger of fortune, bringer of good luck!

Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!

(Wereida weiy, rawe-yeiy,) the thickets by the Psishxwe River, (yiji, we,)

Are grey, (wow, wo,) are grey, (rawe-yeiy)...

Chorus: Wo, wo!

Our hardened grey hounds, (wer,) are dragging here, (wew,) their food, their food!

Chorus: Wo, wo!

<sup>26</sup> Another incidence of the (language of the chase) word ‘Бжъабэ [Bzchabe]’ (‘deer’). ‘Бжъабэжъхэр [Bzchabezchxer]’ = great deer (plural).

2. My song, my chant, (wewiywew, warediy, we,) augurs well!  
 Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!  
 (Wereida wiy, rawe-yay,) in the deep burrows, (we,) dwells, (we,) our,  
 (wo-wa,) our common prey, (rewe-yeiy)...
- Chorus: Wo, wo!  
 If we set off to 'Ezaxwe,<sup>27</sup> there, (t'e, ar,) about our failures, (wo-wo,)
 

Might we forget, might we forget!

 Chorus: Wo, wo!
3. My song, my chant, (wewiywe, warediy, wo,) is the omen of good fortune!  
 Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!  
 (Wereda wiy, rawe-yay,) St. George, (zhiy, we,) his Supreme God,  
 (wow, wo,) is in his company, (rewe-yay)...
- Chorus: Wo, wo!  
 Herself, (we,) always with the soft-snouts, (yiji,) the white-faced [beauty], (wow, wo,)
 

Is his bag, his booty!

 Chorus: Wo, wo!
4. My song, my chant, (wewiywew, warediy, we,) is propitious!  
 Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!  
 (Wereda wiy, rawe-yay,) if foxes we are to hunt, (wer,) on lean steeds,  
 (wer,) let's set off, (rawe-yeiy)...
- Chorus: Wo, wo!  
 If deer we are after, (wer,) on stout mounts, (wo,) let's depart, let's depart!  
 Chorus: Wo, wo!
5. My song, my chant, (wewiywew, warediy, we,) is auspicious!  
 Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!  
 All day long, (rawe-yay,) at our Amewiqwe,<sup>28</sup> staffs,  
 (wo, wowqe, wowqe, we,) are bent, [stretching hide] (rawe-yeiy)...
- Chorus: Wo, wo!

<sup>27</sup> 'Ezaxwe' is the name of a place (in Circassia). 'Ezaxwe' means 'drinking party' in Kabardian. Perhaps 'Ezaxwe' was the place to be to drown one's sorrows!

<sup>28</sup> 'Amewiqwe' is the name of a place (in Circassia).

The dried off hide that they bring, (ar,) is packed full, (wo-wo,) in layers in bullock carts,  
In layers in bullock carts!

Chorus: Wo, wo!

6. My song, my chant, (wewiywew, warediy, we,) omens well!

Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!

(Wareda wiy, rawe-yay,) at our ancient Ariq the great deer,<sup>29</sup>  
(wawqe, wo,) are grazing, (rawe-yeiy)...

Chorus: Wo, wo!

The fattened deer, (yiji, ar,) with knees, (wo-wo,) are with black knees, (rawe-yeiy)!

Chorus: Wo, wo!

7. My song, my chant, (wewiywew, warediy, we,) bodes well!

Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!

(Wereda wiy, rawe-yay,) our great black muskets, (wer,) together we,  
(wo-wo,) we fire simultaneously, (rawe-yeiy)...

Chorus: Wo, wo!

If he looks into the eyes of whatever breed of prey, (wo, wowqe, wow, we,)

It cannot flee, it just cannot break free!

Chorus: Wo, wo!

8. My song, my chant, (wewiywew, warediy, we,) is the omen of good luck!

Chorus: Wo, wow, wow riyariy!

(Wareda wiy, rawe-yey,) Old Bedzele,<sup>30</sup> with dark and gloomy snakes,  
(Wow, wo,) is swarming and teeming, (rawe-yeiy)...

Chorus: Wo, wo!

He who rescues the captive white-sleeved damsel, by leading her by the hand through the  
Crevice between the two massive rocks, is St. George, is St. George!

Chorus: Wo, wo!

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<sup>29</sup> 'Ariq' is the name of mountain ridge (in Kabarda; used for pasturage) and a settlement (also called 'Boriqwey') located on the right bank of the Terek River to the southwest of the ridge.

<sup>30</sup> 'Bedzele' is a place name (in Circassia).



The theme of St. George rescuing the damsel in distress is common to the medieval legends of the Circassians, Georgians, English, Ossetians, and other peoples. St. George is considered to be the patron saint of both the Georgians and English (and the Circassians before the advent of Islam). It is known that there had been active interactions between the Circassian and Georgian civilizations throughout the ages. St. (Prophet) Elijah (Елэ, Еллэ, Yele, Yelle), as bringer of rain, was also similarly venerated by both the Circassians and Georgians. The common heritage of the Circassians and Georgians merits further investigation.

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**Interesting link:**

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## «АДЫГЭБЗЭ – АДЫГЭПСЭ»

[‘Circassian Language – Circassian Soul’]

«Адыгэпсэ зыӀутым адыгэбзэр дывгъэхъумэ»

Мэргъущ Іэсиат и усэ телъыджэ

[A fine poem by ’Esiyat Merghwsch]

АДЫГЭБЗЭ – АДЫГЭПСЭ	CIRCASSIAN LANGUAGE – CIRCASSIAN SOUL
Си бзэ дахэу адыгэбзэ, Си бзэ шабэу адыгэбзэ, Узигъусэщ жэщи махуи, ГушӀагъщӀэлы сянэм и бзэ. Адыгэбзэ, уэ си гъащӀэм Хьэл-щэныфӀхэр къыхэплъхьащ, Сыбгъэгушхуэу сытым щыгъуи Уэ си гъащӀэм ухэлъынщ. Адыгэбзэм нэхъ сфӀэдахэ Зы бзэ закъуи зэхэсхакъым. Адыгэбзэм хабзэ дахэр СимыгъащӀэу хуэшэчакъым. Адыгэбзэ, сэ уи дыгъэр Махуэ къэскӀэ кысхуоупсэ. Адыгэбзэм и дахагъэм Къысхелъхьэжыр адыгэпсэ.	Circassian, my exquisite language, Circassian, my tender tongue, Thou art with me night and day, Lying deep in my heart, my mother’s tongue. Adiga language, upon my life Thou hast bestowed good manners. A source of eternal hope and confidence Thou shalt remain in my life. Never have I heard a language More magnificent than Circassian. With our graceful and charming etiquette Circassian couldn’t bear but to acquaint me. Adiga language, thy sun upon me Shineth every day. The beauty of the native tongue Placeth in me my Circassian soul.
Мэргъущ Іэсиат	’Esiyat Merghwsch

ЗезыдзэкӀар: Жэмышъуэ Амджэд

[Translated by Amjad Jaimoukha]

## **Мэргъуц Iэсият**

Мэргъуц Iэсият 1989 гъэм Къармэхьэблэ (Къэбэрдейм) къыщальхуаш. Ар зэрыщыкIурэ гурыхуэу къэхъуаш. Къармэхьэблэ дэт курыт еджапIэр къиуха нэужь, Iэсият щIэтIысхъаш Къэбэрдей-Балъкъэр Къэрал Университетым и педагогическэ колледжым адыгэбзэмрэ адыгэ литературэмкIэ и къудамэм.

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## **'Esiyat Merghwsch**

'Esiyat was born in the village of Qarmeheble in the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic. She was a precocious child. Upon finishing school, she studied at the Department of Kabardian Language and Literature at the Institute of Philology of the Kabardino-Balkarian State University.

## ПСАЛЪЭ ЩАГЪУЭХЭР

[Significant Words in This Issue]

Мы едзыгъуэм ит псалъэ щагъуэхэм мыхъэнэ кыикIхэр Жэмыхъуэ Амджэд и «КЪЭБЭРДЕЙ-ИНДЖЫЛЫЗ (АНГЛИЙСКЭ) ПСАЛЪАЛЪЭМ» (Амман квалэ: Сэнджэлей тхылъ тедзапIэ, 1997; етIуанэрей тедзэгъуэ: 2009) кыдэтхаш.

[The following words are from A. M. Jaimoukha (Zhemix'we), *Kabardian-English Dictionary: Being a Literary Lexicon of East Circassian*, Amman: Sanjalay Press, 1997; second edition: 2009]

**Афэ** coat of mail; ~ *джанэ*: chain mail/armour; \* *афэр зи джанэ куэщI!*: (folk.) whose shirt-hem is a coat of mail (mainly in the description of Sosriqwe, one of the principal protagonists in the Nart Epos).

**БгъуэнщIагъ** grotto, cave, cavern.

**Бжъэпэ** precipice; steep slope; sheer descent.

**Бзэ** 1. language, tongue; speech, 2. *attr.* linguistic; language; vocal; speech; \* *бзэр убыдын*: to hold one's tongue; *бзэр нучын*: to lapse into silence; to hold one's tongue; ~ *дыкъяукъуэ*: gossip, tale-teller, tale-bearer; ~ *дыдж*, ~ *бзаджэ*: wicked/ malicious tongue; ~ *хуэкъутэн* (*хуэкъута хъун*): to learn to speak a foreign language well; *бзэр къэмIэтэн*: to talk obscenely; to loosen one's tongue; *бзэр убыдын*: 1. to be deprived of speech; 2. *fig.* to lose one's tongue; to be deprived of the gift of speech; ~ *IэфI*: tender, sweet; good with words, sliver-tongued.

**БзэщIэныгъэ** 1. linguistics; science of language; 2. *attr.* linguistic.

**Бысым** host; hostess; ~ *щIын*: to be (smb.'s) guest, to stop at (smb.'s) place; *бысымыр хъэщIэм и IуэхутхъэбзащIэу*: prov. a host is his guest's servant.

**Вэн** *vt & vi* to till, plough; *щIыр ~*: to till/plough the land.

**Гуэн** corn-bin; covered wattle granary.

**Гущэ** 1. cradle; 2. *attr.* cradle; ~ *уэпэд*: lullaby, cradle song.

**ГъэщIэгъуэн** 1. *n* charm, fascination; wonder, marvel; 2. *as adj.* charming, fascinating; wonderful; delightful, exquisite.

**ГъэIэпхъуэн** *vt* 1. causative form of *Iэпхъуэн*; 2. to transport, convey; to transfer, move; 3. to move, resettle (smb.); 4. to transplant (plants).

**ГъукІэ** 1. (black) smith; 2. *attr.* of 1; ~ *уадэ*: *sledge-hammer*.

**Гъунэ** border, edge; outskirts; outlying districts; boundary, border-line, frontier; *къэрал* ~: *frontier*.

**Дадэ** grandad, grand-dad; grandpa(па) (form of address).

**Джэгу** 1. game; pastime; 2. dance get-together/gathering.

**ДжэгуакІуэ** 1. minstrel, vocalist, singer; 2. joker, jester; 3. organizer of group activities.

**Еныкъуэкъун** *vi* 1. to argue, dispute; to have an altercation; to wrangle, squabble; 2. to compete (with smb. in smth.), to contend (with smb. for smth.).

**Ефэ-ешхэ** feast, banquet; \* ~ *нэхрэ джэгу*: (*saying*) *better a dance than a drinking-bout*.

**Жылапхэ** *agric.* seeds, seed-fund (for sowing).

**Жыхафэгу** middle of floor (of room); \* *жыхафэгур цхъэцукІэклэ епхъэнкл*: *she sweeps the floor with her hair (said of faultless housewife)*; *жыхафэгур зи шэджагъуакІуэ*: (*saying*) *slacker, idler, loafer*.

**ЖъантІэ** place of honour in room (away from door, near hearth), or at table (usually reserved for guests).

**Жъэгу** hearth; \* ~ *науцхэ*: *family hearth*; ~ *науцхэ нэцІ*: *empty hearth*; ~ *дэсыжын*: *to stay at home, to become a stay-at-home*; ~ *науцхэм дэсын*: 1. *to stay at home*; 2. *to be on a visit (to smb.)*; *to idle, loaf*; ~ *дэтІысхъэжын*: *to become a permanent stay-at-home due to old age*.

**Жъэгупатхэ** patron of the domestic hearth in the Circassian Pantheon. He shared this godhood with Sozeresh.

**Жъэгупащхэ** 1. place by the hearth; 2. living room; 3. *fig.* family hearth.

**Зээмызэ** *adv.* sometimes, at times, (every) now and then, occasionally.

**ЗэхэлыкІэ** 1. structure; system; 2. structure, design; *машинэм и* ~: *structure of the machine*.

**Иджырей** *adj.* present, present-day, (of) today, contemporary; ~ *гъацІэ*: *the present*.

**Куэбжэ** gate; gates; \* *куэбжи набжи иІэкъым*: *he has neither house nor home*.

**КІыщ** smithy, forge; farriery; \* ~ *уэщыншэ*: (*saying*) *the shoemaker's wife is the worst shod*.

**КІуэтэн** *vi* to move, advance; to progress, develop.

**Къаблэ (къэблэ)** 1. south; 2. *attr.* south; southern.

**Къуенакъ** *obs.* visitor, guest; \* ~ *къуенакъ*: *of person who runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds* (lit.: the guest of hither and thither).

**Кхъэлэгъунэ** 1. mausoleum, large (burial) vault, large crypt; 2. overhead fence of sepulchre.

**Кхъужьей** *bot.* pear(-tree); *Pyrus*.

**Лей I** *adj.* surplus, redundant, spare, excessive, extra; *млысынлэ* ~: *spare seat*; *ахьшэ* ~: *spare money*.

**Лей II** injustice, unfairness; harm, \* ~ *зехьэн*: *to commit excesses/out-rages, to cause injustice*; ~ *къылъысын*: *to be insulted, humiliated (by smb.)*; ~ *зыцлэм къыхуэгъуркъым*: *(saying) murder will out*; ~ *нуцлауэ флы уцымыгузъ*: *prov. as you make your bed, so you must lie on it*.

**Лъахъш** chain of cauldron in a Circassian hearth; considered the family's connection to the cosmic chain, and thus to the whole universe.

**Лъэхъэнэ** epoch; age; era; period.

**Льытэн** *vt* 1. to count up, calculate; 2. to consider, take into account, bear in mind.

**Льыхъуэн** *vt* to look for, search for, seek after.

**Лэгъуэ** time of death; death-hour.

**Мэлыбгъэ** barren/dry ewe.

**Нану** (*endearing word*) child; baby.

**Нысашлэ** bride.

**Нысэ** daughter-in-law.

**Псысэ** 1. tale, story; ~ *куэд зылауэ*: *tale-teller, story-teller*; 2. *attr.* fairy-tale.

**Псыхьын** *vt* 1. to temper, harden (metals); 2. *fig.* to temper, harden (smb., smth.; ex.: an organism).

**Пхъэлантхуэ** 1. pole with a great number of twigs for hanging up articles, utensils (in courtyard, field-camp, etc.); 2. this pole (hawthorn or pear sappling with seven branches) as an icon and ritualistic representation of Sozeresh, the god of fertility, family hearth, well-being and illness in the Circassian Pantheon; 3. loose filaments.

**Пхъэщхъэмышхъэ** 1. fruit; 2. *attr.* fruit.

**Пшыналъэ** 1. song; air; 2. muse.

**Пщлантлэ** 1. court, yard, courtyard; 2. *attr.* of 1; ~ *нэуальэхэр*: *outbuildings, outhouses*.

**Пщлэ** 1. pay; fee; fair; price; *нуцлэклэ къацма*: *hired*; 2. use; benefit; 3. *fig.* regard, esteem; \* ~ *къытемынэн*: *not to leave smth. unanswered*;

*хуэфацэ ~ хуэцлын: to render (smb.) his due; to do justice (to smb.); ~ хуэцлын: to think much/highly (of smb.); to hold (smb.) in high esteem; уи цхъэм ~ хуумыцлыжмэ, зыми къынхуицлынкъым: (saying) if you do not respect yourself, nobody will respect you.*

**Тажьджэ** wicker basket placed on bullock cart for transporting maize and other such things.

**Теклуэн** *vi* to conquer; defeat, vanquish (smb.); *бийм ~: to defeat the enemy.*

**Тхаклуэ** writer, author; *тхаклуэхэм я съезд: writers' conference/convention.*

**Тхыль** а) **1.** book; *~ еджэн: to read a book*; **2.** document; б) *attr.* book; *~ медзанлэ: book publishing house.*

**Тхьэлъэлу** religious festival, festive meal as offering to deity (for the purpose of begging/soliciting for rain, recovery of the sick, etc.).

**Тхьэмадэ** **1.** father-in-law (husband's father); **2.** toast-master.

**Тхьэнапэ** icon.

**Уэкъулэ** *obs.* request/entreaty for mutual aid.

**Уэрэд** song; air.

**Уэрэдус** song-writer, author of songs.

**Уэрэджылаклуэ** singer.

**Унафэ** **1.** order, command, injunction; *~ хуэцлын: to give an order, to order/command*; **2.** decision; judgement; decree; resolution; instruction; direction; *~ цлын: to decide/resolve, to pass a resolution, to deliver a judgment.*

**Утыку** ground; area; square (where games are played, performances take place dances held, etc.); \* *~ луэху цлын: to make public/known, to divulge.*

**Уйгъэ** **1.** wound; **2.** injured/wounded person; **3.** wounded game, winged bird.

**Фіэклын** *vi* **1.** to go past, to leave behind (smb., smth.); **2.** to yield (to smb.); to extricate oneself (from).

**Фіэхьус** greeting with which a host addresses his guests.

**Хабзэ** **1.** usage; law; customary law; custom, tradition; *ар абы и хабзэц: this is his custom*; **2.** decency, propriety; decorum; *адыгэ ~: Circassian etiquette.*

**Хасэ** *folk.* council, conference, deliberative meeting/ debate; *нарт ~: Nart Council (meeting of the Narts to deliberate a course of action in*



*face of external threat, or to debate contentious problems); ~ гъэшын: to hold a meeting.*

**Хэхэс** I *adj.* **1.** of another town, community, country; foreign (of person not living in settlement where he was born); **2.** of the Circassian diaspora; diasporic; II *n* **1.** person from another town, community, country, foreigner (person not living in settlement where he was born); **2.** Circassian in diaspora; *хэхэсхэп: Circassian diaspora.*

**Хы** **1.** sea; ocean; **2. attr.** sea; ocean; ~ кхъухъ: *ocean liner.*

**Хьэлэмэт** *adj.* I **1.** interesting; *тхыль ~: interesting book;* **2.** wonderful; marvellous; II (as noun) marvel, wonder, miracle.

**ХьэмкӀутӀей** *bot.* hawthorn; Crataegus.

**Хьушэ** **1. n** herd, flock; **2. fig.** multitude, great number, mass.

**Члисэ** **1.** church; **2. attr.** (of) church.

**Чырбыш** **1.** brick; adobe; **2. attr.** (of) brick; (of) adobe.

**ШыкӀэпшынэ** *mus.* Circassian violin (lit.: hotse-tail violin).

**Щапхъэ** **1.** measure; measurement; **2.** example; instance; *зыгуэрым ~ къытехын: to follow smb.'s example; ~ гъэльэгъуэн: to set an example; щапхъэм наныцӀэ: as an example.*

**Щэн** disposition, temper, character; manner, outward bearing; manners.

**Щэнхабзэ** culture; *адыгэ ~: Circassian culture.*

**ЩӀагъуэ** I *adj.* **1.** important, significant; **2.** rare, interesting; II (as noun) importance, significance.

**ЩӀэупскӀэн** *vt* to swing, rock, shake (smb., smth.); *гууцэр ~: to rock the cradle.*

**ЩӀопшакӀуэ** games played in front of invalid (usually an invalid with a fracture, in order to amuse him and not let him move).

**Щыхъ** honour, respect, esteem, regard; ~ *хуэцӀын: to show respect/esteem (for smb.).*

**Щыхъэху** distinctive Circassian custom of devoting a day of voluntary unpaid labour for house building, usually for families that cannot manage on their own.

**ӀуэрыӀуатэ** folklore, legend, tradition; national creative work transmitted orally.

**Ӏуфэ** **1.** bank; shore; **2. attr.** of 1; \* *Ӏуфэр къэжыхъын: 1. to cringe (to/before smb.), to toady (to smb.); 2. to hang (around smb.); Ӏуфэр къэкӀухъын: to beat about the bush.*