

An Annotated Bibliography of Periodical Literature Obtained in Abkhazia 6–11 June 2008

PAUL CREGO
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This material, published in Abkhazia, is in several different languages. Much Russian-language material published in the Russian Federation was also for sale, but is not covered in this article.

1. Абхазский благовестник

[Abkhazian herald]

Sukhum : “Dom pečati”

56 p. : ill. ; 30 cm.

Undated

“Православный журнал.”

“Одобен издательском советом Русской Православной Церкви.”

In Russian.

Among the articles in this issue is one about the Grand Cathedral, a very important church building located in Mokva. It may be as old as the sixth century. The author, Mira Konstantinovna Khotelashvili-Inal-Ipa, discusses historical and architectural matters and concludes that this is likely the church in honor of the Theotokos that Justinian had built in Abkhazia and that is mentioned by Justinian’s historian Procopius. Other articles include monastic biographies and several on repentance.

2. Аҟазара

[Art]

Sukhum : Abkhazian Ministry of Culture

16 p. : ill. ; 30 cm.

Quarterly?

“Иҟыҟуеит 1979 ш. раахыс.” [Published since 1979.]

Description based on: 2007, no. 1.

In Abkhazian.

Articles in this journal cover theater, painting, music, dance, and architecture.

3. Ақәа

[Sukhum]

Sukhum : Respublika Abkhazia

347 p. : ill. ; 26 cm.

“Журнал литературы, науки и публицистики.”

Description based on: 2006, no. 1.

In Abkhazian and Russian.

Poems, short stories, essays. A prominent article in this issue is a summary of Biblical history in Abkhazian and Russian: “Ап̄шьа исторыиа иаазкъаѣны = Краткая Священная история.”

4. Алашара

[Light]

Sukhum : Union of Abkhazian Writers

200 p. : ill. ; 27 cm.

Monthly

“Published since 1955.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 1.

In Abkhazian.

Primarily a literary journal with poems and literary excerpts. There are also some short biographical articles. It was started at a time when publishing in the Abkhazian language was once again being permitted after several years of suppression.

5. Амцахара

[Amtsakhara = Group of closely-related kin]

Sukhum : Union of Veterans of the Patriotic War, 1992–1993

8 p. : ill. (some col.) ; 42 cm.

Monthly

“Газета основана в 2000 г.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 7 (104) (6–9 June 2008).

In Russian and Abkhazian.

Articles include “We have serious doubts about the impartiality of the UN.” The article conveys concerns of Sergeĭ Shamba, Foreign Minister of Abkhazia, about the position of the UN, which he believes has favored the Georgian side. Another article, “Under the sacred Shapsug trees,” relates the visit of the author, Ėsma Dzhikirba, to a sacred forest in the territory of the Shapsugs, a

Circassian tribe to the north of Abkhazia and in the Russian Federation. The relationships among the Abkhazians, Circassians [or Adyge], and the Georgians continue to be an ongoing part of the way in which these groups often play one off against another.

6. Аҭсны

[Abkhazia]

Sukhum

8 p. : ill. ; 42 cm.

2 issues per week

Description based on: 2008, no. 42/43 (19,586).

In Abkhazian.

This newspaper is one of the first publications of any sort in the Abkhazian language. It was founded in 1919 by Dmitri Gulia (spelled Гәлиа in Abkhazian Cyrillic), who is recognized as the father of Abkhazian literature.

The lead article in this issue is about the meeting that Abkhazian President Sergei Bagapsh had with the foreign ministers of various countries in the European Union.

7. Баракят

[Blessing]

Sukhum : Spiritual Board of the Muslims of the Republic of Abkhazia

8 p. : ill. ; 30 cm.

Monthly

“Газета Духовного Управления мусульман Республик Абхазия.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 4 (17) (April 2008).

In Russian.

Articles in the April and May issues include: “Sources on the spread of Islam in Abkhazia,” “The connection of morality with faith,” “The story of an American Jew who became a Muslim,” and “The path of coffee: the Muslim origin of the drink.” An article in the May edition, “Eternal Peace,” discusses the doctrines of resurrection, judgment, and eternal life in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

8. Чегемская правда

[Chegem truth]

Sukhum : Chegemskaia Pravda

6 p. : ill. ; 42 cm.

Weekly

Description based on: 2008, no. 20 (199) (3 June 2008).

In Russian.

The lead article in this issue, “Quantity does not grow into quality,” talks about the recent visits of a number of foreign ministers from European Union countries to Abkhazia. Another article, “The president of Georgia is guilty of manipulation,” originated in the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, and accuses the Saakashvili government of staging the bombing of buses that carried people over the Inguri River on 21 May to vote in the Georgian Parliament election.

9. Эхо Абхазии

[Echo of Abkhazia]

Sukhum : “Alasharbag’a”

12 p. : ill. (some col.) ; 42 cm.

Weekly

“Издается с февраля 1994 г.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 20 (3 June 2008).

In Russian.

Among the articles in this issue is “Immigration aspects,” which discusses the predicament of the size of the ethnic Abkhazian population within the Republic of Abkhazia. The author of this article, Teimuraz Achugba, argues against the repatriation of Georgians, who were “resettled here in their day as colonizers of a sort ...” Another article, “Kuban-Abkhazia: the ties grow stronger,” discusses the “Days of Abkhazian Culture” celebrated on 30 May in the Krasnodar region.

10. Форум

Sukhum : Aidylara [Unity]

8 p. : ill. ; 46 cm.

“Информационно-аналитическая газета.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 7 (86) (30 May 2008).

In Russian.

Newspaper of the Aidylara [Unity] Party. Articles are generally of political interest. The front page of this issue carries a photograph titled “Day of the President,” in honor of the 14 May birthday of the Republic of Abkhazia’s first president, Vladislav Ardzinba. “Javier Solana will visit Abkhazia” announces the impending visit of the

High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union. An inside article tells of “The secret visit of I. Alasania in Sukhum (or how Georgian-Abkhazian negotiations have been renewed).” Irakli Alasania, at the time, was the Republic of Georgia’s representative to the United Nations.

11. Футбол Абхазии

[Abkhazian Soccer]

Sukhum : Federatsiia futbola RA

4 p. : ill. ; 42 cm.

No. 1 (1) (June 2008) –

In Russian.

Articles include information on the history of soccer in Abkhazia, as well as current information on the sport in Abkhazia.

12. გალო [= Гал]

[Gali]

6 p. : ill. ; 42 cm.

Semi-monthly

“Социально-политическая газета.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 3 (67) (April 2008).

In Mingrelian, Russian, and Abkhazian.

Mingrelian is seldom used as a written language, so this is a rare publication. The Mingrelian language uses the Georgian script with a few additions. That Mingrelian is used as a written language would be perceived as an affront by some Georgians, who would insist that Georgian is the proper written language for Mingrelians. A line from the General Declaration of Human Rights is given on the front page: “All nations are equal and have the right to speak and write in their native language.” Part of the agenda of this newspaper is to encourage some amount of separation between Mingrelians and Georgians. The former have been counted, with some exceptions, as Georgians throughout most of the twentieth century. Often Abkhazian historians will treat Mingrelians as a separate nationality; this is rejected by the Georgians and by most Mingrelians.

This issue has official decrees and announcements, mainly in Russian and Mingrelian. Obituaries are included. An article in Russian, “I am a citizen of the Republic of Abkhazia,” is about obtaining Abkhazian passports in the Gali District.

13. Голос нартов

[Voice of the Narts]

Sukhum : “Nartaa”

8 p. : ill. (some col.) ; 42 cm.

Monthly?

In Russian.

No. 1 (June 2008) –

“Social-political newspaper”

The first issue of this newspaper contains congratulatory messages from political and social leaders of Abkhazia, including President Sergeĭ Bagapsh, Foreign Minister Sergeĭ Shamba, and President of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions Azaret Aĭba. Feature article, “The last war of the knights of the Caucasus,” speaks of the battle at “Red Field,” where Abkhazians along with their Adyghe brothers fought the last battle of the war against Imperial Russia. This battle took place on 21 May 1864 and included Georgians on the side of Russia. Another article, “If Russia does not recognize South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Transdniester in the coming days, then the USA, the countries of the EU, and NATO will by 2010,” discusses Russia’s position in connection with the “frozen conflicts” of post-Soviet space and how these might later be resolved if Russia does not soon give them recognition. The name of the organization that publishes this newspaper, “Narts,” refers to legendary and heroic men and women whose tales are told throughout the Caucasus.

14. Гражданское общество [= Ауаажәдарра]

[Civil Society]

Sukhum : Tsentr gumanitarnykh program

31 p. : ill. ; 30 cm.

“Информационно-аналитический журнал.”

Description based on: no. 79 (2007)

In Russian and Abkhazian.

The Center for Humanitarian Programs is an NGO in Sukhum that works toward the creation of civil society and its institutions. It has also been involved in confidence building exercises with Georgians.

This issue includes an article, “The Abkhazian language—the state language of Abkhazia,” which explains the new law [Nov. 2007] that is mandating the exclusive use of Abkhazian as the language of government and working toward its increasing use in

society in general. Russian has heretofore been the public language of Abkhazia due to the fact that the Abkhazians are, even without the Georgians who used to live in Abkhazia, still a minority within their own republic. Another important article, “George Hewitt answers for us,” answers several assertions made by Andrew Anderson in an online Q & A called “Abkhazian conflict: Nine questions and answers” [http://www.conflicts.rem33.com/images/abkhazia/abkh_quest_answ.htm].

15. Համշեն [= Амшен]

[Hamshen: general term for Armenians who live on the Black Sea coast in Russia, Georgia, and Turkey; includes some Sunni Muslim Armenians]

Sukhum : Armenian Community of the Republic of Armenia
4 p. : ill. ; 42 cm.

Description based on: 2008, no. 10 (173) (19 March 2008).
In Armenian and Russian.

Articles include official material from the Abkhazian-Armenian Community Council. Others deal with Nagorno-Karabakh and political affairs in the Republic of Armenia.

16. НОВЫЙ ВЗГЛЯД

[New view]

Sukhum : Respublika Abkhazia [printed in Moscow]
80 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm.

Quarterly

Description based on: 2007, no. 4.
In Russian.

Glossy magazine with colored illustrations and advertisements for items not affordable for the vast majority of the population of Abkhazia. Articles include an interview with Abkhazia’s President Sergey Baghapsh. Foreign Minister Sergey Shamba’s article outlines the case for Abkhazia’s independence based on the jurisdictional history of the past two centuries. The Sukhumi Primate Centre is highlighted in another article.

17. НОВЫЙ ДЕНЬ [= Амш Գыц]

[New day]

Sukhum : “Arash”
4 p. : ill. ; 45 cm.

Weekly

“Издается с февраля 2004 г.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 22 (179) (30 May 2008).

In Russian and Abkhazian.

The lead article of this issue, “The State—a System of Values,” is an interview with Akhra Bzhaniia, who is the president of the Guild of Journalists and Publicists, an organization that deals with issues of the press as well as government corruption. Another article, “How to Preserve Power,” compares the methods of China’s Mao Tse-Tung and Abkhazia’s nemesis Lavrentiï Beria. Beria, a Mingrelo-Georgian, was born in Abkhazia.

18. Нужная

[Necessary]

Sukhum : “Nuzhnaia”

6 p. : ill. ; 43 p.

Weekly

Description based on: 2008, no. 21 (3 June 2008).

In Russian.

One of the lead articles, “How will the Olympic ambitions of Russians involve us?” speaks about the possibilities for Abkhazia’s economy in connection with the Sochi Winter Olympics of 2014. The article is written in the context of the agreement signed between Abkhazia’s President Bagapsh and the governor of the Krasnodar region of Russia. The article focuses on the 100 million tons of raw material, including sand and crushed stone, that will be exported for the construction of buildings for the Olympics.

19. Правда Абхазии

[Truth of Abkhazia]

Sukhum : Communist Party of the Republic of Abkhazia

4 p. : ill. ; 42 cm.

10 issues per year

“Газета основана 7 ноября 1997 года.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 4 (100) (May 2008).

In Russian.

Contains decrees from the Abkhazian Communist Party. Includes a “Communique to the Abkhazian Diaspora” on the topic of Kosovo’s declaration of independence and what that may mean for the recognition of the Republic of Abkhazia. This issue also contains a letter to Russia’s President Putin on the occasion of the 15th

anniversary of the Caucasian Committee of Solidarity with Abkhazia that was formed among the “seven million Caucasian diaspora in Turkey” during the time of “Georgian aggression against Abkhazia.”

20. Православная Абхазия [= Аҭсны Аишахатара]

[Orthodox Abkhazia]

Sukhum : Sukhumo-Abkhazskaia Eparkhiia

8 p. : ill. (some col.) ; 43 cm.

Monthly

Description based on: 2008, no. 3 (29) (March 2008).

In Russian and Abkhazian.

The Sukhum-Abkhazian Eparchy maintains ties with Orthodoxy, to some extent, through the Patriarchate of Moscow and the Russian Orthodox Church. The Georgian Orthodox Church disapproves of this relationship.

This issue focuses on the celebration of Easter and the Resurrection of Christ. The death of Archbishop Laurus of the Russian Church Abroad is noted. An article on the Orthodox Church of America appears in Abkhazian. Another article, “The conception of the missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church,” focuses on the theology of mission in Orthodoxy.

21. Республика Абхазия

[The Republic of Abkhazia]

Sukhum : Parliament and Executive of Abkhazia

6 p. : ill. ; 43 cm.

3 issues per week [approx.]

“Газета издается с сентября 1991 г.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 62 (2230) (7–8 June 2008).

In Russian.

This is the official newspaper of the Abkhazian government. Some laws and decrees are published in this newspaper. Other articles include “Congress of organizations of the veterans of war ‘Aruaa’” and “Concerning contacts of Abkhazia with Russia.” The organization “Aruaa” is seen by some as a rival to another organization of veterans called “Amtsakhara.”

22. Спортивная Абхазия

[Athletic Abkhazia]

Sukhum : Ministry of Education, Government Committee on Youth and Sport Affairs

6 p. : ill. (some col.) ; 42 cm.

Monthly

“Газета издается с августа 2005 г.”

Description based on: 2008, no.5 (36) (May 2008).

In Russian.

Articles cover current events and history of sports in Abkhazia.

23. Сухум [= Аҕәә]

[Sukhum]

Sukhum : Sukhumi City Admin.

8 p. : ill. ; 30 cm.

“Газета выходит с 19 августа 1998 г.”

Description based on: 2008, no. 7 (171) (1–15 May 2008).

In Russian and Abkhazian.

In addition to articles specifically about the city of Sukhum, there are also articles about foreign relations, including “Baikal becomes closer,” which describes an agreement of friendship between the cities of Sukhum and Baikal, and “Embassy of the Republic of South Ossetia opens in Sukhum.”

24. Сухумский вестник

[Sukhum Herald]

Sukhum : Assotsiatsiia Sukhومتsev

4 p. : ill. ; 43 cm.

Monthly

Description based on: 2008, no. 1 (36) (April 2008).

In Russian.

The lead article in this issue, “Short history of the foundation of the capital of Abkhazia,” begins with the Greek colony of Dioscourias and the Roman fortress city of Sebastopolis, citing Timosthenes of Rhodes and his report that 300 languages were spoken in the markets of Dioscourias. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are discussed in detail.