"Dr. Mikaberidze’s Historical Dictionary of Georgia contains nearly 800 interdisciplinary entries on a variety of subjects from remote antiquity to the present. This remarkable achievement will surely become a standard reference not only for specialists of Georgia and Caucasus, but of the broader Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet, Middle Eastern, Black Sea and Inner Eurasian worlds. Highly recommended!"

—Steven Rapp, professor of history, Georgia State University, Atlanta

Situated in the breathtaking Caucasus Mountains between the Black and the Caspian seas, the country of Georgia lies at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. It has gone through more upheaval and change in the last 15 years—the casting off of the Soviet regime, a civil war, two ethnonterritorial conflicts, economic collapse, corruption, government inefficiency, and massive emigration—than most countries go through in 150 years. However, despite all its hardships, this resilient and ancient country, with thousands of years of winemaking, 3,000 years of statehood, and almost two millennia of Christianity, continues to survive. And with the current government reforms, life in Georgia promises to improve.

Alexander Mikaberidze has created an invaluable source that details the long and turbulent history of Georgia. Historical Dictionary of Georgia, through its chronology, glossary, introduction, appendices, maps, bibliography, and hundreds of cross-referenced dictionary entries on important people, places, events, and institutions, traces Georgia’s history and provides a compass for the direction the country is heading.

Alexander Mikaberidze, who is of Georgian descent, has taught history at Florida State University and Mississippi State University and lectured on strategy and policy for the U.S. Naval War College.
5. *Greece*, by Thanos M. Veremis and Mark Dragoumis. 1995
20. *Gypsies (Romanies)*, by Donald Kenrick. 1998
27. *Gypsies (Romanies)*, by Donald Kenrick. 1998
33. Denmark, by Alastair H. Thomas and Stewart P. Oakley. 1998
34. Modern Italy, by Mark F. Gilbert and K. Robert Nilsson. 1998
35. Belgium, by Robert Stallaerts. 1999
36. Austria, by Paula Sutter Fichtner. 1999
38. Turkey, 2nd edition, by Metin Heper. 2002
41. Poland, 2nd edition, by George Sanford. 2003
42. Albania, New edition, by Robert Elsie. 2004
43. Estonia, by Toivo Miljan. 2004
44. Kosova, by Robert Elsie. 2004
45. Ukraine, by Zenon E. Kohut, Bohdan Y. Nebesio, and Myroslav Yurkevich. 2005
49. Finland, 2nd edition, by George Maude. 2007
50. Georgia, by Alexander Mikaberidze. 2007
To my fellow countrymen

*Patrie fumus igne alieno luculentior*
Contents

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Editor’s Foreword

Few countries have fought so long and so hard to affirm their right to statehood as Georgia—a tiny republic squeezed between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea and in the vicinity of great empires. Its emerging principalities and kingdoms have had to struggle to achieve a semblance of unity and then fight even harder to maintain independence from—among others—the Greeks and Romans, the Byzantines and Persians, the Mongols and Turks, and then the Russians, in the guise of an empire, a soviet republic, and at present a state. That there is an independent Georgia today—even one shorn of regions that once belonged to it—is a bit of a miracle. And it is hardly surprising that even within its borders there are regions that have broken away or might seek to do so. This helps to explain why present-day Georgia has so many political, economic, and social problems. But it has overcome even more serious challenges in the past and just may do so again.

Georgia is not a big country, and its population is not particularly numerous, but it has an amazingly complicated history and rich culture. Thus, to do it justice, a somewhat larger volume than normal was necessary. This historical dictionary starts with an extensive chronology that follows the many twists and turns of a very long history and one that keeps generating events at an astounding pace. This is followed by an introduction that presents the country and its people and summarizes its history. Then comes the dictionary section—an unusually large one, containing about 780 entries on important persons, places, and events, and on politics, the economy, society, religion, and culture. The appendixes provide lists of dynasties and rulers—kings, presidents, and prime ministers—and pertinent demographic and economic details. Given the dearth of literature (especially in English), the bibliography is particularly important to help readers follow up on aspects of particular interest.
This *Historical Dictionary of Georgia* is one of the last in the European series, and it is not surprising that it was so long in preparation, since it was particularly hard to find an author who could present so many aspects in such detail and do so in English. This author is Alexander Mikaberidze, who graduated with a degree in international law from Tbilisi State University in 1999 and obviously has a keen interest in everything related to Georgia as well. In addition to pursuing his legal studies, he received a doctorate in history from Florida State University and taught European, world, and Middle Eastern history there and at Mississippi State University as well. His lifelong interest in history has centered not only on Georgia but on military history, particularly the Napoleonic Wars on which he has written extensively.

This unique reference work on a unique country will doubtless fill some of the countless gaps in the general public’s understanding and will also help specialists track down some elusive information.

Jon Woronoff  
Series Editor
Georgia—For many, this word evokes images of a namesake United States state, and probably very few would recall a tiny republic squeezed between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. Some might recognize it as a founding member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or a turbulent country from recent news headlines and especially in light of the events of the Rose Revolution of 2003 that were reported across the entire world. But those whose minds are open to the world of myths and history, could imagine the defiant Titan Prometheus chained to one of the Caucasian mountains, punished for bringing Fire, a symbol of the sacred knowledge, to humanity; or they could visualize the Greek Argonauts sailing to the legendary Colchis and stealing the Golden Fleece. Indeed, it is a country with an ancient past, thousands of years of winemaking, 3,000 years of statehood, and almost two millennia of Christianity.

A favorite story of the Georgians tells how God came upon the Georgians only after he had apportioned all the countries of the world to other nationalities. The Georgians were in a typically festive mood and invited the Creator to join them in wine and song! The Lord so enjoyed himself that he decided to give these merry and carefree people the one spot on the earth that he had reserved for himself—the sunny valleys and hills that lie to the south of the Great Caucasus Mountains. It is said that the Lord had lavished great bounties on this land. It is indeed a land of contrasts—vast coastline plains with sub-tropical heat, steep mountains snow-topped and swept with wild gales, harsh semi-deserts, tumultuous rivers, and virgin forests.

Because of its special position between Europe and Asia—at the crossroads of peoples, religions, cultures, and languages—Georgia has witnessed many historical dramas that have largely determined the destiny and history of her inhabitants. Life, for the Georgians, has been an
endless and tragic fight for the preservation of their land and liberty. Powerful conquerors have sought to possess this land, and the Assyrians, Midians, Hittites, Parthians, Romans, Arabs, Mongols, Persians, Turks and others strove to dominate the region. One by one, these conquerors moved on, but Georgia lived on, and over the centuries a unique culture and rich tradition, a true mixture of the East and West, has developed here.

Writing a book on the history of Georgia has been a dream of mine since childhood when, growing up in a remote town in Soviet Kazakhstan, I dreamed of returning to my native land. Many things have changed since then for Georgia, and recent years have revealed both the strengths and the weaknesses of its citizens. The promising prospect of independent statehood in 1990 soon turned into violent and tragic events. Once a prosperous republic, Georgia became one of the least developed states in Europe and the Near East, torn apart by ethnic savagery, civil strife, and economic crisis, and suffering from shortages of gas, hot water, and electricity for the better part of the last decade. It will take many years to rebuild the country, and hopefully the lessons of the past will guide future generations of Georgian statesmen in their quest of developing this beautiful country.

Completing this book was tinged with both happiness and sadness. I was delighted when I finished what I believe is a tribute to my native land, but I was saddened because of all of the things that I had omitted, either by choice or accident. I am well aware of the many entries and areas that could not be encompassed in one volume, but I hope that this will not diminish the overall value of the book. I believe that the reader will find this book useful and, if he or she were inspired to seek more, I will know that my work has served its purpose.

This book could not have been written without help and support from many people. Jon Woronoff, series editor at Scarecrow Press, gave me a chance to work on this project and patiently waited as I toiled for months on the manuscript. Dr. Gocha Japaridze supported this idea from early on, and I occasionally sought his advice on various topics. Dr. Ronald Grigor Suny of the University of Michigan and Dr. Steven Rapp of Georgia State University, both eminent scholars of Georgian history, kindly took time from their busy schedules to review my work; Steven’s meticulous and insightful comments, which he generously sprinkled throughout the manuscript, were particularly helpful in cor-
recting my misinterpretations and inaccuracies. The libraries of Mississippi State University and the University of California at Santa Barbara provided me with many materials, as did the staff of Santa Barbara Public Library, which helped me comb through library holdings in other American universities.

I am thankful to many people for their support and direction over the years. Foremost among them is Aleko Mikaberidze, Sr., whose passion for all things Georgian has shaped my character. He has guided me for many years, and I always felt his constant warmth and care, which I will never be able to repay. I am grateful to Natela Korokhashvili, Lia Tsertsvadze, and Spartak Tsikaridze, who embraced me upon my arrival in Georgia. Professor Donald D. Howard of Florida State University was instrumental in my training as a professional historian. Above all, I am indebted to my parents without whom nothing would have been achieved. Their decision to let me return to Georgia changed my entire life.

Working in the Age of the Internet has numerous advantages, and my research eventually became an international effort as I was helped by friends from various countries. I must mention Konstantin Peradze of New York City, Dimitri Khocholava of Orleans, France, and Shalva Lazariashvili, Giorgi Zabakhidze, Paata Buchukuri, and Neka Charkviani of Tbilisi. I am especially thankful to my family—Levan, Marina, Levan, Jr., and Tsiuri—who tirelessly sought, scanned, and mailed numerous documents that I kept requesting from them half way across the globe. They served as early reviewers of my manuscript and helped me improve it at every stage. Above all, I owe thanks to my wife, Anna, who stood by me through the whole process, stoically enduring solitude and often sacrificing her evenings and weekends to help me edit entries.

Any errors or omissions in this book are my fault alone. If this research has merit, however, those named above must share much of the credit.

Santa Barbara, California
October 2006
Reader’s Note

There is no universally accepted system of transliteration of Georgian terms, which causes many inconsistencies in the spelling of words. The system of transliteration used in this book is a combination of that used in the *Revue des Études Géorgiennes et Caucassiennes* and in the Library of Congress system. However, in some instances I retained more familiar or widely accepted spelling of recognized words, e.g., Burdjanadze instead of Burjanadze; Ordzhonikidze instead of Orjjonikidze; Adjara for Achara, etc. Personal names are usually given in European equivalents, except for Giorgi (George), Ioane (John), Erekle (Heraclius), and Grigol (Gregory) that I chose to keep in original form. For simplicity, I chose to use Tbilisi throughout the entire book instead of using Tiflis, which was commonly used in the 19th and early 20th centuries. I also used Western terms Abkhazia and Mingrelia instead of the Georgian Abkhazeti and Samegrelo, although other regional names are given in Georgian versions. When describing eminent persons, statesmen, or military commanders, I italicized their titles such as amir, eristavi, mamasakhlisi, etc. Various data on economic and social parameters of Georgia, unless otherwise indicated, is compiled from reports of the Department of Statistics of the Ministry of Economic Development.

A special note should be made on usage of the term “Georgian.” Any historian writing a national history faces a problem of projecting modern concepts into past, in particular when dealing with the concept of an established “nation.” Nationalist historians often attempt to show a direct link and unbroken development from ancient tribe(s) to modern nation but the reality is much more complex than that. Ancient tribes populating the territory of modern Georgia would have had difficulty in describing themselves as “Georgians” since the ethnogenesis of the
Georgian nation took place at a much later period. Scholars often use the term *Kartveluri*, as in *Kartveluri* languages, to refer to proto-Georgian culture, but I have avoided this term in order not to confuse the general reader. Therefore, I should note that the term “Georgian” used with respect to ancient tribes and principalities should be understood not in the sense of the modern nation but rather as a “proto-Georgian” concept.

Table of Transliteration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ə - a</th>
<th>ə - b</th>
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<th>ə - d</th>
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<td>ə - e</td>
<td>ə - v</td>
<td>ə - z</td>
<td>ə - t (soft)</td>
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<td>ə - i</td>
<td>ə - k</td>
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<td>ə - zh</td>
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<td>ə - r</td>
<td>ə - s</td>
<td>ə - t</td>
<td>ə - u</td>
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<tr>
<td>ə̃ - ə (soft)</td>
<td>ə̃ - ə (soft)</td>
<td>ə̃ - gh</td>
<td>ə̃ - k (q)</td>
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<td>ə̃ - sh</td>
<td>ə̃ - ch</td>
<td>ə̃ - ts</td>
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<td>ə̃ - h</td>
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### Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AO</td>
<td>Autonomous Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Autonomous Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSR</td>
<td>Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACKSEAFOR</td>
<td>Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSEC</td>
<td>Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTC</td>
<td>Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan oil pipeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Central Committee of the Communist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Communist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPSU</td>
<td>Communist Party of the Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUG</td>
<td>Citizens’ Union of Georgia (<em>sakartvelos mokalaketa kavshiri</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCP</td>
<td>Georgian Communist Party (<em>sakartvelos komunisturi partia</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEL</td>
<td>Georgian <em>lari</em>, a unit of currency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOC</td>
<td>Georgian Orthodox Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPF</td>
<td>Georgian Popular Front (<em>sakartvelos sakhalkho pronti</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSSR</td>
<td>Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (<em>sakartvelos sabchota sotsialisturi respulika</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUAM</td>
<td>Georgia-Ukraine-Azerbaijan-Moldova Regional Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ha</td>
<td>hectare</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBSC</td>
<td>International Black Sea Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kavbyuro</td>
<td>Caucasian Bureau of the Russian Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>km</td>
<td>kilometer, a unit of distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>kWh</td>
<td>kilowatt-hour, a unit of energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>meter, a unit of measurement</td>
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<tr>
<td>MW</td>
<td>megawatt, a unit of power</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>National Democratic Party * (erovnuli demokratiuli partia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NG</td>
<td>National Guard * (erovnuli gvardia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obkom</td>
<td>Regional Committee of the Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSDRP</td>
<td>Russian Social Democratic Labor Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSDRP (B)</td>
<td>Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (Bolsheviks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRACECA</td>
<td>Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOMIG</td>
<td>United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zakkraikom</td>
<td>Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZFDR</td>
<td>Transcaucasian Federated Democratic Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZSFSR</td>
<td>Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Georgia under King Parnavaz (third century BCE) xxi
Georgia in the Golden Age (12th–13th centuries) xxii
Georgia in 1918–1921 xxiii
Modern Georgia xxiv
Caucasus and Central Asia xxv
Legend
- - - Historical geographical borders of the provinces
Modern borders of Georgia

Historical Regions of Georgia
Chronology

Prehistoric Georgia

1.77 million years ago  Dmanisi finds revealed the oldest human settlement beyond Africa.

50,000–35,000 years ago  Ancient human stations found at Yashtkhva, near present-day Sokhumi, on the Chikiani Peak (near the Paravani Lake), at Rukhi (Zugdidi region), Kackhi (Chiatura region), Lashebalta (Znauri region), etc.

30,000 to 10,000 years ago  Human habitation in the Jruchi, Sagvarjile, and Chakhati caves. Late Paleolithic period stations at Devis Khvreli, Sakazhia, and Sagvarjile, and Neolithic stations at Anaseuli, Gurianta, Khutsubani, Odishi, Kistriki, Zemo Alvani, etc.

5000–3800 BCE  Shulaveri-Shomu culture flourished in southern Caucasia.

4000 to 2200 BCE  Kura-Araxes (Early Transcaucasian) culture pervaded southern Caucasia and the Armenian Plateau.

2200–1500 BCE  Trialeti Culture thrived in southern Caucasia.

Ancient Georgia

Second–first millennia BCE  Rise of Iberia, Colchis, and Diauchi.

Mid-eighth century BCE  Diauchi destroyed; expanded Colchis clashes with Urartu and suffers from Cimmerian incursions.

Seventh–sixth century BCE  Rise of Egrisi/Colchis; Greek colonies established on the Black Sea coast.
Sixth–fifth century BCE  Georgian lands affected by the rise of powerful Median and later Persian kingdoms.

Fourth century BCE  Alexander the Great’s campaigns in Persia. The arrival of Azo (Azon) and “Greeks” in Iberia; rise of Parnavaz and establishment of united Iberian principality extending to the eastern and western Georgian lands.

Second century BCE  Iberia and Colchis involved in the struggle between Persia, Rome, and Pontus.

65–64 BCE  Roman General Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus conquers Iberia and Colchis.

36 BCE  Anti-Roman rebellion in Iberia and the punitive expedition of Publius Canidus Crassus.

First century CE  Insurrection led by a former slave Anicetus in Colchis in 69; rise of several western Georgian principalities (Lazica, Abasgia, etc.).

Second century  Reign of Parsman II of Iberia.

Third century  Rise of the Sassanid kingdom in Persia; Iberian kings recognized its supremacy.

337 (or 327)  Following St. Nino’s preaching, King Mirian (Meribanes) proclaims Christianity a state religion in Iberia.

Fifth century  Reign of King Vakhtang Gorgasali (452–502); Jacob Tsurtsaveli writes *Passion of Saint Shushanik*, the earliest surviving work of Georgian literature; establishment of Tbilisi as the capital.

466  Georgian Orthodox Church became autocephalous.

Mid-fifth century  Iberia occupied by the Sassanid Persia.

542–562  Egrisi/Lazica became battleground for the Byzantine Empire and Persia.

Late sixth century  Rise of *erismtavars* of Iberia.

Early seventh century  Erismtavar Stepanoz I of Iberia (ca. 590–627) succeeded in reuniting the eastern Georgian territories.

607–608  Georgian and Armenian churches finalize their split.
Byzantine Emperor Heraclius’ campaigns ensured Byzantine predominance in Georgia.

Medieval Georgia

Late seventh century  Arab conquest of eastern Georgia.

697  Arabs briefly extend their influence to western Georgia.

735–738  Arab commander Marwan ibn-Muhammad led a punitive expedition into Kartli, sacking Tbilisi and devastating western Georgia.

Late eighth century  Several semi-independent principalities—Abkhazia, Kakheti, Hereti, Kartli/Iberia, Tao—emerged on the territory of Georgia.

853  Arab army led by Bogha al-Kabir (Bugha Turki) ravaged Kartli and sacked Tbilisi on 5 August.

c. 888  Adarnaze Bagrationi received the title King of the Georgians (kartvelta mepe).

914  Last Arab invasion of Georgia.

10th century  Rise of David Curopalates of Tao.

975–1008  Unification of the Georgian principalities under Bagrat III and establishment of the Kingdom of Georgia.

11th century  Georgian–Byzantine Wars (1021–1029); construction of the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta.

1064–1068  Invasions of Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan.

1080s  Start of the didi turkoba (“the Great Turkish Troubles”) period.

1089–1125  Reign of King David IV Aghmashenebeli.

1103  Ruis-Urbnisi Council reorganized Georgian Orthodox Church.

1105–1115  King David IV liberated most of eastern Georgia.

1106  Gelati Monastery and Academy is founded.

1118–1119  King David’s military reforms and the resettlement of over 200,000 Qipchaks.
1121  **12 August:** Georgian triumph over a Muslim coalition at Didgori.

1122  King David captured Tbilisi, the last Muslim enclave remaining from the Arab occupation.

1123–1124  Conquest of Shirwan and Ani.

**Mid 12th century**  Kings Demetre I (1125–1156) and Giorgi III continued to dominate southern Caucasia and neighboring territories.

1177  Powerful uprising of Prince Demna and Ivane Orbeli.

1184–1213  Reign of Queen Tamar ushered in the Golden Age of Georgia. Georgia expanded its influence southward and defeated major Muslim coalitions in 1195 and 1202.

1204  Empire of Trebizond was established with Georgian military support.

**Late 12th century**  Shota Rustaveli wrote *The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin.*

1221  Mongol raiding parties reached Georgia.

1225–1230  Invasions of the Khwarazmean armies under Jalal al-Din.

1235–1242  Mongol conquest of Georgia.

1254–1256  Mongol census of Georgia.

**Mid-13th century**  Dual monarchy of Kings David Ulu and David Narin; Georgians participated in the Mongol campaigns in Persia and the Middle East.

1259  King David Narin rebelled against the Mongols and established a separate kingdom in western Georgia. Samtskhe became an autonomous principate under Mongol control in 1266.

1265  Berke Khan (1257–1266) of the Golden Horde ravaged eastern Georgia.

1289  **12 March:** King Demetre II was executed by the Mongols.

**Early 14th century**  Reign of King Giorgi V (1314–1346) restored Georgian kingdom and drove the last remaining Mongol troops out of Georgia.
Late 14th century  Georgia was subjected to one of the most dreadful
invasions yet as Mongol warlord Tamerlane (Timur) invaded in 1386–
1387, 1394—1396, and 1399–1403.

1412–1442  Reign of King Alexander I the Great revived Georgia.

1460s–1480s  Invasions of the Aq-Qoyunlu and Qara-Qoyunlu Turko-
man tribes.

Late 15th century  Internal strife and foreign threats led to disinte-
gration of the Georgian kingdom into the three kingdoms of Kartli,
Imereti, and Kakheti and the independent Samtskhe Saatabago.

1483–1491  King Alexander of Kakheti became the first Georgian
ruler to establish formal diplomatic contact with the Russian principal-
ities, dispatching two embassies to Grand Duke Ivan III of Moscow.

Early 16th century  Rise of the Safavid dynasty in Persia and Persian
attacks on eastern Georgia.

1520  Shah Ismail’s campaigns in Kartli-Kakheti.

1541–1553  Shah Tahmasp of Persia led four major invasions of east-
ern Georgia.

1545  King Bagrat of Imereti and his allies were defeated by the Ot-
tomans in the crucial Battle of Sokhoistas.

1540s  The Turks began introducing Turkish customs and converting
the local population of Samtskhe Saatabago.

1555  Treaty of Amassia between Persia and the Ottoman Empire di-
vided Georgia, with Kartli, Kakheti, and eastern Samtskhe in the Per-
sian sphere of influence, and western Georgia and western Samtskhe
under the Ottomans.

Late 16th century  Safavids tightened their domination of eastern
Georgia.

1563  King Levan of Kakheti (1518–1574) requested Russian protec-
tion of his kingdom; Tsar Ivan the Terrible responded by sending a Rus-
sian detachment to Georgia, but King Levan, pressured by Persia, had
to turn these troops back.
1569 Despite his victories in preceding years, King Simon I of Kartli was defeated and captured at Partskhisi.

1585–1587 King Alexander II (1574–1605) of Kakheti negotiated The Book of Pledge with Moscow, forming a short-lived alliance between the East Georgian and Russian kingdoms.

1580s–1590s King Simon of Kartli, released from Persian captivity, routed the Turks at Mukhrani and forced the sultan to recognize him as a Christian king of Kartli; however, leading an anti-Ottoman alliance in 1590s, Simon was eventually captured and imprisoned in Istanbul in 1599.


1614–1617 Shah Abbas led four campaigns against Kakheti and Kartli and resettled some 200,000 Georgians to Persia.

1624 12 September: Queen Consort Ketevan of Kakheti was tortured and executed in Persia.

1625 25 March: Great Mouravi Giorgi Saakadze defeated the Persian army at Martkopi. July: Georgians defeated at Marabda but began guerrilla war that eventually expelled the invading army. Teimuraz Bagrationi became the king of Kartli and Kakheti.

1626 Civil war between the supporters of Giorgi Saakadze and King Teimuraz led to the decisive battle near the Bazaleti Lake.

1626–1629 Embassy of Nikolo Cholokashvili (Nichephorus Irbach) to European courts.

1629 First book printed in the Georgian language produced in Rome.

1632–1744 Persian shahs ruled Kartli through Georgian walis (viceroyls), who established relative peace and prosperity, especially during the reign of Rostom Khan (1634–1658) and Vakhtang V (1658–1675).

1659–1660 Bakhtrioni rebellion in Kakheti.

1703–1724 Reign of King Vakhtang VI revived Kartli.
1709  First printing press established in Tbilisi; first printed edition of *Vepkhistaosani* (The Knight in Panther’s Skin) produced in 1712; King Giorgi XI died fighting the Afghans in Qandahar.

1714–1716  Embassy of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani to the European courts.

1724  Persian and Ottoman invasions forced King Vakhtang to flee to Russia, where he established Georgian colonies in Moscow and Astrakhan.

1723–1735  *Osmaloba* or the Ottoman yoke in Georgia.

1735  Rise of Nadir Khan, whose conquest of southern Caucasus launched *Qizilbashoba* or the Persian yoke in eastern Georgia.

1744  1 October: Teimuraz II and Erekle were crowned kings of Kartli and Kakheti, respectively, the first Christian coronation of Eastern Georgian kings in more than a century.

1752–1784  Reign of King Solomon I revived Imereti.

1757  Georgian victory over the Ottomans at Khresili in western Georgia.

1758  Alliance treaty concluded between Erekle II of Kakheti, Solomon I of Imereti, and Teimuraz II of Kartli.

Late 18th century  Civil war in Persia allowed Kings Teimuraz and Erekle to revive Kartli-Kakheti and expand their sphere of influence.

1762  King Erekle united Kartli and Kakheti.

1769–1774  During the Russo-Turkish War, King Erekle supported Russia and attacked the Ottoman provinces.

1770  20 April: Georgian victory over the Ottomans at Aspindza.

1774  Establishment of a regular army in eastern Georgia.

1783  24 July: Russo-Georgian treaty of alliance concluded at Georgievsk.

1785  Omar Khan of Avaria invaded eastern Georgia.
1790  Alliance treaty signed between the rulers of Kartli-Kakheti, Imereti, Guria, and Mingrelia.

1795  Invasion of Agha Muhammad Khan devastated eastern Georgia, particularly its capital Tbilisi.

1798–1800  Reign of Erekle’s successor King Giorgi XII.

1801  12 September: Emperor Alexander of Russia annexed the kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti. Russian administration and laws were introduced to eastern Georgia.

1803  Mingrelia recognized Russian sovereignty; members of the Bagrationi dynasty were exiled to Russia.

1802–1804  Rebellions flared up in Kartli, Pshavi, Khevsureti, and parts of Kakheti.

1804  Imereti recognized Russian sovereignty.

1810  King Solomon II of Imereti was ousted and Imereti was annexed by the Russian Empire; Guria and Abkhazia recognized Russian sovereignty.

1806–1812  Russo–Turkish War led to the Russian recovery of some southwestern Georgian provinces that had been occupied by the Ottomans.

1811  Autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church was abolished.

1812  Major rebellion in Kakheti.

1813  Treaty of Gulistan between Russia and Persia confirmed Russian control of Georgia.

1820  Anti-Russian uprisings in Imereti, Guria, and Mingrelia.

1828–1829  Following the Russo–Turkish War, Russia annexed the historically Georgian provinces of Meskhetia and Javakheti from the Ottoman Empire.

1831  Reorganization of the Russian administration of Transcaucasia.

1830–1832  Conspiracy of Georgian nobles made the last attempt to throw off Russian rule in Georgia.
1834 Svaneti recognized Russian sovereignty.

1841–1857 Peasant uprisings in Guria and Mingrelia.

1844 Position of the Russian viceroy (*namestnik*) was established. Mikhail Vorontsov became the first viceroy of Caucasus.

1846 Georgia was reorganized into the Tbilisi and Kutaisi *gubernias* (provinces).

1850 Establishment of the Georgian theater under the direction of Giorgi Eristavi.

1854–1856 Western Georgia served as a secondary front during the Crimean War.

1857–1858 Russian annexation of Mingrelia and Svaneti.

Mid 19th century Administrations of Mikhail Vorontsov (1845–1854) and Grand Duke Michael (1862–1882) brought relative prosperity, educational promotion, and commercial development to Georgia.

1864 Russian annexation of Abkhazia.

1864–1871 Emancipation of serfs implemented in Georgia.

1875 Georgian Nobility Bank established under the direction of Ilia Chavchavadze.

1876 Anti-Russian uprising in Svaneti.

1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War led to further recovery of historical Georgian lands from the Ottomans.

1879–1880 Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians and the Georgian Drama Society were established.

1882 Position of viceroy (*namestnik*) was replaced with that of governor general (*glavnoupravliaushii*).

Late 19th century Activities and literary works of Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, Rapiel Eristavi, Giorgi Tsereteli, Alexandre Qazbegi, Vazha Pshavela, and others led to the emergence of national consciousness; spread of Marxists circles in Georgia, and establishment of the Mesame dasi group.
1901–1904 Strikes and demonstrations in Tbilisi and Batumi.

1905 Major strike in Tbilisi spread to other industrial centers and threatened to grow into a general uprising before it was brutally suppressed.

1905–1909 Georgian Social Democrats organized massive support among workers and peasants, especially in Guria, where a peasant republic briefly existed in 1905.

1907 Georgian petition for national autonomy presented at the international conference at The Hague; 30 August: Ilia Chavchavadze was assassinated near Tsitsamuri.

1912–1916 Vasily Amashukeli directed the first documentary film and Alexander Tsutsunava made the first feature film Kristine.

1910–1917 A new cycle of strikes began, and the revolutionary movement gained momentum; the spread of the revolution was halted by the outbreak of World War I, but as the war dragged on, revolutionary sentiments spread among the troops as well.

1917 February: Following the February Revolution in Russia, independent Transcaucasia was proclaimed. March: Autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church was restored. October: Transcaucasian Commissariat headed by Georgian Social Democrats was established and sought separation from Russia.

1918 January: Tbilisi State University was founded. March: Treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed between Soviet Russia, Germany, and Turkey. April: Transcaucasian Federation of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan was established. 26 May: Declaration of State Independence by Georgia. June: Georgia signed the Treaty of Batumi with Turkey; the first German troops arrived in Georgia. December: With the end of World War I, the German troops were replaced by the British, who occupied Batumi and the strategic railway across Georgia.

1918–1919 Georgian–Armenian War was fought over disputed territories in the Javakheti and Lore provinces.

1919 Georgian forces subdued uprisings in Abkhazia and Ossetia.
1920  The League of Nations declined Georgia’s bid for membership. A powerful earthquake struck central Georgia, causing significant damage at Gori and its vicinity.

1921  February: Bolshevik forces invaded Georgia, leading to the collapse of the Menshevik republic and establishment of Soviet power.  
4–5 March: Soviet authority was established in Abkhazia and Ossetia.  
16 March: Treaty of Kars was signed between Soviet Russia and Turkey. 18 March: Menshevik government of Georgia left Batumi for France. 16 July: Autonomous Republic of Adjara was created.

1922  12 March: Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan were united in Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Republic (ZSFSR). 20 April: Autonomous District of South Ossetia was established. 30 December: Georgia, as part of ZSFSR, became a founding member of the Soviet Union.

Soviet Period

1922–1924  An anti-Soviet guerrilla war was led by Kakutsa Cholokashvili and others.

1924  August: A major uprising occurred against Soviet rule in Georgia.

1936  The Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Republic was dissolved and Georgia became a full republic of the Soviet Union.

1930s  Stalinist purges claimed the lives of hundreds of intelligentsia and dissidents.

1941–1945  Georgia participated in World War II, fielding more than 700,000 men.

1944  November: Tens of thousands of Meskhetian Turks were resettled to Central Asia.

1951–1953  Stalin’s “Mingrelian Case” launched another round of purges. Thousands of Georgians were resettled to Central Asia.

1956  9 March: Demonstrations against the Soviet authorities in Tbilisi were brutally suppressed, leaving some 150 dead and hundreds wounded.
1966  The first subway system opened in Tbilisi.

1972  Eduard Shevardnadze became first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party.

1974–1977  The Human Rights Defense Group was established and was later transformed into the Helsinki Union.


1980  Over 300 Georgian intellectuals sent a petition protesting against the exclusion of the Georgian language.

Mid-1980s  Mikhail Gorbachev’s policies of glasnost and perestroika led to the resurgence of the national liberation movement in Georgia.

1988–1989  Increased tensions in Abkhazia followed the Abkhaz calls for greater autonomy.

1989  9 April: A peaceful demonstration in Tbilisi was suppressed by the Soviet military, leaving 20 dead and hundreds injured.

1990  9 April: More than 100,000 Georgians raised fists in silent protest to mark the one-year anniversary of the slaying of pro-independence protesters by Soviet forces. July–August: Georgian nationalists blockaded rail lines as talks with government officials failed to resolve their demand for multi-party politics. October: First free elections to the Georgian Supreme Soviet led to the sweeping victory of the nationalist Round Table-Free Georgia bloc. 14 November: Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected president of the new Georgian Supreme Soviet. December: Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze resigned to protest shootings by Soviet troops in his native Georgia and discord in the Soviet government.

1991  31 March: Georgia boycotted the All-Soviet Union referendum on preservation of the USSR and held its own referendum on the issue of secession from the Soviet Union. April: A strong earthquake struck western Georgia, causing significant property damage but few casualties. 26 May: Zviad Gamsakhurdia won the first contested direct elections for the presidency of Georgia.
Second Democratic Republic

1991  June–September: President Gamsakhurdia’s nationalistic policies and increasingly authoritarian rule led to an acute political crisis and tensions in Abkhazia and Ossetia. October–November: Gamsakhurdia declared a state of emergency and cracked down on the opposition. Some National Guard units rallied around their former commander Tengiz Kitovani. December: Opposition forces launched an assault on the government buildings in Tbilisi and were supported by the Mkhedrioni paramilitary units led by Jaba Ioseliani.

1992  6 January: President Gamsakhurdia broke through a blockade and escaped to Chechnya, where he organized his government in exile. A provisional government was organized under the leadership of Jaba Ioseliani. February: Fighting intensified in South Ossetia. March: Shevardnadze returned to Georgia to head the Georgian State Council. 13 June: Assassination attempt on Jaba Ioseliani, deputy chairman of the State Council, left five dead, but Ioseliani escaped uninjured. 24 June: Supporters of President Gamsakhurdia seized the state television center in Tbilisi but were driven out by the National Guard. July: A Joint Control Commission was established to regulate the conflict in Ossetia. August: Tensions in Abkhazia led to violence after the Georgian authorities dispatched the National Guard and paramilitary units to Abkhazia. 9 August: Georgia, a member of the United Teams of former Soviet republics, participated in the Olympic games in Barcelona and earned one bronze medal. October: A powerful earthquake struck western Georgia, mainly the Racha region; hundreds of buildings were damaged, including historic monuments. 11 October: Parliamentary elections; Shevardnadze was directly elected as speaker of the Parliament.

1993  27 September: Sukhumi fell, following the Abkhaz separatist offensive, with a covert support of the Russian military. September–October: An insurrection was staged by Gamsakhurdia supporters in western Georgia, mainly in Mingrelia region. Georgia agreed to join the Commonwealth of Independent States in return for help from Russian troops against the insurgents. November–December: Heavy fighting broke out in Mingrelia (Samegrelo), where the Mkhedrioni paramilitary units went
on a rampage; Gamsakhurdia was found dead on 31 December under suspicious circumstances.

1994 March: After bitter debate, the Georgian Parliament approved Georgia’s entry into the Moscow-dominated Commonwealth of Independent States. April: Armed officers led by the chief of Tbilisi police stormed into a session of Parliament to protest the appointment of the interior minister. May: The Georgian government and Abkhaz separatists signed a cease-fire agreement. June: Russian peacekeepers were deployed in Abkhazia. October: Fire gutted the main broadcast center in Georgia, leaving the entire republic without television. December: Giorgi Chanturia, leader of the National Democratic Party, was assassinated.

1995 January–March: Kitovani led a “peaceful” march on Abkhazia, but the Georgian authorities interrupted his progress before he reached the security zone. August: A constitution was adopted; an assassination attempt on Shevardnadze failed. October: New currency, the lari, was introduced. November: Parliamentary and presidential elections were held in Georgia; Shevardnadze won his first term as president.

1996 February: Georgia became the first former Soviet republic to agree to return to Germany tens of thousands of books and manuscripts that had been looted by the Red Army’s “trophy brigades” in Germany at the end of World War II; some 100,000 volumes were returned to Germany by August. April: Georgia signed a series of military accords with Russia. July–August: Georgia participated in the Olympic games in Atlanta (USA), this was the first time the nation competed separately from the other former USSR republics. Georgian athletes won two bronze medals. November: Georgia’s breakaway region of South Ossetia held presidential elections that resulted in Ludwig Chibirov’s victory.

1997 August: Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze and Abkhaz separatist leader Vladislav Ardzinba met to discuss steps for the conflict resolution in Abkhazia. October: The Public Defender’s (Ombudsman) office was established in Georgia. November: The Georgian Parliament abolished capital punishment. Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze and the South Ossetian leader Ludvig Chibirov met in Tbilisi to discuss a solution to the conflict in South Ossetia. Georgia criticized Russia’s decision to authorize trade with the separatist regime in Abkhazia. Official reports revealed that almost 40% of the 3,360
Introduction

Georgia has experienced profound changes in the last 15 years as the nation cast off the Soviet regime and took its first steps toward a free and democratic society. The road was far from easy, and the country survived a civil war, two ethno-territorial conflicts, economic collapse, and massive emigration. Its citizens have shown remarkable tenacity and endurance, but much is still to be done after years of struggle. History has shown that small nations must struggle to survive in a world of great powers, and Georgia’s history is one such example. The present is not different either, as the country seeks to find a middle way between friendly relations with Russia and the desire to be part of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The past decade has significantly altered Georgian society, which lost more than one million people, or one fifth of its population, to emigration and other causes and saw its social fabric rent by the deepening economic and political crisis. The very essence of the Georgian identity and culture—Western or Oriental—continues to be debated as the government seeks to portray Georgia as a genuinely European state. The gap between the rich and poor is growing, and while the urban population enjoys relative material comfort, the provinces remain underdeveloped and are often ignored by the central authorities. Nationalism served as a catalyst for the emergence of independent Georgia and played a crucial role throughout the events of the 1990s, stirring up conflicts that threatened to fragment Georgia. Despite its often negative effects, nationalism remains a potent force in Georgian politics, and the government frequently uses it to shore up support in its relations with its menacing northern neighbor.

History is an intrinsic part of the social fabric in Georgia and visitors are often struck by the Georgian penchant for lengthy discussions of their past. History is spoken of in very lively, and often glorious, terms
and it constantly affects people’s daily perceptions of what is happening. It is impossible to fully understand the complexity of current events without first investigating their roots. This dictionary represents an attempt to illustrate Georgia’s long journey through the ages and to explain how various events, cultures, and personalities shaped—and continue to influence—Georgian history, society, and culture.

LAND AND PEOPLE

Georgia is situated among the breathtaking Caucasus Mountains between the Black and the Caspian Seas. Bordering the Great Caucasus in the north and the Lesser Caucasus gorge in the south, the country is divided into eastern and western parts (amier and inier Georgia) by the Surami (Likhi) Mountain range that bisects the country along a northeast–southwest axis. Georgia’s mountainous plateaus and numerous valleys contrast with lowland areas. The territory of Georgia is 69,700 km², which makes it larger than many countries, including Ireland, Denmark, Switzerland, Netherlands, etc. The terrain is predominantly mountainous, with about a third of the territory below 600 m, some 40% between 600 and 1800 m and the remaining above 1,800 m. The highest mountain is Shkhara (5,068 m), followed by Jangi-Tau (5,058 m) and Mkinvartsveri (5,047 m). The western part of the country enjoys a humid, subtropical climate and landscape that contrasts with the dry and continental weather of eastern Georgia. The swampy lowlands of the ancient Colchis in the western part of the country are conducive to intensive agriculture of exotic fruits and vegetables. The eastern regions of Kakheti offer arid plains that are more favorable to grains and livestock grazing. Georgia has long been considered one of the cradles of ancient winemaking and is known for its variety of wines.

Numerous mountain streams and rivers provide potential for abundant hydroelectric power. The main river, Kura (Georgian Mtkvari; Greek Kyros, Latin Cyros) is the longest waterway (1,515 km) in Transcaucasia, originating in Turkey and flowing to the Caspian Sea. In western Georgia, the Rioni (Greek/Latin Phasis, 333 km), Enguri (206 km), Kvirila (152 km), and Tskhenistskali (184 km) cascade down from the Caucasus Mountains and, streaming through the Colchis lowlands, empty into the Black Sea. The Acharistskali (90 km) and Chorokhi (438
km) rivers flow in Adjara, the Kodori (110 km) and Bzipi (110 km) rivers into Abkhazia, and the Alazani (407 km) and Iori (357 km) rivers cut across the eastern provinces of Georgia, sustaining local agriculture. The Aragvi River (110 km) descends through a picturesque valley of the Caucasus Mountains into central Kartli. Georgia also has an abundance of lakes, the largest of which are Paravani (37.5 km²), Kartsakhi (26.3 km²), and Paliastomi (18.2 km²). Georgia’s natural resources include rich deposits of high-quality manganese and coal. The eastern parts of the country have reserves of oil, gas, and barites. Copper, gold, and silver have been mined in the region for centuries.

At the crossroads of great empires throughout their history, the Georgians absorbed and adapted elements from various cultures, while at the same time defending their political and cultural independence. Today, the Georgians are distinguished by their unique cultural heritage. Their language belongs to the Kartvelian (or South Caucasian) family of languages, which has not been conclusively shown to be related to any other family of languages. The proto-Georgian language began to separate into several distinct branches about 4,000 years ago, with the Svan (svanuri) breaking away first in the second millennium BCE. It was followed by Zan (zanuri), which later developed into Mingrelian (megruli) and Laz (chanuri) languages.

Georgians, as an ethnic group, identify themselves as Kartveli/Kartvelians and call their land Sakartvelo or land of the Kartvels. Popular tradition ascribed these names to a legendary hero named Kartlos, said to be the father of all Georgians; scholars, however, agree that the term is derived from the Karts, one of the proto-Georgian tribes that gradually emerged as a dominant group. Georgians are known to the Armenians as virk, and the Persians called them gurg/gurdzhi, which was later corrupted into the Turkish gürçü. Russian Gruziia and Western European Georgia were derived from the Persian and Turkish words gurg/gürçü. However, popular theories purport that the name stems either from the widespread veneration of St. George, who is considered the patron of Georgia, or from the Greek georgos (farmer) because when the Greeks first reached the country they encountered a developed agriculture in ancient Colchis.

The Georgians are divided into four major linguistic groups: Kartvelians, Mingrelians, Laz/Chans, and Svans. Kartvelians historically lived in Kartli (central Georgia) and eventually gave their name to
the rest of the country. The **Mingrelians**, who call their region **Samegalo** (Samegrelo, Mingrelia) and themselves **Margali**, live on the plains north of the Rioni River and west of Tskhenistskali River. The indomitable **Svans** inhabit the mountains of **Svaneti**, above Mingrelia, including valleys of Inguri, Tskhenistskali, and Keladula rivers. The **Laz/Chans** originally populated the entire southwestern coastline of the Black Sea. However, after the arrival of the Ottoman Turks, they were gradually restricted to an area between Samsung, Kars, and Batumi. Historically, Georgia had no diaspora outside the country, except for small religious communities at various Georgian monasteries in the Holy Land, Sinai, Syria, Greece, and Bulgaria. The Ottoman conquests resulted in the loss of large territories in southwestern Georgia, recently as a result of the Treaty of Kars in 1921; currently, Turkey has a substantial Laz/Chan population in northeastern provinces. As a result of the Safavid invasions in late 16th and 17th centuries, Georgian communities also emerged throughout Persia, especially in Fereydan province, where **Fereydan Georgians** (Fereidneli) continue to reside. In the 1920s, the Georgian provinces of Zakatala and Belakani were ceded to Azerbaijan, but its Georgian population, commonly known as **Ingilos**, continues to thrive.

The last Soviet census of 1989 showed the population of Georgia at 5.4 million, but the closing decade of the 20th century dramatically affected the population growth and its composition. As the result of civil wars, ethno-territorial conflicts, economic hardship, and increased emigration, the 2002 census results reduced the figure to about 4.3 million (the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia were not included in this census, but their combined population was estimated at approximately 230,000). Thus, over 13 years, the overall population has declined by about 1 million (one fifth of the total).

This massive exodus had important political, social, and economic ramifications. Georgians constitute a majority (83.8%) and, compared to the 1989 census, enjoy a 14% increase in their share of the population. Among the national minorities, the overall Armenian population of Georgia has declined by some 188,000 in the last 13 years from 437,271 in 1989 to 248,929 in 2002. The highest emigration rate has been among the Russians; in 1989, there were 341,172 Russians, or 6.3% of the overall population, but by 2003, there remained only 67,671 Russians, who make up 1.5% of the total. Out of 102,324 Greeks in 1989, some 15,200
remain and out of 24,795 Jews there are now only 3,772 left. The Azeri minority remained relatively stable with some 285,000 persons.

Christianity is the religion of the majority of Georgia’s population, and the principal denomination is the Georgian Orthodox Church; there are smaller Catholic, Gregorian Orthodox, and Protestant churches. Over 88% of the population of Georgia are Christians, and of them 83.9% are Orthodox Christians. Islam is followed by 9.9%, among them some Adjarians, Abkhaz, Azeris, Kurds, and other ethnic minorities. Most Ossetians are Eastern Orthodox Christians.

In administrative terms, Georgia includes two autonomic units of Abkhazia and Adjara, 11 administrative-territorial regions, five major cities, and 54 towns. The largest city in Georgia is the capital, Tbilisi, with a population of about 1.1 million. Among other major cities are Kutaisi (186,000), Batumi (122,000), Rustavi (116,400), Sukhumi, and Zugdidi (69,000). Historically, several distinct regions were formed on the territory of Georgia that correspond to the natural divisions of the country. Western Georgia consists of the following regions: Imereti, with its capital at Kutaisi; Abkhazia (Apkhazeti), with its capital at Sukhumi (Sokhumi); Svaneti (Greek Souania), with its center at Mestia; Racha, with its center at Abrolauri; Adjara, with its capital city of Batumi; Mingrelia (Samegrelo), with its capital at Zugdidi; Guria, with its center at Ozurgeti; and the Samtskhe-Javakheti region with its center at Akhaltsikhe. In eastern Georgia, the major regions are Kartli (ancient Iberia), divided into Inner Kartli (Shida Kartli), that also includes the South Ossetia region, Lower Kartli (Kvemo Kartli) and Upper Kartli (Zemo Kartli); Mtskheta served as an ancient capital of Kartli until the fifth century CE when Tbilisi was declared the royal capital. Kakheti, with its historic center at Gremi, includes Inner and Outer Kakheti; the far-eastern historical region of Hereti is now partly under control of Azerbaijan following the partition of Georgia in the 1920s. Many ancient southwestern provinces—Tao, Klarjeti, Lazica, Speri, Chaneti, and others—are presently within the territory of Turkey.

**PREHISTORIC GEORGIA**

The Georgians are believed to derive from indigenous inhabitants of the Caucasus. Historical and archeological evidence indicates that humans
have inhabited this region since primordial times. The oldest traces of human habitation, dating back 1.77 million years, were found near Dmanisi, in eastern Georgia, and provided tantalizing insights into the development of *homo erectus*. In the later periods, humans settled in the Transcaucasian region more frequently, and ancient settlements were found throughout the country, notably at Yashtkhva, Rukhi, Katskhi, and Lashebalta. During the Mousterian period (100,000 to 35,000 years ago), the human population grew on the Black Sea coast and in the Rioni-Kvirila basin, where archeologists have found traces of human habitation in the Jruchi, Sagvarjilem, and Chakhati caves. Late Paleolithic period settlements were unearthed at Devis Khvreli and Sakazhia, and the discoveries from the Neolithic era were made at Anaseuli, Gurianta, Khutsubani, Odishi, Kistriki, Zemo Alvani, and others.

**RISE OF SOCIETIES AND STATES**

Between ca. 11000 and 9000 BCE, hunters and gatherers established permanent settlements in Southern Caucasia. In the Chalcolithic period (ca. 6400–3800 BCE), Shulaveri-Shomu culture flourished using obsidian for tools, raising animals and growing crops, including grapes. The fourth and third millennia BCE experienced a gradual development of agriculture and cattle breeding. From ca. 4000 to 2200 BCE, the Kura-Araxes (Early Transcaucasian) culture pervaded Southern Caucasia and the Armenian Plateau, producing distinctive handmade pottery with burnished black exteriors and red interiors, portable andirons of clay and new kinds of bronze tools and weapons. It gradually broke up but survived in some places until as late as ca. 1500 BCE. In the Bronze Age, several sophisticated cultures developed on the territory of Georgia that are represented in the large barrows in Trialeti (ca. 2200–1500), which produced four-wheeled wooden carriages, precious goblets, and silverware.

At the end of the third millennium, the Hittites established their state in eastern Anatolia and had considerable influence on the neighboring proto-Georgian tribes. Two major cultures existed on the territory of Georgia, the Western Georgian, also known as Colchian (*Kolkhuri*) and the eastern Georgian or Iberian. There were also a number of proto-Georgian tribes in Asia Minor, which had close interaction with major
powers of the ancient Near East, especially with the Hittites and Assyria. Assyrian inscriptions from the 11th century BCE describe the proto-Georgian tribes of Kashkai, Mushki, and Tubal that lived in eastern Anatolia. The Georgian tribes of the early Bronze Age were well known for their sophisticated metallurgy. The Bible makes mention of Thubals/Tubalcain as one of the pioneers in metalworking.

The increasing sophistication of these early Georgian cultures led to the emergence of the tribal confederations of Diauchi (Diauehi, Daiaeni) and Colchis (Kolkha) at the end of the second millennium BCE in southwestern and western Caucasus, respectively. Diauchi was engaged in a war with the powerful kingdoms of Assyria and Urartu, and the inscriptions of the Urartu kings Menua (ruled 810–786 BCE) and Argishti (786–764) reveal the wealth and power of this early confederation. In his Odyssey, Homer mentions King Aietes and his mighty kingdom of Colchis, while Apollonius of Rhodes, in his Argonautica of the third century BCE, left a detailed account of the legendary expedition of the Argonauts to seize the famed Golden Fleece.

In the mid-eighth century BCE, the Diauchi confederation was destroyed, and part of its territory was annexed by the neighboring Colchis, which now found itself facing the hostile Urartu. The Urartian King Sardur II (764–735) led several campaigns against Colchis around 750–741 BCE, significantly weakening and exposing it to the attacks of northern tribes. By 720 BCE, the Cimmerian incursions from the north destroyed Colchis and significantly affected local society and culture. Some Georgian tribes were scattered into remote regions of south Caucasus, and others found themselves subjugated by the Medes and Persians. In the subsequent century, new tribal confederations were established, the most important of them being Speri (Sasperi) in the upper reaches of the Chorokhi River and the new kingdom of Colchis, known as Egrisi, in western Georgia. Egrisi enjoyed close relations with the newly established Greek colonies—Dioscurias (Sukhumi), Gyenos (Ochamchire), Phasis (in the vicinity of present-day Poti), Anakopia (Akhal Atoni), and Pitius (Bichvinta)—on the Black Sea coast, and the Greek sources provide fascinating insights into ancient western Georgian society. Excavations at Vani, Dablagomi, and Sairkhe in western Georgia have revealed a sophisticated and urbanized society that struck its own silver coins, known as the Colchian white (kolkhuri tetri), that were widely circulated in Transcaucasia.
By the seventh century BCE, the Georgian principalities were affected by the rise of powerful Median and later Persian kingdoms. Herodotus informs us that the proto-Georgian tribes of Tibarenes, Mossinikoi, Macrones, Moschi, and others made up the 18th and 19th satrapies of the Achaemenid Persia. While most Persian subjects paid taxes, Colchians were exempt from them but delivered a tribute of 200 girl and boy slaves every five years. The Greek and Persian presence in Transcaucasia exposed Georgian societies to thriving economic and commercial ties with other regions and considerably affected the socio-economic development of the region. The period saw the consolidation of Eastern Georgia (Iberia) and the migration of some Georgian tribes, the most important of them being Moschi/Meskhi from Asia Minor, that settled in the central Kartli and founded the future Iberian capital of Mtskheta (city of Meskhi). By the time the famous Greek general Xenophon marched with his 10,000 soldiers through Asia Minor in 401–400 BCE, the Colchians and other proto-Georgian tribes had freed themselves from the Persians. Xenophon’s *Anabasis* described in detail the tribes of Chalybes, Taochi, Phasians, Mossynoeci, and others the Greeks encountered. These proto-Georgians lived in communal societies and often warred with one another.

**ANCIENT GEORGIA**

In the fourth century BCE, the Georgian principalities found themselves involved in the whirlwind of Alexander the Great’s campaign in the east. There is no historical evidence that Alexander or his generals campaigned in the Caucasus, but Georgian chronicles describe “Greek” troops reaching Iberia/Kartli, which they occupied and placed under the governorship of Azo (Azon). The Greek authorities proved to be harsh and uncompromising, which caused the local population to rebel. According to Georgian historical tradition, young Parnavaz, a nephew of the last ruler of Iberia who was assassinated by the Greeks, contacted *Eristavi* Quji of Egrisi and, with his support, launched a successful rebellion against Azo. Parnavaz, who married the daughter of Quji, and thus controlled both the eastern and western Georgian principalities. He founded the Parnavazid dynasty and divided the kingdom into seven regions under governorship of
eristavis and established Shida Kartli as a special region ruled by a **spaspet** (army commander). Despite the lack of tangible proof, King Parnavaz is often credited with spreading the Georgian alphabet throughout the kingdom and introducing the cult of Armazi and the goddess of fertility, Zadeni. Archeological evidence has revealed the Iberian capital of Mtskheta of this period as an advanced city with its own acropolis, baths, and other amenities.

Under later Parnavazid kings, the kingdoms of Iberia and Colchis/Egrisi found themselves facing major change in the balance of power in Asia Minor. In 190 BCE, the Seleucid Empire fell to the Romans while the weakened Persia was unable to prevent the rise of the powerful Armenian kingdom under Artashes (Artaxias). Armenian rulers greatly expanded their territory that also incorporated some Georgian regions. After the death of King Parnajom of Iberia, the Armenian king Arshak took over his throne, establishing an Armenian hegemony over eastern Georgia. In the first century, Armenia reached its zenith under King Tigran II the Great, who allied himself to his father-in-law Mithradates Eupator of Pontus (111–63 BCE) against Rome. Western Georgians were also allied with Pontus, where Georgian tribes (Laz/Chan, Colchians, Chalybes, etc) constituted a large part of the population and served in the armies of King Mithradates in Greece and Asia Minor. In 65 BCE, the Roman General Gneus Pompeius Magnus defeated Pontus and marched against Iberia, where King Artag was forced to recognize Roman sovereignty, sending lavish gifts of gold and his children as hostages. Meanwhile, Pompeius crossed the mountains into Colchis, where he campaigned in search of the mythical Golden Fleece and the chained titan Prometheus. Thus, Colchis-Egrisi and Kartli-Iberia were recognized as client states of Rome. The wealth and might of these principalities were attested to by the famous Greek scholar Strabo, who described eastern and western Georgian lands in his *Geography*.

Roman power was never firm in Iberia/Kartli, which remained under the Parthia/Persian sphere of influence for the greater part of its existence. In 37–36 BCE, Iberians refused to participate in Marc Antony’s campaigns against Parthia, and a large anti-Roman rebellion began in 36. The punitive expedition of Publius Canidus Crassus was the last Roman effort to conquer eastern Georgia. However, the western Georgian principality of Colchis/Egrisi remained under direct Roman administration and struggled for its independence. In 69 CE, a powerful...
insurrection, led by a former slave Anicetus, succeeded in temporarily driving the Romans out of Colchis but was later defeated. By the second century, several principalities (Lazica, Abasgia, etc.) emerged in western Georgia and recognized the sovereignty of Rome.

In the first and second centuries CE, the Kingdom of Kartli (Iberia) emerged as a relatively strong state as its rulers took advantage of the struggle between Rome and Parthia. King Parsman (Pharasmenes) actively interfered in the affairs of the neighboring Armenian kingdom, placing his brother Mithradates (35–51 CE) on the Armenian throne in the mid-first century, and skillfully maneuvering between the powerful empires. The Iberian presence in Armenia weakened after the Treaty of Rhandeia of 63 CE between Rome and Parthia allotted the privilege of nomination to the Parthian Arsacids and the right of investiture to the emperor of Rome. The Roman emperors sought to gain the support of the kings of Kartli (Iberia) against the Parthians. Roman Emperor Vespasian (69–79) had a wall erected in Mtskheta with the inscription that King Mithridates (Mihrdat) of Kartli (Iberia) was “the friend of the Caesars” and the ruler “of the Roman-loving Iberians.” However, King Parsman (mid-second century) openly defied Rome and refused to pay homage to the Roman Emperor Hadrian (117–138) during the latter’s visit to Roman provinces in Asia Minor, although the Roman emperor presented him with a war elephant and 500 troops. With the help of the Alans, Parsman attacked the Roman and Parthian vassal states of Albania, Armenia, and Cappadocia. Under Hadrian’s successor, Emperor Antoninus Pius (138–161), the relations between the Roman Empire and Kartli (Iberia) significantly improved and King Parsman, accompanied by a large retinue, visited Rome where he received a royal welcome; according to the Roman historian Cassius Dio, he was given the special privilege of offering a sacrifice on the Capitol and having his equestrian statue placed in the Temple of Bellona.

The fortunes of Kartli changed with the rise of the Sasanid kingdom in Persia in the third century CE, when the Iberian kings were forced to recognize the Sasanid supremacy; the Sasanid rulers appointed their viceroys (pitiaxæ/vitaxae) to keep watch on Georgian lands. The office of pitiaxæ eventually became hereditary in the ruling house of Lower Kartli, thus inaugurating the Kartli pitiaxæat, that brought an extensive territory under Sasanid control. In the third century, the Roman Empire
briefly regained Kartli under Emperor Aurelian (270–275) but lost it a
decade later. The Persians placed their candidate Mirian (Meribanes,
284–361) on the throne of eastern Georgia. Mirian’s reign proved deci-
sive, since he became the first Georgian ruler to adopt Christianity.

The rise and spread of Christianity, which continued for several cen-
turies, had a profound effect on the Georgian principalities. Georgian
tradition holds that two members of the Jewish community of Mtskheta
were present at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and brought back a num-
ber of holy relics, including Christ’s chiton (robe) that was buried near
Mtskheta. The Christian tradition also claims the allotment of the “Iber-
ian” lands to the Virgin Mary, who is, thus, considered the main protec-
tor and intercessor of Georgia. Georgian Orthodox Church credits the
introduction of Christianity to Apostles Andrew the First Called, Simon
the Canaanite, Mathias, Bartholomew, and Thaddeus, who preached in
western and southwestern Georgia in the first century.

The Sasanid Empire and its Zoroastrian religion had a firm hold in east-
ern Georgia and delayed the spread of Christianity for another three cen-
turies. In the early fourth century, Saint Nino of Cappadocia preached the
Christian message in Iberia and succeeded in persuading King Mirian and
his consort, Queen Nana, to proclaim it a state religion in Eastern Georgia
around 337; although technically marking the start of conversion only in
Iberia, this event is now considered as the official conversion of all of
Georgia. However, Christianity was already well established in western
Georgia and Bishop Stratophilus of Bichvinta had attended the first Ecu-
menical Council held in Nicea in 325. Sixty years later, western Georgian
bishops were joined by Bishop Pantophilus of Kartli at the second Ecu-
menical Council in Constantinople in 381. The Georgian Orthodox
Church was initially under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic See of Antioch,
but became autocephalous (independent) in 466 when the Bishop of Mt-
skheta was elevated to the rank of Catholicos of Kartli. Another important
development took place in the sixth century, when Georgian church lead-
ers rejected Monophysitism, the christological position that Christ has
only one nature, which neighboring Armenia accepted in 506; the Geo-
rgian Church, instead, supported the Chalcedonian creed, which holds that
Christ has two natures, one divine and one human. The split with the Geo-
rgean church was complete by 607, drawing Georgia closer to the Byzan-
tine Empire, and later to the Christian Europe, and farther from Sasanian
Persia, that was more tolerant of the Monophysites.
Conversion to Christianity had long-lasting consequences for Georgia. Situated at the crossroads of the West and the East, Georgia now took a political orientation toward the West/Europe and firmly tied its future and culture to Western civilization. The introduction of Christianity stimulated a vigorous development of arts and letters. Although pre-Christian Georgian literature was apparently destroyed in the process, Georgia underwent a cultural transformation. Monasticism flourished and many important religious works were translated into Georgian. Among the earliest surviving examples of Georgian original hagiographic literature are the fifth century *Martyrdom of the Holy Queen Shushanik* and *Life of Saint Nino*. The widespread construction of churches promoted a rapid improvement in architecture and gradually a unique cruciform style of church architecture was developed, evident in the basilica-type churches of Bolnisi and Urbnisi (fifth century) and the cruciform domed Jvari Church (late sixth century).

Christianity in Georgia was put to severe tests from the very beginning. Sasanian Persia promoted the teachings of Zoroaster and helped spread Mazdaism throughout eastern Georgia. Shah Yazdegerd II (438–457) endeavored to convert Iberia to Mazdaism and dispatched Zoroastrian *magi* to take charge of the conversion. Many Iberian nobles submitted, but their commitment to the new faith proved shallow. Efforts to convert the common people were less successful since Christianity appeared to have struck deep roots among them.

In the fifth and sixth centuries, Christian Kartli (Iberia) struggled against Persian domination. This period produced King Vakhtang Gorgasali (452–502), one of the most colorful personalities in the history of Georgia. The son of King Mihrdat V, he was nicknamed Gorgasali (“wolf headed,” from the Persian *Gorg-a-sar*) because of the shape of his helmet. He extended his authority to the Byzantium-held Egrisi (Lazica) and Abasgia, subdued the warlike tribes of Alans (Oss, Ossetes) and secured the autocephalous status for the Georgian Orthodox Church. Married to a Persian princess, Vakhtang participated in the Persian campaigns against the Byzantine Empire between 455 and 458 but later grew irritated with the Persian interference in his affairs. In 482, he, in alliance with the Armenians, led an uprising against Persia, but internal dissension and the failure to secure help from Byzantine Emperor Justinian doomed the rebellion; Georgia was ravaged by the Persian punitive expeditions in 483 and 484. In 502, Vakhtang led another
uprising that proved to be more successful. The Georgians defeated Shah Kavad’s army on the Samgori Plains in Kartli, but according to a tradition, King Vakhtang himself was mortally injured when one of his renegade servants betrayed him and wounded him through an armpit defect of his armor. One of his lasting legacies was the transferring of the capital from Mtskheta to the nearby small fortress of Tbilisi.

The death of King Vakhtang seriously weakened Kartli (Iberia) and exposed it to Persian encroachment. In 523, King Gurgen rose in rebellion but was defeated and Kartli was occupied. Persian officials introduced heavy taxation and Mazdaizing policies. Having subdued Kartli, Persia moved into western Georgia, where it clashed with the Byzantine Empire. In the mid-520s, King Tsate of Lazica broke his alliance with Persia and supported the Byzantine rulers, who deployed their forces at Tskhisdziri (Petra). The rulers of Egrisi/Lazica tried to use the hostility between Byzantium and Persia to their own advantage, but the war devastated western Georgia. Persia invaded Lazica several times but the alliance between the rulers of Lazica and Constantinople endured. However, in 554, King Gubaz of Egrisi was assassinated by Byzantine officials on the Khobistskali River. In response, the dismayed population of Egrisi summoned a national assembly, where two notables, Aites and Phartazes, gave their famed speeches on whether to continue supporting Byzantium or turn to Persia. In the end, Egrisi sided with the Byzantine Empire, feeling cultural and religious affinity with it. By 562, the joint efforts of Egrisi and Byzantium culminated in the expulsion of Persia from western Georgia. Lazica became a province of the Byzantine Empire.

The Byzantine–Persian rivalry had serious consequences for Iberia. Sasanid rulers held eastern Georgian under their suzerainty while local princes, led by the mamasakhlisi (prince-regent) of Kartli/Iberia, ran the government. When the Byzantine Emperor Maurice attacked Persia in 582, Georgian nobles supported him in hopes of restoring the kingship in Iberia. Iberian autonomy was restored in 588, but Emperor Maurice appointed a curopalates (presiding prince) instead of a king. The first curopalates, Guaram (588–602) and his heirs were caught between the warring Persia and Byzantium. In 591, Constantinople and the Sasanid Empire agreed to divide Iberia between them, with Tbilisi remaining in Persian hands and Mtskheta, the old capital, under Byzantine control. In the early seventh century, the truce between Byzantium and Persia
collapsed and Erismtavari Stepanoz I of Iberia (ca. 590–627) succeeded in reuniting the eastern Georgian territories. As the war between the Byzantine and Sasanid empires continued, Georgian principalities were often turned into battlegrounds. In 627–628, the campaigns of Byzantine Emperor Heraclius ensured Byzantine predominance in western Georgia and significantly weakened Iberia/Kartli, exposing it to the arrival of the new conqueror.

MEDIEVAL GEORGIA

In the late seventh century, a new political and military power appeared on the international scene. United by a powerful religious message, Arab tribes proved to be a force to be reckoned with as they overran the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire and Sasanid Persia and carved out their own domain. The first Arab raiding parties appeared in Georgia in 642–643, but following the conquest of Armenia in 652, Arabs arrived in force. In 654, the Arab commander Habib ibn-Maslam negotiated a treaty of protection (datvis sigeli) with Erismtavari Stepanoz II, who agreed to pay a jizya or protection tax levied on non-Muslim nations. Two years later, Iberian authorities took advantage of the internal dissension in the Caliphate to cease paying tribute. However, the Arabs soon returned with a vengeance and began a systematic conquest of eastern Georgia in the 680s. In 685, the Byzantine Empire and the Caliphate agreed to share the tribute from Armenia and Kartli, but the local population rose in rebellion in 686 and Erismtavari Nerseh of Kartli defeated the Arab forces in Armenia. Yet, in 697, the ruler of Egrisi, Sergi Barnukis-dze, invited Arabs to western Georgia to help him fight the Byzantine forces; Arabs occupied the capital city of Tskhegoji and other key fortresses but failed to firmly establish themselves in the region and soon withdrew.

Unlike western Georgia, Kartli remained under Arab domination and, starting in 704–705, Arabic coins were minted in Tbilisi. The Arabs treated Armenia and Georgia as a single frontier province and subjected it to heavy tributes. Discontented with new taxes and alien authorities, the local population rose in rebellions and the struggle against the Arabs soon assumed a popular character. In 681–682, Adarnase II of Kartli and Prince Grigor Mamikonian of Armenia held off the Arabs but even-
tually perished in this struggle. In 689, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian II forced the Arabs to cede Georgia and recognized Guaram II (684–693) as curopalates of Kartli. In 693, the Arabs recovered their possessions in Kartli and Armenia and the vicious circle of fighting began anew.

In the early eighth century, the Iberians and Armenians organized several unsuccessful revolts against the Arabs. In 735, the Arab commander Marwan ibn-Muhammad led another punitive expedition into Kartli, sacking Tbilisi and capturing the fortresses of Tsikhegoji and Sukhumi in western Georgia. He left such devastation and desolation in his wake that his nickname Murwan Qru (Murwan the Deaf, i.e., deaf to pleas) still survives in popular tradition. A new Arab emirate led by the amir of Tbilisi was established in Kartli. In addition to jizya and kharaj (tax on land) taxes, Georgians were forced to provide troops for the Arab armies and a labor force for various projects. Conversion to Islam was widely encouraged, and Christianity was persecuted, producing many Christian martyrs, including Abo Tbileli and, Princes David and Constantine of Argveti. As the Arab dominance intensified, the Georgian and Armenian forces often united under the banner of Christianity. The amirs of Tbilisi eventually became powerful enough to defy the Abbasid caliphs for decades. The caliphs finally tried to restore their authority in Georgia and, in 853, a large Arab army led by Bogha al-Kabir (Bugha Turki) ravaged Kartli and sacked Tbilisi on 5 August. However, in 914, another Arab expedition under command of Abu al-Kasim failed to subdue Kartli, and this proved to be the last such attempt on the part of the Caliphate. With the Abbasid Caliphate gradually declining, several semi-independent principalities emerged on the territory of Georgia. The Kingdom of Abkhazia covered most of western Georgia, the Bishopric of Kakheti, and the Principality of Hereti rose in the east and Tao Klarjeti dominion in the southwest.

Of the emerging Georgian principalities, Tao (known as Tao-Klarjeti in Georgian sources) proved to be the most important by far. Ruled by the Bagration (Bagrationi) princely family, Tao gradually expanded its sphere of influence. In the second half of the 10th century, during the rule of one of its greatest princes, David Curopalates, Tao became a large and powerful principality whose borders reached Lake Van. The growth and consolidation of this realm contributed to closer cultural and economic ties with other kingdoms and principalities. The might of the
new Georgian principality was clearly demonstrated in 979, when the
Byzantine Emperor Basil, facing a large rebellion, appealed for help
from David Curopalates. A Georgian expeditionary corps under Tornike
Eristavi defeated the insurgents and restored authority to the emperor.
Throughout his reign, David Curopalates pursued his great design of
the political unification of Georgia. Supported by Ioane Marushisdze, a
powerful eristavi of Kartli, he succeeded in having his grandson Bagrat
placed on the throne of Kartli in 975 and of Abkhazia in 978. Following
David’s death in 1001, King Bagrat III inherited Tao and later annexed
Kakheti and Hereti in 1008–1010, thereby uniting eastern and
western Georgia into a single state with a capital in Kutaisi. The united
Kingdom of Georgia was born.

The rise of the Georgian kingdom worried the Byzantine Empire. In
the 1000s, its Emperor Basil II, despite Georgian military aid in 979, occu-
pied Tao and the Georgian-Byzantine disputes over this region soon
escalated into a war. King Giorgi I (1014–1027) initially defeated the
imperial army but, once the Byzantine conquest of Bulgaria was com-
pleted in 1018, Emperor Basil II diverted his resources against Georgia.
In 1021–1022, his forces defeated King Giorgi I and his Armenian al-
lies and occupied the provinces of Tao, Artaan, and Javakheti. The new
Georgian King Bagrat IV (1027–1072) continued the war but faced
powerful opposition of feudal lords who refused to recognize his
suzerainty and joined the Byzantine army in 1028; the lords of Kakheti
and Hereti were particularly defiant and broke away from the Georgian
kingdom. The Georgian–Byzantine war eventually ended in 1029 after
the Georgian Queen Mariam visited Constantinople and negotiated a
peace treaty with Emperor Romanus III. Bagrat IV then turned to in-
ternal problems, subduing rebellious feudal lords including the mighty
Eristavis Rati and Liparit Baghvash of Kldekari. Bagrat was preparing
for another campaign against the lords of Kakheti and Hereti when a
more serious threat thwarted his plans.

In the early 11th century, the Seljuk tribes began massive migration
to Asia Minor and the Caucasus. After founding the Seljuk Sultanate in
1055, they expanded their sphere of influence to Iran, Iraq, and Syria.
In 1064, the Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan led a successful incursion into the
southern regions of Georgia, and four years later, he ravaged eastern
Georgia, even reaching Imereti in the west. In 1071, the Seljuk victory
over the Byzantine army at the crucial battle of Manzikert opened the
way for their systematic conquest of the Caucasus. In 1080, the so-called didi turkoba ("the Great Turkish Troubles") period began in Georgia when the Turkish tribes arrived in large numbers to settle on Georgian lands and turned the occupied territory into pastures, undermining the local agriculture and economy. King Giorgi II (1072–1089) was forced to recognize their supremacy and paid tribute to the Seljuk sultan.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF GEORGIA

Seljuk dominance persisted unchecked for almost a decade as the country continued to be devastated by the enemy invasions, internal dissent, and natural disasters. King Giorgi II failed to rise to the occasion, and the people needed a strong and energetic ruler to lead the struggle. In 1089, a bloodless coup forced the king to abdicate in favor of his 16-year-old son David. The new king faced the daunting challenge of defeating a powerful enemy and rebuilding a devastated country. Despite his young age, Kind David IV proved to be a capable statesman and military commander. In 1089–1100, he organized small detachments to harass and destroy isolated Seljuk troops and began the resettlement of desolate regions. In 1092, he stopped the payment of the annual tribute to the Seljuk sultan, and over the next 10 years, he gradually liberated most of eastern Georgia. King David reformed the Georgian Orthodox Church and strengthened the royal authority throughout the kingdom. In 1110–1117, he continued his conquests throughout southern Transcaucasia, defeating the Seljuk invasions in 1105, 1110, and 1116. To strengthen his army, King David launched a major military reform in 1118–1120 and resettled some 40,000 Qipčaq families (approximately 200,000 men) from the northern Caucasus steppes to Kartli; recruiting one soldier from each family, David raised a 45,000-man standing Qipčaq army in addition to Georgian feudal troops. The new army provided the king with a much-needed force to fight both external threats and internal discontent of powerful lords.

Starting in 1120, King David began a more aggressive policy of expansion. He established contact with the Crusaders in the Holy Land and there is evidence that the two sides tried to coordinate their actions against the Muslims. In 1121, he achieved his greatest victory as the
Georgian army routed a massive Muslim coalition in the Didgori Valley, near Tbilisi, on 12 August. The battle is widely known as “dzlevai sakvirveli” (incredible victory) in Georgia and is considered an apogee of Georgian military history. Following his triumph, King David captured Tbilisi, the last Muslim enclave remaining from the Arab occupation, in 1122 and declared it the capital of the Kingdom of Georgia. In 1123–1124, Georgian armies were victorious in neighboring territories of Armenia, Shirwan, and northern Caucasus, greatly expanding the Georgian sphere of influence. By the time of King David’s death on 24 January 1125, Georgia had become one of the most powerful states in all of the Near East. King David’s successful campaigns inspired the Georgian people and gave them confidence in their own strength. The country enjoyed a revival in agriculture and industry as well as in literature and arts. For his contributions, King David was hailed as aghmashenebeli (reviver, [re]builder) and was canonized as a saint.

The reign of King David ushered in the “Golden Age” of Georgian history, which in many ways was facilitated by the Crusaders whose successful campaigns in Palestine diverted the Muslim resources and enabled Georgia to open a victorious campaign in the north. During the reign of King Demetre I (1125–1156), Georgia continued to dominate southern Caucasia and contiguous territories. Georgian kings established close relations with the neighboring states through many dynastic marriages. One of King David Aghmashenebeli’s daughters, Kata, was married to the Byzantine prince Alexius Bryennius-Comnenus, the son of the famous Anna Comnena, Byzantine princess and one of the first known female historians. The other, daughter, Tamar, became the wife of Shirwan Shah Akhsitan (the king of Aghsartan). Later, King Demetre secured an alliance with the Kievan Rus through the marriage of his daughter with Prince Izyaslav II of Kiev.

Under King Giorgi III (1156–1184), a new wave of Georgian expansion was initiated as Georgian armies seized the Armenian capital of Ani in 1161 and conquered Shirwan in 1167. However, internal dissent among the nobles grew as the king aged, especially after it became apparent that he would be succeeded by his daughter Tamar. In 1177, the nobles rose in rebellion but were suppressed. The following year, King Giorgi III ceded the throne to his daughter Tamar, but remained coregent until his death in 1184. Powerful lords took advantage of the king’s passing to reassert themselves. Queen Tamar was forced to agree to the
second coronation that emphasized the role of the nobility in investing her with royal power. The nobility then demanded the establishment of the karavi, a political body with legislative and judicial power. Tamar’s refusal to satisfy these demands brought the Georgian monarchy to the verge of a civil war that was averted through negotiations. In the end, royal authority was significantly limited and the responsibilities of the royal council, dominated by the nobles, expanded.

Despite internal dissent, Georgia remained a powerful kingdom and enjoyed major successes in its foreign policy. In 1195, a large Muslim coalition was crushed in the battle at Shamkhor, and another one at Basian in 1202. The Georgians annexed Arran and Duin in 1203, and, in 1209, their armies captured the Emirate of Kars while the mighty Armen-Shahs, the emirs of Erzurum and Erzinjan as well as the north Caucasian tribes became the vassals. Georgian influence also extended to the southern coastline of the Black Sea, populated by a large Georgian-speaking population. The Empire of Trebizond, a Georgian vassal state, was established here in 1204 and soon became a major trading emporium surviving for over 250 years. Georgians then carried war into Azerbaijan and northern Persia in 1208–1210. These victories brought Georgia to the summit of its power and glory, establishing a pan-Caucasian Georgian empire stretching from the Black Sea to the Caspian and from the Caucasus Mountains to Lake Van.

The rise of Georgia as a great power was accompanied by an expansion of its religious and cultural presence throughout Asia Minor. Centralized royal power facilitated the growth of cities and towns and development of trade and crafts. A sophisticated irrigation system in Samgori and the Alazani valleys covered some 53,000 hectares of land. Changes in agricultural technology led to the development of a large “Georgian plough,” which improved cultivation of land and increased productivity. Tbilisi, with a population of up to 100,000, became a center of regional and international trade, with one of the routes of the famous Silk Road, linking China, Central Asia, and the West, passing through it. The period also witnessed a renaissance of Georgian sciences and art. Georgian craftsmen, especially Beshken and Beka Opizari, gained fame for their unique goldsmith works. Numerous scholarly and literary works (Amiran-Darejaniani, Abdulmesia, Tamariani, etc.) were produced both within Georgia and abroad, while the art of illumination of manuscripts and miniature painting reached its
zenith. Georgian architecture rose to a new level and is well represented in the Gelati Cathedral, the domed church at Tighva, the churches of Ikorta and Betania, and the rock-carved monastic complexes of David Gareja and Vardzia. Georgian monasteries were also constructed and flourished throughout the Holy Land and Antioch, including the Gethsemane, Golgotha, Karpana, and the Holy Cross monasteries in Jerusalem, the Mangana and Trianflos in Constantinople, the Alexandrian in Kilikia, the Petritsoni in Bulgaria, St. Athanasios and the Iviron on Mt. Athos, and others. Georgian philosophers and scholars—Giorgi Atoneli, Eprem Mtsire (Epraim the Letter), Giorgi Mtsire (the Lesser), Arsen Ikaltoeli, and others—enjoyed international eminence. Finally, Shota Rustaveli’s epic poem *Vepkhistkaosani* (The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin) remains the greatest cultural achievement of this age.

**STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL**

Georgia’s golden age ended in the early 13th century with the arrival of the Mongol hordes led by Chenghiz Khan. Following their conquest of China and southeastern Asian states, the Mongols attacked Khwarazm in Central Asia. Chenghiz Khan then dispatched a Mongolian corps on a reconnaissance mission to the east. The Georgian army under King Giorgi IV Lasha, the son of Queen Tamar, suffered a defeat but it had no immediate effect because the Mongols quickly left Georgia and moved across the Caucasus Mountains. More significant in its consequences was the arrival of Prince Jalal al-Din, the son of the last ruler of Khwarazm, who was defeated by the Mongols and now led his Khwarasman army to Transcaucasia.

The Kingdom of Georgia itself was torn by internal dissent and was unprepared for such an ordeal. The struggle between the nobility and the crown increased. In 1222, King Giorgi appointed his sister Rusudan as a co-regent and died later that year. Queen Rusudan (1223–1245) proved a less capable ruler, and domestic discord intensified on the eve of foreign invasion. In 1225, at the head of an army of some 200,000 Turkmen and various mercenaries, Jalal al-Din invaded Georgia and defeated the 70,000 strong Georgian–Armenian army commanded by Ivane Mkhargrdzeli at Garhni in November 1225. This was followed by the capture of Tbilisi, where a frightful massacre of tens of thousands of
Christians ensued. Jalal al-Din continued devastating Georgian and Armenian regions until 1230, when the Mongols finally defeated him. His continuous raids and devastations brought not only mass destruction of human life and property but also famine and pestilence, and a seriously weakened Georgia was left without any resources to defend itself from attackers at the very moment when this was needed most.

In 1235–1236, Mongol forces, unlike their first raid in 1221, appeared with the sole purpose of conquest and occupation and easily overran the already devastated principalities of Armenia and Georgia. Queen Rusudan fled to the security of western Georgia, while the nobles secluded themselves in their fortresses. The Mongol conquest of eastern Georgia continued until 1242, when Georgian rulers finally gave in and accepted the Mongol yoke. The Mongols initially kept the Georgian monarchy and local administration intact but imposed monetary taxes and military duty. Following the death of Queen Rusudan in 1245, they reorganized the administrative division of Georgia and the neighboring countries. South Caucasia formed a single administrative unit composed of five vilayets, with Georgia constituting the first or Gurjistani (Georgian) vilayet of eight tumans or districts, each required to provide 10,000 soldiers.

The Georgian aristocracy was discontented with the foreign oppression, but a conspiracy organized at Kokhtastavi had failed. The situation was further worsened by the lack of strong leadership because two candidates—the sons of King Lasha-Giorgi and Queen Rususan, both named David—claimed their rights to the Georgian throne. The Mongols took advantage of this circumstance to weaken Georgian opposition and recognized both candidates, appointing David, the son of King Giorgi IV, as ulu or senior and David, the son of Queen Rusudan, as narin or junior ruler.

After the accession of the Great Khan Mongke (1251–1239), a thorough census was made of all parts of the empire in 1252–1257 and Georgia was ordered to provide one soldier per nine souls for a total of 90,000 soldiers. New taxes were imposed on agriculture and industry. The establishment of the Mongol Il-Khanid state in 1256 brought another change to Georgia. Georgians were obliged to participate in military ventures of the Il-Khans on a regular basis, providing a specified number of troops. Georgian, and Armenian, contingents fought in all the major Mongol campaigns in Syria, Iraq, and Palestine from 1256.
onward, distinguishing themselves during the assault on Baghdad in 1258 and in the campaigns against the Mamluks in 1259–1260s. This forced participation resulted in the deaths of thousands of Georgians and their absence from Georgia, where they were needed to protect their families and native land from persistent raids.

Heavy taxation and the burden of military service naturally led to discontent and rebellion. Several uprisings, led by both Georgian kings, occurred between 1259 and 1261, but the Mongols suppressed all of them; King David Narin fled the persecution to western Georgia, where he established an independent kingdom, splitting the Georgian realm in half. Simultaneously, Georgia became a theater of war between the Il-Khans, and yet another Mongol state, the Golden Horde, centered in the lower Volga. In 1265, Berke Khan (1257–1266) of the Golden Horde invaded Georgia and ravaged the Iori and Mtkvari valleys as the Georgian troops fought for the Il-Khans against him.

The death of King David Ulu set in motion the nominal partition of Georgia into several principalities. King David Narin already claimed royal authority in western Georgia. The Mongols appointed David Ulu’s son Demetre II (1270–1289) as the king of eastern Georgia, but they also carved out the region of Samtskhe (in southwestern Georgia) and placed it under the direct control of the Il-Khans. In 1289, when Arghun Khan crushed a plot against him, he summoned King Demetre II, who had been wrongly implicated in the conspiracy. To avert destruction of his native land that was imminent if he refused, King Demetre rejected suggestions to flee to western Georgia and appeared in front of the khan, who had him tortured and executed on 12 March 1289. Such devotion to the national cause earned the king the title of tavdadebuli (self-sacrificing).

In the first half of the 14th century, King Giorgi V Brtskinvale (the Resplendent) (1314–1346) pursued a shrewd and flexible policy aimed at throwing off the Mongol yoke and restoring the Georgian kingdom. He established close relations with the Mongol khans and succeeded in acquiring authority to personally collect taxes on their behalf. Using Mongol force to his advantage, he suppressed defiant feudal lords and restored royal authority in western Georgia in 1329 and in Samtskhe five years later. He took advantage of the civil war in the Il-Khanate, where several khans were overthrown between 1335 and 1344, and drove the last remaining Mongol troops out of Georgia.
The respite from the foreign invasion proved to be brief. Barely recovering after the horror of the Black Death, Georgia was subjected to one of the most dreadful invasions yet as the Mongol warlord Timur (Tamerlane) began carving out his empire and invaded Georgia eight times in 1386–1387, 1394–1396, and 1399–1403. During the first Timurid invasion of 1386–1387, Tbilisi was sacked and King Bagrat V (1360–1393) was captured. The country had hardly recovered when Timur returned in 1394 and devastated central Kartli, despite efforts of the new King Giorgi VII (1393–1407). Two years later, King Georgi VII helped the neighboring Armenians and earned the wrath of Timur, who began the systematic destruction of southern Georgia in 1399. Tens of thousands of Georgians and Armenians were pressed into slavery, and some Georgian regions were completely depopulated. However, the Georgians continued their struggle and King Giorgi VII refused to submit. Following his victory over the rising Ottoman state in 1402, Timur returned to Georgia again in 1403, spreading death and destruction to the already desolate countryside. Later that year, peace was finally signed between King Giorgi VII and Timur, removing the Mongolian warlord from Georgia for the last time.

Timur’s campaigns in Georgia wrought destruction on an unprecedented scale. Major cities lay in ruins and tens of thousands of Georgians were massacred or taken into captivity; incalculable losses were inflicted on property and livestock, while society was in disarray and the royal authority weakened. The burden of rebuilding the country fell on the shoulders of King Alexander I (1412–1442). He overcame the initial opposition of the powerful lords of Dadiani, Jakeli, and Sharavashidze in 1412–1415, revived many towns and repaired monasteries and churches, including the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and the Ruisi Monastery. In 1425, he established a temporary tax that remained in force for the next 15 years and helped to fund the rebuilding process. To increase the population of his realm, he encouraged the immigration of the Armenians, who enjoyed trading privileges in Georgia. He reorganized the Georgian Orthodox Church and provided large subsidies to repair and maintain Georgian monasteries in the Holy Land. King Alexander also pursued an aggressive foreign policy aimed at recovering the lost territories, expanding his sphere of influence into southern Armenia by 1435. However, his most crucial mistake was in appointing his sons to principal positions in the kingdom. These crown princes soon gained
too much power and became surrounded by feuding factions of nobles who intrigued for the ultimate prize of placing their candidate on the throne. The last king of the united Kingdom of Georgia, Giorgi VIII (1446–1466), faced successive uprisings of powerful lords, most notable among them Atabeg Kvarkvare of Samtskhe and Eristavi Bagrat of Imereti, who defeated the royal armies at Chikhori (1463) and Paravani Lake (1465). The last battle was particularly consequential because King Giorgi VIII himself was captured, an event that accelerated the breaking up of the united kingdom into separate principalities. Thus, by the late 15th century, Georgia was split yet again into the three kingdoms of Kartli, Imereti and Kakheti, and the independent Samtskhe Saatabago.

FACING NEW CONQUERORS: OTTOMAN AND PERSIAN EMPIRES

The 15th century brought dramatic changes to the geopolitical situation of Georgia, as a new powerful state of the Ottoman Turks emerged in Anatolia. In 1453, they finally captured Constantinople and destroyed the Byzantine Empire. Another Christian power and former Georgian ally, the Empire of Trebizond, fell in 1461, while the Khanate of the Crimea was established as an Ottoman vassal in 1475. Georgia thus found itself surrounded by hostile powers in every direction and was isolated from new international trade routes and direct contacts with European culture. Continuous raids and incursions destroyed the local economy, commerce and crafts fell into decay, and some cities disappeared. The separatist tendencies of individual feudal lords increased and the disintegration process accelerated. In western Georgia, the Kingdom of Imereti waned and the principalities of Odishi, Svaneti, Guria, and Abkhazia emerged.

In the late 15th century, the powerful confederations of the Aq-Qoyunlu and Qara-Qoyunlu Turkmen tribes launched numerous raids against Georgia that earned their leaders the title of ghazi and enormous wealth. However, internal dissension soon weakened them, and the Aq-Qoyunlu were defeated by the Qizilbash led by Ismail Safavid in early 16th century. The new century saw Georgia once again in the precarious middle ground between two powerful enemies, the Ottoman Turks
to the west and the Persian Safavids to the east. Shah Ismail I (1501–1524), the founder of the Safavid dynasty of Persia, led many raiding expeditions into Georgia in the 1510s. His successor, Shah Tahmasp I (1524–1576), fought four major campaigns against Georgia in 1540–1554 and began the systematic extension of his control over eastern Caucasia. King Luarsab I (1527–1556) of Kartli led local resistance and won an important victory over the Persian army at Garisi in 1556, although he died in action. Persian campaigns resulted in the resettlement of large numbers of Georgians to Persia, whose subsequent role in the Persian army and civil administration led to significant changes in the character of Safavid society.

The Persian–Ottoman struggle for the control of the Caucasus was temporarily interrupted by the Treaty of Amassia in 1555. The peace agreement divided the region between the two rivals, with Kartli, Kakheti, and eastern Samtskhe in the Persian sphere of influence, and western Georgia and western Samtskhe under the Ottomans. Safavids tightened their predominance in eastern Georgia by imposing Persian social and political institutions and appointing Georgian converts to Islam to the leading positions in Kartli and Kakheti. King Simon I’s attempts to resist proved futile when he was betrayed and captured in 1569. He was released only nine years later when the Persians suffered reverses at the hands of the Ottomans. In 1578, Simon’s energetic actions led to the liberation of key fortresses, including Tbilisi. In 1582, the Georgians routed a large Ottoman army on the Mukhrani Valley, and six years later, King Simon negotiated a peace treaty with the Ottomans, who recognized him as the Christian king of Kartli and pledged not to interfere in his affairs. Simon then turned to his quest of uniting Georgia and campaigned twice in Imereti in 1588–1590. Despite his initial successes, he ultimately failed in this ambition. In 1595, he joined an anti-Ottoman alliance but was defeated and captured at Nakhiduri in 1600, spending the rest of his life in the Yedikule Kapi prison in Istanbul.

Meanwhile, the rulers of Kakheti preferred diplomatic solutions to conflicts and were prepared to make concessions and pay tribute to avoid open confrontation. King Alexander of Kakheti (1476–1511) negotiated with his enemies and often agreed to recognize their supremacy and pay a small tribute, saving his realm from destruction. He became the first Georgian ruler to establish formal diplomatic contacts with the Russian principalities when, in 1483 and 1491, he dispatched two
embassies to Grand Duke Ivan III of Moscow. In 1563, King Levan of Kakheti (1518–1574) appealed to the Russian rulers to take his kingdom under their protection. Tsar Ivan the Terrible responded by sending a Russian detachment to Georgia, but Levan, pressured by Persia, had to turn these troops back. King Alexander II (1574–1605) also appealed for Russian support against the Persians and the Ottomans. In September 1587, he negotiated the Book of Pledge, forming an alliance between Georgian and Russian kingdoms. However, as the Times of Troubles began in Russia, Georgian principalities could not count on foreign assistance in their struggle for independence.

Western Georgia was also in disarray with local principalities feuding with each other and often assisting the Ottomans in their conquests. Thus, Atabeg Mzechabuk of Samtskhe allowed the Ottoman troops to pass through his realm to attack his rival King Bagrat (1510–1565) of Imereti in 1510. The latter responded with a punitive expedition against Samtskhe in 1535, when he annexed this region to Imereti. Local nobles then invited the Ottomans to drive the Imeretians out of Samtskhe and King Bagrat was defeated in the decisive battle at Sokhoistas in 1545. The Turks began introducing Turkish customs and converting the local population of Samtskhe Saatabago, which soon turned into the Gurjistan vilayet of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the Georgian regions of Samtskhe, Adjara, and Chaneti remained under Ottoman dominance for the next three centuries.

In the 17th century, Persia emerged as a powerful state under the capable leadership of Shah Abbas I of the Safavid dynasty. Persians successfully engaged the Turks in southern Transcaucasia, gradually replacing the Ottoman yoke with that of Persia. Attempts of Giorgi Saakadze, the great mouravi of Kartli, to unite Georgian forces against foreign threats failed due to the internal feuds of nobility and he was forced to flee to Persia. In 1614–1617, Shah Abbas I launched several campaigns against Kakheti, razing numerous towns, fortresses, and monasteries; some 200,000 Georgians were taken into captivity and were resettled into Persia, where they helped to develop the local agriculture and industry. Shah Abbas sought to populate the eastern Georgian principalities with the Turkoman tribes and turn them into dependable bulwarks. In 1625, Giorgi Saakadze raised a rebellion in Kartli and annihilated a Persian army in the battle of Martkopi on 25 March. He then quickly captured Tbilisi and campaigned in Kakheti, Ganja-
Karabagh, and Akhaltsikhe. King Teimuraz I of Kakheti was invited to take the crown of Kartli and, thereby, both principalities were united. Although the Georgians suffered a defeat in the subsequent battle of Marabda in late 1625, Saakadze turned to guerrilla war, eliminating some 12,000 Persians in the Ksani Valley alone. His successful resistance frustrated Shah Abbas’ plans of destroying the Georgian states and setting up Qizilbash khanates on Georgian territory. Failing to win a war, Shah Abbas turned to diplomacy, reviving feuds between the Georgian nobles, which led to a civil war in the fall of 1626.

From 1632 to 1744, the Persian shahs ruled Kartli through Georgian walis or viceroys, who established relative peace and prosperity in the country, especially during the reign of Rostom Khan (1634–1658), who was brought up in Persia, served as qollar-aghasi (commander of the Persian guard), and introduced many Persian manners and tradition to Kartli. He was succeeded by his son Vakhtang (Shah Nawaz I), who continued his father’s Persophile policy. In Kakheti, the Persian policies of settling Qizilbash tribes soon backfired causing the Bakhtrioni rebellion led by Eristavs Shalva and Elizbar of Ksani and Prince Bidzina Choloqashvili in 1659–1660, which drove the Qizilbash tribes out of Kakheti. Meantime, the part played by the Georgians in the political and social life of Persia also increased. Shah Abbas’ successors often owed their thrones to the support of the Georgians golams [ghulams] who occupied key military and court positions.

In the 18th century, the political situation in Georgia improved relatively. During the reign of King Vakhtang VI (1703–1724) of Kartli, depopulated lands were resettled, irrigation canals and roads were repaired, and commerce and crafts revived and expanded. In 1709, a printing press—the first in Transcaucasia—opened in Tbilisi. Three years later, Shota Rustaveli’s epic poem The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin was printed for the first time. The king was assisted in his reforms by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani (1658–1725), an outstanding figure in the history of Georgia, whose humanistic ideas left an indelible trace on the Georgian culture. Orbeliani produced the first dictionary of the Georgian language, Sitkvis kona, which still remains relevant today, and authored many didactic fables, including Sibrdzne Sitsruisa and Stsavlani. One of the greatest academic achievements of this period was the establishment of a commission of scholars to collect historical documents and manuscripts. The commission compiled documents on the history
of Georgia from the 14th to the 18th century into Akhali Kartlis Tskovreba while Prince Vakhushhti Bagrationi’s Description of Georgia laid the foundation for the critical study of Georgian history.

After the Afghan victory at Gulnabad in 1722, the Persian Shah Husayn sought help from King Vakhtang, but in November 1721, the latter negotiated a joint military operation against Persia with Tsar Peter the Great of Russia. The Russian army reached Darband but then returned to Russia, leaving Georgia to face Persian retaliation. The Ottomans, taking advantage of the turmoil in eastern Georgia, also marched into Kartli the same year. The deposed King Vakhtang fled to Russia with a retinue of 1,400 men in August 1724. The same year, the Russo–Turkish Treaty was concluded in Istanbul according to which Russia kept Daghestan and the narrow strip of the Caspian coastline, while Turkey obtained virtually all of Transcaucasia. In 1728, the Ottoman authorities divided Kartli between the Georgian nobles, whose constant feuding made it easy for the Ottomans to control them. The period of Turkish domination (1723–1735), known as Osmaloba in Georgia, resulted in a heavy tax burden on the population and led to a rapid deterioration of the local economy and cultural life.

In 1735, Nadir Khan, a maverick Persian commander, launched his conquest of Transcaucasia and was assisted by some Georgian nobles, among which Prince Teimuraz of Kakheti had the most importance and privileges. Georgian hopes of gaining independence by turning Persia against the Turks were dashed when Nadir, who crowned himself shah in 1736, began establishing a Persian administration in eastern Georgia. Thus, the Osmaloba was replaced by the Qizilbashoba or the Persian yoke. The exorbitant taxes levied by Nadir Shah soon provoked an uprising in Kartli and Kakheti, forcing the shah to make concessions. In 1744, he gave the throne of Kakheti to Teimuraz II and that of Kartli to his son Erekle II. On 1 October 1745, the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral was the site of the first Christian coronation of a Georgian king in over a century.

The death of Nadir Shah in 1747 led to a civil war in Persia allowing Kings Teimuraz and Erekle to secure a respite for eastern Georgia. Their reign proved to be one of the more successful periods in the history of Georgia. Both kings conducted numerous expeditions into Transcaucasia and played an important role in the ongoing civil strife in Persia. In 1752, King Erekle routed the Afghan Azad Khan, a rival of the Persian
Zand dynasty, near Yerivan and later captured him at Kazakh in 1760. Georgians successfully campaigned in Armenia in 1765, 1770, and 1780 and drove back the annual incursions of the raiding bands from Dagestan. In 1762, after the death of Teimuraz II, Erekle proclaimed himself King of Kartli and Kakheti, thereby uniting eastern Georgia. The reign of King Erekle revived the country, as measures were taken to settle the depopulated areas and restore industry and trade. Erekle strove to introduce Western-style industry in Georgia, inviting specialists from Europe and sending Georgians abroad to master various trades.

In spite of this success, the situation in Georgia remained precarious and Georgian monarchs continued to seek assistance from Russia. King Teimuraz traveled to Russia in 1760, but arrived a few days after the death of the Empress Elizabeth and could not negotiate in the ensuing turmoil at the Romanov court. King Erekle was more successful in his rapprochement with Russia. At the beginning of the Russo–Turkish War in 1769, a Russian force, under the command of General Totleben, arrived in Georgia and a joint Russo–Georgian campaign was planned to seize the Akhaltsikhe vilayet. In 1770, the Russian and Georgian troops besieged the Atskuri fortress but during the fighting Totleben deserted the Georgians on the battlefield and withdrew his troops. Nevertheless, on 20 April 1770, Erekle won a decisive victory over the Turks near Aspindza, and with King Solomon I of Imereti, he besieged the key fortress of Akhalkalaki. The Russo–Turkish Treaty of Küçük-Kaynardja of 1774 brought no territorial change to the lands of Georgia, but the Porte renounced the tribute it collected from Georgia. To prevent any future foreign threats, King Erekle appealed to St. Petersburg for a protectorate and the treaty between Georgia and Russia was signed on 24 July 1783 at Georgievsk. According to this document, the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti recognized the supremacy of the Russian rulers, who, in turn, pledged to safeguard the unity of the kingdom. King Erekle II and his heirs were guaranteed the throne and the Georgian church was allowed to remain independent.

The Russian orientation of Erekle II and the arrival of Russian troops in Georgia alarmed the neighboring powers. The Ottoman Empire sought to have the Treaty of Georgievsk annulled and instigated the devastating incursions of Omar Khan of Avaria in 1785. Two years later, the Porte presented Russia with an ultimatum, demanding the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia and later that year, it declared
war. Russia faced a precarious situation, fighting on several fronts against Sweden, Turkey, and Poland. In these circumstances, the St. Petersburg court was unable to fulfill the terms of the Treaty of Georgievsk and recalled the Russian forces from Georgia.

During this period, the Qajar dynasty had ascended the throne of Persia, and Agha Muhammad Khan brought most of the Persian lands under his sway. He demanded from King Erekle II to denounce the Treaty of Georgievsk and recognize Persian suzerainty. Erekle refused the Persian ultimatum, remaining faithful to the alliance with Russia. Nevertheless, the latter did not send any troops to support its ally and left the Georgians alone in the face of Persian aggression. In early fall of 1795, Agha Muhammad Khan attacked eastern Georgia, where King Erekle made a desperate attempt to halt the invaders but managed to rally only some 5,000 men against 35,000 Persians. In a pitched battle at Krtisanisi on 11 September 1795, the Georgian forces were defeated and Tbilisi was taken and pillaged in dreadful fashion. The Persian invasion was followed by the Daghestanian raids that further devastated Kartli-Kakheti. In response to Erekle’s pleas for help, two Russian battalions finally arrived in Georgia in late 1795 and Russia declared war on Persia in March 1796. However, in November, Empress Catherine II died and her son Paul I recalled the Russian troops from Transcaucasia at once. Agha Muhammad Khan set out for Georgia again but was assassinated near Shusha in June 1797.

The death of King Erekle on 23 January 1798 was a turning point in the history of eastern Georgia. His successor, King Giorgi XII, proved to be a feeble and incompetent ruler and dynastic intrigues undermined the crown. In September 1801, following the death of King Giorgi and in complete breach of the Treaty of Georgievsk, Emperor Alexander of Russia unilaterally abolished the Georgian kingdoms of Kartli-Kakheti and had them annexed to the empire as gubernias (provinces). The Bagrationi royal family was detained and exiled, and the autocephaly of the Georgian church abolished.

Western Georgia remained under Ottoman influence throughout the 17th–18th centuries and Georgian rulers incessantly sought ways to reduce foreign encroachments. In 1703, a large Ottoman army occupied Imereti, Guria, and Mingrelia but subsequent turmoil in the Ottoman Empire helped the Georgians to drive them back. However, Ottoman garrisons remained in strategic places and along the coastline. In 1738,
King Alexander V of Imereti unsuccessfully tried to gain military support from Russia. As the royal authority declined, grand nobles (tavadis) gained in power and their incessant intrigues and struggles only weakened the western Georgian principalities. In 1752, Solomon I ascended the Imeretian throne. Surrounding himself with lesser tavadis and aznaurs, he sought to curb the power of great nobles and drive the Ottoman forces out of western Georgia. On 14 December 1757, he gained a decisive victory over the Ottoman army at Khresili, and the following year he negotiated a military alliance with Kartli-Kakheti. In 1759, he prohibited the slave trade, perpetuated by many nobles, and ruthlessly persecuted any disobedient elements. Solomon’s far-reaching policies soon produced results and led to a temporary peace with the Ottoman Empire in 1767. The following year, the Imeretian king appealed to Russia for help against the Turks. Although a Russian detachment under General Gotlib Totleben arrived in Imereti in late 1769, the Russian involvement produced no result by the time they left three years later. In the 1770s, the united forces of Imereti and Mingrelia repelled several Ottoman invasions and celebrated victories at the Chkherimela River (1774) and Rukhi (1779).

Solomon I’s death in 1784 led to a struggle for the crown that continued for five years and destabilized western Georgia. The new Imeretian king, Solomon II, faced serious problems both within his realm and from abroad. Great nobles continued to defy his authority and Solomon II’s attempts to extend his power to the rest of western Georgia only antagonized the powerful rulers of Mingrelia and Guria. In 1803–1809, the western Georgian principalities were annexed to the Russian Empire while the kingdom of Imereti was taken by force of arms in 1810, when the last Bagrationi ruler, King Solomon II, was forced into exile in the Ottoman Empire. The remaining principalities had no other choice but to enter the empire to preserve some vestiges of autonomy, with Guria until 1828, Mingrelia until 1857, Svaneti until 1858, and Abkhazia until 1864.

**IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE**

The Russian tsarist regime was thus established in Georgia. The country was divided into uezds (districts) with Russian officials responsible
for maintaining law and order and Russian declared the official language of the country. However, the oppressive rule quickly led to successive uprisings. In 1802–1804, rebellions flared up in Mtuleti, spreading to Samachablo, Pshavi, Khevsureti, and parts of Kakheti. During the Kakhetian uprising of 1812, Prince Alexander Batonishvili was proclaimed king of Georgia, but the insurgents were soon suppressed. Large peasant uprisings took place in Imereti in 1819–1820, Guria in 1841, and Mingrelia in 1856–1857. Many Georgian nobles, however, became content with their equalization in rights with the Russian aristocracy and entered Russian military service, often reaching the highest ranks. The Commander of the Caucasus Prince Paul Tsitsianov himself was the scion of the noble Georgian family of Tsitsishvili and governed the region in 1802–1806.

By the mid-19th century, Georgia was divided into two major provinces, the Tifliskaia gubernia (Tbilisi province) comprised of nine uezds (Tbilisi, Gori, Telavi, Signaghi, Tianeti, Dusheti, Borchalo, Akhaltsikhe, and Akhalkalaki) and one okrug (region) of Zakatala; and the Kutaiskaia gubernia (Kutaisi province), which initially included three uezds (Kutaisi, Shorapani, and Racha) but later incorporated the districts of Ozurgeti, Zugdidi, Senaki, Lechkhumi, and Sukhumi. Throughout the 19th century, the Russian Empire, seeking to extend its territory southward, was engaged in bitter conflict with the Ottomans. Defeats in the Russo–Turkish wars of 1806–1812 and of 1828–1829 forced the Ottoman Empire to surrender the historical Georgian provinces of Meskheti and Javakheti. After the Russo–Turkish War of 1877–1878, the Batumi region (Batumskii okrug) was annexed to Kutaisi province. Between 1878 and 1918, several other territories of the medieval Kingdom of Georgia were also incorporated and the Russian Empire, thus, inadvertently accomplished “the gathering of the Georgian lands,” the dream that guided so many Georgian kings. Georgia was initially governed by the civilian governor general, who was assisted by three departments of state, criminal and civil cases, and the assembly of local nobility (sakrebuli). In 1844, this system was thoroughly revised and the governor general was replaced by namestnik or viceroy of the Russian emperor, who was given unlimited authority in the region.

The governorships of Mikhail Vorontsov (1845–1854) and Grand Duke Mikhail (1862–1881) were periods of relative prosperity, educa-
tional encouragement, and commercial development. Vorontsov was especially instrumental in the economic development of the region. He solved the divisive problem of who qualified for nobility and confirmed the noble status of many claimants and granted the nobles some privileges, which encouraged them to support him and the Russian administration in general. Vorontsov facilitated the free transit of European goods and lower tariffs for imports that contributed to reviving trade. He helped found glass, textile, and silk plants and played an important role in the transformation of Tbilisi into a Western-style town. On his orders, new buildings and wide avenues and squares were constructed in the old part of Tbilisi and the first Georgian and Russian theaters and public library were opened between 1846 and 1850. The Russian authorities, moreover, established and funded a number of schools and hospitals, greatly improved communications, and allowed new generations of the Georgian nobles to study in Russian and European universities. The presence of the Russian troops ended the century-long incursions of the Ottoman, Persian, and the North Caucasian forces and brought relative peace and stability to the entire country.

The Russian rule also had a sinister side. The Imperial government considered Georgia a colony that was to supply raw materials and was reluctant to develop major industries in the region. Its authorities often attempted to populate Georgian provinces with loyal colonists and a Christian but non-Georgian population (Armenians, Greeks, Germans, Russian religious minorities) that was settled in Meskheti, Javakheti, Adjara, and others. In Abkhazia and Ossetia, north Caucasian tribes were allowed to move across the mountains to the fertile lowlands. By 1856, over 20 Russian military colonies were established throughout Georgia. Cultural repression became an especial cause of resentment and the suppression of the Georgian Orthodox Church in 1811 became a rallying cry for national loyalties. In 1830–1832, a conspiracy of Georgian nobles made the last attempt to throw off Russian rule in Georgia, but it was betrayed and, with its fall, all hopes of a Bagratid restoration ended.

The late 19th century was marked by the intensification of Pan-Slavist policies that proved ominous for the non-Russian minorities. The Russian officials never recognized the existence of a single Georgian nation and instead contrived various ethnic groups of “Kartvelian origin.” In 1872, the Russian government banned the use of the Georgian language for
instruction. In an effort to weaken the nationalist revival, it also tried a subtler plan of introducing teaching in the primary schools and public worship in other Kartvelian languages, Megrelian and Svan, which had never before been used for these purposes. The fulfillment of this design would have meant the fragmenting of national unity. Although the Georgian intelligentsia succeeded in undermining this policy, it appeared less successful in Abkhazia, where Russian liturgy and education resulted in the gradual Russification of the local population, which shared a common historical and cultural heritage with the Georgians.

The social structure of Georgian society also changed. In 1861, serfdom was abolished in Russia and, after prolonged preparations, the peasant reform was implemented in Kartli-Kakheti in 1864, in Imereti in 1865, in Mingrelia in 1867, in Abkhazia in 1870, and in Svaneti in 1871. The reform made things harder for the peasantry that lost lands and suffered under higher taxes. The Georgian middle class and nobility were also disgruntled since the bureaucracy in Georgia was usually staffed by Russians, Russified Germans, and Poles, while trade remained the monopoly of the Armenians. The latter fact led to the economic dominance of the Armenians and caused ethnic-based tensions with the impoverished Georgian nobility, who still had a feudal mentality but had become dependent on Armenian creditors and blamed them for many misfortunes.

Despite the Russian oppression, Georgian scholarship and literature still enjoyed a revival and greatly contributed to the emergence of a national consciousness. Alexander Chavchavadze, Grigol Orbeliani, Nikoloz Baratashvili, and others introduced Romanticism into Georgian literature and had close contacts with their Russian colleagues, including Alexander Griboyedov, Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Leo Tolstoy, and others. In the late 19th century, the Tergdaleulni group, the young men who crossed the Tergi (Terek) River to study in Russia, played a significant role in these processes as Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, Niko Nikoladze, and others devoted their efforts to awaken the Georgian national awareness and bring about reforms in society. They organized a literary and social movement dubbed the Pirveli Dasi or First Group, which proved effective in its campaign for the revitalization of the Georgian language and culture. This period saw an expansion in the number of Georgian magazines, books, and newspapers being published while the works of Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli,
Rapiel Eristavi, Giorgi Tsereteli, Alexandre Kazbegi, Vazha Pshavela, and others raised Georgian literature to new heights.

By the late 19th century, migration from rural areas and the growth of manufacturing had generated a fairly large and cohesive working class. Georgia was greatly affected by the industrial crisis of the early 20th century, and thousands of men lost their jobs. As social and political conditions deteriorated, people became more susceptible to revolutionary causes and the political culture evolved rapidly. The population of western Georgia was politically more active than in other regions and Guria, in spite of a large peasant population, was particularly seized by social democratic ideas. Among the rising political factions was the liberal Meore Dasi or Second Group led by Giorgi Tsereteli and the social-democratic Mesame Dasi or Third Group, established in 1892–1893, to propagate Western European Social democratic ideals. Initially influenced by the Russian revolutionaries, especially by the ideas of Vladimir Lenin, the Georgian Social Democrats eventually espoused a less radical approach and, in a subsequent split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, Georgia became a Menshevik stronghold.

In 1901–1904, several strikes and demonstrations were organized in Tbilisi and Batumi. The growing revolutionary movement led to the amalgamation of social-democratic organizations and Congress of Caucasian Social-Democratic Organizations was held in March 1903 and established the Caucasian Joint Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Worker’s Party (RSDRP). After the second congress, the members of the Mesame Dasi took a Menshevik stand and opposed the more revolutionary-minded Bolsheviks. In January 1905, a major strike in Tbilisi spread to other industrial centers, including Kutaisi, Poti, Tkibuli, Chiauria, and Shorapani, and threatened to grow into a general uprising before it was brutally suppressed. Hundreds of Georgian activists were arrested and exiled. In 1904–1909, Georgian Social Democrats organized massive support among workers and peasants, especially in Guria, which became a hotbed of revolutionary activities.

In 1905, facing increasing revolutionary activity, the Imperial government made a series of concessions. The State Duma was summoned in St. Petersburg and a Georgian delegation of deputies, including Noe Zhordania, Isidore Ramishvili, Joseph Baratashvili, and others, attended its sessions. Emperor Nicholas II also restored the position of viceroy of Georgia and appointed Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, giving him extended
military and civil authority. Georgian Social Democrats were persecuted and many of them arrested and exiled. One of the most historic events of this period was the assassination of Ilia Chavchavadze near Tsitsamuri on 30 August 1907, which shocked the entire nation. In 1910, another cycle of strikes began and the revolutionary movement gained momentum in 1913, when the workers of the Chiatura manganese mines were joined by their comrades in Zestaponi, Batumi, and Poti. By 1914, Tbilisi and other industrial centers in Transcaucasia were on strike. The spread of the revolution was briefly halted by the outbreak of World War I, but as the war dragged on, revolutionary sentiments spread among the troops as well.

**BIRTH OF THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

The revolutionary upheaval of 1917 in Russia and the collapse of the imperial government created unexpected conditions for the outlying regions. In February 1917, leading Georgian political parties gathered in Tbilisi where the necessity to declare independence became clear. The Russian Provisional Government established the Special Transcaucasian Committee (Ozakom) to govern the region. In November 1917, the first government of the independent Transcaucasia was created in Tbilisi as the Transcaucasian Commissariat replaced Ozakom following the Bolshevik seizure of power in St. Petersburg. Headed by the Georgian Social Democrat Evgeni Gegechkori, the Transcaucasian Commissariat was anti-Bolshevik in its political goals and sought the separation of Transcaucasia from Bolshevik Russia.

In late 1917 and early 1918, the Commissariat took measures to suppress the Bolshevik influence in Georgia and ordered the seizure of the Tbilisi arsenal, the disarming of pro-Bolshevik troops, the closure of Bolshevik newspapers, etc. Among other reforms were the Commissariat’s decree on land, the abolition of social distinction, changes in labor conditions, and the circulation of currency (bonds). In February 1918, the Turkish forces launched an offensive that captured Erzerum, Kars, Ardahan, and threatened the southern provinces of Georgia. Concerned about the Ottoman control of Transcaucasia, Germany quickly interfered and forced the Turkish government to sign a secret treaty that placed Georgia into German sphere of influence. Simultaneously, Tran-
scaucasian Commissariat surrendered its authority to the Transcaucasian Seim that was to oversee the secession of Transcaucasia from Soviet Russia. Following the Trebizond Peace Talks with the Ottoman Empire, the Transcaucasian Seim proclaimed the establishment of the Transcaucasian Federation that united Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. However, facing renewed Ottoman attacks and hoping for German help, Georgia soon ceded from the Federation and the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the National Council of Georgia on 26 May 1918.

As the best organized political party with the most members, the Social Democrats (Menshevik faction) organized the first government of independent Georgia. Based on a multiparty system, the newly established government also included the National Democratic Party, Social Federalists, Social-Revolutioneers, and other political organizations. Although supporting internationalist ideology, the Social Democrats soon parted with their co-revolutioneers, both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, in Russia. Thus, the actual ideological basis of the Democratic Republic of Georgia became European-style democratic socialism in contrast to the Russian model of socialism and it was oriented toward the middle classes of the Georgian society.

The newly born Menshevik government faced challenges from every direction. Bolshevik uprisings were instigated in various regions, particularly in Abkhazia and Ossetia, where separatist calls were made. With the support from the Black Sea Soviet republic, Bolshevik authority was established in Abkhazia in March 1918 but the Georgian forces under Giorgi Mazniashvili and Valiko Jugheli defeated the insurgents and restored the central authority in Abkhazia in May–June 1918; Georgian troops even took under control the Sochi district of the former Black Sea province but had to engage General Denikin’s White Army forces. In 1919–1920, similar outbursts of Bolshevik-supported separatism were suppressed in Ossetia. In the south, Armenian forces contested the Georgian control of the Lore/Lori region in December 1918 but were routed the following year. Turkey withdrew its forces from southwestern Georgia in October–November 1918 and was replaced by the British troops that occupied Batumi and entered Tbilisi in late December 1918. The Turkish influence, however, remained strong in southern Georgian provinces, where several riots were crushed by General Giorgi Kvinitadze in 1919.
The independence of Georgia was recognized by Soviet Russia on 7 May 1920, and a special treaty was signed between Tbilisi and Moscow with the consent of the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin. Refused entry into the League of Nations, Georgia gained de jure recognition from major powers, including Germany, Turkey, Britain, France, Japan, Italy, etc. The three years of independence proved to be of great political and cultural significance. Major economic and educational reforms were implemented, more than a thousand schools were established; the national theater was revived; Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi Opera and Conservatoire, and the Shota Rustaveli Theater were established. However, despite its initial success, the fledgling Georgian republic had no chance of succeeding because, as the Bolshevik government in Russia emerged victorious out of the Civil War in 1919, it turned its attention to Transcaucasia.

SOVIET GEORGIA

By 1920, Soviet Russia actively sought to extend its hegemony to south Caucasus. Sergo Ordzhonikidze coordinated the Bolshevik policies in the region and was a fervent exponent of sovietization of Georgia. In April 1920, the 11th Red Army occupied Azerbaijan and established Soviet authority in Baku. In May, the Bolsheviks crossed the Georgian state border but were halted in their advance while the diplomatic negotiations soon led to Russia’s recognition of Georgia’s independence in May 1920. Nevertheless, in November of the same year, the Red Army occupied Armenia, where another Soviet government was proclaimed. The Bolshevik authorities in Moscow then successfully negotiated with Turkey and other powers promising concessions in return for their approval for an eventual attack on Georgia.

On 11 February 1921, the Bolsheviks incited an uprising in the Lori district of Georgia and, portraying it as the workers’ insurrection against the Menshevik government, the 11th Red Army quickly came to its aid, invading Georgia on 12 February. In late February, the 9th Red Army invaded Georgia through Abkhazia and additional Red Army brigades marched through strategic passes across the Caucasus. On 24 February, after failing to halt the Bolshevik advance, the Menshevik forces under General Giorgi Kvinitadze left Tbilisi for a last stand in Batumi; the Bolsheviks occupied the Georgian capital the following day. The situation
was further complicated by Turkey’s involvement in the war as Turkish troops attempted to capture the strategic port of Batumi. Although General Kvinitadze routed the Turks in Adjara, the Menshevik government was unable to turn the tide of the war against the Bolsheviks and immigrated to Europe, forming a government-in-exile. By March 1921, Georgia was effectively under the control of the Bolsheviks.

The government in exile continued its struggle for decades to come, but it was an uphill battle. Some Georgian statesmen succumbed to the pressure and committed suicide; others were assassinated by the Soviet secret service. In 1932, the Soviet Union and France signed an agreement that banned anti-Soviet émigré groups in France and led to the closure of the remaining Georgian embassy in Paris. The émigré community, however, continued its resistance. In 1934, émigré politicians from Georgia, Azerbaijan, and North Caucasus organized the Council of Transcaucasian Confederation that was to coordinate national liberation movements in their respective countries. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, several Georgian émigré organizations blossomed in Germany and the Baltic states, including the Tetri Giorgi paramilitary unit.

With the Menshevik government overthrown, the Bolsheviks established the Revolutionary Committee under Philipe Makharadze as the supreme authority in Georgia. In February 1922, the first congress of Soviets of Georgia was summoned in Tbilisi and adopted the Constitution of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic. The new authorities struggled to establish themselves as a guerrilla war began in various regions. In the summer of 1921, a rebellion in Svaneti was harshly suppressed but instigated further anti-Bolshevik outbreaks. In 1922, guerrilla units, led by Kakutsa Cholokashvili and his shepitsulebi (men of the oath), operated in Kartli, Guria, Khevsureti, Kakheti, and Mingrelia. The same year, Georgian political parties united their efforts and formed an Independence Committee and a host of regional organizations. However, the underground organization had been penetrated by the secret police and, in February 1923, police arrested committee members and shut down the underground press. In the subsequent reprisals, hundreds of Georgians, including Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia Ambrosi, were arrested and exiled, and numerous churches and monasteries were closed. In August 1924, a major uprising began in Georgia but lack of organization and ineffective cooperation between the rebels precipitated their defeat in bloody clashes with the Soviet authorities. The uprising
was ruthlessly crushed and the Bolsheviks seized an opportunity to exterminate any potential threats, exiling or executing hundreds.

The sovietization of Georgia led by Sergo Ordzhonikidze and Joseph Stalin was so brutal that even Vladimir Lenin opposed its radicalism in the so-called Georgian Affair, but the process continued after his death unabated. Collectivization was carried out ruthlessly throughout the 1920s and, in the 1930s, widespread purges of Georgian society were perpetrated by Stalin’s local lieutenant Lavrenti Beria, head of the Soviet state security apparatus in Georgia. The impact of sovietization on the Georgian culture and social environment was severe, and it inculcated a conformist tendency with the Soviet Communist Party among the survivors. Between 1922 and 1936, Georgia was part of the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (ZKFSR), which also included the neighboring Armenia and Azerbaijan. In 1936, the new Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) made Georgia one of the constituent republics of the USSR.

Despite its oppressive nature, the new Soviet regime also brought rapid development of Georgian science, culture, and economy. Georgia quickly transformed from an overwhelmingly agrarian country to a largely industrial and urban society. Its agricultural output greatly increased and new industrial facilities were built in Rustavi, Chiatura, Zestaponi, Batumi, Tbilisi, and others towns. Several hydroelectric stations, notably Zemo-Avchala and Rioni, were constructed and provided much-needed electricity. The railroad network was repaired and expanded throughout the country. After Tbilisi State University was established by the Menshevik government in 1918, the Soviet authorities founded the Georgian Polytechnic Institute, Georgian Agricultural Institute, Tbilisi Medical Institute, pedagogical institutes in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Batumi, Institute of Mathematics, Institute of Physics, Tbilisi Academy of Arts, etc. In 1946, the Georgian Academy of Sciences was established as the premier center of scientific research in Georgia. In 1930–1934, universal mandatory education was introduced and three-stage education system established.

GEORGIANS IN WORLD WAR II

During World War II, Georgia mobilized almost 700,000 citizens (out of a total population of 3.5 million), who served with the Red Army on
all fronts of the war; some 350,000 of them perished in the war, exceeding the war losses of such major powers as the United States and Britain. More than 200,000 Georgians received various medals and orders for their actions during the war and 137 of them were conferred the highest award of the Hero of the USSR. The Georgian homefront concentrated on the production of mineral resources and increased the output of manganese at the Chiatura mining plants, coal at Tkibuli and Tkvarcheli plants, and metals at the Zestaponi factory. In 1941, Tbilisi Aviation Factory was established and began producing fighter planes for the Red Army. Georgia also served as an evacuation center for thousands of refugees from German-occupied areas in Byelorussia and Ukraine. In 1943, three Georgian divisions participated in vicious battles in the Crimea and the Caucasus and several Georgian officers rose to prominence, among them Konstantine Leselidze, Vladimir Naneishvili, Ermalo Zoberidze, Porphirius Chanchibadze. Georgians also took an active part in the guerrilla warfare and commanded units throughout western USSR and Eastern Europe, notably the David Bakradze, Ivane Shubitidze, and Vladimir Talakvadze’s units in Ukraine and Byelorussia, those of Vladimir Dzneladze and Shalva Kobiaishvili in Poland, of Stefa Khatiashvili, Nikoloz Tabagua, and Otar Chkhchenkeli in France, and of Pore Mosulfishvili and Noe Kublashvili in Italy.

At the same time, Georgians also fought in the ranks of the German Wehrmacht. The Georgian Social Democrats, who had escaped the rigors of sovietization in Georgia, rallied in Germany, and ignoring the dangers of German national socialism, they sought to use the German war machine to liberate Georgia. Members of the intelligentsia in Georgia also considered cooperating with the Nazi authorities in order to overthrow the Soviet regime. However, the Soviet secret service effectively suppressed them, and between 1941–1942, widespread arrests were made leading to the execution of ringleaders. In 1942–1943, as the number of captured Georgian troops increased, the German command established the so-called Georgian Legion under the leadership of Major General Shalva Maghlakelidze as part of the Eastern Legions (Ostlegionen). The Legion eventually consisted of eight Georgian battalions participating in campaigns in the Caucasus, Ukraine, and Byelorussia; one of them was later deployed on the strategic island of Texel in the German “Atlantic Wall,” where it fought what is often described as Europe’s last battle in late May 1945.
After the war, the Soviet authorities intensified political repression on the Georgian intelligentsia, especially the dissident groups that demonstrated nationalistic tendencies. In 1948, several students of Tbilisi State University were arrested for conspiring against the Soviet government, and nine of them were sentenced to 25 years in Siberia. On 25 December 1951, some 20,000 Georgians, who allegedly had acted against the Soviet regime, were loaded on railway wagons and resettled to desolate regions of northern Central Asia where many of them died; the survivors managed to return to Georgia in 1954. In late 1951, at Stalin’s orders, the so-called Mingrelian Case was instigated against Lavrenti Beria and claimed many innocent Georgians who were accused of Mingrelian nationalism and anti-government activities.

GEORGIA IN THE 1950s THROUGH 1970s

The death of Joseph Stalin led to a power struggle in the Kremlin. In the new triumvirate, the Georgian Beria enjoyed enormous power controlling the Ministries of Internal Affairs and of State Security. However, in June 1953, Beria was arrested on charges of foreign espionage and treason and was executed. The new Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev made key changes in the Communist leadership of Georgia, appointing his protégé Vasili Mzhavanadze as the secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party, dismissing the first secretaries in Batumi and Sukhumi and some 2,000 party officials in other positions. Stalin’s death also ushered in the so-called “Thaw” period in the USSR, and Khrushchev began the de-Stalinization process. In February 1956, he made the famous speech at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party and denounced Stalin’s policies and the “cult of personality.” The speech was supposed to be secret but rumors about its content leaked.

To the majority of Soviet citizens, such revelations came as a great surprise, particularly in Georgia, since denunciation of Stalin often stressed his ethnicity and gradually evolved into charges against the entire Georgian nation. Khrushchev’s sudden criticism of Stalin was met with a deep resentment. Following Khrushchev’s speech, on 5 March 1956, a demonstration was organized near the Stalin monument on the bank of the Kura River to mark the third anniversary of Stalin’s death. The situation spiraled out of control and the protesters rapidly grew in
numbers, with their slogans becoming more and more radical. Students played an important role in mobilizing demonstrators and pushing a more nationalistic program of demands. As demonstrations paralyzed the entire city of Tbilisi, the Georgian Communist leadership was unable to cope with situation and turned to the Soviet military for help. On 9 March 1956, the Soviet armed forces opened fire and launched a bloody crackdown on protesters. The exact number of casualties remains unclear, but estimates indicate about 150 were killed and hundreds more were wounded and arrested.

The event was quickly covered up, and the rest of the Soviet Union did not learn about it for years. Following the events of 1956, the issues of language and culture assumed unprecedented importance as a Georgian sense of identity merged with the determination to preserve the Georgian language and culture from foreign domination. Immediately after the massacre, several national-patriotic groups were established. Merab Kostava and Zviad Gamsakhurdia organized the underground Gorgasliani, which began publishing anti-Soviet pamphlets and newspapers. The Sighnaghi Youth Guard was set up in Kakheti and published several issues of Simebi, its anti-establishment journal. In the 1960s, the Union for the Freedom and Independence of Georgia was established in Tbilisi with the main goal of proclaiming an independent democratic republic.

By the 1970s, the Georgian Communist Party had the highest percentage of members per capita of all the republican Communist Parties. Favoritism and political control facilitated the growth of black marketing, speculation, and corruption. According to the World Bank study, Georgia ranked 12th poorest of the 15 Soviet republics in terms of official per capita income, yet savings deposits per capita were sixth highest amongst the republics. Furthermore, bribe taking was rampant in the education system and, based on official statistics, Georgia had one of the highest numbers of advanced degrees awarded per thousand persons, especially in prestigious fields like medicine and law. Many Georgians joined the Party for no other reason than careerism or opportunism. Party connections not only helped with promotion but also protected those involved in the shadow economy. In fact, the Georgian Communist Party had become so notoriously corrupt that even Leonid Brezhnev’s stagnant regime felt obliged to intervene and promote a new first secretary, Eduard Shevardnadze, to clean up its activities.
Shevardnadze’s tenure as the first secretary (1972–1985) was marked by a vigorous, at times even ruthless, campaign against both corruption and political opposition. Shevardnadze succeeded in raising industrial and agricultural output and labor productivity in Georgia, and by 1980, Georgia was one of the few republics fulfilling its Five Year Plan targets. However, the emphasis on completion of state plans also resulted in rapid deterioration in the quality of Georgian products, especially tea and wine. Shevardnadze’s efficient and heavy-handed methods were particularly effective in disrupting the Georgian dissident movement, which posed no threat to Soviet power until Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms.

RISE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT

The 1970s also saw a gradual development of the national liberation movement led by Georgian dissidents, notably Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava. In 1974, the Action Group for Defense of Human Rights was established and, three years later, the Georgian Helsinki Group was founded. The power of Georgian nationalism was revealed in 1978, when the Soviet authorities decided to amend the Georgian constitution and remove an article affirming Georgian as the sole official state language of the republic. On 14 April 1978, thousands of Georgians rallied in the streets of Tbilisi and their numbers grew by the hour. As the situation escalated, First Secretary Eduard Shevardnadze personally met with demonstrators and negotiated a peaceful resolution of the situation. The Soviet authorities decided against removing the disputed clause. The events clearly demonstrated the potency of Georgian nationalism and contributed to the increasing popularity of the national liberation movement.

After Shevardnadze departed to Moscow to take up his post as Soviet foreign minister, his protégé, Jumber Patiashvili, took charge of the Georgian Communist Party. The all-Union policy of glasnost (openness) after 1985 meant that previously dormant nationalist aspirations among the Georgian people began to make themselves heard. By 1987, several groups that presented themselves as cultural but which had a strongly nationalist program had appeared. In fact, such was the popular support for unofficial groups demanding better protection for the en-
vironment or Georgian cultural monuments that the Communist Party authorities tried to establish their own parallel organizations to draw off support from the anti-establishment groups. Georgian intellectuals, especially members of the republican Writer’s Union, launched a campaign to assert national prerogatives in the face of perceived threats. They declared that as a result of the imposition of Russian as the medium of interethnic communication throughout the USSR, the Georgian language was denied its natural preeminence within the home republic. Furthermore, they stressed that Georgians were forced to disregard their culture and adapt themselves constantly to the Russian language and Russian culture, which became a growing challenge for the minorities within the Republic.

The late 1980s saw dramatic events leading to the collapse of Soviet power in Eastern Europe. Communist authorities fell in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria and the process culminated in the unification of Germany in 1989. At the same time, national movements were on the rise within the Soviet Union, particularly in the Baltic States and Transcaucasia. In November 1988, a massive demonstration gathered in front of the government buildings on Rustaveli Avenue in central Tbilisi protesting proposed amendments to the USSR constitution changing the status of the Georgian language and elevating Russian to the only state language of the republic. Although the amendments were soon dropped, the situation escalated. Tensions between the Georgians and the Abkhaz spiraled out of control when Abkhaz nationalists called for Abkhazian independence from Georgia in the early 1989. On 18 March 1989, the Popular Forum of Abkhazia (Aydgilara) organized a demonstration in Lykhny for the restoration of Abkhazia’s status as an independent soviet socialist republic (SSR). In response, a series of rallies began on 25 March 1989 in Tbilisi and demands were made to contain the Abkhazian separatists; gradually the calls became more radical and eventually they also included the national independence of Georgia.

On 4 April 1989, some 150 Georgian nationalist activists began a hunger strike in front of the Supreme Soviet at Rustaveli Avenue. They demanded full independence for Georgia and complete integration of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia within Georgia. Two days later, tens of thousands went to the streets of the capital and demonstrated their solidarity. As the rallies increased in size, the Georgian authorities
turned to the Soviet military for help. On 9 April 1989, demonstrators were attacked by Soviet troops and, in bloody fighting, 21 demonstrators, mostly women and teens, were killed while hundreds were left sick for weeks and months from toxic gases. The brutality of the Soviet forces against the peaceful demonstrators was recorded on tape and, when broadcasted later that year, it shocked the whole Soviet Union. The tragic events of April only intensified Georgian nationalism and gave greater credibility to the national liberation movements. The nation united around the cause of independence and, in the months after the tragedy, hundreds of thousands rallied in the streets of Tbilisi, wearing black as a sign of grief and carrying national banners.

In response to the tragedy of 9 April, the Communist leadership of Georgia was replaced. The new First Secretary Givi Gumbaridze, who replaced Jumber Patiashvili, initially endeavored to calm the situation but his attempts to delay the first free elections for the Georgian Supreme Soviet scheduled for October 1990 actually played into the hands of the opposition. The opposition parties organized the Committee of National Liberation, which united the Helsinki Union led by Zviad Gamsakhurdia (Kostava had died in an automobile accident in late 1989), the National Democratic Party led by Giorgi Chanturia, Irakli Shengelia’s Union of National Justice, and Irakli Tsereteli’s National Independence Party. In March 1990, a special conference of opposition groups was summoned in Tbilisi and the National Forum was established. However, the opposition parties soon disagreed on a number of issues. More radical groups established Round Table-Free Georgia, uniting the Helsinki Union, Society of St. Ilia the Righteous, the Merab Kostava Society, Traditionalist Union, National-Liberal Union, etc. Other national groups formed a National Congress and began a new campaign for the national independence of Georgia.

In the elections of October 1990, the Round Table-Free Georgia bloc, led by Gamsakhurdia, won a majority of votes and formed the first non-Communist government of Georgia. Gamsakhurdia’s supporters now held the majority in the Supreme Soviet, and in practice the Communist and other deputies deferred to their proposals for constitutional change. On 14 November 1990, Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected chairman of the new Georgian Supreme Soviet. The new Soviet began abolishing the vestiges of the Soviet authorities, adopted the first series of national laws, and organized a special commission to draft the new constitution.
In March 1991, Georgia boycotted the All-Soviet Union referendum on the preservation of the USSR and held its own referendum on the issue of secession from the Soviet Union, resulting in almost 90% voting in favor of independence. At 12:30 p.m. on 9 April 1991, the Supreme Soviet of Georgia adopted the Declaration of Independence of Georgia. Two months later, on 26 May 1991, Gamsakhurdia won the first contested direct elections for the presidency of Georgia, obtaining over 85% of the votes cast. It seemed that the goal of independent Georgian republic was finally achieved.

SECOND DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

The last decade of the 20th century proved to be extremely tense for Georgia. Ethnic conflicts and civil wars, combined with severe economic and political crises, have devastated the country, turning it from one of the most prosperous Soviet republics into one of the poorest and most underdeveloped states in Europe and the Near East. Georgia’s political development during these years of turmoil and its struggle to maintain independence vis-à-vis the neo-imperialist aspirations of Russia, are very complicated and difficult to illustrate.

The success of the Georgian national liberation movement, which culminated in the Georgian declaration of independence in 1991, soon proved to be bittersweet. President Zviad Gamsakhurdia’s anti-Russian and nationalistic policies, and increasingly authoritarian rule, led to an acute political conflict in Georgia in 1990–1991. The government adopted the doctrine of “hosts and guests” and threatened national minorities residing in Georgia. Gamsakhurdia himself saw enemies everywhere around him and denounced his political opponents as “agents and stooges of the Kremlin.” The new president’s erratic policies soon led to the resignation of several key government members, including Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and Foreign Minister Giorgi Khoshtaria.

In the fall of 1991, demonstrations against Gamsakhurdia’s government regularly took place in Tbilisi. Georgian society, including the national security forces, split into opposing sides. As clashes escalated in Tbilisi, Gamsakhurdia declared a state of emergency and cracked down on the opposition. Some units of the National Guard, led by Tengiz Kitovani, withdrew to the outskirts of the Georgian capital, where they
defied orders to disband and began preparations for a military coup. Gamsakhurdia’s former allies joined forces with the opposition, which now included the National Independence Party (Irakli Tsurteli), Popular Front (Nodar Natadze), Rustaveli Society (Akaki Bakradze), National Democratic Party (Giorgi Chanturia), etc.

In late December 1991, Kitovani’s forces launched an assault on Tbilisi and were supported by the Mkhedrioni paramilitary units led by Jaba Ioseliani. By 22 December, the rebels besieged the Parliament building, where Gamsakhurdia and his loyal troops put up a fierce resistance. The resulting fighting led to many deaths and destruction of the central district of Tbilisi. On 6 January 1992, Gamsakhurdia finally broke through the blockade and escaped to Armenia and then to Chechnya, where he organized his government in exile. Kitovani and Ioseliani, with the support of former Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua, established an interim government, the Military Council. To legalize their coup against a democratically elected president, the members of the Military Council invited Eduard Shevardnadze, whose international clout was imperative to legitimize the new authorities. In March 1992, Shevardnadze became the head of the State Council.

Meanwhile, the situation in Georgia escalated and led to ethno-territorial conflicts that plunged the country in the abyss of civil war and economic collapse. In February 1992, fighting intensified in South Ossetia, where Russia provided covert support for separatists. Shevardnadze was forced to make concessions and signed an armistice in July 1992 that established the Joint Control Commission to regulate the conflict. Fighting in Ossetia was barely over when tensions in secessionist Abkhazia, also supported by Russia, led to violence in August 1992. Georgian authorities dispatched the National Guard and paramilitary units and the sporadic clashes soon escalated into a major war between the Russian-backed separatists and Georgian forces. Within a year, the Georgian troops were routed and some 300,000 Georgians and other residents of Abkhazia were expelled in a widespread ethnic cleansing of the region.

The entanglement of official Tbilisi in Abkhazia encouraged Zviad Gamsakhurdia to return to Georgia, where he rallied forces in his native region of Mingrelia (Samegrelo) and in Tbilisi. In June 1992, Zviadists seized the state television center in Tbilisi, but were driven out by the National Guard. In 1993, the pro-Gamsakhurdia forces under Colonel
Loti Kobalia launched a surprise attack against the government troops in Mingrelia and occupied strategic positions in the regions. Their actions played a crucial role in the failure of Georgian forces in Abkhazia since reinforcements were delayed or diverted to fight the insurgency. Threatened on both fronts, Shevardnadze was forced to make concessions to Russia and join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in return for Russian military support against the rebels. In October 1993, Georgian government forces, supported by Russian troops, launched a counterattack against Gamsakhurdia’s forces; the Russian navy landed troops to secure the strategic port of Poti. Heavy fighting took place around Samtredia, Khobi, Senaki, and Zugdidi; the combat was particularly savage in Mingrelia (Samegrelo) proper, where the Mkhedrioni paramilitary units went on a rampage. These atrocities contributed to the eventual antagonism of Mingrelians toward Shevardnadze and his government. By December 1993, most of Mingrelia was under government control and the pro-Gamsakhurdia leaders imprisoned; Gamsakhurdia himself was found dead under suspicious circumstances (the official version supports a suicide) near the village of Jikhashkari.

The civil war remains one of the most dramatic and decisive events in the history of modern Georgia. A prosperous Soviet republic, Georgia was completely devastated during the three years of conflict, with the economy and industry shattered and the population suffering from gas and electric outages. The collapse of the central authorities led to the rise of numerous criminal gangs, while the activities of Mkhedrioni paramilitary units affected thousands of citizens throughout the country. The civil war certainly contributed to the separatist movements in Ossetia and Abkhazia by radicalizing the sides involved in these conflicts and diverting much-needed Georgian resources. Other regions, notably Adjara and Javakheti, became increasingly defiant of the central authorities. Furthermore, Georgian society itself became split into two irreconcilable sides that became engaged in a vicious struggle for the next decade.

As the conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia subsided in 1994, Shevardnadze turned to domestic affairs and sought to restore the central authority that was gravely weakened during the turmoil. Over the next three years, he outmaneuvered his political opponents and consolidated his authority. The once powerful warlords Jaba Ioseliani and Kitovani
were imprisoned, and paramilitary units were banned. In August 1995, a new Constitution was adopted establishing the institutions of the presidency and the Parliament. In 1995, and later in 2000, Shevardnadze was elected president of Georgia, though elections were marred by claims of widespread fraud and vote rigging. In August 1995, Shevardnadze barely survived an assassination attempt during the official signing ceremony of the Constitution on 29 August and used this event to get rid of his opposition. In early February 1998 Shevardnadze survived another attempt on his life and investigations alleged Zviadist involvement, leading to increased persecutions of Gamsakhurdia’s supporters. In October 1998, a two-day armed insurrection by pro-Gamsakhurdia troops threatened to destabilize Georgia but ended after the mutineers surrendered to government forces.

Shevardnadze’s presidency constitutes an important period in the recent history of Georgia. On his arrival, the country was ravaged by a civil war and ethnic conflicts; the economic and industrial infrastructure was largely destroyed. Georgian society itself was demoralized, divided into factions, and dominated by warlords. Using his contacts in the diplomatic world, Shevardnadze established close relations with the United States, which he perceived as a counterbalance to the Russian influence in Transcaucasia. Georgia soon became a major recipient of U.S. foreign and military aid, signed a strategic partnership with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and even declared its goal of joining NATO and the European Union (EU). One of Shevardnadze’s major achievements was showing to Western and American policymakers that Georgia can serve as a secure East-West energy corridor, which allowed Tbilisi to secure a multi-billion oil pipeline project (Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan) to transport oil from the Caspian Sea to the European markets. In 1999, Georgia celebrated another important success as it joined the Council of Europe, and in 2000, Tbilisi became the 137th member of the World Trade Organization. In 2002, Georgia announced its resolve to seek full membership in the Euro-Atlantic alliance, becoming a member of NATO’s Partnership for Peace.

However, Shevardnadze’s relative successes in foreign affairs were more than outweighed by domestic failures. While economic reforms were launched, they were not far-reaching enough and were often erratically enforced. The shadow economy accounted for as much as 60% of the country’s economic product as tax evasion, smuggling, extortion,
bribery, and rigged privatization became pervasive. Shevardnadze was unable to restore central authority in some regions, especially in Adjara. Supporters of Gamsakhurdia and other dissidents were persecuted and many imprisoned on trumped-up charges. Corruption became so rampant that Georgia became known as one of the world’s most corrupt countries. Shevardnadze’s closest advisers and associates, including members of his family, exerted disproportionate economic power and controlled large portions of the oil trade and media holdings. In 2001, Shevardnadze began an extensive anti-corruption reform but it proved to be an empty gesture. In October 2001, public discontent led to protests in Tbilisi, after Rustavi 2, an independent television station that had been critical of the government, was raided by security officials. Public demonstrations forced Shevardnadze to announce the dismissal of his entire government in November. In April 2002, economic woes were worsened by a natural disaster as a powerful earthquake rocked Tbilisi, causing extensive damage to some 2,500 buildings.

Irritated by Georgia’s pro-Western course, Russia encouraged separatism in Abkhazia and Ossetia while effectively declaring an economic blockade on the rest of Georgia that resulted in widespread power and gas outage. The escalating war in Chechnya further deteriorated Russo-Georgian relations as Russia accused Shevardnadze of harboring Chechen guerrillas. After the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001, Georgia became a strategic partner in the American war against international terrorism. Tbilisi offered Georgian airspace and airfields to the United States of America during the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and contributed troops to the international contingent in Iraq. In 2002, Shevardnadze turned to the U.S. for assistance to enhance Georgia’s military preparedness, and a special Train and Equip Program to train the Georgian army was launched with the financial backing from Washington.

The charges of dishonesty and fraud left Shevardnadze vulnerable during the parliamentary elections of 2003. The officially announced results of this election favored Shevardnadze’s ruling party but were immediately denounced as rigged and unfair by the opposition and by international election observers. This sparked massive demonstrations, popularly known as the Rose Revolution, demanding the resignation of the president. Led by Shevardnadze’s one-time protégés, Zurab Zhvania, Nino Burdjanadze, and Mikhail Saakashvili, the protesters broke...
into the opening session of a new Parliament on 21 November 2003, forcing Shevardnadze to escape with his bodyguards. Pressured by
Russia and the United States, Shevardnadze announced his resignation
on 23 November and was replaced as president on an interim basis by
Burdjanadze.

Thus, a powerful coalition of reformists headed by Saakashvili, Bur-
djanadze, and Zhvania found itself at the helm of the state. In January
2004, Saakashvili won a landslide victory in the presidential elections.
He pushed through constitutional amendments that strengthened the
powers of the president and restored the post of prime minister for his
ally, Zurab Zhvania. Their first great success came in removing Aslan
Abashidze, the defiant leader of Adjara, and bringing this region back
under the control of the central authorities. The new authorities sought
to reconcile Georgian society by rehabilitating former President Zviad
Gamsakhurdia and releasing Gamsakhurdia’s supporters who were im-
prisoned by Shevardnadze’s government. Saakashvili also pushed
through the change of state symbols and adopted his National Move-
ment’s party banner as a new national flag in 2004; furthermore, in a bid
to portray Georgia as a European state, the new administration had or-
dered the flag of the European Union to be flown together with the state
flag at government buildings.

Economic reforms and improvements in living standards enjoy high
priority since more than half of the population of Georgia lives below
the poverty line. The low rate of economic growth places Georgia as
100th out of the 177 countries listed in the United Nations Development
Program’s Human Development Report of 2005, significantly lower
than most of the transitional countries. A growing gap between the rich
and poor is also of great concern. Saakashvili’s government directed its
efforts to fighting the widespread black economy, reforming tax codes,
imposing more rigorous tax collection, and making the country more at-
tractive for foreign investment. Georgia’s economic reforms and new
round of privatization earned praise from the international community
and helped secure new credit lines from the International Monetary
Fund and World Bank. The armed forces were substantially modernized
and increased.

More far-reaching and dramatic was the new government’s anti-
corruption campaign that purged the government bureaucracy of
thousands of officials; in the police alone, only 15% of former officials
remained in the force. The family and clan structure of Georgian society facilitates a system in which corruption easily flourishes. Thus, the watchdog Transparency International ranked Georgia 124th place (out of 133) in 2003 and 133rd place (out of 145) in 2004. It remains to be seen if the new government will be able to eradicate corruption—which is so widespread and deeply rooted in Georgian society—in the short term.

Another priority spelled out by Saakashvili after his election is bringing back the breakaway regions under Georgian authority. After restoring control of Adjara in the spring of 2004, the new presidency shifted its attention toward the separatist region of South Ossetia, which led to sharp tensions and brief clashes between the two sides. The issue is very sensitive and cannot be seen separately from the relations with Russia, which exerts great influence in the separatist regions. Relations with Russia, however, remain a major concern in the light of Russia’s continuing political, economic, and military support to separatist governments in both regions. The new government of Georgia pursues a strongly pro-Western, particularly pro-U.S., foreign policy, and seeks Georgian membership of NATO and the EU. After the start of American war in Iraq, Georgia joined the coalition forces and remained one of the major contributors to the coalition in terms of the country’s per capita troop deployment. In 2004, the NATO’s North Atlantic Council approved the Individual Partnership Action Plan of Georgia. In May 2005, Georgia was visited by U.S. President George W. Bush, who was greeted by tens of thousands of Georgians at Freedom Square in Tbilisi. With U.S. backing, Georgia achieved a historic agreement with Russia on the complete withdrawal of Russian military bases by 2008. Such pro-Western overtures only embitter Georgia’s northern neighbor, which still perceives south Caucasus as its sphere of influence and vital to its geo-strategic interests. Russo–Georgian relations rapidly deteriorated in 2004–2006 and the governments of two states bickered over a wide range of issues. In January 2006, amid “gas war” between Russia and Ukraine, acts of sabotage in Russia left Georgia without gas and electricity amid the coldest winter in a century. Russia’s lackluster response and two-fold increase in gas price further strained relations between the two neighbors and forced Tbilisi to seek alternative sources of energy. In late February, the dispute deepened after Russia refused to receive the Georgian prime minister in Moscow and stopped issuing visas to Georgian citizens. In March, Georgian Parliament discussed
legislation to seek $15 billion in restitution from Russia for its involvement in conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. But the following month, Russia countered with a full-scale “trade war” banning Georgian agricultural produce, wine, and mineral waters from the Russian market. In response, Tbilisi declared its intention to withdraw its membership from the Commonwealth of Independent States. The rift between Russia and other former Soviet republics became especially apparent after the presidents of Ukraine, Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, joined by the U.S. delegation led by Vice President Richard Cheney, assembled at the conference in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 4 May 2006. Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili accused Russia of “imperial nostalgia” that sought to undermine the economies and sovereignty of former Soviet republics. However, the conference was noteworthy for the U.S. vice president’s speech that harshly criticized Russia for backsliding on democracy and using its vast energy resources to blackmail and dominate its neighboring states. The address was immediately characterized as a modern-day version of Winston Churchill’s famous “Iron Curtain” speech, and this time Georgia seems to have positioned itself on the other side of the “curtain.” In the summer of 2006, the Georgian government faced an uprising attempt by a defiant paramilitary group in the Kodori gorge but quickly moved in to suppress it. The government then made a decision to relocate the Abkhaz government-in-exile to the Kodori Valley, the only remaining territory of Abkhazia under Georgian control. This decision was condemned by Russia and the secessionist authorities of Abkhazia, who fear official Tbilisi will seek military solution to the conflict.

Entering the 21st century, Georgia is beset with numerous difficulties such as ubiquitous corruption and government inefficiency, secessionist demands of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, unfriendly, oftentimes hostile, relations with Russia, an unstable economic situation, and widespread poverty. The new government’s reforms give some hope of improvement, but only time will tell how these reforms and policies fare.
ABASGIA. Region in ancient western Georgia. The ethnicity of the Abasgoi tribe is still a matter of discussion, as some scholars claim their Abkhazian origins, while others describe them as one of the Georgian tribes. According to Flavius Arrian, Abasgia was a Roman client state in the second century, and the Roman emperor appointed its rulers. Starting in the fourth century, the Abasgoi tribes faced the rising Apshil tribes in the south, which forced them to move to the north and establish their realm around present-day Sukhumi. Abasgia later became part of the principality of Egrisi (Lazica), and the kings of Egrisi nominated its princes. Abasgia supported Egrisi in the wars between Byzantium and Sasanid Iran. In 550, Abasgia was embroiled in a widespread uprising against Byzantine rule. The Abasgoi elected two new princes—Opsites in the east and Sceparnas in the west—and appealed to the Persians for support. Sceparnas was soon afterward summoned to the Sassanid court, and his colleague Opsites prepared to resist the Roman forces that the Byzantine commander Bessas dispatched against him under the command of Wilgang and John the Armenian. The Byzantine army suppressed the uprising later that year and restored Byzantine authority. Early in the seventh century, Byzantium detached Abasgia from Egrisi and established its direct rule in the region. The new Abasgia region now included lands of western Apshils, Sanigs, and Misimils and was often used to refer to present-day Abkhazia as well as western Georgia in general.

ABASHELI, ALEXANDER (1884–1954). Georgian poet. He was born Alexander Chochia in the village of Sachochio in Kutaisi
province and became actively involved in revolutionary activities in the 1900s, participating in the 1905 Revolution. His poems—*Tbilisi Night* (1926), *October Thunder* (1937), *To My Native Land* (1938), and others—glorified Soviet achievements, and during World War II, he published party line lyrics, including *Beat Them Off*, *Stalingrad*, and *The Khevsurian Tank Driver*, among others. He promoted publication of Georgian classical literature, and, together with George Abashidze, he authored the Georgian national anthem.

**ABASHIDZE, ASLAN (ASLANBEG) (1877–1924).** Georgian general. He was born into a prominent Georgian family and was the brother of Mehmed Abashidze. He participated in revolutionary activities in 1905–1907 but later fled to the Ottoman Empire where he remained until 1917. He studied military art in Istanbul and befriended the young Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. He returned to Adjara after the February Revolution of 1917 and offered his service to the newly established Democratic Republic of Georgia. Abashidze was actively involved in establishing the Georgian army but had to leave the country after the Soviet invasion of 1921. He lived in exile in Istanbul, and was involved with the Georgian community and the organization of the August Uprising of 1924 against the Soviet regime in Georgia. He was allegedly poisoned in 1924. See also KVINITADZE, GIORGI; MAZNIASHVILI, GIORGI.

**ABASHIDZE, ASLAN (1938– ).** Head of the Adjarian Autonomous Republic in western Georgia from 1991 to 2004. Abashidze was born into a prominent Georgian family of Adjarian descent. His grandfather, *Mehmed Abashidze*, was a famous writer and a member of the National Council of the Democratic Republic of Georgia (1918–1921), but he was executed during Joseph Stalin’s purges in 1937. Abashidze’s father, Ibrahim, was imprisoned and spent 10 years in the GULAG (an acronym for Glavnoye Upravleniya Ispravitelno-Trudovykh Lagerey i kolonii) camp system in Siberia. After Stalin’s death, Abashidze’s family was rehabilitated, which allowed him to graduate with a degree in history and philosophy from Batumi State Pedagogical Institute and a degree in economics from Tbilisi State University. He worked as a teacher (1962–1965) and director of technical service institutes (1965–1980) before becoming the head of

After the Georgian declaration of independence in 1991, Abashidze gained a powerful appointment, becoming the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara. He also served as the deputy chairman of the Parliament of Georgia in 1991 and 1992–1995. He gradually established himself independently of the Tbilisi authorities and soon opposed the government of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. During the civil war from 1991–1993, Abashidze closed the borders of his autonomous republic and prevented the spread of civil disturbance into Adjara, saving the region from devastation and pillages. This further increased his popularity among the local population. Abashidze established a free economic zone in Adjara to attract foreign capital and succeeded in developing local infrastructures, turning Adjara into one of the most prosperous regions in Georgia. This helped him to win reelection in 1998. However, Abashidze’s government was also characterized by nepotism, widespread persecution of the opposition, and suppression of basic freedoms; Abashidze’s family and close circle of friends allegedly run most of the businesses in Adjara. After the return of Eduard Shevardnadze to Georgia, Abashidze reached an accord that allowed him to retain semi-independence in Adjara, and he established close relations with Russia. The relations between Batumi and Tbilisi soon grew cold, and Abashidze’s political party, the Union of Democratic Revival or the Union for Georgia’s Rebirth, became an active opposition force to Shevardnadze’s government. Official Tbilisi was reluctant to openly challenge Abashidze, fearing another civil war and breakaway region. Abashidze became increasingly defiant of the central authorities, for example, by retaining customs duties and revenues earmarked for Tbilisi.

The situation changed drastically after the Rose Revolution in November 2003. The new government in Tbilisi set the restoration of its control over Adjara as one of its top priorities. In response, Abashidze denounced the new government, declared a state of emergency in Adjara, and sought Russian support against Tbilisi. The enmity between the two centers rapidly intensified when in mid-March 2004 a motorcade of President Mikhail Saakashvili traveling to Adjara was
stopped by the Adjarian border guards and was refused entry. Abashidze accused Saakashvili of attempting to overthrow him and called for a mobilization of paramilitary units. In response, Saakashvili issued a one-day ultimatum to Abashidze to accept central authority and disband the Adjarian forces. The central authorities closed transit routes in and out of Adjara and declared an economic blockade of the region. Despite his attempts, Abashidze failed to secure help from Russia and came under intense pressure from the United States and European states. In early May, thousands of protesters demonstrated in Batumi demanding Abashidze’s resignation. Amid extreme tensions and public pressure, Abashidze resigned on 5 May 2004. The next day, after receiving assurances of personal security from Tbilisi and Moscow, Abashidze left for Russia, where he currently resides.


ABASHIDZE, GRIGOL (1914–1994). Prominent Georgian writer and academician. Born in Zeda Rgani in western Georgia, he graduated with a degree in philology from Tbilisi State University in 1936 and worked at the satirical journal Niangi in 1944–1951 before serving as editor of the literary journals Drosha and Mnatobi in 1951–1967. He became first secretary of the Union of Georgian Writers in 1967 and later directed the Union between 1973 and 1981. In 1982, he was appointed to head the Shota Rustaveli Prize Committee. His first poems were published when he was 20 years old and quickly became popular. He revived the classical style of poetry and intertwined themes of past and present, historical symbolism, and philosophy. Among his earlier poems (1930–1950) are Am did
khmaurshi, Poladis simghera, Zarzmis zmaneba, Shavi qalaqis gazapkhuli, Giorgi VI, Ganmeordeba, Gazapkhuli, Sakure, Samgoris velze. After winning the USSR State Prize in 1951, Abashidze turned to prose and produced a series of excellent historical novels, including Lasharela (1957), Didi ghame (1963), and Tsotne dadiani anu kartvelta datsema da amaghleba (1975). This trilogy is the story of 13th century Georgia and the establishment of the Mongol yoke. Abashidze also authored numerous novelettes, short stories, and children’s literature and translated works by Russian and European poets and writers.

ABASHIDZE, IRAKLI (1909–1992). Prominent Georgian writer, scholar, and academician. Born on 23 November 1909 in Khoni, he graduated with a degree in philology from Tbilisi State University in 1931 and worked as an editor of the journal Chveni Taoba (1938–1939) and of Mnatobi from 1946–1953. Starting in the 1930s, he regularly published collections of his poems that brought him critical acclaim. He served as the executive secretary of the Writers’ Union of Georgia from 1939–1944, first secretary of the union from 1953–1966, and was its chairman in 1966–1967. He served as the secretary of the Writer’s Union of the USSR from 1968–1970. In the 1950s and 1960s, Abashidze visited India and Palestine on scientific missions which resulted in a series of books; Palestine, Palestine garnered him the Rustaveli Prize in 1965 and Mtsvel Indoetshi and Indoetis Gzebze brought him the Jawaharlal Nehru Prize in 1972. In his later years, he produced excellent translations of Russian and Western European writers and won the Galaktion Tabidze Prize for his poems in 1987. He was elected a member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 1960 and served in the academy presidium from 1965–1988. Among his greatest accomplishments, Abashidze supervised the publication of the multi-volume Georgian Encyclopedia between 1966–1992. In 1988, he became the chairman of the Rustaveli Society of Georgia. He died on 14 January 1994 and was buried in the Pantheon of Public Figures in Tbilisi. See also LITERATURE.

ABASHIDZE, MEHMED (MEHMED BEG) (1873–1937). Prominent Georgian statesman and public benefactor. Born to the powerful family of Abashidze, rulers of Adjara, Mehmed was raised in the
Ottoman-dominated Batumi but studied in the first Georgian school opened there in 1883. His father, Ibrahim Abashidze, was an associate of Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, and other prominent Georgian public figures. Fluent in six languages, Mehmed showed his literary talents early and authored several works and translations from Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. He wrote the first Georgian textbook on the Arabic language and the first Turkish translation of Shota Rustaveli’s great epic, but the manuscript was lost in the 1930s. Abashidze also earned fame as a playwright and his works were staged in the Batumi Drama Theater.

Besides his literary career, Abashidze was actively involved in the political life of Adjara and of Georgia in general. In the early 1900s, he was involved with the Socialist Federalist Party of Georgia and called for the region’s integration within Georgia. In 1908, he fled the Tsarist persecutions to the Ottoman Empire but was arrested there and spent one year in various prisons. He was released but from 1909–1913 he was under house arrest. Returning to Adjara in 1913, he was arrested by the Tsarist authorities and spent several years in Russian prisons, first in Batumi and then in Novocherkassk and Tbilisi before being exiled to Siberia. After his release, Abashidze was prohibited from returning to Adjara and lived under house arrest in Tbilisi. Despite restrictions, he managed to continue active participation in politics and established the Committee of Georgian Muslims of the Batumi district.

Abashidze returned to Adjara only after the February Revolution of 1917. He helped organize the national congress in Batumi and directed the Committee of Georgian Muslims to counter the actions of the Musavat Party that preached pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism in Adjara. In November 1917, he was elected to the first National Council of Georgia and played an important role in the subsequent discussions regarding the status and treatment of the Muslim population of Georgia. He was in Batumi during the Turkish occupation of Batumi in March 1918 and was detained for his criticism of the Turkish authorities. Imprisoned in the Trebizond prison, he escaped later that year and started a campaign against the Turkish-organized referendum in Adjara. In May 1918, he participated in the events leading to the Georgian Declaration of Independence, and following the British occupation of Batumi, he
returned to Adjara, where he organized the Congress of the People of Adjara. From 1919–1921, he was chairman of the Mejlis (National Assembly) of Adjara and was instrumental in countering the Turkish encroachments on the region.

After the Bolsheviks seized power in Adjara in March 1921, Abashidze resigned his position in the Mejlis and was elected to the Revolutionary Committee of the Batumi district. He later participated in the work of the committee, drafting the first constitution of the Adjarian autonomous republic. However, in 1923, Abashidze was expelled from Georgia by the Bolshevik authorities and lived for five years in Baku. Returning to Batumi in 1928, he was initially well treated by the Soviet authorities since he personally had known Joseph Stalin since the early 1900s. In 1935, he became the head of the Adjarian section of the Writers’ Union of Georgia. However, as the Stalinist purges intensified, Abashidze became a prime target and was arrested together with other members of his family in 1937. He was tried on trumped-up charges of treason and executed later that year. Abashidze was rehabilitated only in 1957.

ABASHIDZE, VASO (VASILY) (1854–1926). Prominent Georgian actor and director, founder of realism in the Georgian theater. Born in Dusheti, Abashidze began his career as a stage actor in local plays before debuting with the Georgian Drama Society in Tbilisi in 1879. Over the years, he performed in and directed many theatrical productions and co-founded (1885) and edited the journal Theater. For his contributions to the development of the Georgian theater, the Tbilisi Theater of Musical Comedy was named after him.

ABAZA MEHMED PASHA (?–1634). Prominent Ottoman statesman of Georgian descent. Born to a Georgian family, he was kidnapped in his childhood and sold into slavery in Istanbul. He converted to Islam and quickly advanced through the administrative ranks of the Ottoman Empire. In 1605–1607, he took part in the uprising in Anatolia and was captured but was pardoned. Abaza Mehmed Pasha was appointed beglarbeg of Marash in 1617 and then given the governorship of Erzurum in 1620. Two years later, he led a rebellion against Sultan Mustafa I that continued until 1628. Abaza Mehmed Pasha
contacted King Teimuraz I of Kakheti who promised him assistance against the Ottomans, and helped the forces of Shah Abbas of Persia to capture the fortress of Akhaltsikhe. Abaza Mehmed Pasha was captured on 18 September 1828 and taken to Istanbul, where Sultan Murad IV pardoned him and appointed him first the governor of Bosnia and later of Ochakov in the Crimea. Abaza Mehmed Pasha distinguished himself during the Polish-Ottoman War in 1633 but became a victim of court intrigues and was arrested and executed on 24 August 1634.

ABBAS I, SHAH (1571–1629). Shah of the Safavid dynasty (1588–1629) of Persia, also known as Abbas the Great. The son of Muhammad Shah and his Georgian wife, Abbas ascended the Persian throne at the age of 17 and faced an uphill struggle against the Ottomans, concluding peace on unfavorable terms in 1590. After consolidating his rule, Abbas began a systematic inclusion of Georgians and Armenians in his newly established standing army Ġolämān-e ḵāša-ye ্sārifa (crown servants). Abbas used these Ġolām troops to crush the power of the Qizilbash aristocracy and used the wealth he acquired from confiscated properties to further reinforce his position. He drove the Uzbegs from eastern Iran in 1598 and attacked the Ottomans in the west, recapturing the key fortress of Kars and the Azerbaijani regions of Tabriz and Erevan. From 1614–1618, he launched three invasions of the eastern Georgian principalities of Kartli-Kakheti and resettled some 200,000 Georgians in Persia where they helped to develop agriculture and other industries; their descendents still reside in these regions. Shah Abbas also surrounded himself with many Georgian nobles, appointing them to key positions throughout Persia. Among his wives were Leila, the sister of King Luarsab II of Kartli, Helene, sister of King Teimuraz I of Kakheti, and Fahrimjan Begum, sister of King Simon I of Kartli.

Despite his close relations with Georgians, Abbas ruthlessly persecuted the Bagrationi rulers of Kakheti and Kartli, giving his blessing to the murder of King Alexander II of Kakheti in 1605, castrating Princes Levan and Alexander in 1620, killing King Luarsab II of Kartli in 1622, and torturing to death Queen Ketevan of Kakheti in 1624. Abbas’ policies soon backfired as he faced a widespread uprising in Georgia from 1615–1625. Georgians, led by maverick com-
mander Giorgi Saakadze, successfully engaged the Persian army at Marabda, Martkopi, and the Isani Valley and thwarted Shah Abbas’ plans to destroy the Georgian principalities. Nevertheless, by the time of his death in 1629, Shah Abbas had restored to Persia the territories held at the time of Ismail I. He transferred the capital from Qazvin to Isfahan, turning it into a thriving center of arts, craft-based industry, and commerce. See also ALLAHVERDI KHAN; BARATASHVILI, SHADIMAN; PERSIA, GEORGIAN COMMUNITIES IN; ROSTOM KHAN.

ABBAS II, SHAH (1642–1666). The son of Shah Sefi I, Abbas II employed numerous Georgians at his court, most important of them being spasalar Rostom Khan, Aslan Khan of Merv, Khosrow Mirza, governor of Isfahan, and others. Abbas continued an aggressive policy toward the eastern Georgian principalities and resettled tens of thousands of Georgians from Kakheti replacing them with Turkoman tribes. His policies led to the widespread Bakhtrooni Uprising in Kakheti in 1660. See also VAKHTANG V.

ABDALLAH-BEG. Georgian political figure of the 18th century. The son of King Iese of Kartli and Helen, the daughter of King Erekle I, he supported the Persians in Georgia and governed Gori and later Tbilisi for them. In 1744, he received the governorship of Kvemo Kartli but claimed the throne of the entire Kartli and revolted in his fortress of Samshvilde. He used the Daghestanian tribes to ravage the countryside and fight King Erekle II of Kartli. He was eventually defeated by Erekle.

ABESALOM AND ETERI. Georgian folk epic. The poem describes how Prince Abesalom and his vizier Murman fell in love with the beautiful Eteri, a common girl. After she and Abesalom swore eternal love to each other, bitter Murman turned to evil forces to gain the hand of Eteri. During their wedding, Murman used magic millet to enchant Eteri and promised to cure her in return for her affection. Although he gained possession of her, he failed to win Eteri’s love. Loosing his love, Abesalom became mortally ill and Eteri’s attempts to save him proved to be too late. After his death, Eteri committed suicide and they were buried together. However, even in death, the
evil Murman haunted the lovers, burying himself alive in a grave dug between them. Zachary Paliashvili produced a successful opera in 1919 based on this epic.

ABKHAZ (Apkhaz, Apsua). Abkhaz are considered to be one of the indigenous peoples in the Caucasus. They comprised a minority population of the Abkhazian ASSR but since the Georgia-Abkhazian conflict in 1990, they constitute a majority in the self-proclaimed republic of Abkhazia. While the Abkhaz call themselves apsua and their ancient territory Apsny (the land of the Abkhaz), neighboring peoples refer to them by different names like aigba and mdauet (Karachays, Kabardians), baskhyg (Ubykhians), mephaz (Svans), aphaza (Megrelians), apkhazi (Georgians), and abaza (Turks). The Abkhaz language belongs to the Abkhazo-Adyghian group of the Caucasian family. A Latin-based alphabet for the Abkhaz language was initially devised by P. Uslar in 1862, but in the 1890s, Dmitri Gulia helped create an Abkhaz script that developed a written Abkhaz language. However, the Soviet authorities made major changes in the alphabetic basis of the language: in 1926, the analytic alphabet of N. Marr was introduced only to be replaced by Roman letters in 1928, Georgian script in 1938, and the Slavic one in 1954.

The ethnic origin of the Abkhaz population remains a matter of heated discussion because of its political implications. Abkhazian historians insist that modern Abkhazs descended from ancient tribes that had populated this area for centuries and that Georgians only recently migrated to Abkhazia. In return, Georgian historians argue that proto-Georgian tribes, among them the Abkhaz, had populated Abkhazia from ancient times and that modern Abkhazs are the descendants of the North Caucasian tribes that migrated to Abkhazia from the North Caucasian regions and assumed the Abkhaz identity. Abkhazian communities also exist in Turkey, where they were established after thousands of Abkhazs fled Russian oppression in the late 19th century. Christianity was introduced as early as the first and second centuries CE, and Stratophilus, the bishop of Pitsunda, took part in the first Council of Nicaea held in 325 CE. Christianity played an important role in shaping the Abkhaz identity until the Ottoman conquest in the 16th century brought with it the spread of Islam. See also ABASGIA; ABKHAZIA, CONFLICT IN; ARDZINBA, VLADISLAV; BAGAPSH, SERGEY.
ABKHAZI, CONSTANTINE (1867–1923). Georgian military figure and statesman. He was born to a prominent Georgian family, the son of Prince Nikoloz (Niko) Abkhazi and Princess Chavchavadze, the sister of the great Georgian writer and public figure Ilia Chavchavadze. He graduated from the Tbilisi Cadet Corps and the St. Petersburg Military Academy and served in the Russian army. Returning to Georgia, he helped with the construction of the Kakhetian railway (1906–1913) and was elected as a marshal of the nobility of Kartli-Kakheti in 1913 and 1916. During World War I, Abkhazi rose to the rank of major general and successfully led an artillery brigade. After the February Revolution of 1917, he became one of the founders of the National Democratic Party of Georgia and was actively involved in the proclamation of independence in 1918.

During the brief existence of the first republic, Abkhazi was involved in forming the national army and founding of Tbilisi State University. He was a member of the national Parliament from 1919–1921 and was the chairman of the National Democratic Party in 1920–1923. During the Soviet invasion of 1921, Prince Abkhazi took part in the fighting and later led the Military Center of the Independence Committee, an underground organization to overthrow the Soviet regime in Georgia. He was actively involved in organizing partisan movements in Kakheti and Pshav-Khevsureti in 1922 as well as making preparations for the August Uprising of 1924. However, in February 1923, Abkhazi and other members of the Military Center were arrested by the Russian security forces and were executed for anti-Soviet activities on 19 May 1923.

ABKHAZIA (APKHAZETI, APSNY). Region in the northwestern part of Georgia. An autonomous republic within Georgia, it currently enjoys de facto independence following a bloody conflict in the 1990s, but it is not recognized internationally. Abkhazia covers some 8,600 km² and has an extensive coastline on the Black Sea; the Caucasus Mountains separate it from Circassia and the Russian Federation. The region is mostly mountainous, and major human settlements are largely confined to the coast. The climate is mild and is favorable for the production of tea, tobacco, and subtropical fruits.

The ethnic origin of the population of Abkhazia remains a matter of bitter dispute because of its political implications. Abkhazian historians
insist that modern Abkhazs descended from ancient tribes that had populated this area for centuries and that Georgians only recently migrated to Abkhazia. In return, Georgian historians argue that proto-Georgian tribes, among them the Abkhaz, had populated Abkhazia from ancient times and that modern Abkhazs are the descendants of the North Caucasian tribes that migrated to Abkhazia from the North Caucasian regions (Apsua, Adygey, etc.), and assumed the Abkhaz identity. The demography of Abkhazia has undergone major change since 1989 when the last Soviet census showed that 45.7% of its population were Georgians and 17.8% ethnic Abkhazs. In 1992–1994, virtually all Georgians (over 250,000) and other ethnic groups were expelled from the region as a result of widespread ethnic cleansing.

Archeological evidence demonstrates that humans settled in Abkhazia as early as primordial times. Paleolithic traces of human habitation were found at Yashtkhva, near present-day Sukhumi, while the Kistriki site produced findings from the Neolithic epoch. In the first millennium BCE, the territory of modern Abkhazia was part of the ancient kingdom of Colchis and later that of Egrisi. Greek traders established several colonies on its coast, the most important of them being Dioscurias (modern Sukhumi). Between the first and fourth centuries CE, western Georgia, including Abkhazia, was under Roman authority and later remained within the sphere of influence of the Byzantine Empire. Although Christianity was initially introduced in the first and second centuries CE, the local tribes converted to Christianity reluctantly over the next centuries. In the early seventh century, Byzantine Emperor Heraclius appointed his officials in Abkhazia, turning it into an autonomous principality and considerably expanding its territory. In the eighth century, Abkhazian eristavi recognized the sovereignty of Eristavi Archil of Kartli, and later that century, Eristavi Leon II united all of western Georgia into the Kingdom of the Abkhazs (Apkhazta samepo) with its capital in Kutaisi. In 975, the kingdom was absorbed into the united Kingdom of Georgia.

In the 12th century, the territory of Abkhazia was organized into the Sukumi principality (saeristavteristavo) under the Sharvashidze family within the united Kingdom of Georgia. Following the collapse of the kingdom of Georgia in the 15th century, Sharvashidze recognized the sovereignty of the Dadiani princes of Odishi (Mingrelia). Over the next decades, the Sharvashidze rulers took advantage of
civil strife and turmoil in western Georgia to expand their sphere of influence, extending the Abkhazian border first to the Ghalidzga River and then to the Enguri River. Simultaneously, to replenish the declining population, Sharvashidzes allowed the North Caucasian tribes to settle in their realms. Starting in the 16th century, Abkhazia found itself in the sphere of influence of the Ottoman Empire and some Abkhazians converted to Islam. During this period, Abkhazia fragmented into several political entities, led by prominent noble families such as the Sharvashidze, Marshania, and others.

In the early 19th century, Abkhazia gradually entered the Russian sphere of influence as the Georgian principalities (Imereti, Guria, Mingrelia, etc.) were annexed by the Russian Empire. In 1810, Prince Giorgi Sharvashidze recognized Russian sovereignty, and Russian authorities began a gradual annexation of Abkhazia, which ended in 1864 when the principality was officially abolished and was reorganized into the Sukhumi Military District within the Kutaisi Gubernia. During the Russo–Turkish wars of the 19th century Abkhazia was often a battleground for the two empires.

Abkhazia actively resisted Russian rule in the Caucasus throughout the 19th century. Large anti-Russian uprisings took place in 1821–1824, 1840–1842, and 1866. In the 1830s–1860s, some Abkhazs took part in Imam Shamil’s campaigns against Russia in Chechnya and Daghestan. Russia pursued the policy of Russification in the region and persecuted tens of thousands of Muslim Abkhazs, who were forced to immigrate to the Ottoman Empire between 1864–1878. Russian authorities also facilitated ethnic divisions in the region, and this period saw mounting tensions between the Abkhaz and Georgians. In response to Russian policies, Georgian nationalist leaders called for increased settlement of Georgians, Mingrelians in particular, in Abkhazia, where many regions became depopulated following the oppressive Russian measures. This only contributed to local antagonisms. In the 1905 Revolution, Abkhazs supported the Russian imperial authorities in part because of fear of potential Georgian oppression. As a result, Georgians perceived the Abkhazs as being pro-Russian “fifth columnists” who threatened Georgian independence. The dissolution of the Russian empire in 1917 led to a short-lived Georgian republic in 1918–1921 and further conflicts between Georgians and Abkhazs, who tried to break away from Geor-
gia; the causes of this secession included both Bolshevik propaganda and Abkhaz fears of Georgian cultural dominance.

In 1918, Abkhazian Bolsheviks attempted to create a soviet republic in Abkhazia, but the Georgian central authorities responded with military force, quelling the movement by late 1918. Simultaneously, the Abkhazian National Council discussed the issue of Abkhazian autonomy with the National Council of Georgia, and a special agreement was concluded in June 1918 that granted the Abkhazian National Council wide self-government. In 1921, the Constitution of Georgia recognized the autonomy of Abkhazia within Georgia.

Some Abkhaz groups continued their quest for greater independence and supported the Russian invasions of Georgia, first by General Anton Denikin’s Volunteer Army in February 1919 and then the Bolshevik invasion in March 1921. After the Soviet takeover of Georgia, the Bolshevik government rewarded the Abkhaz with the Abkhazian Soviet Socialist Republic, independent of Georgia, formally established in March 1921. This act was in keeping with the general policy of the Bolshevik authorities to fragment Georgia into a number of autonomous units that would be subject to the influence of Soviet Russia and the means to control Georgian government; in addition to Abkhazia, two more autonomous units of Adjara and South Ossetia were created. However, the Abkhazian quasi-independence was short-lived since Abkhazian authorities were compelled to conclude a treaty of federation with Georgia in December 1921. Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan were then incorporated into the Transcaucasian Federated SSR (ZFSSR) that became one of the founding republics of the Soviet Union in 1922. The constitution of the USSR of 1924 did not recognize Abkhazia as a union republic but treated it as an autonomous unit within Georgia.

Between 1922 and 1936, Abkhazia was governed by Nestor Lakoba, who enjoyed close personal ties with the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and spared it the rigors of collectivization. In 1925, the new constitution of Abkhazia granted it extensive autonomy within Georgia, but it was never put in effect. In 1931, the conference of soviets of Abkhazia changed its status from a union republic into an autonomous republic within the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic; the decision was approved by the Georgian republican government and was later reflected in the Constitutions of Georgia and Abkhazia.
Some Abkhaz responded with demonstrations and calls for the restoration of republic status or incorporation into the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). In December 1936, Lakoba died after dining with Lavrenti Beria, the head of the Communist Party in Transcaucasia. New Abkhazian authorities, under the close supervision of Beria, subjected the region to the policy of “Georgianization” that banned the Abkhaz language and cultural rights and encouraged Georgian migration to Abkhazia. This period (1937–1953) was, and still is, viewed by many Abkhazs as a Georgian attempt to eradicate their culture and identity, and it greatly facilitated the spread of anti-Georgian sentiments and the rise of Abkhaz nationalism. However, reprisals and cultural repression were not limited to the Abkhazs alone. Tens of thousands of Georgians perished in the Stalinist purges in the late 1920s and 1930s, many were arrested during the infamous “Mingrelian Case” in 1949, and hundreds were resettled to Central Asia in 1951.

After the death of Stalin and Beria, the Abkhaz were given a larger role in the governance of the autonomous republic that encouraged the growth of Abkhaz culture and literature. Abkhazian State University, Abkhaz national television, a museum, and theater and dancing ensembles were established. Newspapers and books were published in the Abkhazian language, albeit under the Soviet censorship. Ethnic quotas were established for government positions giving the Abkhaz a degree of political power that was disproportionate to their minority status in the republic; thus, there were 57 Abkhaz, 53 Georgians, and 14 Russians in the Supreme Soviet while the Abkhaz constituted one third of city and regional soviet officials. This led to heightened tensions among the population since other ethnic groups resented what they perceived as unfair distribution of power. Through the 1950s and into the 1970s, certain Abkhaz groups made calls for the separation of Abkhazia from Georgia and demanded the restoration of its union republic status or its incorporation into the RSFSR.

In the late 1980s, Georgian nationalism emerged as a major force shaping regional politics and escalating conflicts between Georgian and Abkhaz nationalists, who viewed each other with distrust and extremism. In the spring of 1989, tensions between Georgia and Abkhazia spiraled out of control when the Abkhaz nationalists called

The collapse of central government in Tbilisi and the coup against Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in early 1992 greatly contributed to Abkhazian separatism. Vladislav Ardzinba, chairman of the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet, took advantage of the Georgian turmoil to implement measures for establishment of the republic’s de facto independence. In July 1992, the Abkhaz authorities adopted the 1925 Constitution, declaring Abkhazia a sovereign republic. In response, the Georgian authorities deployed troops in Abkhazia, which led to clashes with the Abkhazian forces and eventually to a full-scale war. Abkhaz separatists received substantial political and military assistance from the Russian military as well as volunteers of the Confederation of the Mountain People of the Caucasus. By 1994, they had defeated the Georgian forces and established control over the region. Widespread ethnic cleansing led to the expulsion of virtually the entire Georgian population of Abkhazia as well as other ethnic groups.

At present, the conflict is at an impasse with neither side willing to make concessions. Some 300,000 refugees remain outside Abkhazia living in squalid conditions, and no settlement can be envisioned in the near future. Russia’s involvement in the conflict remains of crucial importance. Although the Kremlin denies any involvement in the war, its policies in the region contradict this. Russian military actively participated in the war and later provided weapons and training to the Abkhaz separatists. Illegal acquisition of property belonging to Georgian refugees in Abkhazia by Russian companies and individuals continues despite Georgian protests. Russia extended citizenship rights to Abkhazians, and currently the majority of Abkhaz
have Russian passports; the Russian authorities often use this fact to justify their interventions as the protector of Russian citizens. The Russian-Abkhaz border is notoriously porous, with Russian businesses and travel agencies freely operating in the region.

The frequent visits of Abkhaz leaders to Moscow reveal their great dependence on Russian authorities, who usually have the final say in decision making. The Russian Duma recently considered, but later rejected, annexing Abkhazia into the Russian Federation. Thus, Georgians perceive this conflict as a struggle against Russia and view the Abkhaz leadership as pawns of Russian strategic interests in the Caucasus.

**ABKHAZIA, CONFLICT IN.** Conflict between Georgians and Abkhazians, supported by Russia, in the former Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia. It is one of the most decisive events in the modern history of Georgia and has had a profound impact on the nation. The very definition of the conflict is disputed on both sides. To Georgians, this is not a conflict incited by ethnic hatred alone but rather a political struggle often blamed on “imperial forces” of Russia that seek to curb the Georgian pro-Western outlook and secure Russian dominance in the region. For the Abkhaz, the conflict is also not ethnic in nature but rather is about self-determination and their right to define their political future. For them, the Georgians are invaders and oppressors, so the conflict has a national-liberation character; ironically, fighting against perceived oppressors—Georgians—the Abkhaz sought help from a historically even greater—Russia, who had ruthlessly persecuted the Abkhaz throughout the late 19th century.

The tensions between Abkhazians and Georgians were largely suppressed during the Soviet era, but they flared up on several occasions in the 1950s and 1960s. More serious was the conflict over the constitutional reform initiated during Leonid Brezhnev’s era that would have abolished Georgian as a state language in the Georgian SSR. The Abkhaz used this opportunity to campaign for linguistic rights, and some called for Abkhazia’s incorporation in the Russian Federation. A letter signed by some 130 Abkhaz intellectuals was sent to the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1977 protesting against the influx of Georgians into Abkhazia and the Georgianization policies. An investigative commission led by Party Central Committee Secretary Ivan
Kapitonov studied the Abkhaz claims and enforced several changes, including the institution of additional cultural rights and proportional quota system of government; thus, despite being a minority, the Abkhazs soon controlled 67% of government ministers and 71% of regional (obkom) officials. However, this compromise was spurned by both the Abkhaz and Georgian sides; the Abkhaz maintained that it fell far short of their intended goal, and Georgians were incensed by what they considered excessive concessions to a minority group. In October 1978, public unrest erupted in Abkhazia, and law enforcement forces were used to quell the demonstrations. Three years later, another upheaval against Abkhazian privileges took place in Tbilisi. A violent conflict was averted because of the authoritarian system of the Soviet Union that suppressed both Georgian and Abkhaz nationalists.

The last years of the Soviet Union were marked by growing tensions in Abkhazia. While the Abkhaz were dissatisfied with their status as a national minority within Georgia, the Georgians themselves feared for the unity and survival of their nation and believed that the Soviet authorities would instigate ethnic conflict zones to chastise Georgia in case it attempted to secede from the Soviet Union. Such sentiments contributed to a widespread notion among the Georgians that ethnic minorities were pro-Russian and were controlled by the Kremlin. Therefore, Georgian nationalists often resorted to radical demands, including calls to abolish all autonomous regions within Georgia and to drive minorities out of the country in order to increase the ethnic homogeneity and loyalty of the remaining population. Such appeals naturally only antagonized the ethnic minorities. In the spring of 1989, tensions between Georgians and Abkhazs spiraled out of control when the Abkhaz nationalists again called for Abkhazian independence from Georgia. On 18 March 1989, the Popular Forum of Abkhazia (Aydgilara) organized a demonstration in Lykhny for the restoration of Abkhazia’s status as an independent soviet socialist republic (SSR). The drafting of a “Lykhny Letter” outlining their demands is often regarded as one of the major events leading to the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict. On 9 April 1989 (See Tbilisi, DEMONSTRATIONS in [1989]), a large-scale Georgian demonstration in Tbilisi in support of Georgian independence and opposing Abkhaz separatism was brutally suppressed by Soviet troops. The events of 9
April led to massive protests in Tbilisi and intensified Georgian nationalism.

The Georgian-Abkhaz conflict was influenced by a number of factors. The breakup of the USSR led to the collapse of strong central authority. Georgian attempts to secede only embittered Russian hardliners, who wanted to retain Georgia within the Russian sphere of influence. The Kremlin considered the region strategically important to its interests and was certainly reluctant to see it turn to the West; Georgian statements on close cooperation with the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) only strengthened this resolve in Moscow. Extreme positions taken by the Georgian nationalists, often bordering on chauvinism, added additional dynamics to this already convoluted process. The conflict in South Ossetia, which preceded the war in Abkhazia, also weakened and fragmented the Georgian side. The Abkhazs, apparently ignoring the Russian oppression of the 19th century that forced tens of thousands of them to flee to Turkey, now rallied around the Russian hard-liners against Georgia. Finally, the lack of unity among the Georgian leadership, especially after the fall of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, and the beginning the Zviadist insurgency in Mingrelia were of considerable importance. See OSSETIA, CONFLICT IN.

The first armed clashes between the Abkhazian and Georgian populations took place in mid-July 1989 and left 11 dead and 140 wounded. The Soviet authorities curbed these disorders but were unable to prevent further escalation of the conflict. On 25 August 1990, the Supreme Soviet of Abkhazia passed the Declaration on the State Sovereignty of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia. On 9 April 1991, Georgia proclaimed its independence from the USSR, abolished its Soviet Constitution, and restored the principal document of the Democratic Republic of Georgia of 1918–1921. The new Georgian government often campaigned on a slogan of “Georgia for the Georgians” which national minorities, including the Abkhaz, considered a threat to their interests.

For the Abkhaz authorities, the abolition of the Soviet Constitution of Georgia also meant the implicit abolition of their autonomous status since the Georgian Constitution of 1921 did not extend such status to Abkhazia. In March 1991, Gamsakhurdia issued an “Appeal to the Abkhazian People” in which he acknowledged the age-old
friendship between the Georgians and the Abkhaz but then accused the Abkhaz leadership—Vladislav Ardzinba in particular—of being a tool in the hands of Moscow. In response, Ardzinba declared that the Abkhazian Parliament still considered Abkhazia part of the USSR and supported the newly issued draft of the Union treaty, which granted equal rights to both Union and autonomous republics. In defiance of official Tbilisi, Abkhazia voted in the referendum for the preservation of the Union, which caused Gamsakhurdia to threaten to disband the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet and abolish Abkhazian autonomy. In return, Ardzinba arranged for the redeployment of a Russian airborne assault battalion from the Baltic republics to Sukhumi and shored up support from the hard-liners in the Russian government. In October–December, Tbilisi was compelled to accept elections to the Abkhazian legislature on a quota basis that disregarded demographics and gave the Abkhaz minority a majority of seats: 28 seats to the Abkhaz (17% of the population), 26 to the Georgians (47%), and 11 to all the remaining ethnic groups.

The situation further deteriorated due to ethnic violence in the former Autonomous District of South Ossetia. Official Tbilisi itself was in turmoil after a military coup d'etat removed President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and led to a civil war in Tbilisi in December 1991–January 1992. By March 1992, a new government body, a Military Council, was established and former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was invited to take its helm. In Abkhazia, Georgian deputies complained of discrimination after Ardzinba began establishing an Abkhaz-only National Guard. In early May 1992, Georgian deputies began boycotting the sessions of the Abkhazian Parliament, and one month later they began a campaign of civil disobedience, followed by a Georgian strike in Sukhumi and attempts to set up a parallel power structure. That same month, Abkhaz national guardsmen attacked the building housing Abkhazia’s Ministry of Internal Affairs in Sukhumi that was controlled by the Georgian authorities.

On 23 July 1992, the Supreme Council of the republic, boycotted by its Georgian members, declared full independence from Georgia and restored the 1925 Constitution of the Abkhaz Soviet Socialist Republic. The situation was further aggravated by the activity of armed groups, supporting the ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, that
now operated from western Georgia. Amid sporadic clashes, Tbilisi dispatched its National Guard units to restore order in Abkhazia in August 1992. The Georgian government later claimed that Ardzinba had been notified in advance of plans to move Georgian troops into Abkhazia to restore order (a fact denied by Ardzinba). After brief clashes with the Abkhazian paramilitary forces, the Georgian National Guard occupied most of Abkhazia while the secessionist government left Sukhumi. In the process, certain Georgian paramilitary units committed atrocities against both the Abkhaz and Georgian population of the region. Abkhaz public figures also accused the Georgians of damaging Abkhaz monuments of history and culture.

On 3 September 1992, a ceasefire was negotiated between the Abkhaz and Georgian sides in Moscow. Simultaneously, the self-styled Confederation of Mountain People of Caucasus, an umbrella organization of the pro-Russian forces in the North Caucasus, supported the Abkhaz secessionists and hundreds of volunteer paramilitaries, mostly Chechens, Kabardians, and Cossacks, crossed the mountains to fight against the Georgians. In late September, separatist forces launched a counterattack, capturing Gagra on 2 October. The Chechen separatist commander Shamil Basaev’s “Abkhazian Battalion” played an important role in this battle.

Although Moscow officially maintained neutrality, in reality, Russian troops in the conflict zone often assisted the Abkhaz forces, training and equipping them and providing air and naval support. The Russian officers were hostile to Eduard Shevardnadze, whom they saw as one of the initiators of the break-up of the Soviet Union and the dilapidated state of the Russian military. Senior Russian officers seem to have had their own vested interests in Abkhazia that often guided their actions. Finally, Moscow itself was involved in a crisis between the presidency and the Parliament, and President Boris Yeltsin’s control over his own military forces in the regions seemed doubtful at times. The Georgian government accused Russia of waging an undeclared war against Georgia after a number of Russian troops were captured fighting and a Russian fighter plane was shot down. In October–November 1992, Abkhaz forces, with Russian support, secured their positions around Gagra, established supply and communications lines, and prepared an offensive against Sukhumi. The Georgian central authorities were still in disarray as
Shevardnadze clashed with Tengiz Kitovani and Jaba Ioseliani, leaders of paramilitary forces.

In early March 1993, Shevardnadze arrived in Sukhumi to take control of the city defenses. On 14 March, the Abkhaz and the North Caucasus Confederation forces launched a full-scale attack on Sukhumi, resulting in widespread destruction and civilian casualties. Both sides accused each other of ethnic cleansing. Despite a brief armistice in March–May 1993, the Abkhaz and North Caucasian forces resumed their offensive toward the village of Tamishi in July, and the ensuing battle proved to be one of the bloodiest of the war. By late July, Sukhumi was virtually besieged. On 27 July, a Russian-mediated ceasefire was concluded in Sochi, providing for the withdrawal of the Georgian army from Abkhazia and mutual demilitarization by the belligerents to be followed by the return of a legal government to Sukhumi. In the meantime, Georgian central authorities had to deal with the increased activity of pro-Gamsakhurdia units in western Georgia, where Zviadist forces, commanded by Loti Kobalia, briefly took Senaki, Abasha, and Khobi, forcing official Tbilisi to divert substantial forces from Abkhazia.

As the Zviadist forces launched a major offensive against Georgian government troops near Samtredia on 15 September, the Abkhaz side decided to resume military operations. The armistice in Abkhazia ended on 16 September when separatist forces launched a large-scale offensive on Sukhumi and, with the help of Russian soldiers and North Caucasian volunteers, seized the town on 28 September after almost two weeks of bloody fighting. Georgian appeals to Russia to act on its obligations as a mediator under the Sochi agreements were ignored. Georgian sources reported massive atrocities against the Georgian civilian population perpetrated by the Abkhaz and their allies, especially the Chechens. Shevardnadze himself remained in Sukhumi as long as he could and was evacuated on one of the last planes leaving the region.

The fall of Sukhumi demoralized the Georgian forces and enabled the separatists to establish control over the entire territory of Abkhazia, except for the Kodori Gorge. Meantime, pro-Gamsakhurdia forces captured several cities, including the strategic port of Poti. Facing a disaster, Shevardnadze was forced to make major concessions to Russia and agreed to enter the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in re-
turn for political and military assistance; thus, Georgia was forced back into the Russian sphere of influence. The Kremlin immediately used its influence to halt the Abkhazian offensive and dispatched Russian troops to drive out the pro-Gamsakhurdia forces. On 9 October, a Georgian-Russian agreement on the status of Russian troops in Georgia was signed, and Russian troops landed in Poti to guard strategic objects in Georgia while the Georgian government forces were fighting Zviadist paramilitaries in October–December 1993. President Gamsakhurdia himself died in circumstances that remain unclear in a remote village in Mingrelia on 31 December 1993.

The military defeat of the Georgian forces exposed thousands of Georgian civilians to the wrath of separatists. Widespread ethnic cleansing of Georgians was accompanied by brutal atrocities conducted throughout the region; more than 250,000 Georgians and other ethnic groups were expelled. In December 1993, an official ceasefire was signed by the Georgian and Abkhaz leaders with Russian mediation under the aegis of the United Nations. Both sides pledged not to use force or the threat of force for the period of the negotiations, to exchange prisoners, and to create conditions for the voluntary, safe, and swift return of refugees. However, the negotiations revealed the parties’ drastically differing approaches to the future of Abkhazia. The Abkhaz side was reluctant to allow the return of the Georgian refugees but argued that Abkhazia’s status should be determined by an immediate referendum in which the population would choose between autonomy within Georgia, confederation of Abkhazia and Georgia on equal terms, or complete independence for Abkhazia. The Georgian side, realizing that the absence of Georgian refugees would skew voting in the Abkhaz favor, refused to concur until the refugee issue was resolved.

In April 1994, the Abkhaz and Georgian sides, with Russia’s mediation and participation of the United Nations and the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, signed a quadripartite agreement in Moscow on the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons. One of the clauses provided for prosecution of persons who had perpetrated military crimes, crimes against humanity, or serious common crimes, but it concerned only Georgian and not Abkhazian perpetrators. The Abkhaz side, remarkably, argued that any Georgian who had taken part in hostilities and was currently serving in the
Georgian military was not eligible to return to Abkhazia; this would have automatically disqualified most of the male Georgian population of Abkhazia. Furthermore, the agreement provided for Abkhazia’s own constitution, national symbols, and power sharing in the fields of foreign policy, trade, border service, customs, etc. The Abkhaz side interpreted these articles as virtual recognition of the sovereign status of Abkhazia. Official Tbilisi argued that Abkhazia was never referred to as a subject of international law.

In May 1994, the Georgian and Abkhaz sides agreed on a new ceasefire and the disengagement of troops. Both sides withdrew 12 km from the front lines along the Inguri River to form a security zone. In June 1994, the peacekeeping forces, provided by Russia, were deployed and the UN mission (UNOMIG) began operations. In late August, the first group of Georgian refugees was allowed into the Gali region.

On 26 November 1994, the Abkhaz Parliament declared the independence of Abkhazia. The declaration was condemned both in Tbilisi and Moscow. Over the next four years, with neither side willing to concede, the negotiations deadlocked and the conflict became a “frozen” one. In April–May 1998, it briefly escalated after Abkhaz forces entered Georgian villages in the Gali District, and although a new ceasefire was signed on May 20, the brief conflict resulted in several thousand more Georgian refugees. In October 1999, Abkhazia organized a referendum on independence and its Constitution, but the results were rejected by the international community because the majority of the Abkhazian population—Georgian refugees—were unable to participate in it. Three years later, the Abkhazian authorities introduced amendments to the Abkhazian Constitution providing for a dual citizenship, a move unambiguously directed at establishing closer relations with Russia. Since then at least two-thirds of the Abkhazs have acquired Russian citizenship.

The efforts of the UN remained central to the Abkhazian peace process. The UN approach to the conflict is anchored in ensuring the territorial integrity of Georgia as confirmed in the 1992 Moscow Agreement. In 2001, Dieter Boden, the UN secretary-general’s special envoy to Abkhazia, suggested a division of authority between Tbilisi and Sukhumi within a single Georgian state, a position reflected in the so-called “Boden Document.” However, the Abkhaz
leadership has rejected the draft as a basis for negotiations. In mid-March 2001, the third round of Georgian-Abkhazian talks took place in Yalta under the aegis of the Geneva peace process; the first round had been in Athens in October 1998, and the second in Istanbul in July 1999. The negotiations concluded with both sides issuing a non-aggression pledge and agreeing to work to allow the safe return of refugees. Following the meeting, the UN Security Council called on Abkhazia to be more flexible and to agree to the option of broad autonomy within Georgia.

However, the prospects for the peace process deteriorated in April 2001 after a series of killings, kidnappings, and skirmishes; Georgian refugees who had returned home were subjected to arrest and persecution by Abkhaz police. The hostilities brought a halt to peace talks within the framework of the UN Coordination Council. In May, Abkhazia refused to participate in the talks unless Georgia refrained from using guerrillas tactics, while Georgian authorities stressed that any future negotiations were dependent on the return of internally displaced persons to Abkhazia. The parties were on the brink of resuming full-scale military operations in autumn 2001 when tensions escalated in the Kodori Gorge; official Tbilisi deployed additional troops there, and, in response, the Russian peacekeeping force was dispatched against them, in violation of the terms of its mandate. Both Abkhazia and Georgia used aerial bombing, resulting in approximately 75 reported casualties. On 8 October 2001, a UN helicopter was shot down by unknown assailants, killing all nine persons on board. The crisis further strained relations between Georgia and Russia, the latter being accused of supporting Abkhazia’s separatist agenda and violating Georgian airspace. The Parliament of Georgia adopted a resolution calling for the removal of the Russian peacekeepers from Abkhazia and President Eduard Shevardnadze threatened to pull out of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Russia, in turn, refused to close its remaining military bases in Georgia despite commitments it had made at the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Summit in Istanbul in 1999. By late November 2001, the warring parties managed to pacify the situation, following the UN calls to end their military rhetoric and achieve a peaceful resolution of the dispute; Georgia agreed to pull its forces out of the Kodori Gorge.
By 2002, the conflict entered its 10th year and remained unresolved. The situation remained calm for the most part throughout the year, although both sides occasionally violated the ceasefire and sporadic fighting continued. In May 2002, after blocking it on several occasions, Russia changed its position on the UN document on Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competence between Tbilisi and Sukhumi, which called for subordinating Abkhazia to the central government of Georgia. By mid-May, Russia also completed the evacuation of the Gudauta air base, and the mandate of Russian peacekeepers was extended for another six months. The Abkhazian authorities, however, refused to accept the Basic Principles document because it threatened their goal of establishing an independent state. In August 2002, Georgian and Abkhazian authorities agreed to withdraw their forces from the Kodori Gorge to the approved 4-km buffer zone; later that year the Abkhaz side asserted that Chechen fighters were aiding Georgian troops in the Pankisi Gorge. In October, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called on the Abkhaz side to reconsider its refusal to discuss the Boden Proposal of 2001 that envisioned considerable autonomy within a Georgian state, but the Abkhaz government affirmed its unwillingness to discuss any proposals that would result in Abkhazia being a region of Georgia. In November, the ailing Abkhaz leader Vladislav Ardzinba sacked Prime Minister Anri Djergenia and appointed Gennadi Gagulia, who supported a harder line in relation to a peace settlement. In December 2002, tensions escalated between Moscow and Tbilisi after the former restored the rail link between Sochi and Sukhumi. The Georgian authorities refused to extend the mandate of the Russian peacekeeping force and called for a new rapid-reaction force to replace it. The Abkhaz and Russian sides rejected any changes to the current peacekeeping arrangement.

In March 2003, Georgia, Russia, and the Abkhaz reached an agreement in Sochi that called for expediting the return of Georgian refugees to the Gali region, extended the Russian peacekeeping force’s mandate, and confirmed the future resumption of the railway connection from Sochi via Sukhumi to Armenia. In April, the Abkhaz government suffered from intra-factional infighting as the newly appointed Prime Minister Gennadi Gagulia was dismissed following calls from the public political movement Amtsakhara; the Amt-
sakhara headquarters were subsequently bombed. In July, Amtskhara activists called for the Abkhaz leader Vladislav Ardzinba to resign. The peace process was also in a stalemate as bilateral talks under the aegis of the UN were postponed indefinitely after the Abkhaz delegation refused to travel to Tbilisi and Georgia continued to call for greater UN involvement and for a broadening in the composition of the peacekeeping force in Abkhazia. In October 2003, the Abkhaz and Georgian delegations met in Gali, and through the mediation of Heidi Tagliavini, the UN secretary-general’s special representative in Georgia, the two sides signed a protocol in which they agreed to take steps to stop the widespread criminal activities in the Gali region and the Kodori Gorge. They also agreed to cooperate with UN police in the area to facilitate the repatriation of Georgian internally displaced persons. Later that month, the Friends of the UN Secretary General Group, consisting of officials from France, Germany, Russia, Britain, and the United States, met in Moscow to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Abkhazia. In the final report, they highlighted the importance of implementing the agreements on the repatriation of refugees that had been reached in March 2003. However, in the summer of 2003, relations between Georgia and Russia soured again after the Russian authorities began to assess the condition of the Abkhaz section of the Russian–Georgian railway link; the Georgian authorities protested that the railway connection through Abkhazia can only be restored after the safe return of Georgian refugees to the region.

In 2003, even more important was the momentous event of the November elections and the subsequent Rose Revolution. The overthrow of Eduard Shevardnadze and the rise of Mikhail Saakashvili’s government that proclaimed restoration of Georgia’s national integrity as one of its main priorities, caused the Abkhaz leadership to anxiously look toward Russia for protection against possible aggression. This was especially evident after official Tbilisi quickly moved against the defiant province of Adjara and placed it under firm control of the central authority. In May 2004, President Saakashvili revealed his new settlement plan, which offered Abkhazia broad autonomy within a federal Georgian state; Abkhazia was to retain autonomous power in the executive and legislative branches while Tbilisi controlled foreign policy, defense, internal security, and
customs collection. The Abkhaz side, insisting on its sovereignty, rejected the offer as well as several other Georgian proposals, including a settlement proposed by Saakashvili when he addressed the United Nations. In August, friction increased between Russia and Georgia after railway service between Moscow and Sukhumi and ferry services between Russian towns and Abkhazia were restored. Saakashvili ordered the Georgian navy to sink any vessels entering the waters off Sukhumi without Georgian permission. In response, Abkhaz and Russian defense officials warned of retaliation.

By mid-2004, the Abkhaz side was in the midst of heated presidential elections. In April, the United Abkhazia Party was created under the leadership of Foreign Minister Sergey Shamba, former Prime Minister Sergey Bagapsh, and Nodar Khashba, a senior official in the Russian Emergencies Ministry. In June, following the assassination of its leader Garri Aiba, the Amtsakhara opposition movement merged with United Abkhazia, creating a united opposition to Prime Minister Raul Khajimba. Among the five main candidates, Prime Minister Khajimba and the opposition leader Sergey Bagapsh were favorites to win. In a surprise move, Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his support for Khajimba and actively interfered in the pre-election campaign. However, the election results favoring Khajimba were contested, and the post-election dispute between Bagapsh and Khajimba brought the region to the verge of a civil war; minor incidents were reported between rival supporters, and the election headquarters of Sergey Bagapsh was bombed. On 16 November, Russia closed its border to the region and threatened a blockade unless the dispute was resolved quickly. Bagapsh and Khajimba both traveled to Moscow where it was agreed that new elections would be held in January 2005; to avoid an open confrontation, the two opponents decided to run on a joint ticket with Bagapsh as the presidential candidate and Khajimba as the vice president. The second round of voting took place in January 2005 and the Bagapsh-Khajimba team won the elections with more than 69,000 of the total 129,000 votes. The same month, the new Abkhaz government visited Moscow to hold another round of consultations with Russian officials.

In June 2005, Georgian authorities reiterated that the Abkhaz portion of the maritime border remained closed to maritime traffic and threatened to take measures against illegal traffic to Abkhazia. In response, the Russian Foreign Ministry declared that Russia would
“take relevant measures” to ensure the security of its citizens who visit Abkhazia. Simultaneously, tripartite talks between Georgian, Russian, and Abkhaz sides were held regarding the rehabilitation of the Abkhaz railway. Russia and Georgia agreed to work toward the resumption of the Abkhaz railway, but the resumption of the railway connection was related to the return of the Georgian internally displaced persons to Abkhazia, a very sensitive issue for both sides. On 14 July 2005, Abkhaz opposition parties of the Forum of People’s Unity categorically demanded of the unrecognized republic’s government that it take a hard-line stance to prevent the return of Georgian internally displaced persons to Abkhazia.

In July 2005, the Georgian authorities attempted to continue the so-called Geneva process, which involved a series of Georgian-Abkhaz negotiations with the participation of the Group of Friends of the UN Secretary General. These talks mainly concerned the security guarantees in the conflict zone and the return of Georgian internally displaced persons to Abkhazia. However, the separatist side refused to participate in them, citing the Georgian side’s failure to hand over the cargo confiscated on a Turkish vessel en route to Abkhazia on 3 July. In late July, the Georgian side proposed that the authorities in breakaway Abkhazia sign a joint declaration on non-resumption of hostilities, but the Abkhaz side rejected it. Instead, the Abkhaz leader Bagapsh met with South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoity in Gagra on 26 July, and the two separatist regions signed a communiqué on cooperation and mutual assistance against Georgia.

On 15 August 2005, Abkhaz forces, with support from the Russian military, began their largest military exercise since the 1992–1993 war. The five-day exercise involved some 6,000 troops, armored vehicles, artillery, patrol boats, helicopters, and a few supposedly “Abkhaz,” Su-25 planes. The Russian peacekeeping troops in Abkhazia not only did not interfere, they actually supported the exercise and allowed the Abkhaz forces to use the firing range near Ochamchira. These peacekeeping forces were repeatedly accused of contraband and trafficking. In August 2005, Georgian police detained Russian peacekeepers carrying contraband goods (cigarettes, alcohol, etc.) into Georgia. An armed confrontation ensued when two Russian armored vehicles rushed to the scene and threatened to attack the Georgian police in order to retrieve the cargo. The Georgian Ministry of
Internal Affairs then dispatched additional forces to the scene, causing the Russians to withdraw to the other side of the Inguri River. The situation in the conflict zone worsened in late October and early November when the separatist authorities began drafting the Georgian population of the Gali district. In late October, the Abkhaz authorities adopted a new law on citizenship, which granted citizenship only to ethnic Abkhaz and persons who have been permanently living in Abkhazia since 1999, automatically disqualifying more than 250,000 Georgians and other ethnic refugees who had fled the region in the early 1990s. On 11 November, the Abkhaz leader Bagapsh confirmed his decision to establish firm control of the Gali district of Abkhazia, mainly populated by ethnic Georgians; only those Gali residents who abandoned their Georgian citizenship would be granted newly introduced Abkhaz passports and full rights in the self-proclaimed republic.

The conflict in Abkhazia remains unresolved, and no breakthrough is anticipated in the near future. Despite an official economic blockade imposed by Russia and CIS in 1995, the breakaway region has been—and still is—receiving military and economic support from Russia. Even though Tbilisi now offers the widest autonomy possible, both the Abkhaz government and the opposition reject any forms of union with Georgia. The administration of President Mikhail Saakashvili modified the Georgian approach to the Abkhazian problem and attempted a multi-component diplomacy in the fall of 2005. The president’s special representative on Abkhazia, Irakli Alasania, stated that Georgia would no longer seek the isolation of the Abkhaz leadership and sought improvement in Georgian-Abkhaz relations. Georgian and Abkhaz authorities cooperated on possible rehabilitation of the Inguri Hydropower Plant, and official Tbilisi agreed to the reopening of the railway connection between Russia and Georgia through Abkhazia. Saakashvili also tried to raise the profile of the Abkhazian conflict and focused attention on the violation of the rights of ethnic Georgians in Abkhazia, which, by late 2005, included cases of forced conscription of Georgians into the Abkhaz army, pressure to abandon Georgian citizenship, suppression of the right to study in the Georgian language, and other measures. Tbilisi demanded that a Civilian Police Mission be launched in Gali, and that a UN/OSCE Human Rights Office be opened in Gali. Both demands
were rejected by the Abkhaz side. In November 2005, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan made a brief visit to Georgia, where he reaffirmed UN support for the territorial integrity of Georgia.

The January–February 2006 talks between the Abkhaz and Georgian sides proved ineffective, largely due to the Russian position that made it difficult for Georgia to agree to the proposed conditions. Georgian diplomatic efforts to gain Western support in Abkhazia only irritated Russia, especially in light of the Georgian campaign to discredit Russian peacekeeping forces. In October 2005, the Georgian Parliament voted to review the performance of the Russian peacekeepers by 1 July 2006 and, in case no progress was reached, to demand their withdrawal starting 15 July 2006. In response, Moscow made important changes in its position in the conflict mediation. First, Russia backed proposals of the Abkhaz de facto president Sergey Bagapsh that foresaw talks with Georgia on all issues except Abkhazia’s political status, based on the assertion that the status was “already determined in a 1999 referendum” on independence of Abkhazia, although hundreds of thousands of Georgian displaced persons did not participate in it. On 31 January, as the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on another extension of the mandate of UN observer mission in Abkhazia, Russia insisted on removal of the paragraph affirming the commitment to Georgia’s territorial integrity as well as the reference to the so-called “Boden Document,” which provides for a broad autonomy of Abkhazia within Georgia. Simultaneously, Russian President Vladimir Putin instructed the Foreign Ministry to prepare legal arguments in support of using the Kosovo model in respect to Abkhazia and hinted at the possibility of Russian recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in case Kosovo is granted full independence. In late July 2006, the Georgian government quelled an uprising in the Kodori Gorge, the only territory of Abkhazia under control of central authorities, and announced the transfer of the Abkhaz government-in-exile in the region. This decision was strongly condemned by Russia and the secessionist authorities in Abkhazia.

**ABKHAZIA, UPRISING OF 1821–1824.** Rebellion against Russian colonialism in Abkhazia. It began following the death of Giorgi (Safar Ali-Bey) Sharvashidze, the ruler of Abkhazia, in February 1821. As the Russian forces began taking control of the principality, the local population rose up in arms under the leadership of Aslan Bey
Sharvashidze, attacking the Russian troops near the village of Esheri. The Tsarist government quickly responded by bringing in another Sharvashidze, Omar Bey, who was raised in St. Petersburg. The governor of Imereti, General Gorchakov, dispatched additional troops to Abkhazia and engaged the rebels in the estuary of the Kodori River. By 13 November, the government forces seized Sukhumi and began pacification of the region. Aslan Bey Sharvashidze fled into the mountains, where he continued resistance for some time. Although the Russian authorities imposed Omar Bey Sharvashidze to rule Abkhazia, the latter failed to gain popular support and died in 1822. The following year, the Russian government confirmed his brother Mikhail (Hamut Bey) as an heir to the throne. However, Hamut Bey shared his brother’s fate and was unsuccessful in securing his authority.

As anti-government sentiments spread through Abkhazia, the Russian authorities resorted to terror tactics to intimidate the local population. In May 1824, Russian troops burned down the village of Akafa. This only intensified the anti-Russian attitudes, which soon revived the rebellion. The insurgents received Ottoman support, and under the leadership of Aslan Bey Sharvashidze, they besieged the Russian garrisons of Sukhumi and Lykhny. The Russian authorities quickly concentrated their forces and directed warships from Sebastopol. In July 1824, General Gorchakov broke through the rebel ranks to reinforce the Russian troops in Sukhumi and launched his new offensive on 20 July and soon defeated the insurgents.

**ABKHAZIA, UPRISING OF 1840–1842.** Rebellion against Russian colonialism in the mountainous regions of Abkhazia. Although the Russian Empire extended its authority to Abkhazia in the 1820s and 1830s, the mountainous regions remained beyond its control. In the 1840s, faced with Russian encroachment, the mountaineers intensified their struggle under the leadership of Shabat Marshania. In 1840–1841, Russian forces fought the insurgents with varying degrees of success. Following the death of Shabat Marshania in 1842, the rebellion gradually faded away.

**ABKHAZIA, UPRISING OF 1866.** Rebellion of the Abkhazian peasantry against the agrarian reforms planned by the Russian government. The revolt began in the village of Lykhny (in present Gu-
dauta region) on 26 July 1866 when a detachment of the Russian troops attempted to enforce an agrarian reform. The rebellion quickly attracted more than 20,000 supporters. On 27 July, more than 4,000 of them tried to seize Sukhumi but were repulsed after two days of fighting. As the Russian authorities diverted their troops to Abkhazia, the rebels were defeated by 7 September; three rebel leaders were executed and 30 were exiled to Siberia.

ABKHAZIA, UPRISING OF 1918. Bolshevik attempt to establish Soviet authority in Abkhazia. The revolutionary upheaval of 1917 in Russia and the collapse of the imperial government created unexpected conditions for the outlying regions. The Russian Provisional Government established a Special Transcaucasian Committee (Ozakom) to govern the region, but in November 1917, the first government of independent Transcaucasia, the Transcaucasian Commissariat, was established in Tbilisi. Headed by Georgian Social Democrat Evgeni Gegechkori, the Transcaucasian Commissariat was anti-Bolshevik in its political goals and sought separation of Transcaucasia from Russia. In early 1918, the Bolsheviks, led by Nestor Lakoba, Mamia Orakhelashvili, E. Eshba, and others, began preparations for an uprising in Abkhazia. The revolt was planned to coincide with similar unrest in other regions of Georgia. However, the circumstances were complicated by the Ottoman offensive into southwestern Georgia and General Denikin’s White Army attacking from the north. The revolt started in Gagra in early March, and the rebels quickly seized Gudauta, Gumista, and other regions before capturing Sukhumi on 26 March. The newly established Revolutionary Committee was directed by E. Eshba and implemented several Bolshevik policies, including decrees against private property and land ownership. The Bolsheviks also appealed to their comrades in Ekaterinodar (present-day Krasnodar) to annex the Sukhumi District (sukhumskii okrug, present-day Abkhazia) to the Black Sea-Kuban Soviet Republic (chernomorsko-kubanskaia sovetskaya respublika). The Transcaucasian Commissariat, and its successor Transcaucasian Seim, immediately diverted the National Guard forces led by General Giorgi Mazniashvili, who defeated the insurgents on the Kodori River. In June 1918, Mazniashvili became governor and commander-in-chief in Abkhazia and suppressed the uprising by late 1918.
ABO TBILELI (ca. 757–786). Christian martyr and the patron saint of the city of Tbilisi. Arab by descent, he grew up in Baghdad where he worked as a perfumer and met Georgian Prince Nerse II of Kartli. Around 774, he followed Nerse to Tbilisi and then into Khazaria, where the Georgian prince had escaped to after defying the Abbasid caliph. Abo studied Christian theology and secretly converted to Christianity. Returning to Tbilisi in 784, he was exposed as a Christian and was executed by the Arab authorities on 6 January 786. His contemporary, Ioane Sabanisdze, described Abo’s life and martyrdom in his hagiographic story, *The Martyrdom of Saint Abo*.

ABRAHAM I (13TH CENTURY). Catholicos-Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church in the 13th century. After becoming Catholicos-Patriarch in 1282, he supported the decision of King Demetre II to appear in front of the Mongol court in order to save Georgia from Mongol retribution. After the king was executed in 1289, Abraham secretly acquired his body and brought it back to Georgia. He then participated in several embassies to the Mongol court to negotiate peace between the Mongols and King David VIII of Georgia.

ABULADZE, TENGIZ EVGENIS-DZE (1924–1994). Georgian film director and scriptwriter. He graduated from the Rustaveli State Theater Institute in 1946 and studied in the Union Cinematography State Institute in Moscow, where he produced his first film *Dimitri Arakishvili* in 1953. After graduating, Abuladze produced several documentary films including *Our Palace* and *Georgian Folk Dance State Ensemble*. In 1954, he made his first major feature film *Magdanas Lurja*, which earned him the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival and first prize at the Edinburgh International Film Festival in 1956. His film, *Someone Else’s Children* (1956), won diplomas at the international film festivals in Tashkent, Helsinki, London, and Tehran. In 1962, he produced one of his most popular feature films, *Grandma, Iliko, Illarion and Me*, based on Nodar Dumbardze’s novel. Abuladze’s next project was a trilogy of movies that reflected his philosophy of life and established him as the leading film director of his generation. The first two movies were *The Supplication* (1967), which won a grand prix at the San Remo Film Festival, and *The Wishing Tree* (1976), which was honored at film festivals in Riga,
Tehran, Moscow, and several other cities. In 1984, he completed the trilogy with his most famous and controversial movie, Repentance, which portrayed the brutal reality of Joseph Stalin’s purges and their consequences. The film proved to be one of the most important pictures of the perestroika period and had a long-lasting effect on raising the political consciousness in the Soviet Union. See also CINEMA; THEATER.

ADARNASE. Name of several Bagratid princes of Kartli and Tao-Klarjeti in southwestern Georgia.

1. Adarnase, Erismtavari of Kartli (early seventh century) was the son of Erismtavari Stepanoz, who constructed the Jvari Monastery near Mtskheta. From 606–608, Adarnase, supported by Catholicos Kirion, rejected monophysitism and supported the Chalcedonian creed, which eventually drew Georgia closer to the Byzantine Empire and further from the Sasanid Persia that was more tolerant of the Monophysites. He finalized the split between the Georgian and Armenian churches and even prohibited any relations, except for commercial, between his subjects and Armenians. In the 610s, the Persians removed Adarnase from power, but he managed to return following the campaigns of Byzantine Emperor Heraclius in Georgia in 627–628. With Byzantine support, Adarnase secured his position in Kartli and supported Albanian princes against the Persians.

2. Adarnase II (888–923), the son of David I Curopalates of Tao-Klarjeti. Following the death of David I, the Bagratid principality of Tao-Klarjeti found itself in turmoil as one of the throne claimants, Guaram Mampalis-dze, tried to carve out his own realm with the help of King Bagrat of Abkhazia in 888. However, Adarnase II seized the throne and defeated his enemies, firmly securing his position in Tao-Klarjeti. He was the first Bagratid prince to adopt the title of King of the Georgians (kartvelta mepe) and was given the title of curopalate by the Byzantine emperor in 891. Adarnase spent two decades fighting for the unification of the Georgian principalities and actively interfered in the affairs of the neighboring Armenian kingdom. In 904, he defeated King Constantine of Abkhazia, who was captured but later released by King Sumbat of Armenia, which caused a rift between him and Adarnase. Three years later, Adarnase supported the Arab invasion of Armenia.
ADJARA (ADJARIA, AJARA, ACHARA). Autonomous republic in southwestern Georgia with its administrative center in Batumi. The total area of the region is 3,000 km$^2$ with a population of over 400,000. The region is mostly mountainous and forested, and, located on the Black Sea, it has a subtropical climate. Adjara is famous for its health resorts and for the production of tea and citrus fruits. Industries include oil refining, tea packing, tobacco processing, fruit and fish canning, and shipbuilding. The population is predominantly Georgian with substantial numbers of Armenians, Russians, and Greeks.

The region has been inhabited since the Neolithic Age. In ancient times, it was populated by Georgian tribes and later became the province of Colchis and was colonized by Greek merchants in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Adjara was turned into the Odzrkhe saeristavo of the Kingdom of Iberia established by King Parnavaz in the third century BCE. It later came under Roman and Byzantine influence. According to Christian tradition, Apostles Andrew, Simon the Canaanite, Mathias, Bartholomew, and Thaddeus preached in the region in the first century CE. After the second century, Adjara was part of the Kingdom of Lazica and served as a battlefield during the Lazic War (542–562) between the Byzantine and Persian empires. It was later incorporated into the Kingdom of Abkhazia but became an independent principality in the 10th century. In the 11th century, Adjara became a part of the unified Georgian Kingdom. After the disintegration of the Georgian realm in the 15th century, Adjara was contested by Samtkhe and Guria but was eventually occupied by the Ottomans by the 1570s. Although Georgian attempts to recover Adjara continued for decades, the region remained under firm Ottoman control. It was divided into two sandjaks that were subordinated to the pashas of Akhaltsikhe and were subjected to compulsory conversion to Islam.

After the Russian annexation of Georgian principalities in the early 19th century, the region became a battleground between the Ottoman and Russian empires. Following the Russo–Turkish War of 1877–1878, the Ottomans ceded Adjara to the Russian Empire on 3 March 1878. The subsequent Berlin Congress of 1878 declared the Adjarian capital of Batumi a porto franco or free port, which facilitated the development of the local economy and made the town an
important seaport. In the early 20th century, oil pipelines connected Batumi to the rich oil fields of Baku that supplied oil to Europe. During World War I, the Ottoman army briefly occupied Adjara in April 1918 before a British expeditionary force landed there in December of the same year. The Council for the Batumi Region was established to govern Adjara from December 1918 to April 1919. On 13 September 1919, the Committee for Liberation of the Muslims of Georgia founded a Mejlis (Parliament) of Adjara and called for incorporation into the Democratic Republic of Georgia. The British administration ceded the region to Georgia on 20 July 1920. However, one year later, as the Red Army invaded Georgia, the Turkish army occupied Batumi on 11 March but was defeated and driven back by the Georgian troops under General Giorgi Mazniashvili one week later. Following the fall of the Georgian democratic republic, its government went into exile in France from Batumi. Turkey recognized the region as a part of Georgian SSR under the Soviet–Turkish Treaty of Kars of 1921, and the Bolshevik authorities established the Adjarian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic within the Georgian SSR in July 1921.

In 1991, following the Georgian proclamation of independence, President Zviad Gamsakhurdia appointed Aslan Abashidze as the head of Adjara’s Supreme Council. Abashidze established his independence from the Tbilisi authorities and soon opposed the central government. During the civil war (1991–1993), Abashidze closed the borders of his autonomous republic and prevented the spread of civil disturbances into Adjara, saving the region from devastation and looting. This further increased his popularity among the local population. Abashidze established a free economic zone in Adjara to lure foreign capital and succeeded in developing the local infrastructures, turning Adjara into one of the most prosperous regions in Georgia. On 24 October 1997, Adjara became a member of the Assembly of European Regions. Economic development and stability, together with voter intimidation and high-handed methods, helped Abashidze to win a reelection in 1998. However, his government was also characterized by nepotism, widespread persecution of the opposition, and suppression of basic freedoms; Abashidze’s family and close circle of friends allegedly run most of the businesses in Adjara.
During the presidency of Eduard Shevardnadze (1995–2003), Abashidze reached an accord that allowed him to retain semi-independence in Adjara and established close relations with Russia. The relations between Batumi and Tbilisi soon grew cold, and Abashidze’s political party, the Union of Democratic Revival, also known as the Union for Georgia’s Rebirth, became an active opposition force to Shevardnadze’s government. Official Tbilisi was reluctant to openly challenge Abashidze, fearing another civil war and breakaway region. Abashidze became increasingly defiant of the central authorities, retaining customs duties and revenues that were earmarked for Tbilisi.

The situation changed drastically after the Rose Revolution in November 2003. The new government in Tbilisi set the restoration of its control over Adjara as one of its top priorities. In response, Abashidze denounced the new government, declared a state of emergency in Adjara, and sought Russian support against Tbilisi. The enmity between the two centers rapidly intensified when in mid-March 2004 a motorcade of President Mikhail Saakashvili traveling to Adjara was stopped by Adjarian border guards and was refused entry. Abashidze accused Saakashvili of attempting to overthrow him and called for a mobilization of paramilitary units. In response, Saakashvili issued a one-day ultimatum to Abashidze to accept central authority and disband the Adjaran forces. The central authorities closed transit routes in and out of Adjara and declared an economic blockade of the region. Despite his attempts, Abashidze failed to secure help from Russia and came under intense pressure from the United States and European states to accept central authority. In the confusion, Abashidze’s forces blew up bridges connecting the region with the rest of Georgia. The state of emergency was followed by the dispersion of local oppositional demonstrations in early May. These events, however, led to even larger demonstrations when tens of thousands demanded Abashidze’s resignation. Amid extreme tension and public pressure, Abashidze resigned from his position on 5 May 2004.

Following Abashidze’s departure, President Saakashvili imposed direct presidential rule in Adjara and established a 20-member Interim Council, chaired by his ally Levan Varshalomidze, to govern the region before elections were organized. Both Georgian and foreign observers criticized President Saakashvili’s actions in
this regard since they virtually abolished Adjarian autonomy. Regional parliamentary elections were held in June 2004, and the government-backed party gained 28 out of 30 seats in the Adjarian legislative body. On 20 July 2004, the Adjarian Supreme Council approved Levan Varshalomidze as the chairman of the autonomous republic’s government. The regional policy of central and local governments focuses on attracting foreign investment to the region and a large-scale campaign of privatization has been launched for this purpose. The Russian military base in Batumi, which Russia agreed to dismantle at the 1999 Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe summit in Istanbul, continues to be a source of great tension between the two states. In 2005, Georgia and Russia finally agreed to the status of Russian troops, and the withdrawal process began in the summer of the same year and is to be completed by 2008.

ADJARA, CRISIS IN. Political crisis in the Adjarian Autonomous Republic between November 2003 and May 2004. Governed by Aslan Abashidze since 1991, Adjara became increasingly independent from the Tbilisi authorities. During the civil war in 1991–1993, Abashidze closed the borders of his autonomous republic and prevented the spread of civil disturbances in Adjara, saving the region from devastation and looting. This further increased his popularity among the local population. Abashidze established a free economic zone in Adjara to lure foreign capital and succeeded in developing local infrastructures, turning Adjara into one of the most prosperous regions in Georgia. However, his government was also characterized by nepotism, widespread persecution of the opposition and suppression of basic freedoms. After the return of Eduard Shevardnadze to Georgia, Abashidze reached an accord that allowed him to retain semi-independence in Adjara and establish close relations with Russia. The relations between Batumi and Tbilisi soon grew cold and Abashidze’s political party, the Union of Democratic Revival, became an active opposition force to Shevardnadze’s government. Official Tbilisi was reluctant to openly challenge Abashidze fearing another civil war. Adjara, meantime, became increasingly defiant of the central authorities and retained customs duties and revenues earmarked for Tbilisi.
The situation changed drastically after the Rose Revolution ousted Shevardnadze in November 2003. Abashidze denounced these events and vowed to prevent any disturbances in his region, declaring a state of emergency. Following the negotiations with Tbilisi, he temporarily repealed the state of emergency on 3 January 2004, one day before the presidential elections in Georgia. The overwhelming electoral victory of Mikhail Saakashvili, the leader of the Rose Revolution, prompted Abashidze to reinstate the state of emergency on 7 January. After the creation of the new public movement Democratic Adjara, which aimed at democratic reforms in Adjara, Abashidze threatened that the events in Adjara might “develop like in Abkhazia and South Ossetia,” where Georgian troops became involved in bloody conflicts with the secessionist forces in the 1990s. On 16 January, a special group of the Interior Ministry was dispatched to Batumi from Tbilisi to arrest the fugitive ex-chief of the Georgian Railway Company Akaki Chkhaidze, who was accused of embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars. President Saakashvili declared that he “will not permit Adjara to turn into a haven for criminals. Adjara is an integral part of Georgia . . .” The murder of the Adjarian Interior Ministry’s high official, related to one of the opposition leaders, in Batumi on 18 January further increased tensions as the Abashidze’s opponents claimed that the assassination was politically motivated.

The anti-Abashidze campaign in Adjara was driven by the public movement “Our Adjara” and the youth movement Kmara (Enough). Opposition demonstrations in Batumi were dispersed by the police and dozens were injured in the clashes. In late January, Abashidze visited Moscow for consultations and the Russian Foreign Ministry initially supported him, issuing a statement on January 20 condemning “extremist-minded forces” in Adjara. However, Abashidze soon changed his tactics and chose a conciliatory stance toward official Tbilisi. He welcomed President Saakashvili, who arrived in Batumi on 25 January to attend the military parade marking the presidential inauguration, and removed the checkpoint that had operated at the administrative border of the autonomous republic for 10 years. The opposition public movement Democratic Adjara held its first congress in Tbilisi on 27 January and declared its goal of “forcing the Adjarian leaders to carry out democratic reforms in the Autonomous
Republic.” However, persecution of the opposition leaders and raids of their offices continued in Batumi throughout February and the clashes between the supporters of and opposition to the Adjarian leader took place in Kobuleti. President Saakashvili demanded that the Adjarian Security Ministry that was used by Abashidze to persecute his opponents be abolished.

The situation escalated on 14 March 2004 when the central authorities, taking advantage of Abashidze’s visit to Moscow, sent delegations to Adjara to campaign for the upcoming parliamentary elections. Pro-Abashidze paramilitary units blocked the administrative border of Adjara on the Cholokhi River and prevented President Mikhail Saakashvili and other government members from entering the autonomous republic. In retaliation, Saakashvili imposed partial economic sanctions against the region and the Georgian general prosecutor published a list of Adjarian officials wanted for alleged harassment of opposition supporters. The tensions between Tbilisi and Batumi were defused on 16 March after President Saakashvili and Aslan Abashidze reached an agreement that allowed economic sanctions on Adjaria to be lifted, the disarmament of paramilitary forces in Adjaria, release of political prisoners, joint control of the customs and port of Batumi, and free election campaigning. However, Abashidze, fearing a loss of control over the region, refused to disarm his paramilitary forces in April. On 19 April, Major General Roman Dumbadze, commander of the Batumi-based 25th Brigade of the Georgian army, refused to obey the Defense Ministry’s orders and reports indicated that Abashidze intended to set up an Adjarian Defense Ministry on the basis of the 25th Brigade. On 24 April, the Adjarian Senate approved Abashidze’s proposal to impose a curfew in the region. However, several senior officials and dozens of soldiers of the Adjarian elite special task unit soon defected; opposition demonstrations were dispersed in Batumi in late April.

Between 30 April and 2 May, the Georgian central authorities launched the largest ever military exercise at the Kulevi training ground on the Adjarian border in a show of strength. In retaliation, pro-Abashidze paramilitary units destroyed two key bridges over the Cholokhi River connecting Adjara to the rest of Georgia. On 3 May, the United States condemned Abashidze and accused him of “trying
to provoke a military crisis with Georgia’s newly democratically elected leadership.”

On 5 May, the Georgian Parliament demanded that Abashidze resign after his security forces used a water cannon and truncheons to break up a protest rally in Batumi on 4 May, injuring dozens of peaceful protesters. Saakashvili gave the Adjarian authorities until 12 May to disarm the region’s militias or have his government dissolved, and in a televised address to the troops still loyal to Abashidze, he called on them to defect from “Adjara’s criminal regime.” Demonstrations in Batumi increased as tens of thousands from all over Adjara headed for the capital. Georgian Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania and Interior Minister Giorgi Baramidze began talks with Adjarian Interior Minister Jemal Gogitidze, who agreed to withdraw his forces from the administrative border in return for security guarantees. Simultaneously, Secretary of the Russian Security Council Igor Ivanov arrived in Adjara to mediate between official Batumi and Tbilisi. Late on 5 May, Abashidze stepped down after the overnight talks with Ivanov. The following day, President Saakashvili announced on national television, “Aslan has fled, Adjara is free . . . This will be the beginning of Georgia’s territorial integrity.” In scenes reminiscent of the Rose Revolution, news of Abashidze’s resignation brought celebrations in the streets of Batumi, where Sakaashvili himself soon joined the thousands of demonstrators.

Following Abashidze’s departure, President Saakashvili imposed direct presidential rule in Adjara and established a 20-member Interim Council, chaired by his ally Levan Varshalomidze, to govern the region before elections were organized. Regional parliamentary elections were held on 20 June 2004, and in addition to President Saakashvili’s ruling National Movement-Democrats Party, 12 other parties registered in them: the Republican Party, Labor Party, National Democratic Party (NDP), Industry Will Save Georgia, Traditionalists, Green Party, Communist Party of Adjara, Christian-Democratic Party, Merab Kostava Society, Party for Democratic Truth, New Communist Party, and Union for Women’s Rights. According to the final vote tally, 120,000 voters out of Adjara’s 158,400 eligible voters cast a ballot. Only two parties, President Saakashvili’s Victorious Adjara (72.1%) and the Republican Party (13.5%), won seats in Adjara’s Supreme Council while other parties failed to clear
the 7% threshold necessary for securing seats in the legislative body. On 20 July, the Adjarian Supreme Council approved Levan Varshalomidze, Saakashvili’s close ally, as the chairman of the Autonomous Republic’s Government.

ADRIANOPLE, TREATY OF (1829). Peace treaty between Russia and the Ottoman Empire signed on 14 September 1829 to end the Russo–Turkish War of 1828–1829. Russia gained territories in the Danubian principalities and southern Georgia and forced the Ottomans to recognize the annexation of Georgian principalities. The treaty opened the Dardanelles to Russian vessels, granted autonomy to Serbia, and promised autonomy for Greece. See also AKKERMAN CONVENTION.

AFGHANISTAN, GEORGIANS IN. Although impossible to verify, the medieval chronicles inform us that Georgians first reached Afghanistan when King Vakhtang Gorgasal participated in the Persian campaigns in India in 474–476. In the 16th–17th centuries, as they were integrated en masse in the Persian army, Georgians participated in campaigns in Afghanistan and helped the Safavid shahs to extend their control over this region. Contemporaries attested to the size and fighting qualities of the Georgian troops in Persia; Don Juan of Persia estimated some 12,000 Georgians serving in the royal bodyguard troops in the 1580s; a Catholic missionary mentioned 25,000 Georgian cavalry guard in 1608; and the Englishman John Fryer even claimed as many as 40,000 Georgians serving in Persia in 1648, though the last number is certainly too high. Georgian involvement in Afghanistan proved particularly crucial in the late 17th and early 18th century. In 1694, Shah Sulayman was succeeded by Sultan Husayn, who gradually lost his grip on the political situation in eastern Persia. The situation in Afghanistan had rapidly deteriorated after the Moghul emperor demanded the restitution of the key fortress of Qandahar, and the Baluchi tribes began raiding the Persian provinces of Kirman and Yazd and blockaded the Persian garrison of Qandahar.

To address this situation, Sultan Husayn turned to his Georgian allies, appointing King Giorgi XI (Gurjin-Khan) to be governor (beglar-begi) of Kirman, and his brothers Levan (Shah-Quli-Khan) as the chief justice (divan-begi) of Persia, and Kaikhosro (Khusrau-Khan) as
the prefect (darughha) of Isfahan. The Georgian commanders successfully campaigned in 1700, driving the Afghani tribesmen out of the eastern Persian provinces. In 1703, Giorgi, now commander-in-chief (sipah-salar) of the Persian army was given the task of delivering Qandahar and subduing the Afghans. He led his corps of some 4,000 Georgians and 20,000 Persians in May 1704 and quickly subjugated the country. However, his soldiers proved to be unforgiving toward the local population, sequestered goods, and raised taxes. Georgian heavy-handed treatment of the Afghan population prompted Mir Vays (Mir Ways), a local tribe leader, to lead a rebellion, but he was quickly arrested. King Giorgi then committed the crucial mistake of sending Mir Vays to Isfahan, although he urged the shah to get rid of him or at least never to allow him to return to Qandahar. A strong Persian faction hostile to the Georgians existed in the Persian capital, and it took advantage of Mir Vays’ claims to paint the Georgian actions in the worst possible light. Furthermore, Mir Vays was allowed to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he managed to procure fatwas authorizing him to lead a holy war against the Georgians.

Returning to Isfahan, Mir Vays, through skillful flattery and substantial bribes, lulled the suspicions of the shah, who ordered King Giorgi to show moderation and cooperate with the Afghans. King Giorgi probably underestimated the danger he was facing since he failed to notice Mir Vays’ machinations. Matters came to a head when King Giorgi decided to marry Mir Vays’ daughter. The Afghans attacked the Georgian garrison in Qandahar on Ash Wednesday in 1709, taking advantage of the absence of the Georgian detachment of Prince Alexander Luarsabis-dze, who had marched off to pacify one of the nearby regions. Sources vary on the final minutes of the Georgians, some describe them as being killed while sleeping in a garden while others portray King Giorgi and his entourage’s desperate fight at a banquet the Afghans organized in their honor.

After learning about this disaster, Shah Sultan Husayn dispatched Giorgi’s nephew Kaikhosro with 30,000 Persians and 1,200 Georgians to suppress the uprising in 1711. However, this expedition was doomed from the start since the Persian grand vizier, who intrigued against the Georgian faction, had allegedly maintained a secret correspondence with Mir Vays informing him of the Georgian moves; in addition, the troops were not properly funded, and the Persian con-
tingent was placed under separate command. Kaikhosro initially managed to defeat the Afghan forces and besiege Qandahar. However, as Mir Vays gathered his reinforcements, the Persian troops began to desert in large numbers, leaving the Georgians to fight. In the final battle, only a few hundred Georgians and Persians survived out of the entire expeditionary force. Both Kaikhosro and Prince Alexander Luarsabis-dze perished. The loss of capable Georgian generals and their elite troops left Persia exposed to future attacks that eventually culminated in the Afghan Invasion of 1722. Some two decades later, Georgians returned to Afghanistan during Nadir Shah’s eastern campaigns. Young Erekle II commanded the Georgian contingent that fought in Afghanistan and India before returning to Georgia. See Persia, Georgian Communities in.

AGHA MUHAMMED KHAN (1742–1797). Shah of Persia and founder of the Qajar dynasty. He was castrated by the rival Afshar tribe at the age of five but became the chief of his tribe of Qajars in 1758 and rose to the Persian throne in 1796 following a long civil war that had started after the death of Shah Karim Khan in 1779. Agha Muhammed was the first Persian ruler to make Tehran his capital. He opposed Russian expansion into the Caucasus and pressured the Georgian principalities of Kartli-Kakheti against rapprochement with Russia in the Treaty of Georgievsk of 1783. In 1795, he invaded Georgia, and following a two-day battle at Krtsanisi in September, he sacked Tbilisi and ravaged the countryside. Returning to Persia, he proclaimed himself Shahanshah (King of Kings) and conquered Khorasan. In 1797, as he prepared for another campaign in Georgia, he was assassinated by his servants in Azerbaijan.

AGHSARTAN. King of Kakheti and Hereti in 1058–1084. He initially opposed Georgian King Bagrat IV’s attempts to expand the Georgian kingdom from 1060–1064 but was defeated and lost a substantial part of his realm. To recover his territory, Aghsartan contacted the Seljuk Sultan Alp-Arslan, swore an oath of fealty to him, and asked for help against King Bagrat. Over the next decade, Aghsartan took part in the Seljuk campaigns against the Kingdom of Georgia but failed to achieve his goal of expanding his principality. Although he supported a rebellion against King Giorgi II of Georgia
in 1073, he later reconciled with him and provided military help against Sultan Malik Shah in 1074. Aghsartan’s relations with King Giorgi II deteriorated after Sultan Malik Shah agreed to recognize the latter’s claims to Kakheti and Hereti. He traveled to Malik Shah’s court, converted to Islam, and pledged his support against Georgia. The sultan confirmed Aghsartan as the king of Kakheti and Hereti and supported him militarily against King Giorgi II, whose efforts to annex these regions ultimately failed. Aghsartan’s efforts delayed the unification of Georgia for almost two decades. The last king of Kakheti-Hereti, Aghsartan II, was captured by King David IV Aghmashenebeli in 1104.

AGRICULTURE. Following independence in 1991, Georgia embarked on dismantling collective and state farms and launched land privatization in 1992. After the economic crisis of the 1990s, Georgia’s agricultural sector is now recovering with the help of international investment. Nevertheless, lack of financing, absence of modern agricultural technology, and obsolete irrigation and drainage systems complicate its resurgence. Currently, about 55% of the total labor force is employed in agriculture. Wheat, maize, sunflower, potatoes, vegetables, fruit, citrus, grapes, and tea are cultivated in Georgia. These crops mainly meet the demand of the domestic market, but wheat has to be imported; in 2004, 225,000 tons of wheat were produced and 780,000 tons were imported. Maize, grown mainly in Kakheti and Imereti, is both consumed and used for producing oil.

Tea plantations occupy more than 150,000 acres (60,000 hectares) and are equipped with relatively modern picking machinery. The tea quality was once very high but gradually decreased during the Soviet era due to attempts to satisfy demands of the planned economy by sacrificing the quality in favor of quantity of production. Following the collapse of Soviet Union and its common market sphere, tea production plummeted but is slowly recovering. Orchards occupy some 320,000 acres and produce a wide variety of fruits. However, fruit processing plants are in a desolate state, with 55 out of 58 plants standing idle. The situation is better in the canned-foods industry where most of the plants have already been privatized and operate in reduced capacity. In recent years, production of walnuts and hazel-
nuts rapidly increased to satisfy the demands of the European market. Sugar beets and tobacco are cultivated as commercial crops, and essential oils, including geranium, rose, and jasmine, are produced for perfume industry.

In livestock, cattle, sheep, pigs and goats are raised throughout Georgia, especially on the valleys and mountains slopes of eastern Georgia; the mountain pastures are used for sheep and goat-farming. However, the meat processing industry remains in disarray, and only a few facilities continue to function at full capacity. Imports comprise one third of the total meat product consumption. Out of 50 dairy factories operating in the late 1980s, only 10 remained open by 2003; 15 new enterprises are engaged in seasonal production of ice cream from imported milk powder. The operating facilities produce over 15 products, including yogurt, sour cream, cottage cheese, several types of cheese, ice cream, milk, and butter.

Georgian aquaculture is largely underdeveloped, and the fishing fleet consists of small and medium size boats from the Soviet era. In 2003, sea catches totaled 14,450 tons, of which 12,200 were of khamsa. The freshwater fish industry operates on lakes, where trout, flounder, and other species of fish are spawned. Fish processing plants are out of date and require major investments. Fish imports totaled 4,180 tons in 1999 and 4,840 tons in 2003.

Vineyards are one of the oldest and most important branches of Georgian agriculture, considering the ancient culture of wine making in Georgia. There are about 500 varieties of local vines maintained in Georgia today, and some 60 wines are commercially produced. Some of the best Georgian wines are Rkatsiteli, Saperavi, Manavis Mtsvane, Tsolikauri, Tsitska, Khvanchkara, Pino, Khikhva, Krakhuna, and Chkhaveri. There are five major zones for viniculture: Kakheti, Kartli, Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi, and the subtropical zone, each of which produces wines with unique texture and flavor. The largest wine production is in Kakheti, followed by the Kartli and Imereti regions. Since the 1950s, Georgian wineries have been awarded over 270 medals, including 140 gold. The share of exports to Russia totals 75%, exports to Ukraine comprise 10%, and 4% are exported to the United States. See also ECONOMY. In 2006, Russia closed its markets to Georgian produce, forcing Georgia to diversify its trade partners.
AHMED PASHA (?–1758). Ottoman pasha of Akhaltsikhe. Born to a prominent Georgian family of Jakeli, Ahmed Pasha converted to Islam and actively supported Ottoman expansion into the Caucasus. He was involved in the slave trade and personally determined the annual quotas of slaves to be procured in Georgia. After King Solomon I of Imereti ceased paying tribute to the Ottoman Sultan, Ahmed Pasha led the Ottoman army of some 40,000 men against Imereti but suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of King Solomon I at Khresili in 1757. He was imprisoned and later executed on the sultan’s orders.

AHMED PASHA (KHMISHIAHVILI) (?–1836). Ottoman pasha of Kars and Akhaltsikhe. Born to a prominent noble family of Georgian Muslims, he was the son of Selim Pasha of Adjara. In 1815, after Selim Pasha’s revolt was suppressed, Ahmed Pasha fled to Guria. He later returned to Adjara and restored his authority in the region. In 1828–1829, he supported the Ottomans in their war against Russia and was appointed pasha of Akhaltsikhe with orders to conquer Samtskhe-Javakheti. He led an expedition into Samtskhe but failed to seize Akhaltsikhe, where a Russian garrison under General V. Bebutov successfully defended itself. After the war, Ahmed became beglarbeg of Kars in 1829 and then ruled Erzerum in 1836. He commanded the troops in the eastern provinces (vilayets) of the Ottoman Empire and died fighting the Kurdish insurgents.

AIETES (ÆETES, AEETES).
1. In Greek mythology, the son of Helios, god of the sun, and the king of Colchis. Aietes was the brother of Circe and the father of Medea and Apsirte (Apsyrtus). During his reign, Colchis became a powerful principality and possessed the Golden Fleece, a symbol of prosperity and might. A group of Greek heroes sailed with Jason on the Argo on a quest for the Golden Fleece. The Argonauts snatched the Golden Fleece with the help of Medea and returned to Greece. The myth of the Argonauts contained interesting details on tribes residing in western Georgia. It portrayed Colchis as a powerful and prosperous country with a well developed agriculture and metallurgy. Archeological discoveries confirmed the existence of a powerful tribal state in this region in the 14th–13th centuries BCE.
2. Sixth century statesman and orator. In 555 AD, following the murder of King Gubaz II of Lazica by Byzantine officials, a nationwide meeting of the people of Egrisi was summoned to decide the future orientation of the kingdom between Byzantium and Persia. In his famous speech, Aietes called for struggle against the Byzantine Empire and support for the Persians.


AKHALI DROEBA (THE NEW TIMES). A weekly Bolshevik newspaper printed in Tbilisi in the Georgian language. Nine issues appeared between November 1906 and January 1907. Joseph Stalin published a number of articles in this newspaper and was associated with the editorial board. The newspaper also published works by prominent Georgian writers, including P. Iashvili, V. Darchia, D. Qartsivadze, and G. Kikodze.


AKHALI SAKARTVELO (THE NEW GEORGIA).


2. A biweekly newspaper of the Georgian émigré community in Paris and Berlin between 1924–1926. Directed by G. Veshapeli, one issue was printed in 1924, 16 in 1925, and 8 in 1926.
AKHALI TSKHOVREBA (THE NEW LIFE). The first legal daily Bolshevik newspaper printed in Tbilisi in the Georgian language between 20 June and 14 July 1906. Twenty issues appeared, some of them with Joseph Stalin’s editorials and articles.

AKHALTSIKHELI, SHALVA. See SHALVA AKHALTSIKHELI.

AKHMETELI, ALEXANDER (SANDRO) (1886–1937). Georgian stage director and co-founder of the Georgian theater. The son of a priest, he was born in the village of Anaga and graduated with a law degree from St. Petersburg University in 1916. During his studies, he became involved with the theater and worked as a theater critic after 1909. In 1919, he made his theater debut with Tqmuleba Shota Rustavelze, and in 1920, he directed his first stage production, Berdo Zmania. Four years later, he became chief stage director at the Rustaveli Theater in Tbilisi. From 1926–1935, he was chief artistic director of the theater. He helped establish a theatrical group, Duruji, in 1924. He produced numerous theater and opera productions, including Glebov’s Zagmuk (1926), Shiukashvili’s Amerikeli bidza (1926), Lortkipanidze’s Ati dge (1927), Shanshiashvili’s Anzor (1928), Kirshon’s City of the Winds (1929), Dadiani’s Tetnuldi (1931), and Mirtskhulava’s Gangashi (1931). Akhmeteli was instrumental in developing the modern Georgian theater and establishing the reputation of the Rustaveli Theater. He perished during the Stalinist purges in 1937.

AKHMETELI, MIKHEIL (1895–1963). Prominent Georgian scholar and public figure. Born in Borjomi, he graduated from the Georgian Nobility Gymnasium in 1914 and studied at the University of Kharkov in 1915–1917. In 1919, he traveled to Germany where he continued his studies at the University of Jena, earning his doctorate in philosophy on 1925. Starting in 1926, he worked at the prestigious Institute of Eastern Europe in Breslau and later directed it from 1937–1940. After World War II, Akhmeteli moved to Munich, where he helped establish the Institute for the Study of Eastern Europe and the USSR and worked as professor at the University of Munich. He remained a staunch opponent of the Soviet Union, rallying the Georgian émigrés in Europe and establishing the Bloc of Anti-Bolshevik
Akhmeteli’s works deal with the history of Bolshevism and the agrarian development of Russia and the Soviet Union.

AKHMETELASHVILI, STEPHAN (1877–1922). Georgian military commander. After graduating from the Cadet Corps, he began his military service in the Russian army and distinguished himself during the Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905) and World War I, earning the orders of St. Anna and of St. Vladimir. In Menshevik Georgia, he was promoted to major general in 1918 and commanded the National Guard troops in Tbilisi. In 1921, he defended the Georgian capital against the 11th Red Army and steadfastly held his positions near Kojori. However, after the Bolshevik takeover of Georgia, he was arrested and executed in 1922. See also KVINITADZE, GIORGI; MAZNIASHVILI, GIORGI.

AKHVLEDIANI, ELENE (1901–1975). One of the finest Georgian painters of the 20th century and theater stage designer. She graduated from the Tbilisi Academy of Arts in 1922 and continued her studies in Paris and traveled through Italy between 1922–1927. Returning to Georgia, she produced some of the finest paintings of that period, full of emotion and romanticism. Among her major works are Dzveli Tbilisi (1924), Kakheti-Zamtari (1924), Parizis ert-erti kutkhe (1926), Alaznis veli (1954), Imereti (1956), and Shemodgoma (1959). She also greatly contributed to the development of theater stage design and designed over 70 productions for the (Konstantine) Marjanishvili Theater.

AKKERMAN CONVENTION (1826). Treaty between Russia and the Ottoman Empire on territorial changes in the Caucasus and the Danubian principalities. Russo–Turkish relations deteriorated rapidly in the two decades after the Treaty of Bucharest of 1812. In March 1826, Russia demanded that the Ottoman Empire honor its obligations under the Treaty of Bucharest. The Ottomans were encouraged by the initial Persian successes in the Russo–Persian War of 1828–1828 and intentional delayed their response. However, following the Persian defeat at Shamkhor and Ganja, they agreed to negotiations and signed the convention at Akkerman on 7 October 1826. The treaty granted autonomy to Serbia and recognized the autonomy
of the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Walachia under Russian tutelage. In Georgia, the Ottomans removed the forces from the Black Sea coast and surrendered the fortresses of Sukhumi, Redut-Kale and Anaklia. See also ADRIANOPLE, TREATY OF; GEORGIEVSK, TREATY OF; GULISTAN, TREATY OF;

ALAGIR INCIDENT (1919). Massacre of Georgian population in Alagir (in North Ossetia) by the Ossetian radicals on 11 January 1919. The small town of Alagir, located in the Vladikavkaz district (okrug), was an industrial center in the Caucasus processing zinc and other metals. Starting in the 1880s, Georgian families from the destitute mountainous regions of Racha began immigrating here and their numbers reached some 120 families in the 1890s and 300 by 1919. They bought land from locals, established a school, and constructed an Orthodox Church in the town. However, they also faced increasing hostility from locals, especially Ossetian radicals who wanted to expel the non-Ossetian population. In 1918, as the Civil War spread to the Caucasus, Georgian families hosted a Georgian detachment of A. Gegechkori passing through the town, an event that was used by Ossetian radicals to justify a “preemptive” attack on Georgians. On 6 January 1919, they attacked the Georgian settlement for the first time but were repulsed. Rallying their forces, the Ossetians again attacked on 11 January, and having overwhelmed the Georgian defenses, they massacred a large part of its Georgian population as well as a few Russians who were residing there. Georgian homes and other property were divided among the attackers. The surviving Georgians were expelled, and many of them died returning to Georgia. The event was widely publicized, and the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin himself called for an investigation and justice for the refugees.

ALASANIA, IRAKLI (1973– ). Georgian politician and former chairman of the Government of Abkhazia-in-exile. Born in Batumi, Alasania graduated from the Faculty of International Law of Tbilisi State University in 1995 and later studied at the Georgian Academy of Security. He began his career at the Ministry of State Security of Georgia, where he worked until 1998 when he transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. In 2001, he was chief of the se-
curity service staff at the Security Council of Georgia, and in 2002, he became first deputy minister of state security. In 2004, Alasania changed posts several times, serving first as deputy minister of defense and later as assistant secretary of the National Security Council of Georgia. In October 2004, he became chairman of the Tbilisi-based Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia. Over the next two years, he served as a chief Georgian representative at the Georgian-Abkhaz peace talks. In March 2006, President Saakashvili appointed Alasania as his assistant for the Abkhazian conflict issues, and after several months of work in this capacity, Alasania was nominated the Georgian envoy to the United States.

ALASTANIANS. A branch of the Bagrationi royal dynasty, often known as the “provincial kings.” The name is derived from Alastani, a center of the dominion given to crown princes starting with Giorgi IV Lasha, the son of Queen Tamar, in the 13th century. The crown prince’s domain was located in southern Georgia and included lands in Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, and Lori. In 1302, King Vakhtang III gave this territory to David VIII, whose descendants became known as the “provincial kings.” Among these rulers were the immediate children of David VIII, Melkisedek the Great (1311–1320), and Andronicus (1340–1354) and their descendants, including Giorgi the Great of Alastani (1354–1373). The Alastanian branch lost power and died out in late 14th century.

ALAYERDI CATHEDRAL. Constructed in the first half of the 11th century, the Alaverdi Cathedral is located near Telavi in the Alazani Valley; its name derives from the Persian Allah-verdi or god given. Father Ioseb Alaverdeli initially established a small church there in the sixth century, and King Kvirike of Kakheti replaced it with a large cathedral in the 11th century. With its characteristic features of Kakhetian architecture, it is one of the tallest (50 m) and most capacious cathedrals in Georgia. Alaverdi was the main church in Kakheti, where the Kakhetian rulers were buried, and is one of the most important eparchies of Georgia. It was damaged on many occasions over the centuries. In 1616, Shah Abbas I’s Persian troops looted it, and later in that century, Shah Abbas II turned the grounds
of the cathedral into pastures. The remains of Queen Ketevan, martyred by the Persians in 1624, were buried here by her son Teimuraz I. The cathedral was destroyed by the Daghestanian raids in 1730s and later was damaged by an earthquake. It was restored in mid-18th century during the reigns of Kings Teimuraz II and Erekle II. During the Soviet period, the church walls were renovated and ancient frescoes were revealed. An annual festival of Alaverdoba celebrates the start of harvest in late September.

**ALDE (11TH CENTURY)**. Daughter of the king of Ossetia and the second wife of King Giorgi I of Georgia. After the death of her husband in 1027, she retired with her son Demetre to Anakopia, which she surrendered to the Byzantine forces during the Georgian–Byzantine Wars in 1032. She then returned to Ossetia, and among her descendants living at the Ossetian court was Prince David Soslan who later married Queen Tamar.

**ALEXANDER I (1777–1825)**. Emperor of Russia in 1801–1825. Grandson of Empress Catherine the Great, he is most famous for his opposition to Napoleonic France and his subsequent role in redrawing the European political map at the Congress of Vienna. He also oversaw the annexation of Georgia in the early 19th century. Six months after becoming emperor, Alexander issued a manifesto on the annexation of Kartli and Kakheti to the Russian Empire on 12 September 1801. Starting in 1805, he gave his consent to the occupation of the western Georgian principalities of Imereti, Guria, Mingrelia, and Abkhazia and the establishment of the Russian administration in these territories.

**ALEXANDER I THE GREAT (1390–1442)**. King of Georgia in 1412–1442. Born to King Constantine I and his wife Natia Amirejibi, Prince Alexander quarreled with his father and found a refuge with Atabeg Ivane Jakeli of Samtskhe. After his father’s death, he ascended the throne in 1412 and turned his energy to rebuilding his kingdom following the devastating invasions of Tamerlane (Timur). He overcame the initial opposition of the powerful lords of Dadiani, Jakeli, and Sharvashidze in 1412–1415, revived many cities, and repaired numerous monasteries and churches, including
the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and Ruisi Monastery. In 1425, he established a temporary tax to finance his projects, which remained in force for the next 15 years. He reorganized the Orthodox Church and provided large subsidies to repair and maintain Georgian monasteries in the Holy Land. King Alexander also pursued an aggressive foreign policy aimed at recovering lost territory. He captured the key fortress of Lori in 1431 and expanded his sphere of influence into the Karabagh region by 1435. To increase the population of the Kingdom of Georgia, he encouraged the immigration of the Armenians. His most crucial mistake was in appointing his sons to principal positions in the kingdom. These crown princes soon gained too much power and were surrounded by feuding groups of nobles who intrigued for the ultimate prize of placing their candidate on the throne. In 1442, King Alexander abdicated and lived the rest of his life as the monk Athanaseos.

ALEXANDER I (?–1389). King of Imereti in 1387–1389. King Bagrat V appointed him the eristavi of Imereti in 1372, but Alexander took advantage of the invasion of Tamerlane (Timur) in 1387 to defy royal authority and declare himself the king of Imereti. However, other rulers of western Georgian regions (Odishi, Sukhumi, Svaneti, and Guria) refused to recognize him and supported King Bagrat V. Following his death in 1389, Imereti was restored to the Kingdom of Georgia.

ALEXANDER II (?–1510). King of Imereti in 1484–1510. The son of King Bagrat VI, he was prevented from ascending the throne by the powerful opposition of nobles Dadiani, Gurieli, Gelovani, Sharvashidze, and others, who invited King Constantine II of Kartli to take over Imereti. In 1484, Alexander seized the royal throne and spent several years fighting his opponents, who were finally crushed in 1488. He took advantage of the weakening Kartli to seize the key fortress of Gori and annex its western regions.

ALEXANDER I (1454–1511). King of Kakheti in 1476–1511. He was the son of Giorgi VIII, the last king of the united Kingdom of Georgia. He always pursued diplomatic solutions to any conflict and was prepared to make concessions and pay tribute to avoid open
confrontation. In 1477, when Uzun Hasan of Aq-Qoyunlu ravaged Kartli and threatened to invade Kakheti, King Alexander agreed to recognize his supremacy and paid a small tribute, saving his realm from destruction. In 1501, he acquiesced to Shah Ismail of Persia, once again saving Kakheti from destruction. In 1483 and 1491, King Alexander dispatched two embassies to Grand Duke Ivan III of Moscow that established long-lasting relations between Russia and the Georgian principalities. He was assassinated by his son Prince Giorgi (Avgiorgi) in 1511.

ALEXANDER II (1527–1605). King of Kakheti in 1574–1605. Son of King Levan of Kakheti, he proved to be a shrewd and capable ruler. During his long reign, he greatly developed agriculture and industry and large towns. However, he faced the difficult task of maneuvering his realm between the Ottoman and Persian empires. Although he initially recognized Persian supremacy, King Alexander supported the Ottomans after the Persian defeat at Chaldiran in 1517. Despite his concessions, Kakheti still suffered from Ottoman and Daghestanian raids, forcing King Alexander to seek other options. In 1585, he appealed for protection to Russia and negotiated the Book of Pledge, which formed an alliance between Georgian and Russian kingdoms. However, Shah Abbas of Persia became concerned by the Russo–Georgian rapprochement, and through intrigues and enticement, interfered in the Kakhetian royal court. In 1601, King Alexander was forced to relinquish his throne to his son Prince David and become a monk.

After David died in October 1602, Alexander left his monastery to resume his duties as king. The following year, Shah Abbas of Persia campaigned in Armenia and called on the Georgian kings of Kartli and Kakheti to join him there. Fearing the worst, King Alexander II hesitated for almost six months before finally joining the shah in April 1604. In early 1605, Shah Abbas sent him back with orders to conquer Shirvan; Alexander was accompanied by his son Prince Constantine, who was raised at the Persian court and had converted to Islam, and the Persian troops. Returning to Kakheti, Alexander was informed about the Russian expedition against Shamkhal and Russian requests for military aid, which he decided to fulfill despite the shah’s orders. On 12 March 1605, the renegade Prince Constan-
tine had his Persian troops murder King Alexander and his advisers during the council of war at the royal palace in Dzegami. See also KETEVAN, QUEEN; SAAKADZE, GIORGI; TEIMURAZ I.

ALEXANDER BATONISHVILI (1674–1711). Georgian public figure and first commander of artillery in the Russian Empire. The son of King Archil II of Imereti, he was raised in Kutaisi before moving with his family to Ossetia in 1680 and to Astrakhan in 1682. Two years later, he and his brother Prince Mamuka traveled to Moscow, where he married into the prominent family of a Russian boyar. In 1691, he was granted an estate near the village of Vsesviatskoe, where he established a Georgian community and cultural center. He enjoyed close relations with Tsar Peter I and accompanied his sovereign to Western Europe on the Great Embassy of 1697. At The Hague and Utrecht, he studied modern artillery techniques, and in London he shared a room with Peter. On returning to Russia, Alexander Archilovich was appointed head of the Pushkarskii Prikaz or Artillery Department, and made the first general of ordnance (Feldzeugmeister) of the Russian army in 1699. In this capacity, Alexander took part in the famous battle of Narva in November 1700, where he was taken prisoner by the Swedes under Charles XII. Despite Peter the Great’s continuous attempts to exchange him for Swedish prisoners, Alexander Batonishvili remained in captivity. He enjoyed relative freedom in Sweden and continued his studies, producing numerous translations and supervising the creation of the new Georgian printing press that was used to print Georgian books in Moscow. He authored the first study of artillery science in Georgian that was later used as a manual in the Georgian army. In 1706, Alexander’s father King Archil addressed a personal appeal to Charles XII, imploring him to release Alexander in exchange for a number of Swedish officer prisoners. The necessary arrangements were not completed until 1710 when Alexander was finally allowed to leave Stockholm. But by then he was seriously ill and died at Riga before being reunited with his family.

ALEXANDER BATONISHVILI (1770–1844). Georgian prince and leader of anti–Russian resistance in Georgia in the early 19th century, known as Eskandar Mirza in Persia. He helped his father King
Erekle II rebuild Tbilisi following the devastating Persian invasion in 1795. After the death of King Erekle II in 1798, Prince Alexander opposed his brother Giorgi XII, fearing he would lead the country into eventual annexation by Russia. He fought against the establishment of Russian sovereignty in Georgia from 1801–1804. He then traveled to Persia, where Fath Ali Shah welcomed him and pledged support against Russia. Over the next 10 years, Alexander was actively involved in anti-Russian disturbances in eastern Georgia, including the 1812 uprising in Kakheti (See KAKHETIAN UPRISING OF 1812). From 1803–1818, he lived in Daghestan, where he incited local tribes to oppose Russia. However, the prince failed to make any significant progress in his quest to liberate Georgia since the Russians had firmly established themselves in the region and defeated the Persian forces during the two Russo–Persian Wars of 1804–1813 and 1826–1828. Following the Treaty of Torkamançay in 1828, Persia relinquished all claims to Transcaucasia and removed its support of Prince Alexander. In 1832, a failed conspiracy of Georgian nobles in Tbilisi envisioned crowning him as the king of Georgia. Prince Alexander spent the last years of his life in poverty and died in Tehran in 1844. He was buried in the local Armenian church.

ALEXANDER LUARSABIS-DZE (?– 1711). Georgian military commander, member of the Bagrationi royal family. He followed King Giorgi XI to Persia and commanded Georgian and Persian troops in Afghanistan, where he distinguished himself fighting the Afghani tribes led by Mir Vays Khan. He died during the massacre of the Georgian garrison in Kandahar in 1711.

ALI BEY AL-KABIR (1728–1773). Mamluk ruler of Egypt in 1760–1773. He was born to a Georgian family of an orthodox Christian in western Georgia, but was kidnapped and sold into slavery in 1741. Two years later, he was purchased in Cairo and became a mamluk gradually rising in influence, reaching the top office of sheikh al-balad in 1763. During the Russo–Turkish War of 1768–1774, Ali Bey broke the Mamluk-Ottoman Treaty of 1517 and deposed the Ottoman governor in 1768. The following year, he proclaimed Egyptian independence, stopped the annual tribute to the Ottoman Empire, proclaimed himself a sultan, and had his
name struck on local coins. In 1770–1771, Ali Bey successfully campaigned in the Hijaz, Palestine, and Syria. However, his initial success faltered when the Mamluks turned against each other. In 1772, Ali Bey was defeated by Abu al-Dhabab and fled to Acco in Syria. After rallying his forces, he tried regaining his power in 1773, but was again defeated and died in Cairo on 8 May 1773. See also MURAD BEY; IBRAHIM BEY.

ALI-QULI KHAN. See IESE, KING.

ALLAHVERDI KHAN (?–1613). Georgian commander and statesman, who rose to the highest positions in Safavid Persia. Born to a Georgian family of Undilaidze, he was captured during one of the Persian raids and was trained in the army Ġolām-e ġāṣṣa-ye sārifa (crown servants). In 1589, he participated in the assassination of the powerful official Morsed-qoli Khan Ostajlu, which paved the way for the rise of Shah Abbas I. For his service, he was rewarded with the governorship of Jorpadaqan near Isfahan and the rank of sultan. In 1595, he became the commander-in-chief (qullar-aqasi) of the golām troops, one of the five highest offices in Safavid Persia. The same year, he was appointed the governor of Fars, becoming the first golām to attain equal status with the Persian tribal chiefs (qizilbas). In 1597, Allahverdi Khan became the governor of Kohgiluya province. He participated in Shah Abbas’ campaign in eastern Persia and distinguished himself at Rebat-e Parian, where the Persian army routed the Uzbeks in August 1598. Later that year, Allahverdi Khan assassinated Farhad Khan Qaramonlu, who was suspected of plotting against the shah, and thereby further increased his standing at the Persian court. By 1600, he was the most powerful man in Persia after the shah.

Over the next 10 years, he proved himself a capable and cunning administrator who vigorously supported Shah Abbas’ reforms. He supervised military reform and established, with the help of Sir Robert Sherley, a powerful golām army of 25,000 men. He assumed supreme command of the Persian army and was the first to receive the title of commander-in-chief (sardar-e laskar). In 1601–1602, he conquered Bahrain and later commanded the Persian army against the Ottoman Empire from 1603–1612. Per-
sian historian Iskander Beg described him as “one of the most powerful amirs to hold office under the [Safavid] dynasty. During his lifetime, he was responsible for the construction of many public buildings, including the bridge across the Zayanda-rud at Isfahan [which still bears his name], and charitable foundations. He was a man of great forbearance, modest and chaste.” After Alahverdi Khan’s sudden death on 3 June 1613, Shah Abbas appointed his sons to the leading positions in the empire: Imam-Quli Khan became the beglarbeg of Fars and Daud Khan received the governorship of Ganja and Karabagh. See also LUARSAB, KING; SAAKADZE, GIORGI; TEIMURAZ I; PERSIA; PERSIA, GEORGIAN COMMUNITIES IN.

**ALLEN, WILLIAM E. D. (1904–1973).** British scholar and historian of Georgia and Caucasus. Born to an Ulster Protestant family, Allen graduated from Eton and began his career as a war correspondent during the Greco–Turkish War in 1921–1925 and in Morocco in late 1920s. He was elected to the British Parliament in 1929 but later resigned his seat and turned to historical research. He was fascinated by Georgian history, and at the age of 29, he published *A History of the Georgian People* that was a standard work for many years. In the 1930s, Allen, joined by Sir Oliver Wardrop and Andro Gigishvili, published the journal *Georgica* that was devoted to Georgian and Caucasian studies. During World War I, he served in the diplomatic corps and was assigned to the British missions in Ethiopia and Beirut. He continued his research, and together with Pail Muratoff, he collected material for another classic, *Caucasian Battlefields* (1953). In later years, Allen worked on various historical projects but invariably returned to Georgian history, authoring *Russian Embassies to the Georgian Kings* (1970). He visited Georgia several times during the Soviet Era and had close contacts with Georgian scholars.

**ALPHABET.** The Georgian language belongs to the Kartvelian group of the Iberian-Caucasian Language Family and is the only language in this family to have its own unique alphabet. The Georgian script has gone through three major stages of development, Asomtavruli (Mrglovani), Nuskhuri (Khutsuri), and Mkhedruli...
that is currently used. Asomtavruli is the oldest type of Georgian script, and its inscriptions dating back to the early Christian era have been found in Armazistsikhe (near Mtskheta) and Nekresi (in Kakheti) by recent scientific expeditions. Early fifth century CE inscriptions were also found near Bethlehem in Palestine and at the Bolnisi Sioni Church near Tbilisi. The first inscriptions in Nushka-Khutsuri script date from the mid-ninth century, and the script was in common use by the 10th–11th centuries. However, the same period also saw the development of the Mkhedruli script, which replaced the Nushka-Khutsuri script in secular writing, while all ecclesiastic literature continued to be written with Khutsuri letters.

The origins of the Georgian script are still debated. Georgian tradition and chronicles ascribe its creation to King Parnavaz of Georgia, who supposedly introduced it in the third century BCE. This premise is supported by prominent Georgian scholars such as Ivane Javakhishvili, Pavle Ingorokva, and Pataridze who agree that the Georgian script must have been created long before the spread of Christianity; recent excavations at Mtskheta seem to support this argument. Others (Korneli Kekelidze and Akaki Shanidze) maintain that the creation of the alphabet was connected with the adoption of Christianity in Georgia. The renowned Georgian linguist Tamaz Gamkrelidze’s research demonstrated that the Greek alphabet seems to have influenced the structure of the oldest Georgian scripts. A small group of Georgian researchers (Giorgi Tsitsishvili, Zurab Qapianidze) maintains that the Georgian alphabet developed directly from the Sumerian script. The belief that the Armenian monk Mesrop Mashtots, who created the Armenian script, also invented the Georgian and Albanian alphabets is unsupported by other historical evidence.

The graphic form of the Georgian alphabet is based on the combination of lines and circles. The order of letters in the Georgian alphabet resembles the order of the Greek Semptic alphabets. There were 38 letters in the MrGovani and Nushkuri scripts, while the Mkhedruli script, following a reform in the early 20th century, now consists of 33 letters—five vowels and 28 consonants. There are no upper case letters. Some consonants distinguish the voiced, voiceless aspirated, and glottalized stops.
AMASHUKELI, ELGUJA (1928– ). Renowned Georgian painter and sculptor. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from Tbilisi State Academy of Arts in 1955 and gradually established himself as one of the foremost sculptors of his generation. He designed subway stations in Tbilisi and produced numerous monuments, including Vakhtang Gorgasali (1967), Rapiel Eristavi (1974), Niko Pirosmani (1975), David IV Aghmashenebeli (1994), Tsonne Dadiani (1997), King Parnavaz (2000), the bas-relief of the 1500th Anniversary of Tbilisi (1958), Mother of Kartli (1963; awarded the Rustaveli State Prize in 1966), monument to Glory (1967), Colchian Mother (1968), Wounded Eagle (1970), monument to Mother Language (1984), and many others. He was recognized as a People’s Artist of the USSR in 1985 and was elected to the USSR Academy of Arts. He received the USSR State Prize, Gogebashvili Prize and won the World Competition in Sofia (Bulgaria) in 1970. In 1981–1996, he presided over the Georgian Painters’ Union.

AMASSIA, TREATY OF (1555). Peace treaty signed between the Ottoman and Persian empires on 29 May 1555 ending the Turko–Persian War of 1514–1555. The Georgian kings, Luarsab II of
Kartli and Bagrat III of Imereti, tried unsuccessfully to thwart this treaty because it threatened their kingdoms. Under the treaty, the two powers divided Transcaucasia and Asia Minor into two parts, with Persia receiving Azerbaijan, eastern Armenia, eastern Kurdistan, the Georgian Kingdoms of Kartli-Kakheti, and the eastern part of Samtskhe, while the Ottomans claimed all of western Georgia, Arabia, Iraq, and western Armenia and Kurdistan. Kars was declared neutral, and its fortress was destroyed. This treaty had a profound effect on the later history of Georgia since it laid the foundation for the division of Georgia between the Ottoman Empire and Persia and facilitated further disintegration of the united Georgian kingdom.

AMBROSI, PATRIARCH (1861–1927). Catholicos-patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church from 1921–1927. Born Bessarion Khe-laia in Martvili, he graduated from the Tbilisi Theological Seminary in 1885 and taught theology and the Georgian language in Sochi, Sukhumi, Akhali Athoni, and Likni from 1887–1896. Between 1897–1900, he studied at the Kazan Theological Academy and later became a monk. From 1901–1904, he served in various positions in the Racha region and Tbilisi and emerged as a vocal spokesman for the restoration of autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church and in opposition to the Russification process in Georgia. In 1905, he was arrested and exiled to Siberia. Three years later, he was accused of participating in the assassination of Orthodox Exarch Nikon; although he was acquitted in 1910, Ambrosi was not allowed to return to Georgia until 1917.

After the autocephaly of the Georgian Church was restored in March 1917, Archimandrite Ambrosi was consecrated as the metropolitan of Chkondidi and then of Abkhazia and Sukhumi. In September 1921, he was elected the catholicos-patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church and faced the difficult task of leading the church and its parish under the newly established Soviet authorities. He preached national unity and revival of the Georgian culture and language. In February 1922, he sent a special memorandum to the participants of the international conference in Genoa seeking international pressure to remove the Soviet troops from Georgia. However, he was arrested for his actions and imprisoned.
for four years before being released in 1926. He died in Tbilisi on 29 March 1927 and was buried in the Sioni Cathedral. In 1995, he was canonized by the Georgian Orthodox Church. See also AUGUST UPRISING OF 1924; DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

AMILAKHOR. Second-highest military position in the feudal Georgian kingdom, the deputy of the amirspasalar. The term was derived from the Arabic term amir meaning “commander, governor, prince”; in subsequent Seljuk usage, amir was employed to designate various military commanders of state, including the amir-e ak’or (master of the horse). The term was introduced to Georgia following the Seljuk incursions in the 11th century, and it gradually replaced the Georgian term mejinibetukhutsesi to designate the deputy commander of the Georgian military. Amilakhors directed three major bodies: stables (sajinibo) with its staff of mejinibetukhutsesi, mejinibeni, misratultukhutsesi, and misroatuli; armory (zardakhana) with its staff of meabjretukhutsesi, meabjreni, zardakhnisukhutsesi, zardakhnis mtsignobari, molare and mejinibe; and saremo with its staff of meremetukhutsesi, saremos nacvali, and meremeni. Although the amilakhor did not have the status of vizier to the king, he attended royal councils and enjoyed privileges of lesser viziers, e.g., mechurchletukhutsesi (finance) and msakhurtukhutssi (majordomo). After the collapse of the united Georgian kingdom in the 15th century, the term amilakhor lost its official meaning and evolved into the last name (amilakhvari) of several princely families that had held it in Samtskhe (15–16th centuries) and Kartli (15th–18th centuries). See also GARIGEBA KHELMTSIPIS KARISA.

AMILAKHvari, Dimitri (1906–1942). Lieutenant colonel of the French Foreign Legion and a hero of the French resistance during World War II. Amilakhvari was born into a noble family, the son of Prince Giorgi Amilakhvari and grandson of General Ivane Amilakhvari. After the Soviet invasion of 1921, his family immigrated to Istanbul and later to France. He graduated from the St. Cyr Military Academy in 1926 and served with the Foreign Legion in North Africa from 1926–1939, rising to the rank of captain. In 1940, he joined the 13th Demi-brigade of legionaries (13e DBLE)
and distinguished himself in actions at Bjervick and Narvik in Norway in May 1940. After the fall of France, Amilakhvari joined the Free French forces in England and took part in the Eritrean and Syrian campaigns. In 1941, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and was appointed commander of the 13th Demi-brigade. The following year, Amilakhvari fought in Libya, where he distinguished himself at Bir-Hakim (26 May–10 June 1942); General Charles de Gaulle named him and his legionnaires the “honour of France” for their heroic defense of the Allied positions. However, Amilakhvari was mortally wounded during the battle of El-Alamein on 24 September 1942 and was buried in the desert under a simple white cross. The 1956 class of the St. Cyr Military Academy was dedicated to his name. See also GEORGIAN LEGION; TEXEL, GEORGIAN UPRISING ON.

AMILAKHvari, Givi (1689–ca. 1757). Prominent statesman and military commander. In early the 18th century, Amilakhvari was one of the most powerful lords serving as the commander of Upper Kartli military district and mouravi of the fortress of Gori. He distinguished himself during the Ottoman attacks in 1723–1735, when he led Georgian resistance following the departure of King Vakhtang VI. However, a shrewd politician, he often compromised with the Ottomans to further his goals. In 1727, after the death of renegade King Iese, the Ottomans divided Kartli into military districts, appointing Amilakhvari to command one of them. In the 1730s, he was engaged in punitive expeditions against the Lezgians and Kakhetians, although he secretly supported the latter. In 1734, with the Persian invasion of Georgia, Amilakhvari sided with Nadir Khan to drive the Turks out of Transcaucasia and captured Gori in 1735. However, his desire to liberate and unite Georgia also alarmed Nadir Khan who had him, and other Georgian lords, arrested. Amilakhvari managed to escape, and together with Erastvi Shanshe of Ksani and Vakhushi Abashidze, he organized an uprising against the Persians in Kartli in 1736. However, the Georgian leader was betrayed and was captured by the Persians later that year.

From 1737–1740, Amilakhvari participated in Nadir Shah’s campaigns in Afghanistan, where he distinguished himself and earned the respect of the shah. He was soon sent back to Kartli to fight against
his former ally Eristavi Shanshe of Ksani. In 1741, Amilakhvari was appointed the governor of Kartli and was confirmed as the lord of Saamilakhvaro and Ksani. He took part in Nadir Shah’s campaigns in Daghestan, but in 1742–1744, he led another rebellion in Kartli before being defeated in the crucial battle of Achabeti in 1744. He was captured in 1745 and moved to Isfahan, where he converted to Islam and, under the new name of Shah Quli Khan, became the commander-in-chief (qullar-aqasi) of the golâm troops, one of the five principal offices in Persia. In 1749, during the civil strife in Persia, he gathered the surviving Georgian troops and fought his way back to Georgia, where he spent the remaining years helping Kings Teimuraz II and Erekle II to rebuild Kartli-Kakheti.

**AMIR.** Arabic term meaning “commander, governor, prince.” *Amirs* served as provincial governors with military and administrative authority. The position was introduced to Georgia after the initial Arab conquests in the eighth century when Abbasid caliphs appointed *amirs* of Tbilisi. During the ninth century, as the central authority weakened in the Caliphate, the *amirs* of Tbilisi gradually became independent. Over the next 300 years, *amirs* governed Tbilisi and extended their authority to Rustavi and Dmanisi; some of them were of Georgian descent, as attested to by *amir* Liparit Baghvash in the 11th century. The ascendancy of *amirs* ended in 1122 when King David IV Aghmashenebeli seized the city following his decisive victory at Didgori. Thereafter, the *amirs* became subordinated to the Georgian crown; known as *amirt-amira*, they were appointed to rule large towns (Kutaisi, Dmanisi, Rustavi, Zhinvali, etc.); the *mouravi* (governor) of Kartli was often referred to as *amir*. In the 17th century, the term *amirt-amira* was replaced by *kalakis mouravi* (town governor). The last *amirt-amira* of Tbilisi was Mouravi Giorgi Saakadze. In other usage, *amir* was employed to designate various military offices of state, e.g., the *amir-e sipahsalar* (*amirspasalar*, commander of the army), the *amir-e bar* (amirbari, constable), and the *amir-e ajib* (*amirejibi*, chamberlain).

**AMIRAN-DAREJANIANI.** One of the most important works of medieval Georgian romance and epic poetry. A prose work in 12 chapters, *Amiran-Darejaniani* (the Story of Amiran, son of Darejan) is at-
tributed to Moses of Khoni (Mose Khoneli) who lived in the 12th century. The epic follows Amiran, son of Darejan, and his comrades on their various quests against evil spirits, devis, dragons, and other supernatural phenomena. The epic incorporates some elements of the Georgian myth of Amirani.

AMIRANI. In Georgian mythology, a heroine, the son of the goddess Dali and a mortal hunter. According to the Svan version, the hunter’s wife learned of her husband’s affair with Dali and killed her by cutting her hair while she was asleep. At Dali’s death, the hunter extracted from her womb a boy whom he called Amirani. The child had marks of his semi-divine origins with symbols of the sun and the moon on his shoulder-blades and a golden tooth.

Georgian myths describe the rise of the titan Amirani, who challenges the gods, kidnaps Kamar, a symbol of divine fire, and teaches metalurgy to humans. In punishment, the gods (in some versions, Jesus Christ) chain Amirani to a cliff (or an iron pole) in the Caucasus Mountains, where the titan continues to defy the gods and struggles to break the chains; an eagle ravages his liver every day, but it heals at night. Amirani’s loyal dog, meantime, licks the chain to thin it out, but every year, on Thursday or in some versions the day before Christmas, the gods send smiths to repair it. In some versions, every seven years the cave where Amirani is chained can be seen in the Caucasus. Scholars agree that this folk epic about Amirani must have been formed in the third millennium BCE and later went through numerous transformations, the most important of them being morphing pagan and Christian elements after the spread of Christianity. The myth could have been assimilated by the Greek colonists or travelers and embodied in the corpus of the famous Greek myth of Prometheus. In the Georgian literature and culture, Amirani is often used as a symbol of the Georgian nation, its ordeals and struggle for survival. See also MYTHOLOGY.

AMIREJIBI. Court chamberlain in feudal Georgia; the name was derived from the Arabic amir-e ajib (chamberlain), who was a deputy to mandartukhutsesi and attended the vizier councils. He supervised ceremonies at the court. Eventually amir-e ajib evolved into Georgian amirejibi and turned into a family name that survives to the present day. See also GARIGEBA KHELMTSIPIS KARISA.
AMIREJIBI, SHALVA (1887–1943). Political figure and writer. Born in a small village in Gori province, he graduated from the Tbilisi Gymnasium for Nobles and became involved in revolutionary activities. Between 1906–1909, he studied in Austria, and upon his return to Georgia, began publishing *Chveni eri* and became known for his poems and other works. He was arrested for his political views but was later released. Starting in 1910, he was associated with the National Democratic Party and worked on the journal *Klde* and the newspapers *Samshoblo* and *Sakartvelo*, where he published numerous works under various pen names. In 1916, he enlisted in the military and participated in World War I until February 1917 when he returned home following the February Revolution. He became active in the National Democratic Party and was elected to the Parliament of the first democratic republic. After the Soviet occupation in 1921, Amirejibi joined the underground resistance led by Kakutsa Cholokashvili. Following the unsuccessful August Uprising of 1924, he immigrated to Europe, where he lived in Germany and France for the rest of his life. In 1940, he established the journal *Akhali Droeba* in Berlin. He died in Paris in July 1943.

AMIREJIBI, CHABUA (MZECHABUK) (1921– ). Prominent Georgian writer and member of the Parliament in 1992–1995. Born in Tbilisi, his parents and close friends were victims of the purges of 1937. In April 1944, as a co-founder and active member of the anti-Soviet organization *Tetri Giorgi*, he was accused of planning and preparing an armed uprising in Georgia and was sentenced to 25 years of imprisonment in Siberia. After 15 years in prison and several prison escapes, he was ultimately rehabilitated in 1959 and became known for his series of poems and novels, including *Ratom ar damatsade* (1960), *Gza* (1962), *Chemi mejghane bidza* (1963), *Kharis aghsareba* (1964), *Giorgi burduli* (1965), and others. His greatest work, and arguably one of the best works in modern Georgian literature, is the epic *Data Tutashkhia* (1973–1975), which he conceived while in prison. The novel follows the tragic life of Data Tutashkhia who is forced to lead a life of brigandage against the Russian authorities and oppression. However, the larger theme of the book deals with the issues of fate, personal freedom, morality, and injustice. The hero is modeled on the pagan god Tutashkha, one of the Promethean proto-
types in Georgian folklore, and the author combines national mythology with a covert defense of free spirit and criticism of repressive Tsarist/Soviet authorities. The book, and the feature film based on it, turned Data Tutashkia into a folk hero in Georgia whose name remains widely popular to the present. Amirejibi was rewarded with the Shota Rustaveli State Prize in 1992 and published his other major work, Gora Mborgali, which is based on his experiences in Soviet prisons, in 1995.

AMIRSPASALAR. The highest military position in the feudal Georgian kingdom, commander-in-chief and vizier to the king. It was derived from the Arabic term amir meaning “commander, governor, prince” and old Persian spahpat or spasalar, commander-in-chief of the medieval Georgian army. The term was introduced to Georgia following the Seljuk incursions in the 11th century and was first mentioned during the reign of King Giorgi III when it replaced the Georgian term spaspet to designate commander-in-chief; some scholars argue that King David IV Aghmashenebeli established the position of amirspasalar as part of his military reform. Military forces under the amirspasalar’s command included troops from the royal domain, royal guard (mona-spa), detachments provided by feudal lords and mercenaries. He was assisted by the amilakhor (deputy commander) and spaspetes (heads of military districts). In peacetime, he supervised army maintenance and training and, on campaign, he served as commander-in-chief unless the king personally led the army.

During a royal coronation, the amirspasalar held the royal sword, a symbol of military authority, and fastened it on the king. At royal councils, he had the right to speak after the king and had to be consulted on granting fiefs to gentry. Initially, the amirspasalar combined the functions of the mandartuhutsesi since the first amirspasalars Ivane Orbeli, Qubasar, Sargis Mkhargrdzeli, Gamrekel Toreli, Chiaberi, and Zakaria Mkhargrdzeli were also mandartuhutsesi. In the early 13th century, the two positions were divided between the sons of Zakaria Mkhargrdzeli, Shahan-shah (Šahan-Šah), and Ivane Atabag, and the latter’s descendants kept the title of amirspasalar for generations, creating the new title of atabag-amirspasalar. In 1334, the Jakeli family was granted the title of atabag-amirspasalar and held it after the disintegration of the Georgian kingdom in the 15th century, although the
title carried no real authority. In the 16th–18th centuries, the Kingdoms of Kartli, Kakheti, and Imereti were divided into military districts led by powerful lords, some of whom (Baratashvili and Orbelishvili in Kartli) claimed the title of amirspasalar.

AMTSKHARA. Opposition party in the separatist republic of Abkhazia. Amtsakhara was established as an association of veterans of the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict but later included a wider community and replaced the Aitara Party as opposition movement. The party lobbied for reform of the Abkhazian government and was largely responsible for bringing down the government of Gennady Gagulia. In 2003–2004, the party campaigned for President Vladislav Ardzinba to step down and tried unsuccessfully to impeach him. The members of the Amtsakhara Party were, and still are, persecuted by the Abkhaz authorities. In April 2003, their office was bombed, and later two Amtsakhara activists died in a car bombing. In June 2004, Garri Aiba, one of the Amtsakhara’s leaders, was shot dead in the center of Sukhumi. During the 2004 elections, the Amtsakhara and United Abkhazia parties merged to form a united front against the government and named former Prime Minister Sergey Bagapsh as their presidential candidate. Bagapsh eventually won the second round of the election and is currently the president of the self-proclaimed republic.

ANANIAVSHILI, NINO (1963–). World-famous Georgian ballerina. Born in March 1963 in Tbilisi, she began skating at an early age and became Georgia’s junior skating champion by 1969. The same year, she also began her ballet training at the Georgian State Choreographic School, including studying under the famous Vakhtang Chabukiani. In 1977, she entered the Moscow Choreographic Institute at the Bolshoi Theater where she was trained by Natalia Zolotova. She soon showed impressive progress in her dancing skills and won the Gold Medal in the Junior Division at the Varna International Comnenus Competition in 1980 and the Grand Prix at the Moscow International Ballet Competition in 1981. She joined the Bolshoi Theater upon her graduation in 1981 and danced her first major role as Odette-Odile in Swan Lake while on tour with the Bolshoi in Germany in 1982. She soon became prima ballerina in such classics as
Giselle, Sleeping Beauty, Don Quixote, La Bayadere, Raymonda, Romeo and Juliet, Nutcracker, and others. In 1985, she won the Gold Medal at the Moscow International Ballet Competition and the Grand Prix of the International Ballet Competition in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1986. In 1988 she and her partner, Andris Liepa, became the first Soviet dancers to guest star with the New York City Ballet. In the 1990s, Ananiashvili’s popularity exploded, and she became an international ballet superstar. Retaining her status as prima ballerina of the Bolshoi, she danced with the American Ballet Theatre, La Scala Ballet, Britain’s Royal Ballet, the Royal Danish Ballet, the Kirov (Mariinsky) Ballet, the Royal Swedish Ballet, the Ballet de Monte Carlo, and the National Ballets of Norway, Finland, Portugal, and many others. Among her numerous honors are the Shota Rustaveli Prize (1993), National Merit Medal of Russia (2001), and the Georgian Medal of Honor (2003). She also tours with her own company “Nina Ananiashvili and International Stars.” In 2001, Nino celebrated her 20th anniversary with the Bolshoi Theater. Despite an injury suffered in late 2001, she returned to the stage in 2002 and continues to captivate audiences throughout the world.

ANANURI. Fortress in the Aragvi Valley, residence of the powerful eristavis of Aragvi. Built in the 15th century, the Ananuri Fortress was considered one of the major fortresses in eastern Georgia. In the 1740s, King Teimuraz II sought the safety of its walls as protection from the attacks of Nadir Shah, and later that century King Erekle II retired to Ananuri following the Persian capture of Tbilisi in 1795. The fortress is well preserved and remains a popular tourist attraction. Within its walls is the Assumption Church (17th century) with finely carved ornaments and frescos.

ANARCHISM IN GEORGIA. Although originating in the 17th–18th centuries, modern anarchism became a potent political movement in the middle of the 19th century under the leadership of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Mikhail Bakunin, and Peter Kropotkin, appealing to those who were opposed to all forms of rule or social domination. The Georgian anarchist movement was organized and led by Varlaam Cherkezishvili (Cherkezov), who traveled extensively in Europe and had close contacts with Kropotkin. In 1903–1904, Georgian anarchists
were involved in the publication of the journal Georgia, a mouthpiece of the Georgian revolutionaries in Paris. In 1905, Cherkezishvili and his supporters returned to Georgia to participate in the 1905 Revolution, but as the revolution failed, they were persecuted and many of them were exiled.

The surviving members of the movement went underground, and in 1905–1905, they conducted an extensive campaign against the Social Democrats. The Anarchists had no support among the proletariat, but they achieved some success among the petit bourgeois elements. They published several journals, including Nobati, Khma, and Musha. However, the movement soon split into two major groups over the issue of Georgian nationalism. The “cosmopolitan” group, led by Shalva Gogelia and Komando (Giorgi) Gogelia, rejected nationalism in favor of the universal class struggle and opposed the Georgian aspirations for independence, while the “national” group, led by Cherkezishvili, were more supportive of Georgian national independence. World War I further divided these groups since the “cosmopolitans” adopted the defeatist (porazhentsi) position while the “nationals” supported the defensive (oborontsi) platform. The anarchist movement was briefly revived during the short-lived democratic republic from 1918–1921 and published the journal Anarchia. The movement’s popularity gradually diminished and it disappeared after the Soviet takeover.

ANDGHULADZE, DAVID (1895–1973). Eminent Georgian artist and tenor. He graduated from the Tbilisi Conservatory in 1927 and made his debut at the Paliashvili Theater of Opera and Ballet, where he performed for the next three decades. From 1945–1947, he was the artistic director of the theater, and from 1946, he taught at the conservatory, becoming professor in 1958. Andghuladze laid the foundation for Georgian dramatic opera singing and was followed by a generation of Georgian opera singers, among them many tenors (Zurab Anjaparidze, Zurab Sotkilava, etc.) who went on to earn world fame. He was awarded the State Prize in 1947 and the title of People’s Artist of USSR in 1950.
ANJAPARIDZE, VERA (VERIKO) (1900–1987). Renowned Georgian actress. Born in Kutaisi, she studied acting in Moscow and Tbilisi and began her career in the Rustaveli Theater in Tbilisi. In 1928, she joined the Marjanishvili Theater, but five years later, she was invited to the Moscow Realist Theater of N. P. Okhlopkov. Anjaparidze later returned to Georgia, where she became the artistic director of the Marjanishvili Theater and taught at the Rustaveli Theater. Over the years, she established herself as one of the leading actresses in the Soviet Union, playing principal roles in theatrical productions of William Shakespeare, Alexandre Dumas, Shalva Dadiani, Karl Chapek, and Friedrich Schiller. She debuted in cinema in 1923 and created many memorable roles in such popular films as Giorgi Saakadze, Otar ant kvrivi, and Monanieba. In addition to her Lenin Order and other medals, she was awarded the State Prize of the USSR in 1943, 1946, and 1952.

ANJAPARIDZE, ZURAB (1928–1997). One of the finest tenors of his generation, Anjaparidze captivated audiences throughout the Soviet Union and Europe. Born in Kutaisi, he studied under David Andghuladze at the Tbilisi Conservatory and continued his studies in Moscow and Milan. He joined the prestigious Bolshoi Theater in 1959 and established himself as one of the finest tenors of his time, whose romantic performances of Italian operas quickly became classics. Arguably his greatest performance was in Herman’s Pikovaia dama at the La Scala opera house in Milan in 1964; the performance stunned the audiences and influenced subsequent generations of tenors. Returning to Tbilisi in 1970, Anjaparidze continued his work at the Paliashvili Theater of Opera and Ballet and left an important legacy as a professor of the Tbilisi Conservatory and director of the Theatrical Institute.

ANTHEM, STATE. Georgia has adopted three state anthems over the last six decades. The first anthem, Idide marad chveno samshblov, was that of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic used between 1946 and 1991. The music was composed by Otar Taktakishvili and lyrics by A. Abasheli and G. Abashidze. Certain lines, praising Joseph Stalin, were changed after his death in 1953.
Praise be to you, our Motherland,
Indomitable Land of Heroes
You gave the world our great
Stalin
Demolisher of the Slavery of
Peoples
Your wish has come true
The ones you shed your blood for:
Do prosper our beautiful country,
Be joyous the land of the
Georgians!

With the light of Great October,
Lenin
Lit up your gray mountains
The wisdom of Stalin empowered
you
And transformed into sunny
orchard.

In the family of brotherly
nations,
You will now thrive;
Do prosper our beautiful country,
Be joyous the land of the
Georgians!

Since ancient times, Your
Thought, Sword and Courage has
shone
Today, your glory and bright
future,
Is forged by a generation hardened
by Stalin
Soviet flag is shining upon you
Like a radiant Sun;
Do prosper our beautiful country,
Be joyous the land of the
Georgians!
The second anthem, *Dideba zetsit kurtkheuls*, was adopted after the proclamation of Georgian independence in 1991, but it was also used as the state anthem of the first democratic republic in 1918–1921. The words and music were based on works of the prominent Georgian composer Konstantine Potskhverashvili (1880–1959).

The third state anthem, *Tavisupleba*, was approved on 23 April 2004 following the Rose Revolution of 2003. The music was written by David Kechaqmadze based on the earlier work of famous Georgian composer Zakaria (Zachary) Paliashvili while David Maghradze authored the words.
ANTHIM THE IBERIAN (ca. 1650–1716). (Georgian: Antimoz Iverieli; Romanian: Antim Ivireanul). Prominent religious and public figure in Romania. A Georgian by birth, he was kidnapped by Ottoman slave traders and brought to Istanbul, where he was rescued by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Entering the priesthood, he remained with the patriarch until the 1680s when he was invited to Romania. He became the bishop of Râmnicu in 1705 and the archbishop of Wallachia in 1708. A man of great talents, he spoke several languages, including Greek, Romanian, Arabic, and Turkish, and soon acquired a thorough knowledge of the Romanian language and culture. He was instrumental in establishing Romanian as the official language of the Romanian Orthodox Church. He became a master printer and established printing presses in Targoviste, Râmnicu, and Bucharest, where he published numerous books in the Romanian, Greek, Slavic, and Arabic languages. His books facilitated a revival of the Romanian literature and national consciousness.

Anthim also trained his fellow Georgians in the art of printing and sent one of his disciples, master printer Mihaî Isvanovicî, (Michael Stefan the Wallachian), to Georgia, where a first printing press was established in Tbilisi in 1709. Possessing great oratorical skills, Anthim became known for his sermons and pastoral letters. He was also actively involved in the political movements of the time and worked for the independence of Romania. He openly called for an anti-Ottoman uprising, criticized the Romanian elites, and came into conflict with the Phanariot officials. In 1716, he was detained at the instigation of the prince of Wallachia and was sentenced to life exile in one of the monasteries. However, as he was escorted across the Danube, Anthim was assassinated and his body was dumped into the river. He was canonized by the Romanian Orthodox Church in June 1992. See also BOOKS, FIRST PRINTED; GEORGIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH; VAKHTANG VI.

ANTON I (1720–1788). Catholicos-patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church in 1744–1755 and 1764–1788. Born Teimuraz Batoniushvili, he was the son of the renegade King Iese of Kartli and was raised with his cousin Prince Erekle, the future King Erekle II, in Kakheti. The invasion of Nadir Shakh in 1735 had a profound effect on young Teimuraz, who left the court and became a monk at the
Gelati Monastery in 1738. Five years later, he moved to the Gareja Monastery in Kakheti and was elected catholicos patriarch of the Orthodox Church in 1744. He supported King Erekle II's efforts to revive eastern Georgia and proved himself an indefatigable and dedicated statesman. He established close relations with the Catholic missions in Georgia and worked to improve contacts with Western Europe. However, his work soon drew criticism from the conservative clergy who accused him of corrupting the Orthodox faith and introducing Catholicism in Georgia. As a consequence, the ecclesiastical council dismissed Anton from his position in December 1755. He soon moved to Russia, where he succeeded in acquitting himself of these charges at the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and was appointed the Archbishop of Vladimir.

In 1762, King Erekle II invited Anton to return to Kartli-Kakheti, and in the subsequent church council, Anton I defeated the conservatives and was reelected to the position of catholicos-patriarch in 1764. He renewed his efforts to bring the Georgian principalities closer to Europe and was actively involved in King Erekle II’s foreign policy. In 1772–1782, he took part in the Russo-Georgian negotiations leading to the Treaty of Georgievsk. Anton generously supported Georgian art and literature and supervised the establishment of a number of schools, including the Tbilisi and Telavi seminaries in 1755 and 1782. He personally directed the drafting of the curricula in these schools, wrote the textbook *Qartuli ghrammatika* in 1753, and translated European treatises on physics, which he taught in seminaries. He was instrumental in reorganizing the new ecclesiastical calendar, wrote original hymns and canons, and translated numerous Slavic Orthodox works into Georgian. In 1769, he completed one of his greatest works, *Martirika*, and began his poetic study of the cultural history of Georgia entitled *Tskobilsitkvaoba*. Directing the educational system in Kartli-Kakheti for a quarter of a century, he produced a new generation of artists, scientists, and writers (Ambrosi Nekreseli, Gaioz Rektori, Philip Qaitmazashvili, and others) and left a deep imprint on 18th century Georgian philosophy and literature. He died on 12 March 1788 and was buried in the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta.

ANTON II (1764–1827). Catholicos-patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church in 1788–1811. Born Teimuraz Bagrationi, the son of
King Erekle II, he entered upon a clerical career and quickly rose through ranks. In 1783, during the Russo-Georgian negotiations, he served in diplomatic missions to the Russian imperial court. He initially supported the Russian authorities in Transcaucasia but soon changed his stance opposing them. In 1810, he was forced to move to Russia, and the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church was abolished in 1811. Anton II was later elected to the Russian Holy Synod and settled in Nizhni Novgorod, where he spent the rest of his life. He was buried at the local church in Nizhni Novgorod in 1827, but his remains were later transferred to Tbilisi and reburied in 1841.

AQ-QOYUNLU (WHITE SHEEP). Confederation of Turkoman tribes, who ruled eastern Anatolia and western Iran in 15th century CE. The Aq-Qoyunlu defeated the Qara-Qoyunlu (Black sheep) tribes in the 15th century and expanded their sphere of influence into Azerbaijan, Armenia, Iraq, and western Persia. Throughout the 1460s–1480s, the Aq Qoyunlu launched numerous raids and campaigns against Georgia that earned their leaders the title of ghazi (fighter for the faith) and enormous wealth. However, internal dissension weakened them, and the Aq-Qoyunlu were defeated by the Qizilbash tribes led by Ismail Safavid in early 16th century.

ARABS, IN GEORGIA. In the late seventh century, a new political and military power appeared on the international scene. United by a powerful religious message, the Arab tribes overran the eastern Byzantine Empire and Sasanid Persia and created their own empire that stretched from Persia to North Africa. The first Arab raiding parties appeared in Georgia in 642–643 but, following the conquest of Armenia in 652, the Arabs arrived in force. In 654, the Arab commander Habib ibn-Maslam negotiated a treaty of protection (datsvis sigeli) with Eristavi Stepanoz II, who agreed to pay jizya or a protection tax paid by non-Muslim nations. Two years later, the Iberian authorities took advantage of internal dissension in the Caliphate to cease paying tribute. However, the Arabs soon returned with a vengeance and began a systematic conquest of eastern Georgia in the 680s. In 685, the Byzantine Empire and the Caliphate agreed to share the tribute from Armenia and Kartli, but the local population rose in rebellion in 686 and Eristavi Nerseh of Kartli defeated the Arab
forces in Armenia. In 697, the ruler of Egrisi, Sergi Barnukis-dze invited the Arabs to western Georgia to help him fight the Byzantine forces; the Arabs occupied the capital city of Tsikhegoji and key fortresses in western Georgia but failed to firmly establish themselves in the region and soon withdrew.

Unlike Egrisi, Kartli remained under Arab domination for decades to come. The Arabs treated Armenia and Georgia as a single frontier province and subjected it to heavy tributes. Discontented with new taxes and alien authorities, the local population rose in rebellions and the struggle against the Arabs soon assumed a popular character. In 681–682, Adarnase II of Kartli and Prince Grigor Mamikonian of Armenia held off the Arabs but eventually perished in this struggle. In 689, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian II forced the Arabs to cede Georgia and recognized Guaram II (684–693) as curopalates of Kartli. In 693, the Arabs recovered their possessions in Kartli and Armenia, and the vicious cycle of fighting began anew. In the early eighth century, the Iberians and Armenians organized several unsuccessful revolts against the Arabs. In 735, the Arab commander Marwan ibn-Muhammad led another punitive expedition into Kartli, sacking Tbilisi and capturing the key fortress of Tsikhegoji and Sukhumi in western Georgia. He left such devastation and desolation in his wake that his nickname Murwan Qru (Murwan the Deaf, i.e., deaf to pleas) still survives in popular tradition. A new Arab emirate led by the amir of Tbilisi was established in Kartli. In addition to new taxes of jizya and kharaj (tax on land), Georgians were forced to provide troops for the Arab armies and a labor force for various projects. Conversion to Islam was widely encouraged, and Christianity was persecuted, resulting in many Christian martyrs including Princes David and Constantine of Argveti and Abo Tbileli. Facing Islamic dominance, the Georgian and Armenian forces united under the banner of Christianity.

As the Abbasid Caliphate gradually declined, several semi-independent principalities emerged on the territory of Georgia. The Kingdom of Abkhazia covered most of western Georgia, the Bishopric of Kakheti and Principality of Hereti rose in the east, and Tao-Klarjeti dominion in the southwest. Tbilisi and parts of Kartli remained in Arab hands for the next several centuries. The Abbasid caliphs still tried to restore their authority in Georgia, and in 853, a large Arab
army led by Bogha al-Kabir (Bugha Turki) ravaged Kartli and sacked Tbilisi on 5 August; some 50,000 residents were slaughtered during the pillage. However, in 914, the last Arab expedition under the command of Abu al-Kasim failed to subdue Kartli and was the last such attempt by the Caliphate. Starting in the 11th century, new forces, the Seljuk Turks, replaced the Arabs on the immediate borders of Georgia. However, the Tbilisi Emirate survived for another 200 years, successfully defending itself against the king of Georgia. In 1122, following his triumph at Didgori, King David IV Aghmashenebeli finally captured the town and moved the Georgian capital from Kutaisi.

ARAGVI. River in Eastern Georgia and a tributary of Kura (Mtkvari) River. It originates as two rivers, Tetri and Shavi Aragvi, that flow from the southern slopes of the Caucasian Mountains and merge near Pasanauri. Aragvi then continues its course until its confluence with the Kura (Mtkvari) River near Mtskheta. The Aragvi Valley is one of the major routes across the Caucasus Mountains and was historically under the control of the eristavis of Aragvi.

ARAGVIS SAERISTA VO. Military-administrative unit in feudal Georgia. Its rulers (eristavi) were appointed by the Bagrationi kings of Georgia (later of Kartli) and controlled the strategic area in the valleys of the Aragvi and Terek rivers with a capital at Dusheti and the main fortress at Ananuri. In the 13th century, the saeristavo was ruled by Shaburisdze family. In the 15th century, the title of eristavi of Aragvi effectively became hereditary, and the saeristavo itself turned into satavado and was claimed by one family. The eristavs of Aragvi were prominent in the politics of feudal Georgia, especially in the 17th century when several generations of eristavs endeavored to increase their stature and power. They directed their efforts to conquering the mountainous tribes of Ertso-Tianeti, and although their campaigns spread death and destruction in the mountains of eastern Georgia, they failed to subdue the region. Memories of these bloody invasions were incorporated in local folktales that were later used by Alexander Kazbegi and Vazha Pshavela to produce classics of the Georgian literature.

The eristavs of Aragvi were more successful in their anti-Persian policies. Zurab Eristavi supported Giorgi Saakadze and helped or-
ganize an anti-Persian uprising in 1625–1626. However, he later switched sides and joined King Teimuraz I against Saakadze and was eventually murdered by his new ally. In 1659–1660, Zaal Eris- tavi was one of the leaders of the Bakhtroni Uprising in Kakheti. In the 16th–18th centuries, the Aragvian rulers were involved in a relentless struggle against their archenemies, the eristavs of Ksani, and both sides employed mercenaries and intrigues to destroy their rivals. In 1739, Eristavi Shanshe of Ksani finally succeeded in seizing the Aragvian fortress of Ananuri and slaying Eristavi Bardzim and his family. Although the line of the Aragvian eristavs continued, its fall was predestined. In 1743, Eristavi Bezhan was murdered during the uprising in his realm, and the saeristavo was annexed by King Teimuraz II of Kakheti, who turned it into one of his princely domains (sauplistsulo).

ARAGVISPIRELI, SHIO (1867–1926). Georgian poet and writer. Born Shio Dedabrishvili to a priest’s family in the Dusheti region, he graduated from the Tbilisi Seminary and Warsaw Veterinary College. He formed the League for Georgia’s Freedom but was arrested and imprisoned. After serving his sentence, he used his experiences to create a series of stories that he began publishing in the mid-1890s. His works portrayed social inequality, the grim reality of oppressed peasants and underlings and decadent lords, the struggle between individual happiness and public morale, and the conflict between the individual and society. He is often described as the first Georgian writer of psychological prose. In addition to his idealistic poems, his major works include Mitsaa (1901), Shio Tavadi (1905), and Gabzaruli Guli (1920).

ARAKISHVILI (ARAKCHIEV), DIMITRI (1873–1953). Distinguished Georgian composer, one of the founders of Georgian professional music. Born in Vladikavkaz, he graduated from the School of Music and Drama in the Moscow Philharmonic in 1901 and from the Moscow Archeological Institute in 1918. He established the journal Muzika i zhizn in 1908 and helped to found the Moscow Conservatory. From 1901–1908, he traveled throughout Georgia collecting traditional music and over 500 folk songs. While working in Moscow, he produced over 20 romances and the opera Tqmuleba Shota.
Rustavelze (1914). In 1918, he moved to Georgia, where he began working as a professor and director of the Tbilisi Conservatory and produced a number of works based on Georgian folk music. He was actively involved in collecting and popularizing Georgian folk songs and published books on Georgian folk music (1916) and East Georgian Folk Songs (1948). Starting in 1932, he directed the Union of Georgian Composers. In 1950, he was elected to the Georgian Academy of Sciences and was awarded the Stalin Prize for his work.

ARCHAEOPOLIS. Greek name of Tsikhegoji, the capital of the ancient Georgian state of Egrisi/Lazica. Located on the Tekhura River, near the modern village of Nokalakevi, the city was reportedly founded by Eristavi Quji in the third century BCE. It soon developed into a large urban center and played an important role during the Lazic War of 542–562 between the Byzantine and Persian empires. It was devastated during the invasion of Arab commander Marwan ibn-Muhammad and never recovered its former glory.

ARCHIL II (1647–1713). King of Imereti in 1661–1663, 1678–1679, 1690–1691, 1695–1696, and 1698, and King of Kakheti in 1664–1675. One of the illustrious Georgian kings, Archil is also a tragic figure whose life took many unexpected turns. He initially ascended the throne of Imereti in 1661 and supported King Vakhtang VI of Kartli in his quest for the unification of the Georgian principalities. However, his policy was disadvantageous to the powerful lords in western Georgia, who invited the Ottoman forces to remove Archil in 1663. A year later, Archil agreed to convert to Islam, and under the new name of Shah-Nazar-Khan, he was given the throne of Kakheti. He proved himself an effective ruler and made great progress in rebuilding the countryside after years of war. In 1675, he was forced to resign his throne in favor of Erekle I and fled to Imereti, where he tried several times to reclaim his throne. Although he succeeded in 1678, 1690, 1695, and 1698, Archil continuously faced the opposition of local lords who were concerned about their authority and used the Ottoman forces to fight the king. To secure his positions, he appealed to Russia for help and traveled to Moscow in 1682.

After a brief return to Imereti in the 1690s, Archil left Georgia for the final time in 1699. He actively supported Tsar Peter I who gave
him vast estates in the Nizhni Novgorod region and appointed Archil’s son, Prince Alexander Batonishvili, the first general of ordnance (Feldzugmeister) of the Russian army. Archil established a vibrant Georgian community at Vsesviatskoe near Moscow and turned his efforts to establishing printing presses that produced Georgian books, starting with Davitni in 1705. He proved himself a talented writer of such magnificent works as Archiliani and Gabaaseba Teimurazisa da Rustvelisa that breathed with patriotic sentiments. His writings influenced contemporary Georgian literature and were the basis of a new literary movement of realism (martlis tqma). King Archil also produced treatises on a number of subjects, among them Saqartvelos zneobani, Leqsn asni ormukhlni, Leqsn asdaatni, and Leqsn aseulni, and translated several works from Russian. He died on 16 April 1713 and was buried at the Don Monastery in Moscow.

ARDZINBA, VLADISLAV (1945– ). Leader of the Abkhaz secessionists and former president of the self-proclaimed republic of Abkhazia. Ardzinba graduated with a degree in history from the Sukhumi Pedagogical Institute and worked at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1969–1987. Returning to Sukhumi in 1987, Ardzinba became the director of the Abkhaz Institute of Language, Literature and History. He became involved in the Abkhaz independence movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s and was elected to the last Soviet Parliament in 1989–1991. In 1990, he was elected head of the Supreme Council of Abkhazia and led the secessionist movement from Georgia. Following the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, Ardzinba was elected the president of the self-proclaimed republic of Abkhazia in 1994; in 1999, he was reelected to this position, although his was the only candidacy and the international community did not recognize his presidency. Ardzinba rejected any negotiations with Georgia and endeavored to bring Abkhazia closer to Russia.

The last years of his presidency were marred by failing health and he was rarely seen in public since 2002. As a result, his prime minister Raul Khajimba assumed the leading position in the Abkhaz government. Despite calls from the opposition (particularly the Amtsakhara movement) for his resignation, Ardzinba remained in power but designated Khajimba as his successor. The presidential
election was held in late 2004, but despite Ardzinba’s endorsement of Khajimba, there was no clear winner and the election results were marred by controversy. Opposition leader Sergey Bagapsh and Khadjimba reached a power-sharing agreement to run together on a national unity ticket and won reelection in the second round of elections on 12 January 2005.

ARGONAUTS. In Greek mythology, a group of heroes who sailed with Jason on the Argo on a quest for the Golden Fleece. According to the myth, King Pelias of Iolcus had been forewarned by an oracle that he would lose his power to a man with one sandal. After encountering Jason, who wore one sandal after having lost the other while crossing a stream, Pelias sent him on the quest to fetch the Golden Fleece in the distant country of Colchis (in western Georgia). Jason gathered a group of principal heroes of ancient Greece that included Heracles, Castor, and Orpheus among others. On their way, the Argonauts encountered the bronze giant Talos, the women of Lemnos, blind Phineas and the harpies, the clashing rocks, and more. When Jason arrived in Colchis, he faced the powerful King Aietes but snatched the Golden Fleece with the help of Aietes’ daughter Medea and returned to Greece. The myth of the Argonauts contained interesting details on ancient Georgian tribes residing in western Georgia. It portrayed Colchis as a powerful and prosperous country with well-developed agriculture and metallurgy. Archeological discoveries confirmed the existence of a powerful tribal state in this region in the 14th–13th centuries BCE.

ARMAZI. Supreme deity in ancient Kartli (Iberia). According to tradition, the cult of Armazi (deity of the moon) was introduced in the third century BCE by King Parnavaz, who erected a large bronze statue of a warrior of gilded copper, clad in a gold coat of mail with a gold helmet on his head; one eye was a ruby, the other an emerald. To the right of Armazi stood another smaller gold idol by the name of Gazi, and to the left, a silver idol called Gaim. The statue of Armazi existed until the spread of Christianity in the fourth century CE. Armazi is also the name of an ancient fortress near Mtskheta. Archeological digs uncovered monuments of antique architecture and a bilingual stele with Greek and Aramaic inscriptions from the second century CE.
ARmed forces. One of the principal objectives of the Georgian authorities following the 1990 elections was to create a unified armed force that incorporates existing paramilitary groups and maintains security in the country. The Georgian National Guard (NG) was established on 20 December 1990 and was initially manned by volunteers. The NG played an important role in the subsequent political life of Georgia. In 1992, following a disagreement with president Zviad Gamsakhurdia, National Guard commander Tengiz Kitovani moved troops loyal to him to the Shavnabada base near Tbilisi, from where he, with the support of Jaba Ioseliani’s Mkhedrioni paramilitary units, launched a coup against Gamsakhurdia, who was overthrown by January 1993. The new government, initially led by Military Council and later State Council, was dominated by the military. The political rivalry between Ioseliani and Kitovani became one of the key conflicts in the government hierarchy and resulted in frequent clashes between the competing forces. Between 1991–1994, Georgian troops—National Guard and the Mkhedrioni—participated in the conflicts in Ossetia and Abkhazia, which revealed their ineffectiveness as fighting forces.

In 1992, the State Council, led by Eduard Shevardnadze, adopted a resolution to form an integrated armed force of up to 20,000 soldiers, but ethnic conflict, political turmoil, and the political ambitions of Kitovani and Ioseliani made this restructuring impossible. In May 1992, Kitovani was appointed minister of defense in an effort to bring the National Guard under central control. Instead, Kitovani turned his position into a power center rivaling Shevardnadze’s. In May 1993, Shevardnadze induced Kitovani and Ioseliani to resign from their powerful positions on the Council for National Security and Defense, depriving both men of influence over national security and enhancing the stature of the head of government. In May 1993, the National Guard was abolished as a separate force, and some individual units received guard status; currently, the National Guard has more than 500 personnel in units located throughout the regions with the primary task of a quick and effective response to emergency situations. From 1993–1994, Shevardnadze directed his efforts at weakening Ioseliani’s paramilitary Mkhedrioni, which was outlawed following the assassination attempt on Shevardnadze in 1995. In 1996, a National Security Council (headed by the president of Georgia) was
established as a consultative body coordinating issues related to defense and security.

The late 1990s saw a deterioration of the Georgian military that suffered from dire economic conditions, corruption among senior officers, and widespread evasion of military service. In 2002, Shevardnadze turned to the United States for assistance to enhance Georgia’s military preparedness, and a special Train and Equip Program to train the Georgian army was launched and financed by Washington. The Rose Revolution of 2003 and election of Mikhail Saakashvili in January 2004 brought certain changes to the existing state of affairs. The new president set the territorial integrity of Georgia as one of his priorities, and alongside his diplomatic overtures to the separatist authorities in Abkhazia and Ossetia, he launched a rigorous military reform.

Seeking membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Georgia plans to create a small, mobile, and well-trained army that satisfies NATO requirements. An Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) was signed with NATO in 2004. The armed forces were downsized from 38,000 men to some 20,000 in early 2004, but an ambitious program of training 15,000–20,000 reservists began later that year. All male citizens of Georgia and persons who are not citizens of Georgia but who permanently reside in Georgia are subject to compulsory military service. Males between 18 and 27 are drafted for compulsory military service of one and a half years; servicemen can conclude a contract and join the professional military service voluntarily.

With the assistance of the United States, Turkey, and other countries, the Georgian authorities slowly transformed the Georgian army into a well trained and well-equipped force qualified for NATO membership. Along with its successes, the Georgian government also faced some major obstacles. Several instances of mutiny and desertion occurred in 2004 as a result of poor conditions. Fraud and corruption remains prevalent in the armed forces, which compelled the president to dismiss the entire leadership of the General Staff in February 2005. Currently, the Georgian armed forces comprises 21,468 men, including 3,747 officers, 10,860 non-commissioned officers, 6,113 conscripts, and 748 civilian personnel. Three battalions of reservists completed their training in early 2005 and 15 battalions were expected to be under arms by 2006. Structurally, the Georgian army consists of four infantry brigades, an ar-
tillery brigade, a special forces brigade, a separate light infantry battalion, a separate armor tank battalion, a separate antiaircraft division, and a communication battalion and technical reconnaissance battalion. Seeking the membership of NATO, Georgia constructed several NATO-standard military bases in Gori and Senaki in 2005–2006.

Between 1997 and 2004, Georgia received tremendous financial support from the United States. In 1998, Washington provided US$5.3 million in military aid, and since then Georgia has received a total of US$107.7 million in the U.S. foreign military financial grants. In addition, it has received the State Department’s International Military Education and Training funds that reached US$1.2 million by 2006. Over US$60 million was spent on a 14-month program to train a Georgian light infantry battalion. Georgia sharply increased its defense spending from GEL 79 million (US$43 million) in 2004 to 324 million in 2005. The Georgian Ministry of Defense purchased a large amount of weaponry, which reportedly includes armored personnel carriers, self-propelled artillery, helicopters, and T-72 tanks. Large-scale tank exercises were conducted in the summer of 2005. Georgian troops have been participating in peacekeeping missions in the Balkans since the late 1990s, and 150 soldiers are currently deployed in Kosovo. After the terrorist attacks on New York’s World Trade Center in 2001, Georgia supported the U.S. campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, contributing over 800 men to the coalition forces in Iraq.

ARMENIA, GEORGIA AND. History of Georgian–Armenian relations dates back to ancient times. Armenian tradition holds that Hayk, a legendary hero/archer, revolted against a tyrant, Bel (Nimrod) of Babylon, and departed for the north with his family and followers, settling around Lake Van. Various Armenian tribes populated the region and the Georgian name somekhi for Armenians was derived from the Sumkhi/Somkhi tribe. The origins of the Armenian nation is a matter of debate. Some scholars (N. Adontz, Cyril Toumanoff, I. Diakonoff) argue that the ancestors of proto-Armenian tribes inhabited the north of the Black Sea in the third millennia BCE and gradually migrated through the Balkans into Anatolia and Asia Minor; Soviet linguists Tamaz Gamkrelidze and V. Ivanov propose another theory that presents the proto-Armenians as autochthonous population of the
Armenian plateau, a thesis supported by scholars in Armenia and elsewhere in the West. The Hittite and Assyrian inscriptions describe the people of Nairi, some of them of Armenian stock, inhabiting the central Armenian region. In the first millennium BCE, Armenian lands were dominated by the Kingdom of Urartu and subsequent Midia, Archemenid Persia, Parthia, and Seleucid monarchy. In the second century BCE, the Seleucid Empire fell to the Romans while the weakened Persia was unable to prevent the rise of the powerful Armenian kingdom under Artashes (Artaxias). Armenian rulers greatly expanded their territory that also incorporated some Georgian lands. After the death of King Parnajom of Iberia, the Armenian king Arshak took over his throne establishing an Armenian hegemony over eastern Georgia. In the first century, Armenia reached its zenith under King Tigran II the Great (95–55), who allied himself to his father in law, Mithradates Eupator of Pontus against Rome. However, following the campaigns of the Roman general Gneus Pompeus, Armenia became a client state of the Roman Empire and adopted a Western political, philosophical, and religious orientation.

In the first–second centuries CE, Armenia became a battleground between Rome and Parthia. King Parsman (Pharasmnes) of Iberia actively interfered in Armenian affairs, placing his brother Mithradates on the Armenian throne in the mid-first century. The Iberian presence in Armenia weakened after the Treaty of Rhandeia of 63 CE between Rome and Parthia allotted the privilege of nomination to the Parthian Arsacids and the right of investiture to the emperor of Rome. In 301 CE, Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity as a state religion, and its church played a crucial role in preserving and developing the unique identity and culture of Armenians. In later periods, Byzantium and Persia contested this region, and Georgian and Armenian rulers often supported each other against the great powers. By the sixth century, while the Georgian church supported the Chalcedonian creed, the Armenian church accepted Monophysitism and thus followed a separate path of religious development. Nevertheless, as Christian nations facing a common threat, Armenia and Georgia often united their effort to fight against Persia, and King Vakhtang Gorgasali had a close alliance with Vardan Mamikonian of Armenia in the late fifth century CE. Starting in the 10th century, Armenia and Georgia found themselves surrounded by the Islamic powers, which
naturally predisposed them to assist each other. The Bagratid family, which achieved prominent positions in both countries, also facilitated such close relations.

In the 10th–11th century, the Armenian principalities were overrun after incessant wars with Byzantium and the Seljuk Turks but a new Armenian kingdom emerged in Cilicia on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. In the 1120s, the Bagrationi dynasty of Georgia expanded its sphere of influence into Armenia and dominated it for almost a hundred years. This period introduced a large number of Armenians to Georgia, where they soon dominated trade and constituted a large part of the urban population in Gori and Tbilisi. The arrival of the Mongols and the rise of the Ottoman Turks played decisive roles in the history of these countries. While Georgia managed to retain some degree of autonomy, Armenia was divided between the Ottoman Empire and Safavid Persia, losing all vestiges of an independent political life. However, Armenian diasporas prospered throughout the Ottoman Empire and Persia and played important roles in the political life of both states. The Persians ruled eastern Armenia until 1828, when Russia annexed it. The Ottoman Turks controlled most of the western Armenian land until the early 20th century, subjecting the Armenian population to discrimination, heavy taxation, and armed attacks. During World War I, the Ottoman government perpetrated a genocidal persecution of the Armenians within the empire that led to the death of hundreds of thousands of Armenians.

While Armenian communities have existed in Georgia since ancient times, the Russo–Turkish Wars and World War I produced a large number of Armenian refugees who settled in Georgia; Armenian numbers in Georgia continued to grow in the 20th century, reaching 437,271 in 1989. However, the collapse of the Soviet Union and turmoil in Georgia led to a substantial decline in the Armenian population, and the 2002 census showed 248,929 Armenians residing in Georgia. Armenians in Georgia are mainly located in three areas, Javakheti, Tbilisi, and Abkhazia. In the 1970s, the Armenian population of Abkhazia was almost as large as the Abkhaz minority itself, but some Armenians left the region during the war in the 1990s. Many Armenians of Javakheti are originally from the province of Erzurum in the Ottoman Empire and fled the Ottoman persecutions in the early 20th century. They enjoy a certain cultural freedom in
Javakheti, where some regions are predominantly Armenian in composition. Armenians constitute one of the oldest communities in Tbilisi, where they once were the largest ethnic group and greatly contributed to its unique culture; in past centuries, they made up a majority of the urban population, and, in 1803, over two thirds of the population of Tbilisi was Armenian. In the late 19th century, two thirds of caravanserais belonged to Armenians, who also owned most of the more than 3,000 shops and other enterprises in Tbilisi.

Despite almost three millennia of coexistence and common bonds against foreign threats, the Georgians and Armenians also have a history of mutual suspicion and conflict, especially in recent history. These tensions are both political and social in nature. In the past, Armenians were successful merchants and business leaders in Georgia while Georgians tended to perceive commerce as unbefitting their status. So by the 19th century, trade remained the monopoly of the Armenians, which led to their economic dominance and caused tensions with the impoverished Georgian nobility, who still thought in feudal terms but had become dependent on Armenian creditors and blamed them for its own misfortunes. This was especially true after the abolition of serfdom in the late 1860s. In the new urban market economy, Georgian nobles faced a powerful Armenian middle class and, unable to enjoy free labor and obligatory payments, they turned to Armenian lenders for financial help and eventually found themselves heavily indebted. Furthermore, by late 19th century, Georgian nobles were shut out of political and economic life that was held firmly by the Russian, Polish, German, and Armenian elites. The newly emancipated peasantry, now migrating to cities, also competed with the more sophisticated urbanite Armenians and naturally viewed them with suspicion. Tensions existed also in the realm of religion, since the Georgian and Armenian churches preached different creeds and distrusted each other; frequent accusations of misappropriating churches and forced conversion of parishioners were, and still are, made by both sides. As a result, the prevalent stereotype of an Armenian was/is that of a shrewd, devious merchant, out to trick and defraud Georgians. Such sentiments survive well into the 21st century and sometimes lead to outlandish, if not outright xenophobic, incidents in Georgian politics. As late as 2002–2003, in an attempt to undermine Zurab Zhvania and Mikhail Saakashvili, political rivals accused them of having an Armenian ancestry!
Although general interethnic harmony still exists, Armenians in Javakheti remain apprehensive of the Georgian authorities. In 1998, when Georgian army units held joint exercises in the region, some units encountered armed groups of Armenians—reportedly possessing mortars and other artillery—who had not been informed of the exercises and mistook the exercises for a government attack. Disputes between government officials and Armenians frequently take place in Javakheti. On 5 October 2005, hundreds of local residents in Akhalkalaki, a town in Samtskhe-Javakheti, protested against the closure of trade facilities by financial police. Tensions flared up after police fired several shots into the air and used force to disperse the rally. The latest incident took place on 9–11 March 2006 when clashes between the Georgian and Armenian youth in Tsalka led to the death of one participant and injury to several others. Although the Public Defender’s Office ruled out ethnic motives in the incident and called it “hooliganism,” the Armenian community in Tsalka and Akhalkalaki organized protest rallies and seized the local court and university building, voicing demands for autonomy. The Javakhk organization also renewed its calls for a referendum on the status of the Javakheti region.

Armenians have refused to serve in the Georgian army because of discrimination and abuses they are subjected to by their Georgian comrades. There are indications that some Armenians in Javakheti are trying to organize beyond the already existing paramilitary organizations and have close links with the Armenian nationalist Dashnaktsutiuns. Some Georgians believe that Russia, and Armenia to a lesser degree, will make attempts to incite conflicts in Javakheti and create another “hot spot” to further destabilize Georgia. So far, the Armenian government has consistently characterized the Javakheti issue as a Georgian internal affair but has warned official Tbilisi against using excessive measures in dealing with local Armenians.

Relations between Armenia and Georgia are complicated by several factors. The regions of Meskheti-Javakheti and Lore (Lori) were, and to a certain degree still are, disputed by both countries. In the early 20th century, Armenian and Georgian nationalists clashed over the delimitation of state borders and a brief war was fought between 1918–1920. In 1921, after the Bolshevik occupation, Georgian territory was partitioned, and parts of the Lore province were given to
Armenia, an event that Georgian and Armenian nationalists regularly bring to the fore. While the Soviet authorities effectively suppressed Georgian–Armenian strains, the collapse of the USSR revealed discord between the neighboring states. The tension increased when Georgian nationalists adopted the doctrine of “hosts and guests,” and the Armenians formed the Javakhk organization and began to call for the creation of an Armenian autonomous unit in Javakheti. During the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict in 1992–1994, some Armenians in Abkhazia supported the separatist cause, and an Armenian unit, designated as “Marshal Bagramian’s Battalion,” fought against the Georgians. Furthermore, while Russo–Georgian relations remain strained, Armenia is a staunch ally of Russia in the region and helps strengthen Russian positions in southern Caucasia. This only exacerbates the mutual apprehension between the two nations. The relative underdevelopment of southern Georgia also facilitates the tendency of local Armenians to orient toward Erevan rather than Tbilisi.

Finally, Armenia’s conflicts with its neighbors and Georgia’s oil pipelines figure prominently in geopolitical equations. Armenia and Turkey still have no diplomatic relations following the Armenian genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Turks in the early 20th century. In 1988, Armenia became involved with Azerbaijan in a war over the Karabagh region. Blockaded by Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenia has Georgia and Iran as the only supply routes, and the former is of particular importance because Armenia is dependent on supplies coming from Russia. While Armenia is interested in a stable Georgia, official Erevan certainly is resentful of Georgia’s rapprochement with Turkey and Azerbaijan and the resulting economic benefits. Railway connections between Kars and Tbilisi will soon bypass Armenia, while strategic oil pipelines already circumvent Armenia and transport oil from Azerbaijan to Turkey through Georgia, bringing much-needed revenue and political clout to Tbilisi.

**ARMENO–GEORGIAN WAR (1918).** Brief conflict between Georgia and Armenia over the disputed territories in the Javakheti and Lore (Lori) provinces. The Georgian–Armenian dispute over these provinces has a long history, and, to a certain degree, remains unresolved to the present day. In the spring of 1918, the Ottoman offensives into south Caucasia led to increased tensions between Georgian
and Armenian national delegations to the Transcaucasian Federation. On Germany’s pledge of protection, Georgia declared its independence in May 1918, followed by Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, the newly born states quickly became embroiled in mutual conflicts over territories, especially following the Ottoman defeat in World War I. On 5–7 December 1918, Armenian forces led by General Dro (Drastamat Kanayan) entered southern Georgia with the goal of claiming the provinces of Javakheti and Lore. After negotiations failed a week later, the Georgian army led by General Giorgi Mzianiashvili counterattacked and routed the Armenian forces at Shulaveri on 29 December, recovering all territories and threatening the Armenian mainland. However, British intervention put an end to the hostilities, and a ceasefire was concluded by the end of the month. Georgia retained control over the Akhalkalaki district, while the Borchalo district was demilitarized and placed under mutual administration, with the northern and southern parts under Georgian and Armenian control, respectively, and the middle ground administered by the British officials.

The war had lasting consequences for both Armenia and Georgia. In Georgia, it reinforced the prevailing stereotype of conniving Armenians seeking a way to harm Georgians; as a result, Armenians in Tbilisi suffered from mob violence and were forced to flee the capital. On the international level, the war undermined the image of the newly born democratic republics that were now perceived as incapable of preserving order and peaceful existence, and made the European powers reluctant to recognize them. Distrusting each other, Armenia and Georgia soon fell victim to the Bolshevik occupation. Soviet Armenia eventually succeeded in gaining control of the Lore province, which was ceded from Georgia in 1921.

**ARSEN IKALTOELI (OF IKALTO) (11TH CENTURY).** Prominent Georgian ecclesiastical figure, scholar, and writer. His biographical details are scarce but it is known that he was born in the village of Ikalto, where he later became a monk, and studied theology in Constantinople, where he met the famous Byzantine scholars Michael Pselllos and John Italos. Arsen later traveled to Georgian monasteries in Syria where he worked with Ephraim the Lesser (Eprem Mtsire) before returning to Georgia where he supported King David IV.
Aghmashenebeli. In 1103–1104, Arsen took part in the Rius-Urbnisi Church Council, which reorganized the Georgian Orthodox Church, and became one of the founding fathers of the Gelati Academy and the Ikalto Academy. Later in life, Arsen retired to the Shio-Mghvime Monastery near Mtskheta, where he produced his numerous works and translations that influenced Georgian ecclesiastical literature.

ARSENA MARABDELI (OF MARABDA) (ca. 1797–1842). Georgian folk hero who fought against peasant oppression, nobility, and Russian authorities in early 19th century. Following his quarrel with Prince Zaal Baratashvili over the treatment of peasants, young Arsen Odzelashvili fled the estate and became Arsena of Marabda (Marabdeli), a Georgian “Robin Hood” fighting for the poor against greedy nobles and merchants and repressive Russian officials. He became one of the most popular folk heroes, forcing the Russian authorities to take extraordinary measures to capture him. Asena was killed in a skirmish near Mtskheta in 1842. His exploits were popularized in the folk poem Arsenas Leksi and by generations of Georgian writers, including Akaki Tsereteli, Ilia Chavchavadze, Giorgi Leonidze, and others.

ARSHAK I. King of Iberia between 93 and 81 BCE and founder of the Arsacid dynasty in Iberia. The son of King Artavasdes I of Armenia, Arshak (Arsaces) ascended the Iberian throne following the overthrow of King Parnajom of Iberia in 93 BCE. Under his rule, Iberia became a client state of Armenia and lost some of the western provinces to Colchis. He was succeeded by his son Artag.

ARSUKISDZE (11TH CENTURY). Architect of the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta, the seat of the catholicos-patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church and the site of one of the greatest Christian relics. According to tradition, Jews from Mtskheta witnessed Jesus Christ’s crucifixion in Palestine and, among other relics, they brought back Christ’s seamless chiton (robe), which was buried near Mtskheta. A small church built there by King Mirian was replaced with a larger basilica of King Vakhtang Gorgasali in the fifth century. In 1010, King Bagrat III commissioned the architect
Arsukisdze to build a magnificent cathedral and its construction was continued by his son Giorgi I. While constructing the new Svetitskhoveli Cathedral between 1010–1029, Arsukisdze proved himself an innovative engineer, changing the old basilica into the domed temple and erecting the largest ecclesiastical building in Georgia. Tradition claims that Arsukisdze surpassed all other architects in mastery of his craft, and his rivals conspired to have his hand chopped off. The central arch of the northern facade has a relief of a hand holding a bevel square with the inscription underneath “The hand of the servant of God Arsukisdze, pray for him.” Constantine Gamsakhurdia, one of the greatest Georgian writers, used Arsukisdze as the main character for his epic Didostatis marjvena (The Hand of the Great Master).

ARTAG (ARTACES IN GREEK AND ROMAN SOURCES). King of Iberia from 81–63 BCE. He succeeded his father Arshak I in Iberia and supported Armenia and Pontus in their resistance to Roman expansion. In 65 BCE, the Roman General Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, following the defeat of King Mithradates VI of Pontus, marched against Iberia. Unable to prepare for the attack, Artag burned the bridge over the Kura (Mtkvari) River at Mtskheta and retreated northward, waging a guerrilla war against the Romans. He was finally defeated on the banks of the Pelorus River and was forced to recognize Roman sovereignty and send lavish gifts of gold and his children as hostages. He was succeeded by his son Bartom in 63 BCE.

ASATIANI, AKAKI (1953– ). Georgian politician and leader of the Union of Georgian Traditionalists. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from Tbilisi State University in 1977 and began his career as a lecturer on Georgian language and literature in 1978–1979. He later worked as interpreter and served in the Ministry of Culture of the Georgian SSR. Asatiani was involved in the national liberation movement in the late 1980s and emerged on the political scene in 1990, when he became deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of Georgia. He presided over the Supreme Council in 1991–1992 and was actively involved in the drafting and adoption of the Declaration of Independence on 9 April 1991 and clashed with Zviad Gamsakhurdia over

ASATIANI, LADO (VLADIMIR) (1917–1943). Georgian poet. He graduated from Tsageri Technical College (1934) and Kutaisi Pedagogical Institute in 1938 and began publishing his writings soon after. His poems, free of constraints of ideology and celebrating everyday pleasures and innocent hedonism, quickly became popular. He was among the first to create the artistic image of Niko Pirosmani, an outstanding primitivist painter. Asatiani’s lyrics were also filled with his patriotic feelings toward Georgia as reflected in his poems Lkhini Kartvelebtan (1938), Sakartvelo (1939), Sakartvelo iko mati saotsnebo sakhei (1939), Salaghobo (1940), etc. However, patriotic sentiments in his lyrics also caused Asatiani to be denounced as a nationalist. His later poems—Kafe rionis piras (1940), Me vetrfi dzlier tipilisis havas (1940), Sasaflao (1941), Vidre sikvdili (1941)—were filled with impulses of neo-romanticism and symbolism and remain among the best Georgian poetry written in the period.

ASATIANI, MIKHAIL (1882–1938). Prominent Georgian psychiatrist. He graduated from Moscow University in 1907 and began work at the psychiatric clinic in Moscow. He eventually became head of the Department of Psychiatry of the Tbilisi State University in 1921 and served on the editorial board of the journal Psikhoterapia. In 1925, he established the Asatiani Psychiatric Research Institute in Tbilisi. He directed hundreds of scientific researches and produced some 40 works on clinical psychiatry and psychotherapy.

ASHOT, THE GREAT (?–ca. 830). Bagratid prince from the Tao region, founder of the Bagrationi dynasty of Georgia. He was the eristavi of Kartli in the early ninth century and opposed Arab expansion into the Caucasus. Following his defeat, Ashot moved to Tao, where he recognized Byzantine sovereignty and received the Byzant-
tine title of curopalates and established a powerful principality with its capital at Artanuji. In a subsequent power struggle he was assassinated inside a church, where he had sought refuge. He is not to be confused with King Ashot I of Armenia (885–890), who founded the Bagratuni dynasty of Armenia.

ASOMTAVRULI. The oldest form of the Georgian alphabet, the Asomtavruli ("capital"). Although the invention of the script is ascribed to King Parnavaz (fourth century BCE), the oldest inscriptions were so far dated fifth century from inscriptions on the church of Bolnisi Sioni near Tbilisi (493–494 CE); recent excavations at Armazistsikhe (near Mtskheta) and Nekresi revealed inscriptions from the first through fourth centuries CE, but their precise dating is still debated. The Asomtavruli script gradually transformed into the Nuskhuri and then the Mkhedruli scripts.

ASPINDZA, BATTLE OF (1770). Major battle between the Georgian army of King Erekle II and the Turkish forces near Aspindza (in southern Georgia) on 20 April 1770. In the 1760s, King Erekle II, and his father King Teimuraz II, sought to establish a military alliance with Russia against the Ottoman Empire and Persia. During the Russo–Turkish war in 1769, Empress Catherine dispatched a Russian expeditionary force (1,200 men) under General Gotlib Totleben to Georgia and King Erekle II opened the second front against the Porte. In March 1770, the Russo–Georgian forces marched into the Borjomi Valley and seized the Sadgeri fortress on 14 April. Three days later, they besieged the Atskhuri fortress, but Erekle and Totleben disagreed on strategy; the Georgian ruler wanted to take advantage of their earlier successes and advance quickly to Akhaltsikhe, the focal point of the Ottoman authority in the region. However, Totleben refused to support him and remained at Atskhuri.

In the meantime, the Ottoman pasha of Akhaltsikhe rallied his troops to relieve Atskuri. In a surprise move, on 19 April, Totleben lifted the siege and withdrew his forces from the theater of operations, effectively abandoning the Georgians. King Erekle had no other option but to retreat, pursued by superior Turkish troops who tried to cut his line of retreat near Aspindza. On 20 April, King Erekle routed the Turkish advance guard of 1,500 men and then allowed the
main Ottoman forces of some 8,000 troops to cross the Kura (Mtkvari) River. During the night of 20 April, a group of Georgians, led by Aghabab Eristavi and Svimon Mukhranbatoni, destroyed the only bridge across the river, stranding the Ottomans on the riverbank. At dawn, the Georgians attacked, with King Erekle leading the center, David Orbeliani the right flank, and Giorgi Batonishvili the left flank. The Ottomans were routed—loosing over half of their strength, including their commander and several pashas; many of whom drowned trying to swim across the river.

ASTRAKHAN, GEORGIAN COMMUNITY IN. In the 17–18th century, Astrakhan, on the northern shore of the Caspian Sea, became a major center of Georgian culture. A Georgian colony was first established here in the late 17th century and served as a transit point for diplomatic missions to Moscow; King Archil II, who resided in Moscow, later appointed a special representative to govern the colony. After the immigration of King Vakhtang VI in 1724, a large part of his entourage led by Vakhushiti Batonishvili (See BAGRATION, VAKHUSHTI) settled in Astrakhan and greatly expanded the Georgian colony. In 1734, King Vakhtang himself settled here and was buried in a local church in March 1737. Other prominent members of the Georgian colony were Archbishop Ioane Saakadze, who built the Trinity Monastery, Anton I, Teimuraz II, Gaioz Rector, Timothy Gabashvili, and Onana Mdivani, who produced numerous original works and translations into and from Georgian. Many Georgians were buried at the local pantheon of Georgian public figures. The reburial of Kings Vakhtang VI and Teimuraz II is being discussed by the governments of Russia and Georgia.

ATABEG. Title of the chief tutor and guardian of the Georgian heir apparent; it was derived from the Turkish ata (father) and beg (prince). Atabegs were introduced to Georgia during the Seljuk conquests of the 11th century. Under earlier Georgian tradition, kings usually selected a commander-in-chief (spaspet) as a mamazudze to raise a crown prince. Atabegs gained prominence under Queen Tamar when this became one of the most powerful offices of state. In addition to tutoring, they governed the crown prince’s domains and were often appointed to rule various provinces, i.e., Atabeg Ivane Akhaltsikel-
Toreli was appointed to govern Kars in the early 1200s. Atabags soon clashed with the influential office of mtsignobartukhutses-chqondideli but eventually overcame it, becoming a senior vizier (vazirta ukhutsesi) while mtsignobartukhutses-chqondideli disappeared from the Georgian court.

The first atabeg was Ivane Mkhargrdzeli, who served as major-domo (msakhurtukhutsesi) under Queen Tamar and was given the title of atabeg in 1205. Seven years later, he also became commander-in-chief (amirspasalar) creating a new office of atabag-amirspasalar that was inherited by his son Avag in 1227 and later by his nephew Zakaria in 1250. Serving as atabag-amirspasalars, the Mkhargrdzeli family commanded Georgian armies during the Khwarazmian and Mongol invasions in 1221–1235 but lost this influential office in 1272 when the Mongols gave it to the renegade Sadun Mankaberdel. In 1281, King Dimitri II withheld the title from Sadun’s son Khutlubugha and conferred it instead on his loyal Tarsaich Orbeli. In return, Khutlubugha conspired against the king and played an important role in his eventual execution in the Mongol camp in 1289. Although Khutlubugha served as atabeg under Dimitri’s successors, the Mkhargrdzeli family succeeded in recovering the office in the early 14th century. In 1334, King Giorgi V conferred this office on his uncle Prince Sargis Jakeli of Samtskhe, who turned it into a hereditary title for his family; thereafter, Jakeli rulers became known as atabegs and their domain as Samtskhe-Saatabago (14th–16th centuries). See also AMILAKHOR; AMIR; AMIRSPASALAR; ERISTA V; GARIGEBA KHELMTSIPIS KARISA.

ATHOS MONASTERY. See IVIRON MONASTERY.

AUGUST UPRISING OF 1924. Failed uprising against the Bolshevik authorities in Georgia. In February 1921, the Red Army ended three years of Georgian independence but struggled to establish its authority as a guerrilla war sprang up in various regions. In the summer of 1921, a rebellion in Svaneti was harshly suppressed but instigated further anti-Bolshevik outbreaks. In 1922, Kakutsa Cholokashvili and Mikhail Lashkarashvili organized guerrilla detachments to fight Soviet authorities while other guerrilla units operated in Kartli, Guria, and Mingrelia. The same year, Georgian political parties
united their efforts, forming an Independence Committee (damoukidblobis komiteti), Military Center (samkhedro tsetntri), and a host of regional organizations. Some former Menshevik leaders returned to Georgia to prepare an uprising.

In late 1922, rebellions began in Khevsureti, Kakheti, and Guria. However, the underground organization had been penetrated by the secret police, and in February 1923, K. Mesabishvili helped the police arrest members of the Military Center and shut down the underground press. On 19 May 1923, Generals Constantine (Kote) Abkhazi, Kote Andronikashvili, and V. Tsulukidze, and 12 other members of the Military Center were executed. In subsequent reprisals, hundreds of Georgians, including Catholicos-Patriarch of All-Georgia Ambrosi, were arrested and exiled, numerous churches and monasteries were closed, and some villages were burned down. However, preparations for the uprising continued under the leadership of Noe Khomeriki and Mikhail Javakhishvili of the newly established Military Commission of the Independence Committee. In late 1923, several leaders (N. Khomeriki, G. Paghava and G. Tsinamdgvrishvili) were arrested, but the return of some Georgian immigrants (G. Paghava, V. Jugheli, B. Chikhvishvili, V. Tsenteradze, and others) from Europe helped the conspirators to continue their work. The Military Commission appointed General Spiridon Chavchavadze to lead the uprising that was supposed to be launched simultaneously throughout Transcaucasia.

The initial date of February 1924 was changed after the arrest of many members of the Military Commission, including Gogita Paghava and Giorgi Tsinamdgvrishvili. In June 1924, the conspirators set a new date, 17 August, but the Soviet secret police detained key members of the Military Commission and the subsequent arrests (including that of Valiko Jugheli, one of the leaders of the uprising) demoralized the conspirators who moved the date to 29 August. The lack of organization and ineffective cooperation between rebel groups precipitated their defeat in bloody clashes with the Soviet authorities, which were helped by the Georgian Bolshevik detachments. The uprising began around 4:00 a.m. on 28 August in Chiatura and spread to Shorapani, Zugdidi, and Guria, while Cholokashvili’s detachment attacked authorities in Kakheti. Abkhazia and Adjara remained largely quiet, as did Tbilisi and Batumi. The Soviet authori-
ties, led by Sergo Ordzhonikidze, quickly responded to these events and dispatched the Red Army units; in certain regions, the peasantry supported the Bolsheviks and attacked the insurgents. Yet in Guria, as Sergo Ordzhonikidze later admitted, there was a general peasant uprising in support of the insurrection. In a major coup, on 4 September, the secret police captured Generals Kote Andronikashvili and Jason Javakhishvili, who were forced to appeal to the insurgents to lay down their weapons.

The uprising was ruthlessly crushed during the remainder of the year; in Metekhi Prison alone, some 146 prisoners, who had had no involvement in the rebellion, were summarily executed. Hundreds were allegedly slaughtered in railway wagons at Shorapani. The Bolsheviks seized an opportunity to exterminate any potential threats and arrested, exiled, or executed hundreds. Depending on one’s sources, the total number of arrested and executed varies between 3,000 and 6,000. The August Uprising remained a taboo subject throughout the Soviet era, and much of it was unknown to the public until the 1990s.

Avalishvili, Zurab (1876–1944). Prominent Georgian historian, jurist, and public figure. He graduated with a degree in law and a gold medal from the St. Petersburg University in 1900 and continued his studies at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) in 1901–1903. Returning to Russia, he defended his dissertation on decentralization and local government in France in 1905 and was associate professor of law at the St. Petersburg University until 1909. From 1910–1917, he was professor and head of the Department of Administrative Law of the St. Petersburg Polytechnical Institute. He was appointed to the Imperial Senate following the February Revolution in 1917 but offered his services to the Democratic Republic of Georgia. He returned to Georgia in April 1918 and became chief adviser on foreign affairs. He was one of the founding fathers of Tbilisi State University, where he was a professor from 1918–1921. Avalishvili contributed to the drafting of the Georgian Constitution. He was instrumental in directing Georgian foreign policy, and he helped establish close relations between Georgia and Germany that led to the latter’s recognition of Georgian independence. In 1919, Avalishvili represented Georgia at the Paris Peace Conference, where he successfully argued against partitioning the western Georgian lands.
After the Soviet occupation of Georgia in 1921, Avalishvili immigrated to Europe, where he lived in France and Germany. He worked as professor at the University of Munich and was one of the leaders of the Georgian Association in Germany. He served on the editorial boards of the academic journals *Georgica* and *Byzantion*. Avalishvili left a diverse academic legacy covering international law and affairs, history of Georgia and the Caucasus, Georgian literature and diplomacy, etc. He died in Schwartzenfeld and was buried at Schwandorf in Germany in 1944. In May 1993, his remains were transferred to Georgia, where they were interred in the Pantheon of Georgian public figures in Tbilisi.

**AVLABAR PRINTING PRESS.** An illegal press maintained by the Social Democratic committees in Tbilisi in 1903–1906. The press was located in an underground cavern beneath a house in the Avlabar suburb of Tbilisi and could be accessed only through a secret tunnel that was dug from a well. The press was first set up by the Social Democrat Mikhail Bochoridze and published various revolutionary works, including Vladimir Lenin’s pamphlets and books. It also produced the newspapers *Proletariatis brdzola* (Proletarian Struggle) and *Proletariatis brdzolis purtseli* (Leaflet of the Proletarian Struggle). Many prominent Bolshevik revolutionaries, including Joseph Stalin, Mikhail Tskhakaya, Stephan Shaumian, Philippe Makharadze, and Alexander Tsulukidze, were actively involved in the press.

**AYDGILARA (UNITY).** Political organization in Abkhazia. Aydgilara was established as people’s forum in December 1988 following the *perestroika* and *glasnost* reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev. It soon emerged as the most important Abkhaz political group and organized several meetings that gradually adopted more and more radical programs. In March 1989, Aydgilara coordinated a massive demonstration at Lykhny, which demanded Abkhazian independence. The activity of Aydgilara helped radicalize the situation in Abkhazia and eventually led to the Georgia-Abkhazian conflict in 1992–1994.

**AZNAURS.** Petty nobility in feudal Georgia. Initially the term was applied to all nobles, but later it described a petty landlord or warrior.
The roots of the Georgian nobility date back to the tribal society when the proto-Georgian tribes were selecting chieftains to govern the community, protect territory, and lead military forces. These chieftains and leaders gradually established the upper class of Georgian society. The word aznaur itself is not Georgian, but its origins are still debated; some scholars attribute it to the Armeno-Persian term azat (the one who is free) and others to the Aryan yazata meaning “the divine one.”

The social pyramid of the Georgian nobility in the Middle Ages was headed by the king (mepe) followed by his sons (uplistuli). The second layer in the social division was occupied by grand nobles (didebulni), who enjoyed distinctive titles, served as governors or viziers, and owned large land estates and serfs; they usually had castles, their own troops, and their own taxation and duties system. Didebulni were subdivided into tsikhosan-monastrosanni, i.e., those owning castles and monasteries, and utskhino-umamonstroni, who had no such possessions. The heads of didebulni families eventually established a caste of their own (tavadi). The third layer was composed by lesser nobility (aznaurni mtsireni) who normally would have a hereditary estate. The majority of aznaurs inherited their noble status, but a few could gain nobility through dedicated service to the king and were known as msakhureuli aznaurni. This process soon led to a rivalry between the grand nobles and the newly ennobled gentry who competed for privileges and estates. In the late Middle Ages, the relationship between the grand nobles and gentry developed into a special system of patronqmoba in which the tavadi held a monopoly on court and state offices, and the petty nobility turned subservient and was considered qma or slaves of their lords.

In the 16th–17th centuries, the gentry became divided into three distinctive groups; the royal gentry (samefo aznaurni) enjoyed better privileges and higher standing than those serving the church (saeklesio aznaurni) and grand nobles (satavado aznaurni). Aznaurs in any of these groups received fiefs from their masters. Their freedom was considerably limited, and they could be given as dowry or bequeathed to others; although they had a right to leave their masters, this also meant abandoning their fief and possessions. Thus, the majority of aznaurs remained without land and had to enter into a subservient relationship to gain a fief. Aznaurs in western Georgia were particularly oppressed and often had to pay feudal dues. In the 18th
century, Georgian criminal law divided the aznaurs into three classes—gandidebuli (great), shua (middle), and tsalmogvi (lesser)—based on their material possessions and were assigned specific punishment for crimes against them. Thus, King Vakhtang VI’s legal code valued the life of gandidebuli aznaur at 192 tumans, a middle aznaur at 96 tumans, and a tsalmogvi at 48 tumans.

In the 19th century, following the Russian annexation of the Georgian principalities, aznaurs became part of the Russian nobility (dvorianstvo). After the Georgian monarchy was abolished, royal aznaurs were the first to enlist in imperial service followed by church aznaurs. The status of the gentry as subservient to the grand nobles turned into a matter of discussion. Initially, the Russian authorities wanted to classify them as commoners and refuse the rights and privileges of the nobility. Facing strong opposition, the Russian administration changed its policy and placed them on a level with the royal aznaurs. However, a bitter disagreement ensued between the tavadis and their aznaurs with respect to fiefs and possessions that the latter enjoyed while in service. In 1836, special courts were established to mediate between the two groups, but they were dominated by the grand nobility and became ineffective. The October Revolution of 1917 abolished the nobility in the Russian Empire, including Georgia.

AZO (FOURTH CENTURY BCE). “Greek” tyrant of ancient Iberia. There is no historical evidence that Alexander the Great or any of his commanders campaigned in the Caucasus, but according to the chronicles Mokitsevai Kartlisa and Kartlis Tskhovreba, Azo (Azon) was one of the “Greek” or “Macedonian” commanders of Alexander the Great, who led “Greek” troops against Kartli, which he occupied, killing the local ruler of Mtskheta, Mamasakhlisi Samara. Azo then extended his authority to Hereti (eastern Georgia) and the north Caucasian tribes; however his reign proved to be harsh and uncompromising, which caused increasing discontent among the local population. The young Parnavaz, the nephew of Mamasakhlisi Samara, organized resistance against the “Greek” tyranny, and with the support of Eristavi Quji of Egrisi (western Georgia), he launched a successful rebellion against Azo. In the decisive battle, Azo’s army was defeated allowing Parnavaz to unite the eastern and western Georgian lands into the Kingdom of Iberia.
BAAMIANI (16TH CENTURY). Georgian version of the Persian epic poem Bahmannamah, which continued the earlier epic Shahnameh by the great Persian poet Ferdowsi. The Georgian version follows Baam (Persian Bahnam), the son of Spandiat (Persian Isfendiar), in his struggle against the descendants of Rostam.

BAAZOV, HERZEL (1904–1938). Writer and prominent member of the Georgian Jewish community. Born to a rabbinical family in Tskhinvali, he studied in gymnasiums in Oni and Tbilisi and graduated with a law degree from Tbilisi State University in 1927. During his studies, he published his first poems in the Jewish journal Ebraelis khma in Kutaisi, and later, after a brief career in the judicial branch, he began working on the journal Sabchota samartali. In 1921–1922, he helped publish the journal Oni, and in the late 1920s, he directed the first Jewish theatrical group Kadima. His works concern allegorical and symbolist themes and describe the Jewish life in Georgia. Among his many works are Dilleamari (1928), Munjebi alaparakdnen (1931), Gelatis quchis dasaruli (1931), Ganurchevlad pirovnebisa (1933), and Itska Rizhinashvili (1936). He perished during the Stalin purges in 1938.


BACHANA (NIKOLOZ RAZIKASHVILI) (1866–1928). Georgian poet, brother of Vazha Pshavela. He graduated from Gori Seminary
in 1885 and later taught Georgian language and history in schools in mountainous villages of northeastern Georgia from 1890–1920. In the 1880s, he began publishing his first poems—Natva, Tkis simghera, Mukha, Vin stqva saqartveloze, etc.—that were centered on the life and traditions of the Georgian mountaineers and discussed the political reality of contemporary Georgia. Bachana was influenced by the writings of his elder brother Vazha Pshavela. His major works include poems Taghlaura (1884), Nanais simghera (1889), Saprtkhe (1891), and Tsatsloba (1924).

BACHKOVO MONASTERY. See PETRITSONI MONASTERY.

BACURIUS HIBERIOS (FOURTH CENTURY). Prominent Georgian military commander in the Byzantine service, also known as Bakur Iberieli and Bakur Iberi. Unfortunately few details are available on his life. He was born into the Iberian royal family and later lived in Constantinople, where he rose through the ranks and distinguished himself commanding Byzantine troops in several campaigns. He participated in the Battle of Adrianople in 378 and later helped Emperor Theodosius I to suppress Flavius Eugenius’ uprising in the Battle of Frigidus in 394. Bacurius also established himself as a notable scholar and philosopher, whose knowledge was praised by many contemporary Greek logicians.

BADALI. In feudal Georgia, a substitute person for military service. The Georgian feudal laws, including the 16th century Dzeglis dadeba mepet-mepisa Giorgis mier, provided for a substitute if a person could not perform the required military service. With the establishment of a standing army (morige jari) by King Erekle II, the system was further enhanced. The Statute for a Standing Army (morigis lashkrobis ganacheni) of 1774 established the persons qualifying for the badali, who could either present a substitute (badali daechira) or pay a fee (morigis sabadlo) that contributed to a special treasury (morigis tetri) to equip and maintain the standing army. See also PATRONQMOMBA.

BAGAPSH, SERGEY (1949– ). Leader of the self-proclaimed republic of Abkhazia; prime minister in 1997–1999, he was elected pres-
ident in 2005. Bagapsh studied at the Institute of Subtropical Economy and began his political career as a first secretary of the Abkhaz Komsomol. In 1992, he joined the Council of Ministers of Abkhazia, and three years later, became first vice premier. During his stint as prime minister from 1997–1999, the Georgian-Abkhazian relations escalated, leading to military actions in May 1998 that resulted in the expulsion of tens of thousands of Georgian residents of the Gali region. In 2000–2004, he worked as a general director of the Chornomorenergo company before being nominated by the opposition movements Amtsakhara and United Abkhazia in the presidential elections in 2004.

Among the five main candidates, Bagapsh and Prime Minister Raul Khajimba were favorites to win. In a surprise move, Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his support for Khajimba. However, the election results favoring Khajimba were contested, and a post-election dispute between Bagapsh and Khajimba brought the region to the verge of civil strife. To avoid a conflict, the two opponents agreed to hold repeat elections on a joint ticket in which Bagapsh ran as the presidential candidate and Khajimba as the vice president. The second round of voting took place in January 2005 and Bagapsh won the elections with more than 69,000 of the total 129,000 votes. He pursued a hardline stance in the relations with the Georgian government and refused to negotiate any limitations to the Abkhaz de facto independence. In late July 2005, the Georgian side offered to sign a joint declaration on non-resumption of hostilities, but the Bagapsh rejected it. Instead, the Abkhaz leader met Eduard Kokoity, leader of another Georgian breakaway province of South Ossetia, in Gagra on 26 July and signed a communiqué on cooperation and mutual assistance against Georgia. In January 2006, in light of increased tensions between Tbilisi and South Ossetia, Bagapsh repeated his readiness to support official Tsikhinvali in case of open hostilities.

BAGRAT CATHEDRAL. One of the finest churches in Georgia, Bagrat Cathedral was built during the reign of the first King Bagrat III of Georgia (975–1014) as a symbol of the state’s unity. The cathedral, dedicated to the assumption of the Holy Virgin, was one of the largest and most spacious in Georgia, and its interior contained intricate frescos and mosaics. However, it was sacked by the Turks in
1510, and its dome was destroyed during another Ottoman invasion in 1692. Its imposing ruins remain an important tourist destination in Kutaisi.

BAGRAT I CUROPALATES. Ruler of Tao and Klarjeti in 826–876. The son of Ashot I the Great, Bagrat strove to expand his sphere of influence into Kartli and supported Arab invasions of eastern Georgian principalities in 842 and 853. He continued the extensive building works initiated by his father and Grigol Khandzteli.

BAGRAT I. King of Abkhazia from 886–893. The son of King Demetre II, Bagrat was overthrown by conspirators led by Ioane Shavlian but survived after being thrown into the sea. Supported by the Byzantine emperor, he returned to western Georgia and restored his crown after defeating King Adarnase (the son of Ioane Shavlian). He later sought, unsuccessfully, to expand his domain into Tao-Klarjeti.

BAGRAT I, ERISTAVI (?–1372). Bagratid prince and claimant to the throne of Imereti. The grandson of King David VI Narin, he was forced to surrender his domain to King Giorgi V the Brilliant in 1330 and was granted the title of eristavi of Shorapani.

BAGRAT II (958–994). King of the Georgians (kartvelta mepe) from the Bagrationi dynasty in Tao. The son of Sumbat Curopalates, Bagrat began his rule as eristaveristavi and earned the nickname regveni (dullard) for his arrogance and stubbornness. He supported David III Curopalates against the Arabs in the Battle of Valashkert in 990.

BAGRAT II (10TH CENTURY). King of Abkhazia. The son of King Constantine III, he struggled against a powerful opposition led by his half-brother Giorgi (later King Giorgi II of Abkhazia) and was supported by Eristavteristavi Gurgen of Klarjeti.

BAGRAT III. First king of the unified Kingdom of Georgia between 978–1014. A son of King Gurgen of Kartli and Queen Gurandukht, he became a focal point in David III Curopalates’s goal of political unification of Georgia. An heir to the throne of Kartli, Bagrat was
also a nephew and heir of King Theodosius III (the Blind, 975–978) of Abkhazia (western Georgia) and was adopted by David Curopalates. In 975, with support of the powerful Lord Ivane Marushis-dze, Bagrat ascended the throne of Kartli, then three years later he became king of Abkhazia and, in 1001, he inherited David Curopalate’s extensive domain in Tao-Klarjeti. In 1008–1010, Bagrat annexed the principalities of Kakheti and Hereti, thereby completing the unification of the Georgian lands into a single state with a capital in Kutaisi.

Early in his reign, Bagrat faced powerful opposition from the nobles and suppressed the rebellious Kavtar Tbeli in the early 980s and Lord Rati Baghvashi of Kldekari in 989. More serious was the threat from the Byzantine Empire that claimed parts of David Curopalates’ domain, and Bagrat’s efforts to restore these territories proved unsuccessful. In the last years of his reign, Bagrat entered into an alliance with the Armenian King Gagik I of Ani and subdued Padlon of Rani (Arran). Bagrat’s legacy includes the magnificent cathedrals of Bedia, Bagrat, and Nikortsminda, which remain some of the finest examples of Georgian medieval architecture. He died at the Panaskerti Fortress and was buried in the Bedia Cathedral. He was succeeded by his son Giorgi I in 1014.

BAGRAT III (1495–1565). King of Imereti in 1519–1565. The son of King Alexander II, Bagrat struggled against rebellious nobles and the Ottoman Empire as he sought to restore his authority over western Georgia. In 1535, he defeated the powerful Atabeg Kvarkvare IV Jakeli of Samtskhe and controlled this principality for the next 10 years. However, local nobles then invited the Ottomans to drive the Imeretians out of Samtskhe, and King Bagrat was defeated in the decisive battle at Sokhoistas in 1545. Returning to Imereti, Bagrat turned against the defiant lords of Guria and Mingrelia. He defeated Levan I Dadiani of Mingrelia but failed to subdue Rostom I Gurieli, who appealed to the Ottoman Empire for support. In 1555, Bagrat was forced to recognize Ottoman supremacy in western Georgia.

BAGRAT IV. King of Georgia from 1027–1072. He was born to King Giorgi I and his wife, the Armenian Princess Mariam, the daughter
of King Senakerim II of Vaspurakan. From 1022–1025, Prince Bagrat was held hostage in Constantinople following his father King Giorgi I’s defeat in the Georgian–Byzantine Wars. After the death of Giorgi in 1024, Bagrat returned to Georgia but faced the opposition of powerful lords led by Prince Demetre of Artanuji, who appealed to the Byzantine emperor to intervene in Georgian affairs. The second Georgian–Byzantine War was fought in 1027–1029 and ended after the death of Emperor Constantine VIII when the Georgian Queen Mother Mariam visited Constantinople and negotiated with Emperor Romanus III in 1030–1031. Georgian–Byzantine relations briefly improved: Bagrat was recognized as the king of Georgia, was granted the Byzantine title of curopalates, and married Princess Helen, the niece of Emperor Romanus III. However, Helen soon died and Bagrat married Princess Borena, the sister of King Dorghol of Ossetia.

In 1032, the Byzantine Empire again interfered in Georgian affairs, supporting Bagrat’s half-brother Demetre, who revolted in Anakopia and appealed to Constantinople for help. Although Bagrat defeated him, the strategic fortress of Anakopia remained in Byzantine hands. The same year, Bagrat turned his attention to the Arab-held city of Tbilisi, where Amir Jafar was captured by the powerful Georgian lords Liparit Baghvashi of Kldekari and Eristavi Ivane Abazas-dze of Kartli. However, influenced by nobles resentful of Liparit Baghvashi, Bagrat released the Arab ruler later that year. In 1038, Bagrat and Lord Liparit besieged Tbilisi for two years, but the king later signed a peace treaty with Amir Jafar without consulting Liparit Baghvashi, who was offended by the royal decision and became Bagrat’s sworn enemy.

In 1045, Bagrat annexed the Armenian capital city of Ani, which the city elders ceded to Georgia in their search for protection against the Byzantine Empire. The Georgian expansion into Armenia only intensified the Georgian–Byzantine rivalry. In 1046, Bagrat invested the Byzantine-held Anakopia but was soon informed of the death of Amir Jafar of Tbilisi. Leaving part of his troops at Anakopia, he rushed to Tbilisi, which he captured except for the Isani citadel. That same year, the Byzantines allied themselves with Liparit Baghvashi and launched a major campaign to defeat Bagrat and replace him with his half-brother Prince Demetre. In 1046–1047, Liparit Bagh-
vashi captured the Artanuji Fortress and, with Byzantine support, routed Bagrat IV’s army, which also included Viking mercenaries, at Sasireti, capturing Tbilisi and forcing Bagrat to retreat into western Georgia; the powerful lord controlled virtually all of eastern Georgia.

Fortunately for Bagrat, Liparit was captured by the Seljuks during the Byzantine–Seljuk War in 1048. The Georgian king then pledged his support to the Byzantine emperor against the Seljuks and seized some of Liparit Baghvash’s lands; Tbilisi was surrendered to Bagrat by the city elders that same year. In 1051, Liparit was released from the Seljuk captivity and returned with a Byzantine force and seized Tbilisi. Realizing that the real strength of Liparit lay in his alliance with Constantinople, King Bagrat went to the Byzantine capital to negotiate a peace treaty, leaving his son Giorgi as a co-regent. However, the Byzantine emperor skillfully prolonged negotiations for three years, keeping Bagrat in the Byzantine capital. In his absence, Liparit seized power by declaring himself a regent of Prince Giorgi and effectively ruled entire Georgia. In 1056, under Byzantine pressure, Bagrat agreed to make peace with Liparit, who became a powerful lord of Meskheti (southern Georgia). In 1058, Bagrat’s supporters, led by Eristavi Sula Kalmakhi, captured the defiant lord and surrendered him to Bagrat, who had him exiled to Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos in Greece.

After two decades of internal feuds, Bagrat finally had the time and resources to restore his authority. He conquered the rebellious Kakheti and Hereti in 1060 and seized Tbilisi in 1062. The king’s further designs were interrupted by the Seljuk invasions. In 1064, the Seljuk Sultan Alp Arslan attacked and ravaged the southern Georgian provinces; Bagrat refused to recognize the Seljuk sovereignty and pay tribute. The following year, Bagrat concluded a military alliance with Emperor Constantine X Dukas and arranged the marriage of his daughter Maria to Prince Michael of Byzantium (the future emperor Michael VII Ducas). In 1067, he secured his southern borders, recapturing the key fortress of Samshvilde. The next year, he turned against the rebellious Lord Aghsartan of Kakheti, who allied himself with the Seljuks. Bagrat’s attack on Kakheti triggered the second invasion of Sultan Alp Arslan, who attacked the eastern Georgian provinces in 1068. The Seljuk leader granted Tbilisi and Rustavi to his ally Amir Padlun III of Ganja and
restored King Aghsartan I on the Kakhet-Heretian throne. As the Seljuks withdrew in 1069, Bagrat defeated Padlun’s forces in Kartli and seized Tbilisi, which he eventually agreed to place under the rule of Arab amirs under the terms of vassalage. Released from Georgian captivity through Seljuk mediation, Padlun launched another attack on Georgia, which Bagrat crushed in 1070 and, in return, devastated Ganja. Returning to Georgia, King Bagrat died on 24 November 1072 and was buried in the Chkondidi Monastery. He was succeeded by his son Giorgi II.

**BAGRAT IV.** King of Imereti in 1660–1661, 1663–1668, 1669–1678, and 1679–1681. The son of King Alexander III, he was blinded by his stepmother in a bitter power struggle. Ascending the throne, Bagrat IV failed to reign in the rebellious lords and was often overthrown by his powerful opposition, greatly weakening the Imeretian kingdom.

**BAGRAT V.** King of Georgia in 1360–1393. The son of King David IX, his reign coincided with one of the darkest chapters in Georgian history. The plague spread through Georgia throughout the 1350s and 1360s, claiming Bagrat’s wife, Queen Helen. In 1366, Bagrat married Princess Anna, the daughter of King John-Alexis III of Trebizond, in 1367. Georgia had barely recovered from this deadly pestilence when the hordes of Tamerlane (Timur) invaded in 1386; after a heroic defense of his capital, King Bagrat, with his family, was captured in Tbilisi. Tamerlane forced him to convert to Islam and returned him to Georgia, accompanied by some 12,000 men. However, Bagrat covertly organized an ambush in one of the valleys and completely exterminated the enemy troops. In retaliation, Tamerlane invaded Georgia in 1387, but facing fierce local resistance and the attacks of Tokhtamish of the Golden Horde, he soon withdrew his forces. Over the next six years, Bagrat tried to rebuild his ravaged country but died in 1393, leaving his son Giorgi VII to prepare for the return of Tamerlane.

**BAGRAT VI.** King of Imereti in 1463–1466 and of Kartli-Imereti in 1466–1478. The grandson of King Alexander I the Great of Georgia, he became the founder of the Imeretian branch of the Bagrationi dy-
nasty. During the reign of King Giorgi VIII of Georgia, Bagrat initially governed Imereti but was removed from his position for supporting Atabeg Kvarkvare II Jakeli in 1462. The next year, Bagrat rebelled, and after his victory over King Giorgi at Chikhori, he declared himself king of Imereti. Two years later, after King Giorgi VIII suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Atabeg Kvarkvare, Bagrat seized the chance of expanding his authority into Kartli, proclaiming himself king of Kartli in 1466. He successfully ruled the two kingdoms for the next 10 years. In 1477, Uzun Hasan, the powerful leader of Aq-Qoyunlu, ravaged Kartli and captured Tbilisi and Gori. Unable to defeat the invader, Bagrat signed a peace treaty with Uzun Hasan and agreed to pay tribute.

BAGRAT VII. Ruler of Kartli in 1616–1619. The son of King David XI, he was raised at the court of the Persian Shah Abbas I and converted to Islam. In 1616, he was granted the title of khan and was appointed governor of Kartli. For the next three years, Bagrat Khan faced the opposition of the maverick Giorgi Saakadze and was eventually recalled back to Persia.

BAGRAT BATONISHVILI (1776–1841). Georgian prince and scholar; author of the first veterinary study in Georgian. The son of King Giorgi XII, Bagrat Batonishvili (Bagrationi) was resettled with other members of the royal family to St. Petersburg in 1803. He spent the rest of his life in Russia, where he authored several important works. His historical studies include Akhali motkhroba, a history of Georgia in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and Ruset-sparsetis omi, an account of the Russo–Persian Wars of the early 19th century. In 1807 and 1818, Bagrat published several veterinary treatises, including Samkurnalo tskhenta da skhvata pirutkyta, that in effect laid the foundation for veterinary science in Georgia.

BAGRAT CUROPALATES, CODE OF. A compilation of laws in the Beka-Aghbugha Book of Laws that was later incorporated in King Vakhtang VI’s legal code. The code covers articles 99 to 170 in the Beka-Aghbugha Book of Laws and presents criminal law regulations in use in the united Kingdom of Georgia. It provides legal definitions for a variety of offenses and relevant punishments. The code had a
significant influence on the later development of Georgian criminal law. The identity of “Bagrat Curopalates” is still a matter of debate; Ivane Javakhishvili suggested King Bagrat III (975–1014), S. Kakabadze argued for King Bagrat, the brother of King Alexander the Great, while I. Surguladze and I. Dolidze favored King Bagrat IV (1027–1072).

BAGRAT KHAN. Ruler of Kartli in 1616–1619; some sources acknowledge him as a king. The son of Daud Khan (David XI Bagrationi), he was raised in Esfahan, where he converted to Islam and adopted Persian customs. Shah Abbas I the Great appointed him to rule Kartli in 1616, but Bagrat effectively controlled only Kvemo (Lower) Kartli, where he lived in Bolnisi. See also SAAKADZE, GIORGI; TEIMURAZ I.

BAGRAT MUKHRANBATONI (16TH CENTURY). Prominent political figure in the Kingdom of Kartli. The brother of King David X, Bagrat commanded one of the military districts (sadrosko). In 1512, he received a vast territory in Mukhrani as his hereditary lands, establishing the Samukhranbatono with its center at Tsikhisdziri and laying the foundation for the Mukhranbatoni branch of the Bagrationi dynasty. In 1513, Bagrat was instrumental in defeating King Giorgi II (Avgiorgi) of Kakheti, who repeatedly ravaged eastern Kartli. In 1520s, Bagrat supported his brother’s attempts to expand royal authority into the Kakhetian lands, but he later became a monk and spent his remaining years in a monastery. Bagrat Mukhranbatoni authored a treatise on Islam entitled Motkhrobai sjulta ughrmtota ismailita (Treatise on the Faith of the Infidel Ismailites), in which he compared Christianity and Islam.

BAGRATONI, DYNASTY. Georgian royal family between the 8th and 19th centuries; one of the longest reigning monarchies in the world. The origins of the Bagratid/Bagrationi/Bagratuni dynasty is still a matter of debate between Georgian and Armenian scholars. Medieval chroniclers, in an attempt to embellish the origins of their kings, suggested the Jewish origins of these families and traced their origins back to the Biblical Kings David and Solomon. Very little is known about the early history of this family. The Georgian scholars
highlight its Georgian descent but remain divided over the specific
details. According to some Georgian scholars (N. Marr, I. Orbeli, E.
Takaishvili, S. Janashia, etc), the family had its roots in the ancient
Georgian province of Speri and belonged to one of the Chan/Laz
tribes. Other scholars, among them P. Ingorkva, and G. Mamulia,
suggest that the Bagrationis were a branch of the Parnavazid dynasty
dynasty of Iberia/Kartli, while still others (L. Urushadze) sought their origins
in the Bivritiani noble family that ruled Odzrkhe in ancient times. Ar-
menian and Western scholars (N. Adonz, C. Toumanoff, R. G. Suny,
and others) disapprove of these arguments and, instead, refer to the
Armenian origins of the Georgian Bagrationis, who branched out of
their Armenian counterparts, Bagratunis that in turn descended from
Bagradates, the commanding general of Tigranes II (95–56 B.C.) and
his viceroy in Syria.

The Bagratids played an important role in southern Georgia and
Armenia, where they gradually emerged following the fall of the Ar-
sacid dynasty in the fifth century. They amassed large fortunes and
territories, and in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, Bagratid
princes were in the service of both Byzantium and Persia. They pur-
sued pro-Arab policy in the eighth century, which saved them from
the annihilation that befell on many major and lesser feudal families
of Georgia and Armenia.

In the ninth century, Ashot I the Great founded a strong Bagrationi
principality in Tao-Klarjeti, where his descendants eventually split
into the branches of Tao and Klarjeti Bagrationis, often competing
with each other for power. Adarnase II Curopalates of the Tao
Bagrationis was the first to receive the title of “king of the Geor-
gians” (kartvelta mepe) from the Byzantine Empire in the 890s. His
descendants expanded their spheres of influence through subtle
diplomacy and coercion. In the second half of the 10th century, dur-
ing the rule of one of the greatest Bagrationi princes, David III
Curopalates turned his domain into a large and powerful kingdom
whose borders reached Lake Van. The growth and consolidation of
this principality contributed to the expansion of Georgian cultural
and economic ties with other kingdoms and principalities. King
David’s crowning achievement was the unification of the Georgian
principalities into a single kingdom under his stepson Bagrat. Thus,
starting in 975, the Bagrationi family led Georgia for a millennium
through the years of success and failure. By the 12th century, after the triumphant reigns of King David IV Aghmashenebeli and Queen Tamar, the Bagrationis rose to the summit of their power and glory, establishing a pan-Caucasian Georgian Empire stretching from the Black Sea to the Caspian and from the Caucasus Mountains to Lake Van.

However, the subsequent invasions of Mongols, Seljuk Turks, and Persians devastated Georgia and resulted in its fragmentation. After a brief revival under King Giorgi VI the Brilliant, the Bagrationis found themselves fighting for survival against numerous foes, including the notorious Tamerlane, in the last decade of the 14th century. The last Bagrationi ruler of the united Georgia, King Giorgi VIII, founded the Kakhetian branch in 1466, while Bagrat VI, the grandson of King Alexander I the Great of Georgia, established the Imeretian branch in 1463. The Bagrationi kings of Kartli continued to claim the main line of the royal dynasty until 1658, when they were suppressed by the Persians and replaced with the Mukhranbatoni branch. The Kakhetian branch eventually succeeded in uniting the eastern Georgian principalities when Erekle II became king of Kartli and Kakheti in 1762. The last ruler of this branch was King Giorgi XII, upon whose death the Russian Empire annexed Kartli-Kakheti in 1801; the Bagrationi monarchy was abolished, and its members were exiled to Russia where they joined the Russian upper nobility. The Imeretian Bagrationis survived for a bit longer as King Solomon II struggled against the Russian encroachment before losing his crown in 1810.

BAGRATIONI, ALEXANDER. See ALEXANDER BATONISHVILI.

BAGRATIONI, BAKAR (1699–1750). Royal prince and statesman. The son of Vakhtang VI, he ruled Kartli while his father was detained in Persia in 1716–1719. He supported Vakhtang VI during the tumultuous events of 1723–1724 and joined him in Russia, where he was accepted into the Russian military service. In 1729, he received the rank of lieutenant general and commanded an artillery depot near Moscow. He helped establish a Georgian printing press in Moscow where he directed publication of the so-called Bakar Bible in Georgian. In later years, he served on several diplomatic missions on behalf of Russian sovereigns.
BAGRATIONI, DAVID (1767–1819). Royal prince, statesman, and writer; also known as David Batonishvili. The son of King Giorgi XII, he was raised by his grandfather King Erekle II and studied in Russia in the 1780s. He effectively ruled Kartli-Kakheti in 1800–1801 and was instrumental in codifying the laws in eastern Georgia. After the death of King Giorgi XII, he was considered his successor but lost his crown after Emperor Alexander annexed Kartli-Kakheti in late 1801. Two years later, he was exiled, together with the rest of the royal family, to Russia, where he settled in St. Petersburg. He was a talented writer and scholar who studied the Enlightenment and produced the first Georgian translation of the works of the French philosophes. He substantially expanded and updated Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani’s dictionary of the Georgian language, and in 1814, he published a book (in Georgian) on the history of Georgia between late 17th and early 18th centuries. In later years, he wrote a Russian-language history of Georgia from ancient times to the 19th century. From 1811–1816, he worked on the history of Georgian law, and in 1818, he authored a textbook on physics in Georgian.

BAGRATIONI, DIMITRI (1746–1826). Georgian prince and poet. Born into the Kartlian branch of the Bagrationi dynasty, he opposed King Erekle II and was exiled to Russia for his involvement in a conspiracy. Prince Dimitri settled in Moscow where he spent the rest of his life and briefly participated in the fighting against Napoleon in 1812. He earned fame as a gifted writer, and among his many works are Tsameba ketevan dedoplisa, Ghamis alersi, Chemo mtvareo, Nana, Sulis kvavili, and Shesakmeba. He also produced the first compilation of Georgian proverbs. His poems were later compiled in the Dimitriani anthology.

BAGRATIONI, GIORGI (ca. 1570–1605). Royal prince and statesman. In the early 1600s, he opposed his brother David, who overthrew his father King Alexander II and seized the Kakhetian throne in 1601. Prince Giorgi spent several years in prison before his father recovered his crown. In 1604–1605, Giorgi ruled Kakheti on behalf of King Alexander II, who was detained by Shah Abbas in Persia. He negotiated a Russo–Georgian treaty in 1604 and pledged allegiance to the Russian Romanov dynasty. In October 1604, he successfully
campaigned against the khanates of Ganja and Shemakha. On 12 March 1605, he was assassinated, together with other members of the royal family, by his renegade brother Constantine I at Dzegami Palace.

BAGRATIONI, GIORGI (1712–1786). Georgian prince, head of the Georgian colony in Moscow, and general in the Russian army; also known as Giorgi Batonishvili. Son of King Vakhtang VI, he followed his father into exile in Russia in 1724 and settled in Moscow. He enlisted in the Russian army and distinguished himself during the Russo–Swedish War in 1741–1743 and the Seven Years War in 1756–1763. Receiving several awards, he eventually rose to the rank of general in the Russian army. After the death of his brother Bakar Bagrationi in 1750, Giorgi became the head of the Georgian colony in Moscow. He became known for his philanthropy and provided substantial funding to the University of Moscow.

BAGRATIONI, GRIGOL (GREGORY) (1789–1830). Georgian prince and writer. The son of Prince Ioanne Bagrationi, he remained in eastern Georgia after its annexation by Russia in 1801 and joined the anti-Russian resistance. In 1812, he participated in a rebellion in Kakheti but was captured and exiled to Russia. He spent the rest of his life in St. Petersburg where he played an important role in establishing a local Georgian community. He prepared anthologies of contemporary Georgian poetry and prose, which included works by Besiki (Bessarion Gabashvili), Sayat Nova, Glakha Mnatishvili, and many others.

BAGRATIONI, IOANNE (1768–1830). Georgian prince and writer. Born into the royal house of Bagrationi, Prince Ioanne took an active part in the campaigns of his grandfather King Erekle II. In 1789, he fought the Lezghins of Daghestan, and the following year, he supported King Solomon II of Imereti. In 1795, he distinguished himself at Krtsanisi, leading troops against the Persians of Agha Muhammad. In 1796–1798, he was grand master of artillery and fought the Turks in Kars and Omar Khan of the Avars. When his father King Giorgi XII’s health declined, Ioanne effectively conducted the business of governing the country. After the king’s death, Ioanne
drafted a far-reaching project for military, judicial, financial, and ecclesiastical reforms to modernize Kartli-Kakheti, but they were never put into effect. He was widely considered to be the best candidate to ascend the throne, but, in fact, his elder brother David became regent. Ioanne supported him and helped counter the claims of other pretenders. Following Russian Emperor Paul I’s decision to annex Kartli-Kakheti in 1801, Ioanne and other Bagrationis were invited to retire in Russia, and he settled in St. Petersburg where he received a generous pension. The next 30 years of Ioanne’s life were devoted to literature. He translated many European treatises into Georgian and wrote several original works, including *Kalmasoba* (1813–1828) and a Georgian–Russian dictionary.

**BAGRATIONI, LEVAN (17TH CENTURY).** Georgian prince and commander. The son of King Vakhtang VI, he ruled Kartli while his brother King Giorgi XI was at the Safavid court in Persia. Levan was recalled to Persia in 1678, where he was forced to convert to Islam and adopted the new name Shah Quli Khan. He became the governor of Kerman and chief justice of Persia. In 1704, he served with King Giorgi XI in Afghanistan. In 1708, he sent a letter to Pope Clement XI pledging his allegiance and asking for help against Persia. Levan also left a scholarly legacy as he worked with Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani on the first Georgian dictionary and wrote several hagiographic works.

**BAGRATIONI, LEVAN (1728–1763).** Georgian prince and writer, often known as Levan Batonishvili. The son of Prince Bakar, he was raised in Russia, where he graduated from the University of Moscow and served in the Russian army. Fluent in the French, German, Russian, and Latin languages, he wrote poems and a landmark historical work, *History of the World*, in Georgian.

**BAGRATIONI, NIKO (NICHOLAS) (1868–1933).** Prince of the Mukhranbatoni branch of the Bagrationi dynasty and hero of the Anglo-Boer War, also known as Niko the Boer. In 1896, he led the delegation of Georgian nobles to the coronation of Emperor Nicholas II. In 1899, he was visiting France when he learned of the beginning of the Anglo-Boer War and volunteered to fight the
British. Arriving in Pretoria, he became close to the Boer leader Paul Kruger and took part in the fighting. He was captured in one of the actions, was interviewed by the British commander Lord Kitchener, and escaped execution because of his royal descent. While in captivity, he was introduced to the young Winston Churchill. After a brief exile to the Island of St. Helena, he returned to France and then to Georgia, where he wrote interesting memoirs, *Burebtan (With the Boers)*, about his experiences in South Africa. He witnessed the establishment of the democratic republic in 1918 and its collapse in 1921. He openly opposed Bolshevik rule, but despite loosing his property, he somehow survived the subsequent turmoil, living in poverty in Tbilisi until his death in 1933.

**BAGRATION, PETER (1765–1812).** Distinguished Georgian general in Russian service. A descendant of King Iese of Kartli, his family immigrated to Russia in 1766. Despite some claims that he was born in Kizlyar, Prince Peter was born in Georgia (probably in Tbilisi) in the summer of 1765 and traveled with his parents to Kizlyar (Dagestan) in 1766. Bagration enlisted in the Russian army in 1782 and quickly advanced through the ranks, participating in campaigns against the Chechens, the Ottomans, and the Poles between 1787–1794. During the legendary General Alexander Suvorov’s campaigns in Italy and Switzerland in 1799, Bagration, already a major general, commanded the advance and rearguards of the Russian army and distinguished himself in the battles at Brescia, Lecco, Tortona, Alexandria, Marengo, Turin, on the Tidone and Trebbia rivers, and at Novi in Italy. In Suvorov’s ill-fated campaign in Switzerland, Bagration served during the crossing of the St. Gottard Pass, the storming of the Devil’s Bridge, the actions in Muothatal Valley, at Nafels, Nestal, Glarus, and the Panixer Pass. Returning to St. Petersburg, he was generously rewarded for his actions and was appointed head of the elite Life Guard Jager Battalion and commander of the Imperial residence at Pavlovsk. In 1805, Bagration distinguished himself at Amstetten, Schöngraben (Hollabrunn), and Austerlitz. Two years later, he again led the Russian advance guard and proved himself at Eylau, Guttstadt, Heilsberg, and Friedland. During the Russo–Swedish War of 1808–1809, Bagration successfully occupied southwestern Finland, and in March 1809, he led the famous march across the frozen
Gulf of Bothnia to occupy the Aland Islands, which precipitated a coup d'état in Stockholm.

Promoted to general of infantry, Bagration was then appointed to command the Army of Moldavia and defeated the Turkish forces in a series of battles in the Danube Valley in 1809. He supported the Serbian independence movement and provided the Serbs with troops and aid against the Turks. During the historic 1812 campaign, Bagration commanded the 2nd Western Army and fought at Moghilev and Smolensk. During the Battle of Borodino on 7 September, he commanded the Russian left flank and fiercely defended the fortifications—later known as Bagration’s fleches—against the main French attacks. He was seriously wounded by a shell splinter in his left leg and died of wound complications on 24 September at the village Simy in the Vladimir gubernia. He was buried at a local church, but his remains were later transferred to the Great Redoubt at the Borodino Battlefield in August 1839. His grave was destroyed by the Bolsheviks in 1932 but was restored in 1987. He was unhappily married to Countess Ekaterina Skavronsky, who left him within a year of marriage and had an illegitimate child with the Austrian diplomat Klemens von Metternich.

BAGRATION, PETER (1818–1876). Prominent Georgian scholar, engineer, and official in the Russian service. He was the son of Roman (Revaz) Bagration, the brother of General Peter Bagration. He studied at the Tbilisi Noble Gymnasium and began service in the Guard units in 1835. Ten years later, Bagration became an adjutant to Duke Maximilian Lichtenberg and served him for the next seven years. In 1857, he rose to major general, and in 1861, he helped supervise the emancipation of the serfs in Perm province. He was appointed governor of Tver in 1862 and became known as an able administrator, supporting the development of railroads, telegraph, libraries, and museums. Promoted to lieutenant general in 1865, Bagration became the governor general of the Baltic provinces of Lifland, Courland, and Estland in 1870. Besides his military career, Bagration also established himself as a prominent chemist and conducted experiments at the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg. In 1847, he discovered one variety of the mineral ortit, which was later christened Bagrationit.
BAGRATIONI, TEIMURAZ (1782–1846). Prominent Georgian historian and philologist, one of the founders of scientific schools of Kartvelology and Rustvelology. The son of the last Bagrationi king Giorgi XII, he was raised at the court of King Erekle II and distinguished himself in the battle at Krtsanisi in 1795. After the Russian annexation of Kartli-Kakheti, he resisted the Russian authorities and fled to Persia where he remained for seven years and supported his uncle Prince Alexander Batonishvili. Prince Teimuraz reconciled with the Russian authorities in 1810 and later moved to St. Petersburg, where he produced several substantial works on the history of Georgia and the Caucasus, Georgian literature, and Rustvelology (study of creative work of Shota Rustaveli); among his major works are History of Georgia (1832), History of Ancient Colchis (1840), and Explanations of the poem “The Knight in the Panther’s Skin” (1843). He contributed materials to Journal Asiatique and Mémoires inédits. In 1831, he was elected an Honorary Member of the Asiatic Society of Paris and later became a member of the St. Petersburg Imperial Academy of Sciences (1837) and of the Antiquarian Society of Copenhagen (1838). Among his disciples were the distinguished scientists Marie-Felitite Brosset (1802–1880), Professor Platon Ioseliani (1809–1875), and Professor David Chubinashvili (1814–1891).

BAGRATIONI, VAKHUSHTI (1696–1757). Distinguished Georgian historian and geographer, one of the founders of Moscow State University. The son of King Vakhtang VI, he was raised by the court priests Iese and Giorgi Garsevanishvili. Prince Vakhushti emerged as one of the leading scholars of his time and conducted an extensive study of Georgian history. He supported his father in implementing various reforms from 1717–1724, briefly governed Karli in the absence of his father in 1722, and commanded troops during the Ottoman invasion of Kartli in 1724. He followed his father into exile in Russia in 1724, where he authored several outstanding works, including Aghtsera sameposa sakartveloisa (History of Georgia, 1745), Sakartvelos geograpiuli aghtsera (Geography of Georgia, 1750), and geographical atlases of the Caucasus (1745–1746).

Vakhushti laid the foundation for the critical study of history, dividing it into different types according to subject matter and themes.
His work combined elements of ethnography, religion, history of government institutions, and social and cultural history into a universal narrative. He laid the foundation for periodization of the Georgian history, dividing it into ancient history and history following the collapse of the united Kingdom of Georgia. Although his *Agtsera sameposa sakartveloisa* provides only a brief description of ancient history, Vakhushti revealed himself as a first rate scholar in the second part that dealt with more contemporary history. He participated in the work of a scholarly commission led by King Vakhtang VI to compile and study historical documents and sources. As a result, Prince Vakhushhti was able to tap a wide range of sources, including chronicles, oral traditions, religious treatises, and royal decrees. He also used architectural and epigraphic sources to restore some aspects of social or cultural history. Most important, he was the first to use critical analyses of sources in his research.

Prince Vakhusti also proved instrumental in developing the fields of cartography and geography, producing two geographic atlases on which he worked for many years. His first atlas of eight maps appeared in 1735, followed by an extended version with 19 maps and the Bagrationi genealogy in 1742–1743. His *Aghtsera sameposa sakartveloisa* was the first study that combined Georgian history with historical geography.

**BAKHTRIONI UPRISING (1659–1660).** Decisive battle during a widespread uprising against the Persians in Kakheti. In the early 17th century, Shah *Abbas I* attempted to turn Kakheti into a Muslim khanate by resettling some 200,000 Kakhetians to Persia and replacing them with Turkoman tribes from Persia. The policy eventually failed, and Shah Abbas had to acknowledge Kakhetian autonomy. However, later in that century, the policy was revived. In 1656, Kakheti was given to the khan of Ganja, and another attempt at settling Turkoman tribes was made. Persian garrisons were deployed at major fortresses, most notably at Bakhtrioni. The Persian policy led to a widespread uprising in eastern Georgia in 1659. The rebels, led by *Eristavi* Zaal of Aragvi, organized an alliance of Georgian forces against the common enemy. *Eristavis* Shalva and Elizbar of Ksani led the Kartlian detachments, Bidzina Cholokashvili rallied the Kakhetians while the Tush-Pshavs and Khevsurs came down from
their settlements high in the Caucasus Mountains. The Georgians made a sudden attack on the Persian garrison at Bakhtrioni and Alaverdi, and success in these battles decided the outcome of the uprising in Georgian favor. The Turkoman tribes were forced to leave eastern Georgia.

By 1660, Persia had to acknowledge its failure in Kakheti, and they returned Kakheti to King Vakhtang V (Shah Nawaz) of Kartli. However, Persia also threatened retaliation if rebel leaders did not surrender. Bidzina Cholokashvili and Eristavis Shalva and Bidzina of Ksani chose to sacrifice their lives to avoid further bloodshed and traveled to Esfahan, where they were executed. The events of the Bakhtrioni uprising produced numerous oral traditions, especially in Tush-Pshavi and Khevsureti, where poems dedicated to local heroes, Nadira Khosharauli, Zezva Gaprindauli, Gogolauri, and others became popular. In the 19th century, Vazha Pshavela used these traditions to create one of his finest poems, Bakhtrioni, while his fellow writer Akaki Tsereteli produced another classic of Georgian literature, Bashi-Achuki.

BAKRADZE, AKAKI (1928– ). Georgian scholar and literary critic. He graduated with a degree in history from Tbilisi State University and began his career as a theater and cinema critic, publishing several works on these topics, including Kinokritikuli etiudebi and Kritikuli tserilebi (both in 1966), Mitologiuri engadi (1969), Sjani (1972), Fikri da gansja (1972), Marad da kvelgan sakartvelo me var shentana (1978), Pilpil mokrili madly (1981), Sulis zrda (1986), Kino, teatri (1989), Mtserlobis motviniereba (1990), Iliia da Akaki (1993), and Datsunebuli gza (1995). In the 1980s and 1990s, he led the Rustaveli Society. He played a prominent role in the national liberation movement in the late 1980s when his writing influenced public opinion and raised the national conscience.

BAKRADZE, DIMITRI (1826–1890). Georgian historian, ethnographer, and archeologist. A corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg, Bakradze was instrumental in gathering material for a history of Georgia and was one of the founders of a museum to preserve written sources on Georgian history. In 1881, he organized the fifth All-Russian Archeological Conference in Tbilisi,
where he laid the foundation for Georgian paleography. He helped found the Society of Enthusiasts of Caucasian Archeology and participated in the landmark study *Akty Kavkazskoi arkeograficheskoi komissii*. Among his many published works were *Kavkaz v drevnikh pamyatnikakh kriastiantsva* (1875), *Arkheolographicheskoe puteshestvie po Guri i Adjare* (1878), and *Sakartvelos Istoria* (1889).

**BAKU–TBILISI–CEYHAN PIPELINE.** See OIL AND PIPELINES.

**BAKUR.** Name of five kings of Kartli between the third and fifth centuries.

1. **Bakur I**, the son of King Vache; the 23rd king of Kartli, ruling in the third century; no details of his reign have survived.

2. **Bakur II**, the grandson of King **Mirian**, became the 28th king of Kartli in the second half of the fourth century according to Georgian medieval chronicles. Sometimes known as Bakar, Bakur was held hostage in Constantinople in his youth. After ascending to the throne of Kartli, he facilitated the spread of Christianity in southern Caucasia. He was engaged in a bitter struggle against the rulers of Armenia, who supported the claim of the son of Bakur’s brother Revi and his Armenian wife, the daughter of King Trdat.

3. **Bakur III**, the 31st king of Iberia; his identity is ambiguous. Georgian chroniclers have no information about his reign, and Armenian and Byzantine sources often contradict each other. Bakur seemed to have been allied to Persia and is mentioned as one of the Persian commanders. He is also credited with the construction of the famous church of Bolnisi Sioni.

4. **Bakur IV**, the son of Dachi of Ujarma; the 38th king of Kartli, reigning in the sixth century.

5. **Bakur V**, the 41st king of Kartli; succeeded King Parsman in the late sixth century.

**BAKUR IBERIELI.** See BACURIUS HIBERIOS.

**BAKURI (SIXTH CENTURY).** Prominent Byzantine commander of Georgian origin. He distinguished himself commanding the Byzantine forces against the Ostrogoth kings Totila and Teia in Italy in the fourth century CE.
BAKURIANI. Major winter resort in Georgia and in south Caucasia in general. Bakuriani, with its well-developed mountain slopes, remains an extremely popular skiing destination. The town itself emerged as a small village in the 16th century and had some 5,000 residents by the early 20th century. It was given the status of a town in 1926 and emerged as a skiing destination in 1929 due to the activities of Giorgi Nikoladze of the Georgian Geographical Society. The first major ski competition was held there in 1934, and a ski school and resort were established in 1935. Bakuriani remained Georgia’s premier ski resort throughout the Soviet period. In the 1990s, it fell into disrepair during the civil war and economic crisis but rebounded in the 2000s, when major investments were made in its infrastructure. In 2006, a new ski run and a 35-car gondola lift were opened.

BALANCHINE, GEORGE (GIORGI BALANCHIVADZE) (1904–1983). One of the 20th century’s foremost ballet choreographers, one of the founders of the modern American ballet. He was the son of the famous Georgian composer Meliton Balanchivadze (1862–1937) and brother of Andria Balanchivadze (1906–1992), a well-known Georgian composer. At the age of nine, he was accepted into the ballet section of St. Petersburg’s Imperial Theater School and was soon appearing on the stage of the famed Maryinsky Theater. After graduating in 1921, he joined the corps de ballet of the Maryinsky, by then renamed the State Theater of Opera and Ballet. In 1924, he toured with ballet dancers in Western Europe and accepted an offer to join Serge Diaghilev’s famed Ballets Russes. He later left the Ballets Russes to establish his own group, Les Ballets, and created new ballets in collaboration with such prominent figures as Bertolt Brecht and composers Kurt Weill, Darius Milhaud, and Henri Sauget.

In late 1933, at the age of 29, Balanchine traveled to the United States at the invitation of the young American arts patron Lincoln Kirstein (1907–1996), whose great passions included the dream of creating a ballet company in America. Balanchine founded the School of American Ballet in 1934 and later established the Ballet Society, which as the New York City Ballet, became resident at New York’s City Center. His brilliant staging of *The Nutcracker* (1954)

BALANCHIVADZE, ANDRIA (1906–1992). Composer, People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR (1957) and of the USSR (1968). The son of Meliton Balanchivadze, Andria studied music in Tbilisi and St. Petersburg. From 1925–1927, he directed the Tbilisi Youth Theater, and from 1927–1931, he worked at St. Petersburg Conservatory. In 1931, he joined the newly established Konstantine (Kote) Marjanishvili Theater and later began teaching at Tbilisi Conservatory. In 1941–1949, he directed the Georgian State Symphony Orchestra and co-founded and directed the Georgian Union of Composers. From 1957–1991, he served on the board of the USSR Union of Composers. Balanchivadze broke ground in many genres in Georgian theater and music. He paved the way for Georgian ballet and authored the first Georgian ballet stage production, Mzechabuki, in 1936. Additionally, his First Symphony is regarded as the first Soviet Georgian symphony of significance. Working with the great Vakhtang Chabukiani, he created a series of ballets that combined the Georgian motifs with classical elements. His later works include Mzia (1949), Tskhovrebis purtslebi (1961), Mtsiri (1964), Okros kortsili (1970), and others. Balanchivadze’s numerous symphonies, pianoforte concerts, and compositions for the stage facilitated the development of Georgian classical music and were rewarded with numerous prizes, including the USSR State Prize in 1944 and the Shota Rustaveli State Prize in 1969.

BALANCHIVADZE, MELITON ANTONOVICH (1863–1937). Composer, People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR (1933), father of Andria Balanchivadze and George Balanchine. Born in Kutaisi, he graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory and studied musical theory under Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov. In 1882, he established the first Georgian folk ensemble and organized the first folk concert in
Tbilisi the following year. From 1889–1895, he studied in St. Petersburg Conservatory and authored his first works, including Nana, Shen getpi marad, Odesac gitsker, and Tamar tsbieri. From 1895–1917, he founded and performed with choirs throughout the Russian Empire and produced numerous theater plays in St. Petersburg. Returning to Georgia in 1917, he established the Kutaisi Music College in 1918 and later directed the Department of Music of the Georgian Commissariat of Education, the Batumi School of Music, and the Kutaisi Music College from 1921–1937. His works were instrumental in establishing and developing modern Georgian opera. His brother, Vasily Balanchivadze (1867–1951), was a prominent stage actor and director.

**BANKING.** Georgia reorganized its banking sector based on the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund in 1994 and adopted the Law on the Activity of Commercial Banks in 1996. The level of minimum capital for commercial banks is set by the National Bank at US$6.6 million for newly founded commercial banks and foreign bank branches. There are no restrictions on the outflow of capital. The existing two-tier banking system consists of the Georgian National Bank and other commercial banks. Bank assets comprise 17% of GDP (US$943 million), liabilities, 14% (US$736 million), and share capital comprises 4% (US$207 million). Special credit lines and long-term borrowings from foreign and international financial institutions represent the main source of credit supplies. Georgian commercial banks generate their revenues mainly through loan operations, but some are also actively developing consumer products, including mortgage loans.

At the moment, the Georgian banking sector includes 19 banking institutions, of which 17 are private commercial banks and two are branches of Turkish and Azeri banks. The top six commercial banks hold more than 80% of total assets and liabilities of the banking system. These banks provide customers with modern banking services and products. Among the shareholders of 10 commercial banks are foreign investors including the German Investment and Development Foundation, ProCredit Holding AG, Greek Emporic Bank, Russian VneshTorgBank, and Kazakh TuranAlemBank. Among the top five
banks are TBC Bank, Bank of Georgia, United Georgian Bank, ProCredit Bank, and Cartu Bank.

**BAPTISTS.** Baptists first appeared in Georgia in the mid-19th century when the Russian imperial authorities resettled them to colonize south Caucasus. Until the early 20th century, the majority of Baptists were Germans, but the first Georgian communities came into existence after 1921. In 1941, the Georgian, Armenian, and Russian Baptist communities in Georgia were united, and the Ossetian Baptists joined them in the 1960s. In 1991, the Christian Baptists Union, which united some 30 churches and approximately 7,000–8,000 parishioners, was established. The majority of Georgian Baptists reside in Tbilisi. See also CATHOLICISM; GEORGIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH; ISLAM IN GEORGIA; JEWS.


**BARATASHVILI, MAMUKA (18TH CENTURY).** Georgian poet. Born into a prominent noble family, Mamuka Baratashvili followed King Vakhtang VI into exile in Russia in 1724 and later settled in
Astrakhan. In 1728, he served on a diplomatic mission to Persia, and in the 1730s, worked in Moscow, where he petitioned the Russian imperial house on behalf of King Vakhtang in 1736. He versified a chapter of the prose romance Rusudani in 1732, and two years later, he authored a 63-verse poem, Keba mepisa bakarisa. His poems celebrated earthly, rather than heavenly, love, and his greatest work was Chashniki anu leksis stsavlis tsigni (1731) that served as the first modern “poetics” treatise in Georgian. His innovations included breaking free of medieval Georgian meters and themes, which made him influential on later poets.

BARATASHVILI, MIKHAIL (1784–1856). Georgian historian and founder of Georgian numismatist studies. He lived in Russia where he served as marshal of nobility in the Simbirsk province. Over the years, Baratashvili assembled an extensive collection of Georgian coins, and in 1844, he produced a definitive study, Numismatic Facts of the Georgian Kingdom, which effectively founded the Georgian numismatist studies. He developed several methods of examining and identifying ancient coins.

BARATASHVILI, NIKOLOZ (NICHOLAS) (1817–1845). One of the greatest Georgian Romantic poets, often described as the “Georgian Byron.” He was born to a prominent noble family, and, on his mother’s side he descended from the illustrious King Erekle II. His mother inspired him with a love of literature, and the young Baratashvili was influenced by the circle of famous Georgian writers and statesmen who frequented their house in Tbilisi. At 22, he wrote his longest poem, Bedi kartlisa, in which he lamented the tragic fate of his native land. The failure of the 1832 Conspiracy (see CONSPIRACY OF 1832) intensified his patriotic feelings. In 1835, he finished the school for children of the nobility in Tbilisi and entered government service as an official in the court. In 1845, he was transferred to Ganja as deputy governor of that province where he became seriously ill and died. His poetry was mostly unpublished and unnoticed at the time of his death, but as poems were published posthumously, he came to be idolized. His remains were brought back to Georgia in 1893 and his funeral turned into a great national event. Nikoloz Baratashvili is buried in Tbilisi in the Pantheon of Georgian
writers and Statesmen on Mtatsminda on the slope of the mount he loved so dearly.

Despite leaving only some 40 poems and lyrics, Baratashvili is considered the preeminent poet of Georgian romanticism. His ingenious squib portrayed a complex inner world of the human soul. The feeling of loneliness runs thorough his early poems (Twilight over the Mtatsminda, 1836, and Reflections on the Kura’s Banks, 1837) and reached its climax in the poem Lonely Soul (1839). In his poems, Baratashvili sang of high moral ideals, and sought his own path to improve society. The poet’s struggle against the powers of pessimism and darkness found expression in one of his best poems, Merani, which has influenced later Georgian poets. With its mystical vision of the future, it also served as a symbol of progress and eternal movement forward.

BARATASHVILI, SHADIMAN (17TH CENTURY). One of the most powerful feudal lords in Kartli, Baratashvili was a tutor to King Luarsab II and exercised great influence at the royal court. He fiercely opposed Giorgi Saakadze and was instrumental in turning King Luarsab against him. In 1612, he organized a conspiracy against Saakadze, who was forced to flee to Persia. In 1614, Baratashvili acquiesced to Shah Abbas I and became one of the most influential pro-Persian lords in eastern Georgia. He lured King Luarsab II from Imereti and had him captured and surrendered to Shah Abbas. In popular culture, Baratashvili’s first name, Shadiman, became synonymous with treason. See also BAZALETI, BATTLE OF; MARABDA, BATTLE; TEIMURAZ I

BARNOEVI (BARNAVELI), VASILY (1856–1934). Georgian writer and novelist, one of the creators of the historical genre in Georgian literature. Born into a priest’s family, he studied at Tbilisi Seminary, from which he graduated in 1878, and he continued his studies in history in Moscow. Returning to Georgia, he taught history in various towns and joined the Georgian Writers’ Union. His first work, Ramdenime surati khevurta tskhovrebadan, was published in 1878, and his first poem, Kartveli kali, followed the next year. From 1888–1892, he published the novelettes Patara levani, Sese, and Papuna. In later years, Barnovi produced a series of historical novels for which
he consulted various chronicles and other historical sources. His best-known historical works are *Isnis tsiskari* (1901), *Sakhifato sikvaruli* (1908), *Mimkrali sharavndedi* (1914), *Trpoba tsamebuli* (1918), *Khazarta sasdzo* (1919), *Armaulis mskhvreva* (1925), *Giorgi Saakadze* (1923–1925), *Dedofali Bizantiisa* (1927), *Tsodva sichabukisa* (1928), and *Tamar mrtsemi* (1929). Barnovi’s rich vocabulary and rhythmic prose style were instrumental in popularizing the historical novel in Georgia and set the standards for this genre. He used historical events and personalities to raise philosophical questions. Barnovi also produced several pedagogical treatises, and in 1919, he authored *Kartuli sitkvierebis istoriis gakvetilebi*, the first textbook on the history of Georgian literature.

**BASIAN, BATTLE OF (1202).** Decisive battle between the Georgians and the Seljuk Turks of Rüm near Basian, in the vicinity of Erzurum (in modern Turkey). Under the rule of Kings David IV Aghmashenebeli and Giorgi III, Georgia emerged as one of the most powerful states in the Near East. The reign of Queen Tamar (1178–1213) further underscored Georgian might after a large Islamic coalition was crushed in the battle of Shamkhor in 1195. Alarmed by the Georgian success, Sultan Rukn ad-Din Suleiman Shah of Rüm (1196–1204) rallied the forces of the Muslim principalities against Georgia. The massive Islamic army (estimates range between 150,000–400,000 men) advanced toward the Georgian borders in 1202 and was met by the 90,000-strong Georgian army under David Soslani at Basian. The Georgian army was deployed with western (apkhazni da imerni) and eastern (amerni da her-kakhni) Georgian troops on flanks and some 40,000 men under Shalva and Ivane Akhaltsikheli in the center while Zakaria Mkhargrdzeli led the advance guard.

The Georgians initially made an unexpected attack with their advance guard on the Muslim army and spread confusion among the enemy troops. Sultan Rukn ad-Din Suleiman managed to rally his forces and counterattacked but was surprised by coordinated flanking attacks that routed his forces. Still, both sides suffered heavy casualties in the bitterly contested battle. The victory at Basian secured the Georgian preeminence in the region. Exploiting her success in this battle, Queen Tamar annexed Arran and Duin in 1203 and subdued
the Emirate of Kars, Armen-Shahs, and the emirs of Erzurum and Erzinjan. The Georgians then carried war into Azerbaijan and advanced as far as Ardabil and Tabriz in 1208 and into Qazvin and Kho in 1210. These victories brought Georgia to the summit of its power and glory, establishing a pan-Caucasian Georgian Empire that extended from the Black Sea to the Caspian and from the Caucasus Mountains to Lake Van.

**BASQUES, GEORGIANS AND.** Basques, populating northern Spain and southern France, are believed to be indigenous people predating the Indo-European invasions. The belief in the kinship of the Basques and Georgians was discussed in medieval Georgia; the medieval scholar Giorgi Mtatsmindeli (ninth century) even describes a plan of some Georgians to travel to Spain to visit the “Iberians of the West.” Jean Chardin, the French explorer who visited Georgia in the 17th century, also mentioned hearing such beliefs from the Georgian nobility. Among numerous theories on the Basques origins, there is one suggesting their Caucasian or proto-Georgian source (K. Bouda, R. Lafon, A. Humboldt, Nikolay Marr, J. Braun, Arnold Chikobava, Sh. Dzidziguri). Based on similarities between the Basque and Caucasian languages, polyphonic music, and traditions as well as archeological and paleoanthropological finds, this hypothesis suggests their common origin and argues in favor of an ethno-logical relationship between proto-Georgians (in the Caucasus) and the Basques (in the Pyrenees), who supposedly had become separated following the invasion of Indo-European populations. The nationalist Zviad Gamsakhurdia further expanded on this thesis, arguing that the Georgians, Basques, Etruscans (in the Apennines), and Pelasgi (in ancient Greece) were part of a larger pre-Indo-European population of the Mediterranean basin. This theory, largely dismissed in academia, was used to promote nationalist views and reinforce the sense of Georgia’s unique place and mission.

**BATONKMOBA.** See PATRONQMOBA.

**BATS.** Caucasian minority group and language, also known as Batsi, Batsbi, Batsb, or Batsaw, present in northeastern Georgia. Part of the Nakh family of the Caucasian languages, the Bats language had
between 2,500 to 3,000 speakers residing in northeastern Kakhetia, primarily around Zemo Alvani; until the late 19th century, the Bats also lived in Tusheti, the mountain region of Northwest Georgia, where four Bats (known as Tsova-Tushs in Georgian) communities of Saghirta, Otelta, Mozarta, and Indurta existed in the Tsova Gorge. The language has only one dialect and exists only as a spoken language since the Bats people use Georgian as their written language. The language is not mutually intelligible with either Chechen or Ingush, the other two members of the Nakh family. The Bats are Christians, and the first records of Christianity in Tushetia date from the 15th–16th centuries, although the conversion probably took place some centuries before.

The Bats consider Dmitri Tsiskarshvili, born in the 17th century, to be their first intellectual. By the 18th–19th centuries, there were already several university graduates among the Bats, and the year 1864 marked the beginning of a systematic education system for the Bats with the opening of a primary school in the village of Zemo-Alvani. Bats’ society has been weakened by the urbanization of the 1950s–1960s as well as by a tendency toward adopting Georgian language and culture. Mixed marriages have become more common, and everyday life and culture are now greatly affected by outside influences.

BATUMI (BATUM). Major port city on the Black Sea coast and administrative center of Autonomous Republic of Adjara; population 122,000. Located several kilometers from the Turkish border, Batumi is one of the best resort towns in Georgia, rich in subtropical vegetation, citrus fruits, and tea. It is also a major center for oil refineries and shipbuilding. Batumi has an ancient history that can be traced back to the first millennium BCE. Later, the Greeks established their colony here and named it Bathus, which is mentioned in the works of Aristotle. In the second century, a Roman military camp was set up near the town. It was a part of the Kingdom of Lazica in the early Middle Ages and later of the united Kingdom of Georgia. However, with the decline of the Georgian state, Batumi was initially governed by the princes of Odishi in 13th–14th centuries and later by the lords of Guria. In 1547, the town was captured by the Ottomans, and over the next 300 years, the Ottomans made a deep imprint on the local so-
ciety and culture. In 1878, following the Ottoman defeat, Russia secured Batumi under the Treaty of Berlin. From 1878–1886, Batumi was a porto franco (free port), which facilitated its rapid growth and development. From 1897–1907, an oil pipeline was constructed linking Batumi to the Caspian oil fields, making Batumi one of the most important port towns on the Black Sea.

During World War I, the Ottoman army briefly occupied Batumi in April 1918 before the British expeditionary force landed there in December of the same year. The British Council for the Batumi Region was established to govern Adjara from December 1918 to April 1919. On 13 September 1919, the Committee for the Liberation of the Georgian Muslims founded a mejlis (Parliament) in Batumi and called for incorporation into the Democratic Republic of Georgia. The British administration ceded the region to Georgia in July 1920. However, one year later, as the Red Army invaded Georgia, the Turks attempted to seize Batumi in March 1921 but were defeated and driven back by the Georgian troops under General Giorgi Maznashvili. Following the fall of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, its government went into exile in France from Batumi. Turkey recognized Adjara and its administrative center of Batumi as a part of the Georgian SSR under the Soviet–Turkish Treaty of Kars of 1921. The Bolshevik authorities established the Adjarian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic with Batumi as its administrative center in July 1921.

During the Soviet era, Batumi gradually developed and became one of the leading resorts and tourist destinations in the USSR. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the civil strife in Georgia, Batumi escaped the fate of many Georgian cities, which were plundered by paramilitary formations, after the head of the Adjarian government, Aslan Abashidze, closed the borders of the autonomous republic and prevented the spread of civil disturbances into Adjara. In the 1990s, Abashidze established a free economic zone in Batumi to lure foreign capital and succeeded in developing local infrastructures, turning Batumi into one of the most prosperous towns in Georgia. However, his government was also characterized by nepotism, widespread persecution of the opposition, and suppression of basic freedoms, all of which led to the ousting of Abashidze in 2004.
Modern Batumi is an important cultural and economic center. Its oil refinery is the main production center of petroleum from oil piped in from Baku. The city also has a major naval infrastructure, including a shipyard and machine-building, zinc-plating, and furniture factories as well as large tea and citrus plantations.

**BATUMI, STRIKE AND DEMONSTRATION (1902).** Worker revolutionary activity in Batumi in February–March 1902, when several hundred workers were fired from the Rothschild Petroleum Refinery. In response, a strike of other workers was organized, and demands were made to institute a shorter working day, increased pay, and other improvements in the workers’ status. On 8 March, the police arrested a large group of workers, which only intensified the strike since the remaining workers organized a demonstration that attracted some 6,000 men on 9 March. The government deployed police and militia against the demonstrators, and in the ensuing clashes, 15 workers were killed, over 50 wounded, and several hundred arrested. The movement was one of the first manifestations of organized revolutionary activity in Georgia and Transcaucasia in general.

**BATUMI, TREATY OF (1918).** Agreement between the Democratic Republic of Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey signed on 4 June 1918. During World War I, the Ottomans launched a successful offensive in the spring of 1918, forcing the Transcaucasian Sejim to sever all relations with Russia. In March 1918, the Bolshevik government of Russia negotiated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which surrendered large territories within Georgia and Armenia to the Ottoman Empire. The Transcaucasian delegation, led by Akaki Chkhenkeli, refused to accept the Brest-Litovsk provisions, and the Ottomans, in response, renewed their offensive—capturing Erzurum and Batumi.

As the Transcaucasian Federation disintegrated into the independent states of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, a conference was held at Batumi that ended in the signing of three agreements. The first made peace between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia and guaranteed the frontiers set by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The second reduced Armenia to Ottoman vassalage; and the third agreement established Ottoman control over the strategic railway in Georgia. The disastrous terms of the Treaty of Batumi led to the surrender of Geor-
gian and Armenian lands, including the districts of Batumi, Kars, Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Alexandropol, Echmiadzin, etc. Georgia lost 11,381 km² with tens of thousands of Georgians, while the Armenian losses amounted to some 18,125 km². The treaty was abolished after the Ottoman defeat in World War I. See also DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE; MOSCOW, TREATY OF; TREBIZOND PEACE TALKS;

BAZALETI, BATTLE OF (1626). Decisive battle between the supporters of King Teimuraz I and Giorgi Saakadze. In the early 17th century, Persia emerged as a powerful state under the capable leadership of Shah Abbas I and began aggressive expansion into Georgia. The attempts of Giorgi Saakadze, the mouravi of Kartli, to unite Georgian forces against foreign threats failed due to internal feuds of the nobility, and he was forced to flee to Persia where he became distinguished as a military commander. In 1625, Saakadze returned to Georgia where he raised a rebellion in Kartli and annihilated a Persian armed force in the battle of Martkopi on 25 March. He then quickly captured Tbilisi and campaigned in Kakheti, Ganja-Karabagh, and Akhaltsikhe. Teimuraz of Kakheti was invited to take the crown of Kartli, and thereby united both principalities. Although the Georgians suffered a defeat in the subsequent battle of Marabda in late 1625, Saakadze turned to guerrilla war, eliminating some 12,000 Persians in the Ksani Valley alone. His successful resistance frustrated Shah Abbas’ plans to destroy the Georgian states and set up Qizilbash khanates on Georgian territory. However, the rise of Saakadze embittered many powerful lords who feared losing their power at court and conspired against Saakadze. Shah Abbas also took advantage of this discontent and skillfully revived the feud between the Georgian nobles. An important aspect of this was a struggle between the gentry, who rallied around Saakadze, and the grand nobility who supported the king.

The final rupture between Saakadze and King Teimuraz occurred in the late summer of 1626, and both sides quickly gathered their supporters. Teimuraz was joined by many grand nobles, including the powerful lords Eristavi Zurab of Aragvi and Iotam Amilakhvari, while Saakadze was supported by the gentry as well as by Kaikhosro Mukhranbatoni of Kartli and Eristavi Iese of Ksani. Pursuing his
dream of uniting the Georgian principalities, Saakadze’s offer to King Giorgi III of Imereti to place his son, Alexander, on the throne of Kartli-Kakheti laid the foundation for restoring the united Kingdom of Georgia. Furthermore, he also appealed for help to the Ottoman sultan, who welcomed this opportunity to replace Persian influence in Transcaucasia.

The decisive battle took place near Bazaleti Lake in the fall of 1626. Both Teimuraz and Saakadze used stand-ins appearing at several locations at once to bolster their troops. However, this tactic backfired when the death of Saakadze’s proxy, David Gogorishvili, demoralized the Saakadze supporters; Saakadze himself slew King Teimuraz’s proxy. The fierce battle ended in victory for Teimuraz, which effectively precluded the future unification of the Georgian principalities and signaled the triumph of the grand nobility.

**BEDI KARTLISA.** Published as *Revue de Karthvéologie (Georgian and Caucasian Studies)*, *Bedi Kartlisa* was initially established as a cultural organ in the Georgian language for the enlightenment of the Georgian émigré community in Paris in 1948. It gradually developed into a major international trilingual publication that helped spread information on Georgia in the West and facilitated the study of Georgian art, literature, culture, and history in Europe. It contained scholarly articles and essays by Western scholars and Georgian émigrés, and reviews and lists of works published in Georgia. By 1983, 41 large volumes had been printed. *See also GEORGICA."

**BEKA AND BESHKEN OPIZARI (12TH CENTURY).** Georgian goldsmiths and silversmiths. They were outstanding masters of the traditional techniques of embossing and chasing in silver gilt. Working in a monastery at Opiza in the Tao region, Beka and Beskhen produced a number of uniquely ornamented icons that set a standard for the subsequent masters. While most of their work perished in the following centuries, several icons and gospel chasings survive, including the chasing of the Anchis Khati (the Anchi icon) frame and the silver chasing of the Tskarostavi Gospel.

**BENDELIANI, CHICHIKO (1914–1944).** Soviet hero and ace pilot of World War II. Born in Chokhatauri, Bendeliani worked at the Va-
leri Chkalov Air Club in Tbilisi in the 1930s and enlisted in the Red Army in 1935. Two years later, he graduated from the 1st Kachin Military Aviation School and began serving as squadron commander in the 43rd Fighter Aviation Regiment in the Kiev Special Military District. During World War II, he served with his regiment in the 21st Army on the Southwestern Front in 1943 and later served in the 54th Guard Fighter Regiment of the 1st Guard Fighter Division of the 16th Air Force. In total, he flew 410 combat missions over Ukraine, Stalingrad, Kursk, and Poland and shot down more than 30 enemy planes. Among other awards, he earned two Orders of Lenin, the Order of the Red Banner, and the highest Soviet honor, the Hero of USSR on 24 August 1943. He died near Kaunas in July 1944. See also GEORGIAN LEGION; KANTARIA, MELITON; TEXEL UPRISING.

BERDZENISHVILI, MERAB (1929–). Distinguished Georgian painter and sculptor. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from the Tbilisi State Academy of Arts in 1955 and quickly earned fame with his monumental sculptures. Among his many works are monuments of Shota Rustaveli (Tbilisi), Giorgi Saakadze (Kaspi), Medea (Bichvinta), Didgori Memorial (Digori), Soldier’s Father (Gurjaani), Ketevan (Tbilisi), and King David Aghmashenebeli (Tbilisi), and paintings of Ilia Chavchavadze, Titsian Tabidze, Sandro Akhmeteli, Konstantine (Kote) Marjanishvili, Nodar Dumbadze, and Dodo Abashidze. Among many awards he received over the years are the USSR State Prize and the State Prize of Georgia. See also MERABISHVILI, MERAB.

BERDZENISHVILI, NIKOLOZ (1894–1965). Distinguished Georgian historian and scholar. Born in Gogoleshubani, Berdzenishvili graduated from Batumi Gymnasium and continued studies at the University of Moscow and Tbilisi State University (TSU). With Ivane Javakhishvili’s support, Berdzenishvili began research at the Department of History at TSU. Berdzenishvili became professor in 1939, and over the next two decades he taught at TSU, Kutraisi Pedagogical Institute, and Tbilisi Pedagogical Institute and worked at the State Museum and Georgian Academy of Sciences. From 1941–1965, he directed history and historical geography programs at
the Javakhishvili Institute of History. In 1944, he became a member of the Academy of Sciences, and from 1946–1956, he directed the History Department at TSU. From 1951–1957, he was vice president of the Georgian Academy of Sciences. Berdzenishvili established himself as a preeminent authority in the field of the history of Georgia, and he produced pioneering works on various aspects of history, among them the nine-volume *Sakartvelos istoriis sakitkhebi*.

**BERIA, LA VRENTI (1899–1953).** Soviet statesman and head of the secret police. Born to a peasant family in Merkheuli (Abkhazia), he finished high school in Sukhumi and studied at the technical college in Baku, where he became a Marxist sympathizer. He became a member of the Communist Party in 1917, but the precise date of his formal membership is in dispute. After briefly serving in the Russian army on the Romanian front during World War I, he returned to Baku to complete his studies, which he did in 1919. In the summer of 1920, he was arrested by the Georgian authorities in Kutaisi and was accused of spying for the Bolsheviks. Through the intervention of Sergey Kirov, Russia’s diplomatic envoy in Georgia, he was released after several weeks in prison and was deported to Baku. In September 1920, he enrolled at the newly established Polytechnic University in Baku, but several months later he joined the Cheka in Baku and participated in the Soviet takeover of Georgia.

In November 1922, Beria became the Cheka head in Georgia and acted with ruthless efficiency against anti-Communist dissidents. In November 1931, he was appointed first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, and **Joseph Stalin** soon promoted him to first secretary of the Transcaucasian Party in 1932. During the purges in the 1930s, Beria supervised reprisals in Transcaucasia and had thousands of citizens executed or exiled. He also played an important role in the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federation into the Soviet republics of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. In July 1938, Stalin summoned Beria to Moscow and appointed him first deputy to Nikolai Ezhov, the commissar of internal affairs and head of the secret police (NKVD). Six months later, in December of the same year, Beria replaced Ezhov and initiated a “purge of the purgers” in which Ezhov and other officials were imprisoned or executed. A partial amnesty released thousands of innocent victims who had been
sentenced to forced labor camps, including Red Army officers and police officials purged by Ezhov. Beria improved prison and camp conditions, not for humanitarian reasons but to avoid wasting much-needed manpower. His methods increased the labor efficiency of the prisoners, who were given better food and other rewards based on their productivity.

In March 1939, Beria was elevated to candidate status in the Politburo, the ruling elite of the Communist Party, but he did not achieve full membership until 1946. During World War II, he served on the five-member State Defense Committee and was responsible for internal security and foreign intelligence operations. He supervised the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Meskhetian Turks, Volga Germans, Kalmyks, and others thought to be a danger to state security. After the war, Beria was promoted to the rank of marshal and was appointed deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1946. He supervised the Soviet atomic energy program that created the first nuclear bomb. Enjoying immense authority, Beria was among the three or four Party leaders who appeared to have the best opportunity to become Stalin’s political successor. However, starting in 1951, he began to lose favor with the dictator, and some of his associates were purged or demoted. In 1953, the Doctor’s Plot, a supposed conspiracy of Kremlin physicians, indicated that Stalin might be planning to purge Beria, who as chief of the secret police was responsible for any breakdown in internal security. However, Stalin died in March before the affair could be resolved. Some rumors had it that Beria was somehow involved in the dictator’s demise.

In the new government, Beria ranked second behind Premier Georgi Malenkov and enjoyed immense power, controlling the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Beria assumed a liberal stance on public questions, recommending a relaxation of the collective farm system, greater autonomy for non-Russian nationalities, and less rigid control over the Soviet satellite countries. However, his ambition and sinister past prompted the Party leaders to forestall any attempt on his part to carry out a possible coup d’état. On 26 June 1953, he was arrested and accused of anti-State activities. Found guilty on all charges, Beria was executed on 23 December 1953.
BERIKA. In Georgian mythology, a deity of fertility with goat-like features. In the medieval period, special celebrations, Berikaoba, were widespread in Georgia. An improvised spectacle with masks, performances featured animal characters (often bear, wolf, and wild boar) to deal with various themes, including death and revival, marriage and marital relations, etc. Berikaoba eventually created a special genre of folk songs and tales that provide interesting insights into contemporary society and life. Although both females and males could participate in it, a special Didi Berikaoba was sometimes organized for males only.

BERLIN, GEORGIAN COMMUNITY IN. In the 19th century, Georgia developed close contacts with Germany. German colonists were periodically resettled to Georgia, German companies made considerable investments in Georgia, and in 1863, a Prussian consulate opened in Tbilisi. Many Georgian nobles studied in German universities and contributed to the close ties between the states. During World War I, Georgian émigrés, including P. Surguladze, M. Tsereteli, G. Machabeli, and G. Kereselidze, established a committee to free Georgia and cooperated with the German authorities. A Georgian Legion was established with the help of German advisors and participated in operations in the Caucasus front. A Georgian literary organ, Kartuli gazeti, was established in Berlin. In June 1918, the Georgian Menshevik republic dispatched a special delegation led by A. Chkhenkeli to Germany, and a Georgian diplomatic mission, led by I. Bakradze and later V. Akhmeteli, was opened in Berlin.

The Georgian community in Berlin was significant in supporting Georgian emigrants and students throughout Europe, returning Georgian prisoners of war, and expanding commercial and cultural ties between the two countries. The community published books on Georgian history and literature and textbooks on foreign languages; after 1922, the community operated the journal Aisis qvekana, which published important works on Georgian history and ethnography; among its contributors were A. Nikuradze and Z. Avalishvili. In later years, the community printed Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani and Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani’s Sibrdzne Sitsruisa, which were smuggled into and distributed in Soviet Georgia. The community also became an important literary center, where Georgian writers G. Robakidze,
A. Papava, V. Nozadze, B. Abuladze, V. Akhmeteli, and others produced original works and completed translations.

The Georgian embassy continued to operate after the Soviet takeover of Georgia and became one of the centers of Georgian émigré politics. It had close relations with the Georgian communities in other European countries, especially in Paris. Georgians lobbied the German government to take action against the Soviet occupation of Georgia. Among groups represented in the Georgian community of Berlin were the Georgian Social Democrats, Social Federalists, and National Democrats, who directed the Free Caucasus Committee and published the journals *Klde, Sakartvelos moambe, Kavkasia,* and others. In the 1930s when the Nazi Party seized power in Germany, a group of Georgian émigrés (S. Kedia, Sh. Karumidze, and others) sought to gain its support in their quest to liberate Georgia. The Georgian government-in-exile disagreed with them, but the group continued its activities. The Georgian National Committee and military organization *Tetri Giorgi* were established in the mid-1930s. From 1939–1941, the Georgian community in Berlin helped organize units of the *Georgian Legion* and Bergman battalion. These units were commanded both by German officers and Georgian émigrés, among them Sh. Maghlakelidze, G. Gabliani, O. Tsereteli, and M. Kedia.

During World War II, the Georgian community in Berlin was led by Mikhail Tsereteli and later by T. Margvelashvili, and among its active members were S. Kedia, G. Robakidze, G. Injia, Z. Avalishvili, G. Maghalashvili, A. Nikuradze, I. Bagrationi, G. Alshibaia, Sh. Amirejibi, E. Ramishvili, E. Nozadze, I. Mantskava, M. Tughushi, D. Shalikashvili, M. Khocholava, and others. The community established a Georgian dance and song company, directed by D. Kavsadze, and a Georgian school at Potsdam. In 1943, the General Headquarters was established to coordinate the actions of Georgians in Germany and other countries. After the war, it was reorganized into a committee led by G. Maghalashvili and M. Kedia. As Germany became partitioned between the Allied powers, Georgian émigrés moved to western Germany but many were captured and either executed or exiled to Siberia; among those executed was the community leader T. Margvelashvili. In the 1960s, the Georgian emigrants restored a community organization under the direction of N. Nakashidze, A. Kordzaia, and others. In 1985, the Georgian Club
was founded in Berlin, which was transformed four years later into the Georgian Society.

BERZHE, ADOLPH (1828–1886). Prominent archeologist and scholar of Georgian and Caucasian history. Born in St. Petersburg, he studied at the Gatchina Orphan Institute, Reformation School and Zapintini Boarding School before enrolling in the Oriental Department of the University of St. Petersburg. Graduating in 1851, he began his career as a clerk in the registry of Prince Mikhail Vorontsov. From 1853–1855, Berzhe visited Persia, where he explored Tabriz, Qazvin, Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, and other places. He returned to Tbilisi in 1854 and was dispatched to Persia again in 1855. Starting in 1864, he served as the chairman of the Caucasus Archaeology Commission. Berzhe produced numerous works on Georgian and Caucasian history that were the foundation of the scientific study of these regions. His most significant work is undoubtedly the multi-volume *Akty sobrannee kavkazskoiu arkheograficheskoiu komissieiu* published in Tbilisi in 1866–1886, which compiled priceless materials on the history of Transcaucasia. He also published *Chechnya and Chechens* (1859), *History of Adygei People Recited by Shora Bemurzin Nogmov after Kabardin Legends* (1861), *Ethnographic Review of the Caucasus* (1879), and many articles on Caucasian history in *Russkaya Starina* and *Caucasian Calendar*.

BESIKI. See GABASHVILI, BESSARION.

BEZHUASHVILI, GELA (1967–). Georgian politician and statesman; former secretary of the State Security Council and minister of defense of Georgia. Bezhuashvili graduated with a degree in international law from Kiev State University in 1991 and worked in the Department of International Law of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1993–1996, he served as Georgia’s ambassador to Kazakhstan. In 1997, he completed his master’s degree in law at Southern Methodist University in Texas. Returning to Georgia, he directed the International Law Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1997–2000 and was closely involved in Georgia’s accession to the Council of Europe. In October 2000, he became the deputy minister of defense. Three years later, he studied at the John F. Kennedy
School of Government at Harvard University. After the Rose Revolution of 2003, he was appointed minister of defense in February 2004 and became secretary of the National Security Council in June of the same year. He was actively involved in the “shuttle diplomacy” on the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In October 2005, he became the minister of foreign affairs of Georgia.

BIRKIN EMBASSY. First Russian embassy led by Rodion Birkin and Peter Pivov to Kakheti in 1587–1588. Accompanied by 50 streltsi, the Russian embassy reached the court of King Alexander II of Kakheti in late August 1587 and negotiated an alliance treaty over the next month. On 29 September, Georgian and Russian sides signed an agreement. In the Book of Pledges, King Alexander recognized Russian sovereignty in return for military help and protection against foreign threats, notably Persia. However, as the “Time of Troubles” began in Russia, the Georgian principalities could not count on Russian assistance in their struggle for independence.

BLACK MOUNTAIN MONASTERIES. One of the major Georgian religious and cultural centers, located near Antioch in historical Syria (present-day Turkey). The complex emerged to prominence in the sixth century when the famous monk Simeon Stylites lived there, and its isolated location contributed to the growing community of monks. The number of Georgians living on the Black Mountain increased in the 10th–11th centuries; many Georgian scholars and monks moved from southeastern Georgian provinces and settled at the monasteries Simeon, Calipos, Castana, and others. They continued the traditions of the Tao-Klarjeti literary school and eventually maintained close contacts with other Georgian monasteries in the Holy Land and the Byzantine Empire. The community was particularly prolific in the 11th century when it formed an influential theological school, produced numerous works of ecclesiastical literature, and translated Greek, Syrian, and Arabic treatises. Among the Georgians living here were Giorgi Shekenebuli, Giorgi Atoneli (the Athonite), Giorgi Mtsire (the Lesser), Saba Tukhareli, Eprem Mtsire (Epraim the Lesser), Ioane Parakneli, Antoni Tbeli, Ioane Mtavarisdze, Arsen Ikaltoeli, and others.
BLACK SEA. An inland sea between southeastern Europe and Asia Minor. It is connected to the Asov Sea through the Strait of Kerch and to the Mediterranean Sea by the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. With an area of 422,000 square km, the Black Sea is the largest anoxic or oxygen-free marine system in the world, which limits its marine life to 100–150 m depth. Named Euxeinos Pontos ( hospitable sea) by the ancient Greeks, the Black Sea was an important factor in the rise of the early Georgian societies. Greeks established their colonies along its coastline in the sixth century and introduced the Hellenistic culture to the region. The kingdoms of Colchis, Egrisi, Abazgia, and Lazica existed along the southeastern shores of the sea.

At present, the Black Sea serves as a major commercial and political stage for Georgia. The ports of Batumi and Poti provide gateways for exports and imports, while the newly constructed oil terminals at Supsa provide much-needed oil to east European markets. As a political element, the Black Sea region includes Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia as well as the adjacent states of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Greece, Macedonia, Moldova, and Serbia and Montenegro. In 1992, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Organization was established and includes all six countries that border the Black Sea (Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia) and six neighboring states (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Greece, Moldova, and Serbia and Montenegro). The organization seeks to achieve cooperation between states and supports regionalism and globalization in order to avoid new divisions in Europe. Although one of the major goals of BSEC is to establish a "free trade zone" in the region, this has proved difficult to achieve in practice due to conflicting interests of the states involved. In 1992, the International Black Sea Club (IBSC) was formed as a non-profit organization for the mayors of towns in the Black Sea region and aims at encouraging direct contacts between companies and enterprises. In 1999, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank was created with an initial capital of over US$300 million, in which Georgia holds 2% of the shares. The bank supports project-based regional cooperation between the states and has provided over US$ 100 million in its seven years of existence. In 1997, the Black Sea Universities Network was organized to develop intellectual resources needed for sustainable development of the regional countries. In 1998, the BSEC
Standing Academic Committee was formed to promote academic co-operation and joint scientific projects, and the International Center for Black Sea Studies was created in Athens (Greece) to carry out policy-oriented and practical research for fulfillment of the BSEC’s goals.

In 1993, Georgia played an important role in launching the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), which linked eight post-Soviet states of Central Asia and the Caucasus with Europe. TRACECA provided major outlets for exports and imports as well as attracting international investment for the vast transport infrastructure projects. Because of its success, the European Conference of Ministers of Transport selected the Black Sea as one of the four Pan-European Transport Areas in 1997. In 1995, Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe was launched to provide technical assistance and investment for hydrocarbon infrastructure in the Black Sea Region. The agreement was supported by 21 countries, including all members of BSEC except for Russia. The same year, Georgia supported the Black Sea Regional Energy Centre based in Sofia, Bulgaria, which united 12 countries with a common goal of developing cooperation in the energy field.

In 2000, Georgia and five other Black Sea countries (Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia) established a multinational naval force, the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (BLACK-SEAFOR) to cooperate in search-and-rescue operations in case of maritime emergencies, mine-clearing, humanitarian assistance, environmental protection, and peacekeeping operations in connection with the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In 2001, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova established a regional international organization GUAM (the initial letters of member countries) that serves both as a commercial emporium and diplomatic means of countering the influence of Russia on the member states in the Caspian–Black Sea regions.

Despite their frequent differences in the realm of politics, the Black Sea countries have demonstrated much-needed cooperation to set up a system of environmental protection of the sea. In 1992, six littoral states signed the Bucharest Convention for the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, and the Black Sea Commission was established three years later to oversee its implementation. In 1993,
the Black Sea Environment Program was established by the Black Sea countries with the support of the United Nations and the European Union. In 1998, the Black Sea NGO Network was set up as a regional independent, non-political association of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from the littoral states to promote public awareness for a healthy Black Sea and a sustainable future. In 2001, all 19 countries of the Black Sea basin signed the Declaration on Water and Water Related Ecosystems in the Wider Black Sea Region.

BOCHORIDZE, MIKHAIL (1873–1913). Georgian revolutionary. He was born on 2 June 1873, the son of a workingman in the Georgian town of Telavi. In 1890–1900, he worked as a blacksmith in the main workshops of the Transcaucasian Railroad in Tbilisi, then became a bookkeeper in 1901. From 1893 he was member of a Social Democratic worker’s circle and, from 1897 to 1903, he was a member of the Tbilisi Party Committee. In March 1903, Bochoridze served on the Caucasus United Committee of the Part and directed the underground Avlabar Printing Press. During the Revolution of 1905, he helped organize and command armed bands of workers and was arrested for these activities in April 1906. On 27 October 1906 he escaped from prison and engaged in underground work for the Party in Tbilisi, Baku, St. Petersburg, and Stavropol province.

BOLNISI. Town in southeastern Georgia and administrative center of the Bolnisi region. For the greater part of its existence, Bolnisi was a small village famous for its Sioni Cathedral (fifth century) with its fine carved stonework; the unique shape of the crosses on the walls of Bolnisi Sioni were incorporated in the national flag of Georgia. In the 19th century, the Russian authorities settled the town with German colonists and renamed it Ekaterinasburg. In 1920s, it was briefly renamed to honor the prominent German Communist Rosa Luxemburg. The name Bolnisi was restored during World War II, when many of the town residents of German descent were resettled to Siberia and central Asia. The local economy is mostly agrarian but also features a winery, brewery, and gold mine in the village of Rat evani. See also BATUMI; BORJOMI; KUTAISI; RUSTAVI; SUKHUMI; TBILISI.
BOLNISI, BATTLE OF (13TH CENTURY). Decisive battle between the Georgian forces and Jalâl al-Dîn’s Khwarazmean forces in 1227 (or 1228). Following the Mongol invasions of Central Asia, Jalâl al-Dîn, the surviving prince of the Khwarazmean Empire, led his troops against Georgia in 1226–1226, and ravaged eastern Georgia and sacked Tbilisi. In 1227, the Georgians joined forces with the neighboring Muslim rulers of Rûm and Shaharmens against the invader. However, Jalâl al-Dîn anticipated their moves and intercepted the Georgian forces moving southward near Bolnisi. Outnumbered and without reinforcements, the Georgians and their North Caucasian allies were decisively defeated. This defeat allowed Jalâl al-Dîn to remain in south Caucasus and continue pillaging eastern Georgia for another four years. See also GARHNI, BATTLE OF; MKHARGRDZELI; RUSUDAN; SHALWA AKHALTSIKHELI.

BOLSHEVIK INVASION OF 1921. In May 1918, the National Council of Georgia adopted the Declaration of Independence and established the first Georgian republic. Over the next three years, the Menshevik government of Georgia introduced major economic, social, and educational reforms that helped stabilize the country. However, by 1920, Soviet Russia actively sought to extend its hegemony to south Caucasus, and Menshevik Georgia was the main obstacle to this plan. In April 1920, the 11th Red Army occupied Azerbaijan and established Soviet authority in Baku. In May, the Bolsheviks crossed the Georgian state border but were halted in their advance and diplomatic negotiations soon led to Russia’s recognition of Georgia’s independence in May 1920. Nevertheless, in November of the same year, the Red Army occupied Armenia, where another Soviet government was proclaimed.

Sergo Ordzhonikidze, the head of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Kavbyuro), coordinated the Bolshevik policies in the region and was a fervent exponent of sovietization of Georgia. He and his supporters in the Kavbyuro played an important role in pushing through the plan for the Bolshevik occupation of Georgia, often disregarding or acting contrary to the directives of the Bolshevik leadership in Moscow. The Bolshevik leaders preferred to leave Georgia alone, expecting that the Menshevik government would collapse under the weight of its own
unpopularity, which would have given the Bolsheviks the advantage of winning power through popular choice rather than armed conquest. However, the Bolsheviks failed to attract a large following in Georgia, where the ruling Menshevik Party enjoyed almost five times larger support among the workers. The reforms were largely successful, and the Menshevik government seemed far from collapse. This caused a growing rift in the Bolshevik leadership, where Vladimir Lenin and his supporters called for a peaceful approach while Joseph Stalin, Leon Trotsky, and their factions advocated the use of force.

Ordzhonikidze belonged to the latter group, and his actions in 1920–1921 greatly contributed to the eventual invasion. In late 1920, the Politburo barred Ordzhonikidze from “self-determining [the fate of] Georgia,” and in two directives in November–December confirmed its peaceful policy toward Tbilisi. Nevertheless, the Kavbyuro continued its planning for a coup in Georgia, prompting the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to chastise them in January 1921 and specifically ordering the Caucasian Bolsheviks to conform to the decisions already taken by the CC on this question. Simultaneously, relations between Tbilisi and Moscow quickly deteriorated over the alleged violations of the peace treaty, persecutions of the Bolsheviks in Georgia, and suspicions that Georgia aided rebels in the North Caucasus. The Kavbyuro took advantage of these circumstances to organize an uprising in southeastern Georgia that was then used as an excuse for invasion. With the offensive underway, the Bolshevik leadership in Moscow had no choice but to concede and approve the Kavbyuro’s actions.

The uprising was incited in the Lore district of Georgia on 11 February 1921 and was portrayed as the workers’ insurrection against the Menshevik government. The insurgents seized the Bochalo district the following day, and, simultaneously, the Bolsheviks began preparations for an uprising in Abkhazia. On 15 February, Philipe Makharadze organized the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia at Shulavery and formally appealed for help from the Russian Bolsheviks. The same day, the Red Army forces in the Caucasus was ordered to assist the insurgents in Georgia. The 11th Army of General Anatoly Gekker was the main attack force that crossed the Georgian state border from Armenia and Azerbaijan on an offensive toward Tbilisi. The Terek forces served a diversionary purpose as they
advanced from Vladikavkaz into Kvemo Kartli. Finally, the 9th Red Army of A. Chernyshev invaded Abkhazia to seize Sukhumi and prevent any reinforcements from foreign powers. On 17 February, the Kavbyuro established the Revolutionary Committee of Abkhazia, which included Nestor Lakoba, N. Akirtava and Eshba among others.

The 11th Army made a double-pronged attack led by M. Velikanov along the Baku–Tbilisi railway and P. Kuryshko from the Sartichala district. By 17 February, these forces occupied Ekaterinfeld, Marneuli, Keshalo, Kody, and Elisavetatal. The following day, the Georgian forces under General Giorgi Kvinitadze successfully engaged Kuryshko near Tsiteli Tskaro, where Kuryshko himself was killed. Despite the destruction of the strategic bridge over the Algeti River, Velikanov continued his advance and seized the strategic Kojori and Yagulji heights some 20 km from Tbilisi. Later that day, the Georgian forces, among them cadets, counterattacked and recaptured these heights. The Bolshevik invasion was dealt a serious setback when the Armenian Dashnaktsutiuns took advantage of the Bolshevik preoccupation in Georgia and seized Yerevan on 18 February, forcing General Gekker to divert some of his forces. The fighting between Kojori and Manglisi continued for three days; by 22 February, the Bolsheviks had restored the bridge over the Algeti River, which allowed them to bring in more reinforcements and the armor trains. Gekker then reorganized his forces to launch a double enveloping offensive on 23 February.

On 24 February, after failing to halt the Bolshevik advance, the Georgian forces under General Kvinitadze left Tbilisi for a last stand in Batumi; the Bolsheviks occupied the Georgian capital the following day, and the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia was reorganized into the Council of People’s Commissars of Georgia. At the same time, the Red Army forces achieved success in Abkhazia, where, aided by the insurgents, they seized Gagra on the 23rd, Lykhny on the 25th, and Gudauta on the 26th of February. However, as the 9th Army advanced to Oni, the Georgian forces, supported by the French fleet, counterattacked and recaptured Gagra and other territories, which remained in their possession until 1 March. Yet, by 4 March, the Bolsheviks had seized all major centers in Abkhazia and proclaimed the Abkhazian Soviet Socialist Republic. The Georgian
forces were also on the defensive in Ossetia, where Tskhivali was lost on 5 March, and the 11th Army crossed the Surami Gorge on its advance to Surami and Bakuriani.

The situation was further complicated by Turkey’s involvement in the war as Turkish troops attempted to capture Akhaltsikhe and the strategic port of Batumi, which was occupied on 11 March. Fighting against the Turks and the 11th Army, General Giorgi Mazniashvili was still able to rout the Turks in Adjara the 15 March. However, the Menshevik government could not turn the tide of the war as Kutaisi was lost on 10 March, Akhaltsikhe on 12 March, and Poti on 14 March. On 17 March, a Bolshevik uprising began in Batumi, and the Menshevik government of Georgia decided to immigrate to Europe the following day. With strategic centers in Georgia under Bolshevik control, the Council of People’s Commissars of Georgia decreed the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly of the Menshevik republic on 24 March and created the new Bolshevik government of people’s commissariats in mid-April.

BOOKS, FIRST PRINTED. The Catholic and Georgian missionaries in Rome (Italy) helped introduce printed books to the Georgian rulers by the early 17th century. The newly established Catholic Theatine and Capuchin missions also required manuals of the Georgian language and devotional texts for their operations. So, when, in 1626, King Teimuraz I of Kartli-Kakheti sent Nicephorus Irbach (Irubakidze-Cholokashvili) on a diplomatic mission to Rome, the Georgian envoy was enlisted to help solve these problems. During his stay at the Vatican, Nicephorus collaborated with Catholic scholars to produce an extensive Georgian–Italian vocabulary, as well as a brief collection of prayers in colloquial Georgian. The dictionary, the first Georgian book to be published, was printed in 1629 and contained over 3,000 words printed in large, clear type of the Mkhedruli alphabet. In 1670, Maggio’s textbook on Georgian grammar appeared in Rome as well. Other religious texts soon followed, and despite their many inaccuracies in light of the limited knowledge of Georgian in Europe, these publications played an important role in the development of Georgian printed culture. In late 17th century, King Archil immigrated to Russia, where he established a vibrant Georgian community at Vsesviatskoe near Moscow and turned his efforts to establishing printing presses that produced Georgian books.
By the late 17th and early 18th century, the number of Georgian books in print had increased, but all of them were produced in Moscow or Rome, and difficulties with transportation and distribution prevented their circulation within Georgia. The decision to establish a permanent printing press in Tbilisi belonged to King Vakhtang VI (r. 1704–1723), whose reign proved to be a period of constructive activity in almost every sphere. With the help of the prominent Georgian cleric Anthim the Iberian, archbishop of Wallachia (present-day Romania), King Vakhtang set about establishing a printing plant in Tbilisi. Archbishop Anthim was himself a master printer and engraver of the first order and a pioneer in Rumanian printing; he sent one of his ablest disciples, the master printer Mihaî Isvanovicî, known in Georgia as Mikheil Stepaneshvili, to open the first Georgian press in Tbilisi.

The press was opened in 1709 and operated for the next 14 years, producing mainly religious texts. One of its greatest achievements was the first print version of Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani, published in 1712. Before its destruction at the hands of the Ottomans in 1723, the press produced the following titles: Four Gospels in Georgian, 1709; Psalms of David, 1709 (2nd edition 1711; 3rd edition, 1712; 4th edition 1716); Book of Liturgies, 1710; Prayer-Book, 1710 (2nd edition 1717); Book of Hours, 1710 (2nd edition 1717; 3rd edition 1722); Germanos the Monk’s Manual on How the Teacher Should Instruct His Pupil, 1711; Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani, 1712; Missal (translated from the Greek) 1713; Book of Church Ritual, 1719–1720; Paraklitoni (a liturgical book of the Georgian orthodox Church), 1720; The Book of the Knowledge of Creation (a Persian astronomical treatise, translated by King Vakhtang VI and other scholars), 1721; books of the Bible, including the Prophets and the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, 1709–1722.

BORJGHALI. It is an ancient symbol of the sun and eternity, related to similar symbols from Mesopotamia and Sumer. Borjghali is usually depicted within a circle that symbolizes the universe. The symbol portrays the Tree of Life, whose roots are firmly in the “past” while its palm-like branches extend for the “future.” The tree itself symbolizes the continuity between the past, present, and future. Above the tree, there is a shining circle symbolizing the sun, eternal
movement, and Life. Nowadays, the symbol is used on Georgian identification cards and passports, currency, and uniforms of Georgian athletes. Borjghali is also a seal of the Basque–Georgian Friendship Association.

BORJOMI. Town in southwestern Georgia. Borjomi is world famous for its mineral waters and the curative powers of its mineral springs. Archeological evidence revealed several stonemason baths from the first millennium BCE. A minor fortress throughout its history, Borjomi changed hands between Georgia and the Ottoman Empire for centuries. The modern history of Borjomi starts in the early 19th century, when, following the annexation of the Georgian principalities, the Russian Empire was involved in a series of wars against the Ottomans. During the Russo–Turkish War of 1828–1829, Russian troops were quartered in Borjomi and discovered the curative powers of the springs. In the 1830s–1840s, the mineral water was exported to St. Petersburg and Moscow, and the first mineral water park was established in 1850, attracting the attention of the imperial family itself. In 1854, a factory was built to produce bottled mineral water, and a glass factory to produce bottles was built in 1896. In 1894, the Russian authorities constructed a railway linking Borjomi to Tbilisi followed by the first electric power plant in 1897, which greatly facilitated the development of Borjomi. Export data clearly shows the scale of success of Borjomi water, with 1,350 bottles in 1854, 320,000 bottles in 1905, and over 9 million bottles in 1913.

The Soviet authorities capitalized on the Tsarist legacy. Officially granted the status of a town in 1918, Borjomi became one of the major resorts in the Soviet Union, especially after Joseph Stalin visited it on several occasions. By the 1980s, Borjomi was producing some half a billion bottles of mineral water a year, enjoying a virtual monopoly on mineral waters in the USSR. The collapse of the Soviet Union and civil strife in Georgia virtually shut down production, although numerous bootleg Borjomi mineral waters were sold both in Georgia and abroad. Production was restored in 1995 under the aegis of the Georgian Glass and Mineral Water Company. Over 50% of the Borjomi production is distributed in Russian markets, 17% is sold in Ukraine, another 15% is exported to 25 countries all over the world, and the rest is consumed in Georgia. By 2005, the Georgian
Glass and Mineral Waters Company, which produces Borjomi mineral water, exported US$22.1 million worth of mineral water to Russia. In 2006, Borjomi mineral water became one of the elements in the Russo–Georgian trade war when Russian authorities banned all imports and sales of this product. See also BATUMI; BOLNISI; KUTAISI; POTI; RUSTAVI; TBILISI.

**BRDZOLA (STRUGGLE).**

1. The first illegal Georgian Marxist newspaper published by Georgian Social Democrats from September 1901 to December 1902. Edited by L. Ketskhoveli, it was printed in the Georgian language in Baku by the underground press known as *Nina*. Only four issues appeared, the first three in Baku and the last in Tbilisi. In March 1903, the First Congress of the Caucasian Social Democrats merged it with the Armenian newspaper *Proletarii* to form a new publication *Borba proletariata*.

2. Illegal Bolshevik newspaper published in Georgian and Russian by the Tbilisi Bolshevik Literary Bureau in 1908.

3. Weekly Bolshevik newspaper of the Tbilisi Committee of the RSDRP published June 1917 and February 1918. Directed by M. Tskhakaya and P. Makharadze, the newspaper published the proceedings of RSDRP conferences and regional Bolshevik meetings.


**BREST-LITOVSK, TREATY OF (1918).** Peace treaty signed between Soviet Russia and the Central Powers (Germany, Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria) on 3 March 1918. The treaty greatly affected the territorial boundaries of Georgia and accelerated the Georgian declaration of independence. In November 1917, after the fall of the Russian provisional government of Alexander Kerensky, the new Bolshevik authorities, led by Vladimir Lenin, resolved to make peace with the Central Powers. In early December, a conference
between a Russian delegation, headed by Leon Trotsky and German and Austrian representatives began at Brest-Litovsk. The conference was interrupted several times because the sides could not agree on terms. On 10 February, the Bolshevik government announced that it could not conclude peace due to the severity of the demands of the Central Powers. In response, Germany and the Porte reopened hostilities, and the German army resumed its advance into Russia. On 3 March 1918, with German troops moving toward Petrograd, the Russian delegation had no choice but to accept the German terms. The Brest-Litovsk Treaty resulted in the Russians surrendering the Ukraine, Finland, Poland, the Caucasus, and the Baltic provinces.

Negotiations on the Caucasus were conducted without representatives from either Georgia, Armenia, or Azerbaijan because the Transcaucasian Commissariat had not yet declared its independence. The Turkish delegation took advantage of this fact and pressured the Russian negotiators into making substantial territorial concessions. On 18 January, the Turks, supported by the Germans, demanded the surrender of Kars, Ardahan, and Batumi regions, which was formalized in Article 4 of the treaty. In response, the newly established Transcaucasian Seim denounced the agreement and opened separate talks with the Ottomans at Trebizond on 13 March. The Ottoman delegation asked the Seim to declare its independence from Russia and accept the provisions of Article 4 of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The Seim’s delegation, led by Akaki Chkhenkeli, countered with an offer to return to the 1914 international boundaries. However, the delegation itself soon became divided over the issues of independence and collaboration with the Ottomans. Failing to achieve a breakthrough, the Seim voted to continue war against the Ottomans on 13 April and recalled its peace delegation the following day. In response, the Ottoman offensive seized Batumi but was checked at Kars. A new ceasefire was signed on 22 April and peace talks were resumed.

Under pressure from Ottoman Turkey, the Seim declared the entire Transcaucasia an independent federal republic on 28 April 1918 and agreed to hold another round of talks with the Turks at Batumi on 10 May. During the negotiations, the delegations from Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan pursued different, often opposing, goals and undermined each other’s interests. To stop the Ottoman attempts to enforce the provisions of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, Georgia turned to
Germany for help and declared its independence on 26 May 1918. However, Georgia was unable to protect itself against the Ottoman attacks and was forced to accept the heavy concessions demanded by the Porte in the Treaty of Batumi of 4 June 1918. However, in November 1918, under the terms of the armistice between Germany and the Allied powers, the Ottomans were compelled to withdraw their forces from the provinces occupied under the provisions of both the treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Batumi.

BROSSET, MARIE-FÉLICITE (1802–1880). French scholar and historian, who made important contributions to the study of Georgian history. Born in Paris, he graduated from the Collège de France and studied oriental languages, becoming fluent in Georgian and Armenian. His initial research concerned Georgian manuscripts preserved in France, and it was the foundation for Kartvelology in Europe. Brosset corresponded with many Georgian public figures, including Prince Teimuraz Bagrationi. In 1834, he published an important study of the Georgian language, L’art libéral ou grammaire géorgienne, and in 1841, he helped translate and print Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani. In 1837, he was invited to work in Russia, where he became a member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences in 1838. Over the next three years, he read courses on the history of Georgia and then traveled extensively in Georgia in the 1840s. Brosset gathered a rich trove of documents and other information that he translated and published in multiple volumes in the French language between 1849 and 1858. Entitled Histoire de la Géorgie depuis l’antiquité jusqu’au XIX siècle and Rapports sur un voyage archéologique dans la Géorgie et dans l’Arménie, these multi-volume works remain among the important sources on Georgian history available to Western scholars.

BUACHIDZE, KITA (1914– ). Prominent Georgian writer, playwright. Buachidze began writing at an early age and published his first play in 1931. He graduated from Tbilisi State University (TSU) in 1941 and proved himself a prolific writer who discussed social and cultural issues affecting contemporary society and revealed its hypocrisy and folly. Buachidze’s work was important in the development of the Georgian dramaturgy, and he was awarded the Shota
Rustaveli Prize in 1958. Among his many plays are Ambavi sikhvarulisa, Mkatsri kalishvilebi, Vardi aspurtsslovani, Okro katsi betviskhidze, Ezoshi avi dzaghlia, Platoni, Rva mokmedi piri, and Polikhron chichia. In 1989–1990, he published his acclaimed books, Takoe dlinnoe pismo Viktory Astafievu i drugie poslani and Shavi tsigni, which dealt with the Georgian recent past, nationalism, and events leading up to independence.

BUFFALO BILL SHOW, GEORGIANS AND. In the 1890s, a group of Georgian riders joined Buffalo Bill’s famous Wild West show and toured the U.S. and Europe with great success. Described as Cossacks, these Georgians were in reality from Guria and joined the Wild West show in 1892; among the riders were Ivane Makharadze, Luka Chkhartishvili, Serapion Imnadze, Ivane Baramidze, Nikoloz Surugladze, Irakli, Tsintsadze, and Polta Tsintsadze. Their acts usually opened with Georgian folk dances and songs, followed by horseback riding and remarkable equestrian skills that astounded their audiences. In Britain, Queen Victoria arranged a private performance by the Georgians led by Ivane Makharadze, and in the U.S., Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt enjoyed the shows as well. Roosevelt presented one of the riders, Giorgi Chkhaidze, with a golden ring and a tray as tokens of his admiration. The Georgian riders included several women—Barbale Imnadze, Kristine Tsintsadze, Maro Zakareishvili-Kvitaishvili, and Frida Mgaloiblishvili. The start of World War I and subsequent turmoil in Georgia ended the Georgian participation in the Wild West shows.

BURCHULADZE, PAATA (1955– ). Georgian artist, one of the finest bass opera singers in the world. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from the Tbilisi Conservatory and made his operatic debut in 1975. He then performed throughout Russia and in Italy, where he pursued further training at Milan’s La Scala opera from 1978–1981. In 1981, he was the international vocal competition Voci Verdiane in Busseto, and the following year, he won a gold medal at the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. In 1983, he made his British debut as a soloist at the Lichfield Festival, and in 1984 he made his first appearance at London’s Covent Garden opera house. In 1985, he won at the International Luciano Pavarotti Competition.
In 1987, Burchuladze was invited by the famous conductor Herbert von Karajan to sing the role of the Commendatore in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* at the Salzburg Festival. In 1989, he debuted with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City and has since sung at the New Israeli Opera, the Verona (Italy) Arena, and in Hamburg. Burchuladze also established himself as a talented concert and recital singer and performed at La Scala, the Musikverein and Konzerthaus in Vienna, the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, La Bastille and Salle Gaveau in Paris, and in other venues. Among his many awards are the Georgian State Prize (1982), the I. Gogebashvili Prize (1991), the Z. Paliashvili Prize (1991), and the Shota Rustaveli Prize (1992).

**BURDJANADZE, NINO (1964–).** Georgian politician, chair of the Parliament of Georgia. Born in Kutaisi, Burdjanadze studied law at Tbilisi State University and Moscow State University in the mid-1980s, earning her degree in international law. Since 1991, she has been an associate professor of law at Tbilisi State University. She was elected to Parliament in 1995, chaired the Legal Committee until 1999, and has served as vice president of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly since 2000. In 2001–2002, Burdjanadze presided over the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization. Throughout the late 1990s, she established herself as a pro-Western politician who favored close ties with the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Burdjanadze was initially a member of the ruling party *Citizen’s Union of Georgia* (CUG) but later parted with the leader President Eduard Shevardnadze over the issues of corruption and inefficiency in his government. She left the CUG in 2002 and founded an opposition party, the Burdjanadze-Democrats, which participated in the 2003 Parliamentary elections. As allegations of voting fraud emerged, she joined other opposition leaders in denouncing the election results and supported Mikhail Saakashvili during the *Rose Revolution* in November 2003. After Shevardnadze’s resignation, the terms of the 1995 Constitution automatically made her the first female president (acting) of Georgia until her ally Mikhail Saakashvili won the presidential elections in January 2004. A new
Parliament was elected in March 2004 and Burdjanadze was re-elected as its chair.

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CALENDAR, ANCIENT. The ancient Georgian calendar was based on a 532-year cycle, and its starting date was considered the creation of the universe almost 6,000 years ago. Each cycle was known as moktsevai while each year as koronikon. The 13th moktsevai ended in 1312, the 14th in 1844, and the 15th will end in 2376. Medieval Georgian manuscripts recorded dates by koronikons. Thus, “qoronikon 20” could be 1332 and 1864, but background information helped to determine the exact period.

CASTELLI, CRISTOFORO (1600–1659). Theatine missionary and traveler. Born into a Genoese family, Castelli received a Jesuit education at Palermo and studied medicine, architecture, drawing, and other arts. In the 1620s through 1640s, he traveled to Georgia as a participant in Pope Urban VIII’s program to unify the Eastern and Western churches. Castelli visited the Georgian communities in Istanbul and Persia and maintained a journal of his travels through western and eastern Georgian provinces. Most importantly, Castelli, a skilled artist, created numerous drawings of Georgian rulers, common people, and everyday life and culture that effectively constitute a visual encyclopedia of 17th century Georgia. On his return to Italy, his drawings caught the eye of the Grand Duke Ferdinand II of Palermo, but many drawings were lost in a shipwreck while being sent from Rome to Palermo; Castelli then set himself the task of reconstructing them from memory.

CATHOLICISM IN GEORGIA. Unlike other orthodox churches, the Georgian church historically was more tolerant of the Catholic church. In the 13th century, Franciscan missionaries, led by Jacob of Rogsane, were permitted to establish a monastery in Tbilisi. Later that century, the Dominicans also operated another monastery in Georgia. In 1329, Pope John XXII established a Catholic bishopric in Tbilisi, which survived until the 16th century. The Georgian cleric
Nikoloz Cholokashvili-Irbaki (1585–1659), who served as an ambassador in Europe in 1626–1629, tried to establish links between the Orthodox and Catholic churches and established the first Georgian printing press in Rome where the first Georgian book, a Georgian–Italian dictionary for Catholic missionaries, was printed. In the early 18th century, the prominent ecclesiastic figure Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani also traveled to Europe (1713–1716) to bring Georgia into contact with Western powers and even converted to Catholicism in a bid to secure European support against Persia. Theatine missionaries operated in Georgia in 1628–1700 while Capuchin Franciscans existed until 1845 when the Russian authorities put an end to their activities. In 1848, Nicholas I agreed to the creation of a Latin diocese at Tiraspol with jurisdiction over Catholics in the vast southern regions of the empire, including Georgia.

Because the Russian authorities forbade their Catholic subjects to use the Byzantine rite, and the Holy See did not promote its use among the Georgians, no organized Georgian Greek Catholic Church ever existed. In 1920, it was estimated that of some 40,000 Catholics in Georgia, 32,000 were Latins and the remainder were of the Armenian rite. However, a small Georgian Byzantine Catholic parish has long existed in Istanbul. After Georgia became independent again in 1991, the Catholic church was able to function more freely, and a significant Armenian Catholic community resumed a normal ecclesiastical life. In November 1999, Pope John Paul II made a two-day visit to Tbilisi and Mtskheta.

There are about 50,000 Catholics living in Georgia, with significant communities in Batumi, Kutaisi, and Tbilisi. They are divided into three rites: Roman Catholic, Armenian, and Assyrian. Absence of legal status hinders the Catholic church’s activity in the country. The Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC) opposes registration of other denominations and pressured the Georgian government to delay the signing of the inter-state treaty with the Vatican. In 2002, the Georgian Parliament approved a concordat that gives the GOC important privileges—over other religious groups—in light of the church’s significant contributions to Georgian culture and history. The GOC fears that a similar agreement with the Vatican would threaten its exclusive status in Georgia and undermine national values. The two churches are also embroiled in disputes over several
churches and other property. See also BAPTISTS; ISLAM IN GEORGIA; JEWS; RELIGION.

CAUCASIA. Geographical region between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, stretching from the Kuma-Manych depression in the north to the Turkish and Iranian borders in the south. It comprises 440,000 km² and is divided into the North and South Caucasus; the latter is often referred to as Transcaucasia, but this term reflects Russia/Soviet perspective that limits its utility. The North Caucasus consists of a western sector in the basin of the Kuban River and an eastern sector in the basin of the Terek River. The South Caucasus is divided into the three major regions of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Caucasia is famous for its diversity, both environmental and ethnic. More than 50 distinct peoples, each with its own language, inhabit it. In religious terms, the Caucasians today are predominantly Christians or Muslims, but in both cases the mountaineers often manifest ancient traditions under a thin veneer of Christianity and Islam.

CAUCASIAN COMMITTEE. Established in 1845 as the center of the Russian administrative system, the Committee consisted of the ministers of war, finance, state properties, justice, and internal affairs, as well as the heir to the imperial throne, the head of the police, and other high officials. The Caucasian Committee directed the civilian activity of the imperial administration in the Caucasus. It was abolished in 1882.

CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS. Mountain range that extends for 1,127 km from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea. The highest peaks are Elbrus (5,642 m), Shkhara (5,068 m), Dykhtau (5,203 m), Kazbek (5,033 m), and Tebulsomta (4,493 m). Only one pass, the Daryal (Gates of Alans), is open through the main gorge year round; the littoral pass along the Caspian Sea coastline at Derbend was used as an invasion route for centuries.

CHABUKIANI, VAKHTANG (1910–1992). Outstanding dancer, choreographer, and ballet master. He received his first ballet training at the studio of Maria Perrini in Tbilisi and later studied at the
Leningrad Ballet School under V. Semenov, V. Ponomarev, L. Leontiev, and A. Monakhov. He began his career as a dancer at the State Theater of Opera and Ballet (GATOB; later the Kirov) in 1929 and quickly established himself as a skilful artist, remaining a leading soloist until 1941. He brought a unique spirit and energy to his dances, noteworthy for his incredible leaps, turns, and jumps that created the impression of him flying. He danced in such modern ballets as the *Golden Age* (1931), the *Flames of Paris* (1932), the *Fountain of Bakhchisaray* (1934), and others. He toured with the first Soviet ballets in Italy and the United States in the 1930s. Chabukiani then returned to Georgia, where he worked as choreographer and artistic director of the Paliashvili Theatre of Opera and Ballet from 1941–1973 and ballet master and director of the Tbilisi Choreographic Academy from 1950–1973.

Chabukiani performed in several feature films, including *Stars of the Ballet* (1946) and *Othello* (1960). His choreography included productions of *Giselle* (1942), *Swan Lake* (1945), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), the *Nutcracker* (1965), and *Cinderella* (1966), and original ballets *Mzechabuki* (1936), *Laurencia* (1939), *Sinatle* (1947), *Othello* (1957), *Demon* (1961), and *Hamlet* (1971), among others. He was one of the first to create male roles in ballets and developed a new archetype of a dancer with strong legs, general athleticism, and uninhibited male energy. In the late 1950s, Chabukiani, already in his forties, surprised his audiences with his energetic dancing. He greatly influenced the development of the Georgian ballet, and his legacy still endures. Throughout his career, Chabukiani received numerous awards, including Honored Artist of the Russian Federation (1939), Honored Artist of the Georgian SSR (1943), People’s Artist of the USSR (1950), State Prize of the USSR (1941, 1948, 1951), and Lenin Prize (1958).

**CHANTURIA, GIORGI (1959–1994).** Prominent Georgian politician and the leader of the *National Democratic Party* (NDP). Chanturia began his career in the 1980s when he became involved in the national liberation movement and helped revive the NDP. After being arrested several times for his anti-Communist views and actions, Chanturia emerged as one of the leaders of a national movement in 1988–1989. In 1990, Chanturia and Zviad Gamsakhurdia joined
forces in the umbrella Round Table-Free Georgia bloc to sweep the
elections and form a new government. After Gamsakhurdia became
president, Chanturia disagreed with him over the national policies,
especially the handling of the conflict in South Ossetia.

As Gamsakhurdia turned to a more authoritarian rule, Chanturia
joined the opposition and facilitated the military coup d’etat directed
against the government in 1992. Over the next two years, he was in
opposition to the new authorities of Eduard Shevardnadze, and his
accusations against government members of criminal activities gradu-
ally gained him more political influence. However, on 3 December
1994, as he was traveling to the closing of the 7th congress of the
NDP, Chanturia and his wife, Irina Sarishvili, were ambushed by
gunmen; Chanturia and his bodyguard died instantly while his wife
barely survived. The death of the young and charismatic politician
sent shockwaves throughout Georgia. His assassination remains un-
solved, and no charges were ever brought.

CHARKVIANI, CANDIDE (1906–1994). Georgian party and gov-
ernment official, first secretary of the Communist Party (CP) of
Georgia. Born in Tsageri, Charkviani graduated from Kutaisi Gym-
nasium and Tbilisi Engineering Institute. He began his career work-
ning for several publications, including the leading CP newspapers
Komunis’tu and Akhalgazrda Komunisti. In 1937, Charkviani was ap-
pointed head of the Department of Education and Culture of Georgia
and later served as the first secretary of the Writers’ Union of Geor-
gia, organizing the celebration of the 750th anniversary of Shota
Rustaveli’s epic Vepkhistiakosani.

In August 1938, Charkviani became the first secretary of the Cen-
tral Committee of the CP of Georgia. Serving until April 1952, he
presided over the rapid industrialization of Georgia. He played an im-
portant role in the establishment of the Georgian Academy of Sci-
ence, the development of heavy industry in Rustavi, an automobile
plant in Kutaisi, a drinking water reservoir and subway system in
Tbilisi, and other projects. In April 1952, Charkviani was moved to a
party position in Moscow, but following the death of Joseph Stalin,
he clashed with Lavrenti Beria who had him “exiled” to Central
Asia in late 1953. Charkviani spent five years managing a construc-
tion company in Tashkent before he was finally allowed to return to
Georgia. Back in Tbilisi, he continued his studies, earning a doctorate in economics and authoring some 40 works, and directed the Research Institute of People’s Economy and Economic Planning. His memoirs were published in 2004.


CHAVCHAVADZE, ALEXANDER (1786–1846). Poet, military commander, and prominent public figure. The son of Garsevan Chavchavadze, the Georgian ambassador to the Russian court, he initially opposed Russian rule in Georgia and was arrested and exiled to Tambov in 1805. After being pardoned, he studied in the Pages Corps in 1809 and served as an adjutant to General Mikhail Barclay de Tolly during the Napoleonic Wars from 1813–1815. He participated in the Russo–Turkish War of 1828–1829 but was later exiled to Tambov for involvement in a conspiracy against Russian interests in 1832. He remained in exile for two years, and upon returning to Georgia, he held high administrative posts in government. His home soon turned into a meeting place of many Russian and Georgian writers and public figures. The famous Russian writer Alexander Griboedov married Chavchavadze’s daughter Nino. Chavchavadze’s poetry established him as the father of Georgian romanticism. His poems, Gogcha, Vakh droni, droni, Isminet ms-meno, Kavkasia, and others, lament the lost past of Georgia while his Sikvarulo dzalsa shensa remains one of the most romantic poems in Georgian literature.
CHAVCHAVADZE, GARSEVAN (?– ca. 1818). Georgian statesman and diplomat. Born into a powerful noble family, he served as mandart-ukhutsesi and mouravi at the court of King Erekle II. In the 1780s, he participated in negotiations between Kartli-Kakheti and Russia and served as a plenipotentiary at the Russian court. In July 1783, on behalf of King Erekle II, he signed the Treaty of Georgievsk with Russia, establishing a Russian protectorate of eastern Georgia. In later years, he continued serving as King Erekle II’s ambassador in St. Petersburg. After being recalled in 1787, Chavchavadze returned to Russia in 1792 and attempted unsuccessfully to obtain Russian military aid against Persia.

After the death of King Erekle and his successor Giorgi XII, Russia annexed eastern Georgia in September 1801. Chavchavadze opposed this development but sought to minimize its effects by participating in the drafting of the statute of the Russian administration in Kartli-Kakheti. However, his attempts to secure greater authority for local nobles proved futile, and he was unable to maintain his post of an ambassador and instead was appointed actual state councilor in the Russian service and returned to Georgia in late 1802. He criticized the administration of Karl Knorring, the first governor general of eastern Georgia, and opposed many of his policies. In response, Knorring revoked Chavchavadze’s title of mouravi and had him arrested following accusations of treason. Fortunately for Chavchavadze, Knorring was soon replaced by Paul Tsitsianov, a Georgian nobleman related to the royal family. Tsitsianov investigated claims against Chavchavadze, whom he had known for many years, and found them groundless. Following his release, Chavchavadze was elected marshal of nobility of the Tbilisi province in July 1803. Chavchavadze maintained secret relations with anti-Russian factions of the Georgian nobility and corresponded with Prince Alexander Batonishvili, who sought to restore the House of Bagrationi.

Although he did not openly support the 1804 uprising in eastern Georgia, Chavchavadze was still compromised by his relations with the leaders of insurgents, especially after his son Alexander joined Prince Parnaoz Batonishvili’s troops. In late 1804, he was accused of involvement in the uprising but could not be arrested because of lack of evidence. However, Tsitsianov, who was suspicious of his actions, had Chavchavadze exiled to Tambov in November 1805. Prince
Chavchavadze’s estate at Tsinandali, later expanded by his son, remains one of the best monuments of Georgian historical heritage.

CHAVCHAVADZE, ILIA (1837–1907). One of the greatest Georgian writers, and a public benefactor and leader of the national liberation movement. Born to a prominent noble family in Kvareli, he graduated from the 1st Classical Gymnasium in Tbilisi and studied law at the University of St. Petersburg. Returning to Georgia, Chavchavadze became founder and editor-in-chief of several Georgian public and political periodicals, including *Sakartvelos Moambe* (1863–1877) and *Iveria* (1877–1905). Throughout this period, he served as founder and chairman of many public, cultural, and educational organizations, among them the Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians, Historical-Ethnographical Society of Georgia, Bank of the Nobility, Dramatic Society, and others that were important forces in reviving a national conscience in Georgia. He is credited with shaping a language of intellectual debate, polemic, and reporting, and a standard style for narrative prose.

In 1906–1907, Chavchavadze was elected to the Duma of the Russian Empire, where he allied himself with the liberals and supported various causes, including the abolition of capital punishment, which was the subject of one of his works, *Sakhrchobelaze*. Besides his journal articles and excellent translations of European literature, he authored numerous literary works that became classics of Georgian literature. His first major works, *Katsia-adamiani?* and *Otaraant kvrivi*, portray with subtle humor, irony, and detail the degeneration of the Georgian gentry and the life of the common people. His later works, *Mepe Dimitri Tavadebuli* and *Gandegili*, exalted self-sacrifice and religious redemption. *Mgzavris tserilebi* revealed his criticism of contemporary society and set out his goals for national revival.

By the early 1900s, Chavchavadze, together with Akaki Tsereteli, had become indisputable leaders of the national movement who spearheaded the revival of Georgian culture and language and sought social, political, and economic reforms. Both men were so revered that they were, and still are, known simply as Ilia and Akaki. However, on 30 August 1907, Chavchavadze was assassinated near Tsitsamuri. Although the murder was never solved, it is
widely believed that the Georgian radical Social Democrats were behind it. Ilia was later canonized by the **Georgian Orthodox Church**. *See also* ENA, MAMULI, SARTS MUNOBA; MESAME DASI; TERGYDAULNI.

**CHERKEZISHVILI, VARLAAM (1846–1925).** Georgian anarchist and revolutionary; his name is often spelled as Tcherkesoff, Cerkezov, or Cherkezov. Born to a Georgian noble family, he studied in the Cadet Corps and the Agrarian Academy of Petrovsk. After a brief trip to the United States during the American Civil War, he returned to Russia, where he became fascinated with anarchism. He was imprisoned in 1866–1867 but was again arrested in 1869 and exiled for six years to Tomsk. In the mid-1870s, Cherkezishvili traveled to Europe, where he settled in Paris and associated with leading anarchists, including Peter Kropotkin himself. Over the next several years, he worked with revolutionary societies and organizations and published his works on the anarchist theory.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Cherkezishvili took part in the Georgian national liberation movement and frequently traveled to Tbilisi. In 1905, he returned to Georgia and participated in revolutionary activities in Tbilisi but had to flee the Tsarist repression. In France, he joined Kropotkin and other anarchists in establishing the Anarchist Red Cross and signed the Manifesto of the Sixteen, an anarchist document issued during World War I in favor of the Allies. After the October Revolution 1917, he traveled to Petrograd and then to Georgia, where he was involved with **Tbilisi State University**. In 1921, after the Soviet occupation of Georgia, Cherkezishvili again immigrated to Europe, where he died in London in August 1925. Among his major works are *Dragomanow de Hadiaacht en lutte avec les Socialistes Russes* (1882), *Let Us Be Just: An Open Letter to Liebknecht* (1896), *Pages of Socialist History: Teachings and Acts of Social Democracy* (1902), *Concentration of Capital: A Marxian Fallacy* (1911), *Sauvons l’héritage des Grandes Révolutions* (1916), and *La Géorgie: Ses Traditions et Ses Droits Politiques* (1919).

**CHIAURELI, MIKHAIL (1894–1974).** Georgian director and scriptwriter. Chiaureli graduated from the Academy of Arts in Tbilisi and began his career as a stage designer and actor. In 1921, he co-
founded the Theater of Satire in Tbilisi. After studying sculpting in Germany in 1922–1923, he returned to Georgia, where he became the director of a theater organized by the Bolshevik authorities. In 1928, he became interested in cinema and began directing feature films. He soon emerged as one of the most important Soviet filmmakers in the 1940s and became Joseph Stalin’s favorite director; his movies contributed significantly to the creation of Stalin’s personality cult. Among his important works were Velikoe Zarevo (1938), Giorgi Saakadze (1942–1943), Kliatva (1946), Padenie Berlina (1950), Nez-abivaemii god 1919 (1952), etc. These films earned him a record five State Prizes of the USSR in 1941, 1943, 1946, 1947, and 1950 and three Orders of Lenin. He lived and worked in Moscow throughout the 1950s and 1960s, but, after Stalin’s death in 1953, he fell out of favor. Chiaureli continued his cinematic career and directed such popular films as Podvig naroda (1956), Otaraant qvrivi (1958), Ambavi erti qalishvilisa (1960), Rats ginakhavs veghar nakhav (1965), and others.

CHIAURELI, SOFIKO (1937– ). One of the finest Georgian actresses. Chiaureli was born into a prominent family, daughter of the famous Georgian director Mikhail Chiaureli and actress Veriko Anjaparidze. She studied at the prestigious State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) in Moscow, where she was taught by K. Stanislavsky. She made her film debut in the critically acclaimed Nash dvor by Rezo Ckheidze in 1956. Returning to Georgia, Chiaureli worked at the Marjanishvili and Rustaveli theaters in Tbilisi, and over the next 40 years, she performed over a hundred roles in numerous films and theatrical productions. Her major films include Khevsuruli balada (1965), Color of Pomegranate (1966), Ne goriu! (1969), Melodii Veriiskogo kvartala (1973), Natvris khe (1976), Ali Baba i 49 razboinikov (1979), Suramis tsikhe (1986), Ashik-Kerib (1988), etc. Besides her numerous international film festival prizes, she also garnered the titles of People’s Artist of Georgia (1976), of Armenia (1979), the USSR State Prize (1980), and the Rustaveli Prize (1998). Married to the famous Georgian director Giorgi Danelia, Chiaureli also worked with such prominent Soviet directors as S. Paradzhanov, Sh. Managadze and T. Abuladze.
CHIBIROV, LUDWIG (1932– ). Former leader of the de facto independent region of South Ossetia. Born in Tskhinvali, Chibirov studied history at the North Ossetian State Pedagogical Institute and earned his doctorate in 1978. In the 1980s, Chibirov established himself as a prominent scholar and historian and rose to become a rector of the South Ossetian State Pedagogical University. Following the Georgian–Ossetian conflict, he became the head of the Ossetian government in 1993, and after the establishment of the institute of presidency, he was elected the first president of South Ossetia in 1996. He remained at this position for the next five years but gradually lost popular support. In 2001, he received less than 20% of the votes and failed to advance to the second round of the presidential elections, which Eduard Kokoiti eventually won.

CHICHINADZE, N.G. (1875–1921). Menshevik politician. Trained as a journalist, Chichinadze worked for several Georgian newspapers and was actively involved in revolution activities. In 1905, he took part in events in Kutaisi and Tbilisi before being elected a delegate to the 4th Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers. After the February Revolution of 1917, Chichinadze worked in Rostov but returned to independent Georgia in 1918. In the three years of Georgian independence, he served as deputy minister of internal affairs and minister of war but died in 1921. See also DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE; TSERETELI, IRAKLI; ZHORDANIA, NOE.

CHIKOBA V A, ARNOLD (1898–1985). Prominent Georgian linguist and philologist, one of the founders of the Georgian Academy of Sciences (GAS). Born in Mingrelia, he graduated from Tbilisi State University in 1922 and began working as associate professor and professor (1933) of linguistics at the university. In 1933–1960, he directed the Department of Caucasology, and between 1936 and 1985, he led the Department of the Iberian-Caucasian languages of the Institute of Linguistics of the Georgian Academy of Sciences (later renamed Arnold Chikobava Institute of Linguistics). In the 1940s, he was one of the founders of the GAS, and from 1950–1953, he served in the Presidium of the GAS. During almost six decades of his academic career, Chikobava studied the Iberian-Caucasian languages, the history
of Georgian language and literature, the Basque-Caucasian hypothesis, and other areas and produced some 300 scholarly research works. He created the scientific school of Iberian-Caucasian linguistics and founded and edited the journal *Iberian-Caucasian Linguistics*. His work was recognized both in the USSR and abroad, and Chikobava received the Lomonosov Prize and State Prize of the USSR as well as an honorary doctorate from the University of Berlin.

**CHILADZE, OTAR (1933– ).** Georgian novelist and poet. Chiladze is one of the finest contemporary writers, noteworthy for his lyrical and narrative verse. He began writing in the 1950s when he deviated from Soviet themes, and his novel *Gzaze erti katsi midioda* (1972–1973) explored the Georgian past for answers to contemporary questions. His later works include *Qovelma chemman mpovnelman* (1976), which portrays a family saga in a rural setting, *Rkinis teatri* (1981), which explores a conflict of life and art in the 1900s, and the autobiographical *Martis mamali* (1987).


**CHKHEIDZE, NIKOLAY (1864–1926).** Menshevik politician. Born in Poti, he graduated from Kutaisi Gymnasium and studied at Novorossiisk University and Kharkov Institute of Science. Chkheidze began his career as a journalist but soon became involved in revolutionary activities in the Caucasus. He became a founding member of the revolutionary Marxist *Mesame Dasi* and led the liberal and nationalist newspaper *Kvali*. He sided with the Mensheviks after the Georgian Social Democrats split in 1903. He participated in the revolutionary events in Batumi in 1905. In 1907–1917, he was elected as a deputy from the Tiflis Province to the 3rd and 4th Dumas, where he became chairman of the Social Democratic Duma delegation.
Chkheidze became famous for his excellent oratory skills, and his speeches and commentaries were widely circulated. He tried to maintain the unity of his party and ensure the Menshevik dominance over the Bolsheviks in the Duma. Despite his efforts, Vladimir Lenin succeeded in splitting the Duma delegation into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions and the two leaders openly clashed.

During World War I, Chkheidze supported centrist policies and became a member of the Provisional Committee of the State Duma. From February–August 1917, he served as the chairman of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers and Soldiers’ Deputies. After the Bolshevik coup in October 1917, Chkheidze returned to Georgia where he played an important role in establishing the Menshevik government and served as a chairman of the Transcaucasian Seim before becoming chairman of the Georgian Constituent Assembly. He led the Georgian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. In 1921, as the Red Army invaded Georgia, Chkheidze immigrated to France where he committed suicide in 1926. See also DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

CHKHEIDZE, REVAZ (1926– ). Georgian artist, one of the finest Georgian film directors. He studied at the USSR State Institute of Cinematography and began his career in 1953. Two years later, Chkheidze co-directed (with Tengiz Abuladze) Magdanas lurja, which earned him the Golden Palm at the Cannes Film Festival and first prize at the Edinburgh International Film Festival in 1956. He went on to direct several acclaimed films, including Chveni ezo (1956), Maya tskheneteli (1959), Jariskacis mama (1964), and Ghmlis bichebi (1969). In 1966, Chekhidze was named People’s Artist of Georgia and, in 1980, People’s Artist of the USSR. In 1973, he became director of the Georgia Film studio, which he continues to direct to the present day.

CHKHENKELI, AKAKI (1874–1959). Georgian politician and one of the leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks. Born in Khoni, he graduated from Kutaisi Gymnasium and the University of Kiev before continuing studies in Berlin and London. In the 1890s, he became involved in revolutionary activities and supported the Social Democrats, eventually siding with the Mensheviks in 1903. He operated a
printing press in Tbilisi and participated in revolutionary events in Georgia between 1905–1907. He was later exiled for his involvement but returned to Batumi in time to be elected to the 4th Duma. In St. Petersburg, he supported cultural and national self-determination, and during World War I, he adopted the defensist position. After the February Revolution of 1917, he was appointed to the Special Transcaucasian Committee (OZAKOM), where he served as internal administration commissar. At the First All-Russian Congress of the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies in June 1917, Chkhenkeli was elected to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. In August, he became a member of the Central Committee of the Russia Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) and then directed the work of the Georgian National Parties’ Conference, where the idea of a Transcaucasian Sejim was first put forward.

After the Revolution of October 1917, he supported the creation of the Transcaucasian Commissariat and was appointed commissar for the Ministry of Interior. In November, he was elected a deputy chairman of the National Council of Georgia. He was later elected to the Constituent Assembly from the Transcaucasian constituency. In February 1918, Chkhenkeli helped organize the government of the Transcaucasian Federative Democratic Republic (ZFDR), where he became the chairman of the Council of Ministers and the minister of foreign affairs. In this position, Chkhenkeli headed the ZFDR’s delegation in the peace negotiations with Germany and Turkey in Trebizond and Batumi. After the ZFDR’s collapse, Chkhenkeli supported the Georgian declaration of independence in May and joined the newly established Georgian government as minister of foreign affairs. He represented Georgia at the peace negotiations with Turkey and Germany in 1919–1920. After the Soviet invasion in 1921, he immigrated to France, where he continued his struggle against the Bolsheviks until his death in Paris in 1959.

CHOLOKASHVILI, KAKUTSA (KAIKHOSRO) (1888–1930). Georgian military figure and leader of the anti-Soviet resistance in Georgia. He was born to a prominent Georgian family of princes. After graduating from the Tbilisi Gymnasium, Cholokashvili enlisted in the Russian army and participated in World War I, where he distinguished himself fighting the Austrians and the Turks. He was
wounded several times and was decorated for bravery. In 1915–1916, he led the Georgian Cavalry Legion against the Turks. In 1918, Cholokashvili joined the Georgian national army and served as the deputy minister of defense. He took part in all military operations from 1918–1920 and organized guerrilla forces to fight the Bolsheviks in 1921–1923. He continued his resistance for the next three years and actively participated in the planning of the August 1924 Uprising in Georgia. During the uprising, he led his troops against the Red Army at Manglisi, Dusheti, Svimoniant-Khevi, and Khevr-Grdzel but was forced to flee Georgia later that year. He immigrated to France, where he died of tuberculosis in 1930. In November 2005, his remains were returned for final interment in Georgia.

CHOLOKASHVILI (-IRBAKI), NIKOLOZ (ca. 1585–1658). Georgian religious and political figure, diplomat and scholar; he was known as Cholokashvili-Irbaki or Nichephorus Irbach in Europe. He was born to a prominent family of princes and was educated in Italy and ordained as a Catholic priest. Returning to Georgia in the early 1600s, he served at the court of King Teimuraz I of Kakheti. In 1614, during the Persian invasion of Kakheti, he immigrated to Jerusalem and later served on several diplomatic missions to Europe for King Teimuraz, seeking an alliance with European powers against Persia. From 1626–1629, he served as the Kakhetian ambassador to Pope Urban VIII and Spanish King Philip II. Cholokashvili helped establish the first Georgian printing press in Rome, which produced the first printed book in Georgian in 1629. He authored the first Georgian–Italian dictionary and translated Latin religious texts into Georgian. Returning to eastern Georgia around 1630, he settled in Tbilisi and maintained a diplomatic correspondence between the Georgian rulers and the Vatican. In 1632, Cholokashvili moved to Mingrelia, where he became a close advisor to Prince Levan II Dadiani. Ten years later, he traveled to Jerusalem, where he toiled at the Georgian Monastery of the Cross until 1649. Returning to western Georgia in 1650, he became Catholicos-Patriarch of the western Georgian Orthodox Church in 1656–1657. However, the death of his protector, Prince Levan II Dadiani, precipitated his downfall. The new Mingrelian ruler incarcerated Cholokashvili and he died in prison in 1658.
CINEMA, GEORGIAN. The Georgian film history began in late 19th century, and the first cinema opened in Tbilisi in 1896. By the 1900s, there were several film theaters throughout Georgia. In 1912, Vasili Amashukeli and Alexander Dighmelov directed the first documentary film *Akaki Tsereteli Racha-Lechkhumshi*, which effectively marked the beginning of the Georgian film industry. In 1916, Alexander Tsitsunava made first feature film *Kristine*. After World War I, Tbilisi was second only to St. Petersburg in the number of cinema theaters and film productions in the Russian Empire.

The Georgian film industry prospered in the 1920s, when a special unit was established at the Commissariat of People’s Education in 1923 and later developed into Goskinprom (state cinematic production). This period produced several talented directors. Such films as Siko Dolidze’s *Dariko*, David Rondeli’s *Dakarguli Samotkhe*, Kote (Konstantine) Mikaberidze’s *Chemi bebia*, Nikoloz Shengelaia’s *Eliso* and *Narinjis Veli*, Ivane Perestiani’s *Arsena Jorjashvili* and *Krasnie diavoliata*, Amo Baknazarov’s *Poterianoe sokrovishe*, and Mikhail Kalatozov (Kalatozishvili) *Marili Svanets* set standards in the industry and greatly influenced subsequent generations of Georgian artists. During the same period, Alexander Tsutsunava and Konstantine (Kote) Marjanishvili, both of whom came from a theatrical background, introduced the best traditions of dramatic art into the Georgian cinema. Tsutsunava’s most memorable films were *Vin Aris Damnashave?* and *Jangi Guriashi* while Marjanishvili’s *Samanishvilis dedinatsvali* remains one of the finest Georgian comedies. In 1929, Mikhail Chiaureli debuted with *Saba* and later produced his other feature film *Qhabarda*.

As the Soviet authorities strengthened, the Georgian film industry found itself increasingly under pressure to conform with official guidelines. Socialist realism became the dominant theme, and the creative force gradually weakened. This was especially evident between the 1930s and early 1950s, when the cinema effectively became a propaganda machine for Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. In 1938, the Tbilisi Cinematographic Studio was established in Tbilisi. Several Georgians rose to prominence in this period, notably Mikheil Chiaureli who emerged in the 1940s as one of the most important Soviet filmmakers and became Joseph Stalin’s favorite director; his movies contributed significantly to the creation of Stalin’s personality cult.
Among his important works were *Velikoe Zarevo* (1938), *Giorgi Saakadze* (1942–1943), *Kliatva* (1946), *Padenie Berlina* (1950), *Nez-abivaemii god 1919* (1952), among others. The success of the Georgian cinema was also due to a generation of talented artists, including Nato Vachnadze, Veriko Anjaparidze, Alexander Zhorzholiani, Sergo Zakariadze, Tamar Tsitsishvili, Ushangi Chkheidze, etc. Mikhail Gelovani became famous for his portrayal of Joseph Stalin in *Vyborgskaiia storona* and *Lenin v 1918* (1939), *Oborona Tsaritsyna* (1942), *Kliatva* (1946) and *Padenie Berlina* (1950).

In the 1950s and 1960s, Georgian cinema saw the establishment of the Gruzia Film Studio and the rise of a young generation of talented directors and screenwriters. Tengiz Abuladze and Rezo Chkheidze collaborated on the 1954 feature film *Magdanas Lurja*, which earned them the prestigious Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival and first prize at the Edinburgh International Film Festival in 1956. Abuladze’s other film *Someone Else’s Children* (1956) won awards at the international film festivals in Tashkent, Helsinki, London, and Tehran. In 1958, Mikhail Kalatozov (Kalatozishvili) achieved great success with his *Letiat zhuravli* that won the prestigious Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival and he went on to direct the successful films *Neotpravlennoe pizmo* (1959) and *Red Tent* (1969).

The period between the late 1960s and the 1980s was the golden age of the Georgian film industry, which produced up to 60 films a year. In 1972, the Faculty of Cinema was established at the Rustaveli Theater and later developed into the Tbilisi Institute of Theater and Film. The studio employed such prominent directors as Giorgi Danelia, Eldar and Giorgi Shengelaia, Otar Ioseliani, Lana Goghoberidze, Mikhail Kobakhidze, Nana Jorjadze, Dito Tsintsadze, Sergey Paradzhanov, Goderdzi Chokheli, and others. The period is noteworthy for a remarkable collaboration of the creative artists Rezo Gabriadze and Eldar Shengelaia, who produced such memorable films as *Arachveulebrivi gamofena* (1968), *Sherekilebi* (1973), and *Tisperi mtebi* (1983). In 1962, Abuladze produced one of his most popular feature films, *Me, bebia, iliko da ilarioni*, based on Nodar Dumbadze’s novel. One of the most acclaimed Georgian films of this period *Otets soldata* was directed by Rezo Chkheidze in 1964, with Sergo Zakariadze in the leading role. Chkheidze went on to direct a series of hits, including *Ghimilis*.
bichebi (1969), Nergebi (1972), Mshobliuro chemo mitsav (1980), and Tskhovreba Don Kikhotisa da Sancho Pansasi (1988). Abuladze’s Védreba (1967) won a grand prix at the San Remo Film Festival, and his other film Natvis Khe (1976) was also honored at film festivals in Riga, Tehran, Moscow, etc. Giorgi Shengelaia directed the popular movies Pirosmani (1969), Matsu Khvitia (1966), Alaverdoba, Rats ginakhavs, vegar nakhav (1965), Khareba da Gogia (1987), Sikvaruli Qvelas unda (1989), and the musical Veris ubnis melodiebi (1973). Ioseliani worked on Giorgobistve (1968), Igo shahsvi mgalobeli (1970), and Pastoral (1975) while Kobakhidze produced Kortsili (1964), Kolga (1966), and Musikosebi (1969). Lana Ghoghoberishvili achieved critical acclaim with Gelati (1958) and later directed Mevkhedav mzes (1965), Peristsvaleba (1968), Rotsa akyavda nushi (1972), Aurzauri sakhtinteshi (1975), Ramodenime interviu pirad sakitkhze (1979), and Oromtriali (1986). This period is also noteworthy for a number of short films, including Kvevri, Serenada, Gvinis Kurdebi, Peola, and Rekordi, that remain popular to the present day. Goderdzi Chokheli directed Mekvle, Aghdgoma, Adamianta Sevda, Utskho, Aghdomis Batkani, and Tsodvis shvilebi. In 1979, Temur Babluani made a debut with Motatseba and followed with Beghurebis gadaprena (1980) and Kukaracha (1982).

Some of the films produced in this period were censored and kept from public release. Otar Ioseliani’s works were suppressed on several occasions, while Abuladze’s famous Monanieba (1984) was released only three years later. This feature film of Abuladze became one of the most famous and controversial movies of this period as it portrayed the brutal reality of Stalin’s purges and had a long-lasting effect on raising political consciousness in the Soviet Union. Sergey Paradzhanov was another major director in the Georgian cinema, whose works earned him worldwide acclaim. His Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors (1965) became a breakthrough film and international success, garnering the British Film Academy Award in 1966. His next film, Sayat nova (The Colour of Pomegranates), revealed his mastery of film art and complexity of his vision that produced a series of unforgettable scenes. In the 1980s, Paradzhanov directed two major films Legenda o Suramskoi kreposti (1985) and Ashik Kerib (1988) that further enhanced his stature as the preeminent Soviet director of his generation.
The Georgian film industry fell in disarray in the early 1990s, when Georgia found itself in the midst of a civil war, ethno-territorial conflicts and economic crisis. Nevertheless, a number of popular films were produced, including Laka, Ghamis Tsekva, Zgvarze, Isini, Ara, Megobaro, Otsnebata Sasaplao, Rcheuli, Ik Chemtan, Ak Tendeba, and others. Babluani directed Udzinarta Mze in 1992 and won the Silver Bear prize at the Berlin Festival. Dito Tsintsadze debuted with Dakhatuli tsre in 1988 and later produced Sakhli (1991), Stumrebi (1991), and Zghvarze (1993). Many directors immigrated to Europe and Russia. Otar Ioseliani and Mikheil Kobakhidze continued their career in France while Nana Jorjadze and Dito Tsintsadze worked in Germany; Jorjadze enjoyed a very successful career, winning the Caméra d’Or at Cannes for her Robinzoniada, anu chemi ingliseli papa (1986) and receiving a nomination for the American Academy Award for her Les Mille et une recettes du cuisinier amoureux (The Chef in Love, 1997). In 2001, the National Center of Cinematography was established in order to revive the Georgian film industry. An international film festival had been organized annually in Tbilisi since 1999.

CITIZEN’S UNION OF GEORGIA. Founded by Eduard Shevardnadze in 1993, Citizen’s Union of Georgia (sakartvelos mokalaketa kavshiri, CUG) soon emerged as the dominant political party in Georgia. In 1995, it won the largest number of seats in Parliament, which allowed the party to establish a virtual single party rule and ensure Shevardnadze’s control of both the executive and legislative branches. The party was initially widely popular and was perceived as a vehicle of reforms, attracting a number of young politicians, including Nino Burdjanadze, Mikhail Machavariani, Mikhail Saakashvili, and Zurab Zhvania. Between 1995 and 1999, the Georgian political scene was dominated by the rivalry of the Shevardnadze’s Citizen’s Union and Aslan Abashidze’s Union of Revival. The CUG sought to limit the opposition’s involvement in politics and adopted a constitutional amendment, which increased the minimum requirement for parliamentary representation from 5% to 7% of the votes cast. This requirement effectively eliminated most of the smaller parties and allowed the major political groups to dominate parliamentary politics. In the 1999 elections, the CUG increased its representation by 19 seats, securing 130 mandates.
The political dominance of the Citizen’s Union of Georgia continued for another four years. However, by 2003, the CUG had lost its allure as it became engulfed in corruption and nepotism scandals and was struggling against growing criticism from the opposition. In 2001, one of its leaders, Mikhail Saakashvili, left the party accusing it and government of rampant corruption, and a year later, two other prominent members, Zhvania and Burdjanadze, defected and establish the United National Movement to challenge the CUG in 2003 elections. The party’s standing was severely undermined when Shevardnadze himself abandoned its membership and supported a new party, For a New Georgia (akhali sakartvelosatvis). In the contested elections of November 2003, CUG sided with Shevardnadze, who was eventually forced to resign over election fraud and manipulation. In the subsequent January 2004 elections, CUG failed to gain any seats and virtually disappeared from the political arena.

**COLCHIS.** Ancient kingdom in western Georgia. Colchis emerged by the end of the second millennium BCE and was relatively advanced by the first millennium BCE; the potter’s wheel had been in regular use, and Herodotus later referred to the superior quality of Colchian linen. Iron was smelted in Colchis as early as the first half of the second millennium BCE. Greek myths and authors portray a centralized and powerful kingdom in Colchis in the Late Bronze Age (middle of the second millennium BCE). In his *Odyssey*, Homer mentions King Aietes and his mighty kingdom of Colchis while Apollonius of Rhodes, in his *Argonautica* of the third century BCE, left a detailed account of the expedition of Argonauts to seize the famed Golden Fleece. Greek colonies were established in the seventh and sixth centuries along the southern Black Sea coastline, and Colchis closely interacted through trade and other exchanges with the Greeks. Archeological excavations at Vani, one of the major cities in western Georgia, produced an abundance of artifacts, including imported Greek painted pottery and new types of pottery for the storage or transportation of cereals, oil, and honey as well as the fermentation and storage of wine.

However, the kingdom eventually declined. By 720 BCE, the Cimmerian incursions from the north had devastated Colchis and significantly affected the local society and culture. Although the kingdom rose again, this time known as Egrisi, it became politically
fragmented and was affected by the rise of the powerful Persian kingdom. Since Colchis was a tributary of Persia, Colchians were exempt from taxes paid by Persian subjects but delivered a tribute of 200 girls and boys every five years. By the time the famous Greek general Xenophon marched with his 10,000 soldiers through Asia Minor in 401–400 BCE, the Colchians and other proto-Georgian tribes had freed themselves from the Persians. Xenophon’s and Strabo’s accounts suggest a marked political fragmentation of Colchis/Egrisi. The Early Hellenistic Period of the fourth to middle third century BCE gave rise to a more marked Greek influence in the region. By the 1st century BCE, Colchis was under control of the powerful Kingdom of Pontus, and participated in the Wars of Mithridates VI Eupator against Rome. In 65 BCE, Roman General Pompeus defeated Mithridates and campaigned in Colchis, which was recognized as a client state of Rome. Emperor Nero annexed Colchis in 64 CE when Polemon II of Pontus failed to control piracy in the region. Colchis became part of Pontus Pleoniacus of the Cappadocia Province. The Greeks, and later Romans, developed several major towns in Colchis, including Dioscurias, Apsarus, Phasis, Pityus, and others. The kingdom eventually evolved into Lazica, and the works of Byzantine historians Procopius of Caesarea, John Lides, and Agathias Scholasticus contain interesting details on its history.

**COMMITTEE FOR INDEPENDENCE OF GEORGIA.** Political group seeking independence of Georgia from the Russian Empire. Following the failed 1905 Revolution, many Georgian revolutionaries fled the persecutions of the tsarist government, and among those who escaped to Europe were Georgian National Democrats. Settling in Geneva, these National Democrats, led by Leo and Giorgi Kereselidze, Petre Surguladze, Nestor Maghalashvili, Giorgi Machabeli, Mikhail Tsereteli, and others, established the Tavisupali Sakartvelo group in 1913 and began publishing the newspaper *Free Georgia*. Later, these revolutionaries organized the Committee for Independence of Georgia, which lobbied the Georgian cause in European countries, coordinate actions with other Georgian revolutionaries, smuggled arms into Georgia, and established a Georgian Legion in Turkey. In 1915, Giorgi Machabeli offered to the Georgian Social Democrats to raise a rebellion in Georgia and appeal for help from
Germany against Russia. However, fearing potential occupation by Turkey, the Georgian Social Democrats declined this plan. During World War I, the Georgian Legion, led by Leo Kereselidze, distinguished itself in military operations on the Caucasian Front.

**COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES.** Political organization established following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was established as a loose confederation of 11 former Soviet republics while Georgia and three Baltic states refused to join it; Azerbaijan and Moldova signed the statute but retained only observer status until 1994. The governing body is the Council of Heads of State, but the Russian Federation dominates the organization. Georgia, led by President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, refused to join the CIS because it was perceived as a successor to the Soviet Union. As the country became embroiled in civil war and ethno-territorial conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the Georgian authorities came under increasing pressure from Russia, which played central roles in both separatist conflicts. In late 1993, with the start of the Russian-backed separatist offensive in Abkhazia and the spread of the pro-Gamsakhurdia insurgency in Mingrelia, Eduard Shevardnadze negotiated with Russia agreeing to join the CIS in return for military support against the insurgents. Russian forces landed on Georgia’s Black Sea coast in November 1993 and helped secure strategic sites throughout western Georgia while the government troops quelled the uprising in Mingrelia. Having secured his authority, Shevardnadze then joined the CIS in 1994. Over the next decade, relations between the Russian-dominated CIS and Georgia proved strained at times. Georgia took advantage of economic opportunities offered by the membership in this organization but remained wary of the Russian influence in internal politics of the organization, especially toward Georgian efforts to solve separatists conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In January 2005, Georgia withdrew its participation from the Council of Ministers of Defense, which meant abandoning the CIS defensive arrangements and a step toward closer integration with the NATO.

**CONSPIRACY OF 1832.** Conspiracy of Georgian nobles against the Russian authorities in Georgia. Following the Russian annexation of
Georgia, the Georgian nobility felt embittered by the introduction of new institutions and laws that were alien in nature. After the Bagrationi royal family was exiled to Russia, the Georgian nobility, often traveling to study in St. Petersburg and Moscow, rallied around the royal princes. In 1825, a secret circle, established by Princes Parnavaz and Dimitri, discussed plans to liberate Georgia from Russia. The following year, Prince Okropir set up another underground group, which included David Orbeliani, Solomon Dodashvili, Giorgi Eristavi, and others. Returning from their studies abroad, Georgian nobles, notably Solomon Dodashvili, Alexander Cholokashvili, and Elizbar Eristavi, organized anti-Russian secret societies in Tbilisi, where they were joined by prominent Georgian public figures and writers, including Alexander Chavchavadze, Grigol Orbeliani, Dimitri Kipiani, and Philadelphos Kiknadze. A special pledge, secret code, and Statute of Conscious Deeds were adopted for the society members.

Although anti-Russian in their ultimate goal, the conspirators were not unanimous on the means of achieving it. One group, led by Ivane Abkhazi, suggested waiting until Georgia had recovered from decades of wars under Russian protection before seeking independence. Alexander Orbeliani and his supporters thought it better to appeal to the Russian emperor and seek broad autonomy within the Russian empire. The last group, led by Grigol Orbeliani and Solomon Dodashvili, called for an immediate insurrection against the Russian authorities and the restoration of Georgian statehood. Since they were all from the privileged class, the conspirators never considered any changes in the social structure of Georgian society. They also disagreed on the form of state government of independent Georgia. The majority of them favored the restoration of an absolute or constitutional monarchy, but there were others, led by Dodashvili, who sought the establishment of a republic. The draft constitution provided for a two-chamber Parliament and limited monarchy with Prince Alexander Batonishvili on the throne. The key positions in the government were assigned to Alexander Chavchavadze (minister of war), Nikoloz Palavandishvili (minister of finances), Constantine Mukhranbatoni (minister of justice), and Iagor Chilashvili (minister of internal affairs).

The Polish uprising of 1830–1831 inspired the Georgian conspirators to take action as they hoped to use the Russian entanglement in
Poland to their favor. They sought to secure support from France, Britain, the Ottoman Empire, and Persia, but none of these powers was ready to confront the Russian Empire. The suppression of the Polish insurrection forced the Georgian nobility to postpone its own uprising for a year. In November 1832, the conspirators made plans for a final insurrection. Under the so-called “First Night Act,” Russian civil officials and military figures were to be invited to a ball at Luarsab Orbeliani’s house, where they would be arrested at midnight. The conspirators would then attack the military barracks and disarm the Russian troops, signaling the start of a wider insurrection throughout Georgia.

The initial date of 6 December was postponed to 20 December to complete the arrangements, but the delay proved fateful. On 9 December, Prince Iase Palavandishvili betrayed the conspiracy and helped the Russian authorities to arrest his former comrades. Thirty-eight conspirators were tried for treason, and some of them were sentenced to death, although these sentences were later commuted to exile. Alexander Orbeliani, Solomon Dodashvili, Alexander Chavchavadze, Dimitri Kipiani, Giorgi Eristavi, Solomon Razmadze, and others were exiled to Siberia. The conspiracy was the last attempt to throw off Russian rule in Georgia, and with its collapse, all hopes of a Bagratid restoration ended.

CONSTANTINE I. King of Georgia in 1407–1411. Son of Bagrat V, he succeeded his uncle King Giorgi VII (1393–1407) following the devastating invasions of Tamerlane (Timur). In 1401–1402, as Tamerlane ravaged southern Georgia, Prince Constantine urged King Giorgi VII to negotiate with the invader, but the two quarreled over this issue. Constantine fled to the powerful Atabeg Ivane Jakeli of Samtskhe and later visited Tamerlane to negotiate his withdrawal from Georgia. After ascending the throne in 1407, he struggled to revive his realm but faced new foreign threats. In 1411, as the Qara-Qoyunlu (Black Sheep) Turcoman tribes raided southeastern Caucasia, Constantine marched with 2,000 men to support his ally, the ruler of Shirvan. However, the allies were defeated in the battle at Chalagan, where Constantine was captured and executed for refusing to submit to the Qara-Qoyunlu leader Kara Yusuf.
CONSTANTINE I. King of Kakheti in 1605. The son of King Alexander II of Kakheti, he was taken as a hostage in early childhood and was raised at the court of Shah Abbas the Great of Persia, where he converted to Islam and became thoroughly “Persianized.” In 1605, Shah Abbas negotiated with King Alexander II in Esfahan and ordered Constantine to accompany his father back to Kakheti; the shah’s secret instruction ordered him to murder the king and seize the throne. On 12 March 1605, Constantine arranged the murder of his own father and brother during a royal council at the Dzegami Palace. The assassination of the royal family and usurpation of the crown by Constantine infuriated the Kakhetians, who rose in a rebellion under the direction of Queen Ketevan later that year. On 22 October 1605, the Kakhetian army under David Jandieri and Bebur Vachnadze routed the Persian forces of Constantine, who was killed on the battlefield.

CONSTANTINE II. King of Kartli-Imereti in 1478–1483 and of Kartli in 1484–1505. The grandson of King Alexander I the Great of Georgia, he was captured together with his uncle King Giorgi VIII by Atabeg Kvarkvare of Samtskhe in 1465. After his daring escape from captivity, Constantine fled to Imereti and fought against Bagrat VI, who proclaimed himself the king of Georgia in 1466. The following year, Constantine was joined by his uncle Giorgi VIII, who tried in vain to retrieve his crown and moved to Kakheti, where he carved out his own kingdom and established the Kakhetian branch of the Bagrationis. Although he recognized Bagrat as the king, Constantine continued to fight him and gradually took certain parts of Kartli under his control. After Bagrat’s death in 1478, Constantine defeated his son Alexander and seized the throne of Kartli-Imereti. He was defeated by Atabeg Kvarkvare at Aradeti in 1483 and lost Imereti to Prince Alexander. Constantine briefly recovered western Georgia in 1487 before the invasion of the Aq-Qoyunlu Turcomans forced him to relinquish it again two years later. He spent the remaining years fighting to unite the Georgian principalities, but in 1490, he summoned a special royal council that recognized the fragmentation of the Kingdom of Georgia into separate principalities. From 1492–1496, he dispatched embassies to Egypt, Italy, and Spain to organize an anti-Ottoman coalition.
CONSTANTINE II. King of Kakheti in 1722–1732. The son of King Erekle I and brother of King Teimuraz II, he was born and raised as Mahmad Quli Khan in Esfahan. He ascended the Kakhetian throne after the death of David II (Imam Quli Khan) in 1722 and enjoyed close relations with the Persian shah, who granted him the governorship of Erevan, Ganja, and Karabagh. In 1722–1723, he feuded with King Vakhtang VI of Kartli, who adopted an anti-Persian policy and made an alliance with Russia. In 1723, the Persian court ordered Constantine to remove Vakhtang from power and seize the throne of Kartli. Constantine, reinforced by the Persians and Lezghians, invaded Kartli and captured Tbilisi in May 1723. Vakhtang and his supporters fled to Shida (Inner) Kartli. The same year, the Ottoman army led by Ibrahim Pasha marched against Constantine, who was unable to defeat it and offered to negotiate. The Ottomans entered Tbilisi on 12 June 1723 and seized Constantine during the negotiations; he managed to escape to Kakheti and supported the Kartlian nobility against the Ottomans. He appealed for help from Tsar Peter the Great and offered to place Kartli-Kakheti under the Russian protection.

After King Vakhtang VI immigrated to Russia in July 1724, Constantine became the leader of the anti-Ottoman resistance in eastern Georgia. Despite his attempts to unite various principalities in southeastern Caucasus, the Ottomans successfully campaigned in southern Azerbaijan and then defeated Constantine in the Ateni Valley in September 1724. Simultaneously, Lezghian raiding parties devastated Kakheti, forcing Constantine to seek shelter in mountainous Pshavi. In 1725, he finally managed to drive the Lezghians out of Kakheti and later used them to raid the Ottoman provinces. By 1730, Constantine was forced to recognize Ottoman supremacy and agreed to pay tribute. In the early 1730s, as the maverick Nadir Khan began his quest to restore the Persian Empire, Constantine sided with him and began challenging Ottoman authority in eastern Georgia. In 1732, the Ottomans sent a punitive expedition under Yusuf Pasha of Akhaltsikhe, who invited Constantine to negotiate a cease-fire at Bezhabagh and had him murdered during discussions.

CONSTANTINE III. King of Abkhazia (western Georgia) in 893–922. Son of Bagrat I, he sought to unite the Georgian lands and seized Kartli in 904. However, he faced an alliance of the Armenian King
Smbat and Adarnase II, King of the Georgians, who defeated and captured Constantine during the peace negotiations. Yet, King Smbat soon released him and made an alliance against the Arabs. In 914, following Abu al-Kasim’s invasion of Armenia and eastern Georgia, Constantine quickly established his authority in Kartli and helped Kvirike I of Kakheti conquer Hereti. He also tried to extend his influence to Ossetia, where he supported the spread of Christianity.

CONSTITUTION OF 1995. Constitution of Georgia was approved by the Georgian legislature on 24 August 1995 and entered into force on 17 October. The Constitution replaced the Decree on State Power of November 1992 that operated as an interim basic law. According to the Constitution, Georgia is an independent, united, and undivided state, as confirmed by the referendum conducted throughout the entire territory of the country (including the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia and the territories of the former autonomous oblast of South Ossetia) on 31 March 1991, and in accordance with the Act on the Restoration of the State Independence of Georgia of 9 April. All state power belongs to the people and is exercised through elected representatives, referenda, and other forms of direct democracy. The official state language is Georgian; in Abkhazia, both Georgian and Abkhazian are recognized as state languages. The Constitution recognizes the unique role played by the Georgian Orthodox Church in Georgian history but it does not proclaim Orthodox Christianity as a state religion and guarantees freedom of faith and religion and the separation of state and church.

Under the Constitution, the state recognizes and defends the universally recognized human rights and freedoms. Georgian citizenship is acquired by birth and naturalization, but dual citizenship is not permitted unless decreed by the president in certain cases, e.g., in 2003, President Saakashvili granted dual citizenship to Salome Zurabishvili before appointing her to lead the Foreign Ministry. Every person is free by birth and equal before the law, regardless of race, color, language, sex, religion, national, ethnic and social affiliation, origin, and place of residence.

The president of Georgia is the head of state and the head of the executive power. The president directs and implements domestic and foreign policy, ensures the unity and territorial integrity of the
country, and supervises the activities of state bodies in accordance with the Constitution. He or she is elected on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot for a period of five years and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Any citizen, who has attained the age of 35 years and lived in Georgia for no less than 15 years is eligible for the presidency. The members of the government are accountable to the president. In February 2005, the Parliament adopted far-reaching changes to the Constitution, increasing the power of the president and introducing the post of prime minister. As a result, the president has the power to dissolve the Parliament while remaining in government even when the Parliament has expressed its lack of confidence. Presidential powers have also been increased in other areas, including the judiciary.

The Parliament is the supreme representative body, enacting legislation and determining the basis of the country’s domestic and foreign policies. Its members are elected on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot, for a term of four years. Of its 235 members, 150 are elected by proportional representation (with a minimum requirement of 7% of the votes cast to secure parliamentary representation) and 85 by majority vote in single-member constituencies. Changes in 2003–2005 were intended to reduce the number of deputies to 150. Any citizen who has attained the age of 25 years and has the right to vote may be elected. The Constitution also envisages that, after appropriate conditions would be achieved in Georgia, Parliament would include two chambers, the Council of the Republic elected under the proportional system and the Senate comprised of deputies elected in Abkhazia, Adjara, and other territorial units of Georgia.

The Constitution provides for an independent judicial branch. Court proceedings are held in public, except for certain specified instances, and their decisions are delivered in public. The nine-man Constitutional Court is the legal body of constitutional control while the Supreme Court supervises legal proceedings in general courts. See also CONSTITUTIONAL COURT OF GEORGIA; ELECTIONS OF 1990; ELECTIONS OF 1995; ELECTIONS OF 1998; ELECTIONS OF 2000; ELECTIONS OF 2003; ELECTIONS OF 2004.
CONSTITUTIONAL COURT OF GEORGIA. The court was established in 1996 based on the Constitution of Georgia and the Organic Law of Georgia on the Constitutional Court of Georgia. In 2002, amendments were made to simplify and facilitate legal proceedings. The Constitutional Court of Georgia consists of nine judges, three of them appointed by the president of Georgia, three elected by the Parliament, and three members appointed by the Supreme Court. The term of office of a member of the Constitutional Court is 10 years. The members of the Constitutional Court of Georgia elect the president of the court for a term of five years. A candidate for the office of the president of the court is nominated by an agreed proposal of the president of Georgia, the chair of the Parliament of Georgia and the president of the Supreme Court of Georgia. The president, who may not be re-elected, convenes and presides over the sittings of the court’s Plenums, signs judicial acts, allocates constitutional claims and constitutional submissions, and maintains general guidance over staff and administrative functions.

The court consists of the Plenum, attended by all nine members, and two boards, consisting of four judges. The court considers constitutional claims and submissions by the president of Georgia, the Parliament, a court of general jurisdiction, the higher representative bodies of autonomous regions, the public defender, legal entities of Georgia, and citizens of or individuals residing in Georgia. The court’s legal authority extends to disputes on the constitutionality of referenda and elections, international treaties and agreements, potential violations of the Constitution, disputes on competence between state bodies, and the constitutionality of political associations.

COSMOLOGY. In ancient Georgian cosmology, the universe is sphere-shaped and consists of three vertically superposed worlds or skneli: the highest world or zeskneli is above the earth and is populated by the gods; the lowest world or kveskneli is below the earth and is the netherworld populated by demons, evil spirits, and dragons; in between these two worlds is the earthly world with humans, animals, plants, etc. Each of these three worlds has its own color, white for the highest, red for the middle, and black for the lowest. Beyond this universe is gareskneli or the world of oblivion, darkness, and eternity. There are two bodies of water and fire, celestial and subterranean,
which have unique properties and affect human lives differently. The sun makes its voyage between the two extreme worlds, the celestial and the subterranean. The moon makes the same journey as the sun but in the opposite direction and rhythm. The moon and the sun are, respectively, brother and sister.

The earthly world has a center (skneli) that divides it into two regions, anterior (tsina samkaro, tsinaskneli) and posterior (ukanasamkaro orukananaskneli). The three vertical worlds are separated by ether but they are connected by the Tree of Life that grows on the edge of the universe (in some versions, a tower, chain, or pillar). The various lands of the earthly world are usually separated by seven or nine mountains or seas. To travel between these lands, a hero must undergo a spiritual transformation (gardacvaleba). After the spread of Christianity, the pagan cosmology absorbed the Christian teachings. The zeskneli became heaven and the abode of the Trinity while kvesknepi turned into hell and the abode of the devil. The spiritual travel to these worlds became associated with death. See also MYTHOLOGY.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. An international organization of 46 states was founded in on 5 May 1949 and seeks to achieve a unity between its members and promote democratic ideals and principles. Georgia became the 41st member state on 27 April 1999 and undertook a number of responsibilities. Georgia’s foreign minister represents the country at the Council of Europe’s (COE) Committee of Ministers, while a delegation of five representatives and five substitutes represents the country at the parliamentary assembly. Dr. Mindia Ugrikhebidze was the first judge representing Georgia in the European Court of Human Rights. Since its accession, Georgia has signed and ratified 49 treaties, including the European Cultural Convention (1997), the European Convention on Human Rights (1999), the European Convention on Extradition (2001), the European Charter of Local Self-Government (2005), and the European Social Charter (2005). Another 12 treaties are signed but not ratified. By 2004, 63 applications were lodged against Georgia, and one judgment was ruled against the Georgian government.

The 1937 Constitution established a one-chamber Supreme Soviet (Council) of the Georgian SSR that was elected for a four-year term. The Supreme Soviet had legislative authority and appointed and supervised the Council of Ministers that assumed executive authority. The head of the council was selected by the first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party with the approval of the party leaders in Moscow. The council had limited political authority since it was overshadowed by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the GSSR and the Georgian Communist Party leadership.

CURRENCY. The oldest surviving currency minted on Georgian territory dates back to the sixth century BCE. Known as Kolkhuri tetri or Colchian silver, these coins were minted in several denominations, and existing coins show them as triobol, tetradrachma, didrachma, and drachma. The tetri circulated until the third century BCE when it was replaced by the Greek gold staters after the Greek expansion under Alexander the Great. However, throughout this period, Parthian and later Persian currency also circulated. After Arab conquests in the seventh century, Arabic dirhams were introduced to Georgia, and a special mint was established in Tbilisi that produced coins with Arabic and Georgian inscriptions. Interestingly, coins often combined Christian and Islamic elements on their obverse and reverse. During the Georgian ascendency in the 12th–13th centuries, Bagrationi kings minted new coins, mostly of copper, that reflected the changing political environment and carried Georgian and Arabic inscriptions with the royal title and epithets like “King of Kings” or “the Sword of the Messiah.” As Georgia came under the Mongol yoke in the late 13–14th centuries, Georgian coins again bore evidence of foreign influence as they combined Georgian, Arabic, and Persian inscriptions.

In later centuries, Persian and Ottoman coins widely circulated throughout Georgia. In the 17th–18th centuries, Bagration kings issued sirma abazi coins of fine (98%) silver that remained in circulation until the Russian conquest in the early 19th century. Silver coins were of three face values—two-abazi, abazi, and half-abazi—and were minted according to the sirma abazi system adopted by King Erekle II. Although attempts were made to introduce paper currency, it failed to gain acceptance in Georgia and the Caucasus in general. From 1804–1834, a Russian mint operated in Tbilisi producing silver
and copper coins with Georgian inscriptions of “Tpilisi” on the obverse and “Kartuli tetri” (Georgian silver) and “Kartuli puli” (Georgian copper) on the reverse. These coins, together with *sirma abazi*, remained in circulation until the late 19th century when they were finally replaced by paper banknotes. From 1917–1921, a number of banknotes or *bons* were issued by the Transcaucasian Commissariat and the independent Georgian republic. The *bons* of the Transcaucasian Commissariat, were circulated in various denominations and had inscriptions in Georgian, Armenian, Arabic, and Russian languages. The Georgian Menshevik government later began issuing its own *bons* in Georgian and Russian languages and with images of St. George with stars, the moon, and the sun. This currency was replaced by the *bons* of the Socialist Republic of Georgia in 1921 and then those of the Federation of the Soviet Socialist Republics of Transcaucasia in the late 1920s before the official Soviet currency (*rubles*) was introduced.

Following its independence in 1990, Georgia continued to circulate Soviet *rubles* but gradually phased them out. On 5 April 1993, an interim currency—*kuponi* or coupon—was introduced in Georgia but suffered from inflation; by 1994, US$1 was equal to some 2,500,000 coupons. On 2 October 1995, a new currency, *lari* (GEL), replaced coupons at a conversion rate of one *lari* per one million coupons. The name *lari* was chosen from an ancient Georgian word denoting a property. One *lari* consists of 100 *tetri*, also an ancient Georgian monetary unit. In the 10 years of its circulation, the *lari* has proved to be stable, and its exchange rate stays at 1.80–2.00GEL per US$1. Banknotes are denominated in units of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 *lari*, and coins are issued in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 *tetri*. The Central Bank of Georgia also periodically issues commemorative coins, and in 2000, it introduced two bimetallic 10 *lari* coins to celebrate the 2000th anniversary of the Birth of Christ and the 3000th anniversary of Georgian statehood.

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**DADIANI.** One of the most eminent noble families in Georgia, the ruling dynasty of *Mingrelia* (Samegrelo). Little is known about the
family’s early history; dadiani seems to have been an office in the Armenian city of Ani in early Middle Ages. It was initially introduced to Georgia as a title in the 11th century and usually carried the hereditary fiefdom of Odishi (Mingrelia, Samegrelo). Over the next seven centuries, the Dadianis became one of the most powerful families in feudal Georgia. In 1557, Levan I Dadiani established himself as an independent ruler of Mingrelia, and his descendants, at times, extended their control to most of western Georgia, playing important role in the political history of Georgia. They often defied the kings of Georgia, and later of Imereti, and used foreign support, most often of the Ottoman Empire, to further their goals.

In the late 17th century, the main branch of the Dadiani family was suppressed by the Imeretian rulers, and its relatives, the Chikovanis, inherited the title of princes of Mingrelia and the family name of Dadiani. In 1802–1803, the Dadianis accepted Russian sovereignty in a bid to oppose King Solomon II of Imereti. The family received the title of princes of the Russian Empire and enjoyed relative autonomy in their domestic affairs. However, in 1857, the last Dadiani ruler, Niko (Nicholas) Dadiani, was deposed and his principality abolished by the Russian authorities. On a minor note, Salome Dadiani (1848–1913), the daughter of Prince David Dadiani, married Prince Achille Murat (1847–1895), the grandson of Marshal Joachim Murat and Caroline Bonaparte, sister of Emperor Napoleon I. In the 18th century, some members of the Dadiani family immigrated to Hungary, where their descendants, known as Dadian or Dadyan, became prominent in Hungarian political and cultural life.

DADIANI, TSOTNE (13TH CENTURY). Ruler of Odishi (Mingrelia) and one of the leaders of the Kokhtastavi Conspiracy. Following the Mongol conquest of Georgia, the country was reorganized into Mongol tumans led by the Georgian nobles. As the taxes and military duties increased, the Georgian nobility became disgruntled with the Mongol authorities. In 1245, Tsotne Dadiani, together with Eristavi Kakhaber Kakhaberis-dze of Rachia, organized a secret meeting of Georgian lords at Kokhtastavi fortress near Aspindza in southern Georgia. The conspirators discussed a general uprising against the Mongols. However, as Dadiani left the meeting to rally his forces in western Georgia, the Mongols, who had been tipped off about the
conspiracy, arrested all of the other participants and brought them to the Armenian city of Ani, where the Mongol noyon (commander) had his headquarters. The prisoners were led to the central square where they were smeared with honey and left to suffer from exposure and bee stings and insect bites for several days, expecting their execution. Hearing what had happened, Tsotne Dadiani went of his own will to Ani, smeared himself with honey, and joined his comrades to share their fate. According to the chronicler, the Mongols were so impressed by Tsotne’s lofty spirit that they pardoned and released all the prisoners.

DALI. In Georgian mythology, a female goddess of nature, animals, and hunting. The cult of Dali (Dæl) was particularly widespread in mountainous regions of Georgia. She was believed to be of extraordinary beauty, with long, golden-colored hair and radiant white skin. She dwelled high in the mountains, usually out of reach of humans, where she watched over the herds of wild animals under her protection. She sometimes shared animals from her flock with hunters, as long as certain conditions and taboos were respected. Hunters were not to kill more than they could carry back to the village nor could they take aim at specially marked animals that were believed to be a transformation of the goddess. In some myths, Dali entered into intimate relations with a hunter but the latter was bound not to reveal the liaison at risk of being punished with death. Some myths describe an encounter between Dali and a mortal hunter that produced a son, Amirani.

DANELIA, GIORGI (1930– ). One of the finest and most successful Georgian directors. Born in Tbilisi, Danelia came from a distinguished artistic family that included such artists as Veriko Anjaparidze, Sofiko Chiaureli, and Meri Andzhaparidze. He initially studied engineering but later switched to cinematography and studied at Mosfilm Studios in the late 1950s. In 1958–1960, he helped direct Vasisuali Lohankin, Tozhe lyudi, and Seryozha before making his directorial debut with Put k Prichalu in 1962. He achieved critical and popular acclaim with his 1964 film Ya shagaiu po Moskve at the Cannes Film Festival, and his 1969 comedy, Ne Gorui!, which successfully blended Georgian traditions, humor, and melancholy. In
1972–1975, he directed two successful comedies, *Jentlemeni udachi* and *Afonya*, the latter receiving a special award at the All Union Film Festival. Danelia's most successful movie remains *Mimino* (1977), which earned a special prize at the Moscow International Film Festival and the USSR State Prize. After the relatively successful *Osennij marafon* and *Slyozy kapali*, Danelia again rose to prominence with his satirical *Kin-Dza-Dza* in 1986 and *Passport* in 1990; the latter film earned him the prestigious Nika Award for Best Screenplay. He continued to make movies in Russia throughout the last decade of the 20th century, producing *Nastya* (1993), *Oryal i Reshka* (1995), and *Fortuna* (2000).

**DANIBEGASHVILI, RAPHAEL (–CA. 1830).** Georgian statesman and traveler, who spent three decades traveling through Persia, Central Asia, and India; he is also known as Danibegov. Little is known about his early life. His family apparently converted to Catholicism and was involved in trade; Raphael's grandfather served at the court of King Teimuraz II, while his father Joseph was khutasis-tavi (commander of 500 men) at the court of Erekle II. Raphael followed in their footsteps, becoming a successful merchant and diplomat who carried out many diplomatic missions on behalf of the Georgian court. In addition to the Georgian, Armenian, and Russian, he spoke several Oriental languages, which helped him in his travels. He first traveled to India in 1795–1796 and later made four more trips in 1797–1798, 1799–1813, 1815–1820, and 1822–1827. In the first mission, King Erekle II instructed Danibegashvili to deliver important documents to a wealthy Armenian merchant Shamir-Agha in Madras, who died before Danibegashvili was able to find him. He remained in India for several months and, according to his journal, served as a tax collector in Deli. In 1799, King Giorgi XII sent Danibegashvili to India again, this time to establish better relations with the local Armenian merchants. Raphael's journal indicates that he traveled through Persia, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Tibet, and Burma before returning to Georgia. During the fourth and fifth voyages, he traveled through the eastern provinces of Russia, crossing the Caspian Sea and Mazandaran into Persia and sailing from the Persian Gulf to India. On his way back, Danibegashvili passed through Lahore, Kashmir, Kabul, Bukhara, Orsk, and Orenburg. His journal of
travels was published in Moscow in 1815 and provides fascinating insights into contemporary societies of Central Asia, India, and Western Siberia.

**DAREJAN, QUEEN (ca. 1726–1807).** Queen consort of King Erekle II (1762–1798) of Kartli-Kakheti. Daughter of King Solomon I, she was married to Erekle to solidify the alliance between eastern and western Georgian kingdoms. Toward the end of his reign, King Erekle was greatly influenced by his wife Queen Darejan who sought greater involvement in political life. She continuously intrigued to have her stepson Giorgi removed from the succession line and to place her sons on the throne. Largely because of her influence, Erekle made two consequential decisions. In 1790, he decreed that all the royal princes—not only the eldest son—had equal rights to the throne. The decision led to bitter struggles between the princes and further division into factions among the nobility. In 1792, Erekle granted special domains to his six sons, each of whom enjoyed considerable power within their realms. Kartli-Kakheti was effectively fragmented since the princes quickly became belligerent toward central authority. After the death of Erekle in 1798, Darejan intrigued against King Giorgi XII, and, following his death, sought to place one of her sons on the throne. However, Emperor Alexander I of Russia annexed Kartli-Kakheti in September 1801. Darejan refused to submit to the Russian authorities, and when they tried to arrest her, she killed a Russian officer. She was nevertheless seized and was resettled with other members of her family to Russia, where she died.

**DARIAL.** Mountain pass in the Terek Valley of the Caucasus Mountains. It is a strategic gateway through the mountains into Georgia and Asia Minor in general and was well known throughout the ancient world. Plinius describes it as *Porta Caucasicæ* and *Porta Hiberniae*, Ptolemeus called it *Sarmatikai Pulai*, while the Muslims referred to it as *dar-i-alan* or the gates of the Alans.

**DASHNAKTSUTIUN (ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION).** Founded in 1890 in Tbilisi, the Dashnaktsutiun Party became the leading political force of the Armenian community in Asia Minor and Caucasus. The Dashnak ideology was
fundamentally nationalist with elements of moderate socialism. Its main goal was to achieve autonomy for the Armenian regions in eastern Turkey. Dashnaks engaged in various political actions including individual acts of terrorism and the use of fighting squads. In 1907, the Dashnaks supported the federal restructuring of Transcaucasia along national lines within a democratic Russian state. In 1918–1920, the Dashnaks became the ruling party in the Republic of Armenia and clashed with Menshevik Georgia over disputed regions in Javakheti and Lore. Currently, the Dashnaks have contacts with the Javakhk organization of Armenians in Samtske-Javakheti.

DAUD KHAN. See DAVID XI.

DAVID GAREJA. Cave monastery and major religious center in eastern Georgia. The first monastery was founded by David, one of the Syrian fathers, in the sixth century. Located in the wilderness of the Kakhetian desert, it was gradually expanded with the additions of caves in the soft limestone and became a center of pilgrimage. In the 13th century, Davit Gareja was devastated by the Mongols but was later restored by King Giorgi the Brilliant. After the invasions of Tamerlane (Timur) in the 14th century, the monastery suffered its worst disaster in 1615 when Shah Abbas of Persia massacred thousands of its monks and destroyed most of its buildings and artistic treasures. King Archil attempted restoration works in the late 17th century, but the monastery never regained its former glory. During the Soviet era, the deserted area around the monastery was used for tank exercises and artillery firing grounds, which seriously damaged the structures. The complex is under restoration now, but it also houses an active colony of monks. In the 1970s and 1980s, the monastery served as a rallying point for the dissidents and leaders of the national liberation movement who campaigned to stop the Soviet military exercises in the vicinity of the monastery. After Georgian independence, the monastery was returned to the Georgian Orthodox Church and it is currently under restoration. He also houses an active colony of monks.

DAVID SOSLANI (?–1204). King consort of Georgia, second husband of Queen Tamar. Prince David was born to the Ossetian royal house that
intermarried with the Bagrationi dynasty. He wed Tamar in 1189 and fathered two children, Giorgi and Rusudan, with her. David proved himself a talented general and statesman. He commanded the Georgian army in decisive battles at Shamkhor in 1195 and Basian in 1203 as well as during the conquests of Erzurum and Gandja, among others.

DAVID I (?–1602). King of Kakheti in 1601–1602. The son of King Alexander II, he led a coup d’etat against his father in 1601. He persecuted other members of the royal family, including his brother Giorgi who conspired against him. Facing defiant lords, David successfully campaigned against the powerful Eristavi Nugzar of Aragvi. During his brief reign, he negotiated a treaty of alliance with Russia and pledged allegiance to the Romanov dynasty. A man of letters, he left several translations of Persian fables. David died suddenly on 21 October 1602 and was succeeded by his father Alexander, who returned from the monastery to resume his reign.

DAVID II (10TH CENTURY). King of Georgians (kartvela mepe) in 923–937. He was the son of Adarnase II of the Tao branch of the Bagrationis and successfully campaigned to return the Artanuji fortress from Byzantine possession.

DAVID II (?–1795). King of Imereti between 1784 and 1789. The son of King Giorgi VII, he faced an opposition of feudal lords and secured his crown only through the support of the powerful Katsia II Dadiani; his main rival was Prince David Archilis-dze. Facing the Ottoman encroachments, he appealed for protection to Russia in 1784. However, his policies embittered many nobles, including Prince Grigol Dadiani, who supported Prince David Archilis-dze’s claims to the throne. In the decisive battle of Matkhoji (1789), the rebels routed King David’s army and forced him to flee to Akhalsikhe; Prince David Archilis-dze ascended the throne under the name of Solomon II. In 1790, King David II, supported by Ottoman troops, returned to Imereti to reclaim his crown, but despite his initial success, he was soon driven out by Solomon II. Through the mediation of King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti, Solomon allowed David to return to Imereti. However, David actively conspired against the king,
and after his last defeat in 1794, he fled to Akhaltsikhe where he died the following year.

DAVID II (IMAM QULI KHAN) (?–1722). Wali (viceroy) of Kakheti in 1703–1709 and king from 1709–1722. The son of King Erekle I, he was born and raised at the Persian court in Esfahan. In 1703, he was appointed *wali* of Kakheti. Three years later, he campaigned against Char-Belakani but was defeated. In 1709, after the death of his father, he was recalled for confirmation to Esfahan, where he was detained until 1715. Returning to Kakheti, he found his realm beset by the Lezghians, whose persistent forays devastated eastern Georgia. David’s campaigns were unsuccessful and failed to prevent large migrations of Lezghians to the eastern regions of Kakheti. He died in 1722 and was buried in Qom in Persia.

DAVID III (?–ca. 1001). Bagratid prince ruling Tao and Klarjeti in the 10th century; he is also known as David Curopalates. The son of Adarnase of Tao, David is described by contemporary chroniclers as pious, merciful, magnanimous to everyone, and a great builder of churches. During his reign, Tao-Klarjeti became a powerful principality whose borders reached to Lake Van. The growth and consolidation of this principality contributed to the expansion of Georgian cultural and economic ties with other kingdoms and principalities. Its might was clearly demonstrated in 979 when Byzantine Emperor Basil, facing a large rebellion of Bardas Skleros (976–979), appealed for help from David III. A Georgian expeditionary corps under Tornike Eristavi defeated the insurgents and restored authority to the emperor. In 990, the Byzantine emperor conferred on him the title of *curopalates*. In the 980s and 990s, David campaigned against the Marawanid emirs and captured Manazkert in 994.

Throughout his reign, David pursued his greatest design of the political unification of Georgia under the Bagrationi dynasty. Supported by Ioane Marushisdze, the powerful *eristavi* of Kartli, he succeeded in having his grandson Bagrat placed on the throne of Kartli in 975 and of Abkhazia in 978. Following David’s death in 1001, King Bagrat III annexed Kakheti and Hereti in 1008–1010, thereby uniting eastern and western Georgia into a single state with its capital in Kutaisi. The united Kingdom of Georgia was born.
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DAVID IV AGHMASHENEBELI

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DAVID IV AGHMASHENEBELI (1073–1125). King of Georgia in
1089–1125, popularly considered as the greatest Georgian king. Born
into the family of King Giorgi II in Kutaisi, David was raised during one of the darkest chapters of Georgian history. Starting around
1080, Georgia faced the so-called Great Turkish Onslaught (didi
turkoba) when the Seljuk tribes began massive migrations to the
southern Caucasus. King Giorgi II was unable to cope with the problem, and in a bloodless coup in 1089, he was forced to resign in favor of his son, David. From 1089–1100, King David gradually organized small detachments of his loyal troops to harass and destroy
isolated enemy troops. He also began the resettlement of devastated
regions and helped to revive major cities. Encouraged by his success
and the beginning of the Crusades in Palestine, he ceased payment of
the annual contribution to the Seljuks and put an end to their seasonal
migration to Georgia. In 1101, King David captured the fortress of
Zedazeni, a strategic point in his struggle for Kakheti and Hereti,
and within the next three years he liberated most of eastern Georgia.
In 1103, King David convened the Rius-Urbnisi Church Council
that reformed the Georgian Orthodox Church, which had a period of
ascendancy in the 11th century and came into possession of vast land
holdings, turning it into “a state within a state” and clashing with the
royal authority. The Ruisi-Urbnisi Council limited the church’s authority, expelled rebellious clergy, and expanded the royal administration. The office of the powerful Archbishop of Chqondidi was
merged with that of Mtsignobartukhutsesi, chief adviser to the king
on all state issues. The new office attempted to introduce direct royal
authority over the church, supervised the new court system (saajo
kari), and directed the police apparatus (mstovrebi) that spread royal
authority throughout the kingdom. The king facilitated the construction of Georgian monasteries and churches in Georgia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Palestine. His most beloved project was the establishment
of the Gelati Monastery and Academy in 1106, where he often personally performed manual labor during the construction. Gelati soon
became a major educational and cultural center.
In 1105, in response to the Georgian success, the Seljuks mobilized a
large coalition against King David but were routed at Ertsukhi. Over the
next 15 years, King David enjoyed a series of brilliant victories as he
continued his expansion throughout southern Transcaucasia, capturing


the key fortresses of Samshvilde, Dzerna, Rustavi, Kaladzori, Lore, Aragani, and others. The Seljuk invasions between 1110 and 1116 were defeated. From 1118–1120, King David launched a major military re-
form. Although the crown had the *mona spa* royal troops of some 5,000 men, it was dependent on the troops supplied by feudal lords, who of-
ten defied the king. To address this issue, King David came up with a
brilliant, though risky, solution. Married to the daughter of the leader of
the powerful Cuman-Qipcaqs residing in the northern Caucasus, David
invited a Cuman-Qipcaq tribe, which was engaged in a bitter war with
the rising Russian principalities, to resettle in Georgia in 1118. David’s
decision had long-lasting consequences. Georgia was lacking in man-
power as a consequence of the devastation wrought by the Seljuk in-
ursions. Royal authority was beset by a troublesome nobility jealous of
its privileges and apprehensive of an increasingly strong central gov-
ernment. Thus, the Qipcaqs would provide the crown with a force that
would be loyal to it alone, free of any connections with other vested in-
terests in Georgia. Certainly, the decision to resettle and use a large for-
eign army was a daring move, which could have had disastrous effects
on Georgia. But the gamble worked.

Between 1118 and 1119, King David moved some 40,000
Qipcaq families (approximately 200,000 people) from the northern
Caucasus steppes to central and eastern Georgia and, to accelerate
their assimilation into the Georgian population, they were dispersed
over a number of places while retaining their clan structure. They
were outfitted by the crown and were granted lands to settle. In turn,
the Qipcaqs provided one soldier per family, allowing King David to
establish a 40,000-man standing army in addition to his royal troops.
According to the Georgian royal annals, *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, King
David’s policy proved to be very successful as the Qipcaqs soon con-
verted to Christianity and adopted the Georgian way of life. The new
army provided the crown with much of the necessary force to fight
both external threats and internal discontent of the powerful lords.

The royal biographer of King David informs us that the Qipcaqs
were immediately put to use as the Georgians “began to raid Persia,
Shirwan and Great Armenia” and invariably returned home from
these campaigns “laden with booty.” The year 1120 saw King
David’s campaigns in the east as he twice invaded and defeated Shir-
wan, then captured the fortresses of Kabala, Kurdevani, Lizani, and
Khishtalanti. In November, he marched southwest to support King Baldwin II and his Crusaders in the Holy Land and defeated the Muslim armies at Ashornia and Sevgelmeja. In 1121, while the king was isolated by heavy snow in western Georgia, the Seljuks invaded eastern Georgian provinces. In a remarkable feat of leadership, King David rallied his forces and the local population to clear the snow-covered road across the Surami (Likhi) Mountains and defeated the Seljuks. The Georgian king soon asserted his authority over almost the entire southern Caucasia, except for Tbilisi, and some regions of the North Caucasus. He established contact with the Crusaders in the Holy Land, and there is evidence that the two factions tried to coordinate their actions against the Muslims.

Muslim powers became increasingly concerned about the rapid rise of a Christian state in southern Caucasia and considered it a greater threat than the Crusaders in the Holy Land, whom they contained on the coast. In 1121, Sultan Mahmud b. Muhammad (1118–1131) declared a holy war on Georgia and rallied a large coalition of Muslim states led by the Artuqid Najm al-din El-ğazi and Toğrul b. Muhammad. The size of the Muslim army is still a matter of debate with numbers ranging from a fantastic 600,000 men (Walter the Chancellor’s Bella Antiochena, Matthew of Edessa) to 400,000 (Smbat Sparapet’s Chronicle) to modern Georgian estimates of 100,000–250,000 men. Although both of these numbers seem exaggerated, all sources agree that the Muslim powers gathered an army that was many times larger than the Georgian force of 56,000 men. However, on 12 August 1121, King David routed the enemy army on the fields of Didgori, achieving what is often considered the greatest military success in Georgian history. The victory at Didgori signaled the emergence of Georgia as a great military power and shifted the balance in favor of Georgian cultural and political supremacy in eastern Asia Minor.

Following his success, King David captured Tbilisi, the last Muslim enclave remaining from the Arab occupation, in 1122 and moved the Georgian capital here. A well-educated man, he preached tolerance and acceptance of other religions, abrogated taxes and services for the Muslims and Jews, and protected the Sufis and Muslim scholars.

In 1123–1124, King David’s armies were victorious in the neighboring territories of Armenia, Shirwan, and northern Caucasus,
greatly expanding Georgia’s sphere of influence. By the time of King David’s death on 24 January 1125, Georgia had become one of the most powerful states in all of the Near East. King David’s successful campaigns inspired the people, gave them confidence in their own strength, and led the country to a revival in agriculture and industry and the flourishing of cities. Upon his death, King David was, as he had ordered, buried under the stone of the main gatehouse of the Gelati Monastery so that anyone coming to his beloved Gelati Academy stepped on his tomb first, a humble gesture for a great man. He had three children, a son Demetre, who succeeded him and continued his father’s victorious reign; and two daughters, Tamar, who was married to the Shirwan Shah Akhsitan (Aghsartan in Georgian), and Kata, married to Alexios, the son of the Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros IV. Besides his political and military skills, King David earned fame as a writer, composing *Galobani sinanulisani* (Hymns of Repentence, c. 1120), a powerful work of emotional free-verse psalms, which reveal the king’s humility and zeal.

**DAVID V (12TH CENTURY).** King of Georgia in 1155. The son of King Demetre I, he conspired against his father after learning that he planned to place his other son, Giorgi, on the throne. David forced his father to enter a monastery but died after reining for only six months; according to Armenian sources, he was murdered by disgruntled nobles. Demetre I returned to the throne and reigned for another year, when he was succeeded by Giorgi III. David’s only son Demetre (Demna) later challenged Giorgi’s authority and led a powerful uprising in 1177–1178.

**DAVID VI NARIN (13TH CENTURY).** Co-ruler of Georgia in 1245–1259 and king of western Georgia from 1260–1293. The son of Queen Rusudan, he was appointed co-regent of Georgia during the Mongol invasions in the 1230s and was later sent to the Mongol capital of Qaraqorum to receive confirmation for his accession to the throne in 1243. The Mongols kept him there for three years, and in 1246, confirmed him and Prince David, son of King Giorgi IV Lasha, as co-rulers of Georgia; David, son of Rusudan, was named narin or junior while David, son of Giorgi, became ulu or senior. Returning to Georgia, they ruled their kingdom between 1248 and 1259.
Disillusioned with the Mongols, David VI Narin organized an uprising in 1259 but failed to gain the support of his co-ruler. The Mongols subdued the rebellion within a year, but King David escaped to western Georgia where he established a separate kingdom and contained the Mongol incursions. He tried to play into the civil strife among the Mongols and sheltered the Mongol princes fighting against Abaga Khan; later, Abaga Khan (1263–1282) led several punitive expeditions against Imereti. David established close contacts with the Byzantine Empire and the sultanate of Egypt in an attempt to organize an anti-Mongol coalition. In 1282, he successfully campaigned against the Empire of Trebizond, the former ally of Georgia, and briefly restored Georgian influence at this Comneni court.

David VI Narin organized an uprising in 1259 but was defeated and escaped to western Georgia where he reigned over an independent kingdom for the next three decades. In 1260, David Ulu, receiving Hulagu Khan’s orders to participate in the Mongol campaign against Egypt, organized another revolt against the Mongols but was defeated near Akhaladaba and waged a guerrilla war for another year before moving to Imereti. As the Mongols prepared to appoint a new ruler of eastern Georgia, David Ulu decided to surrender to retain his crown. In 1262, he pledged allegiance to Hulagu Khan and agreed to accompany him in his battles against Berke Khan of the Golden Horde in 1263–1265. He helped...
construct a special defensive line (*siba*) in eastern Caucasia to prevent incursions of the armies of the Golden Horde. Despite his service to the Mongols, David had to accept the Mongol decision to turn the Samtskhe region of Georgia into an autonomous principality under the direct control of the Il-Khans.

**DAVID VIII (?–1311).** King of Georgia in 1293–1311. The son of King Demetre II, he was raised by the powerful lord Tarsaich Orbeli, and following his father’s execution by the Mongols in 1289, he was forced to participate in the Mongol campaigns in Anatolia in 1291–1292. He was confirmed as the king of Georgia in 1293, but his authority extended only to eastern Georgia. He was involved in the civil strife among the Mongols and supported the opposition to Gaykhatu Khan (1291–1295) and later supported Baydu Khan. In 1297, fearing for his life, he rejected Mahmud Ghazan Khan’s request to join him, organized a rebellion, and contacted the Golden Horde with an offer to fight against the Il-Khans. After several failed attempts to subdue him, Mahmud Ghazan appointed his brother Prince Giorgi (the future Giorgi V the Brilliant) as the king of Georgia in an attempt to divide the Georgian forces. King David continued his struggle for several years but lost many of his supporters along the way; in 1302, his other brother, Vakhtang, reconciled with the Mongols and was also confirmed as the king. David died in 1311, still defiant of Mongols.

**DAVID IX (14TH CENTURY).** King of Georgia in 1346–1360. The son of King Giorgi V the Brilliant, his reign was marked by the spread of the Bubonic Plague in 1347–1348 that claimed thousands of lives in Georgia.

**DAVID X (?–1526).** King of Kartli in 1505–1525. The son of King Constantine II, he reigned over a weakened monarchy that was ravaged by foreign invasions and domestic dissension. In 1509, he was attacked by King Alexander II of Imereti, who seized large portions of Kartli before being driven out a year later. In 1510–1511, King Giorgi II (Avgiorgi) of Kakheti invaded Kartli from the east but was also forced to retreat. David X later managed to capture Giorgi in 1513 and briefly united Kartli and Kakheti under his rule. The most
serious threat to his reign came from the rising power of the Safavid dynasty in Persia. Shah Ismail I led several invasions of eastern Georgia in 1518–1522 and forced David to pay tribute. In 1524, David briefly liberated Tbilisi, drove the Persians out of Kartli, and ceased paying tribute. However, he simultaneously lost Kakheti, when Prince Levan, the son of Giorgi II, seized the throne. In 1525, tired of secular life, King David resigned his throne in favor of his brother Giorgi and retired to a monastery in Tbilisi where he died in 1526.

DAVID XI. King of Kartli between 1569–1578. The son of King Luarsab I of Kartli, he traveled to the Safavid court in 1561, where Shah Tahmasp had him convert to Islam and adopt a new name (Daud Khan) before receiving his investiture as ruler of Kartli to replace his defiant brother, King Simon I. Daud Khan, supported by the Persian troops, invaded Kartli but was defeated by Simon at Dighomi and Samadlo in 1567–1568 before he finally triumphed over his brother at Partskhisi in 1569. He ruled Kartli for the next nine years. He faced the powerful opposition of Georgian nobles led by Sachino Baratashvili. In 1578, as a new war began between the Ottoman Empire and Persia, a large Ottoman army drove Daud Khan out of Kartli and seized the entire kingdom. To turn the tide of war in the Caucasus, the Safavid court released King Simon I, who quickly rallied Georgian forces against the Ottomans. However, the renegade Daud Khan now switched sides and surrendered key fortresses to the Ottomans before personally fleeing to Istanbul where he was generously rewarded. Daud spent several years at the sultan’s court, where he wrote a medical treatise in Georgian.

DAVID OF TAO. See DAVID III.

DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENCE (1918). The revolutionary upheaval of 1917 in Russia and the collapse of the imperial government created unexpected conditions for the outlying regions. The Russian Provisional Government established the Special Transcaucasian Committee (Ozakom) to govern the region. Led by the Russian member of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, Ozakom also included Georgian members—the Socialist Federalist Kita
Abashidze and the Social Democrat Akaki Chkhenkeli. In April of the same year, the National Intra-Party Council of Georgia was established under the leadership of Chkhenkeli in Tbilisi and began calling for greater autonomy for Georgia within the Russian Empire. In November 1917, the first government of independent Transcaucasia was established in Tbilisi as the Transcaucasian Commissariat replaced Ozakom following the Bolshevik seizure of power in St. Petersburg. Headed by the Georgian Social Democrat Evgeni Gegechkori, the Transcaucasian Commissariat was anti-Bolshevik in its political goals and sought the separation of Transcaucasia from Russia. In February 1918, the Transcaucasian Commissariat surrendered its authority to the Transcaucasian Seim, organized by the Transcaucasian deputies of the Russian Constituent Assembly to oversee the secession of Transcaucasia from Soviet Russia.

Simultaneously, Georgian political parties, encouraged by Germany, sought greater independence. The first National Congress of Georgia was organized and elected the National Council of Georgia led by Noe Zhordania. From January–March 1918, the Menshevik authorities in Georgia faced increased activity of the Bolshevik cells that tried to turn the thousands of retreating Russian troops against the local authorities and seize power. The National Council of Georgia mobilized national forces, including units of the newly established National Guard and Georgian Corps, and intercepted some Bolshevik units on their march to Tbilisi.

In March 1918, Soviet Russia, on the verge of collapse, quickly negotiated a ceasefire with the Germans and the Turks at Brest-Litovsk and agreed to heavy concessions in return for a respite. Among other provisions, the Bolsheviks surrendered extensive territory in southern Georgia and Armenia to Turkey, without consulting with the Transcaucasian Seim. When the Ottoman forces began their offensive to seize these territories, the Transcaucasian Seim protested and sought a diplomatic solution to the problem. In late March, peace talks were held in Trebizond between the Transcaucasian delegation led by Akaki Chkhchenkeli and the Ottoman side. Despite the delegation’s attempts, the Turks rejected its offers and continued their attacks, occupying Batumi, southern Guria, and almost the entire Meskheti. Following the Trebizond Peace Talks, the Transcaucasian Seim proclaimed the establishment of the independent Transcaucasian Feder-
ation that united Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan in the face of the Ottoman aggression. Its first government under the Georgian Menshevik Akaki Chkhenkeli was organized in Tbilisi and immediately resumed negotiations with the Ottomans Empire.

On 11 May 1918, another peace conference was held in Batumi, where the Ottomans remained firm in their intention to enforce the articles of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The Transcaucasian delegation found itself splintered as the Georgians adopted a pro-German orientation, Armenians sided with the British, and the Azerbaijani delegates sided with the Turks. The German representatives warned the Georgians that Germany would be unable to defend the Georgian republic unless it seceded from the Transcaucasian Federation and proclaimed its independence. On 14 May 1918, the Executive Committee of the National Council of Georgia made a decision to seek independence under the protection of Germany. Two days later, the Committee officially declared its intentions and organized a special commission to begin preparation for the declaration of independence.

On 26 May 1918, at 4:50 p.m., a special session of the National Council of Georgia was convened in the former residence of the Russian viceroy in Tbilisi. Attended by 42 full members and 36 candidate members, the session was opened by Noe Zhordania, the head of the National Council, who read the Act of Independence of Georgia. Its first article declared complete independence of Georgia and claimed sovereign rights for the Georgian nation. Article II recognized Georgia as a democratic republic while Articles III and IV announced Georgia’s neutrality in international wars. Other articles guaranteed a wide range of civil and political rights to all citizens of Georgia.

The first Menshevik government was comprised of eight cabinet ministers: Noe Ramishvili served as head of the government and minister of internal affairs; Akaki Chkhenkeli was minister of foreign affairs; Grigol Giorgadze was minister of war; Giorgi Zhuruli was minister of commerce and industry; Giorgi Laskhishvili was minister of education; Noe Khomeriki was minister of labor and agriculture, Shalva Meskhishvili was minister of justice, and Ivane Lordkipanidze was minister of communications.

DELLA VALLE, PIETRO (1586–1652). Renaissance traveler who left detailed accounts of Georgia and the Georgian communities in
Persia. He was born into a distinguished noble family in Rome and received a thorough education in the arts and sciences. In 1611, he participated in the Spanish expedition against the pirates on the Barbary coast and later visited the Holy Land in 1614–1616. On his return journey, he decided to continue his travels and joined a caravan traveling to Persia, where he offered his services against the Ottomans to Shah Abbas. He spent the next five years in Persia before returning with his Georgian wife to Italy. Della Vale wrote a series of letters to a friend in Naples, which remains one of the best sources on 17th-century Persia. Besides his descriptions of Persian society and culture, he also left detailed observations on the Georgians living in Persia and seemed to have been impressed by their personal qualities, courage, and civilized courtesy. His notes contain information on the plight of the Georgian royal family in Persia and on the composition and arms of the Georgian forces in battle.

DEMETRE I. King of Georgia in 1125–1155. The eldest son of King David IV Aghmashenebeli, he fought alongside his father in numerous campaigns in the early 1100s. He distinguished himself at Didgori in 1121 and in Shirvan in 1123. Demetre succeeded his father in 1125 and faced the revived attack of the Seljuks, who recovered Ani, capital of Armenia, under terms of vassalage. In 1138, he captured the famous fortress of Ganja (in Azerbaijan), and to celebrate his victory, he brought its iron gates to the Gelati Monastery, where they were stored as trophies. In 1130 and 1154, Demetre faced a plot of nobles who resented the centralized authority of the king. Led by Crown Prince David, the nobles were initially defeated in 1138 when royal troops arrested the conspirators and executed one of their leaders, Ioanne Abuletis-dze. However, in 1154, Prince David revolted again and forced his father to abdicate and become a monk. However, David V died only six months later and King Demetre returned to the throne. The short-lived rule of David had one important consequence as he was survived by his son Demna, who was regarded by the aristocratic opposition as a lawful pretender and they later rallied around him. Demetre died in 1155 and was buried at the Gelati Monastery. He was well-known for his poems, which were mainly on religious
themes, including the popular *Shen Khar Venakhi* (Thou Art the Vine), a hymn to the Holy Mother.

**DEMETRE II TA VDADEBULI (ca. 1259–1289).** King of Georgia in 1271–1289. The son of King *David VII Ulu*, he is one of the tragic figures in Georgian history. His mother, Queen Gvantsa, was executed by the Mongols in 1262 and his father fought the Mongols for several years before dying in 1270. He traveled to receive the investiture from the Il-Khan Abaqa but was placed under regency of Sandun Mankanberdel, who effectively governed the kingdom. Between 1275 and 1281, Demetre participated in every Mongol campaign in the Near East and distinguished himself in battles against the Egyptian *Mamluks*, especially in the battle of Homs in 1281. His absence from Georgia increased the decentralization of the Georgian monarchy, undermined the economy and agriculture, and made possible further Mongol devastation of the countryside.

In the 1280s, Demetre was involved in the turmoil in the Il-Khanate where he supported Ahmad Tekuder Khan (1284–1285) and later served under Arghun Khan (1284–1291), establishing close relations with the powerful vizier Bugha. However, this relationship proved to be Demetre’s undoing when, in 1288, Arghun Khan uncovered a conspiracy that implicated Bugha. Arghun had Bugha’s entire family executed and ordered Demetre, who was innocent but was related to Bugha, to appear at his court. Despite counsel from his advisers, Demetre decided to face apparent death rather than subject his country to Mongol reprisals. He was beheaded at Movakan on 12 March 1289. His body was secretly transported to Georgia, where he was buried at the *Svetitskhoveli Cathedral* in Mtskheta. He was later canonized by the Georgian Orthodox Church and earned the title of *tavadadebuli* (self-sacrificing) for his ultimate sacrifice for his people.

**DEMETRE II.** King of Abkhazia from 825–861. The son of *Leon II*, he repulsed three major Byzantine invasions but was less successful against the Arab commander Bogha al-Kabir (*Bugha Turki*) who invaded *Kartli* and campaigned in western Georgia in 835–836. Demetre provided generous support to the *Georgian Orthodox Church* and helped found many churches and monasteries, some of them with the help of the famous monk *Grigol Khandzteli*. 
DEMETRE III. King of Abkhazia in 967–975. The son of King Giorgi II and brother of Leon III, he was challenged by his brother Theodosius, whom he defeated and had blinded. Yet, after Demetre died childless, Theodosius ascended the throne and helped unify the Georgian principalities under his nephew Bagrat III.

DEVI. In Georgian mythology, an evil giant, comparable to an ogre in Western European myths. With horns and a wicked appearance, devis often had multiple heads that regenerated if severed. Devis lived in the underworld or in remote mountains where they hoarded treasures and kept captives. Georgian myths usually depicted a family of devis, with nine brothers being an average number. Bakbak-Devi was often portrayed as the strongest of the devis. Heroes, generally, had to deceive them with various tricks or games.

DIAUCHI. Tribal confederation, also known as Diauehi, Daiaeni, that emerged at the end of the second millennium BCE in southwestern Caucasia. Diauchi was engaged in a war with the powerful kingdoms of Assyria and Urartu, and the inscriptions of the Urartu kings Menua (ruled 810–786 BCE) and Argishti (786–764) reveal the wealth and power of this early Georgian entity. In the mid-eighth century BCE, Diauchi was destroyed, and its territory was divided by the neighboring Urartu and Colchis. Assyrian sources preserved the names of several kings of Diauchi. Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser I campaigned against King Sien of Diauchi in 1112 BCE and took him captive after a major battle. In 845 BCE, King Asia of Diauchi allied himself with King Arame of Urartu but was defeated by King Shalmaneser III of Assiria and paid a tribute of a quantity of horses. In the early eighth century BCE, King Utupurshini (Utupursi) fought against the Assyrian kings Menua and Argishti I but was defeated and was forced to pay a heavy tribute.

DIDGORI, BATTLE OF (1121). Conflict between Georgian and a Muslim coalition on the Didgori Field near Tbilisi in August 1121; the battle is usually considered the greatest Georgian military success. The late 11th century saw the beginning of the so-called Great Turkish Troubles (didi turkoba) in Georgia when the Seljuk tribes arrived in large numbers to settle on Georgian lands and turned the oc-
cupied territory into pastures, undermining local agriculture and the economy. Seljuk dominance continued unchecked for almost a decade and devastated the country. In 1089, a bloodless coup d’etat forced King Giorgi II to abdicate in favor of his 16-year-old son David, who quickly rallied his forces to defeat the powerful enemy and rebuild his country. From 1089–1105, King David attacked isolated Seljuk troops and revived the devastated regions; in 1092, he ceased paying the annual tribute to the Seljuks and ended the seasonal migration of the Turks into Georgia. He then continued his expansion throughout southern Transcaucasia, successfully defeating the Seljuk invasions in 1105, 1110, and 1116. King David reorganized the Georgian army, resettling some 40,000 families of Cuman-Qipcaqs from the northern Caucasus, who provided him with a steady supply of manpower. The new army was immediately put to use as King David began to raid the nearby principalities of Shirwan and Great Armenia. He soon asserted his authority over almost the entire southern Transcaucasia, except for Tbilisi, and some regions of the North Caucasus. He also established contact with the Crusaders in the Holy Land, and there is evidence that the two factions tried to coordinate their actions against the Muslims.

The Muslim powers became increasingly concerned about the rapid rise of the Christian state in the southern Caucasus and even considered it a greater threat than the Crusaders in Palestine, whom they managed to contain on the coast. In 1121, Sultan Mahmud b. Muhammad (1118–1131) declared a holy war on Georgia and rallied a large coalition of Muslim states led by the Artuqid Najm al-din El-ğazi and Togrul b. Muhammad, the Seljuqid ruler of Arran and Nakhichevan; the coalition was also supported by lesser but important local rulers, including the “king of the Arabs,” Dubays b. Sadaqa (1108–1135), and Tughan-Arslan, lord of Arzin, Bidlis, and Dvin. Najm al-din El-ğazi had just celebrated his great victory over the Crusaders under King Roger of Antioch at Balat in 1119 and enjoyed the reputation of an experienced Muslim commander. The size of the Muslim army is still a matter of debate with numbers ranging from a fantastic 600,000 men (Walter the Chancellor’s Bella Antiochena, Matthew of Edessa) to 400,000 (Smbat Sparapet’s Chronicle) while estimates of Georgian historians vary between 100,000–250,000. Although all of these numbers are exaggerated, the sources indicate that
Muslims made massive preparations, gathered an army that was many times larger than any engaged in the Holy Land, and vastly outnumbered the Georgians. In mid-summer 1121, the Muslim troops advanced along various routes, with part of them passing the provinces of Arsan al Rum (Erserum) and al-Ghars (Kars) while Sultan Toğrul moved through Ganja and Tughan-Arslan the Hunchback marched from Dvin. Entering Georgian territory, they proceeded by the Manglisi-Didgori Valley toward Tiflis. On 10 August, the enormous Muslim army bivouacked on a vast field near Didgori, about a day’s march from Tbilisi.

The Georgians were well aware of the Muslim preparations and took necessary precautions. King David evacuated the regions along the Muslim invasion route and called up his troops. The Georgians mastered some 56,000 men, including 500 Alans and 200 Crusaders, who had arrived from the Holy Land. On 11 August 1121, he led his army along the Nichbisi Valley from the ancient capital of Mtskheta and divided the troops into two parts with a larger group under his personal command; a smaller detachment under his son Demetre was to occupy secretly the nearby heights and strike the enemy flank at a signal. On the royal orders, the Nichbisi Valley, behind the Georgian troops, was blockaded with fallen trees leaving no other choice for the Georgian troops but to fight to the death. According to the French knight and historian Galterii, King David appealed to his warriors just before the battle, “Soldiers of Christ! If we fight with abandon, defending the faith of our Lord, we shall not only overcome the countless servants of Satan, but the Devil himself. I will only advise you one thing that will add to our honor and our profit: raising our hands to Heaven we will all swear to our Lord that in the name of love to Him, we will rather die on the battlefield than run.”

The Georgian battle plan involved a cunning move. On the morning of 12 August, some 200 cavalrmen departed the Georgian camp and rode to the enemy side, indicating they wanted to defect. The Muslim commanders, surprisingly, not only allowed them into the camp but also gathered to meet them. At a signal, the Georgians suddenly unsheathed their swords and attacked them, killing and wounding most of them. Observing the confusion in the enemy camp, King David ordered a general attack on the enemy positions while his son
Prince Demetre charged the enemy flank. With their leadership in disarray, the Muslims in the frontline failed to organize any resistance, while those in the back soon became so disorganized that the entire battle lasted only three hours before the enemy army fled in disorder. According to the Georgian chronicler, King David’s troops pursued them for three days, “putting all of them to the sword and leaving them to the carnivorous beasts and birds of the mountains and plains.” The Armenian historian Matthews wrote that “terrible and savage slaughter of the enemy troops ensued and the [enemy] corpses filled up the rivers and covered all valleys and cliffs,” and claimed that less than a hundred men survived from every thousand. The Muslim commander-in-chief El-ğazi himself was wounded and fled with the few surviving escorts while his son-in-law Dubays b. Sadaqa barely escaped after having his necklace torn off his neck (it was later donated to the Gelati Monastery). The Georgians captured the entire enemy camp and the fabulous riches it contained.

Following his success, King David seized Tbilisi, the last Muslim enclave remaining from the Arab occupation, in 1122 and moved the Georgian capital there. In 1123–1124, Georgian armies were victorious in the neighboring territories of Armenia, Shirwan, and northern Caucasus, greatly expanding Georgia’s sphere of influence. A contemporary chronicler marveled, “What tongue can relate the wonders which our sustaining Christ gave us on that day? And what are the narrations of Homer and Aristotle to me about the Trojan War and the bravery of Achilles or Josephus’ writings about the valor of the Maccabees or Alexander and Titus at Jerusalem?” The battle entered the Georgian national conscience as “the miraculous victory” (dzlevai sakvirveli) and is without doubt one of the apogees of Georgian history. It signaled the emergence of Georgia as a great military power in the late 11th–12th centuries and shifted the balance in favor of Georgian cultural and political supremacy in south Caucasia and the Near East.

**DIDI TURKOBA.** Period of “Great Turkish Troubles” in the 11th century when the Seljuk tribes began massive migrations to southern Caucasia and occupied Georgian lands, forcing the Georgian kings to recognize Seljuk sovereignty. It ended with the reign of David IV Aghmashenebeli (1089–1125).
Dobilni. In Georgian mythology, minor evil spirits that usually took the appearance of women, children, or even animals to harm humans and spread diseases. The dobilni towers (dobilt koshki) are found within the complexes of most Khevsurian shrines. However, there are instances when dobilni had positive attributes, e.g., Giorgi’s sisters, Samdzimari/Tamar in Khevsureti and Pshavi. Local folk epics describe how Giorgi led a raiding party of khwis-shvilni to Kajeti (Kajaveti), the realm of the evil kajis. After defeating the kajis, Giorgi seized their wealth and their women, including Princess Samdzimari who swore brother-sisterhood with Giorgi and helped him in his quests. Women prayed at the shrines to Samdzimari for the birth of healthy children, an easy childbirth, and good health in general.
Shrines to the *dobilni* were also invoked for the productivity and well-being of dairy cattle and the protection of travelers.

**DODASHVILI, SOLOMON (1805–1836).** Georgian philosopher and journalist, leader of the *Conspiracy of 1832*. Born in the village of Magharo in Kakheti, Dodashvili studied in Sighnaghi and Tbilisi before enrolling in the University of St. Petersburg where he graduated with a degree in philosophy in 1827. Returning to Georgia, he began working as an editor at the newspaper *Tpilisis utskebani* and published several important philosophical and pedagogical works, including *Logika*, *Logikis methologia*, *Shemoklebuli kartuli ghramatika*, and *Ritorika* in 1827–1830. During his studies in Russia, he was exposed to the ideas of the Enlightenment and the Russian free-thinkers. The events of the Decembrist Uprising of 1825, which he witnessed, had a profound effect on him and inspired him to attempt radical changes in Georgia. In 1831–1832, Dodashvili gradually organized a circle of like-minded Georgians who sought to overthrow the Russian authorities and restore the Georgian monarchy. After the conspiracy was betrayed by one of its members, Dodashvili was arrested and exiled to Vyatka in 1834 where he soon became seriously ill and died two years later.

**DUMBADZE, NODAR (1928–1984).** One of the most popular and best known Georgian poets of the 20th century. Born in Tbilisi, Dumbadze graduated with a degree in economy from Tbilisi State University in 1964 and began his career as an editor at the satirical journal *Niangi* in 1967. Five years later, he became secretary of the Georgian Writers’ Union and a member of the presidium of the USSR Writers’ Union. His first works appeared in various journals in the 1950s, and his first anthology of stories *Sopleli bichi* was published in 1960. In the same year, Dumbadze wrote one of his best, and most popular, novels *Me, bebia, iliko da ilarioni*, followed by another success with *Me vkhedav mzes* in 1962. These novels described in remarkable simplicity, humor, and clarity life in Soviet Georgia during and after World War II. In later years, Dumbadze published *Mziani ghame* (1967) and *Nu geshinia deda* (1971). Another success came with his acclaimed novel *Tetri bairaghebi* (1973), which discussed social and moral problems within Georgian society and was awarded the Shota Rustaveli Prize in 1975. His later novel *Maradisobis kanoni* (1978) received the Lenin Prize in 1980.
During the Soviet Era, Georgia was one of the most prosperous republics, and Georgian citrus, tea, and wine products dominated the Soviet market and ensured high earnings for the residents of the Georgian SSR; Georgian savings accounts were, on average, twice as large as in the rest of the Soviet Union. However, following its independence in 1990, Georgia suffered severe political and financial turbulence, which left the economy in ruins. The economic crisis was particularly acute in 1992–1994 when the country barely survived the confluence of civil war, ethno-political conflicts, shortages of gas and electricity, loss of favorable trading relationships with Russia, and access to key pipelines and transport links. In the mid-1990s, Georgia experienced modest levels of GDP growth and foreign investment that increased over time. By 1998, the government’s policies to stabilize the currency (the lari was introduced in 1995), reduce inflation rates, encourage trade, and bring in investment produced results, and Georgian economy grew at an average 7%. In 2003, according to the World Bank, Georgia’s gross national income, measured at average 2001–2003 prices, was equivalent to US$830 per capita or US$2,540 per capita on an international purchasing-power parity basis.

After a setback due to the Russian financial crisis in 1998, the Georgian economy experienced rapid growth, with GDP reaching GEL 6 billion in 2000, GEL 8.5 billion in 2003 and GEL 9.9 billion in 2004; inflation was kept under 4.8%. Between 2000 and 2004, gross capital formation increased from GEL 1.6 to GEL 2.9 billion while exports of goods and services almost tripled from GEL 1.3 to 3.1 billion; net domestic product rose from GEL 5.4 to GEL 8.9 billion. The government took aggressive measures to combat smuggling and tax evasion that greatly increased the revenue, from GEL 905 million in 2000 to GEL 2.1 billion in 2004. The budget expenditures also rose from GEL 1.1 billion to GEL 2.4 billion, with the defense
spending increasing almost five-fold from GEL 29 million to GEL 160 million. Georgia’s state debt remained relatively unchanged, peaking at GEL 4.8 billion in 2002 and declining to GEL 4.3 billion in 2004; Georgian foreign debt totaled US$2.7 billion in 2004.

In 2005, Georgia placed fifth in the Economic Intelligence Unit’s 20 fastest growing countries and showed a real GDP growth of 12%. In the mid-1990s, Georgia became a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation. In June 2000, Georgia became the fourth former Soviet republic to join the World Trade Organization (WTO), which provided it with new opportunities for development. According to official statistics, the economically active population of Georgia fluctuated between 2 million and 2.1 million persons in 2000–2004 and the unemployment rate remained at 11.5–12.5%, although unofficial estimates projected much higher rates, especially in small towns and rural regions.

The administration of President Mikhail Saakashvili that assumed office in early 2004 sought to transform the Georgian economy along market principles, reforming its banking system and privatizing state enterprises and retail establishments. In 2004, Georgia was selected as one of 16 countries of the Millennium Challenge Account and was granted a five-year, US$295.3 million credit by the United States to rehabilitate regional infrastructures and develop industry and enterprises. In late 2004, the government launched a widespread campaign against corruption and drug abuse and dramatically reduced the bureaucratic apparatus; the size of the police force alone was decreased from over 13,000 to 3,000. Higher salaries were set and higher standards of admission to government positions were established. Georgia negotiated with the IMF a new three-year Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility program and cracked down on smuggling across international borders and in the secessionist regions of Abkhazia and Ossetia. In 2004, the lending programs of the IMF and the World Bank resumed and the “Paris Club” of creditors restructured US$161 million of the country’s debt. The government implemented a financial amnesty program for illegally acquired property and assets of former state officials, which generated an estimated US$500 million; a one-off amnesty on undeclared tax obligations
was also announced in order to promote the reduction of the informal sector. In 2004, revenue collection increased substantially, but serious difficulties remain in relation to the regulation and collection of customs duties in the separatist regions. In December 2004, the parliament approved a new tax code, which decreased the rate of value-added tax from 20 to 18% and introduced a flat-rate system of personal income tax of 12%. A wide-ranging privatization program, covering hundreds of state enterprises and properties, was launched in mid-2004. See also AGRICULTURE; BANKING; FORESTRY; INDUSTRY; NATURAL RESOURCES; PRIVATIZATION; TRADE AND SERVICES; TRANSPORTATION

EDUCATION. Education is compulsory for those between the ages of 6 and 14, and the adult literacy rate is 99.5%. Primary and secondary education is free, while higher education is available for free to the highest achieving pupils. Instruction is available in Georgian, Abkhazian, Azeri, Armenian, English, German, and Russian languages.

Georgia has a multi-level educational system that starts with pre-primary schools and continues through primary, secondary, and higher education levels. On each level, students are awarded special credentials of completion of studies: certificates (sashualo skolis atestati) on completion of the secondary school and diplomas (propesiul-teknikuri sast-savleblis diplomi or sashualo specialuri sastsavleblis diplomi) on completion of secondary specialized or vocational/technical schools. These credentials are needed to gain access to higher education, and candidates must pass a competitive entrance examination (misaghebi gamotsdebi).

Primary education begins at the age of six and lasts for six years. Basic school comprises three years of education between the ages 12 and 15. Secondary education, beginning at the age of 15, continues for two years and results in a school completion certificate. In 2003, 25% of children of the relevant age group were enrolled in pre-primary schools and 87% of those were instructed in Georgian. Primary enrolment remains at 95% of the relevant age group, while the secondary enrollment is 75%. By 2005, Georgia had 1,394 primary day schools and 1,737 secondary day schools, with a total enrollment of 648,000 pupils. In addition, there were 27 evening schools, 85
state secondary specialized schools, 65 private secondary specialized schools, and 78 vocational/technical schools.

There are four major types of higher education institutions: university, institute, academy and conservatory. There are 26 state institutions of higher education, the most prestigious being Tbilisi State University, State Technical University, State Pedagogical University, and Tbilisi State Medical University. In addition, over 200 private institutions of higher education are available throughout the country. Students can pursue studies in some 300 different specialties. In 2004, 153,254 students were enrolled in institutions of higher education. The university level studies are divided into several stages. Upon completion of the four-year first stage, students are awarded a bachelor’s degree (bakalavris diplomi). The two-year second stage provides students with the opportunity to work toward an advanced degree such as a master’s degree (magistris diplomi). Until 2005–2006, the third stage, popularly known as aspirantura, comprised at least three years’ study and led to the presentation and defense of a thesis. Successful students were awarded the degree of Candidate of Sciences (metsnierebata kandidati), which was equivalent to a Ph.D. in Western European and American universities. However, the further, and the highest, stage of university education called for independent scientific research and defense of a dissertation, which resulted in the doctoral degree (metsnierebata doktori). As a result of ongoing reforms, this complex third stage was reorganized and a 3-year doctoral program was established.

The political and economic crisis of the past decade greatly affected the educational system. Major science and research institutions lost their funding and fell into disarray, and the quality of education greatly diminished. Nepotism and bribery, especially in entrance examinations for institutions of higher education, became widespread. High school teachers and university faculty received meager salaries, which were often delayed for several months. In such circumstances, corruption increased and undermined faith in the entire system. Tbilisi State University was particularly marred by alleged abuses of its leadership, which led to student protests and the resignation of its rector in 2003–2004. Sweeping reforms of the educational system began in 2005. The initial goal was to eradicate widespread corruption and nepotism, and standard tests were introduced
for entry examination to institutions of higher education. Faculties at Tbilisi State University, the premier institution of higher education, have been reduced from 22 to 6, and the overall number of staff was slashed from 5,000 to 800. The university’s autonomy was removed, its ruling Great Council abolished, and the university was placed under the control of the Ministry of Education. Such changes met strong resistance among the faculty and, in June–July 2006, Tbilisi State University was engulfed in turmoil. Many faculty members, supported by the opposition parties, tried to reinstate the Great Council, and curtail the reforms. Police prevented their attempt to seize the university building and, despite much agitation, the opposition gradually lost its momentum.

1812 UPRISING IN KAKHETI. See KAKHETIAN UPRISING OF 1812.

1832 CONSPIRACY. See CONSPIRACY of 1832.

EKVTIME MTATSMINDELI. See EUTHIMIUS THE ATHONITE.

ELECTIONS OF 1990. Elections to the Supreme Soviet of Georgia held on 28 October and 11 November 1990. Following the massacre of demonstrators on 9 April 1989, the Soviet authorities of Georgia acted under great pressure. First Secretary Jumber Patiashvili was removed from his post and was replaced by Givi Gumbaridze, who sought a way out of this delicate situation through negotiations with the leaders of the national liberation movement. In February 1990, the Supreme Council, where even the Communist deputies were affected by anti-Soviet sentiments, declared Georgia “an annexed and occupied country” and removed the Communist Party’s monopoly on power. Pressure from the opposition parties forced the Supreme Soviet to postpone full multi-party elections from 25 March to October 1990. In July–August, Georgian nationalists blockaded rail lines as talks with government officials failed to resolve their demand for multi-party politics.

The election was noteworthy for a number of coalitions involved. The Round Table—Free Georgia bloc comprised the Helsinki Union, the Saint Ilia the Righteous Society, the Merab Kostava Society, the
Union of Georgian Traditionalists, the Popular Front-Radical Union, the National-Christian Party, and the National-Liberal Union. The Concord, Peace, Rebirth bloc included the Union for National Concord and Rebirth and Peace and Freedom (Afghans). The Freedom Bloc was composed of the Republican-federal Party, the Democratic Choice for Georgia (DASI), the Liberal-Democratic National Party, the Party of Georgian Greens, the Association for National Concord, and the Christian-Democratic Union. The Liberation and Economic Rebirth bloc comprised the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the Progressive-Democratic Party, and the Labor Party. The Democratic Georgia bloc included the Ilia Chavchavadze Society, the Republican Party, the Union of Free Democrats, the Ivane Javakhishvili Society, the Archil Jorjadze Society, the Democratic Popular Front, and the Georgian Demographic Society.

The elections were boycotted by many non-ethnic Georgians because the Georgian nationalists, fearing separatism in Abkhazia and Ossetia, insisted on removing any parties limited to one area of the country from participating. Official results showed 3,444,002 registered voters and turnout of 2,406,742 or almost 70%. In the elections, the Round Table–Free Georgia coalition, led by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, won 155 seats in the 250-seat chamber and 54% of the votes cast; the Communist Party gained 64 seats and 29.6%; the Georgian Popular Front (GPF) gained 17 seats; the Rustaveli Society 2 seats; the Liberation and Economic Rebirth bloc 2 seats; the Democratic Georgia Party 6 seats; and independent candidates 13 seats. The Round Table–Free Georgia won by a landslide in Tbilisi and in large and medium-sized cities but failed to gain support of non-Georgian residents and in rural areas. Communist candidates won in all of the rural district of Adjara and the districts bordering Armenia and Azerbaijan. In November 1990, Avtandil Margiani replaced Gumbaridze as the first secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia, and the party seceded from the CPSU. Virtually all political parties and coalitions, including the Communist Party, declared their support for Georgia’s independence.

See also CHANTURIA, GIORGI; GAMSAKHURDIA, ZVIAD; KOSTAVA, MERAB; PATIAVHILI, JUMBER.

voters (82.62%) out of 3,604,810 registered casting their votes. Of the six candidates who ran for the highest post, Zviad Gamsakhurdia gained the most votes (86% or 2,565,362 votes), followed by Valerian Advadze (8% or 240,243 votes), Jemal Mikeladze (1.74% or 51,717 votes), Nodar Natadze (1.22% or 36,266 votes), Irakli Shengelaia (0.91% or 26,886 votes), and Tamaz Kvachantiradze (0.29% or 8,553 votes).

ELECTIONS OF 1992. Parliamentary elections held on 11 October 1992. Following a coup against President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, a special military council was established to continue governing. To legitimize its authority, the military council invited Eduard Shevardnadze, former Soviet Foreign Minister, to Georgia and transformed itself into the State Council with Shevardnadze at its helm. The State Council sought to legitimize itself by holding elections for a new parliament. It initially adopted an electoral system, the single transferable vote that virtually guaranteed representation by small parties and made it difficult for one party to seize a large share of seats. However, a new law of 1 August 1992 abolished the single transferable vote system in favor of a combination of single-member districts and proportional voting by party lists. The total number of seats to be awarded from the part list system was 150, while 84 single-member districts would elect the remaining deputies. No minimum threshold of votes was adopted in order to allow as many parties as possible, but supporters of ousted President Gamsakhurdia were barred from running. Over 40 parties registered for the elections; Eduard Shevardnadze initially supported the Peace Bloc, a coalition dominated by the newly established Democratic Union of former communists and officials. However, other parties were concerned about their electoral chances and sought to mitigate potential risks. A special law was adopted that created a post of chairman of the parliament, and 5,000 signatures were required to nominate any candidate for this post. No other candidate dared to challenge Shevardnadze for this post, and he won it easily with 96% of votes.

On 11 October, 2,592,117 or 75% of voters participated in the elections; elections were postponed indefinitely in nine districts in western Georgia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. Forty-seven parties took part in the elections, some united in alliances and blocs. Besides the
Peace Bloc, supported by Shevardnadze, there was also the October 11 bloc that united the Republican Party, the Democratic Choice for Georgia, the Georgian Popular Front, and the Christian Democratic Union.

The largest number of votes (21%) and 35 seats were gained by the Peace Bloc, which comprised former Communists and government officials. The October 11 Bloc of moderate reformers gained 19 seats, followed by the Unity Bloc and the National Democratic Party, each with 15 seats. Representations were also obtained by President Gamsakhurdia’s former supporters who had broken with him in late 1991; Charter-91 won nine seats, the Monarchist Union of Georgian Traditionalists won seven seats, the Merab Kostava Society also won seven seats, the Union of National Agreement and Revival won five seats, and the National Independence Party won four seats. The members of the State Council, Tengiz Sigua, Tengiz Kitovani and Jaba Ioseliani, were elected as independent deputies. The biggest surprise of the elections was the reemergence of Jumber Patiashvili, the former leader of the Georgian Communist Party who was vilified for his role in the events of 9 April 1989.

ELECTIONS OF 1995. Presidential and parliamentary elections held on 5 November 1995. Several changes were made to the electoral system. While the number of deputies (150 from party lists and 85 from single-mandate districts) remained the same, the complicated system of tabulating the proportional voting by regions was abolished, and national districts were created. A new electoral law also established a 5% threshold.

Approximately 68% of the registered electorate reportedly participated in the elections. Six candidates ran for the highest post of the Georgian executive branch: Eduard Shevardnadze, Jumber Patiashvili, Akaki Bakradze, Panteleimon Giorgadze, Kartlos Gharibashvili, and Roin Liparteliani. However, the real political rivalry for the presidential post was limited to Shevardnadze and his one-time successor as the first secretary of Georgia, Patiashvili. Shevardnadze won almost 75% of the votes cast, followed by Patiashvili (19%), Bakradze (1.47% or 31,350 votes), Giorgadze (0.5% or 10,697 votes), Gharibashvili (0.47% or 10,023 votes), and Liparteliani (0.37% or 7,948 votes).
The parliamentary elections were boycotted in Abkhazia and in parts of South Ossetia. Only three parties contesting the 150 proportional seats succeeded in obtaining the required 5% of the votes to obtain representation in the parliament. Shevardnadze’s Citizen’s Union of Georgia (CUG) won the largest number of seats (111), followed by the National Democratic Party of Georgia (36) and the All-Georgian Union of Revival (32 seats), chaired by Aslan Abashidze, the leader of Adjara. Only about one-half of the single-mandate seats were filled; however, following a further two rounds of voting, the full complement of 85 deputies was elected.

ELECTIONS OF 1999. Parliamentary elections held in two rounds on 31 October and 14 November 1999. In July 1999, the parliament, controlled by Eduard Shevardnadze’s Citizen’s Union of Georgia (CUG), sought to limit the opposition’s involvement in politics and adopted a constitutional amendment that increased the minimum requirement for parliamentary representation from 5% to 7% of the votes cast. This requirement effectively eliminated many smaller parties and allowed the major political groups to dominate parliamentary politics. With about 65% turnout, the election results showed another sweeping victory for the CUG, which secured 130 seats (85 proportional and 45 constituency). The Union for the Revival of Georgia bloc and the Industry Will Save Georgia bloc obtained 58 seats (51 proportional) and 15 seats (14 proportional), respectively. The mandate of the 12 Abkhazian deputies was extended. Despite allegations of vote rigging and irregularities, observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) declared the elections lawful.

ELECTIONS OF 2000. Presidential elections held on 9 April 2000. Facing no real opposition, Eduard Shevardnadze easily won another term with about 79.8% of votes. His major rival, Jumber Patiashvili, was second with 16.7%. However, the elections were marred by widespread vote rigging and irregularities, which were noted by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. However, the elections were declared valid.
ELECTIONS OF 2003. Parliamentary elections held on 2 November 2003. The elections were much anticipated by the opposition and by the public in general, both of which sought to curb President Eduard Shevardnadze’s hold over political life in Georgia. The student protest organization Kmara (Enough) proved effective in organizing anti-government rallies to demand free and fair elections. In 2002, some supporters of Shevardnadze left his political team and launched their own parties. The most important of them was Zurab Zhvania, chairman of the parliament, who founded a new political party, the United Democrats. In August 2003, Zhvania and Nino Burdjanadze, the new chair of the parliament, joined their forces in the Burdjanadze-Democrats bloc. Mikhail Saakashvili, a maverick politician who had resigned from Shevardnadze’s government in protest over corruption, led another newly established party, the National Movement. Shevardnadze, who had abandoned his faithful Citizen’s Union of Georgia in 2001, supported a new party, For a New Georgia, which obtained the majority of the votes cast. However, international monitors from the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) denounced the elections for numerous electoral irregularities and the falsification of results.

On 4 November, thousands of people assembled in Tbilisi to protest against the election results, and the opposition leaders—Saakashvili, Burdjanadze and Zhvania—demanded Shevardnadze’s resignation. Further large-scale protest demonstrations subsequently took place in Tbilisi and the rest of the country. On 20 November, the Central Electoral Committee itself became divided as five of its members refused to endorse the announced final results which gave the pro-Shevardnadze bloc For a New Georgia a total of 57 seats, followed by the Adjarian leader Aslan Abashidze’s Democratic Union of Revival (39 seats), and Saakashvili’s National Movement with 36 seats. The official results showed that the Georgian Labour Party obtained 21 seats the Burjanadze-Democrats bloc, 16; the New Right bloc, 15; the Industry Will Save Georgia alliance, 2; the remaining 15 seats were won by independents; repeat elections were scheduled for several constituencies. The events following the official announcement of results led to the Rose Revolution on 22—23 November and the ouster of President Shevardnadze.
ELECTIONS OF 2004. Presidential elections held on 4 January 2004. Five candidates, Mikhail Saakashvili, Temur Shashiashvili, Zaza Sikharulidze, Roin Liparteliani, and Kartlos Gharibashvili, ran for the highest executive post. With an 88% voter turnout, Mikhail Saakashvili obtained 96.3% of the votes cast and was elected the third president of Georgia. At the age of 36, he was recognized as the youngest president in Europe.

Parliamentary elections were held on 28 March 2004; they had been scheduled for March following the failed elections in November 2003 and the ouster of President Eduard Shevardnadze. The new government refused to lower the representation threshold from 7 to 5%, a requirement that kept many smaller parties out of parliamentary politics. In the elections, a coalition of Mikhail Saakashvili’s National Movement, United Democrats (led by Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burdjanadze), and the Republican Party won 135 of the 235 seats. The Rightist Opposition alliance, which included the Industry Will Save Georgia and the New Conservative Party, gained 15 seats; 75 members were elected in single-seat constituencies, and 10 members represented the displaced population of Abkhazia. Four parties and blocs came close to gaining seats in the parliament. Democratic Union for Revival received 6% of the votes, the Labor Party gained 5.8%, the Freedom Movement had 4.2%, the National Democratic Alliance (comprising the National Democratic Party and Union of Georgian Traditionalists) had 2.5%, and the Jumber Patiaishvili—Unity bloc—won 2.4%.

The parliamentary majority, however, soon experienced internal feuding, which caused some of its members, Koba Davitashvili and Zviad Dzidziguri, to establish a splinter faction, which later evolved into the Conservative Party of Georgia. The Republican Party of Georgia also defected and joined the opposition. The National Movement-Democrats emerged as a powerful force and ruling coalition, and it united President Saakashvili’s National Movement, the late Prime-Minister Zurab Zhvania’s United Democrats, the Republican Party, supporters of parliamentary speaker Nino Burdjanadze, and supporters of former president Zviad Gamsakhurdia—the Union of National Forces. The power base of the former President Shevardnadze, the Citizens’ Union, broke apart and disappeared from the political arena. Concerns were expressed about the high threshold
of representation (7%) that allowed only the National Movement—Democrats and the Rightist Opposition to pass this barrier. As a result, Georgian politics today are dominated by the broad political movement of the National Movement—Democrats, which often has no clear political profile and is centered around a few popular leaders.

ELIAVA, GIORGI GRIGOROVICH (1892–1937). Microbiologist, founder of the Georgian school of microbiology. He studied medicine at the University of Geneva and Moscow University, where he graduated in 1916. During World War I, he served on the front lines on the Caucasian front. He later directed the Tbilisi Central Laboratory. After the war, he traveled to France, where he did research at the prestigious Pasteur Institute in Paris from 1918–1927. In 1923, he co-founded the Tbilisi Bacteriological Institute and became chair of microbiology at Tbilisi State University in 1929. In the early 1930s, he established and directed the All-Union Institute of Bacteriophagology. Eliava established himself as one of the leading authorities on bacteriophagy and pioneered new methods of production and use of bacteriophages. Eliava, together with the prominent microbiologist Félix d’Herelle, made significant discoveries in bacteriophage cultures and bacterial mutability. His work allowed successful treatment of gangrene and other skin diseases. However, Eliava soon fell into disfavor with the notorious Lavrenti Beria, who had him accused of treason; he was executed along with his wife in 1937.

ELIAVA, SHALVA ZURABOVICH (1885–1837). Revolutionary and Communist Party official. He studied law at St. Petersburg University and joined the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RS-DRP), siding with the Bolshevik faction. Returning to Georgia, he worked as an agitator and propagandist during the 1905 Revolution and was arrested on several occasions. In 1906, he traveled to St. Petersburg, where he took part in the student movement but was arrested and exiled in 1909. He was released four years later and resumed revolutionary activity in St. Petersburg, where he was arrested again and exiled to Vologda. After the February Revolution in 1917, Eliava was elected chairman of the Vologda Soviet of Workers and Soldiers and later was a delegate to the 2nd All-Russian Congress of Soviets. He served as the chairman of the Executive Committee of
Vologda Province until 1918 when he was appointed to the RSFSR People’s Commissariat of Trade and Industry.

From 1918, Eliava was member of the All-Russian, later USSR, Central Executive Committee, of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee, and of the Georgian Central Executive Committee. During the Civil War, he served on the Eastern and Turkestan fronts. In 1921, he took part in the Soviet occupation of Georgia and served as people’s commissar for military and naval affairs of the Georgian SSR and later of the Transcaucasian Federation. In 1923, he became chairman of the Georgian Council of People’s Commissars and chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the Transcaucasian Federation in 1930. In the early 1930s, he worked as the USSR deputy commissar of foreign trade. However, he was arrested and executed in 1937.

**EMAMQULI KHAN (17th century).** Prominent Persian statesman of Georgian descent. Son of the celebrated Georgian ghulam Allahverdi Khan, Emamquli Khan became governor of Lar in Fars in 1610. On the death of his father in 1613, Shah Abbas appointed Emamquli Khan to succeed him as governor-general (beglarbeg) of Fars and granted him the rank of an amir of the divan. In 1619–1620, Emamquli Khan directed works to link the headwaters of the Karun and Zayandarud Rivers to supply the Persian capital, Isfahan. As the Safavid viceroy in the south, Emamquli Khan played an important role in driving the Portuguese out of the Persian Gulf. He initially served under his father during the campaign in Bahrain in 1602 and later drove the Portuguese out of Gombroon, modern Bandar-e ‘Abbas. The Portuguese still maintained a strong base on the island of Qeæm that was vital to the defense of Hormuz. Emamquli Khan successfully cooperated with the representatives of the English East India Company to launch joint operations against the Portuguese in 1622. Emamquli Khan was famous for his patronage of arts and extensive public works. In Shiraz, he built a madrasa and provided it with extensive endowments in real estate. He also constructed a bridge over the Kor Riber in Marvdaæt, which is still standing. He enjoyed the complete trust of Shah Abbas, who was notorious for his suspicious character. However, after the death of the shah, the fortunes of Emamquli Khan changed. In 1633, he fell victim to intrigues at the court of Shah Safi, who put him and his family to death.
ENA, MAMULI, SARTSMUNOeba (LANGUAGE, FATHERLAND, FAITH). Slogan of the Georgian national liberation movement in the late 19th and 20th centuries. It was originally formulated as “mamuli, ena, sartsmunoeba” by Ilia Chavchavadze, one of the most important public figures in late 19th-century Georgia. A talented writer and charitable benefactor, Chavchavadze became a guiding force in the national liberation movement, seeking to raise national awareness and preserve Georgian culture. The new slogan was important because by putting mamuli (fatherland) and ena (language) before sartsmunoeba (faith), it stressed the secular nature of Georgian nationalism and made it possible to engage Georgians of other faiths and denominations. Historically, the Georgian identity, “Georgian-ness” itself, was equated with being an Orthodox Christian, and ethnic Georgians of other religions or denominations were scorned; Muslim Georgians were often derisively referred to as Tatars, Catholic Georgians became known as prangi (“Franks”) and those of the Gregorian-Armenian denomination were described as somkhebi (“Armenians”). However, the “faith” element in the slogan still referred to Orthodox Christianity, and Chavchavadze himself stressed the crucial role of the Georgian Orthodox Church preserving and developing Georgian culture.

During the Soviet era, the Communist government made several attempts to abolish the Georgian language as the state language in Georgia, which led to massive protests and revived Georgian nationalist sentiments. The Georgian dissidents Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava campaigned under a modified version of this slogan —“ena, mamuli, sartsmunoeba” (language, fatherland, faith)—that emphasized the Georgian language as a rallying point for Georgian nationalism.

EPHRAIM THE GREAT (EPREM DIDI) (Ninth century). Prominent Georgian religious figure. Details of his early life are unknown, but Christian tradition describes young Ep raid as an honest, pious, and intelligent man who became a disciple of Grigol Khandzteli, who encountered Ep raid during his travels in Kartli. Grigol took Ep raid with him to southern Georgia and tutored him at his great monastery at Khandztla. In later years, Ep raid became the bishop of Atskuri, and over the 40 years of his service, he emerged as one of
the leading figures in the **Georgian Orthodox Church**. He opposed Catholicos Arsen at the Church Council summoned in Javakheti but reconciled with him after Grigol Kandzteli’s intervention. Epraim played an important role in affirming the autocephaly of the Georgian church and obtaining the right to consecrate the myron (*chrism*), which had formerly been delivered from Jerusalem.

**EPHRAIM THE LESSER (EPREM MTSIRE) (?- ca. 1101).** Prominent Georgian religious figure, scholar, and philosopher. Details of his early life are unknown. Epraim was born to a noble family from Tao-Klarjeti region, and during the Georgian-Byzantine Wars, his family was among the hostages taken to Constantinople. Epraim was educated in Constantinople and continued his studies at the Georgian monastery at **Black Mountain** near Antioch, where he was tutored by the eminent Georgian clerics Saba Tukhareli, Anton Tbeli, Arsen Ikaltoeli, Stepane Chuleveli, and Ioan Parakneli. Epraim soon demonstrated his intellectual prowess and emerged as one of the major philosophers of his time. He authored over a hundred treatises that exerted great influence on the Georgian philosophical tradition and religious literature. Epraim was particularly important in creating guidelines for critical translation of various texts into Georgian, and he developed new principles of punctuation. He personally translated works of Dionysius the Areopagite, Basil the Great, John of Damascus, etc. After the churches of Antioch and Constantinople contested the autocephaly of the Georgian church, Epraim was asked by the Georgian clergy to provide a scholarly response, which he did after a meticulous study of ancient Greek, Syrian, and Georgian sources.

**EREKLE I.** King of Kartli in 1688–1703. The grandson of King **Teimuraz I**, he was raised at the Romanov court in Moscow and returned to Georgia in 1662 at which time he tried to seize the throne of Kakheti. He clashed with the powerful **Vakhtang V (Shah Nawaz)** who placed his son **Archil** in Kakheti and forced Erekle to go back to Russia in 1664. Ten years later, Erekle returned to Kakheti and appealed for help in his royal claims to the shah of Persia. He traveled to Esfahan to meet the shah, who demanded his conversion to Islam before confirming him to the Kartlian throne. Taking the new name of Nazar-Ali Khan, Erekle returned to Kartli to replace
King Giorgi XI in 1688. Giorgi initially fled to Imereti but three years later he rallied forces to challenge Erekle. In the ensuing civil war, neither side achieved victory and Giorgi traveled to Esfahan to gain the shah’s support against Erekle in 1703. The shah indeed confirmed him as the king of Kartli and appointed Erekle as the king of Kakheti. However, before he could assume his authority, Erekle was recalled to Esfahan, where the shah kept him for several years.

EREKLE II (1720–1798). King of Kakheti in 1744–1762 and of Kartli-Kakheti in 1762–1798. Popularly known as Patara Kakhi, Erekle II is one of the most important political figures in 18th-century Georgia. Born into the Kakhetian branch of the Bagrationi dynasty, Erekle spent his early years in the service of Nadir Khan, who restored Persian dominance in eastern Georgia in 1734–1735. Nadir appointed Erekle’s father, King Teimuraz II (1729–1744) as wali of Kakheti while a Persian governor ruled the neighboring Kartli. Despite the resistance of many Georgian nobles to Persian rule, Teimuraz and Erekle remained loyal to Nadir Khan (shah after 1737) to secure their power and rebuild the country. Erekle gained a reputation as a military commander commanding Georgian forces in Nadir Shah’s campaigns in India in 1737–1740, where he distinguished himself during the assault on Deli. In 1743, Erekle and Teimuraz supported Nadir Shah against the rebellious Georgian nobles, and as a reward, the Shah granted Kartli to Teimuraz and Kakheti to Erekle; his nephew, who succeeded him on the throne, was married to Teimuraz’s daughter Ketevan.

Following Nadir Shah’s assassination in 1747, Erekle took advantage of the political instability in Persia to assert his independence and concluded alliances with the khans of Azerbaijan against the Persians. In 1749, Erekle drove the last Persian troops out of Kartli and, after the death of his father in 1762, Erekle became the ruler of the united Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti. He successfully campaigned throughout southeastern Caucasus, where he established a temporary Georgian hegemony over various Muslim principalities. In 1751, he routed Azat Khan of Adarbadagan, one of the pretenders to the Persian throne, in a decisive battle at Kirbulakh (in Armenia) and later captured him in 1760. King Erekle also fought a series of battles against his archenemy, Açi Chalabi, khan of Saki-Shirvan, who
defeated the Georgians at Ganja in 1752 but was routed later that year. In the late 1750s, Erekle was engaged in a war of attrition with the Daghestanians, whose constant raids devastated eastern Georgia. In 1754–1755, he defeated them near Mchadjvari and Kvareli. He attempted to unify other Georgian principalities and negotiated a military alliance with King Solomon of Imereti in 1758. Erekle made significant reforms toward the modernization of the army, administration, education, and economy and restricted the powers of the feudal aristocracy. In 1765, he suppressed the uprising of Prince Paata and ruthlessly eliminated the rebel leaders.

Erekle also actively sought Russian aid against foreign threats because Russia was a Christian nation and could serve as a link to Europe, which Erekle thought essential for Georgia’s development. In 1752, he sent a mission to St. Petersburg to request Russian troops or a financial subsidy, but, preoccupied with European affairs, the Russian rulers ignored these appeals. Despite Erekle’s support of Russia in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768–1774, Russia remained reluctant to commit itself to a new alliance and treated Georgia as a secondary theater of military operations. Erekle finally obtained the guarantees he had sought from Russia when he and Empress Catherine II concluded the Treaty of Georgievsk in 1783. The treaty transformed Kartli-Kakheti into a Russian protectorate and pledged Russian protection against any foreign threats. However, Russia failed to live up to its responsibilities, and during a new Russo-Turkish War from 1787–1792, Russian troops evacuated Kartli-Kakheti, leaving Erekle to face Persia alone.

Agha Muhammad Khan of Persia, determined to restore Persian control over eastern Georgia, demanded that Erekle renounce his alliance with Russia and acknowledge Persian suzerainty. When Erekle refused, Agha Muhammad Khan invaded Kartli-Kakheti and devastated the countryside and razed Tbilisi in 1795. Russian troops arrived in 1796, too late to be of any help. Even then, the death of Empress Catherine brought an abrupt change in Russian policy in the Caucasus as her successor Paul I withdrew all Russian troops. Despite being let down by the Russians, Erekle remained convinced that only Russian protection could ensure the continued existence of his country. His death in early 1798 was a momentous event in Georgian history. The country lost an able and
experienced leader and found itself in the midst of a dynastic crisis as members of the royal houses vied against each other for power. Erekle’s quest to gain Russia’s help proved of great importance to Georgia since it led to the eventual annexation of Georgian principalities by Russia in the early 19th century and the subsequent 190 years of Russian administration.

**ERISTA VI**. Provincial governor and, oftentimes, title corresponding to duke. *Eristavi*, literally meaning “leader of the people,” enjoyed supreme authority within his province and commanded the troops. In the early Middle Ages, there were also positions of *eristavtmattavari* (prince of the dukes), the highest political position in the principality of *Iberia* between the sixth and ninth centuries, and of *eristavteristavi* or archduke that enjoyed higher status than *eristavi*. The *eristavis* of provinces were nominally subject to removal by the king, and their successors were supposed to receive royal approval. However, in reality, the king often could not remove powerful *eristavis* without risking a conflict. See also AMIR; AMIRSPASALAR; AMIREJIBI; AZNAUR; PATRONQMOBA.

**ERISTA VI, GIORGI** (1813–1864). Georgian playwright and one of the founders of Georgian theater dramaturgy. After graduating from the Tbilisi Noble School, Eristavi studied in a private school in Moscow and became friends with some Russian writers, including Alexander Griboedov. In 1832, Eristavi was implicated in an anti-Russian conspiracy and was imprisoned and exiled for 10 years. Returning to Georgia in 1842, he served in the administration of the Russian viceroy until 1854, when he returned to private life. He later directed a theater in Tbilisi, and in the 1850s, he founded and edited an influential journal *Tsiskari*. Eristavi’s poetry was influenced by Romanticism, and one of his early works *Osuri motkhoeba anu Zare da Kanimat*, adapted the Romeo and Juliet theme to Georgian realities. His greatest legacy lay in his plays that used satire and witty dialogue to expose the realities of contemporary life. Among his finest plays are the bitter comedies *Dava any tochka da zapetaia* (1840) and *Gakra* (1849) that ridiculed decadent Georgian nobles, unscrupulous Armenian moneylenders, and Russian civil servants.
ERISTAVI, RAPHAEL (1824–1901). Georgian poet, scholar, and journalist. Raphael Eristavi was descended from the powerful noble family of the Eristavis of Aragvi and studied in gymnasiums in Telavi and Tbilisi before starting his service in the Russian viceroy’s administration. He eventually became a member of the Caucasian Censorship Committee. Eristavi contributed articles on various issues to the journal Kavkaz and played an important role in establishing the Georgian Museum, Georgian theater, and the Society for the Advancement of Learning Among the Georgians. From 1884–1886, he directed the Georgian Drama Society and participated in the scientific study of the text of the Vepkhistaosani poem in 1882.

Eristavi’s first major work appeared in 1852 when the journal Tsiskari published his story Oborvanets (in Russian) followed by his first Georgian novelette, Nino, in 1857. In later years, he wrote the poems Ghvino (1868) Tandilas dardi (1882), Beruas chivili, Beruas chafigreba (1883), Aspindzis omi, Tamariani (1887), Dedaena, Neta ras stiri dediko?, Ras erchi mag bichs tataro (1881), Samshoblo khevurisa (1881) and others. Eristavi also tried vaudevilles, and his first play, Mbrunavi stolebi, appeared in 1868 followed by Dedakastma tu gaitisia, tskhra ugheli kharis umdzelvresia (1870), Jer daikhotsnen, mere igortsines, Suratebi chveni khalkhis tskhovrebidan, and others.

Through his journalism and scholarship, Eristavi played an important role in the development of Georgian ethnography and folk studies. He traveled widely all over Georgia and studied in detail the traditions in the mountainous regions of Georgia, especially in Khevsureti, Pshavi, Tusheti, and Svaneti. His works attracted the Russian public by their fluent Russian narrative and the interesting materials which Eristavi retrieved from his travels. Together with Ilia Chavchavadze, he published Glekhuri simgherebi, leksebi da andazebi which compiled folk songs and poems; in 1873, he also published Kartuli sakhalhko poezia on Georgian folk poetry, and four years later, he authored a book on Georgian proverbs and riddles. In the 1870s, Eristavi helped develop Georgian lexicology and technical terminology and produced several dictionaries, including the Latin-Russian-Georgian Plant Dictionary, Georgian-Russian-Latin Language Dictionary, and the first edition of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani’s Kartuli Leksikoni (1884). His fiftieth jubilee was a national event celebrated by many poets and public figures.
ERTSO-TIANETI. Historical region in eastern Georgia. Located in the upper valley of the Iori River, it consists of the two regions of Ertsos and Tianeti and was historically part of the kingdom of Kakheti.

EUTHYMIUS THE ATHONITE (EKVTIME ATONELI) (ca. 955–1028). Renowned Georgian philosopher and scholar, also known as Eufimius the Abasgian or St. Euthymius the Georgian. The son of Ioane Varaz-vache Chordvaneli and nephew of the great Tornike Eristavi, Ekvtime was taken as a hostage to Constantinople but was later released and became a monk, joining the famous Great Laura of Athanasios on Mount Athos. Ekvtime subsequently became leader of the Georgian Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos and emerged as one of the finest Christian theologians and scholars of his age. Fluent in Georgian, Greek, and other languages, he translated many religious treatises and philosophical works. Among his major works was Greek version of Sibrdzne Balavarisa (Wisdom of Balahvari), a Christianized version of episodes from the life of Buddha that became very popular in Medieval Europe. Of greater importance was Ekvtime’s work to prepare Georgian translations of various Greek philosophical, ecclesiastical and legal discourses that played a crucial role in the development of Georgia.

FEREYDAN. Fereydan and Fereydunshahr are two regions in Central Iran where Georgians were settled in the 17th century. In 1614–1617, Shah Abbas I of Persia launched several campaigns against Kakheti, razing numerous towns, fortresses, and monasteries; some 200,000 Georgians were taken into captivity and resettled into Persia, where they helped to develop local agriculture and industry. Over the next three centuries, Georgians remained there, witnessing the ups and downs of Persian history. Although Georgians also live in other regions of Iran, many of them do not speak Georgian anymore but are still aware of their Georgian origins. Georgians in Fereydan and Fereydunshahr speak fereidnuli, a variation of Georgian that is heavily influenced by Persian. Their clothing, music, and food are naturally...
more similar to the Persian but still retain some Georgian elements. Relations between the Georgians in Fereydan and Fereydunshahr and Georgia were maintained throughout the centuries but were curbed during the Soviet era. They were further revived in recent years, and Georgian president Mikhail Saakashvili visited the region in 2004. See also PERSIA, GEORGIAN COMMUNITIES IN.

FLAGS. The issue of the historical flag of Georgia remains the subject of a debate. Little is known about flags or symbols of ancient Georgia since there are no pieces preserved either from the ancient or the feudal period. Surviving sources indicate that the flag used between the fifth and 13th centuries might have had an image of St. George displayed against a white background. This flag became known as Gorgaslian-Davitian-Tamariani, referring to three major Georgian rulers, Vakhtang Gorgasali, David IV Aghmashenebeli, and Queen Tamar. In later periods, the 14th–16th centuries, the Georgian flag seems to have gone through several transformations, and some of its variations had crosses depicted on it. Some Western European sources recorded a Georgian flag with a cross or crosses against a white background; among them was also a five cross variation which, in effect, represented the flag of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem. In western Georgia, the kings of Imereti sometimes used a flag with a black cross against a white background.

Figure 1. The coat of arms of the royal house of Bagrationi.

In the 17th–18th centuries, Bagrationi rulers most often used royal banners that contained their royal coat of arms. The most important source on this topic remains Vakhushti Batonishvili’s (Bagrationi) excellent study on the history of Georgia, but it should be approached with critical analysis. According to Vakhushi, the royal flag (see figure 1) was usually divided into four panels: the central panel had the Tunic of Jesus Christ; according to ancient Georgian tradition, the
tunic was recovered by Georgian Jews after the crucifixion and brought to Mtskheta, the ancient capital of Georgia, where it was buried under the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral. The top right panel included David’s harp, symbolizing Bagrationi’s claim to descent from King David of Israel while the bottom left the sling with which the biblical David slew Goliath. The top left panel had the royal orb and the bottom right the crossed swords. Another variation of the royal flag was the ancient Gorgaslian-Davitian-Tamarian that depicted St. George slaying the dragon. In this period, each region of historical Georgia also had its own flag (see figure 2).

After the Russian annexation, Georgian flags became things of the past, and Russian imperial colors took their place. The situation changed in the early 20th century when Georgia became independent. In 1918, the newly established Transcaucasian Federation adopted a tricolor flag based on a German design, but it remained in effect for only three months before Georgia declared its independence on 26 May 1918. The new national flag of the democratic republic was also a tricolor where the garnet color stood for the national color of Georgia while black and white stripes stood for the country’s tragic past and hopes for the future. This flag, and its variations, was used until the Soviet occupation in 1921 and later remained the banner of Georgian émigrés (figure 3).

The Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic was established after 1921, merging Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan,
and later joined the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). From 1922–1937, the state flag of Georgia was that of the Federation—a red banner with initials ZSFSR (Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic). In the 1930s, the flag was modified, and a star with hammer and sickle in it were added. After the ZSFSR was disbanded and the sister republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia were restored, the Georgian flag was designed as a red banner with the inscription in Georgian, “Sakartvelos SSR” (Georgian SSR). In 1951, the flag was changed again. The new variation included a red hammer and sickle with a star in a blue sun in a canton blue bar in the upper part of flag; this flag was used until 1989 (see figure 4).

In the late 1980s, the national liberation movement mainly used as its symbols three types of flags: the ancient Gorgaslian-Davitian-Tamariani (with St. George), the flag with five red crosses, and the flag of the Menshevik republic. After Georgia became independent, President Zviad Gamsakhurdia’s government revived the tricolor flag of the Menshevik democratic republic in November 1990. The new flag was used for the next 13 years until the Rose Revolution in 2003; throughout this period, the medieval flag with five red crosses was widely used.

![Figure 3. Flags of the Menshevik Georgia (According to Vakhushti Bagrationi).](image1)

![Figure 4. Flags of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic (second republic), 1921–1990.](image2)
The new government of Mikhail Saakashvili set out to change the old symbols, which were replaced with more nationalistic representation. Public opinion, influenced by official propaganda, overwhelmingly favored adoption of the flag with five red crosses and ignored the few voices of protest from the historians and scholars who questioned the historical validity of the new flag. On 14 January 2004, the Parliament approved the new national flag with one large and four small red “Bolnisi crosses” against a white background (see figure 5).

FOREIGN RELATIONS. Georgia’s geopolitical location proved to be both a great advantage and disadvantage throughout its history. Located between Europe and Asia, Georgia served as a transit route for commerce, culture, and religions for millenniums and created its own unique civilization. However, the importance of its location also drew generations of conquerors who tried to extend their sphere of influence to Transcaucasia. More recently, the Russian Empire succeeded in establishing itself in Georgia for almost 200 years and projected its interests throughout the Near East.

During the Soviet era, Georgia’s traditional commercial and diplomatic links to Turkey and Iran, both close allies of the United States, were terminated and replaced by close integration with the 14 other Soviet republics. As in other spheres, the central authorities, in this case the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, controlled any foreign contacts. Eduard Shevardnadze’s tenure as Soviet foreign minister (1985–1990) was marked by visits of several high-ranking foreign dignitaries, including Britain’s Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and United States Secretary of State George Shultz.

Following its declaration of independence, Georgia had difficulty gaining international recognition, since many nations were reluctant to recognize breakaway republics of the still-existing Soviet Union.
Nevertheless, Romania granted recognition in August 1991, and several other states followed suit. Despite Georgian overtures toward the United States, Washington was unresponsive. By the time the Soviet Union was dissolved in late 1991, Georgia was embroiled in a civil war, and foreign contacts were greatly curtailed since the international community was not disposed to recognizing the legitimacy of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia’s successors. The situation changed in March 1992 when Eduard Shevardnadze became chairman of the State Council and used his reputation and knowledge of foreign leaders to advance the Georgian cause. Relations improved with Germany, which became the first Western country to post an ambassador to Georgia, and the United States, which provided some US$230 million in aid in 1992–1993 alone. By December 1992, six countries had diplomatic missions (China, Germany, Israel, Russia, Turkey, and the United States) in Tbilisi, and 17 other countries had begun conducting diplomatic affairs with Georgia through their ambassadors to Russia or Ukraine. In August 1993, the United States granted Georgia favored-nation status, and the European Community offered technical and economic assistance.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 increased Russian interests in Georgia since Russia lost virtually the entire Black Sea coastline, the direct connection with Armenia, its major strategic ally in the Caucasus, and saw its influence in the North Caucasus undermined. Recent history showed that these factors often played a negative role in Russo-Georgian relations as Russia adopted a dubious position in the ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia that brought Georgia to the brink of disintegration. It is natural then that Georgia’s foreign policy has been dominated by its relations with Russia. These relations improved slightly after the death of Zviad Gamsakurdia, who was a staunch nationalist and an opponent of Russia, and Eduard Shevardnadze’s government joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). A 10-year treaty of friendship and cooperation with Russia was signed in February 1994. However, relations with Russia continued to deteriorate following Georgia’s endeavors toward the West and its attempts to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), both of which Russia perceives as a major threat to its interests in the region. Russia was critical of the events of the Rose Revolution of 2003, and President Mikhail Saakashvili’s tenure has created even greater friction between Tbilisi and Moscow as a conse-
quence of the new Georgian government’s attempts to restore control in
the pro-Russian separatist regions. A war of words has been waged
from the very outset of the new Georgian government, which has
often adopted an aggressive stance toward Russian policies in the
region and has openly criticized Russian peacekeeping forces in
Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Tbilisi has accused Russia of pursuing
formal annexation of both regions and of seeking to gain the support of
the international community to resolve these conflicts.

The Russo–Georgian relations rapidly worsened in 2006, when Rus-
sia effectively declared an economic blockade of Georgia, banning im-
ports of Georgian wine, mineral water and other produce. Situation
further deteriorated in August–October 2006, when Georgia harshly
criticized Russia at the UN General Assembly and arrested four alleged
Russian spies in Tbilisi. In response, the Kremlin recalled its ambassa-
dor from Georgia, launched partial evacuation of its citizens from Geor-
gia and closed all transport connections with Georgia. Russian authori-
ties also launched an anti-Georgian campaign throughout Russia, which
drew international criticism. Another factor of geopolitical importance
is the oil and gas pipelines that cross Georgia circumventing Russian
territory. Since 2004, Russia uses its energy resources to further its
geopolitical interests and seeks control of strategic pipelines in Ukraine
and Georgia. In November 2006, Russian state-owned Gazprom threat-
ened to double the price of gas for Georgia unless Tbilisi agreed to hand
over some strategic assets, including gas pipeline. Tbilisi denounced
this request as Russian government’s “political blackmail” and attempts
to punish Georgia for its pro-Western stance. As of December 2006, re-
lations between Georgia and Russia remain at all time low and will
hardly improve in the nearest future.

Of the former Soviet republics, Georgia has the closest relations with
Azerbaijan, which transports its oil and gas through Georgia to the
world markets, and Kazakhstan. The latter became one of the largest in-
estors in Georgia, committing nearly US$2 billion in construction, re-
habilitation, and renovation works in Tbilisi, Batumi, and other regions.
Relations with Ukraine remain one of the cornerstones of Georgian for-
eign policy, especially vis-à-vis Russia. The Rose Revolution of 2003
inspired the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, and President
Saakashvili, who has lived and studied in Kiev, openly supported the
opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko in contrast to the Russian support
of Victor Yanukovich. In 1997, Georgia and Ukraine initiated a consultative forum, which was later formalized as a GUAM organization that serves as diplomatic means of countering the influence of Russia in the member states in the Caspian–Black Sea regions. In December 2005, the presidents of Ukraine and Georgia, joined by four other former Soviet republics, announced the formation of the Community of Democratic Choice that was unmistakably anti-Russian. In response, Russia resorted to its surreptitious weapon—gas supplies—to influence her neighbors, and the Russian state-owned gas company doubled the price of gas for Georgia and quadrupled it for Ukraine. Although Russia denied using gas as a tool of political pressure, the fact that her close ally Byelorussia continued to receive gas at a subsidized price argued otherwise.

After a tumultuous history of hostilities and tensions, Georgia rediscovered its neighbor Turkey as a friendly and reliable partner that greatly facilitated Georgia’s transition after the collapse of the USSR. The two countries have close relations that are further strengthened by the multi-billion-dollar pipeline projects that carry oil through Georgia to Turkey. Georgia has enjoyed long and complex relations with its southern neighbor, Armenia. For centuries, both countries were the only Christian, albeit of different creeds, nations in Asia Minor and lent a friendly hand of assistance in times of trouble. In the early 20th century, Georgia received a large influx of Armenians following their widespread persecution and massacre by the Turks during World War I. Since 1988, Armenia is engaged in a war with Azerbaijan over the Nagorny Karabagh region and, blockaded by its Turkic neighbors, its only communications with Russia and Western countries have to pass through Georgia. However, there is some tension in Georgian–Armenian relations that is reinforced by the fact that Armenia remains Russia’s major ally in the Caucasus. In addition, the large Armenian community residing in the southern region of Georgia often displays nationalistic sentiments, thus increasing Georgian suspicion that it might be used as an instrument of provocation to create another conflict inside Georgia.

The United States also has a particular interest in the region, having invested heavily in the oil pipeline projects. Georgia also serves as a strategic location in the American “War on Terror.” After the 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, Tbilisi offered Georgian airspace and airfields to Washington during the American operations in Afghanistan.
and Iraq and contributed troops to the international contingent in Iraq. In 2002, President Eduard Shevardnadze turned to the United States for assistance to enhance Georgia’s military preparedness and Train and Equip Program, designed to train the Georgian armed forces as part of the global war on terrorism, was launched in May 2002 with a US$64 million funding; it eventually trained four light infantry battalions and one mechanized armor company. The United States has provided the Georgian Ministry of Defense, border guard, customs, and other security and law enforcement agencies with communications equipment, vehicles, and helicopters with spares/repair parts for transport and patrol, surveillance and detection equipment, computers for automation of applications, licensing and regulatory systems, and forensics laboratory assistance. The American military also helped renovate the Georgian aviation maintenance facility on the Alekseyevsk airbase tarmac, where the US$3.2 million hangar and warehouse were completed.

Increasing U.S. economic and political influence in Georgia is spurned by the Kremlin, which considers it as American meddling in its “back yard.” The Georgian government regularly accuses the Russian peacekeepers in breakaway regions of siding with the separatists and calls for the withdrawal of the Russian peacekeepers. The American and international involvement in the region is perceived to change the region’s strategic balance for the better. Official Tbilisi, thus, has the delicate task of balancing its policies between Russia and the United States while solving its internal problems.

Another important actor in the regional politics is Europe. In April 1999, Georgia joined the Council of Europe and later signed the cornerstone Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the European Union (EU). These developments brought Georgia closer to the EU’s border and strengthened European strategic and economic interests in the region. After the Rose Revolution of 2003, Georgia and neighboring Armenia and Azerbaijan were included in the European Neighborhood Policy. Official Tbilisi views Georgia’s membership of the EU as its long-term priority.

**FORESTRY.** Georgia is about 40% covered by forests, of which roughly 10% are virgin forests. During the Soviet period, Georgia satisfied its demands by importing cheap wood from Siberia while conserving local forests. The economic turmoil of the 1990s saw the beginning of intensive exploitation of Georgia’s forests as the populace
sought wood for heating and timber for sale abroad. Illegal wood-cutting rapidly increased and threatened virgin forests, especially chestnut trees. The entire state forest fund of Georgia comprises 3 million hectares of land, of which 2.7 million hectares are covered with woods, and the total reserves amount to 386.4 million cubic meters. Although the government officially sanctioned cutting of 1 million cubic meters per year, legal and illegal cutting total over 2.5 million cubic meters annually. The government tries to take measures to curb illegal wood-cutting, but soaring energy costs and inadequate salaries compel the populace to take advantage of the illegal timber market to support itself. Reforestation efforts have slowed in recent years, from 4.7 thousand hectares in 1998 to 0.2 thousand hectares in 2004. Forest fires also frequently threaten some areas. See also ECONOMY.

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GABASHVILI, BESARION (1750–1791). Georgian poet and statesman, also known as Besiki. The son of Zakaria Gabashvili, minister of King Teimuraz II’s court, Besarion showed his literary talents early on. However, in the mid–18th century, his father quarreled with Catholicos Anton I of All Georgia and was forced into exile to Imereti. Gabashvili served at the court of King Solomon I and traveled on a diplomatic mission to Persia in 1778. Returning to Imereti, he was dispatched to negotiate an alliance with Russia in 1787. He met Prince Gregory Potemkin in southern Ukraine and followed him throughout the Russo–Turkish War of 1787–1791. Gabashvili died suddenly at Jassy on 4 February 1791.

The most gifted Georgian poet of his time, Gabashvili left a diverse poetic legacy that is unique for its sheer musicality and spontaneity. His poems Sevdis baghs shevel, Me mixvi magas shensa bralebsa, Me shenze pikrma mimarinda, Shavni shavni, and, most of all, Tano tatano and Dedopals anazed reveal his great talent at writing romantic poetry. His heroic poetry includes the poems Aspindzistvis and Rukhsis omi while his Rdzal-dedamtiliani, Chabua orbelianze, and other lyrics reveal his satirical skills. His poetic rhythms and rhymes remain among the finest in the Georgian literature and set the standard that succeeding generations of poets struggled to match.
GABASHVILI, CATHERINE (EKATERINE) (1851–1938). Georgian writer and public figure. Born in Gori, she graduated from a private boarding school in Tbilisi and became active in the national movement underway in the 1860s. She was influenced by Ilia Chavchavadze and other members of the tergdaleulni group, and her works concentrated on social and cultural issues of contemporary Georgian society. She was particularly concerned about the status of the peasantry, and her first work on this topic, Glekhatsobis azri sasoplo shkolazed, was published in the journal Droeba in 1870, followed by Surati, Ghvinia gadaichekha (1890), Magdanas lurja (1890), Meurmis pikrebi (1891), Gamarjvebuli niko (1896), Soplis megobari (1911), Soplis mastsavlebeli (1918), Soplis mevakhsheni (1925), and others. Her other writings—Romani didkhevashi (1881), Orena da quche (1883), Gurgenaulis babo (1890)—dealt with relations between individuals, social customs and morals, and the status of women in Georgian society.

Gabashvili was one of the first feminist writers who called for greater freedom and rights for women. She was actively involved in the Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians and drafted a specialized curriculum for women. In 1883, she opened a school for girls from impoverished families in her apartment in Tbilisi. In 1890, she co-founded the journal Jejili, which began publishing stories for children and played an important role in developing a youth literature genre in Georgia. In 1956, a feature film Magdanas lurja, based on Gabashvili’s novel, won prizes at the international film festivals at Cannes and Edinburgh.

GABASHVILI, GIGO (GIORGI) (1862–1936). Prominent painter, one of the founders of realism in Georgian painting. Born in Tbilisi, he showed his painting skills early on, and studied at the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts in 1886–1888 and the Munich Academy of Arts in 1894–1897. Returning to Georgia, he soon gained fame and held his first exhibition in Tbilisi in 1891. In the 1890s, Gabashvili traveled through Central Asia, Italy, and Greece and created several works that were influenced by his experiences. He established his art studio in Tbilisi in 1897 and trained a generation of painters, including T. Momtsesmlidze, A. Pitakhia, A. Gogiashvili, L. Avaliani, and G. Roinishvili. He produced hundreds of paintings, some of which are After the Rain, Tea Merchant, Mullah, Ancient Eastern Weapons Shop,
At the Melon Field, Bazaar in Samarkand, Divan-Begi Basin in Mukhara, Drunken Khevsur, Dawn at Cemetery Church, portraits of Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, Niko Nikoladze, etc. In the 1920s, Gabashvili helped establish the Georgian Academy of Arts in Tbilisi, where he worked as its first professor in subsequent years. The title of People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR was conferred on him in 1929.

GABASHVILI, TIMOTHY (?–1764). Georgian writer, traveler, and religious and political figure. Details on his early life remain obscure. Gabashvili served in the David Gareja monastery in the 1720s and later moved to Imereti, where he became archbishop of Kutaisi. In 1737, he created one of the first detailed maps of western Georgia. In 1738, King Alexander V of Imereti entrusted him to negotiate an anti-Ottoman alliance with Russia and Gabashvili traveled to St. Petersburg in 1739. Returning to Georgia in 1740, he retained the title of archbishop, although the bishopric itself was abolished. In 1753, Gabashvili was appointed archbishop of Kartli and became a close associate of King Erekle II. In 1755, Gabashvili traveled through Anatolia, Palestine, and Greece, visiting Istanbul and Georgian monasteries throughout the Ottoman Empire. In 1759, he returned to Georgia but later moved to Russia, where he joined the Georgian community in Astrakhan. Gabashvili left an interesting literary legacy, which includes his Mimoslva (Travels). Not published until 1852, Mimoslva laid the foundation for the study of Georgian cultural centers and remains one of the best sources on Georgia and Georgian monasteries abroad during that time. Among his other works, often united under the common name of Timotiane, are the historical novel Martsukhi and several religious treatises.

GABLIANI, GIVI (1915–2001). Georgian military figure, commander of the Georgian Legion units. Born in Mulachi, he studied medicine in Tbilisi and continued his studies in Munich. With the start of World War II, Gabliani joined the Georgian Legion where he quickly advanced through the ranks, becoming a colonel. Together with Shalva Maghlakelidze, he was one of the top Georgian commanders of the Georgian Legion and led Georgian battalions in the Caucasus and Crimea, where he earned a reputation as a capable officer. After
the war, he immigrated to the United States where he settled in New Jersey and practiced medicine until 1987. He left insightful memoirs on his years in the Georgian Legion.


**GAGELI, VARAM (13TH CENTURY).** Prominent Georgian feudal lord and court official during the reigns of Queen Tamar and King Giorgi IV. He served as *msakhurtukhutsesi* (majordomo) of the royal court and supported Georgian expansion throughout southern Caucasus. In the 1210s, he and Ivane Mkhargrdzeli raided the northern Persian provinces returning with enormous spoils. In 1220, he commanded the right wing of the Georgian army against the Mongols. During the reign of Queen Rusudan, he became one of the most powerful lords in Georgia. In the 1230s, after the Mongol conquest of eastern Georgia, he made peace with the invaders and commanded one of the *tumans*, a Mongol military district organized in Georgia. He participated in the Kokhstastavi Conspiracy against the Mongols and played an important role in having Prince David Ulu confirmed as co-ruler of Georgia.

GAMREKELI, DAVID (1911–1977). Georgian opera singer, baritone. Born in Chiatura, he graduated from Tbilisi Conservatory in 1935 and began performing at the Tbilisi Theater of Opera. In 1938, he won the All-Union competition in Moscow and later joined the Bolshoi Theater, where he remained until 1952. He established himself as one of the leading performers of his period and performed such memorable roles as Abdul the Arab in D. Arakishvili’s Tkmuleba Shota Rustavelze, Kaki in Andriashvili’s Kako qachaghi, Eugene Onegin in Tchaikovsky’s Eugene Onegin, and others. He was awarded the USSR State Prize in 1950.
GAMREKELI, IRAKLI (1894–1943). Georgian artist, painter, and one of the founders of the Georgian theater design art. He studied at Rostov Medical Institute and Medical Faculty of Tbilisi State University, from which he graduated in 1922. Gamrekeli began his career as a chief stage artist/designer at the Rustaveli Theater, and over the next two decades he created unique stage productions for Latavra (1924), Hamlet (1925), Tetnuldi (1931), Arsena (1936), Napertsklidan (1937), Othello (1937), Giorgi Saakadze (1940), and others.

GAMSAKHURDIA, CONSTANTINE (1893–1975). One of the greatest Georgian writers and public benefactor. Born to a noble family in Abasha in Mingrelia, he graduated from the Kutaisi Gymnasium and continued his studies at the Universities of St. Petersburg and Berlin. While living in Germany, he published a number of short stories that were influenced by German expressionism and French post-symbolism as well as articles and books on the Caucasus and its relations with Europe. In 1918, he helped found Tbilisi State University, where he later served as professor of German literature. In 1918–1919, he worked in the Georgian Embassy in Germany and in 1920 as plenipotentiary envoy to Italy.

Throughout the 1920s, Gamsakhurdia was one of the leaders of the national liberation movement in Georgia, and his writings often helped shape public opinion in Georgia. For his activity, he was arrested and imprisoned by the Soviet authorities in 1924–1925 and 1926–1928. Gamsakhurdia authored several epic Georgian historical novels, including Dionisos ghimili, Mtvaris motatseba, Didostatis marjvena, Vazis kvaviloba, and Davit Aghmashenebeli. His works brought unprecedented subtlety of phrasing to Georgian prose and established new models of syntactic construction. He was also the first Georgian scholar to study life and works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. His son, Zviad, led the national liberation movement in the 1960s–1980s and was elected first president of Georgia.

GAMSAKHURDIA, ZVIAD (1939–1993). Former first president of Georgia and leader of the national liberation movement. Gamsakhurdia is, without a doubt, one of the most important and controversial figures in recent Georgian history. He was born into a prominent family of noble origins, and his father, the great Georgian writer
Constantine Gamsakhurdia, was actively involved in the national liberation movement in the 1920s and 1930s. Inspired by his father’s example and the spirit of the national liberation movement, Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his friend Merab Kostava established the Georgian youth underground, Gorgasliani, in the early 1950s and began printing and distributing anti-Soviet pamphlets. In 1956, at the age of 17, he was arrested for his activities by the KGB. After his release, Gamsakhurdia studied at the Department of Western Languages and Literature in **Tbilisi State University (TSU)** in 1958–1962 and worked at the Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature and lectured at TSU from 1963–1990. He was a member of the Writers’ Union of Georgia from 1966–1977 and again from 1981–1992. Gamsakhurdia established himself as a talented scholar, translator, and Rustvelologist, and among his many translations were poetry and prose by French, British, and American authors.

Despite pressure from the authorities, Gamsakhurdia continued his work for the national liberation movement and established an underground printing press, which produced banned literature and the samizdat papers *Golden Fleece* and *Georgian Herald*. In 1974, he and Kostava established the Action Group for Defense of Human Rights and three years later founded the Georgian **Helsinki Group**. In 1977, the KGB arrested all of the members of the Soviet Helsinki Human Rights group, including Kostava and Gamsakhurdia. They were jailed in the notorious Lefortovo prison, and later, in an attempt to break their will and portray them as mentally ill, they were transferred for several months to a psychiatric prison along with other dissidents. In 1978, Gamsakhurdia was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by the United States Congress. In 1979, after serving two years in a psychiatric hospital and in prison, Gamsakhurdia appeared on nationwide television renouncing his anti-Soviet activities and condemning his fellow dissidents. The change in Gamsakhurdia’s position was, and still is, debated; it was argued that his recantation was coerced by the KGB under duress. Kostava, Gamsakhurdia’s close friend who probably knew him best, supported his decision, arguing that it was necessary to keep the dissident movement in Georgia alive. After returning to Georgia, Gamsakhurdia worked tirelessly to have his friend, Kostava, freed. In 1981, he led student demonstrations in **Tbilisi** and helped the national liberation movement to gain

After Kostava’s release in 1987, Gamsakhurdia co-founded the Society of Saint Ilia the Righteous and emerged as one of the leaders of Georgian national liberation movement. In 1988–1989, he and Kostava led numerous peaceful pro-independence protests, particularly in March–April 1989. He was arrested in April 1989 when the Soviet troops attacked peaceful demonstrators in Tbilisi. Released later that year, he was instrumental in organizing elections in Georgia, where his electoral Bloc Round Table–Independent Georgia won a sweeping victory. In November 1990, Gamsakhurdia was elected the chairman of the Supreme Council of Georgia and presided over the restoration of Georgian independence on 31 March 1991; on 9 April, he co-wrote the Declaration of Independence Act and was the first to sign it. The Supreme Council elected him as the first president of Georgia, which was later confirmed in nationwide elections on 26 May 1991.

Gamsakhurdia faced daunting challenges in his first term of office. Relations with Moscow quickly became hostile. Gamsakhurdia’s nationalist policy antagonized ethnic minorities, whose position was contentious even before Georgia’s independence. In 1989, violence erupted in the Autonomous Region of South Ossetia, where the Ossetian government announced its decision to secede from Georgia to Russia. In response, Gamsakhurdia and the Georgian Supreme Soviet annulled the autonomy and dispatched security forces to restore order. As the situation escalated, Gamsakhurdia sought to strengthen his authority and antagonized his many critics who challenged his authoritarian style of rule. Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and several senior members of the government resigned in protest. The anti-Gamsakhurdia opposition gained momentum while the president denounced them as “agents of the Kremlin” and traitors to their country.

Later that month, he dismissed Tengiz Kitovani, commander of the National Guard, who defied orders and led most of his troops to a military base outside Tbilisi. Gamsakhurdia then cracked down on his opposition, arresting its leaders and closing down newspapers and TV channels. On 2 September, Gamsakhurdia used force to disperse an anti-government rally in Tbilisi, which further intensified the
Oppositional sentiments. In October–November, skirmishes between government supporters and opponents evolved into gunfights. In December, the armed opposition, supported by the Mkhedrioni paramilitary organization, launched a military coup against Gamsakhurdia. Between 22 December 1991 and 6 January 1992, the government building in the central Tbilisi, where Gamsakhurdia was entrenched, was besieged by the opposition using heavy weaponry. On 6 January, Gamsakhurdia was finally able to break through the blockade and escape to Armenia and later to Chechnya, where he was welcomed by General Dzhokhar Dudayev.

In Gamsakhurdia’s absence, a triumvirate of Tengiz Kitovani, Jaba Ioseliani, and Tengiz Sigua established an interim Military Council and invited former Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze to lead the new government. Gamsakhurdia denounced their actions and claimed the legitimacy of his presidency. His supporters continued active resistance to the “military junta” and some of them briefly seized the national television center in June 1992. Shevardnadze’s government responded with repressive measures that targeted Gamsakhurdia’s supporters, now christened “Zviadists.”

The situation in Georgia worsened even more in August 1992 when violence broke out in Abkhazia and the Georgian government dispatched security forces to restore order. Sporadic clashes between the Georgian troops and Russian-backed separatists soon evolved into a full-scale war that completely destabilized the situation. As the Georgian army suffered major defeats and was forced to retreat from Abkhazia, Gamsakhurdia returned to Georgia where he rallied his supporters in his native Samegrelo (Mingrelia) region and established the so-called “government in exile” in Zugdidi. His supporters organized a substantial military force that attacked strategic installations and towns in the rear of the government forces retreating from Abkhazia.

Concerned about his authority, Shevardnadze had no other choice but to compromise with Russia. In exchange for Georgia’s return to the Russian sphere of influence, the Kremlin dispatched troops to the strategically vital port of Poti on the Black Sea and supported the Georgian government troops against the “Zviadist” forces. By mid-November, the government forces had subdued the resistance in Mingrelia and captured its center Zugdidi. Gamsakhurdia fled with sev-
eral of his bodyguards to the woods, where he continued fighting for a few weeks before he was found dead in the village of Khibula on 31 December 1993. The circumstances of his death remain unclear; the official version claims a suicide, but many in Georgia believe that he was assassinated. His body was transferred and buried in the Chechen capital of Grozny in late February 1994.

Gamsakhurdia’s legacy remains a controversial subject in Georgia. His contributions to the Georgian national movement are unquestionably significant, and he played a crucial role in raising Georgian national awareness. He was a talented writer, and, above all, an ardent nationalist. Gamsakhurdia’s legacy in the realm of politics is far from positive. He was easily influenced by his entourage and tended to adopt an authoritarian style of government. His radical nationalist policies certainly contributed to the escalation of ethnic conflicts in Georgia. His inflexibility and unwillingness to negotiate and compromise with opponents was even more crucial since it led to a civil war and split Georgian society at an important moment in its history. Following his death, his supporters were persecuted, and many were imprisoned. Only recently, in an attempt to reconcile a divided society, President Mikhail Saakashvili praised Gamsakhurdia’s role in recent Georgian history and began the process of his rehabilitation.

GAREJA MONASTERY. See DAVID GAREJA MONASTERY.

GARIGEBA KHELMTSIPIS KARISA (STATUTE OF THE ROYAL COURT). Statute establishing the structure and procedure of the Georgian monarchy. The date of its completion is usually set at the early 14th century, although some scholars place it as early as the 1290s. The original document is lost, and only the 17th century copy is preserved—and even that was discovered only in 1920. The Garigeba provides crucial insights on a wide range of issues, including government, economy, and culture. It defines in detail the rights and responsibilities of government officials and elaborates on the nature of the Georgian monarchy. According to this document, the king’s authority was limited by darbazi that could be summoned in didis tsesita to advise on crucial issues of war and peace, accession, etc., or umtsrosita tsesita to elaborate on topics of lesser importance. The king’s main advisory and administrative organ was a council of
viziers (saveziro). The council was led by mtsignobartukhutse si-chkondideli and comprised the following viziers (ranked by their authority): atabeg (chief adviser and tutor to the crown prince), amirspasalar (commander-in-chief), mandartukhutsesi (grand chamberlain), mechurchletukhutsesi (treasurer), and msakhurtukhutsesi (majordomo). The council was also attended by additional staff of amilakhor (deputy to amirspasalar), amirejib (deputy to mandartukhutsesi), and mtsignobari (clerk).

GARHNI, BATTLE OF (1225). Major battle between the Georgian army led by Ivane Mkhargrdzeli and the Khwarazmean forces of Jalāl al-Dīn. The Khwarazmean forces were displaced by the Mongol invasion of Central Asia, which claimed the powerful Empire of Khwarazm. After escaping to India and then eastern Persia, Jalāl al-Dīn rallied his forces, but instead of engaging the Mongols, he led them against neighboring Georgia. In the summer of 1225, his army of more than 100,000 men (some estimates place its strength at 200,000 men) approached the Georgian borders in Armenia, where Ivane Mkhargrdzeli gathered about 70,000 men. The Georgian advance guard was composed of the Meskhetian troops under Lords Shalva and Ivane Akhaltsikheli while the main forces were deployed on the hills near Garhni.

The battle started with the attack of the Georgian advance guard but feuding among the Georgian commanders predetermined the battle’s outcome. Despite repeated pleas from the Akhaltsikheli brothers, Ivane Mkhargrdzeli refused to commit his forces in support of his rivals and watched as the Khwarazmean troops slaughtered the Mesks. Ivane Akhaltsikheli fell on the battlefield, while Shalva was captured and later executed. The battle had a tremendous impact on Georgia, which had not experienced foreign invasions for almost a hundred years. The battle effectively signaled the end of the Golden Age of Georgia and the start of a long twilight. Jalāl al-Dīn soon captured Tbilisi and ravaged the country for the next five years until the arrival of the Mongols.

GARISI, BATTLE OF (1556). Major battle between the Georgian forces of King Luarsab I of Kartli and the Persian troops led by Shahverdi Sultan, beglarbeg of Ganja. In 1555, the Ottoman Empire and Persia concluded the Treaty of Amassia, which partitioned
Georgia between the two powers. Shah Tahmasp of Persia immediately set out to claim the eastern provinces of Georgia and dispatched Shahverdi Sultan, beglarbeg of Ganja, with the Persian army to conquer Kartli. The enemy invasion was routed by King Luarsab and his son Simon at the village of Garisi, but Luarsab himself died in the battle.

GEDEVANISHVILI, IONA (JOHN) (1737–1821). Georgian religious figure and writer. Gedevanishvili’s early life remains obscure but it is known that he followed Catholicos Anton I on his trip to Russia in 1756. He later served as archimandrite of the Jvari Monastery, and in 1785, he became mitropolit of Ruisi. However, a disagreement with King Erekle II forced him to flee to Imereti and from there traveled through the Middle East and Russia. He was welcomed at the court of Catherine II of Russia and settled in Moscow in 1795. Gedevanishvili wrote and published his diary of travels under the title Mimosula anu mgzavroba ioana ruisisi mitropolitisa between 1805–1810. His work provides interesting insights into political, social, and cultural aspects of life in Georgia, Anatolia, Palestine, Istanbul, Egypt, Greece, Poland, Moldavia, and other regions.

GEGECHKORI, ALEXANDER (1887–1928). Bolshevik revolutionary and government official. While working in Batumi and Baku in 1902–1904, he was exposed to Marxist ideology and joined the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP). He helped organize workers’ campaigns and set up a printing press. In 1905, he escaped the police in Baku and fled to Tbilisi, where he founded new Bolshevik cells. In 1906–1907, he directed Bolshevik activities in various regions of Georgia but was arrested and exiled in 1908. He managed to escape and worked with underground Bolshevik cells in Chelyabinsk. In 1909, he secretly returned to Georgia and helped set up Bolshevik cells in Mingrelia. The following year, he was arrested again and exiled, but he escaped only to be captured for the third time and was sent to Astrakhan.

Following the February Revolution in 1917, Gegechkori returned to Georgia and helped found the Kutaisi Bolshevik Bureau. In 1918, he was elected chairman of the Western Georgia Party Committee and organized several Bolshevik uprisings against the newly established Menshevik government of independent Georgia. In 1919, during one of the
revolts, he was seriously wounded and lost his right leg. While recuperating, he was arrested and exiled from Georgia. After the Soviet takeover of Georgia in 1921, Gegechkori served as chairman of the Tbilisi Revolutionary Committee in 1921–1922 and people’s commissar of internal affairs in 1922–1923. From 1924–1928, he was people’s commissar of agriculture and deputy chairman of the Georgian Council of People’s Commissars. He committed suicide in 1928.

GEGECHKORI, EVGENI (1881–1954). Menshevik revolutionary and government official. He studied at Moscow University and became active in the student movement in 1903–1904, joining the Menshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) in 1903. Two years later, he took part in revolutionary events in Georgia. From 1907–1912, he was elected a delegate from the Kutaisi Province to the 3rd State Duma, where he became one of the leaders of the Social Democratic faction. During the February Revolution in 1917, Gegechkori became commissar for the Provisional Government in western Georgia and later served as chairman of the Transcaucasian Soviet of Soldiers’ Deputies of the 1st convocation. In June 1917, he was elected to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. In November 1917–April 1918 he chaired the Transcaucasian Commissariat and served as minister of labor before leading the Transcaucasian Seim and becoming its minister of war. In March 1918, he rejected the provisions of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and sought a separate treaty with the Ottoman Empire. After the establishment of independent Georgia, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly and was appointed minister of foreign affairs, playing a prominent role in the Georgian–Turkish and Georgian–German negotiations. In March 1921, he joined other members of the Menshevik government as it went into exile in France. He remained active in exile, serving in the foreign delegation of the Georgian Social Democratic Party.

GELATI, MONASTERY AND ACADEMY. Major cultural center of medieval Georgia. The Monastery of Gelati is located near Kutaisi in western Georgia. It was founded by King David IV Aghmashenebeli in 1106 and completed by his son Demetre in 1130. The complex includes a number of churches and secular buildings that were added in later centuries. Three major churches are built of yellowish limestone, and the major cathedral is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The
monastery was also a major center of education, where King David IV invited various scholars to teach theological and secular subjects, including philosophy, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, grammar, rhetoric, music, etc. Among the scholars working there were such prominent men of letters as Ioane Petritsi and Arsen Ikaltoeli. Although many of the works produced at Gelati were destroyed in subsequent wars, some of them are still preserved at the Institute of Manuscripts in Tbilisi. King David IV Aghmashenebeli himself was buried on the grounds of the central gates of the monastery.

GELOVANI, MIKHAIL (1893–1956). Georgian actor, best known for his portrayal of Joseph Stalin. He began his movie career in Georgian theater in Baku in 1912 and later performed in Batumi and Kutaisi. He studied acting in Tbilisi in 1918–1920 and joined the Rustaveli Theater in 1921 and the Moscow Theater in 1942. He earned his fame for playing Joseph Stalin in the films the Great Glow and The Man with the Rifles (both 1938), the Vyborg Side and Lenin in 1918 (1939), Valerii Chkalov (1941), the Defense of Tsaritsyn (1942), the Vow (1946), and the Fall of Berlin (1950).

GEORGIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. Premier center of scientific research in Georgia, the Georgian Academy of Sciences (sakartvelos metsnierebata academia, GAS) was established in February 1941. It was based on the Georgian branch of the All-Union Academy of Sciences and Tbilisi State University, where several key research institutions and centers were established in the 1920s and 1930s. Among the founders of the Academy were such prominent scientists and scholars as Giorgi Akhvlediani, Arnold Chikobava, Ivane Beriashvili, Giorgi Chubinashvili, Simon Janashia, Alexander Janelidze, Korneli Kekelidze, Nikoloz Ketskhoveli, Giorgi Khachapuridze, Nikoloz Muskheleishvili, Akaki Shanidze, Dimitri Uznadze, and others. Initially, the Academy members were organized into the two Departments of Mathematics and Natural Sciences and of Social Sciences. However, the Academy currently unites over 62 research institutes and centers and employs almost 7,000 scholars. Its first president was the distinguished mathematician Nikoloz Muskheleishvili, who led the Academy for 30 years between 1941 and 1972. He was succeeded by another prominent Georgian mathematician Ilia Vekua, who held the post between 1972 and 1977. Evgeni Kharadze, an astronomer and physicist, presided over

**GEORGIAN AFFAIR OF 1922.** Crucial episode in early Soviet history and a cause of a rift in the Bolshevik leadership. Stirred by differing interpretations of nationality policies, the Georgian affair played an important role in defining the relations between the central and regional authorities as well as furthering the division between Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin.

In February 1921, the Red Army invaded the Democratic Republic of Georgia and overthrew its Menshevik government, which went into exile in France. As Bolshevik authority was established in Georgia, a number of disagreements emerged between the Bolshevik central authorities in Moscow and local committees. The most important dispute was between the Central Committee (CC) of the Communist Party of Georgia led by Philine Makharadze and Budu Mdivani and the Caucasian Bureau (Kavbyuro) of the Russian Communist Party directed by Sergo Ordzhonikidze. Makharadze and Mdivani believed that the Georgian Bolshevik organizations should retain some degree of autonomy and power, while Ordzhonikidze called for greater integration of Georgia within Transcaucasia in particular and Russia in general. Thus, the main issue became what was the authority of Kavbyuro over the CC of the regional Communist parties. Another aspect of the problem lay in the national question.

The Marxist movement itself was divided over these issues, with the Leninists believing that the nationalism could serve as a progressive force and therefore should be reconciled, while the Luxemburgists ruthlessly opposed it, considering nationalism a dangerous diversion of the working class forces. In Georgia, Ordzhonikidze had an aversion to any manifestations of nationalism, and his policies to curb it led to increasing conflict with the Georgian Communist Party. Among campaigns of the Georgian Bolsheviks were the Kavbyuro’s unilateral decision to unite the Transcaucasian railways and Cheka (Soviet secret police) under its authority. Furthermore, in late 1921, the Kavbyuro made public its project for the federal union of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan without consulting republican Communist parties. Another important issue was the status of the Georgian Red Army and Georgian trade unions, both of which the Kavbyuro
and the Georgian Communist Party wanted to control. Finally, the last major cause of friction was the issue of Georgia’s entry in the USSR.

In all of these issues, the Kavbyuro (which was soon renamed Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party or Zakkraikom) and its head, Ordzhonikidze, demanded maximum unification of Georgia within the new Soviet entity while the Georgian Communists tended to place the interests of Georgia proper above the needs of the central Communist authorities, which exposed them to charges of nationalism. One of the most hotly debated questions was the Zakkraikom’s desire to abolish the Georgian currency and introduce a Transcaucasian currency. The Georgian Communists countered that such a change would greatly undermine the Georgian economy, which remained strong in comparison to the neighboring states; real wages were on average 50% higher than in Russia. They also accused the Zakkraikom of subjecting Georgia to Russian nationalism by introducing the Russian language in official institutions, abolishing traditional Georgian uniforms in the Georgian armed forces, and deliberate discrimination against Georgians in government employment, where they were replaced by Russians. At the XII Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Georgian Bolsheviks, notably Kote Tsintsadze, complained about some 15,000 non-Georgians (mostly Russians) who were brought to replace Georgian workers at the Transcaucasian railways, while S. Kavtaradze accused the central authorities of pursuing “a colonial policy” reminiscent of “the imperialist state.”

The most important dispute was over Georgia’s integration within the Transcaucasian Federation. Vladimir Lenin warned against “thoughtless imitation” of the Russian Bolshevik experiences and allowed for wide divergence on regional levels. Yet, the Zakkraikom, disregarding the directives of Lenin and the Politburo, pushed the formation of the federation and a formal treaty of federal union of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan was signed by the representatives of the three republics in March 1922. The treaty effectively curtailed the authority of republican Communist parties and gave power to the central authorities. The Georgian Bolsheviks opposed the treaty, especially after Joseph Stalin publicized his project to have the three Caucasian republics enter the USSR as a single unit of the
Transcaucasian Federation. However, their protests were silenced by stern responses from the Bolshevik leadership, including Joseph Stalin, Lev Kamenev, and Nikolay Bukharin, in late October 1922. Ordzhonikidze took advantage of the moment to move against his opponents and tried to remove some of them from Tbilisi. Nine out of 11 members of the Georgian Central Committee resigned in protest over Ordzhonikidze's attacks and were quickly replaced by more compliant members; still, the Georgian complaints to Moscow resulted in a three-man commission sent to investigate Ordzhonikidze's action. Led by Felix Dzerzhinsky, the commission rebuked the Georgian Communist Party, denounced its members as “deviationists,” and supported Ordzhonikidze.

Ordzhonikidze’s opponents, however, soon got new reasons for complaints after Ordzhonikidze and his close ally A. Gegechkori physically assaulted some Georgian communists. Such high-handed methods increased suspicions among the Bolshevik high leadership, and although he criticized Georgian Bolsheviks in October 1922, Lenin changed his attitude to the Georgian affair and the nationalities issue in general by early 1923. He became more sympathetic to the Georgian complaints, which was reflected in his Testament and Notes on the Question of Nationalities or Autonomization. Lenin was concerned about the policies that Ordzhonikidze and his supporters put in place in Georgia and criticized what he perceived as the Russian oppression. He was concerned that the Bolshevik authorities took “that same Russian apparatus . . . over from Tsarism and slightly anointed it with Soviet oil.” Therefore, he wanted to make certain concessions in the nationality question, including guarantees in the sphere of language and possible transformation of the USSR into a military and diplomatic confederation while the republican CP retained authority over domestic issues. Lenin was particularly critical of Ordzhonikidze and Stalin, whom he considered responsible for events in Georgia.

Lenin’s intervention in the Georgian Affair had a major impact on subsequent events. Stalin, who was effectively in charge of uniting the Soviet republics and trying to solidify his position in the party, derided the Georgian Communists for opposing his plans but could not challenge Lenin’s authority. Instead, Stalin began working behind-the-scenes to undermine Lenin’s attempt to mitigate the Soviet na-
tionality policies. The growing hostility between Lenin and Stalin became evident in the former’s *Testament and Letters Opposing Great Russian Chauvinism of Stalin in relation to his proposal for ‘union’ of the independent republics in the Russian Federation* (December, 1922) and *Opposing Stalin’s ‘persecution’ of the ‘Georgian case’* (March 1923); Lenin described Stalin as “too rude” and “[in]capable of using [his] authority with sufficient caution” and suggested removing him from party leadership positions. In January 1923, Lenin opened his own inquiry into the Georgian affairs and the reports prepared by the Dzerzhinsky commission. The final report unequivocally supported the Georgian Bolsheviks, whose nationalism Lenin found insignificant compared to actions of the Kavbyuro. Lenin severely criticized both Ordzhonikidze and Dzerzhinsky for deviation from party policies, physical methods of repression, and cover-ups. Stalin was not mentioned in the report, but Lenin began to suspect his possible involvement and made several inquiries into this matter; some scholars argue that Stalin escaped censure because the secretaries to whom Lenin entrusted this investigation were Stalin’s appointees. Nevertheless, his split with Stalin increased following the latter’s mistreatment of Lenin’s wife Nadezhda Krupskaya.

In March 1923, Lenin openly supported the Georgian Communists in his letter to Mdivani and Makharadze, which signaled the start of conciliation. To avoid publicizing discord among the party leadership, the Politburo sought to contain the information surrounding the affair and distributed a brief circular commending both the Zakkraikom and Georgian Communist Party. Lenin, already suffering from poor health, entrusted this matter to Leon Trotsky, who seems to have taken some measures to help the Georgian Communists. At the same time, Stalin instructed Ordzhonikidze to reach a compromise with the Georgian Communists. On 14 March, a consensus was reached, and a secret party agreement was signed by the representatives of the Politburo, Zakkraikom, and the Georgian Communist Party. Georgians agreed to Georgia’s integration within the Transcaucasian Federation while the Politburo pledged to fight any “Great Russian” tendencies in nationality affairs and show sensitivity in local affairs.

However, the personal animosity between Ordzhonikidze, Mdivani, and Makharadze only intensified; following his failed attempt to remove Ordzhonikidze from the Zakkraikom, Mdivani himself
was sacked from the CC of the Georgian Communist Party, but Makharadze remained in place. Although Ordzhonikidze did defeat his opponents, his reputation was severely damaged by the entire affair and he was later recalled from the Caucasus. In late March, Trotsky tried unsuccessfully to persuade the Politburo to remove Ordzhonikidze from his post, and turning to more immediate economic problems, he did not attach importance to the affair and seems to have abandoned it completely. As a result, Stalin was able firmly to secure his position within the party and fend off Lenin’s notes on the nationality issues, which Lenin himself described as a “bomb” against Stalin. Although the notes were floated at the XII Congress, only Bukharin supported the Georgian Communists, while Stalin managed to sway the majority of delegates and avoid direct attacks. With the support of the Congress, Stalin declared that the right to national self-determination was subordinate to the right of the working class to strengthen its power, which effectively destroyed any hopes of the Georgian Bolsheviks for a favorable solution to their problems. With Lenin’s health rapidly deteriorating, Stalin was able to maneuver through party politics to the top. As Trotsky later noted, Stalin’s success against the Georgian ‘deviationists’ in the Georgian Affairs revealed the growing extent of his influence and signaled the beginning of the Stalinist counter-revolution.

GEORGIAN–BYZANTINE WARS (11TH CENTURY). A series of conflicts between the Kingdom of Georgia and the Byzantine Empire between 1021–1030 for the southwestern Georgian provinces. In 979, the Byzantine Emperor Basil, facing a large rebellion, appealed for help from Bagratid prince David III Curopalates. A Georgian expeditionary corps under Tornike Eristavi defeated the insurgents and restored authority to the emperor. However, soon after the death of David III, Emperor Basil occupied Tao in the 1000s and the subsequent Georgian–Byzantine disputes over David’s succession developed into a military conflict. In 1014, King Giorgi I of Georgia, taking advantage of Basil’s involvement in Bulgaria, invaded the disputed area and defeated an imperial army. However, once the Byzantine conquest of Bulgaria was complete in 1018, the Byzantine emperor made preparations for the new campaign against Georgia. In 1021–1022, his forces defeated Giorgi I and his allies and took con-
trol of Tao, Artaani, and Javakheti; some Georgian nobles, led by Vache Karichisdze and Bishop John (Ioane) Baneli, supported the Byzantine forces, while others rallied around Bishops Saba Mtbevari and Ezra Ancheli to defend the Shavshet–Klarjeti region. The Byzantine Emperor Constantine VIII also supported Prince Demetre, the son of Gurgen of Artanuji, in his claims to the throne of Georgia. Georgia was forced to sign a peace agreement and surrender several important fortresses along the border. Giorgi’s son Bagrat was sent to Constantinople as an imperial hostage where he remained for three years.

After the death of Giorgi, Bagrat IV returned to Georgia, but he faced the opposition of powerful lords who invited the Byzantine emperor to interfere in Georgian affairs. So the second Georgian–Byzantine War was fought in 1027–1029. The death of Emperor Constantine VIII and new threats to the imperial borders compelled his successor Emperor Romanus III to accept the peace treaty negotiated by Georgian Queen Mother Mariam.

GEORGIAN DIASPORA IN RUSSIA (17TH–19TH CENTURIES).

Georgians first appeared in Russian principalities in the early Middle Ages through commercial and religious contacts. Some sources indicate that Georgian artists participated in the decoration of the Kiev-Pechersk Monastery, the church of Savior-on-Nereditsa in Novgorod (12th century), and the Dmitrovsky Cathedral in Vladimir (12th century). However, a permanent Georgian colony was established in Moscow in the 17th century when Prince Erekle Bagrationi and his relatives moved to the Romanov court and married into the boyar noble families. Later that century, King Archil immigrated with his family to Moscow, where he established a Georgian printing press and printed the first Georgian books (BOOKS, FIRST PRINTED). Georgians settled along Nikolskaya street and in the villages of Vsesvyatkoje and Pakhra and quickly entered Russian political and cultural life under Tsar Peter the Great. Archil’s son, Alexander Batonishvili, became the first general of ordnance (feldzeugmeister) of the Russian army in 1699. In 1715, L. Gabashvili became the archimandrite of the Don Monastery in Moscow, and in later years, Joseph Samebeli served as the head of the Novgorod eparchy, where he expanded the Yurievsky Monastery.

In 1724, a new wave of Georgian emigrants arrived following the escape of King Vakhtang VI from Kartli. Vakhtang was given an estate
in Voskresenskoye, where his followers established a Georgian colony near Moscow. Another wave of Georgian immigration to Russia took place after the Russian annexation of Kartli-Kakheti in 1801 and of the remaining Georgian principalities in 1804–1815. Members of the royal family were exiled to Russia and were followed by many noble families. Some of them settled in St. Petersburg, others in Moscow. These Georgians gradually changed their family names to more Russian sounding versions, i.e., Dadiani became Dadianov, Baratashvili—Baratov, Tsitsishvili—Tsitsianov, Shalikashvili—Shalikov, etc. They often married into the Russian aristocracy and gained prominent positions at the court and in government. Besides Moscow and St. Petersburg, several Georgian colonies existed in Astrakhan, Kizlyar, Mozdok, and small towns along the North Caucasus.

GEORGIAN LEGION. Georgian unit serving in the German Wehrmacht during World War II. The history of the Georgian Legion can be traced back to 1914 when the Governing Committee for Independent Georgia, composed of Georgian emigres, was formed under the aegis of the German government, with branches in Austro-Hungary and Turkey. Led by Petre Surguladze, the committee included such prominent Georgians as Giorgi Machabeli, Mikhail Tsereteli, and Leo Kereselidze. In 1915, a special Georgian detachment, the Georgian Legion, was established as part of the German expeditionary forces in Turkey; it was initially commanded by both German and Georgian officers—initially by Lieutenant Horst Schliephack, and later, Count F. W. von der Schulenburg represented the German side, while Leo Kereselidze served as a Georgian commander. During World War I, the Georgian Legion was deployed in the mountains east of Tirebolu on the Black Sea coast, with its headquarters in Samsun and Kerasunt. However, the Turkish government, planning to annex southwestern Georgian provinces, was not keen on having the Georgian Legion operating on its territory and in late 1916 demanded its dissolution. The Legion was officially disbanded in April 1917.

During World War II, the German command began establishing the Eastern Legions, and among the first created was the so-called Georgian Legion of the Caucasian (Kaukatische) Legion, organized from Georgian emigres and prisoners of war; by 1942, the Georgian Legion included two battalions (nos. 795 and 796), but the following
year six more (nos. 797, 798, 799, 822, 823, 824) were formed. Commanded by Shalva Maghlakelidze, Givi Gabliani, and other Georgian officers, the Legion produced an internal newspaper, Sakartvelo, which printed news, ideological materials, and letters from the front. The Legion took part in the Wehrmacht’s campaigns in the Caucasus and Ukraine, but in late 1943, the German General Staff, based on incorrect reports of increased desertion in Eastern Legions, had them redeployed to France, Italy, and the Balkans, where they were used against the local guerrillas. Memoirs of some of the surviving legionnaires (Maghlakelidze, Gabliani) reveal that Georgian legionnaires opposed the redeployment from the Russian front since their goal was to fight the Soviet forces and liberate Georgia. As a result, the unit morale plummeted and willingness to fight for the Nazi regime declined. One of the Georgian battalions (822nd) was stationed at the strategic island of Texel off the Dutch coast, where it rebelled in the spring of 1945. After the war, many members of the Georgian Legion were repatriated to the USSR and once there, they were imprisoned or exiled to Siberia. Some Georgian legionnaires settled in Europe and the United States.

Another Caucasian detachment, the Bergman battalion (Sonderverband Bergmann), was organized in 1941, and it included three Georgian units, one North Caucasian unit, and one Azeri unit. Georgian companies were sometimes named after the Georgian royalty or literary persons such as David IV Aghmashenebeli, Tamar, Erekle II, and Rustaveli companies. Tamar II became a unit of the German Abwehr (military intelligence). A special Georgian cavalry squadron was organized under Prince M. Dadiani. In 1942, the members of Bergman battalion conducted intelligence and sabotage operations in the North Caucasus, in particular on the oil fields around Grozny. In the fall of 1942, the unit fought on the Mozdok-Nalchik front and later excelled in rear guard actions during the German retreat. In 1943, the battalion was increased in size and was transformed into a regiment with three battalions, where the Bergman-I battalion was staffed with Georgians. It distinguished itself in the Crimea and was evacuated to Greece and Croatia while auxiliary Georgian units were moved to France. After the war, some of them were repatriated to the Soviet Union while others stayed in Western Europe or immigrated to the United States.
GEORGIAN MILITARY HIGHWAY. Major route through the Caucasus Mountains. The highway has existed, first as a narrow path, since ancient times and was of strategic importance since it provided a direct access route to and from Georgia. After the Russian annexation of Georgia, it was important to have reliable communication and supply lines through the mountains, and a road was constructed by 1817 and paved by 1863. With a distance of 207 km between Vladikavkaz—for many years the main Russian military base in the region—and Tbilisi, the highway had towers and other military installations guarding the safety of travelers and served as a major route for the Russian military deployment in southern Caucasia.

GEORGIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH. The rise of Christianity had a profound effect on the Georgian principalities. According to Georgian traditions, representatives of the Jewish community of Mtskheta were present at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and that among the holy relics they brought back was Christ’s chiton (robe) that was buried near Mtskheta. The Christian tradition also describes the allotment of “Iberian” lands to Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is considered the main protector and intercessor of Georgia. Tradition holds that Christianity was first introduced by Apostles Andrew, the First Called, and Simon, the Canaanite, who preached in western Georgia and are credited with the establishment of the first Georgian Eparchy in Atskuri (in southwestern Georgia). Another apostle, Mathias, preached in southwest of Georgia and is buried in Goni, near Batumi. Apostles Bartholomew and Thadeus preached in southern Georgia as well.

Archeological studies reveal that Christianity was professed in Georgia in the second to third centuries before it was declared an official state religion. The new religion faced a major challenge from the Sasanid Empire and its Zoroastrian religion that had a firm hold over eastern Georgia and delayed the adoption of Christianity for decades. In the early fourth century, Equal-to-the-Apostles Saint Nino of Cappadocia preached the Christian message in Iberia and succeeded in persuading King Mirian II and his consort Queen Nana to proclaim it the state religion in (eastern Georgia) around 327 (or 337). Bishops Stratophile of Bichvinta (Pythiunda) and Domnis (Domne) of Trebizond attended the first Ecumenical Council held in Nicea in 325 and the Bishop Pantophilus of Kartli attended the second Ecumenical Council in 381.
After the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451) established five autocephalous sees in Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, the Church of Kartli was placed under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic See of Antioch while the Church of Egrisi was subordinated to Constantinople. The Church of Kartli constituted a part of the Antiochean patriarchy but became autocephalous (independent) in 466 when the Patriarchate of Antioch elevated the Bishop of Mtskheta to the rank of Catholicos of Kartli; the first Catholicos was Peter, who led the church between 467 and 474. Eventually, in 1010, the Catholicos of Kartli was elevated to the rank of patriarch and, in 1057, the Church of Antioch re-endorsed the Georgian church’s autocephaly.

In the sixth century, when, following the Council of Dvin, Georgian church leaders rejected Monophysitism—the christological position that Christ has only one nature—(neighboring Armenia accepted it in 506) and supported the Chalcedonian creed—which holds that Christ has two natures, one divine and one human—drawing Georgia closer to the Byzantine Empire, and later to Europe, and further from the Sasanid Persia that was more tolerant of the Monophysites. This period is noteworthy for the activities of famous Georgian theologians Evagrius Ponticus (Evagre Pontoeli, fourth century) and Peter the Iberian (Petre Iberi, fifth century).

By the sixth century, the Church of Kartli had 35 bishops and was gradually gaining its own rights and international recognition. In the ninth century, the church received the right to consecrate the myron (chrism, used in the administration of certain sacraments and in the performance of certain ecclesiastical functions), which was formerly delivered from Jerusalem. In the west, the Church of Egrisi (Lazica) was led by a metropolitan, who established his see in ancient Phasis (Poti) and was subordinated to the Patriarch of Constantinople. The close relations between the Church of Egrisi and Constantinople facilitated the spread of the Hellenistic Christian tradition in the region. In the late ninth century, the Church of Egrisi broke away from Constantinople and placed itself under the catholicos of the Church of Kartli, effectively establishing a united Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC).

Between the sixth and ninth centuries, Georgia underwent a cultural transformation as Christian monasticism flourished, leaving a long-lasting influence and stimulating a vigorous development of arts and letters. Although pre-Christian Georgian literature seems to have been destroyed in the process, new original works were created
and many important religious treatises translated from Greek into Georgian. The earliest surviving examples of Georgian hagiographic literature are the *Life of Saint Nino* and *Martyrdom of the Holy Queen Shushanik* from the fifth century. The widespread construction of churches promoted rapid improvement in architecture, and gradually a unique cruciform style of church architecture developed, evident in the basilica-type churches of Bolnisi and Urbnisi (fifth century) and the cruciform domed Jvari Church (late sixth century). Important centers of Georgian Christian culture were established at the Georgian monasteries at Mount Sinai and the Monastery of the Black Mountain near Antioch in Syria, the monasteries of St. Sabas, the Holy Cross, and St. Chariton in Palestine, the Iviron Monastery complex on Mount Athos in Greece, the Petritsoni Monastery in Bulgaria, and others. Important philosophical-theological schools existed at the Academies of Gelati and Ikalto.

The Georgian Christians had close contacts with the Holy Land and were involved in translating and interpreting Christian works; many lost original Arabic Christian texts are preserved through Georgian translations. Georgian scholars produced and translated polemical works on Christianity and Islam and original treatises on medicine, astronomy, and other fields. In the 10th century, the contacts between the Arab (Syrian) and Georgian Christian literatures faded and were replaced by Byzantine influence. The 11th–12th centuries saw the Georgian church actively participating in and adapting the Byzantine regulations and canons. The exchange of ideas was mutual, since Constantinople had a large community of Georgian scholars and theologians, who, in turn, influenced the Byzantine theology and philosophy. Constantinople and Mount Athos became the centers of Georgian Christian culture outside Georgia and produced outstanding manuscripts, many of which are still preserved at the Iviron Monastery. Frescoes, mosaic arts, icon painting, repoussé covers for holy books, and cloisonné were perfected; the Icon of the Kakhuli Virgin (10th century) remains one of the largest and most immaculate enamel works in the world. This period produced such talented scholars and theologians as Euthymios the Athonite (Ektime Atoneli, 955–1028), Giorgi the Athonite (Giorgi Atoneli, 1009–1065), Epraim the Lesser (Ephrem Mtsire, 11th century), Arsen Ikaltoeli (11th century), and
Ioane Petritsi. Of particular importance was the activity of Grigol Khandzteli, who organized a vibrant monastic life in the Tao-Klarjeti region of southwestern Georgia.

The 10th–11th centuries saw the GOC come into possession of vast land holdings, turning it into “a state within a state” and clashing with the royal authority. In 1103, King David IV Aghmashenebeli convened the Ruis-Urbnisi Church Council that reformed the Georgian Orthodox Church. The council limited the church’s authority, expelled rebellious clergy, and expanded the royal administration into the clerical sphere. The office of the powerful Archbishop of Chqondidi was merged with that of Mtsignobartukhutsesi, chief adviser to the king on all state issues, and the new office of Chqondideli-Mtsignobartukhutsesi introduced direct royal authority into the church.

Following the Golden Age in the late 12th and early 13th centuries, Georgia was devastated by the Mongol invasions and the onslaught of Tamerlane (Timur). The GOC played a particularly important role during this period when it provided a rallying point for the population, providing spiritual comfort and preserving the Georgian culture. However, political developments also affected the church. Between the 15th and 18th centuries, as the united Kingdom of Georgia was split into eastern and western parts, the Orthodox Church was ruled by two catholicos-patriarchs, and an independent catholicate emerged in west Georgia in the late 14th century.

Unlike other orthodox churches, the Georgian church was more tolerant of the Roman Catholic Church. In the 13th century, Franciscan missionaries were allowed to establish a monastery, led by Jacob of Rogsane, in Tbilisi. Later that century, the Dominicans operated another monastery in Georgia. In 1329, Pope John XXII established a Catholic bishopric in Tbilisi, which survived until the 16th century. The Georgian cleric Nikoloz Cholokashvili-Irbaki (1585–1659) served as an ambassador in Europe from 1626–1629, tried to establish links between the Orthodox and Catholic churches, and established the first Georgian printing press in Rome, where the first Georgian book, a Georgian–Italian dictionary for Catholic missionaries, was printed. (See also BOOKS, FIRST PRINTED.) In the early 18th century, the prominent ecclesiastic figure Sulkhan Saba Orbeliani also traveled to Europe (1713–1716) to bring Georgia into contact with the Western powers and even converted to Catholicism in a bid to secure
European support against Persia. Theatine missionaries operated in Georgia from 1628–1700 while Capuchin Franciscans existed until 1845 when the Russian authorities put an end to their activities.

After the Kingdom of Kartl-Kakheti was occupied and annexed by the Russian Empire, the autocephalous status of the Georgian Orthodox Church was abolished by the Russian authorities in 1811. For the next hundred years, the Georgian church was subordinated to the synodal rule of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Georgian liturgy was suppressed and replaced with the Russian liturgy. In the 1850s, most of the GOC’s property and lands were requisitioned by the Russian government.

The February Revolution in 1917 provided the possibility of reviving the GOC, and its autocephaly was restored on 12 March 1917, although the Holy Synod of the Constantinople and the Russian Orthodox Church refused to officially recognize it. The restoration of the GOC proved short-lived because four years later, the Red Army invaded and occupied the newly independent Georgian republic. Throughout this period, hundreds, if not thousands, of churches and monasteries were damaged or destroyed throughout Georgia, particularly in revolutionary Guria. Inspired by new ideology, the Bolshevik authorities persecuted the Georgian church and had thousands of priests and monks arrested. During World War II, persecution of the clergy was relatively limited as Joseph Stalin sought to use the church to rally the Soviet citizens against the Nazi threat. The autocephaly of the Georgian church was recognized by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1943, but it remained under the constant pressure and supervision of the Soviet authorities. Nevertheless, between 1921 and 1978, the Georgian clergy held 12 ecclesiastical councils. The GOC enjoyed a period of revival, and the Holy Synod of Constantinople recognized its autocephaly in January 1990.

At present, the Georgian church consists of 15 bishoprics supervised by the Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II, who resides in Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi. The church supervises 35 eparchies and several hundred active churches and monasteries.

In 2002, more than 88% of Georgia’s population identified themselves as Christians, and, of them, 84% as Orthodox Christians. The Georgian church itself has been wary of the spread of proselytizing Protestant religions, especially Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh-Day
Adventists, and Pentecostals, and argues that these groups exploit the dire economic conditions in Georgia to gain converts through financial aid. Conservative elements in the church forced Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II to withdraw the Georgian church from two major ecumenical bodies, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches in 1997. Between 1999 and 2002, a small group of Orthodox Christians, led by the defrocked priest Father Basili, organized several publicized attacks against religious groups, which led to international criticism of Georgia. In 2002, the Georgian Parliament ratified a concordat with the Georgian Orthodox Church granting it a special status, considering the church’s exceptional contributions to the history and culture of Georgia.

**GEORGIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC.** A socialist republic established following the Bolshevik invasion and the collapse of the Menshevik republic in February 1921. Between December 1921–February 1922, elections to the Bolshevik soviets were conducted and the 1st All-Georgian Conference of Soviets (February–March 1922) adopted the first socialist constitution of Georgia. Simultaneously, the Adjarian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) was established in July 1921, followed by the Abkhazian ASSR in December 1921 and the South Ossetian Autonomous District in April 1922. On 12 March 1922, the Georgian SSR was annexed to the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (ZSFSR), but in December 1936, the ZSFSR was disbanded and the Georgian SSR received the status of one of the constituent republics of the Soviet Union. The republic eventually included three autonomous regions, 67 raions (administrative regions), and 51 towns. The 1937 Constitution established a one-chamber Supreme Soviet (Council) of the Georgian SSR that was elected for a four-year term. In between its sessions, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet assumed the supreme authority. The Supreme Soviet had legislative authority and appointed and supervised the Council of Ministers that assumed executive authority. In addition, the Supreme Soviet created the Council of Nationalities where autonomous regions elected their representatives (Abkhazia and Adjara, 11 deputies each; South Ossetia, 5 deputies). The judiciary was directed by the Supreme Court that was elected for five years by the Supreme Soviet.
Despite political and cultural repression, the Georgian SSR achieved considerable success in industry, medicine, education, and science. Between the 1930s and the 1950s, some 800 new industrial enterprises were constructed, among them hydroelectric and thermal power plants, factories, and mines in Rustavi, Zestaponi, Chiatura, Tkvarcheli, and Kutaisi. Several thousand kilometers of roads and some 250 km of railroad were built. Illiteracy was gradually eradicated, and a universal education system was introduced. Tbilisi State University became one of the premier institutions of higher education in the entire Caucasus region, and the Georgian Academy of Sciences was established in 1941. The period also saw rapid urbanization as the rural population dropped from 78% in 1926 to 52% in 1970.

**GEORGIEVSK, TREATY OF 1783.** Agreement between the Georgian Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti and the Russian Empire concluded at Georgievsk in the North Caucasus on 24 July 1783; Prince Paul Potemkin signed it on behalf of Russian Empress Catherine II and Ioane Mukhranbatoni and Garsevan Chavchavadze represented the Georgian King Erekle II. The treaty was ratified by both King Erekle and Empress Catherine in early 1784.

The treaty contained 13 major articles. King Erekle II recognized the Russian protectorate and pledged to place his forces in the service of the Russian rulers. In turn, Empress Catherine guaranteed the integrity of Georgian territories and promised military and political support against foreign threats. Minor articles dealt with the right of investiture, correspondence with foreign powers, and the status of Georgian catholicos, nobility, clergy, and merchants within the Russian Empire.

Four secret articles were also negotiated. King Erekle II was to establish close relations with King Solomon, and in case they quarreled, both Georgian rulers were to seek Russian mediation. Russia promised to deploy two battalions and four cannons in Georgia, and the Russian commander of the Caucasian Line (in North Caucasus) was responsible for providing additional forces in case of foreign invasion. In its negotiations with the Ottoman Empire and Persia, Russia was to insist that the territories of Kartli-Kakheti, taken from it by these two powers, be returned.

The treaty of Georgievsk established a nominal military alliance between Russia and Georgia and was designed to reduce the posi-
tions of Persia and Turkey in the Caucasus. However, Russia was unable to honor its obligations, and the treaty, in fact, proved to be detrimental to Georgia. The Ottomans and Persians perceived it as Russian expansion into their spheres of influence and a direct challenge to their interests. Two Russian battalions could not provide adequate protection, and in 1787, Empress Catherine recalled even this token force from Georgia, leaving King Erekle to face the Ottoman and Persian retribution. Although he was able to check the Turks, Erekle could not defend his country against the invasion of Agha Muhammad Khan in 1795. The Persian invasion was followed by that of the Dagestani that further devastated Kartli-Kakheti. In response to Erekle’s pleas for help, two Russian battalions arrived in Georgia in late 1795 and Russia declared war on Persia in March 1796. However, in November, Empress Catherine II died, and her son Paul I at once recalled the Russian troops from Transcaucasia. The Treaty of Georgievsk was, for all practical purposes, void.

The deaths of King Erekle in 1798 and of his son Giorgi XII in 1800 became turning points in the history of eastern Georgia. In September 1801, in a complete breach of the Treaty of Georgievsk, Emperor Alexander of Russia unilaterally abolished the Georgian kingdoms of Kartli-Kakheti and had them annexed to the empire as gubernias (province). The Bagrationi royal family was detained and exiled in 1803, and the autocephaly of the Georgian Orthodox Church was abolished in 1811.

**GEORGICA.** International historical journal established and published cooperatively by Tbilisi State University (TSU) and the University of Jena (Germany). From 1978–1989, the journal was printed in Jena but later was published in Konstanz (Germany). In recent years, it represents the efforts of four major universities (TSU and the Universities of Jena, Saarbrucken, and Konstanz) and remains one of the leading academic publications in the field of Kartvelology and Caucasian studies. See also BEDI KARTLISA.

**GERMANS IN GEORGIA.** As Russia expanded into Caucasus in the late 18th century, the Russian rulers began resettling German colonists into newly acquired areas. In the 1800s, after annexation of eastern Georgian principalities, small groups of settlers from
Wurttemberg, Bavaria, and other Germanic states were settled in Kartli. The goal was to repopulate the regions, help develop agriculture, and introduce pro-Russian demographics. General Alexey Yermolov, Russian commander-in-chief in the Caucasus, was particularly active in this respect. He arranged the arrival of the first group of colonists, consisting of some 200 persons, in Tbilisi in September in 1817 and settled them near Sartichala, where a colony named Marienfield was established. A year later, Yermolov moved 500 Wurttemberg families to Kartli and had them settled throughout the region. The colonists were provided with land, money, and materials necessary to start new life.

By 1820, six major colonies were established in eastern Georgia: Marienfield, Petersdorf (17 families, near Marienfield); Kukia (51 families, presently David Aghmashenebeli Avenue in Tbilisi); Alexandersdorf (23 families, in present day Didube district in Tbilisi); Elisavetal (65 families, present-day Asureti); and Ekaterinenfeld (116 families, near Bolnisi). Small groups of colonists were moved to other regions of Georgia throughout the 19th century. By 1865, there were over 4,000 Germans in Georgia, and their population increased to 5,500 by 1886 and some 7,500 by 1897. The early 20th century saw Germans emigrating from Caucasus, and this accelerated during and after World War I and the Georgian independence. In 1922, there were 2,500 Germans in Georgia and their numbers had slightly increased by 1926 when 3,200 persons were counted. World War II launched another wave of exodus as Germans were forcibly removed from Georgia and its neighboring regions and resettled by the Soviet authorities. Their numbers remained low for the rest of the Soviet period. The 1989 census found only 1,546 Germans residing in Georgia. The collapse of the USSR and the opening of the borders allowed many of them to emigrate, and the 2002 census accounted for only 651 Germans in Georgia.

GHMERTI. In Georgian mythology, the supreme divinity, head of the pantheon of gods, chief architect and lord of the universe. According to the mythos, Ghmerti is all-powerful and created the universe. He lives in the ninth sky, where he resides on a golden throne. His daughter, the sun, and his son, the moon, illuminate the earth, while his other offspring, khvits-shvilni, wander the earth, protecting humans and fighting the evil forces. Ghmerti controls nature and animals, and he determines the length and events of every human’s life. Ghmerti often
was called Morige Ghmerti (“God the Director”) or Dambadebeli (“the Creator”). Following the spread of Christianity, the cult of Ghmerti quickly merged with the identity of God the Father.

GHOGHOBERIDZE, LEVAN (1896–1937). Bolshevik revolutionary and government official. Ghoghoberidze joined the Bolshevik Party in the 1910s and soon proved himself an active revolutionary. In 1917, he became deputy chairman of the Dzhivizlik Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies and served on the editorial board of the Bolshevik newspaper Kavkazskii rabochii (Caucasian Worker). In 1918, he helped establish the Bolshevik government in Baku, but had to flee the city after its collapse. He directed underground Bolshevik cells in Georgia but was arrested and banished from the country. Returning to Azerbaijan, he joined the Bureau of the Baku Bolshevik Party Committee and organized demonstrations against the Musavatist government.

After working in the Nizhegorod Provincial Party Committee, Ghoghoberidze returned to Georgia, where he was secretary of the Tbilisi Revolutionary Committee and secretary of the Tbilisi Party Committee. In 1923, he rose to the post of deputy chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of Georgia. From 1926–1930, he served as the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, virtually governing the entire country. In 1930, he moved to Moscow, where he held various positions in the party and was elected to the 15th and 16th Party Congresses. During the Stalinist purges, he was arrested by the secret police and died in prison in March 1937.

GIORGADZE, IGOR (1950– ). Former minister of state security of Georgia. The son of General Panteleimon Giorgadze, the current leader of the Georgian Communist Party, Giorgadze served in the KGB during the Soviet Union era and became minister of state security of Georgia in 1993. He was charged with terrorism and the assassination attempt on President Eduard Shevardnadze in 1995, but he escaped prosecution and remains in hiding in Russia. Despite numerous requests from Georgian authorities and Interpol, Russia denies Giorgadze’s presence, although the latter frequently gives interviews to the Russian media. Giorgadze attempted to run in the presidential elections in 2000 and 2004 but was refused registration. In 2005 and 2006, Giorgadze helped establish the Justice Party in Georgia and made several appearances in the Russian media, forewarning of the impending “Revolution of Nettles.”
in Georgia to redress the “Rose Revolution.” In September 2006, Georgian authorities arrested 29 people linked to Giorgadze’s Justice Party, and charged 13 of them with plotting a coup against the government.

GIORGADZE, PANTALEIMON (1925– ). Georgian politician, leader of the United Communist Party of Georgia. Giorgadze served in the Soviet Army during World War II, joined the Communist Party in 1944, and later studied at the USSR General Staff Academy, from which he graduated in 1969. During his military career, he rose to the position of deputy commander of the Soviet Border Troops and earned more than 40 medals and orders before retiring with the rank of general. After Georgia’s independence in 1990, he was one of the vocal members of the Communist Party, but after the party broke apart, he became the leader of the United Communist Party of Georgia.

GIORGI. In Georgian mythology, a pre-Christian deity warrior who protected farmers, travelers, warriors, and hunters. After the spread of Christianity, the deity was morphed with the cult of St. George and was believed to be the patron saint of Georgia. The cult of Giorgi remains widespread in Georgia, especially in the mountainous regions.

GIORGI I. King of Georgia from 1014–1027. The son of King Bagrat III, Giorgi faced many difficulties upon his accession. The eastern provinces of Kakheti and Hereti were in revolt, and the Byzantine Empire had annexed the southwestern Georgian province of Tao. Taking advantage of Emperor Basil II’s involvement in Bulgaria, Giorgi invaded the disputed area and defeated an imperial army in 1014–1018. However, once the Byzantine conquest of Bulgaria was complete in 1018, Basil made preparations for the new campaign against Georgia. In response, Giorgi negotiated an alliance with the Armenian princes and contacted the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim to fight the Byzantine Empire. Despite this diplomatic success, the Georgians were unable to defeat the imperial forces. In 1021–1022, Basil II defeated Giorgi I and his allies and took control of Tao, Artaani, and Javakheti (See MESKHETI). Georgia was forced to sign a peace agreement and surrender several important fortresses along the border. Giorgi’s son Bagrat was sent to Constantinople as an imperial hostage and remained there for three years. King Giorgi died while making preparations for new
war at Trialeti on 16 August 1027 and was buried in Kutaisi. One of the lasting legacies of Giorgi’s reign was the construction of the magnificent Svetitskhoveli Cathedral in Mtskheta. He was succeeded by his son Bagrat IV.

GIORGI II. King of Abkhazia from 922–957. The son of King Constantine III, he was challenged by his brother Bagrat and later by Giorgi’s son Constantine, both of whom he defeated. In the 930s, Giorgi II placed his son Leon in Kartli and campaigned in Kakheti, where he forced the local ruler Kvirike to recognize his authority. He helped to spread Christianity in Ossetia and constructed churches throughout western Georgia. By the mid-10th century, Giorgi had emerged as one of the most powerful rulers in southern Caucasia.

GIORGI II (c. 1072–1089). King of Georgia from 1072–1089. The son of Bagrat IV, Giorgi’s reign began with the revolt of defiant lords and the invasions of the Seljuk Turks. In 1073, several powerful lords rebelled against the king; Niania, the son of Kvabuli, captured the royal capital of Kutaisi while Ivane Baghvashi, supported by the Kakhetians, seized positions in the Ksani Valley and Eristavi Vardan of Svaneti invaded western Georgia. King Giorgi chose to negotiate with the rebels and made substantial concessions. Despite his important victory over the Seljuks under Sarang of Gandja at Partskhisi, King Giorgi was unable to stop the annual migration of the Turcoman tribes to Georgia. In 1074, the Seljuk Sultan Malik Shah ravaged Samshvilde and Kartli. In later years, Giorgi campaigned in southwestern Georgia, where he recovered many fortresses from Byzantine control. The Georgian seizure of Kars, however, triggered the Seljuk punitive expedition under Amir Ahmad, who defeated Giorgi at Kvelistsikhe. Starting in 1080, the Turcoman tribes began to settle in Georgia, where they occupied large expanses of territory, turning it into pastures and undermining local agriculture and economy. Giorgi was forced to sign peace with the Great Seljuks by which Georgia became a tributary state of the sultanate. Giorgi used the respite in war against the Seljuks to solve his domestic problems. Devastated by foreign invasions, Georgia was further weakened by the disastrous earthquake of 1083 that leveled many cities and killed thousands of people. In 1089, King Giorgi resigned his throne in favor of his son David IV.
GIORGI III (?–1184). King of Georgia from 1156–1184. The son of King Demetre I, he was placed on the throne by King Demetre I after the death of his eldest son David V in 1156, despite the fact that David had a son Demetre (Demna). Giorgi pursued an aggressive foreign policy and sought to extend his sphere of influence. He seized Dwin and Ani in 1161–1162 and supported his nephew, Shirvanshah Aghsartan of Shirvan, against foreign threats in 1167. Although the Seljuks later forced Giorgi III to cede Ani to a Muslim ruler on terms of vassalage, this Armenian city was eventually incorporated into Georgia by 1173. However, Georgian external success was undermined by internal dissent. In 1177, the nobles led by Prince Demetre (Demna), the nephew of Giorgi III, and Lord Ioane Orbeli, amirspasalar of the Georgian army, rose in rebellion seeking to remove Giorgi III and limit the royal authority. Giorgi III quickly moved against the rebellion and suppressed it by 1178. The same year, King Giorgi III appointed his daughter Tamar as his co-regent in an attempt to thwart any opposition of the nobility in case of his untimely death. Giorgi and Tamar ruled together for the next six years. The king supervised the construction of the Geguti Palace in western Georgia. He died at the village of Stagiri on 27 March 1184 and was buried in the Gelati Monastery.

GIORGI IV (LASHA GIORGI) (1193–1223). King of Georgia from 1206–1223. The son of Queen Tamar, he was made a co-regent in 1206 and became king after the death of his mother in 1213. Over the next several years, he campaigned against Ganja, Akhlat, Erzerum, and Naxčevan. Around 1219–1220, Giorgi IV received a letter from Pope Honorius asking for military support of the Crusaders against the Muslims in Palestine. He enthusiastically supported this plan and made necessary preparations for the campaign. However, in 1220, Georgia suddenly faced a new and unexpected enemy, the Mongols, who would forever change the course of events. The Mongols led by the great Subudai and Jebe defeated the Georgian army in a decisive battle in which Giorgi was seriously wounded. Luckily, the Mongols then crossed the Caucasus Mountains and marched toward the Russian principalities. The Georgian court failed to learn from this experience and considered it a simple raid, making no preparations on the eve of massive invasions. Giorgi barely recovered from his wound when he traveled to celebrate his sister Rusudan's wedding to the ruler of Shirvan in 1223, but
he died of complications of his injury at Bagavan. He was famous for his remarkable gallantry and compassionate character, but, most of all, for his free spirit. Despite the strong opposition of the nobility and the church, he fell in love and wed a commoner, who was already married; this marriage produced one child, David, future King David ulu. Although he was later forced to divorce his wife, Giorgi refused to marry anyone else for the rest of his life.

GIORGI V THE BRILLIANT (?–1346). King of Georgia in 1299 and between 1318 and 1346. The son of King Demetre II, he was confirmed as king by the Mongols in 1299 but his reign was a formality since he effectively controlled only Tbilisi. In the 1310s, the Il-Khan Öljeitü confirmed the infant son of King David VIII as King Giorgi VI (1314–1318) and appointed his uncle Giorgi V as his regent. Over the next several years, Giorgi proved himself a skillful politician as he established close contacts with various states throughout the Middle East. In 1316–1320, he sent embassies to the Mamluk rulers of Egypt, who allowed the Georgians to take control of major Christian sacred sites in the Holy Land, including the Church of the Holy Cross, the Calvary, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the keys to the Edicule of the Tomb of the Lord. Becoming king in 1318, Giorgi faced a daunting task of uniting his kingdom, which had split into three parts and was devastated by wars. Breaking with his predecessors who fought the Mongols, Giorgi chose to establish close relations with the Il-Khans and used their military might to further his goals. He defeated the Ossetians and recaptured Gori and subdued defiant nobles, most of whom were captured and executed.

In 1329, after the death of King Michael of western Georgia, Giorgi seized Kutaisi and reunited the eastern and western Georgian principalities. In 1334, he took advantage of the passing of Sargis II Jakeli of Samtskhe to annex this region as well. At the same time, Giorgi summoned a church council that reformed the Georgian Orthodox Church. He also adopted two new legal codes, Dzeglis dadeba, which was enforced in the mountainous regions of Georgia, and Khelmitsipis karis garigeba, which reorganized the royal court and government. He implemented a number of financial reforms, including the introduction of a new silver currency known as Giorgauli tetri. Giorgi took advantage of the civil strife in the Il-Khanate to expel the remaining Mongol
forces from Georgia. He maintained close contacts with European rulers, including French King Philip VI and Pope John XXII.

GIORGI XI. King (*wali*) of Kartli from 1676–1688 and 1703–1709, and a prominent official at the Safavid court of Persia known as Gorgin Khan or Shah Nawaz II. He was the son of King Vakhtang V (Shah Nawaz Khan I), after whose death Shah Solayman summoned Prince Giorgi to his court, had him convert to Islam, and confirmed him as ruler of Kartli in 1676. Giorgi, now known as Gorgin Khan, reigned over Kartli for 10 years that were marked by his continuing tensions with the Persian vizier Shaikh Ali Khan. Giorgi was confirmed as the king in 1676. Unlike his father, Giorgi sought to lessen the Persian influence in eastern Georgia, supported his brother Archil in Imereti, and established close contacts with the Catholic church, protecting its missionaries in Georgia. He also persecuted pro-Persian nobles in Kartli, which irritated the Safavid shah. In 1688, Shah Solayman deposed Gorgin Khan for supporting rebels in the neighboring Kakheti and appointed a rival claimant, Prince Erekle (Nazar-Ali Khan), to replace him.

Gorgin Khan initially fled to Ottoman-controlled western Georgia, where he was sheltered by his brother Archil. In 1690–1691, with Ottoman support, he campaigned against the lords of Guria and Mingrelia but was unable to defeat the Persians in Kartli. In the mid-1690s, as relations between Persia and the Ottoman Empire deteriorated, Gorgin Khan was offered the throne of Kartli again in return for the support of the Safavids, which he did. Nevertheless, disagreements soon prevailed, and Giorgi continued to defy the Safavids, repulsing their incursions in 1694–1695. The new Shah Sultan Husayn preferred a diplomatic solution and offered Gorgin Khan amnesty, which he accepted. In March 1697, the Portuguese envoy, Gregorio Pereira Fidalgo, witnessed his arrival at the Safavid palace accompanied by 50 soldiers. Recognizing his courage and skills, Sultan Husayn confirmed Giorgi as the king of Kartli in 1703 but kept him in Esfahan. Giorgi was then appointed *beglarbeg* of Kerman, and in 1703, Shah Sultan Husayn appointed him *sepahsalar* or commander-in-chief of the Persian army and the governor (*beglarbeg*) of Qandahar. Since Giorgi had no offspring, his nephew Kaikhosro (Kosrow Khan) was appointed to rule Kartli in his absence.
In late 1703, Giorgi was ordered to pacify the Afghani tribes that constantly harassed eastern Persian provinces. The following spring, Giorgi led his corps of some 4,000 Georgians and 20,000 Persians and quickly subjugated the Afghani tribes. However, his soldiers proved to be unforgiving toward the local population, and they requisitioned goods and raised taxes. Georgian oppressive treatment of the Afghan population prompted Mir Vays (Mir Ways), a local tribal leader, to lead a rebellion, but he was quickly arrested. Giorgi then committed a crucial mistake by sending Mir Vays to Esfahan, although he urged the shah to get rid of him or at least never to allow him to return to Qandahar. A strong Persian faction that was hostile to the Georgians dwelled in the Persian capital, and it took advantage of Mir Vays’ claims to paint the Georgian actions in the worst possible light. Furthermore, Mir Vays was allowed to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he procured fatwas authorizing him to lead a holy war against the Georgians.

Returning to Esfahan, Mir Vays, through skillful flattery and substantial bribes, lulled the suspicions of the shah, who ordered King Giorgi to show moderation and cooperate with the Afghans. King Giorgi probably underestimated the danger he was facing since he failed to notice Mir Vays’ preparations against him. The Afghans attacked the Georgian garrison in Qandahar in the spring of 1709, taking advantage of the absence of the Georgian detachment of Prince Alexander Luarsabis–dze who had marched off to pacify one of the nearby regions. Sources vary on the final minutes of the Georgians, some describe them being killed while sleeping in a garden while others portray Giorgi and his entourage’s desperate fight at a banquet the Afghans had organized in their honor.

After learning about this disaster, Shah Sultan Husayn dispatched Giorgi’s nephew Kaikhosro with 30,000 Persians and 1,200 Georgians to suppress the uprising in 1711. However, this expedition was doomed from the start since the Persian grand vizier, who had intrigued against the Georgian faction, allegedly had maintained a secret correspondence with Mir Vays informing him of the Georgian moves; in addition, the troops were not properly funded and the Persian contingent was placed under separate command. Kaikhosro initially managed to defeat the Afghan forces and besiege Qandahar. However, as Mir Vays gathered his reinforcements,
the Persian troops began to desert in large numbers, leaving the Georgians to fight. In the final battle, only several hundred Georgians and Persians survived out of the entire expeditionary force; both Kaikhosro and Prince Alexander Luarsabis–dze perished. The loss of capable Georgian generals and their elite troops left Persia exposed to future attacks that eventually culminated in the Afghan Invasion of 1722.

GIORGI ATONELI (THE ATHONITE) (ca. 1009–1065). Eminent Georgian philosopher and scholar, the head of the Iviron Monastery. Giorgi Atoneli was born into a royal official’s family in Trialeti and was educated at the monasteries at Tadzrisi and Kakhuli. Around 1022, he traveled to Constantinople where he studied for the next 10 years. Returning to Georgia, he entered the Kakhuli Monastery and embarked on his religious career. In the 1030s, Giorgi Atoneli traveled widely in Anatolia, the Holy Land, and Greece and lived at the Georgian monastery on the Black Mountain, where he was mentored by prominent Georgian monk Giorgi Shekenebuli. In 1040, he moved to the Mount Athos in Greece, where he joined the Georgian Iviron Monastery and became its head four years later. Under Giorgi’s direction, the Iviron Monastery earned a reputation for scholarship and became a center of Georgian cultural life. Giorgi maintained close contact with Georgia and helped King Bagrat IV to regulate the Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC). In 1057, he defended the autocephaly of the GOC in a bitter argument with the Church of Antioch. He directed the translations of numerous Greek, Syriac, and Arabic works into Georgian, including the treatises of John of Damascus, Basil the Great, Athanasius of Alexandria, and others. Giorgi Atoneli also produced the so-called Giorgiseuli edition of the Bible. He wrote several influential works that set the standards for the Georgian hymnography, liturgy, hagiography, and other fields; among his major works were Tskhovreba netarisa mamisa chuenisa ioanesi da epvimesi da utskebai mis mokalakobisa matisai, Sakharebai gamokrebuli satselitsdo, Pavle gamokrebuli satselitsdo, and Tueni atormetnive. He is buried at the Iviron Monastery in Greece.

GIORGİ MTSIRE (THE LESSER) (11TH CENTURY). Georgian scholar and writer, disciple of Giorgi Atoneli. Little is known about
his early life; the earliest facts of his life relate to his travels with Giorgi Atoneli in Anatolia and the Holy Land. In the mid-11th century, Giorgi Mtsire, also known as Giorgi Khutsesmonazoni, was active at the Georgian monastery on the Black Mountain and later followed his mentor to the Iviron Monastery. In the 1060s, he wrote the biography of Giorgi Atoneli that provides interesting insights into Georgian communities in various monasteries abroad and Georgian–Byzantine relations.

GOGEBASHVILI, JACOB (IAKOB) (1840–1912). Georgian pedagogue, publicist, and scholar, founder of the field of pedagogy in Georgia. Born into a priest’s family, Gogebashvili studied in seminaries in Gori, Tbilisi, and Kiev in 1858–1863. Returning to Georgia, he began teaching at Tbilisi Seminary in 1863 and later became an academic supervisor. He was actively involved in the national liberation movement and became a close associate of Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, and other members of the Pirveli dasi group. His activities caused the government to dismiss him in 1874, and Gogebashvili was never employed in state positions again. He was instrumental in pushing educational reforms and laid the foundation for the field of pedagogy. He helped operate and edited youth literary journals Nobati, Jejili, and Nakaduli. Among his many articles and works were Kartuli enis anbani da pirveli sakitkhavi tsigni mostsavletatvis (1865), Bunebis kari (1865), Deda ena (1876), publicist writings Burji erovnebisa, Khe naqofit itsnobeba, akhali nabiji khalkhis ganatlebashi, Brma tsinamdgholoba khalkhis ganatlebashi, and works of fiction Iavnanam ra kna, Lomi, Mertskhali, Oragulis tskhvreba, Aspindzis omi, Iotam Zedgenidze, Erekle Meje da ingilo kali, and Tsotne dadiani. His most famous, and arguably most influential work, is Deda ena, the first Georgian ABC and grammar book that still remains popular in Georgia.

GOGLIDZE, SERGEY (1901–1953). Georgian Communist, senior official in the Soviet secret service. Born in Korta (Racha region), Goglidze enlisted in the Red Army in 1918 and fought in Central Asia, where he was appointed to the revolutionary tribunal. He began working in the All-Russian Emergency Commission (Cheka) in 1921 and served as army commissar in Ukraine and the Caucasus in 1922–1923. He graduated from the Frunze Military Academy in 1929
and began service in the Cheka’s successor State Political Directorate (Gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie, GPU), where he directed political affairs of the Transcaucasian bureau. During these years, he was befriended by Lavrenti Beria, who helped him advance through the ranks. In 1934, Gogladze became head of the border and internal guard forces of the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennykh del, NKVD) and served as the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of Georgia in 1937–1938.

Goglidze was responsible for carrying out ruthless purges in Georgia and employed high-handed methods in dealing with those arrested. After the fall of N. Yezhov, the head of the NKVD, in 1938, Goglidze purged the secret service of “suspicious” elements, and in early 1941, he directed purges in Bessarabia. After the start of World War II, he was sent to direct NKVD in the Khabarovsk region in the Far East. Two years later, Goglidze became commissioner of the Ministry of State Security (Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti, MGB) for the entire Far East region of the USSR. He was transferred to Moscow in 1951, where he became the head of the Chief Directorate of Railway and Water Transport Security of the MGB. With Beria’s support, he became Deputy Minister of State Security of the USSR in August 1951, and after a brief tenure as the Minister of State Security of Uzbekistan in October 1951–February 1952, he continued service in the second highest position at MGB, where he also directed the 3rd Directorate (Military Counter-Intelligence). Following Joseph Stalin’s death in March 1952, Beria united MGB with the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), where Goglidze became a member of the Ministry Collegium and head of the 3rd Directorate. In July 1953, he was visiting East Germany when Beria was arrested in a coup; Goglidze was also detained and was transported to Moscow, where he was accused of treason and executed.

GORI. Town some 60 km west of Tbilisi. The exact date of founding of Gori is unknown. Archeological excavations indicate human settlements dating back to ancient times, and the existence of the fortress of Gori is recorded in early medieval sources. However, King David IV Aghmashenebeli is usually credited with establishing the city of Gori, where he settled Armenian refugees who helped develop commerce. Gori soon developed into a trading emporium, and its
fortress, known as Goristsikhe, held a strategic position in the Kura/Mtkvari Valley. Between the 13th–19th centuries, Gori changed hands numerous times as the Ottoman and Persian empires tried to extend their dominion over Georgia. Gori’s world fame stems from being the birthplace of **Joseph Stalin**, and the city has the world’s only Stalin museum that contains numerous artifacts, including Stalin’s entire childhood home.

**GOVERNMENT.** The **Constitution of 1995** established a presidential republic with a strong mechanism of checks and balances between government branches. Legislative authority is vested in the Parliament, which is the highest representative body of the state. It exercises legislative power, carries out the general control over the government, determines the main directions of domestic and foreign relations, and performs other functions within the framework of the Constitution. The Parliament consists of 275 members: 150 of them are elected in a nationwide vote on the basis of proportional representation from party lists, and 85 members are chosen from single-mandate, geographically defined districts. Members of Parliament are elected for four years on the basis of free, universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

The executive branch includes the president of Georgia, who serves as head of state, and a prime minister, who serves as head of government. The president exercises control of the internal and foreign policy of the state and acts as the commander-in-chief. The president is elected on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot for a term of five years. A person may be elected to this post for only two consecutive terms. The government, responsible to the president and the Parliament, is composed of the prime minister and the ministers. The prime minister appoints other members of the government with the consent of the president and is authorized to dismiss the members of the government.

The judiciary is presided over by the Supreme Court of Georgia. The Parliament appoints the chairman of the Supreme Court upon nomination by the president. Simultaneously, the Constitutional Court rules on the legality and constitutionality of legislative or governmental acts under the Constitution of Georgia.
GREEN PARTY. Green Party (Mtsvaneta Partia, GPG) was established by Zurab Zhvania, R. Khuntsaria, and Giorgi Baramidze in 1990 and soon emerged as a powerful new force on the political scene of Georgia. Failing to gain representation in 1990, the party, led by Zhvania, secured 12 seats in 1992 and three years later, the Green Party made a pragmatic choice of supporting Eduard Shevardnadze which brought it four seats in the Parliament. The party leadership provided a valuable experience for Zurab Zhvania, who went on to enjoy a remarkable political career, playing an important role in the Rose Revolution of 2003 and becoming prime minister of Georgia.

GREGORY PAKURIANOS. See GRIGOL BAKURIANISDZE.

GRIGOL BAKURIANISDZE (?–1086). Prominent Georgian prince and commander of the Byzantine forces, also known as Gregory Pakurianos. The son of Eristaveristavi Bakur of Tao, Grigol entered the Byzantine service and quickly rose through the ranks. He governed Byzantine provinces in Syria, Kars, and Theodosiopolis. In 1064, he fought against the Seljucks of Alp Arslan at Ani, and in the early 1070s, commanded Byzantine troops against King Giorgi II of Georgia. Grigol was one of the most influential nobles in the Byzantine Empire, and in 1081, he played an active role in a coup against Emperor Nicephorus III. Under the new emperor, he became the commander-in-chief (megas domestikos) of western regions of the empire and controlled vast territories in the Balkans. He supported Georgian monasteries in the Holy Land and the Byzantine Empire, making substantial donations to the Georgian Iviron Monastery on Mount Athos and establishing the Georgian monastery of Petritsoni (modern Bachkovo). He died in one of the battles against the Pechenegs in 1086. His typikon of the Petritsoni monastery discussed the history of the foundation of the monastery and set its curriculum and objectives.

GRIGOL KHANDZTELI (?–861). Prominent Georgian religious figure and scholar, also known as Grigol (Gregory) of Khandzta. He was born to a noble family and raised at the court of Eristavi Nerse of Kartli. After entering a monastery, Gregory traveled to the Tao-Klarjeti region in the company of Saba of Iskhani, Theodorius, and Christophorus, who helped him establish an active monastic community in
southwestern Georgia. Grigol stayed in the St. John the Baptist Monastery in Opiza for two years and then founded a monastery at Khandzta. He was supported by Ashot Curopalates of the emerging Bagrationi family, who provided material and financial support for the newly established community of monks. The Khandzta Monastery soon became a major cultural and religious center, and Grigol earned an unimpeachable reputation for his wisdom, moral values, and strict adherence to religious dogmas. Hearing about Ashot Curopalates’ liaison with a commoner, he chastised the powerful prince for living in sin and forced him to part ways with his mistress. When the election of catholicos of Kartli was marred by nepotism and fraud and threatened to split the Church of Kartli, Grigol was invited to mediate and successfully resolved this divisive issue. He spent years traveling throughout western Georgia where he gave sermons and helped found the Ubisa Monastery.

GRISHASHVILI, IOSEB (JOSEPH) (1889–1965). Georgian poet, one of the most popular of the 20th century Georgian writers. The son of an artisan, his real last name was Mamulaishvili. He began writing poems in his youth and began his career working as a prompter in theaters. Fluent in several languages, Grishashvili turned his poetic talents to his roots among the shopkeepers and tradesmen of old Tbilisi, and his lyrics were often styled after the ashugh (popular minstrel). In the late 1910s, he published the artistic journal Leyla and was serving on the editorial board of the journal Khomli and newspapers Lomisi and Kartuli sitkva. He was briefly associated with the tsisperkantelebi literary group, but the Bolshevik takeover of Georgia affected his writings, and he published only a few poems in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In 1927, he wrote Dzveli Tbilisis literaturuli Bohema, which reminisces about old Tbilisi. He also later participated in the production of the Georgian language dictionary and subsequently became a member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 1946. Grishashvili was honored with the title of People’s Poet of the Georgian SSR in 1959 and served on the board of the Georgian Writers’ Union. Among his scholarly works are the essays on origins of Georgian Romanticism, Mikhail Lermontov and Georgian Literature, and the comparison of Georgian literature to other Soviet writing. However, Grishashvili is best remembered for his
love lyrics and translations of Armenian, Azeri, and Russian poets. He was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor in 1944 and the Stalin Prize in 1950.

GUAM. Regional international organization that unites Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova. GUAM (named after the initial letters of member countries) was initially established as a consultative forum in 1997, and two years later, it was expanded to include Uzbekistan, changing its name to GUUAM. The organization charter was officially adopted in June 2001 but, in 2005, Uzbekistan withdrew from the organization. GUAM serves both as a commercial emporium and diplomatic means of countering the influence of Russia in the member states in the Caspian–Black Sea regions.

GUBAZ I (FIFTH CENTURY). King of Egrisi/Lazica, Gubaz led an anti-Byzantine uprising in 456 and appealed to Sasanid Persia for support. Over the next decade, he fought the armies of the Byzantine emperors—Marcian (450–457) and Leon I (457–474)—before agreeing to resign his throne in favor of his son Tsate. In 465, he visited the Byzantine court to pledge allegiance to the emperor.

GUBAZ II (? –554). King of Egrisi/Lazica in the mid-sixth century. Gubaz II was a client-king of the Byzantine Empire, but he exploited the conflict between Constantinople and Sasanid Persia to gain independence. In 541, Gubaz II, embittered by the Byzantine oppression, organized a revolt and appealed to the Sasanid Shah Chosroes I (Khosrau Anushirvan) for help. In 542, in response to the Persian army entering Lazica, Emperor Justinian mobilized the Byzantine forces against them. The fighting between the two powers centered around the strategic fortress of Petra, where the Persian–Lazic troops initially defeated the imperial forces.

The success, however, proved bittersweet since Gubaz soon realized that the Persians wanted, just like the Byzantines, to conquer his country. In 548, Gubaz revolted again, this time against the Persians, and requested help from Emperor Justinian. The Imperial army led by Dagisthaeus besieged Petra but was defeated by the superior Persians. In 550, the Byzantine–Lazic army routed Persian armies on the Phasis (Rioni) and Tskhenistskali rivers. Petra was captured, and an-
other Persian army was defeated at Archaeopolis (Vani) in 551. Yet, the tide of war soon shifted to the Persians as they seized Kutaisi and defeated Byzantine–Lazic forces at Telephis in 553. Archaeopolis was lost the following year, and the defeats caused a bitter disagreement between Gubaz and the Byzantine commanders. The king complained about the actions of the Byzantine commanders Bessas, Martin, and Rusticus to the Byzantine emperor, who recalled Bessas.

In 554, the remaining Byzantine commanders assassinated King Gubaz at a meeting on the bank of the Khobistskali River. In response, the dismayed population of Lazica summoned a national assembly, where two notables, Aietes and Partadze, gave their famed speeches on whether to continue supporting Byzantium or turn to Persia. In the end, Egrisi sided with the Byzantine Empire, feeling cultural and religious affinity with it. Tsathes (Tsate), the younger brother of Gubaz, was selected as the new king, and the Byzantine emperor investigated the assassination and had Rusticus and his brother John arrested and executed.

GUDA-MAKARI. Historical region in the Caucasus Mountains of northern Georgia. It is bordered by Mtiuleti to the west, Khevi to the north, Khevsureti and Pshavi to the east, and Khando-Chartali to the south. Its Georgian population is often referred to as guda-makrelebi and speaks one of the mtiuluri dialects of the Georgian language.

GUDIASHVILI, VLADIMIR (LADO) (1896–1980). Well-known Georgian painter and artist. Born in Tbilisi, he studied at the Tbilisi Painting and Sculpture School in 1910–1914. During this period, he met Niko Pirosmanishvili (Pirosmani), who made a deep impression on him and inspired several of his paintings. From 1919–1926, Gudiaashvili traveled to France, where he studied in Paris and met such prominent artists as Pablo Picasso, Amadeo Modigliani, Louis Aragon, and others. He enjoyed critical success in Paris, and his works were featured at exhibitions in Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Lyons, and later in London, Rome, Brussels, Berlin, Amsterdam, and New York. He was also involved in the Tsisperkantelebi (Blue Horns) symbolist group of Georgian artists. Returning to Georgia, he began teaching at the Tbilisi Art Academy.
His works combine dramatic grotesque, warm colors and mythological allegories. An amazingly versatile artist, he produced easel paintings, frescoes, and drawings in ink, water-colors, gouache, and mixed media, illustrated books, produced satirical drawings and stage scenery, and painted historical pictures and portraits, allegorical compositions, and decorative panels. His subjects vary from portraits to lyrical themes to mythological and political subjects. Gudiashvili died in Tbilisi on 20 July 1980 and was buried in the Pantheon of Georgian Public Figures.

GUGUSHVILI, BESSARION (1948– ). Georgian statesman, former Prime Minister. Gugushvili rose to prominence in the national liberation movement in the late 1980s and was one of the closest associates of Zviad Gamsakhurdia. In President Gamsakhurdia’s government, Gugushvili was appointed prime minister after Tengiz Sigua resigned in August 1991. Upon Gamsakhurdia’s ouster in January 1992, Gugushvili followed him to Chechnya and helped establish a government in exile. In 1993, he returned to western Georgia and participated in the uprising in Mingrelia. After the death of Gamsakhurdia in December 1993, Gugushvili fled Georgia and eventually received political asylum in Finland, where he still remains. He continues his criticism of the administrations of Eduard Shevardnadze and Mikhail Saakashvili in newspaper articles and publications.

GULIA, DMITRI (1874–1960). Abkhaz writer and historian, who created the Abkhaz script and laid the foundation for modern Abkhaz literature. Gulia was born to a peasant family in the Uarcha village and studied at the Gori Seminary. In the 1890s, he and K. Machavariani created an Abkhaz script that helped develop a written Abkhaz language. A gifted poet, Gulia published his first compilation of lyrics in 1912 and later directed the first Abkhaz theatrical group and edited the literary newspaper Apsny. During the Soviet period, Gulia wrote several works of prose that became classics of the Abkhaz literature, including Pod chuzhim nebom and Kamachic, as well as important studies on the Abkhaz history, ethnography, and language. He was awarded the title of the People’s Poet of Abkhazia in 1937.
GULISTAN, TREATY OF (1813). Treaty signed between Russia and Persia on 5 November 1813 to end the first Russo–Persian War of 1804–1813. Negotiated with British mediation, the treaty confirmed the Russian victory in the war and forced Persia to relinquish its claims to South Caucasia. Persia lost all its territories to the north of the Aras River, which included all of Georgia and parts of Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Persians also surrendered their rights to navigate the Caspian Sea and granted Russia capitulatory rights to trade within Persia. The treaty established a firm Russian presence in the region, which was further consolidated by the Treaty of Turkmanchai in 1828.

GUMBARIDZE, GIVI (1945– ). Georgian party and government official. Born in Tbilisi, Gumbaridze graduated from Tbilisi State University and began working in the archive section of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Georgia. He quickly advanced through the Communist Party ranks, becoming first secretary of Zestaponi Regional Committee and first secretary of the Town Committee of Tbilisi. In the 1980s, he served as the head of the KGB of Georgia. Following the events of 9 April 1989 (See TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS OF 9 APRIL 1989), Gumbaridze replaced the disgraced Jumber Patiashvili as the first secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia. During his short term in office, he supervised preparations for the first multi-party elections in Georgia, and in October 1989, he was elected chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of Georgia. He made concessions to the opposition leaders, but after the Communist Party's defeat in the 1990 elections, he resigned and served as the people’s deputy and member of the Supreme Council of the USSR until 1991.

GURAMISHVILI, DAVID (1705–1792). One of the finest Georgian poets of the 18th century. Guramishvili was kidnapped by a Dagestani raiding party in 1727 but eventually escaped and made his way to Russia. He followed King Vakhtang VI into exile and later served in the Russian army, distinguishing himself during the Seven Years War. He was awarded an estate in Ukraine, where he spent the rest of his life. Guramishvili’s poetry, which comprises one great cycle of autobiographical poetry known as the Davitiani is powerful in its
ability to convey lamentation and sadness over his personal experiences and the destruction of his native land. The poem Davit Guramishvilis lektagan datkoeba recounts his captivity in Dagestan, while his most important work is Kartlis chirri, which describes in verses historical events in Georgia in the first half of the 18th century. Among other works, Zubovka is a classic song of dalliance with a peasant girl, while Katsvia metskemse narrates family life in the Georgian mountains. Guramishvili’s poetry emulates Shota Rustaveli’s quatrains in using four rhyming 16-syllable lines.

GURANDUKHT. The name of several queen consorts of Georgia.

1. Gurandukht (10th century). Wife of King Gurgen (994–1008), she was the daughter of King Giorgi II of Abkhazia (922–957) and mother of King Bagrat III of Georgia (975–1014).

2. Gurandukht (11th century). Daughter of King Giorgi I (1014–1027), she was sister of King Bagrat IV (1027–1072).

3. Gurandukht (12th century). Daughter of Atrak, the leader of the Cuman-Qipcaqs, she was married to King David IV Aghmashenebeli and helped secure an important political and military alliance between her native Qipcaqs and the kingdom of Georgia. Following her marriage, her entire Qipcaq tribe was resettled to Georgia, where it provided much-needed troops for the Georgian royal army.

GURIA. Historical region in western Georgia. Its eastern border is on the Chorokh and Adjaristskali rivers; the northern border follows the Rioni River; and the southern border is the Chorokh River. It is divided into three districts, Zemo (Upper), Shua (Middle), and Kvemo (Lower) Guria. In ancient times, Guria was part of the Kingdom of Colchis/Egrisi, and later its territory was incorporated into the Kingdom of Abkhazia and the united Kingdom of Georgia. In the late Middle Ages, the Kingdom of Imereti often controlled this region before the samtavro (dukedom) of Guria emerged in the 15th century. With its center in Ozurgeti, Guria was governed by the Gurieli family for over three hundred years, fighting against Ottoman encroachments before the Russian annexation in the early 19th century. In the 16th century, Guria lost its southwestern region, now known as Adjara, and became a tributary of the Ottoman sultans. In 1810, Prince Mamia V Gurieli accepted Russian sovereignty. In 1828, the princi-
pality was annexed to the Georgian–Imeretian province and later transformed into the Ozurgeti mazra (district) within the Kutaisi gubernia. In 1841, Guria mounted an anti-Russian uprising, but it was suppressed. In the early 20th century, Guria became a hotbed of radical revolutionary activities, especially in 1905 when the so-called “peasant republic” was briefly established.

GURIAN UPRISING OF 1841. After Guria accepted Russian sovereignty in 1810, the Russian authorities allowed it to maintain its autonomy for the next three decades. In 1840, the principality was abolished and was transformed into the Ozurgeti mazra (district). The establishment of a new administration and laws, combined with an increased tax burden, caused widespread discontent among the Gurian peasants. In May 1841, the peasants rebelled in the village of Aketi, near Lanchkhuti, and the insurrection soon spread to the rest of Guria and the neighboring Imereti. By July, the rebels’ numbers had swollen to 7,000 men; on 9 August, Abesa Bolkvadze’s rebel troops routed the Russian detachment near the village of Gogoreti. Following this success, the insurgents seized Shekvetili, Likhauri, Nagomari, and Chokhatauri and besieged the administrative center of Ozurgeti. The Gurian nobility initially supported the insurgents, but as the peasants began to sack their estates, the nobility turned its back on the uprising and helped the Russian authorities to suppress it.

GURIAN REVOLT OF 1905. Anti-Tsarist rebellion in Guria in 1905–1906; the event is often referred to as the Gurian Republic of 1905 or the Gurian peasant republic and is considered the first case of successful social democratic revolution within a largely peasant society. Guria, organized into the Ozurgeti uezd of the Kutaisi gubernia, remained relatively underdeveloped by the late 19th century, which made it a fertile base for Marxist ideas. Despite the region’s largely agrarian society, the Menshevik Party was successful in gaining support among the Gurian peasantry and called for agrarian reforms that would benefit landless peasants. Led by the Gurian Committee of Rural Workers, such agitation soon led to riots in 1903–1904 that were quelled by the government. However, the 1905 Revolution in Moscow and St. Petersburg soon spread to the periphery of the Russian Empire and revived the suppressed sentiments of the Gurian peasantry, which
revolted in a more radical way in early 1905. Better organized this time, the peasants expelled landlords and government representatives, established their authorities, and created self-defense units. With the initial success, political and social demands grew; revolutionaries created local councils, attempted reforms of land that was given to peasants, mandated freedom of the press and assembly, gender equality, election processes, separation of government and church, universal education, and other reforms.

By February 1905, the rebels controlled almost the entire Guria, and in March, the government declared martial law, dispatching troops under General Alikhanov-Avarskey into the rebellious province. However, the Gurians mounted a fierce resistance, halting the government troops and defending themselves until the autumn. The Gurian Mensheviks established the military revolutionary headquarters that coordinated defense of the province. In October, government forces were routed at Nasakirali, and the rebels followed up this success with the capture of Ozurgeti, Guria’s administrative center, in December. The Gurian Republic was proclaimed, and new Menshevik authority was established. Alarmed by their success, the government diverted large forces of the regular Russian army, which entered the province in January 1906. Despite their resistance, the Gurian revolutionaries were defeated and the Gurian Republic was ruthlessly crushed. Nevertheless, Guria remained a hotbed of revolutionary activity for years to come; its pro-Menshevik sentiments also played role in the August Uprising of 1924.

GVALADZE, EUGENE (GENO) (1900–1937). Georgian lawyer and public benefactor, one of the leaders of the national liberation movement in 1921–1937. Born in the village of Sveri in Imereti, Gvaladze studied at Tbilisi Gymnasium and Tbilisi State University, graduating with a degree in law. He joined the Menshevik Party and published several articles on current politics in Georgian newspapers and journals. In 1920–1921, he served in the National Army of the Democratic Republic of Georgia and fought the Red Army on the approaches to Tbilisi in February–March 1921. After the Bolshevik occupation, he played an active role in organizing resistance cells. He helped organize and direct the secret organization Tetri Giorgi that aimed at launching a military uprising to liberate Georgia. On 26 May 1922, on the fourth anniversary
of Georgian independence, he organized a large anti-Bolshevik demonstration in Tbilisi but was arrested and imprisoned for several months. From 1922–1924, Gvaladze also coordinated the activities of the underground Committee of Independence of Georgia and participated in the preparation of the August Uprising in 1924. After the insurrection failed, he was arrested in August 1924 but was released the following year. He continued his efforts to liberate Georgia, for which he was arrested and executed in October 1937.

GVAZAVA, GIORGI (1868–1941). Georgian jurist, publicist, and one of the founders of the National Democratic Party. Gvazava graduated from the 2nd Gymnasium in Tbilisi in 1889 and studied law in the University of Moscow and the Sorbonne in Paris. In 1907, he participated in the international conference in The Hague, where he raised the issue of Georgian self-determination. Returning to Georgia, he was arrested in 1910 but was later released. After the February Revolution of 1917, Gvazava became actively involved in politics, was one of the founders and leaders of the National Democratic party, and was elected to the National Council. On 26 May 1918, he was one of the authors and signatories of the Declaration of Independence. He participated in the Georgian–Ottoman negotiations in Trebizond and Constantinople. In 1919, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly, where he led the National Democratic faction. He followed the Georgian government into exile in March 1921 and became a close associate of Noe Zhordania. Gvazava left an interesting literary legacy, which includes his many publicist articles and translations of Greek and French fiction. In 1938, he produced a French translation of Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani poem.

HELSEINKI UNION. First legal opposition organization of Georgian dissidents. In 1975, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held its meeting in Helsinki (Finland) and adopted the Final Act that was also joined by the Soviet Union and the United States. The signatory states pledged to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and promote and encourage the exercise of these
rights. Early in 1976, Georgian dissidents organized the Initiative
Group on the Protection of Human Rights, which was renamed the
Helsinki Group later that year. The organization was led by Merab
Kostava, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Bego Bezhushvili, Viktor Rtshkhi-
ladze, and others. The Helsinki Group published several journals, no-
tably The Golden Fleece, which propagated their opposition to the
Soviet regime and discussed issues of civic rights, political prisoners,
Georgian language, culture, historical monuments, etc. The Soviet
authorities initially tolerated the group’s activities but cracked
down on it in 1978, when Kostava and Gamsakhurdia were arrested
and exiled.

Nevertheless, the group survived underground and played a cru-
cial role in agitating students and spreading the ideas of the na-
tional liberation movement. It was especially active in the events
of 14 April 1978 when the Soviet authorities decided to amend an
article of the Constitution that affirmed Georgian as the sole offi-
cial state language of the Georgian republic. With the help of mem-
bers of the Helsinki Group, thousands of Georgians rallied in the
streets of Tbilisi, forcing the authorities to decide against remov-
ing the disputed clause. The organization’s profile increased in the
late 1980s when Gamsakhurdia and Kostava returned to the fore of
the dissident movement. In 1989, the group changed its name to
the Helsinki Union

HERETI. Historic province in southeastern Georgia. In ancient times,
the territory of Hereti came under the control of Caucasian Albania
and later under the influence of the rising Georgian principates; ac-
cording to Georgian chronicles, the name of the province derives
from the legendary patriarch Heros, the son of Thargamos, who
founded the city of Hereti (Khoranta). Hereti constituted one of the
saeristavos of Iberia. An independent principality (samtavro)
emerged in the late eighth century and gained considerable power. In
the ninth century, the rulers of Hereti adopted the title of king and es-
established their capital at Shaki. Throughout this period, Hereti feuded
with neighboring Kakheti, and in 915, joint forces of Kvirike of
Kakheti and Constantine III of Abkhazia campained against King
Adarnase II of Hereti. Despite their success and a brief partition of
Hereti, Adarnase was able to recover his principality.
Adarnase’s successor Ishkhanik (943–951) was a nephew of Gurgen Bagrationi of Tao-Klarjeti and was forced to recognize the ascendancy of the neighboring Salarid dynasty of Deilam. However, he ceased paying tribute by the mid-10th century and played an important role in extending the influence of the Georgian Orthodox Church to southeastern Caucasus. His successor, Ioane (951–959), successfully campaigned in northern Azerbaijan; however, his death left a political void in Hereti and Kvirike II of Kakheti stepped into that void and seized Hereti. Hereti was later contested by King Bagrat III of Georgia, who sought to unite the Georgian lands under his crown. The mid-11th century saw the reign of Kvirike III the Great who effectively united Hereti and Kakheti. In 1104, King David IV Aghmashenebeli of Georgia successfully campaigned and annexed Hereti to his kingdom, turning it into one of his saeristavos. Thereafter, Hereti remained within the Georgian kingdom until the 15th century when it fell under the Kakhetian monarchy. In 1801, when Russia annexed the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti, Hereti also fell under the Russian control, where it remained for the next hundred years. In 1918, it became one of the regions of the newly independent Georgia. However, after the Georgian Menshevik republic was defeated three years later, the Bolshevik authorities ceded part of the historical Hereti, districts of Zakatala and Belakani, to Soviet Azerbaijan.

**HOLY LAND, GEORGIANS IN THE.** Georgian monks were present in the Holy Land from the fourth century and established a number of monasteries in Palestine, Antioch, Cyprus, Bithynia, Mount Athos, Syria, and Constantinople. They eventually built and maintained about forty monasteries and churches throughout the Holy Land and the Byzantine Empire. In Syria, Georgian churches were built at the Black or Miraculous Mountain near Antioch and at the St. Simeon’s Monastery. Among those in the vicinity of Jerusalem were the Georgian churches of St. Saba in the Judean wilderness, a convent near the place of the martyrdom of St. James the Great, and the Monastery of the Holy Cross. See also IVIRON MONASTERY.

Georgians soon constituted a powerful presence in the Holy Land. King Bagrat IV asked the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX
Monomachus for half of Calvary and had a Georgian bishop present in Jerusalem. In the 12th–13th centuries, during the reigns of David IV Aghmashenebeli, Giorgi III and Queen Tamar, Georgians enjoyed a privileged status above other Christians, and after the suffering from the Mongol campaigns in the late 13th century, Georgians managed to recover their positions in the Holy Land. According to contemporary chronicler James de Vitry, while most Christians were persecuted and suffered hardships in Jerusalem, the Georgians were able to move about freely and had the privilege of entering Jerusalem with flags unfurled and were not required to pay the taxes imposed upon other Christians.

During the reign of King Giorgi V Brtskinvale, Georgians established close relations with the Mamluk sultans of Egypt, who returned to them the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, and transferred to their possession the holiest of the Christian sites, Calvary (Locus Calvaria), the Chapel of Adam below Calvary, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the keys to the Edicule of the Tomb of the Lord, the Chapel of the Holy Angels, and the Chapel of the Prison of Christ, and the Chapels of St. Mary Magdalene, St. Helena, and the Discovery of the True Cross. In the mid-14th century, the Georgians briefly lost Calvary and the Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre, which were occupied by the Armenians and the Latins. They contested their rights to the northern part of Calvary and recovered it in the late 15th century. They held these sacred Christian sites for a hundred years before finally being forced to surrender it to the Greeks. The Georgians carried out some restoration activities at the Holy Sepulchre, where King Bagrat VI had a canopy built in 1476 and King Levan of Kakheti repaired the Holy Sepulchre and Golgotha in 1530s.

One of the oldest Georgian monasteries in Jerusalem was the Monastery of St. John the Evangelist, which had belonged to the Georgians since the sixth century. The monastery was in Georgian possession through the 16th century before Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent granted it to the Franciscan Order in 1561. The Georgians also established a monastery near the Cathedral of St. James around 1030, and it remained in their possession until the 12th century when it passed to the Armenians around 1141. Georgian sources indicate that the Nunnery Saidnayah, also known as the
Monastery of the Presentation or of St. Anna was built by the eristavis of Racha in the Christian Quarter of the Old City in Jerusalem and the Georgian nuns still maintained it in the late 18th century. The Monastery of St. Nicholas, reportedly built on the site of St. Nicholas’ cell, seems to have been in Georgian possession until the 17th century and was bought by the Greeks in 1685. The most important Georgian possession in Jerusalem was the fortress-like Monastery of the Holy Cross that was established in the 11th century and was maintained through the 16th century, when it was taken over by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. Georgian presence in the Holy Land declined after the 15th century, and Georgian monasteries were taken over by the Armenian and Greek churches.

**HOLY CROSS, MONASTERY OF.** Georgian monastery in Jerusalem, major center of Georgian cultural and religious life. The first community was established here in the fourth century. King Mirian purchased this site in the mid-fourth century, and King Vakhtang Gorgasali founded a monastery in the fifth century. A larger monastery was established in the early 11th century when prominent clerics Giorgi-Prochore Shavsheli, Giorgi and Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli, supported by King Bagrat IV of Georgia, established a monastery between 1039 and 1056. Christian tradition claims that the monastery was erected on the burial spot of Adam’s head from which grew the tree that gave its wood to the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified. In the 12th–13th century, the monastery was one of the major centers of Georgian cultural life, and its community of monks produced numerous illuminated manuscripts and original treatises. At various times, its community included such prominent clerics as Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli, Ioane Dvali, Mikael Dvali, Shavi Ioane, Efrem Mtsire (Ephraim the Lesser), and others. However, as the Georgian kingdom declined, the Georgian community of the Holy Cross waned as well and was gradually taken over by the Greeks. A majority of Georgian manuscripts were lost or damaged over many centuries, but more than 150 of them are still preserved in the monastery, making it one of the largest repositories of medieval Georgian manuscripts.
IASHVILI, LEO (1768–1836). Prominent general and artillery commander in the Russian army. Iashvili, known as Yashvil, was born to a prominent Georgian noble family and was the brother of General Vladimir Iashvili. He studied in the Artillery and Engineer Cadet Corps and began service in the Russian army in 1786. He participated in the Russo–Turkish War from 1788–1791, fighting at Akkerman, Bender, Ochakov, and Ismail. In 1792–1794, he served in Poland and distinguished himself at Warsaw and Praga. In 1795–1800, he served in various units and advanced through the ranks, becoming a colonel in May 1800. Commanding the artillery, Iashvili participated in the 1805 campaign, distinguishing himself in rear guard actions and the battles at Wischau and Austerlitz. In 1806–1807, he served with the 4th Artillery Brigade in Poland and took part in the battles at Pultusk, Eylau, Guttstadt, and Friedland. For his actions, he was promoted to major general in March 1808 and became commander of the artillery brigade of the 4th Division in 1809.

In 1812, Iashvili commanded the artillery in General Peter Wittgenstein’s corps, fighting at Dunaburg, Jakubovo, Klyastitsy, Golovchin, Smolyani, Borisov, Polotsk, and Berezina and, for his actions, he was promoted to lieutenant general. In 1813–1814, he served as head of artillery in the main Russian army and participated in all the major battles against Napoleon Bonaparte in Germany and France. After the war, he commanded the artillery of the 1st Army, becoming a general in 1819. In 1830–1831, Iashvili took part in the suppression of the Polish uprising and later became a member of the Council of War of the Ministry of War. See also BAGRATIONI, PETER AND NAPOLEONIC WARS, GEORGIANS IN.

IASHVILI, PAOLO (1894–1937). Georgian symbolist poet. Born in Kutaisi, he studied in Kutaisi and Anapa before traveling to Paris where he became acquainted with the works of European and Russian poets. Returning to Georgia in 1915, he helped found the Tsisperkantselebi group of Georgian symbolist poets and edited the journal Tsisperi kantebi. His first works appeared in 1911 and quickly emerged as an innovative force in Georgian poetry. He played an important role in the development of the symbolist move-
ment with his works *Kortsili, Triptikhi, Parshavangebi kalakshi, Tsiteli khari, Brbosagan*, and others. From 1915–1924, he published a series of poems known as *Elene Dadianis dghiurebi* that revealed the author’s fondness for mysticism. Iashvili’s poems were affected by political events in Georgia, which was occupied by the Bolsheviks in 1921. His poems became more and more ideological in essence as is revealed in such lyrics as *Akhal sakartvelos, Lenins, Mtsvervalebidan*, and others. He was persecuted by the Soviet authorities, and, in July 1937, he committed suicide at the Writers’ Union of Georgia.

**IBERIA (IVERIA).** Greek/Latin name of the eastern Georgian region of Kartli, also known as Caucasian Iberia or Eastern Iberia to distinguish it from the Spanish Iberia in the Pyrenees. Georgians refer to this region as Kartli; the name is derived from the powerful tribe of Karts, who dominated this region in the first millennium BCE. Georgian traditions also ascribe the term to the legendary hero Kartlos, the forefather of Georgians. According to some Georgian scholars, the word *Iberia* is derived from the name of proto-Georgian tribes *Saspers > Speri > Hberi > Iberi* that populated south Caucasia in ancient times.

The late first millennium saw the consolidation of eastern Georgian (Iberian) tribes and the arrival of other Georgian tribes (Moschi/Meskhi) from Anatolia, which settled in central Kartli and founded the future Iberian capital of Mtskheta (city of Meskhi). Iberia maintained contacts with Achaemenid Persia, Armenia, Greek city-states along the Black Sea, and other states. According to Georgian chronicles, after Alexander the Great’s campaigns in the east in the fourth century BCE, some “Greek” troops reached Iberia/Kartli, which they occupied and placed under the governorship of Azo (Azon). In a subsequent rebellion, Parnavaz rose to power and united the Georgian lands. Iberia played an important part in the assimilation of various Georgian tribes into the dominant Kartvelian identity. In the first century BCE, it was invaded by the Roman forces and fell under Roman domination. In subsequent centuries, Iberia/Kartli found itself torn between the Byzantine Empire, Sasanid Persia, Arabs, Ottoman Turks, and Safavid Persia. In 1801, Kartli was annexed by the Russian Empire, where it remained for the next 190 years.
Today, Kartli is divided into Shida (Inner) and Kvemo (Lower) provinces and has a population of approximately 500,000. The region also includes the South Ossetian region, which enjoyed autonomy until the early 1990s. The ethno-territorial conflict that started in 1990 continues to the present day.

Several medieval authors as well as modern scholars have argued for an ethnogenetical kinship between the Caucasian Iberians and the original population of Spanish Iberia. Georgian medieval chronicles mention the plans of Georgian nobles and priests to travel to Spain to revive contacts with long lost “brothers.” More recently, Georgian scholars studied the possible kinship between the Georgians and the Basques. According to popular, albeit unproven, theory, both of these nations belonged to a larger proto-Iberian population that inhabited the Mediterranean basin prior to the arrival of the Indo-Europeans.

IBRAHIM BEY (?–1816). Prominent Mamluk statesman and military commander, also known as Ibrahim Bey Al Kabir Al-Muhammadi. He was born as Abram Shinjikashvili to a Georgian priest’s family in the village of Martkopi near Tbilisi, Georgia. He was kidnapped at an early age and raised as a mamluk of Muhammad Bey Abu l’Dhahab. In 1768–1769, he became a bey and served as amir al-hajj in 1772–1773 and daftardat in 1773–1774. In March 1775, he was appointed shaykh al-balad, and after the death of his patron Abu l’Dhahab, Ibrahim became co-ruler (with Murad Bey) of Egypt. However, he and Murad Bey were forced to flee to Upper Egypt during a brief civil war but returned to power in February 1778 when he assumed the position of shaykh al-balad. However, the conflict between numerous mamluk factions continued, leading to a rupture between Ibrahim Bey and Murad Bey. The two rulers soon reconciled and Ibrahim was restored as shaykh al-balad in February 1785. Nevertheless, another civil war led to the disruption of pilgrimages to the Muslim Holy Places and to a decline in agriculture.

In late 1785, Ibrahim and Murad received Ottoman demands for tribute but refused to comply. On 18 July 1786, Murad Bey failed to contain an Ottoman expeditionary force sent as a result, and the Turks installed a new government in Cairo in August 1786. Ibrahim Bey withdrew to Upper Egypt where he fought the Ottoman-backed administration in Cairo for the next five years. In July 1791, he fi-
nally seized power in Cairo and ruled with Murad Bey for the next seven years. He kept close contact with his family in Georgia, and despite being a Muslim, contributed significant sums of money to the construction of the Christian church and fortifications at his native village of Martkopi, near Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. He even invited members of his family to visit him and had close relations with King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti (Eastern Georgia).

On 2 July 1798, Ibrahim Bey faced the invasion of the French expeditionary army under General Napoleon Bonaparte. Within the next three weeks, as Murad Bey’s mamluk forces were defeated at Shubrakhit (10–13 July) and Inbaba (Embaba) (21 July), Ibrahim Bey fled to Syria. Although he continued resistance against the French, Ibrahim Bey never fully restored his authority, and his forces were depleted. After Muhammad Ali, an officer in Ottoman government forces, became viceroy of Egypt, Ibrahim remained in Upper Egypt, distrustful of Muhammad Ali. Thus, he declined an invitation to visit Cairo in early 1811 and survived the massacre of the mamluks of 1 March 1811. The same year, Ibrahim Bey left the country and settled at Dongola in the Sudan, where he died five years later.

IESE, KING (1680–1727). Georgian king and Safavid wali or viceroy of Kartli, also known as Ali Quli Khan and Mustafa Pasha. He was born Prince Iese Bagrationi to the royal dynasty of Georgia, the son of Prince Levan of Kartli and his wife Tinatin Avalishvili. His father served as the lord chief justice of Persia, and Iese was raised at the Safavid court. He converted to Islam and changed his name to Ali-Quli Khan. His marriage to Princess Helen Bagrationi, daughter of King Erekle I, produced eight children, including the future Catholicos Anton I of Georgia. He participated in the campaigns of his uncles King Giorgi XI and Kaikhosro in Afghanistan in 1704–1707. In 1708, he became governor (beglarbeg) of Kirman, and three years later he became commander of the Persian artillery. In 1711, King Giorgi XI and Prince Kaikhosro both died fighting the Afghans, and the governorship of eastern Georgia was given to Ali Quli Khan’s half brother King Vakhtang VI. However, Vakhtang soon refused Shah Husayn’s order to covert to Islam and was imprisoned, while Ali Quli Khan was sent to Kartli as viceroy in place of Vakhtang. He proved to be an incompetent ruler and was replaced by Vakhtang in
In 1722, Vakhtang endeavored to throw off the Persian yoke with the help of Peter the Great of Russia. Although Peter launched his Persian Campaign in 1722 and promised to support Vakhtang, he was soon compelled to abort the campaign, leaving the Georgians to face the Persian retaliation. The Shah dethroned Vakhtang VI and gave Kartli to his loyal King Constantine of Kakheti. Late in 1724, the Turks exploited the turmoil in Kartli by defeating King Constantine’s troops and appointing the renegade Ali Quli Khan to govern the country. In 1724, Ali-Quli Khan changed his madhab (creed) from Shiite to Sunni and his name to Mustafa Pasha, and nominally governed Kartli under the Ottoman protectorate until his death in 1727. He played an important role in the suppression of the anti-Ottoman revolt in Kartli in 1724, when in the decisive battle near Gori, when the Georgians appeared to be winning, Iese rallied the Ottoman forces to deliver a crushing blow to the rebels. His descendants later challenged the authority of King Erekle II and were suppressed and forced to emigrate. Iese’s grandson Ivan moved to Daghestan in the 1760s and there reared his son Peter Bagration, the future distinguished Russian commander and hero of the Napoleonic Wars.

IETIM GURJI (1875–1940). Famous Georgian folk poet and one of the finest representatives of the ashug (folk poetry) culture of Tbilisi. He wrote his poems in the Georgian, Armenian, and Azeri languages since 1895 and they immediately became immensely popular among the Tbilisites. His poems deal with the everyday toils of artisans, merchants, and peasantry and sing the praises of Tbilisi and its unique atmosphere. Although most of his poems spread by word of mouth, Gurji published several compilations, including Anabqis leksi (1909), Akhali mgosani da simgherebi (1911), and Ietimes akhali leksebi (1913). He worked in the Baku oil fields from 1905–1907 and was involved in revolutionary activities for which he was arrested and imprisoned for several years. He continued writing in later years as well, and several anthologies of his poems were published between 1928 and 1958.

IKALTO. Monastery near Telavi in eastern Georgia. Established in the sixth century, Ikalto Monastery evolved into one of the largest Georgian religious and cultural centers. In the 12th century, King David
Aghmashenebeli helped expand the monastery and establish an academy directed by the prominent Georgian philosopher Arsen Ikaltoeli. The complex was devastated by the Persian invasions in the 17th century. The monastery complex includes three churches and the ruins of the academy buildings.

ILARION KARTVELI (THE GEORGIAN) (NINTH CENTURY).
Prominent Georgian scholar, theologian, and religious figure. Born into a noble family from Kakheti, Ilarion Kartveli played an important role in developing monasticism in medieval Georgia, helping to found several churches in the David Gareja Monastery and writing canons for several monasteries in eastern Georgia. In his later years, he traveled widely in the Byzantine Empire and the Holy Land, visiting the Georgian monasteries in Jerusalem, Sinai, Syria, and other regions, and translating new Christian literature into Georgian. Around 864, Ilarion Kartveli founded a Georgian monastery on Mount Olympus in Anatolia, and his name is also associated with the establishment of another monastery, Romana, near Constantinople in 876. These two Georgian monasteries soon became literary centers and produced many valuable ecclesiastical manuscripts that influenced Christian philosophy and theology.

ILIA II (1933– ). Catholicos patriarch of all Georgia, archbishop of Mtskheta and Tbilisi. Born Irakli Ghudushauri-Shiolashvili in Orjonikidze (now Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia), he studied at Moscow Seminary and Academy before taking his vows in 1959. In 1960, he returned to Georgia, where he served in the Batumi Cathedral and rose to archimandrite. In 1963, he became the Bishop of Shemokmedi and Catholicos Patriarch Ephraim II’s choir bishop (vicar). Ilia also directed the Mtskheta Seminary from 1963–1972. In 1967, he was transferred to Abkhazian eparchy and later given the rank of metropolitan. On 9 November 1977, after the death of Catholicos Patriarch David V, he was elected as patriarch guardian and then, on 25 December, as catholicos patriarch of all Georgia. His tenure coincided with important political, cultural, and spiritual changes in Georgia. During the turbulent days of April 1989, he personally met with leaders of the national liberation movement and led a prayer with thousands of demonstrators on the main avenues of Tbilisi.
In the 1990s, Ilia led the revival of the Georgian church, long suppressed by the Soviet authorities. He helped establish new seminaries and clerical schools in Batumi, Akhaltsikhe, Kutaisi, Khulo, and Tbilisi, and supported the renewal of the monasticism in Georgia. After many centuries, the Gelati Monastery and Academy was restored under the auspices of the church. He supervised the reorganization of the governing organs of the church and created specialized departments within the patriarchy. The number of eparchies has increased from 15 to 27, and the number of functioning monasteries and convents has increased to more than 50. The country’s largest church—the Sameba Cathedral—was completed to commemorate the 2000th Christmas and 1500th anniversary of autocephaly. See also GEORGIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH.

IMERETI. Historic region in western Georgia. In ancient times, Imereti was part of Colchis, and the Greek myth of the Argonauts places the capital of the mighty King Aietes in Kutaisi. In later centuries, Imereti was incorporated into the Kingdom of Egrisi and was greatly influenced by the Byzantine Empire. Christianity was introduced here in the first century but became the state religion in the fourth century. In the 8th–10th centuries, Imereti was part of the Kingdom of Abkhazia. In 975–1463, the region was within the borders of the united Georgian kingdom but enjoyed autonomy in the mid-13th century when King David narin ruled the region after escaping the Mongol invasion of eastern Georgia. In 1463, Imereti seceded from the Kingdom of Georgia and became an independent kingdom ruled by the Imeretian branch of the Bagrationi dynasty.

Over the next three centuries, the Imeretian rulers struggled to maintain their supremacy in western Georgia, fighting against the lords of Mingrelia, Guria, or Svaneti, as well as the powerful Ottoman Empire. In the early 19th century, Imereti resisted the Russian encroachments, but its last King, Solomon II, was forced to abandon his throne in 1810 when Imereti was annexed by the Russian Empire. Reorganized into the Kutaisi Gubernia, Imereti remained within the imperial borders until 1918 when Georgia proclaimed its independence. Following the Bolshevik invasion in 1921, Imereti became part of the Transcaucasian SFSR in 1922–1936 and then of the Georgian SSR in 1936–1991. Currently, it is one of the
largest regions in Georgia with the second largest city, Kutaisi, serving as its administrative center. Imereti also has major urban industrial centers for the production of manganese in Chiatura, coal mining in Tkibuli, and production of metal alloys, iron, copper in Zestaponi.

**IMERETI UPRISING OF 1819–1820.** Following the annexation of the Kingdom of Imereti, the Russian authorities began introducing a new administration and new laws and regulations. The **Georgian Orthodox Church** was also affected, and after its autocephaly was abolished in 1811, a Russian official was placed in charge of religious affairs. The Russian **egzarch**, Feofilakt Rusanov, sought to extend his authority to western Georgia, where **Mitropolit Kutateli**, heading the eparchy of Abkhazia, retained much of his power. In 1814, the eparchy was abolished, and Rusanov, authorized by the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), began introducing reforms that called for the transfer of Georgian church property to the ROC, reduction of the number of eparchies in Imereti, and a change in legal status of the church **aznaurs** and peasantry.

These changes led to widespread discontent among the Imeretian clergy, nobility, and peasantry. In June 1819, an uprising flared up in Imereti and quickly spread through other regions, including Racha and Guria. The rebel calls were initially directed against the Russian religious policies and demanded that the reforms be revoked and that Rusanov be recalled from Imereti. However, they soon evolved into general anti-Russian sentiments. General Alexey Yermolov, who served as governor of Georgia, was occupied with uprisings in Chechnya and Dagestan, and his deputy General Velyaminov initially negotiated with the insurgents. He agreed to stop the reform process and recall Rusanov, and these concessions helped pacify the region by the fall of 1819. However, the Russian authorities then began persecuting the rebel leaders and demanded that the peasantry repent for its rebelliousness and pledge allegiance to the Russian emperor. In response, the uprising flared up again; violence swept through Imereti, and estates of pro-Russian nobles were sacked. The rebels called for the restoration of the Imeretian monarchy and declared King **Solomon II**’s grandson Ivane Abashidze the new king of Imereti.
In early 1820, Russian authorities dispatched substantial military forces to deal with the insurgents. In March, some rebel leaders and their families were captured while Ivane Abashidze fled to Guria. Mitropolit Kutateli died while in Russian custody. However, the rebellion continued and spread to Guria, Racha, and Mingrelia, where it was led by Grigol Dadiani. The fighting continued for the rest of the year before it was brutally suppressed by superior Russian forces. The rebel leaders were imprisoned or exiled, and the church reform was implemented.

IMERKHEVI. Georgian mountainous region in the historical Tao-Klarjeti province, presently in Turkey. Its Georgian population, known as Imerkhevelebi, converted to Islam but retained their Georgian traditions and language.

INDUSTRY. Industry contributed 20.6% of the GDP in 2003, and the sector (comprising mining, manufacturing, utilities, and construction) provided 8.3% of employment. The coal extraction industry is one of the largest in Georgia and is centered at Tkibuli and Tkvarcheli in western Georgia. High-quality manganese is produced at the Chiatura mines. The Rustavi metallurgical plant and chemical complex once were one of the largest in the USSR but suffered in the 1990s. Zestaponi is another center of metallurgy, but its factory is also largely idle. The machine-building industry in Tbilisi and Kutaisi produces electric railway locomotives, heavy machines, earth-moving equipment, and precision instruments. The chemical industry specializes in mineral fertilizers, synthetic materials, and pharmaceutical products. The building industry produces cement, slate, and prefabricated reinforced-concrete structures. Light industry produces cotton, wool textiles, silk fabrics, and clothing. The manufacturing sector contributed 9.2% of the GDP in 2003, and it provided 4.9% of employment in that year. Although the machinery and metal-working industries, traditionally the most important parts of the sector, were in decline in the late 1990s, manufacturing GDP increased, in real terms, by an average of 7.6% per year. Real manufacturing GDP increased by 3.0% each year in 1999 and 2000. According to World Bank estimates, the sector increased by average annual growth of 8.3% in 2002 and of 6.9% in 2003. See also ECONOMY.
INGILO. See SAINGILO.

INGOROKVA, PAVLE (1893–1990). Eminent Georgian historian and philologist. He studied at St. Petersburg University, from which he graduated in 1915. Returning to Georgia, he helped establish the Georgian Writers’ Union in 1917 and was involved with various scientific publications, including *Kavkasioni*. In 1929, Ingorokva became the head of the Department of Manuscripts of the State Museum, which he directed until 1940. In 1941, he joined the prestigious Institute of History of the Georgian Academy of Sciences (GAS) and later founded the Institute of Manuscripts of the GAS in 1958. His main fields of research were the history of the Georgian language, literature, and society and Rustvelology. His major publications include *Rustveliana* (1926), *Ilia Chavchavadze* (1951), and *Giorgi Merchule* (1954), among others.

IOANE LAZI (THE LAZ) (FIFTH CENTURY). Prominent Georgian philosopher and theologian. He was born in western Georgia but later lived in Constantinople, where he earned his reputation for theologian debates. He collaborated with such prominent scholars as Petre Iberi (Peter the Iberian) and Proclus Diadochus. He is believed to have contributed to *Corpus areopagiticum*, which had great influence on the medieval Christian philosophy and theology.

IOANE PETRITSI (11TH CENTURY). One of the greatest Georgian medieval philosophers and scholars. Little is known about his early life; he is believed to have been born in Samtskhe and studied in Constantinople, where he was tutored by renowned Byzantine scholars, including Michael Psellos and John Italos. Petritsi soon earned fame as a talented scholar. Fleeing persecutions that befell him and Italos for their writings, Ioane lived in the Georgian monasteries in Petritsoni and on the Black Mountain before returning to Georgia. During the reign of King David IV Aghmashenebeli, Ioane Petritsi worked at the Gelati Academy, where he left an important legacy of translations and original works. He was instrumental in spreading the ideas of neo-platonism and humanism in Georgia that influenced subsequent development of Georgian philosophy and theology. He tried to prove the existence of God on the basis of Aristotelian logic and
Proclus’ emanation theory. He argued that Platonic philosophy could reach a true understanding of God and strived to become the Aristotle of Christian theology. His translation of Nemesius of Emesa’s *On the Nature of Man* introduced Christian anthropology into Georgian philosophical thought.

**IOANE ZOSIME (10TH CENTURY).** Georgian monk, philosopher, and hymnographer. Among other works, Ioane Zosime is the author of *Kebaia da didebai kartulis enisa* (Praise and Glorification of the Georgian Language), a hymn to the Georgian language and its unique mission. Ioane Zosime preached, “Buried is the Georgian language as a martyr until the day of the Messiah’s second coming, so that God may look at every language through this language. And so the language is sleeping to this day. And in the Gospels this language is called Lazarus . . . And friendship it spoke because every secret is buried in this language and dead for four days. Therefore David the Prophet spoke, saying: ‘A thousand years is like one day.’ And within the Georgian Gospels, in Matthew, sits a part, which is a letter, and it will say to all the four thousand secrets. And such are the four days and the man who was dead for four days, for this [it is] buried with him through the death of its baptism. And this language, beautified and blessed by the name of the Lord, humble and afflicted, awaits the day of the second coming of the Lord . . .” The hymn has inspired many nationalist and messianic tendencies in Georgia, especially in the 1980s and 1990s when it became a rallying point for the national liberation movement and its spirit of revival of Georgia resonated with many Georgians. **Zviad Gamsakhurdia**’s writings, particularly his *Sakartvelos sulieri misia* (Spiritual Mission of Georgia), also played an important role in explaining the hymn in a strictly messianic context and turning it into a major element of the nationalist ideology. Gamsakhurdia argued that the hymn’s reference to a four-day burial and the equation of one day to a thousand years refers to the eclipsing of a Japhetic or proto-Georgian civilization by Indo-European newcomers. Thus, Georgia would soon be revived and “at the Second Coming, it will take back the position of universal spiritual leader and judge of mankind, which it possessed in the past” (*Sakartvelos sulieri misia*, 1991). Such sentiments were—and to some degree still are—prevalent in Georgia and often sustain Georgian beliefs of superiority and a unique spiritual mission.
IOSEB (JOSEPH) TBILELI (1620–1688). Georgian ecclesiastic figure and writer. He was born to the Saakaze family and was the nephew of the Great Mouravi Giorgi Saakadze. Ioseb enjoyed a successful career in the Georgian church and rose to the position of mitropolit of Tbilisi. He established a library at the Sioni Cathedral in Tbilisi where he collected and copied many Georgian manuscripts and translated works from other languages. He authored several religious treatises, including Tskhovreba da mokalakeoba aleksi katsisa ghmrtsa, Tsmindanta krebatatvis, Keba da tsameba tsmidis maranisa, tsmuli shairad, and Anbantskeba. From 1681–1687, he wrote his greatest work, Didmouraviani, an epic poem of the struggle of the Georgian people against foreign threats and the exploits of Giorgi Saakadze. Besides its literary value, Didmouraviani is also an important source on the history of 17th-century eastern Georgia.

IOSELIANI, JABA (DZHABA) (1926–2003). Georgian writer, politician, leader of the Mkhedrioni organization, and reputed mobster. Ioseliani, arguably the most colorful and controversial politician in Georgia’s recent political history, was born in Khashuri. He was arrested for committing serious crimes and was convicted and served several sentences in Soviet prisons where he became acquainted with and earned a reputation in the criminal underworld. Between his imprisonments, Ioseliani graduated from Tbilisi State Theater Institute and later worked as deputy director of the Museum of Film and Theater Arts. In 1982, he defended his doctoral dissertation in literature. He authored several plays and novels, including the novels Sanitaruli matarebeli (1988), Limonatis kvekana (1996), Sami ganzomileba (1998), Sarezhisoro gegma (1999), and plays Stumari, Eteriani, Taki-maskhara, Shavi kata, and others.

Ioseliani rose to prominence in the 1990s when he established and directed the Mkhedrioni paramilitary organization. Imprisoned by President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in 1990 for advocating violent regime change and creating an illegal armed force, Ioseliani played a crucial role in the coup that ousted Gamsakhurdia in January 1992. He became one of the triumvirate in the State Council and directed the Provisional Committee after a state of emergency was declared in Georgia in 1993. From 1992–1995, Ioseliani served in the Parliament
of Georgia. He emerged as a powerful warlord and his Mkhedrioni units effectively controlled a large part of Georgia. His forces played a detrimental role in the events in Abkhazia and Mingrelia, where they became infamous for widespread carnage; the word Mkhedrioni is still synonymous with looting and criminal enterprise in Georgia. In 1993–1994, he led the Georgian delegation during the Georgian-Abkhazian talks in Geneva.

Despite his persistent denial, Ioseliani was known to be involved in organized crime, racketeering, and laundering operations. In 1992, he advocated the return of Eduard Shevardnadze in a bid to legitimize his government, but this decision eventually proved to be his greatest mistake. For three years, Shevardnadze depended on Ioseliani and his paramilitaries to maintain control of the country, but in 1995, Shevardnadze was finally able to outmaneuver Ioseliani and had him arrested on charges of banditry and terrorism. Ioseliani served several years in prison, and after his health deteriorated, he was pardoned in 2000. He unsuccessfully attempted to revive the Mkhedrioni as a political movement and sided with his former bitter rivals, including Zviadists, against Shevardnadze. He died of heart attack on 4 March 2003.

IOSELIANI, OTAR (1934– ). Georgian film director. Born in Tbilisi, he studied music and graphic art at the Tbilisi Conservatory; he graduated from the University of Moscow and studied under Alexander Dovzhenko at the famous VGIK School of Cinema. His first works—Sapovnela (1959), Aprili (1961), Giorgobistve (1968)—revealed his esthetic approach to cinema, nonconformity and the desire to capture moments of passing life. In Iko shashvi mgalobeli (1970, which won the best film award at an international film festival in Italy), Ioseliani challenged the official morality on work and duty, and his Pastorali (1982, won prizes at Cannes and Berlin film festivals) compared the urban and rural lifestyle in the USSR. He later immigrated to Western Europe, where he directed most of his recent films, including Les Favoris de la Lune (1984, won prizes at the Venice Film Festival), Un petit monastère en Toscane (1988), Et la lumière fut (1989, won prizes at the Venice Film Festival), La Chasse aux papillons (1992, awards by the Berlin Academy of Arts and Russian “Triumph”), Seule, Géorgie (1994), Le Fils de Gascogne (1995), Adieu, plancher des vaches! (1999), and Lundi matin (2002).
ISAKADZE, LIANA (1946–). Georgian violinist and conductor. Born in Tbilisi, she began taking music lessons at a very early age and later studied at the Tbilisi Music School for gifted children. By age 10, she had already competed at the International Music Festival in Moscow, where she was discovered by David Oistrakh. At 14, she participated in the violin competition of the USSR, and in 1965, she won the Margarita Long and Jacques Thibaut competition in Paris and later the Tchaikovsky competition in Moscow and the Sibelius competition in Helsinki in 1970. She graduated from the Moscow State Conservatory in 1970 and joined the Moscow Philharmonic, where she remained for the next two decades. She became the youngest musician in the history of the USSR to obtain the title of People’s Artist of the USSR in 1988. Between 1981 and 1996, she was a conductor and artistic director of the Georgian State Chamber Orchestra. In 1990, she brought this orchestra to Ingolstadt (Germany), and in 1992, she became artistic director of the Oistrakh Musical Academy in Germany. She organized several international music festivals, including Night Serenades in Georgia, Musicians Have Fun in Moscow, Chamber Music Festival at Eichstatt (Germany), and the Festival of Art in Borjomi (Georgia), among others.

ISLAM IN GEORGIA. A Christian nation since the fourth century, Georgia found itself greatly influenced by Islam. In the seventh century, Arabs extended their dominion to Georgia and introduced Islam. In later centuries, Georgia found itself surrounded by the Muslim states that sprang up throughout Caucasia; Armenia was the only other Christian state in the region, but it lost its statehood in the early Middle Ages. Conversion to Islam was encouraged and often forced upon the Georgians, but the majority of them remained steadfast in their Christian faith. Nevertheless, an Arab emirate existed in Tbilisi between the 8th and 12th centuries. After the period of Didi turkoba in the late 11th century, Georgia rose to prominence under King David IV Aghmashenebeli and his successors, and Muslims were generally well treated and were even granted some privileges.

The rise of the powerful Ottoman Empire and Safavid Persia had important consequences for the spread of Islam in Georgia. Both states sought to extend their influence into Georgia and waged incessant wars against Georgian kings. In 1555, Persia and the Ottoman
government signed the Treaty of Amassia, which approved the partition of Georgia between the two empires. The Ottomans succeeded in annexing southern Guria, Samtske-Javakheti, Tao, and other Georgian provinces, where the population was compelled to convert to Islam. The Ottomans retained their hold over these regions for more than three centuries, and Islam left a deep imprint on the local culture and society. In the east, Safavid Persia pursued similar goals of converting the Georgian principalities of Kartli and Kakheti into Muslim khanates. The Safavid domination caused the immigration of Qizilbash tribes to the region, leading to an in-depth Islamization of certain areas, in particular Lower Kartli and Kakheti. Although these policies ultimately failed, Islam shaped many aspects of life in eastern Georgia. Georgian literature is permeated with Islamic motifs, and the government organization was often patterned after that of neighboring Persia and the Ottoman Empire.

In the 19th century, as Russia annexed Georgia, the imperial policies weakened Islam in Georgia but could not eradicate it, and it oscillated between tolerance and Orthodox proselytism. The Russian authorities were particularly ruthless against the Muslims in Abkhazia, who were forced to emigrate from the region starting in the 1860s. In the Soviet era, the full might of the state machinery was initially directed against both Christianity and Islam, further weakening them. Muslim Meskhetian Turks were condemned as potential fifth columnists of Turkey and were resettled to Central Asia. However, these anti-religious policies were later relaxed and one of the four Departments for Spiritual Affairs of the Soviet Union was founded at Baku. Islamic schooling for Muslims across the Soviet Union was possible in two towns, Bukhara and Tashkent, in Central Asia.

Nowadays, Islam is the second-largest religion in Georgia, with 9.9% of population professing it. Two large Muslim communities co-exist in Georgia—Shiite Azeris and Sunni Adjarians. Islam is professed in two major centers, Adjara and Lower Kartli, but smaller Muslim communities also exist among Abkhazs in western Georgia and Kists in northeastern provinces. Adjarians were influenced by the neighboring Turks from the 16th century and follow a Sunni Islam. Adjarian autonomy was initially based on this religious specificity and was retained for political reasons by the Bolsheviks. During the Soviet era, the Communist authorities conducted an eradication pol-
 icy against Islam in the region; mosques and madrasas (religious schools) were closed, public displays of Islam were forbidden and Islam existed only in the private sphere. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 caused a religious revival in Georgia, and the Georgian national liberation movement thought to redefine the links between national identity and religious feelings. The opening of borders and the arrival of Turkish Muslim missionaries to Adjara was perceived as a return to the Ottoman era. The Georgian government led by Zviad Gamsakhurdia embraced Orthodox Christianity and implemented a policy to reconvert Adjara to Christianity.

Although the conversion rate among Adjarians remained high in subsequent years, so did the initiatives of the Turkish missionaries. Among various Muslim preaching movements in Adjara is Suleyman, named after the Turkish Islamist leader Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan (1888–1959), which operates several small madrasas in Adjara. The Nurdjus, the disciples of Sait Nursi (1876–1960), and its splinter group, the Fetullahci movement, founded by Fethullah Gülen, are also active in Georgia and operate several madrasas in Tbilisi and Batumi. The Turkish religious influence is also manifested in the work of the so-called Diyanet, the Department of Religious Affairs, which is under the authority of the prime minister and dispatches its emissaries regularly across the border and disseminates Islamic literature.

There are over 280,000 Azeris residing in Georgia, mainly in the Bolnisi, Marneuli, and Dmanisi regions in Lower Kartli. Adversely affected by its experiences in Abkhazia and Ossetia, Georgian society oftentimes views the Shiite Azeri with suspicion and considers them as a potential obstacle to national construction. The region, and eastern Georgia in general, was for many decades, under the influence of Persia/Iran and its Shiite Imamism. The Soviet authorities prevented any contacts between the Shiite Islam in Georgia and Iran and forbade pilgrimages to the Shiite towns of Karbala, Mashad, Najaf, and Qom. They also succeeded in weakening the position of Islam and imposed secularism among the Muslim Azeris of Georgia. Georgian independence in the 1990s brought many changes, including increased influence from Iran. Iranian Muslim missionaries became active in neighboring Azerbaijan and extended their influence to southeastern regions of Georgia. The Iman Foundation, based in Tbilisi, offers religious lessons and operates a small library of Shiite
literature. Ahli Beyt, a foundation based in Marneuli, helps the Shiite Azeris learn Arabic and Shiite theology as well as secular subjects. In the small village of Kosali, which is on the Azeri–Georgian border near Marneuli, a small Turkish madrasa has been set up by Nakchibendi Turks, disciples of Osman Nuri Tobpa.

Islam’s status in present-day Georgia is of interest and importance. Although officially affirmed by the Constitution, the separation of the church and state barely exists in practice, and Georgian governments openly affirm their attachment to Orthodox Christian values. The day after his accession to power, President Mikhail Saakashvili adopted a new national flag with five crosses to signify Georgia’s links with its Christian past and the importance of Christian spirituality for national construction. The legal status of Islam is still undetermined since the Georgian Orthodox Church opposes recognition of any other religious entity, including other Christian creeds. The war in neighboring Chechnya increased the influence of Islamic radicals in the northern Caucasus, but Georgia has so far avoided the pitfalls of religious strife. The demands of Shiite Azeris are more economic than religious since they have been marginalized since the country’s independence and their provinces are underfunded and underdeveloped. See also RELIGION.

IVIRON MONASTERY. Georgian Orthodox monastery located on Mount Athos in the northernmost peninsula of Halkidiki in Macedonia, Greece. In addition to the Iviron Monastery, there is a complex of 19 monasteries that form an autonomous ecclesiastical state of Aghion Oros under Greek sovereignty. Byzantine Emperor Basil I issued an imperial charter to the monks of Athos in 883 and thus was born the monastic community that has continued its practice of the ascetic life without interruption for over a millennium. Georgian monks actively participated in the establishment of the Athos colony, and the Iviron Monastery eventually became the greatest Georgian cultural center outside Georgia. One of benefactors of the Iviron Monastery was Tornike Eristavi (Ioannes Tornikios), who served as commander-in-chief of Georgian troops and helped Emperor Basil II secure his throne in 979. After the war, Tornike donated all of his possessions to the Iviron Monastery, helped build a larger monastery in 980–983, and spent the rest of his life living there as a monk.
In the early Middle Ages, the Iviron Monastery had a large group of Georgian monks under the leadership of Euthimius the Athonite (Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli) and Giorgi Mtatsmindeli. These Georgian monks produced original illuminated manuscripts, translations, and treatises. Among other works, Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli translated Sibrdzne Balavarisa from Georgian to Greek as well as other works of Eastern philosophy. However, Georgian monks were often persecuted by their Greek counterparts, who gradually seized control of the entire monastery complex. Although the Georgians lost control of the Iviron, some Georgian monks live there nowadays. The monks of Athos today live much the same life that has been lived on the Holy Mountain for the last thousand years. An edict by Emperor Constantine issued in 1060 continues to forbid females from entering the peninsula. Men entering Athos as monks take up residence in one of the monasteries or sketae and engage in a life of prayer and work that follows the traditional Orthodox monastic lifestyle. The Iviron Monastery has one of the largest collections of Georgian manuscripts.

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Jabadari, Ivane (1852–1913). Georgian revolutionary-narodnik. Born to a noble family, he studied at the Medical Academy in St. Petersburg and was exposed to socialist ideas. Jabadari became active in student movements and later embraced the ideas of Mikhail Bakunin. He was one of the founders of the All-Russian Social Revolutionary Organization and disseminated propaganda among the workers in Moscow. He was arrested in April 1875 and was tried in the famous Trial of the Fifty in 1877, receiving five years of exile. In 1887, he returned to Georgia and practiced law in Tbilisi. He clashed with the leaders of the Georgian national movement, who accused him of pro-Russian activity in Georgia. From 1905–1907, Jabadari participated in the revolutionary events in Tbilisi. See also Mesame Dasi; Tsitsianov, Alexander.

Jabidze, David (1916–1982). Soviet ace and Hero of the USSR during World War II. Born into a peasant family, Jabidze studied in a local flying club and at Tbilisi State University before enlisting in
JAKELI. One of the most prominent noble families in Georgia. Emerging in the 12th century, the Jakeli held key positions during the reign of Queen Tamar and became the atabegs and rulers of Samtskhe, a region in southwestern Georgia. They played an important role in Georgian political life between the 12th–15th centuries when their power rivaled even that of the kings of all Georgia. They retained control over Samtskhe for hundreds of years. After the Ottoman conquest in the 15th century, Samtskhe was divided into pashaliks that were still governed by members of the Jakeli family, who converted to Islam.

JAKELI, IVANE-KVARKVARE (13TH CENTURY). Prominent Georgian political figure. Ivane Jakeli served as mechurchletukhutsesi (royal treasurer) under Queen Tamar and supported her against the opposition of feudal lords. In the late 1220s, he organized Georgian defenses against Jalāl al-Dīn and later fought the Mongol incursions in Samtskhe. He continued to rule the Samtskhe region under the Mongol yoke and helped Prince David, the son of Queen Rusudan, and Prince David, the son of King Giorgi IV, travel for investiture to Central Asia. In the mid-1240s, he defeated a major invasion of the Turcoman tribes near Van Lake and later became one of the leaders of the Kokhtastavi Conspiracy against the Mongols.

JAKELI, ISAQ I. Pasha of Akhaltsikhe in 1701–1745 and governor of Kartli from 1727–1735. After a bloody struggle for the throne, Isaq Jakeli emerged as the winner in 1718 and took part in the Ottoman conquest of eastern Georgia in 1723–1724. After the death of King Iese of Kartli in 1727, Isaq I became the governor of Kartli and other
Georgian and Armenians regions. His reign proved very detrimental to the Georgian population, which was forced to pay exorbitant taxes and convert to Islam. In 1735, as Persia emerged under leadership of Nadir Khan, Isaq Khan was driven out of eastern Georgia and returned to Akhaltsikhe, where he ruled until 1745.

JAKELI, KVARKVARE II (1416–1488). Atabeg of Samtskhe in 1451–1498. The son of Beka II Jakeli, Kvarkvare played an important role in 15th-century Georgian politics and contributed to the disintegration of the united Kingdom of Georgia. Seeking more autonomy from Bagrationi rulers, Kvarkvare tried to establish a Meskhetian church, independent of the Georgian Orthodox Church, and defied King Giorgi VIII of Georgia in both internal and foreign matters. In 1465, he captured the king himself near Paravani Lake, but later released him. The struggle, however, continued and in 1483, Kvarkvare II routed the royal troops at Aradeti. These events signaled the end of the united Kingdom of Georgia, which disintegrated into several principalities. Kvarkvare gained his long-sought independence in Samtskhe while Eristavi Bagrat seized the thrones of Imereti and Kartli and Giorgi VIII carved out his own realm in Kakheti. Kvarkvare turned Samtskhe into a powerful state and he successfully dealt with the Ottoman threat. In 1479, he routed the Turks and counterattacked, capturing Erzerum in 1491.

JAKELI, MANUCHAR II (MUSTAFA PASHA). Atabeg of Samtskhe and pasha of Akhaltsikhe between 1581 and 1614. The son of Kaikhosro II, he served as the regent of Samtskhe from 1576–1578 and sided with the Ottomans. Traveling to the Ottoman court in Istanbul, Manuchar converted to Islam, changed his name to Mustafa, and was appointed pasha of Akhaltsikhe in 1579. Despite his support of the Ottomans, Manuchar continued to maintain secret communications with the Georgian princes, especially with King Simon of Kartli, who actively resisted the Ottoman expansion in Caucasus. After receiving instructions to invade Kartli, Manuchar informed Simon of Ottoman intentions and helped defeat the invading Ottoman army at the Mukhrani Field. Manuchar renounced Islam and incited a rebellion in his native Samtkhe in 1581. He successfully fought against the Ottomans for two years, forcing them
to recognize him as beglarbeg of Samtskhe. Manuchar then called for the restoration of his title of atabeg and refused to convert to Islam. In response, the Ottomans organized a punitive expedition in 1587, which Manuchar was unable to defeat, and he fled to Persia, where he served at the Persian courts until his death in 1614.

**JAKELI, MANUCHAR III.** Atabeg of Samtskhe in 1614–1625. The son of Manuchar II, he accompanied his father to Persia and was confirmed as ruler of Samtskhe by Shah Abbas I of Persia. He continued to fight the Ottomans until 1608 when he was forced to flee to Kartli. After the death of his father in 1614, he officially claimed the title of atabeg of Samtskhe and incited anti-Ottoman sentiments in the region. In 1624, he fought against the Ottoman pasha of Erzerum and later moved to Kartli, where he supported Giorgi Saakadze against the Persians and distinguished himself in the battle at Marabda. In 1625, he reconciled with the Ottomans and was confirmed as atabeg of Samtskhe. However, Manuchar was killed by his renegade uncle, Sapar Pasha (Beka Jakeli), upon his return to Samtskhe.

**JALĀL AL-DĪN MENGUBERDĪ (?–1231).** Last ruler of the Khwarezmid Empire; his name is sometimes given as Jelal ad-Din Mingburnu. He was the son of Shah Ala ad-Din Muhammad II, who had the misfortune of challenging Chengiz Khan in the late 1210s. In 1220, the Mongols invaded Khwarazm and stormed its major cities of Bukhara, Samarkand, and Urgench, leaving behind them a trail of death and devastation. Shah Muhammad II fled and died on an island in the Caspian Sea, and Jalāl al-Dīn emerged as a leader of the Khwarazmean resistance after barely escaping to India in the Battle of the Indus. Over the next three years, he rallied forces and harassed the Mongols throughout Central Asia and Persia. In 1225, he led his army to the Caucasus, where he defeated the Georgians at Garhni (Gar- nisi) in 1226 and captured Tbilisi on 9 March. His troops seized enormous booty in Georgia that had seen no enemy invasions in almost 150 years. According to Georgian chronicles, Jalāl al-Dīn offered the Christians in Tbilisi the choice of converting to Islam or being executed; he had thousands executed for refusal. He remained in Georgia and Armenia for the next five years, defeating Georgians in another decisive battle at Bolnisi. Only the arrival of the Mongols, seeking
him, forced Jalāl al-Dīn to withdraw from Georgia. Defeated and abandoned, he was murdered in a remote Kurdish village in 1231.

**JANASHIA, SIMON (1900–1947).** Distinguished Georgian historian and scholar. He was born in the village Makvaneti in Guria, the son of a prominent ethnographer and public benefactor Nikołoz Janashia (1872–1918). In 1922, Janashia graduated from Tbilisi State University, where he began working as assistant professor (1922–1930) and associate professor (1930–1935) before becoming full professor in 1935. From 1936–1941, he was director of the Institute of Language, History, and Material Culture of the Georgian Branch of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. In 1941, he became one of the founders of the Georgian Academy of Sciences (GAS), and in 1943–1947, he served as the vice president of the Academy and director of its Institute of History. His many works covered the history of ancient Georgian states, historical geography of Georgia, Kartvelian languages, etc. His major publications include *Origins of Social Classes and the State among Georgian Tribes* (1932), *Feudal Revolution in Georgia* (1935), *Tubal-Tabal, Tibaren, Iber* (1937), and *Georgia on the Path of Early Feudalization* (1937). He was co-author of *History of Georgia* (1946). Among his many awards were two Stalin prizes (1942, 1947), two Orders of Lenin, and the Order of the Red Banner of Labor.

**JANELIDZE, YUSTIN (1883–1950).** Prominent Georgian surgeon. Born in Samtredia, he studied at the University of Kharkov from 1903–1905 before being expelled for involvement in student demonstrations. He completed his doctoral studies in Switzerland and returned to Russia in 1911, where he began working in the Surgical Clinic of the Women’s Medical Institute. From 1921, Janelidze served as professor and chair of the general surgery of this institute. In 1927, he became chair of the Hospital Surgical Clinic of the 1st Leningrad Medical Institute and was instrumental in developing ambulance service. In 1939, he was appointed chief surgeon of the Soviet Navy and distinguished himself during the Soviet–Finnish War and World War II. After the war, he continued his work on surgery of the heart and major vessels. He became chairman of the 25th All-Union Congress of Surgeons in 1946 and was appointed a member of the Learned Medical Council of the USSR Ministry of Health.
Throughout his career, he made major contributions to Soviet clinical surgery, performing the first heart operation in 1911 and the first successful suture of a wound of the ascending aorta in 1913, developing and performing a simple palliative operation for angina pectoris, and developing original methods of treating dislocations of the hip and shoulders and fractures of the patella. Janelidze also pioneered skin-grafting methods and other plastic operations and produced several preeminent students who further developed Soviet medicine. He produced more than 100 works, including *Heart Wounds and Their Surgical Treatment* (1927), *Burns and Their Treatment* (1941), and *Free Skin-Grafting Treatment in Russia and the Soviet Union* (1945). For his work, he was awarded many honors, including the Stalin Prize in 1949 and two Orders of Lenin. He became a member of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences in 1944 and was named Hero of Socialist Labor in 1945.

**JAPARIDZE, PROKOFY** (1880–1918). Georgian revolutionary, who became famous for his role in the Baku Soviet in 1917–1918. Born in the village of Shardometi in western Georgia, Japaridze studied at the Alexandrovsky Teachers Institute in Tbilisi, where he became involved in Marxist circles and joined the Social Democratic Party in 1898. He participated in several strikes of railroad workers and was arrested and forbidden to enter any major cities of Transcaucasia in 1901. He continued his work in Kutaisi for the next three years before he joined the Baku Party Committee in 1904. He was the Baku delegate to the 3rd Bolshevik Party Congress in 1905 and actively pursued revolutionary activities in Baku. He helped established the Bolshevik newspapers *Bakinskii rabochii* and *Prizyv* and supported his fellow Bolshevik Stepan Shaumian in spreading the Bolshevik message among the Shiite Muslims. He also served as secretary of the Union of Oil Workers until he was arrested and exiled to Rostov in 1909.

While in exile, Japaridze joined the local Bolshevik cell and presided over its meetings for two years before he was arrested again and exiled to Vologda. After three years in Siberia, he came to Tbilisi in 1914 and resumed his revolutionary activities, spreading Bolshevik propaganda materials. He was arrested for the third time in 1915 and sent to Yenisei Province. In 1916, he escaped and secretly returned to the Caucasus to agitate among the soldiers on the Russo–Turkish front. In 1917, after the February Revolution, Japaridze moved to Baku and was elected to the
6th Bolshevik Party Congress in Petrograd in the summer of that year. Upon returning to Baku, he was elected chairman of the Executive Committee of the Baku Soviet. In 1918, he was one the leaders of the short-lived Baku Commune but was arrested and executed with other Baku commissars on 20 September 1918.

JAVAKHETI. *See* MESKHETI.

JAVAKHISHVILI, IVANE (1876–1940). One of the most distinguished Georgian historians and scholars. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from the Faculty of Oriental Languages of St. Petersburg University in 1899 and became a privat-docent at the Chair of Armenian and Georgian Philology. In 1901–1902, he was a visiting scholar to the University of Berlin, and in 1902, he and Academician *Nikolay Marr* studied ancient Georgian collections in the Sinai. In 1906, he defended his thesis on state structure of ancient Georgia and Armenia, one of the first scientific studies of class society of these countries. In 1918, he was instrumental in founding Tbilisi State University (TSU), where he became professor and dean of the Faculty of Philology and served as the university rector from 1919–1926. From 1918–1938, he headed the Department of History at TSU.

JAVAKHISHVILI, MIKHAIL (1880–1937). Georgian writer. Born Mikhail Adamishvili in the village of Tserakvi, he studied at the Yalta College of Horticulture and Viticulture graduating in 1901. Returning to Georgia, he worked at a copper smeltery in Kakheti and began writing in 1903 taking the pen name, Javakhishvili. The next year, he worked for the newspapers *Iveria* and *Glekhi* and criticized the Russian autocracy. In 1906, he was persecuted for his works and immigrated to France, where he studied art and political economy at the Sorbonne University. He traveled extensively, visiting Switzerland, Great Britain, Italy, Belgium, the United States, Germany, and Turkey in 1908–1909.

In 1909, Javakhishvili secretly returned to Georgia and organized a group of writers publishing the journal *Eri*. However, he was soon arrested for his writing and imprisoned in Metekhi Prison before being exiled. In 1917, he managed to return to Georgia, where he became a member of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee. In the 1920s, he published a number of his works, including *Eka* (1905), *Tetri sakelo* (1923), *Kvachi Kvachantiradze* (1924), *Jakos khiznebi* (1925), and *Arsena Marabdeli, Kalis tvirti* (1936). He also proved himself a gifted translator of foreign prose and poetry, and among his translations were works of Adam Sienkewicz, Guy de Maupassant, and Anton Chekhov. He remained in Georgia after the Soviet occupation and was arrested on trumped-up charges of treason during the purges of 1937 and was executed later that year.

JAVAKHK. Armenian nationalist movement in Javakheti. Established as a national-popular movement in 1988, Javakhk’s official goals were the preservation of the Armenian cultural heritage, development of the region, and, most importantly, obtaining autonomy, if not to unite with Armenia. The movement gained in power in response to President Zviad Gamsakhurdia’s nationalist policies in the early 1990s. In later years, the Javakhk enjoyed relative autonomy from the central authorities that were occupied with civil strife and ethnic conflicts in other regions of Georgia. One of its branches, Parvents, developed into a paramilitary organization. In the mid-1990s, the Javakhk played an important role in the conflict between Tbilisi and local authorities in Akhalkalaki concerning the appointment of prefects. In 1997, the members of the
Javakhk movement began collecting signatures in support of creating Armenian autonomy in Javakheti. Official Yerevan does not support the idea of Javakhk separatism but there are indications that the Javakhk have close links with the Armenian Dashnaktsutiun Party, which is an influential political force in present-day Armenia.

JEWS. Georgian tradition holds that the first Jews began to arrive in Iberia in the seventh century BCE when the Assyrians expanded their sphere of influence into the Kingdom of Israel. Around 586 BCE, the Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar’s attack on Jerusalem led to the immigration of a large number of Jews to Iberia, where they settled around Mtskheta. Over the following centuries, there were several more migrations, especially following the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in the first century. By the fourth century CE, the Jewish community had grown in size and prosperity in Mtskheta. According to Christian tradition, two members of this community, Elioz and the Karenian Longinus, traveled to Jerusalem and were present at Christ’s crucifixion. By the Middle Ages, the Jews, together with the Armenians, held a monopoly on trade and greatly contributed to the development of the Georgian states. Tbilisi eventually became the center of the largest concentration of Jews, but smaller communities could be found in Gori, Kutaisi, Samtredia, Batumi, and Akhaltsikhe. Ashkenazi Jews, comprising 20% of the community, began to arrive after the Russian annexation of Georgia in 1801 and especially during World War II. Each Jewish community had a gabbai who served as a rabbi, shohet, mohel, and heder, and directed religious and communal affairs. In general surveys, they are usually seen as a local group of Jews; however, their position in the Georgian community has been so peculiar (similar to that of Mountain Jews in Daghestan) that they have been considered to be a separate people.

While in the previous centuries the attitude of the Georgians toward the Jews had been very tolerant, the establishment of the Russian administration seems to have induced anti-Semitism in western Georgia. Several blood libel cases took place between 1852–1884. In 1897, the first Zionist organization was established in Tbilisi, and four years later, the First Congress of Caucasian Zionists was held. Rabbi David Baazov emerged as one of the leading Zionists and
participated in the Zionist Congress in Basel. Following Georgian independence in May 1918, Jews were granted full civil and political rights, which led to an increased involvement of Jews in public events. In 1918, the All-Jewish Congress was held in Tbilisi. In the 1920s, the situation changed drastically. After the failed August Uprising of 1924, the Bolshevik authorities suppressed all Zionist activities and imposed economic restrictions on the Jewish community. In the 1930s through the 1950s, conditions barely changed for Jews, and many activists were arrested.

Things changed after the Israeli victory in the Six Day War in 1967. Two years later, 17 Georgian Jewish families wrote letters to the United Nations demanding permission to immigrate to Israel. This was the first public demand by Soviet Jews for immigration, and the Israeli government used it widely to campaign against the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union. In July 1971, a group of Georgian Jews went on a hunger strike in Moscow. As the Soviet restrictions on Jewish immigration lessened, thousands of Georgian Jews made aliyah (immigration to Israel) in the 1970s. The pace of immigration increased in the late 1980s and early 1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the start of civil turmoil in Georgia. While there were 24,720 Jews in Georgia in 1989, only 14,000 remained by the late 1990s and 3,772 by 2002. In September 1998, the Georgian government sponsored a major celebration commemorating 2,600 years of Jewish life in Georgia. Several Jewish institutions and schools continued to operate in Tbilisi, and three Jewish newspapers (Menora, Shalom, and 26 Century) are published.

JORJADZE, NANA (1948– ). Georgian director, scriptwriter, and actress. She graduated from music school in 1966 and studied at the Tbilisi Art Academy and Tbilisi State Theatre Institute, which she completed in 1980. She began her career in the Georgian film industry in 1977 and gradually gained both critical and popular acclaim. In the 1990s, she moved to Europe, where she became a member of the European Cinema Academy and directed several successful films and won awards at international film festivals. Her directorial debut was with Mogzauroba sopolshi in 1979 and was followed by Atlanti (1979), Moturave (1981), Itsotskhe genatsvale (1981), and Erosi (1984). Jorjadze’s breakthrough came with Robinzioniada anu chemi
ingliseli papa (1986), which earned her the Camera d’Or for Best First Feature Film in Cannes. After moving to France in the early 1990s, she directed Les Souvenirs sont devenus fous, Encounters, Château de la napoule, and About Georgia. In 1997, she became the first—and so far the only—Georgian director to be nominated for the American Academy Award for her Les Mille et une recettes du cuisinier amoureux, also known under its English title The Chef in Love. Her latest film was 27 Missing Kisses (2000).

**JVARI.** In Georgian mythology, the guarding deities of villages and valleys. Predating Christian tradition, the cult of jvari (literarily the cross) was, and still remains, widespread in the mountains of eastern Georgia. Each village had its own jvari, which was worshipped as a guardian warrior. Jvaris were most often associated with khvtis-shvilni but merged with Christian saints, retaining some pagan elements.

**JVARI.** Church erected on top of a mountain in Mtskheta. Originally, King Mirian had placed a monumental wooden cross there following his conversion to Christianity in the fourth century. Erismtavari Guaram built a small church next to this cross in 545–586, and his successor, Stephanos (586–605), constructed a larger church to house the cross. The church is noteworthy for its harmonious proportions and marks the divergence of Georgian architecture from the Byzantine blueprints. The building is especially interesting for the architectural sculpture adorning the exterior walls and the windows embellished with vegetal motifs.

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**KAJI.** In Georgian mythology, evil spirits, often portrayed as a race of magic-wielding, demonic metalworkers. They lived in Kajeti/Kajaveti and had magic powers that they used against humans. Folk tales distinguished between land kajis, who lived in the remote woods and harassed humans, and river kajis, who dwelt in rivers, streams, or lakes and were more benevolent to humans. Female kajis were very beautiful and they easily tempted or helped heroes on their
quests. Kajis figure prominently in Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistaosani, which describes the kajis kidnapping one of the female protagonists and fighting the main heroes at the Kajeti fortress.

KAKABADZE, DAVID (1889–1952). Prominent Georgian artist and painter. Born in Kukhi (near Kutaisi), Kakabadze studied at the Kutaisi Gymnasium and the University of St. Petersburg. He became seriously interested in painting and was tutored by leading Russian painters. In 1914, he co-founded an artistic group that introduced avant-garde work to Russian art. In 1911–1919, Kakabadze produced paintings with a strong interest in the Georgian themes, and one of his most famous paintings, Imereti—Mother Mine, is featured on the national banknotes of Georgia. In 1919–1927, Kakabadze lived in France where he studied Byzantine history and art and produced a series of avant-garde paintings. Returning to Georgia in 1927, he combined romantic themes with social realism in his many artworks and taught at the Academy of Arts from 1928–1948.

KAKABADZE, SARGIS (1886–1967). Georgian historian. Born in Kukhi, he studied history at St. Petersburg University, from which he graduated in 1910. Returning to Georgia, he taught history at Tbilisi Gymnasium before becoming professor at Tbilisi State University, where he worked from 1918–1967. In the 1920s, he directed the State Historical Archive of Georgia and later directed one of the departments in the archive. His main fields of interest were the ancient history of Georgia and the Caucasus and of Georgian literature, particularly Rustvelology. Among his major works are Character of the Feudal System in Georgia (1912), Georgian Historians of the 11th century (1912), Social-Economic Issues in Medieval Georgia (1927), Vakhtang Gorgasali (1959), and Rustaveli and His Poem (1966).

KAKHETI. Historical region in eastern Georgia. In ancient times, Kakhetian territory was part of the Georgian principates of Iberia and Hereti, and some of its regions were also under the control of Caucasian Albania. An independent principality emerged here in the eighth century. In the 10th–11th centuries, Kakhetian kings often interfered in the affairs of neighboring Kartli and later resisted the
efforts of the Bagrationi dynasty to unite Georgian lands. Kakheti was incorporated into the united Kingdom of Georgia in the early 12th century. Following the collapse of the Kingdom of Georgia, Kakheti emerged as one of the independent principalities. In the 15th–17th centuries, it was periodically united with Kartli and suffered the worst during the Persian invasions in the early 17th century when approximately 200,000 Kakhetians were resettled to Persia. The Persian attempts to turn Kakheti into one of the Muslim khanates eventually failed, but it remained under Persian influence. In 1762, King Erekle II managed to unite Kakheti and Kartli into one kingdom, which existed until 1801 when the Russian Empire annexed it.

As part of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, Kakheti served as the Soviet Union’s largest wine producing region. However, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the region has suffered severe economic hardships. Besides its reputation for wine, Kakheti is also famous for hundreds of historical monuments under state protection, including the monastery cave complex of David Gareja, the Cathedral of Alaverdi, and the Tsinandali house museum of Alexander Chavchavadze, the 19th century Georgian poet and intellectual.

Currently, Kakheti has a population of 447,900 in an area of 11,340 km³. The majority of Kakhetians are ethnic Georgians and are members of the Georgian Orthodox Church, but it also includes a substantial number of Azerbaijanis and smaller groups of Russians, Armenians, Chechens, and Dagestanians.

**KAKHETIAN UPRISING OF 1605.** By the early 17th century, Kakheti was in the Persian sphere of influence, and Shah Abbas I sought greater integration of this kingdom within his empire. In 1605, he encouraged renegade Prince Constantine, son of King Alexander II of Kakheti, to murder his father, brother, and other royal officials at the Dzegami Palace on 12 March. The bloody takeover stunned the rest of Kakheti, and many nobles rallied around surviving Queen Consort Ketevan and her son Teimuraz. Constantine used Persian troops and bribes to divide his opponents, and with Shah Abbas’ consent, promised the nobles a lavish bounty if they participated in a raid on the neighboring Shirvan. To prepare for an uprising, Queen Ketevan and her supporters agreed
to take part in the campaign, and Constantine led some 10,000 men against Shemakha.

As the siege of Shemakha lengthened, troops became discontented, and Ketevan’s supporters used this opportunity to launch a rebellion. They attacked Constantine’s camp, forcing the prince to flee under cover of darkness. The following day, the Kakhetian troops, led by the rebel nobles, lifted the siege and returned to Kakheti. To avoid confrontation with Persia, the rebel leaders sent to Shah Abbas to pledge allegiance but requested Christian Prince Teimuraz’s confirmation as a king. By September, Kakhetian nobility was divided between supporters of Teimuraz and Constantine, and both sides prepared for the decisive battle. On 22 October, they met at the Belaknistskali River where the rebels, supported by King Giorgi X of Kartli, routed their opponents, with Constantine falling on the battlefield. The success of the Kakhetian rebels forced Shah Abbas to concede to their demands and approve Teimuraz as the king of Kakheti in 1606. However, the relations between the new Kakhetian ruler and Persia were hostile from the very beginning of Teimuraz’s reign, and he was the rallying point of anti-Persian forces in Georgia for the next five decades.

KAKHETIAN UPRISING OF 1615–1617. Despite relative success of the 1605 uprising, Kakheti remained under Persian dominance, which the new King Teimuraz I sought to curb. With the support of western Georgian principalities and Kartli, Teimuraz took advantage of the start of a new round of Turco–Persian wars to launch an uprising in Kakheti. On 15 September, the Kakhetian troops, led by Nodar Jorjadze and David Jandieri, attacked the Persian garrison at Alaverdi and seized the fortress. As the uprising spread to other areas, Shah Abbas I dispatched some 15,000 men under Ali Quli Khan. The insurgents were informed of the Persian plans by the Georgian nobles present at the Persian headquarters. This allowed Teimuraz to intercept and defeat the enemy forces.

The initial success of the uprising proved fleeting. In 1615–1617, Shah Abbas returned with a vengeance, leading a massive army in three invasions of Kakheti, which led to thousands of casualties and widespread devastation. The Persian ruler sought to turn Kakheti into a Qizilbash domain, and he resettled some 200,000 Georgians into
Persia where they helped to develop agriculture and other industries, while Qizilbash tribes were settled instead in Kakheti. Despite the defeat, Teimuraz and his Kakhetian supporters continued their resistance; in 1625, Teimuraz, with the help of Giorgi Saakadze, drove the Persians out of eastern Georgia and briefly united Kartli and Kakheti.

**KAKHETIAN UPRISING OF 1659–1660.** See BAKHTRIONI UPRISING.

**KAKHETIAN UPRISING OF 1802.** Anti-Russian uprising in the summer of 1802. Following the Russian annexation of Kartli-Kakheti, the Georgian nobility became dissatisfied with the new order of things, especially the establishment of the Russian administration that effectively limited their rights and privileges. In April 1812, an Imperial manifesto declaring Kartli-Kakheti annexed was read at the Sioni Church in Tbilisi, and the attending nobility was pressured to pledge allegiance to the new sovereign. One group of nobles defied the orders and left the ceremony in protest.

After two months of agitation, these nobles, among whom were Princes Andronikashvili, Vachnadze, Jandieri, Kobulashvili, and Chavchavadze, gathered a force of several thousand men at the village of Kelmenchauri, in Kakheti, where they were joined by Royal Princes Vakhtang Iraklis-dze and Teimuraz Giorgis-dze while Queen Darejan and Prince Alexander Batonishvili were contacted in Persia. According to the plan adopted, the uprising was to be supported by King Solomon II of Imereti and Muslim rulers of Ganja and Akhaltsikhe, who were to engage the scattered Russian forces. The insurgents planned to place Prince Yulon Iraklis-dze (who was sheltered by King Solomon II of Imereti) on the throne of Kartli-Kakheti. The nobility pledged an oath of loyalty to Prince Yulon and wrote a letter to the Russian emperor, demanding that the Treaty of Giorgievsk be honored and the Bagrationi dynasty in eastern Georgia be restored. See GIORGIEVSK, TREATY OF.

Learning about the plans for the uprising, the Russian authorities quickly rallied their forces but dispatched only one battalion to deal with the insurgents, which was routed near Kelmenchauri. The Russian commander, Karl Knorring, then took emergency measures to protect
Tbilisi, reinforcements were brought to Kartli, and strategic routes across the mountains were blocked. Such dramatic actions had an effect on the rebellious nobles, many of whom reconsidered opposing the Russian rule. The forces that were gathered at Kelmenchauri were disbanded, and Prince Alexander, who had brought his troops to Char-Belakani region, turned back to Persia. The Russian authorities promptly moved against the rebel leadership, arresting some of them while many fled to Persia. Those who were arrested were later pardoned but were compelled to pledge allegiance to the Russian emperor.

**KACHETIAN UPRISING OF 1812.** After the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti was annexed by Emperor Alexander I in 1801, the Russian administration was quickly set up in eastern Georgia. Attempted changes, alien language and tradition, and increased taxation led to growing resistance among the Georgian nobles and peasantry. Between 1802 and 1804, rebellions flared up in Kartli and spread to Pshavi, Khevsureti, and Ossetia. In 1810–1811, Kakheti suffered from poor harvests, natural disasters, and plague, which led to food shortages and high prices. Despite the hardship, Russian officials forced the peasantry to sell their remaining produce to the state at a low price. As the Russian troops began requisitioning supplies, a peasant uprising flared up in the village of Akhmeta on 31 January 1812. The insurgents captured the entire Russian garrison of Sighnaghi and later seized Telavi, Bodbiskhevi, Anaga, Dusheti, and Pasanauri. The rebels were supported by the local nobility and Prince Alexander Batonishvili. The revolt soon spread to Kartli, and the Russian forces lost more than 1,000 men in clashes with the insurgents. The rebellion continued throughout 1812 until the superior Russian army finally defeated it and pacified the region by early 1813.

KALANDADZE, ANA (1924– ). One of the finest Georgian poets of the 20th century. Born in Khidistavi in western Georgia, she graduated from Tbilisi State University in 1946 and worked at the Institute of Linguistics in 1952–1998. She began publishing her short poems in the 1940s and quickly gained popularity with her laconic but subtle and intimate lyrics, among them Mepereba mze alersis matkhovars, Lamis sakhlshi shemoichras tuta, Isev gakhseni guli chemi sikkvarulistvis, Vit potoli sheni, and others.

KALATOZOV (KALATOZISHVILI), MIKHAIL (1903–1973). Prominent Georgian/Soviet director, actor, and screenwriter. Born in Tbilisi, he became interested in cinema early on and worked at film studios in Georgia in the late 1920s and early 1930s. His first feature film was Sol Svanetii in 1930. In 1933, he studied in St. Petersburg, and after a brief career at the Tbilisi Film Studio, he worked at Lenfilm and Mosfilm where he produced Muzhestvo, Valerii Chkalov, and Zagovor obrechionnikh. From 1946–1948, he was a deputy minister of cinematography of the USSR. Kalatozov rose to prominence in the 1950s and 1960s when he directed Vikhri vzazhdebnie (1953), Vernie druzia (1954), Letiat zhuravli (The Cranes Are Flying, 1957), Neotpravlennoe pizmo (1959), and Red Tent (1969). He was awarded the USSR State Prize in 1951 and became a People’s Artist of the USSR in 1969. His greatest success was Letiat zhuravli, which won the prestigious Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 1958.

KAMO (1882–1922). Prominent Bolshevik revolutionary. He was born Simon Arshakovich Ter-Petrosyan into an Armenian family in Gori. In the 1900s, he joined revolutionary activities, set up printing presses, and distributed Bolshevik literature in various towns in Georgia. Famous for his daring escapes, Kamo was first arrested in November 1903 but escaped a year later. In 1905, he established armed squads throughout Georgia and led a detachment of armed workers during the 1905 Revolution, sustaining several wounds in clashes with government forces. During this period he became notorious for his daring raids and robberies to collect funds for the Bolshevik Party. In March 1906, he traveled to St. Petersburg where he met Vladimir Lenin and was instructed to
procure weapons for Bolshevik squads. Kamo successfully carried out this mission, secretly smuggling ammunition into Russia. His most famous exploit took place in June 1907 when he planned and executed, together with young Joseph Stalin, a daring attack on the Tsarist treasury convoy on Erivan Square in Tbilisi, seizing some 250,000 rubles.

Kamo and his accomplices managed to escape, but the tsarist authorities launched a widespread hunt for them. Kamo managed to move part of the funds to St. Petersburg, but the Russian authorities informed the police and banks of the serial numbers. Forced to move abroad, persons changing these banknotes were arrested in Berlin, Munich, Paris, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Geneva, revealing the scale of Kamo’s operations. In November 1907, Kamo himself was betrayed by the provocateur Y. A. Zhitomirsky and was arrested in Berlin. To avoid extradition, he feigned insanity for two years before he was extradited to Russia in 1909. Imprisoned in Metekhi Castle in Tbilisi, Kamo continued to feign madness, which allowed him to make a daring escape from the prison hospital in August 1911 and flee to Paris where he supervised the transportation of Bolshevik literature to Russia. Returning to Russia in 1912, he was arrested again and sentenced to death. However, on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the Romanov dynasty, his sentence was commuted to 20 years of hard labor, which he was to serve in Kharkov penitentiary. After the February Revolution of 1917, he was pardoned and returned to Transcaucasia.

From 1917–1919, Kamo traveled with secret instructions between St. Petersburg and Baku. During the civil war, he organized and commanded partisan detachments operating in the rear of the White Army around Kursk and Oryol. In 1920, he was arrested for covert Bolshevik activities by the Georgian Menshevik government in Tbilisi and expelled from Georgia. He took part in the Bolshevik coup in Baku that established the Soviet authority in Azerbaijan. In 1920–1921, he studied at the War Academy in Moscow and later worked for the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic’s Ministry of Foreign Trade. In 1922, he was transferred to the Georgian People’s Commissariat of Finance. In July 1922, he died in a traffic accident believed to have been staged on Stalin’s orders.
KANCHELI, GIA (GIORGI) (1935–). One of the finest modern composers, Kancheli was born in Tbilisi and initially planned to study geology but switched to music and graduated from Tbilisi Conservatory in 1963. His remarkable talents were showcased in 1962 when he won the All-Union Young Composer Competition but also angered Soviet authorities with his love of American jazz music. In 1970, he began teaching at the Tbilisi Conservatory and became musical director of the Rustaveli Theater the following year. Over the next 20 years, Kancheli produced numerous musical compositions that revealed his mastery in dramatic structure and variety of themes. With the collapse of the USSR and civil strife in Georgia, Kancheli immigrated to Germany in the early 1990s. While he was working in Europe, his compositions quickly earned critical acclaim and universal praise, and Kancheli was recognized as one of the most important composers of the 20th and early 21st centuries. Among his works are The Pranks of Hanuman and Symphony No. 3 (1973), The Caucasian Chalk Circle and Symphony No. 4: “In Memoria di Michelangelo” (1975); Symphony No. 5 (1977); Symphony No. 6 (1979–1980); opera Music for the Living (1982–1984); Symphony No. 7: “Epilogue” (1986); Magnum Ignotum (1994); And Farewell Goes Out Sighing, Rokwa, Styx (1999); and Ergo (2000).

KANTARIA, MELITON (1920–1993). Hero of the Soviet Union and one of the Soviet soldiers who raised the Soviet flag over the Reichstag. He was born in Jvari, and after graduating from a local school, he worked in the kolkhoz. He enlisted in the Red Army in 1940 and served as an intelligence officer in the 756th Regiment of the 150th Division of the 3rd Army on the Byelorussian front. On 30 April 1945, after fierce fighting with the German troops in Berlin, Kantaria, together with M. Yegorov and A. Berest, managed to climb to the roof of the Reichstag building and fix a Red Banner there. The title of the Hero of the Soviet Union was conferred on him—the highest Soviet military award—on 8 May 1946.

KARKARASHVILI, GIA (GIORGI) (1966–). Georgian military figure, former minister of defense. Karkarashvili graduated from the Tbilisi Artillery School and later studied at the Russian General Staff Academy. Serving in the Soviet Army, he gained experience in
Afghanistan in the 1980s. After Georgia became independent in 1990, he entered politics and supported a military coup d’etat against President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. He was appointed minister of defense in May 1993 and commanded Georgian troops during the war in Abkhazia in 1992–1994 when he became notorious for his threat to use excessive violence against the Abkhaz separatists. After the war, Karkarashvili briefly left political life and lived in Moscow. He was seriously injured in an assassination attempt; barely surviving a gunshot wound to his head, he spent three years recovering before returning to politics. In 1999, he was elected to the Parliament of Georgia but resigned his seat in 2004.

KARS, TREATY OF. Agreement between Turkey and Soviet Russia, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan signed on 13 October 1921. The Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia was represented by Shalva Eliava, People’s Commissar for War and the Navy, and Alexander Svanidze, People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs and People’s Commissar for Finance. The contracting states agreed not to recognize any peace treaty or other international act imposed upon any one of them by foreign powers. Under the treaty, the northeastern border of Turkey was determined by the line that began at the village of Sarpi on the Black Sea, passed by Mt. Kheids Mta, and followed the former northern administrative borders of the sanjaks of Ardahan and Kars. As a result, Turkey took control of the ancient Georgian provinces of Tao, Klarjeti, and others. Turkey agreed to cede to Georgia suzerainty over Batumi and the territory to the north of the frontier, under special conditions. The local population was to enjoy administrative autonomy, and Turkey was to be assured free transit through Batumi for commodities and all materials destined for, or originating in, Turkey, without customs duties and charges. Turkey and Georgia also agreed to facilitate the crossing of the border by the inhabitants of the bordering zones on the condition that they observe the customs, police, and sanitary regulations.

The treaty also greatly affected the future of the neighboring Armenian republic, whose territory was partitioned as well. Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Armenia agreed that the region of Nakhichevan constituted an autonomous territory under the protection of Azerbaijan.
KARTLI. See IBERIA.

KARTLI UPRISING OF 1804. Anti-Russian uprising in the mountains of Kartli in May 1804. Following the annexation of Kartli-Kakheti, the Russian authorities quickly moved forward to set up a new administration of the acquired regions. New regulations increased the tax burden on the peasantry and Russian officials, unfamiliar with local customs, soon alienated the peasantry, especially in the mountainous regions of Kartli, where peasants were forced to work for free on the Georgian Military Road; hard work and severe punishments led to the death of 23 men during the winter of 1804. In the spring, tensions between the Russian officials and the local population of Mtiuleti led to clashes, and the uprising quickly spread to other regions. The rebels were joined by Ossetians, Mokheviens, Khevsurs, Tushis, and Pshavs and were organized and commanded by Sh. Burduli, T. Chkareuli, L. Nazghaidze, and others. Royal Princes Yulon and Parnavaz were contacted and were offered leadership positions. However, as they traveled to join the insurgents, the princes encountered Russian forces, and in a brief clash, Prince Yulon was captured but Prince Parnavaz escaped to Kakheti where he rallied some supporters and finally joined the rebels.

Russian commander-in-chief Pavel Tsitsianov planned a campaign against Erevan Khanate that year and had a force of recruits from Mtiuleti and other mountain regions deployed in the Aragvi Valley. With the start of the uprising, these troops disobeyed orders and sided with the rebels. In July, the insurgents captured the local administrative centers of Stepantsminda and Dusheti and strategic points Lars and Lomisi, in the Darial Pass and the Aragvi Valley, respectively. They kept the local Russian forces at bay until October 1804, when Paul Tsitsianov returned from his campaign in Erevan Khanate and moved considerable reinforcements against the rebels. He ordered the Russian troops in the North Caucasus to advance through the Darial Valley while he launched an offensive in the Aragvi Valley. The rebels were no match for the regular army, and the insurrection was brutally suppressed; Prince Parnavaz was captured and exiled and more than 300 rebels were imprisoned. Despite the defeat, the rebellion forced the Russian authorities to make certain concessions in order to avoid further confrontations with the local populace.

Title of a whole corpus of Georgian historical sources, which includes chronicles, royal lives, and histories. These writings were organized into several editions, most prominent of them by Queen Mariam in 1638–1645 and King Vakhtang VI in the 1700s. The Kartlis Tskhovreba consists of seven major works. Three of them were edited by Leonti Mroveli: The History of the Kings of Kartli covers the history of Georgia from the ancient times to the fifth century CE; the History of King Vakhtang Gorgasali by Juanisher Juansheriani (eighth century) covers Georgian history from the fifth to eighth century; and The Martyrdom of King Archil II describes events of the late eighth century. The Chronicle of Kartli provides information on the period from the late 8th century to the 11th. The History of the King of Kings is an anonymous work concerning King David IV Aghmashenebeli (1089–1125). The Histories and Eulogies of the Sovereigns is also anonymously written and deals with the reign of Queen Tamar (1184–1213). The History of the Mongol Invasions, by an anonymous contemporary, describes the period after the death of Queen Tamar to the mid-14th century. The subsequent history of the 15th–16th centuries is covered in separate works. The First Continuation of the Kartlis Tskhovreba covers Georgian history to 1453 while the Second Continuation describes the years 1454–1605. There is also the 13th century Armenian adaptation of parts of the Kartlis tskhovreba, entitled Chronique Armenienne.

KARTVELI, ALEXANDER (1896–1974). One of the finest American aircraft engineers, who contributed to the Allied war efforts during World War II. Born to a Georgian family in Tbilisi, he traveled to France to study military science in 1919. When two years later, the Red Army invaded Georgia, Kartveli remained in France and entered the Ecole Supérieure d’Aéronautique in Paris. To support himself, he gave private lessons in mathematics and performed as a trapeze artist in a circus during the evening. After graduation, Kartveli worked for a while at the Blériot Company and designed the Bernard and Ferbois aircrafts. In 1924, one of his aircraft established a new world speed record. He then began working on a large passenger aircraft and
shared his plans with Charles Levine, a wealthy and eccentric American millionaire who dreamed of building a transatlantic transport plane. In 1927, Levine invited Kartveli to New York.

After Levine’s project failed, Kartveli joined the Fokker American Company in 1928. Three years later, while this company was going bankrupt, Alexander Kartveli met Alexander Seversky, a leading American aircraft designer who was also from Tbilisi, and became chief engineer at Seversky Aircraft Corp. The two talented engineers created a series of aircraft, and during World War II they designed one of the greatest airplanes, the P-47 Thunderbolt, that contributed to the Allied war effort. After the war, Kartveli continued his work on designing airplanes, creating several jet-engine planes, including the F-84 Thunderjet and Republic F-105 Thunderchief. Kartveli lived with his wife in New York for most of his life. He stayed with Seversky Aircraft Corp and Republic for almost 35 years and later continued his work at Fairchild Hiller as a design consultant.

KARTVELISHVILI, LAVRENTI (1890–1937). Georgian Bolshevik and government official. Born into a peasant family in the village of Ianeti, he studied commerce in Kiev but became involved in revolutionary activities and was expelled. After participating in the events of 1905, he became a member of the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) in 1910. He became chairman of the Kiev City Committee in 1917 and member of the All-Ukranian Committee of the Communist Party in May 1918. In July, he joined the Central Committee of the Ukranian Communist Party and later worked in Odessa where he directed the regional committee in the spring and summer of 1919. During the Civil War, Kartvelishvili served in the Revolutionary-Military Council of the 12th Army in late 1919. In early 1920, he became editor of the Kommunist newspaper and directed the Odessa obkom before assuming a senior party position in 1921. Two years later, he became secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party and later served as the second secretary of the Transcaucasian Regional Committee and chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of Georgian SSR. In 1929, he was transferred to direct the political section of the Ukrainian Military District and served as the 2nd secretary of the Central Committee of the Ukranian Communist Party. In 1930,
he became a candidate member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and a member in 1934. Two years later, he directed the Crimea obkom but was arrested during the Stalinist purges and executed in June 1937. He was posthumously rehabilitated in 1956.

**KAVBYURO.** A body representing the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) in the Caucasus region; its name is an abbreviation for the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Formed in April 1920, it became the supreme Bolshevik authority in the region under the direction of Sergo (Gregory) Ordzhonikidze. The Kavbyuro was actively involved in toppling the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic in April 1920 and in preparing the Bolshevik invasion of Georgia in 1921. The Bureau was transformed by the First Congress of the Communist Organizations of Transcaucasia in February 1922; it later operated as the Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party or Zakkraikom.

**KAVSADZE, KAKHI (1935– ).** Popular Georgian actor. Born in Tkibuli, he studied at the Rustaveli Theater, where he debuted in the 1960s. Over the next three decades, he portrayed a series of memorable characters in some 30 films and established himself as one of the finest actors of his generation. Among his most popular films are Beloe solntse pustini (1969), Melodii veriiskogo kvartala (1973), Natvris khe (1977), Monanieba (1984), and Zhite Don Kikhota i Sancho (1988). In 1981, he received the title of People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR.

**KAVTARADZE, SERGEY (1885–1971).** Georgian revolutionary, party, and government official. Born in the village of Zovreti, he joined the Bolshevik Party in 1903 and was involved in revolutionary activities in Batumi, Kutaisi, Tbilisi, Baku, and St. Petersburg. From 1912–1914, he worked at the Bolshevik newspaper Pravda. Graduating from the University of St. Petersburg in 1915, he was elected to the Caucasian Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) in 1917 and edited the newspaper Kavkazskii rabochii. He participated in the 6th Conference of the RSDRP and directed the Executive Committee of the Vladikavkaz
Soviet in 1918. Over the next two years, he was involved in Bolshevik activities against the Menshevik government of Georgia and was arrested on several occasions.

After the Soviet takeover of Georgia in 1921, Kavtaradze became chairman of the Revolutionary Committees of Batumi and Adjara and later rose to deputy chairman of the Georgian Revolutionary Committee and People’s Commissar of Justice. He presided over the Council of People’s Commissars in Georgia, and after a brief stint in the Soviet embassy in Turkey, he was appointed to the Supreme Court of USSR. In 1927, he was arrested for his support of Leon Trotsky and was exiled for four years to Siberia. He was released in 1931, but five years later he was again arrested on charges of counterrevolutionary activities and spent another three years in prison. Released through Lavrenti Beria’s intervention in 1939, he was reinstated in the Communist Party and began working at the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, becoming deputy commissar of foreign affairs in 1943. He participated in the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences during World War II. From 1945–1952, he was the Soviet ambassador to Romania. After his retirement in 1954, he was elected to the XXII Conference of the Communist Party in 1961.

KAZBEGI, ALEXANDER (1848–1893). One of the finest Georgian writers of the late 19th century. Kazbegi was born into a prominent family in Stepantsminda in the mountains of northern Georgia. He moved to Tbilisi in 1879, began working at the newspaper Droeba, and published his first works. In 1881, Kazbegi’s novel, Elguja, caused a scandal because of its positive portrayal of mountaineers and their struggle against Tsarism; the book was banned but it nevertheless enjoyed tremendous success. It was followed by Eliso (1882), Mamismkvleli (1882), Tsiko (1883), Khevisberi Gocha (1884), and other novels, which described in fascinating and engaging detail the life of Georgian mountaineers and their customs and oppression. Kazbegi also proved to be a talented translator of European and Russian literature into the Georgian language.

KEKELIDZE, KORNELI (CORNELIUS) (1879–1962). Eminent Georgian philologist, literary expert, and scholar. Born near Vani in western Georgia, Kekelidze studied at Tbilisi Seminary and
Kiev Theological Academy in the 1900s. He became rector of Tbilisi Seminary in 1916 and was one of the founding fathers of Tbilisi State University (TSU) in 1918. Between 1919 and 1962, Kekelidze chaired several departments at TSU and served in the People’s Commissariat of Education and other government bodies. From 1933–1936, he also directed the Faculty of History of Literature at Kutaisi Pedagogical Institute, and between 1942–1949, he directed the Shota Rustaveli Institute of History of Georgian Literature.

Kekelidze left a diverse literary and scholarly legacy that laid the foundation for critical study of Georgian literature. He was instrumental in discovering, publishing, and preserving ancient manuscripts and other literary sources. In his quest for manuscripts, he actively collaborated with the Kiev Theological Academy and the Russian Academy of Sciences and worked in archives and in monasteries and private collections. He left interesting works on the influence of foreign cultures on Georgian literature, Georgian–Byzantine and Georgia–Persian relations, the history of printing in Georgia, the development of Georgian script, among others. In 1912, he produced two books on ancient Georgian theological works. He helped produced a series of annotated editions of literary works, including Ioane Sabanis-dze’s Abo Tbilelis Tsameba (1935), N. Tsitsishvili’s Shvidi Mtiebi (1930), Ioane Batonishvili’s Kalmasoba (1936), Visramiani (1938), and Istoriani da Azmani sharavantedtani (1941). Of greater importance were his monographs on the history of Georgian literature: a two-volume Dzveli kartuli literaturis istoria that went through four editions between 1923–1960, and Konspektivnii kurs istorii drevnegruzinskoi literaturi (1939). For his work, Kekelidze received several state awards, including the Order of Lenin, and was elected to the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 1941.

KERESELIDZE, LEO (1878–1942). Georgian commander and leader of the Georgian émigré community. Opposing the Russian authorities in Georgia, Kereselidze helped create the Georgian Legion in the German army and distinguished himself during World War I. In 1918, as Georgia proclaimed its independence, Kereselidze became actively involved in the creation of the national army and was promoted to major general. In 1921, he took part in the fighting against the Red Army before immigrating to Europe. Living in Germany, he co-founded the Tetri Giorgi organization of Georgian émigrés that
sought to liberate Georgia. He later helped found the Union of Georgian Traditionalists in 1942. Harold Armstrong used him as a main character for his book *Unending Battle: The Life of One Georgian Patriot* (1934). *See also Berlin, Georgian Community of.*

**KETEVAN, QUEEN (?–1624).** Queen of Kakheti, who was tortured to death at the Safavid court of Persia. Ketevan was married to Prince David, the son of King Alexander II of Kakheti. In 1605, her husband and father-in-law were murdered by Prince Constantine, David’s renegade brother. Ketevan rallied the Kakhetian forces to defeat Constantine and effectively ruled Kakheti in favor of her young son Teimuraz. As the tensions between the Kakhetian and the Safavid courts mounted, Ketevan chose to travel to Persia to negotiate with Shah Abbas but was detained and imprisoned for several years. Her grandsons, Princes Alexander and Levan, were also captured and later tortured to death. Ketevan rejected Shah Abbas’s demands to convert to Islam and promises to make her his wife and became a rallying point for the Georgians fighting against the Persian domination.

On 12 September 1624, on Shah Abbas’ orders, Queen Ketevan was savagely tortured and burned to death. Her body was secretly taken away by the Portuguese missionaries, who witnessed her death. In 1627, the remains were brought to Goa (India) where they were buried near the St. Augustine de Grasa Church, but the location of Ketevan’s grave was lost eventually. Some parts of her remains were also transported to Portugal as well as to Georgia, where they were buried in the Alaverdi Cathedral. She was canonized by the Georgian Orthodox Church and remains a symbolic figure in Georgian history. The story of her martyrdom was publicized in Europe, and several literary works were produced, including Andreas Gryphius’ *Catharina von Georgien* (1657).

**KHAIHINDRAVA, GIORGI** (1956– ). Georgian director and statesman. He graduated from the Georgian Polytechnical Institute and Tbilisi State Theater Institute and began his career as a film actor in *Robinzoniada, Urga, Udzinarta Mze*, etc. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, he directed several successful films, including *Otsnebis sasafloa* and *Fipresci*. He was actively involved in politics in 1991–1993, was imprisoned for his political views, and later served as a senior official in Eduard Shevardnadze’s government. After Shevardnadze’s fall,
Kharadze joined President Mikhail Saakashvili’s administration and became state minister for conflict resolution, playing an active role in negotiations with the Abkhazian and Ossetian secessionist authorities.

In 2006, Khaindrava became involved in a hidden confrontation with Irakli Okruashvili, the powerful minister of defense, who represented a hard-line fraction of the government. In late July, Khanidrava broke the official government line and criticized Georgian military police for its operations in South Ossetia. His criticism led to a bitter public quarrel who Okruashvili and resulted in the resignation of the entire cabinet on 21 July. President Saakashvili nominated a new cabinet two days later but Khaindrava was excluded from it.

Kharadze, Archil (1895–1976). Eminent Georgian mathematician and scholar. He studied mathematics at the University of Moscow and at Tbilisi State University, where he received his doctorate in 1922. Starting in 1918, he taught mathematics at TSU and became vice-rector of the university in 1938. He helped establish and then directed the Departments of Theory of Functions of Complex Variables, of Algebra, and of Theoretical Mathematics at the Institute of Mathematics in the late 1930s and 1940s. Kharadze played an important role in developing mathematical studies in Georgia. His research concentrated on mathematical analysis and produced works on spatial curves, polynomials, partial linear equations, etc. In the 1920s he served in a commission developing Georgian mathematical terminology, and in later years he co-authored important textbooks on determinant theory, higher mathematics, and mathematical analysis that have been used to train generations of Georgian students.

Kharadze, Evgeni (1907–2001). Georgian scholar and astrophysicist. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from Tbilisi State University in 1930 and continued his studies at the Leningrad State Astronomical Institute, which he completed four years later. In 1936, he defended his first degree in physics at Leningrad State University and then his doctorate at Moscow State University in 1948. In 1950, he became a candidate member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences and a full member in 1956. He was instrumental in establishing and developing the modern astronomical observatory at Abastumani, which he directed between 1932 and 1992. Kharadze also served as the 17th rector of Tbilisi State University in 1959–1966, vice president of the International Astronom-
KHERKHEULIDZE, NINE BROTHERS. Georgian folk heroes, symbols of steadfast devotion and sacrifice. In 1625, an anti-Persian rebellion led by Giorgi Saakadze began in Kartli. The Georgian forces defeated the Persians at Martkopi in March but faced invasion by a larger enemy by July of the same year. In the decisive battle at Marabda on 1 July, the Persian army enjoyed numerical superiority and was armed with advanced firearms. Despite the counsel of Giorgi Saakadze, King Teimuraz I ordered an attack on the well-defended Persian positions; the Persian troops were arranged in four lines, with the first kneeling, the second standing, the third on horseback, and the fourth mounted on camels, to bring maximum firepower to the front. Nevertheless, the impetus of the Georgian attack pierced the Persian lines and spread confusion among the enemy. As Persians began to flee, a small group of Georgian troops pursued them while others began to plunder the Persian camp. At this moment, Persian reinforcements arrived, charging the befuddled Georgians. In the subsequent bloodshed, the Persians attempted to seize the royal banner, which was guarded by the nine Kherkheulidze brothers, who defended it to the last man. After the last of them was mortally wounded, their mother and sister, who had accompanied them on the campaign, rushed to protect the banner and also perished in the battle.

KHEVI. Historical region in eastern Georgia that includes the valleys of the Truso, Tergi, and Snostskhali rivers; its inhabitants are known as Mokheves. The region was of strategic importance since it provided a direct route across the Caucasus Mountains. In the 19th century, the Russian authorities constructed the Georgian Military Highway to connect Transcaucasia with the rest of the empire. Among local cultural sites are the Gergeti Church (14th century), the Garbani Church (9th–10th century), the Sioni Basilica (9th century), the Betlemi Monastery Complex (9–10th century), and the Sno Fortress.

KHEVSURETI. Historical region in the mountains of northeastern Georgia. Its inhabitants, the Khevsurs, traditionally lived in free communities in which there was no class distinction. Although under the sway of the Georgian kings, these societies were usually excluded
from the administrative-territorial divisions of feudal Georgia and were considered as borderland regions. The Khevsurs were free of any feudal taxes but had the duty of protecting the northern borders of Georgia. They frequently provided forces to engage the enemy invasions in Kartli or Kakheti and played an important role in the Bakhtironi Uprising of 1659–1660.

The modern Khevsurs are known for their spirit of independence, and although they are predominantly Orthodox Christians, they also retain many pre-Christian archaic traditions in their life and religion. The famous German ethnologist Gustav Radde traveled in Khevsureti in 1876 and produced an interesting study, Chewsuren und ihr Land (Kassel, 1878), which introduced the region to the Western world. Among its major cultural sites are the famous Shatili and Mutso villages with their medieval towers, Gudanis Jvari, the fortresses of Khakhmati, Akhieli, and Lebais Kari.

KHORAVA, AKAKI (1895–1972). Georgian artist and one of the founders of the Georgian Soviet theater. Khorava graduated from Kutaisi Gymnasium in 1915 and continued his studies at the universities in Kiev and Tbilisi in 1915–1919. He participated in student-produced plays, and in 1922, he enrolled in the A. Paghava Theater School in Tbilisi. The following year, he debuted at the Rustaveli Theater where he served not only as an actor but as the theater’s artistic director and chief director between 1935 and 1955. He helped found the Shota Rustaveli Theatrical Institute, which he directed in the 1940s, and the Georgian Theatrical Society, which he chaired in the late 1940s and 1950s. He played an important role in developing theater productions in Georgia and remained one of the most notable stage actors. Among his many roles were Andukapari in Giorgi Eristavi’s Gakra, Laertus and Othello in William Shakespeare’s Hamlet and Othello, Argishdi in Shalva Dadiani’s Tetnuldi, Boris Godunov in Alexander Pushkin’s Boris Godunov, Cyrano in Rostand’s Cyrano de Bergerac, and others. Khorava also had a successful film career, his most memorable part being the leading role in Giorgi Saakadze (1942–1943). He won five State Prizes of USSR, including two in 1946, and several medals.

KHUNDADZE, SILOVAN (1860–1928). Georgian pedagogue and public figure, one of the founders of the modern Georgian literary
language. Born in Guria, Khundadze studied at Kutaisi Gymnasium and St. Petersburg University in the 1880s. Returning to Georgia, he began publishing his scholarly papers, publicist articles, and poetry in various journals, including Iveria, Samshoblo, Droeba, and Ganatleba. In 1901–1902, the two-volume Chemi azri da pikrebi was published in Kutaisi. Of greater importance was Kundadze’s work as a pedagogue, who wrote such important textbooks as Kartuli zmnebi (1891), Saliteraturo kartuli (1901), Kartuli gramatika (1904), and Kartuli martltserisa da storebis dziritadi safudzvlebi (1927), which set the standards for the modern Georgian literary language. Among his other works are studies of Nikoloz Baratashvili (1914), Grigol Orbeliani (1917), Raphael Eristavi (1918), Akaki Tsereteli (1918), Ilia Chavchavadze (1919), and Shota Rustaveli (1921).

A member of the Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians, he taught Georgian language and literature in local schools in western Georgia and later worked at Kutaisi Gymnasium where he established one of the major centers for the study of Georgian literature. In 1900, he helped establish the Kutaisi Georgian Nobility Gymnasium, which played an important role in rising literacy and national consciousness in western Georgia. As a teacher, he personally shaped a generation of prominent Georgian scholars and public figures, including the future academicians Giorgi Akvlediani, Shalva Nutsubidze, Kote Eristavi, Arnold Chikobava, Petre Kavtaradze, Dimitri Uznadze, Simon Kaukhchishvili, and Giorgi Tsereteli and writers Niko Lordkipanidze, Constantine Gamsakhurdia, and others.

In 1907, Khundadze joined the Historical and Ethnographic Society of Georgia and began publishing the magazine Merani in 1910; however, in 1914 he clashed with the Russian authorities and was dismissed from his school for two years, during which he organized the Teachers’ Union of Western Georgia. In 1917, Khundadze supported the establishment of the Tbilisi State University, which opened its doors in January 1918. In 1919, he became the director of Kutaisi Gymnasium and remained at this post for the next four years.

KHVICIA, IPPOLITE (1910–1985). Popular Georgian artist. Born in Kentauri, he began his career as a stage actor in theater in Tslulkidze in the 1930s and launched his film career in 1956. Over the next two decades, he created some of the most popular and beloved characters in

**KHVTIS-SHVILNI.** In Georgian mythology, a group of heroes who were born to gods and had semi-divine nature. They protected humans, assured good crops and milk-yields, fought against *devis* (ogres) and *kudiani*, and performed various quests. While there are dozens of these deities, the most popular of them were *Kopala, Iakhsari, Giorgi*, and *Amirani*. Folk epics describe how the *khvts-shvilni* led by Kopala and Iakhsari declared a war of conquest on the *devis*, and drove them from the land. Another raiding party led by Giorgi destroyed the hitherto impregnable fortress of the *kajis*, and carried off their treasures, cattle, and women. Iakhsari was the son of gods who protected humans from *devis* and *kajis*. Iakhsari could cure illnesses, expel evil spirits, and bring back to life those who had died in natural incidents. The cult was widespread in the mountains of east Georgia, especially in Mtiuleti, Gudamakari, and Tusheti.

**KIACHELI, LEO (1884–1963).** Georgian writer. Born in the village of Obuji, he graduated from Kutaisi High School in 1904 and studied law at the Universities in Kharkov, Moscow, and Geneva. He joined the revolutionary movement in 1905 but was arrested the following year. He escaped from prison in 1907 and fled abroad, where he remained from 1912 to 1917. He returned to Georgia after the February Revolution and began publishing his writings, which were often influenced by symbolist and impressionist movements. However, he also described in masterful terms the realities of social problems in 19th century Georgia as well as political repression following the fall of the Menshevik republic in 1921. His best known works include *Tariel Golua* (1916), *Siskhli* (1927), *Gvadi Bigva* (1936–1937), *Mtis katsi* (1948), *Tavadis kali Maya* (1927), *Almasgir Kibulan* (1925), and *Khaki Adzba* (1933). He was awarded the prestigious Stalin Prize for *Gvadi Bigva* in 1941. See also LITERATURE.

**KIKABIDZE, VAKHTANG (1938–).** Popular Georgian actor. Born in Tbilisi, he studied at Tbilisi State University (1956–1959) and the
Institute of Foreign Languages (1961–1963) before starting his career as a singer in the popular Georgian ensemble Orera. He later launched his solo career and had a number of hits throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Kikabidze also proved himself a talented actor and created many characters (Mimino, Ne gorui, etc.) that became part of popular culture. Among his major works are Vstrecha v gorakh (1966), Ne gorui (1969), Veris ubnis melodiebi (1973), Mimino (1977), Bud zdorov, dorogoi! (1981), and Fortuna (2000). He continues his successful concert tours in Russia and Georgia. Among other awards, he was the winner in the best male performance category at the International Film Festival at Cartachena in 1970 and received the State Prize of the USSR in 1980 and the Georgian Order of Honor in 1994. See also CINEMA.

KIKODZE, GERONTI (1886–1960). Georgian writer and historian. Born in the village of Bakhvi, he studied philosophy at the Universities of Leipzig and Bern. He was involved in revolutionary movements and was arrested for his speeches on several occasions. After the Soviet regime was established in Georgia, he became Deputy People’s Commissar of Agriculture but continued his scholarly studies and lectured on European literature. He translated into Georgian many European writers, including Prosper Mérimée, Stendhal, and Honoré de Balzac. Among his major works are History of Georgian Literature (1947), Georgian Classics (1942), and Erekle II (1948). See also LITERATURE.

KIPIANI, DIMITRI (1814–1887). Georgian writer, publicist, and public figure. Born in the village of Mereti, Kipiani graduated from a gymnasium in Tbilisi and began his career as a teacher. He participated in the 1832 conspiracy of the Georgian nobles and was exiled to Siberia, where he remained for five years. Returning to Georgia in 1837, he served in various positions in the Russian administration and became a member of viceroy’s (Prince Alexander Bariatinsky) council. In 1864–1870, he served as marshal of nobility of Tbilisi province and, in 1885–1886, as the marshal of nobility in Kutaisi province. He governed Tbilisi from 1876–1897.

Kipiani was actively involved in the rising national movement in Georgia and became a close associate of Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki
Tsereteli, and others. He helped establish the Georgian Bank for Nobility, the Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians, and the Georgian Drama Society. In the late 1860s, he spearheaded the efforts to emancipate the serfs in Georgia. His articles were important in reviving and reforming the Georgian language, which, Kipiani believed, was a prerequisite for the revival of national consciousness. He translated many European works into Georgian as well as Georgian literary pieces into Russian. In 1882, he produced Akhali kartuli gramatika, which set new standards of teaching Georgian grammar. In 1886, he gained fame with his critical response to the Russian Exarch Pavel, who anathematized the entire Georgian nation after the assassination of the rector of the Tbilisi Seminary. Kipiani was arrested for his actions and was exiled to Russia where he was murdered (possibly by Tsarist agents) in Stavropol on 5 November 1887. His funeral in Tbilisi drew enormous crowds and turned into a demonstration condemning the Russian administration of Georgia.

KITOVANI, TENGIZ (1939– ). Military commander and politician. An artist by profession, Kitovani participated in the national liberation movement in Georgia in the late 1980s. He was elected to the Supreme Council in 1990 and later commanded the National Guard. In 1991, he clashed with President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who dismissed him from his post in August of that year. In response, Kitovani rallied his loyalists inside the National Guard and established a base near Tbilisi, where he defied orders to disband. In December 1991, he was supported by Jaba Ioseliani and Tengiz Sigua during the military coup against Gamsakhurdia. In January 1992, after Gamsakhurdia’s escape from Tbilisi, Kitovani, Ioseliani, and Sigua established the Military Council in which Kitovani served as the minister of defense. He was responsible for the decision to dispatch Georgian forces to Abkhazia in the summer of 1992, which led to the bloody conflict in this region. His inept command of Georgian forces led to his dismissal by Eduard Shevardnadze in May 1993. Kitovani then joined opposition groups against Shevardnadze’s government. In 1995, while attempting to lead his loyalist forces back to Abkhazia, he was arrested by the security forces and imprisoned. He was pardoned in May 1999.
KIZIKI UPRISING OF 1878. Peasant uprising against the Russian authorities in Kakheti in 1878. The peasantry of eastern Georgia was already suffering from high taxes and unrestrained local bureaucracy when, during the Russo–Turkish War, the Russian authorities began recruiting peasants into the Russian army. In drafting recruitment lists, local officials often excluded their own family members, acquaintances, or those who paid bribes. Such nepotism and corruption led to the uprising that began at the village of Zemo Machkhaani on 4 June when the peasants attacked the local village head (masahkhlishi) and other officials. The revolt quickly spread to other villages, where peasants organized small self-defense units. The rebels ransacked the estate of prominent nobleman, Revaz Vachnadze, and captured several high officials, including General Joseph Orbeliani. However, the Russian authorities quickly responded in force and subdued the uprising by the end of the summer. The rebel leadership was captured, and 11 of them were sentenced to 15 years of exile.

KLDIASHVILI, DAVID (1862–1931). Georgian writer. Born in Imereti, he was raised in an impoverished family of noble origins and studied in Kiev and Moscow in 1880–1882. Returning to Georgia, he served in the Russian army but left the service during the revolutionary events of 1905–1907. He reenlisted during World War I and returned to civilian life in 1917. Kldiashvili gained literary fame in the 1880s when his translations and original works were published in the journals Teatri and Moambe. His first major work was Sherishvha followed by Mskhverpli (1894) and Tsrfei guli (1896). Among his important novels are Solomon Morbeladze (1894), Samanishvilis dedinatsvali (1897), Kamushadzis gachirveba (1900), Rostom Mashvelidze (1910), and Bakulas ghorebi (1920). Kldiashvili also made significant contributions to Georgian dramaturgy with his plays Irines Bedniereba (1897), Darispanis gasachiri (1903), and Ubedureba (1914). In these works, he adopted a critical realism style to portray social inequality, the grim reality of the oppressed peasants and the underlings and decadent lords, the struggle between individual happiness and public morality, and the conflict between an individual and society. In 1925, Kldiashvili published his autobiographical Chemi tskhovrebis gzaze and was awarded the title of People’s Artist in 1930. See also LITERATURE.
**KMARA.** Civic resistance movement that proved instrumental in bringing down the governments of President Eduard Shevardnadze and the Adjarian leader Aslan Abashidze. Kmara (Georgian word meaning *enough*) was modeled after *Otpor*, a student resistance organization in Serbia. Some Kmara activities received training from *Otpor* members in Serbia, and the organization itself was financially supported by several Western organizations, including George Soros’ Open Society Institute.

In 2001–2003, the Kmara activists gradually increased their criticism of Shevardnadze’s government, and in November 2001, they organized widespread demonstrations to protest the Security Ministry’s crackdown on the independent television station Rustavi-2 and forced the resignation of the government and the speaker of the Parliament. On 14 April 2003, approximately 200 students marched from Tbilisi State University (TSU) to the State Chancellery, chanting their slogan “kmara” and carrying the flags of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic with the faces of the current government leaders on them. The demonstration also had a symbolic meaning, since, on 14 April 1978, Georgian students organized massive demonstrations to retain Georgian as a state language. At that time, Eduard Shevardnadze, a Communist leader of Georgia, had to yield to public pressure. Later the same month, the Kmara members launched their campaign to oust Roin Metreveli, who had served as the rector of TSU for over a decade.

In May 2003, the activist groups staged protest demonstrations against police violence in front of the police departments in Tbilisi, Akhaltsikhe, Gori, Telavi, Khashuri, Poti, and Rustavi. Two months later, during a protest rally in front of the Ministry of Energy, the Kmara activists clashed with police. In the following months, the movement modified its agenda and focused on community and social issues. It organized two cleaning “operations” on the Mtatsminda plateau, aiming to rid the center of Tbilisi of the garbage. On 20 September, a charitable concert was organized in Mziuri Park in Tbilisi under the slogan “Enough for the Educated Future Generation” and with the goal of collecting books for Tbilisi-based school libraries. In October, protests were organized in front of the state chancellery and Parliament buildings, and anti-government graffiti appeared on the streets of Tbilisi and other cities. The government initially responded
to the Kmara actions by simply erasing the graffiti, but later the police made several arrests.

The Kmara movement played its most important role during the parliamentary elections in November 2003. After the elections were largely condemned for widespread vote rigging, the Kmara activists took to the streets, staging massive demonstrations that paralyzed the capital. On 23 November, President Shevardnadze resigned, and a new government was formed led by opposition leaders Mikhail Saakashvili, Zurab Zhvania, and Nino Burdjanadze. The Kmara then diverted their actions from Tbilisi to Adjara. In January 2004, its members began to post banners in the streets of the Adjarian capital Batumi with the slogans “Enough to Abashidze’s Dictatorship.” In response, the Adjarian police arrested several activists on charges of drug trafficking. In the wake of these arrests, the Adjarian leader Aslan Abashidze imposed a state of emergency in the autonomous republic on 7 January, claiming that “certain forces” were planning terrorist acts against his authority. The officials in Tbilisi immediately condemned these arrests as “political persecutions” and demanded the release of the detained activists and an end to the state of emergency. On 11 January, several hundred citizens held a protest rally in the village of Gonio demanding the cancellation of the state of emergency in the region, but they were attacked by pro-Abashidze forces. On 18 January, under pressure from Tbilisi, Abashidze released the detained activists but maintained the state of emergency, effectively cracking down on any protests. In a surprising move, the Russian Foreign Ministry interfered in the Georgian internal affairs, siding with Abashidze and issuing a statement on 20 January describing the actions of the Kmara movement as “attempts by extremist-minded forces . . . to cause tensions in Adjara.”

In late January–February, the situation in Adjara further intensified as activists of the Kmara movement, who were taking anti-Abashidze posters to Batumi, were attacked on the administrative border of the autonomous republic and were severely beaten. In response, Kmara stepped up its actions. By April 2004, several hundred volunteers entered Adjara, operating in Batumi, Khulo, Keda, Khelvachauri, and Kobuleti. The Kmara campaigns produced results as large demonstrations calling for Abashidze’s resignation took place in Batumi. The enmity between the two centers, Tbilisi and Batumi, rapidly intensified, and President Saakashvili even imposed an
economic blockade on the region. Despite repeated attempts, Abashidze failed to secure help from Russia and came under intense pressure from the United States and European countries to make concessions. In early May, thousands of protesters, including the Kmara activists, demonstrated in Batumi demanding Abashidze’s resignation. Amid heightened tensions and public pressure, Abashidze resigned on 5 May 2004. The next day, after receiving assurances of security from Tbilisi and Moscow, Abashidze left for Russia.

In 2005, the Kmara movement switched its operations to training similar student opposition groups in other post-Soviet states. Its actions were mainly focused on Byelorussia, where the opposition movement Zubr hoped to use Kmara tactics against President Alexander Lukashenko. In August 2005, the Byelorussian authorities arrested several Kmara activists in Minsk. The Georgian government and international organizations condemned these arrests, and the activists were released after 15 days of imprisonment on 2 September 2005.

**KNIGHT IN TIGER’S SKIN.** See VEPKHISTKAOSANI.

**KODORI GORGE, UPRISING IN (2006).** An uprising by a paramilitary organization Monadire (Hunter) in the northwestern region of Svaneti. Late July proved tumultuous in Georgian politics as tensions increased between Tbilisi and Moscow. The Georgian public protested what it perceived as a government cover-up in criminal cases and some cabinet members showed disagreements on state policies. To address these issues, President Mikhail Saakashvili reshuffled his cabinet, dismissing dissenter officials and retaining controversial ministers of internal affairs and defense. On 22 July 2006, Emzar Kvitsiani, former presidential representative to Svaneti and chief of the Monadire (Hunter) paramilitary group based in the Kodori gorge, announced his defiance toward the central authorities, citing plans of Defense Minister Irakli Okruashvili to disarm the militia group. The following day, Kvitsiani also voiced political demands, threatening to continue his defiance if the Interior and Defense Ministers were approved in the newly formed cabinet.

The Monadire (Hunter) paramilitary organization was organized during the conflict in Abkhazia in the early 1990s. It was one of several similar organizations established in Georgia and was tasked with
defending the Kodori Gorge, a strategic pathway into Abkhazia that remains the only territory of Abkhazia still under Georgian control. The unit succeeded in halting the separatist offensive in the mid-1990s and later had an unwritten understanding with the Abkhaz authorities on non-resumption of hostilities. Under President Shevardnadze, the organization was formalized and incorporated into the Ministry of Defense in 2002. At its peak, the organization had as many as 850 members but its membership gradually declined to some 300 men, who exercised almost unrestricted control of the region. After 2004, the new administration of President Mikhail Saakashvili, seeking to strengthen its control over the republic, began to abolish paramilitary organizations and the Monadire was ordered to disband in 2005, with Defense Minister Okruashvili accusing its members of being engaged in criminal activities.

Following Kvitsiani’s declaration on 22 July 2006, officials in Tbilisi responded by denouncing his actions as a Russian-orchestrated provocation amid heightened tensions between the two countries over secessionist conflicts and peacekeeping troops stationed in the conflict zones. Despite calls to negotiate with the disobedient militia leader, the Georgian government quickly dispatched police forces to quell the uprising. Russia and the separatist authorities in Abkhazia denounced the Georgian decision to send forces to the gorge, claiming it would escalate tensions and lead to the resumption of hostilities and violate the Moscow Treaty of 1994, which prohibited deployment of military troops in the gorge. Tbilisi rejected these claims and argued that it was conducting a police operation against a criminal group. In a three-day operation, the government forces took control of the entire gorge and the nearby villages as Kvitsiani’s supporters either surrendered or fled into the mountains.

The Kodori uprising had important consequences. It further increased tensions between Russia and Georgia. Tbilisi accused Russia of providing support to the rebels and seeking to destabilize the region following Georgian demands to withdraw Russian peacekeepers from Abkhazia. Intercepted phone conversations also revealed that Kvitsiani was offered military help by the Abkhaz separatist authorities. Russia charged Tbilisi with escalating the situation in the region and seeking a military solution to the Abkhazian conflict. The Abkhaz de facto authorities quickly mobilized their forces and received
assurances of support from the South Ossetian officials and their supporters from the North Caucasus. The incident also revealed deep division between the Georgian political groups, as many opposition leaders opposed the government’s decision to subdue the rebels. The society, in general, was unanimous in its disapproval of Kvitsiani’s actions and supported the government’s decision to send troops into the region. The administration of President Saakashvili has greatly benefited from the developments in the Kodori Gorge, as it shifted public attention from a scandal of government cover-up in the high-profile murder case to the developments in the Kodori Gorge.

KOKOITY, EDUARD (1964– ). Leader of the de facto independent region of South Ossetia. Kokoity rose to prominence through his sports career, winning the Georgian wrestling championship in 1980 and later serving on Soviet wrestling teams. In the 1980s, he studied at a pedagogical institute and served as first secretary of the Tskhinvali branch of Komsomol. In 1990–1991, he participated in the Georgian–Ossetian conflict and led a militia detachment. In 1990–1993, he served in the legislative assembly of the self-proclaimed Republic of South Ossetia and, in 1997 he was appointed as a trade representative to the Russian Federation. In December 2001, he won the presidential elections, gaining 53% of the votes against 40% for his rival Stanislav Kochiev in the second round. Kokoity adopted a radical position against reunification with Georgia, rejecting Georgian offers of the widest possible autonomy. Tensions between the Georgian and Ossetian sides flared up in 2004, and a series of clashes brought the two sides to the verge of a full-scale confrontation.

Kokoity enjoys the full support of the Russian Federation and frequently visits Moscow for consultations. In July 2005, Kokoity visited another Georgian separatist region of Abkhazia, and with the Abkhazian leader, Sergey Bagapsh, signed a communiqué on cooperation and mutual assistance against Georgia. In 2006, he condemned the Georgian demands for the removal of Russian peacekeepers from Ossetia and sought to shore up support in Moscow, Abkhazia, and North Ossetia against potential Georgian aggression.

KOPALA. In Georgian mythology, the deity of lightning, a mighty hero, and demon killer. His cult still remains popular in the moun-
tains of Georgia, especially in Khevsureti. It is Kopala who, aided by Iakhsar, drove away from the surface the demons who were persecuting humanity. Kopala is armed with a mace to which he is bound in close solidarity and an iron bow made especially for him by the blacksmith god Pirkushi. He alone has the power to defeat the most powerful and stubborn demons, who often seize a human soul. Thus, Kopala was believed to be able to cure various forms of madness, which was believed to be “the disease of the soul.”

KOSTAVA, MERAB (1939–1989). Georgian dissident and one of leaders of the national liberation movement in Georgia. Born in Tbilisi, Kostava was inspired by national liberation ideas in his youth, and together with Zviad Gamsakhurdia, he established the Georgian youth underground, Gorgasliani, in the early 1950s. He wrote and distributed anti-Soviet pamphlets and called for the national independence of Georgia. In 1956, at the age of 17, he was arrested for his activities by the KGB and was held in custody for several months, some of the time in abusive psychiatric hospitals. After his release, Kostava studied in the Tbilisi State Conservatory and taught music in Tbilisi. Despite pressure from the authorities, he remained a staunch supporter of the national liberation movement. He and Gamsakhurdia secretly established a printing press, which produced banned literature and the samizdat papers Golden Fleece and Georgian Herald. In 1974, the two dissidents established the Action Group for the Defense of Human Rights and three years later, founded the Georgian Helsinki Group.

Kostava’s criticism of the Soviet regime led to another arrest in 1977, and he spent 10 years in exile in Siberia, where he wrote a number of works on Georgian history and literature. During these years, his health deteriorated as he contracted tuberculosis. Despite the disease, he staged a number of hunger strikes protesting the inhumane conditions in the camps. In 1985, his son was found hanged in his apartment in a reported suicide, which was widely believed to have been staged by the Soviet security. His spirit unbroken, Kostava was finally released in April 1987 and continued his work for Georgian independence. In 1988, he co-founded the Society of Saint Ilya the Righteous and soon emerged as one of the leaders of the Georgian national liberation movement.
In 1988–1989, Kostava and Gamsakhurdia organized a number of peaceful pro-independence activities, including a demonstration on 9 April 1989 that was crushed by Soviet troops in Tbilisi. Unfortunately, he did not witness the success of the movement he led for so many years. On 13 October 1989, Kostava died under suspicious circumstances in an automobile accident and was buried in the national pantheon on the Mtatsminda. In June 1990, the Merab Kostava Society was established in Tbilisi and regularly participated in the subsequent parliamentary elections. The death of Kostava in 1989 had significant consequences since it left Gamsakhurdia as a leading figure in the national liberation movement and without another figure of equal stature to balance his radical tendencies.

KRTSANISI, BATTLE OF (1795). Major battle between the Persian and Georgian armies on 11 September 1795. In the late 18th century, King Erekle II took advantage of the declining power of Persia and effectively expanded his sphere of influence in southeastern Transcaucasia. Seeking a new ally in his struggle against the Ottomans and Persians, he turned to Russia and concluded a military alliance with Empress Catherine II at Giorgievsk in 1783. As Persia emerged from civil war, Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar claimed the throne and sought to restore Persian influence in Transcaucasia. The pro-Russian policy of Georgia led to his demands to annul the Treaty of Georgievsk and recognize Persian suzerainty. Erekle rejected this ultimatum and appealed to Catherine II to honor her obligations under the Treaty of Georgievsk. However, Russia failed to provide any military aid, leaving the Georgians to face the brunt of the Persian reprisals. See GEORGIEVSK, TREATY OF.

In the late summer of 1795, the 35,000-man Persian army under the command of Agha Mohammad Khan invaded eastern Georgia, quickly advancing to Tbilisi. King Erekle was able to rally only 5,000 men and decided to engage the enemy on the approaches to the Georgian capital. On 8–9 September, the Georgians put up fierce resistance in the valleys leading to Tbilisi, successfully delaying the Persians. The main battle began on 10 September on the Krtsanisi field near Tbilisi, where King Erekle fought the superior Persian army to a draw. On the night of 11 September, Agha Mohammad Khan, frustrated by Georgian resistance, was already preparing to withdraw when two defectors from Tbilisi in-
formed him of the Georgian vulnerability. Rallying his forces, the shah engaged the Georgians on 11 September. The brutal fighting produced many instances of heroism, including the 300 Aragvians who fought their way to the shah and captured the Persian imperial standard but perished in the process. The 75-year old King Erekle personally distinguished himself before his bodyguards forced him to leave the battlefield. Following their victory, the Persians captured Tbilisi and pillaged it for the next nine days, virtually razing the city. Tens of thousands of residents were slaughtered or taken captive. King Erekle, his spirit unbroken, continued his pro-Russian policy but died in January 1798, and the weakened Kartli-Kakheti was annexed by Russia in 1801.

**KÜÇÜK KAYNARCA, TREATY OF (1774).** Treaty between the Russian and Ottoman empires signed on 21 July 1771 that ended the Russo–Turkish War of 1768–1774. The Ottomans surrendered territory between the Dnieper and Bug rivers and provided Russia with a direct access to the Black Sea. The Ottoman vassal state, the Crimean Khanate, was granted independence but was eventually conquered by Russia. The treaty granted Russia important political and economic rights within the Ottoman Empire, including the right to protect Orthodox Christians. Disregarding Georgian military help during the war, Russia conceded to Ottoman sovereignty in western Georgia but obliged the Porte to renounce its annual tribute of boys and girls.

**KURA RIVER.** Major river in south Caucasia. Flowing through Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey, the Kura River (Georgian Mtkvari, Armenian Kur, Greek Kyros, Latin Cyrus), rises in the Armenian Highlands in Turkey and empties into the Caspian Sea. It is 1,515 km long and flows mainly through ravines and gorges, draining a basin of some 72,500 square miles. In Georgia, it flows past the cities of Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Mtskheta, and Tbilisi, receiving water from its tributaries the Aragvi, Alazani, and Iori rivers before flowing into the Mingechaur Reservoir in Azerbaijan. Below Mingechaur, the Kura/Mtkvari is joined by the Araxes River and forms a large delta at its estuary on the Caspian Sea.

**KURDS IN GEORGIA.** Although historical data on Kurds in Georgia remains scarce, the Kurds certainly have been present in the region
since ancient times, especially considering the rise of the Mkhar-grdzeli family, which is believed to have Kurdish roots. Reliable data on Kurds in Georgia is available dating from the late 19th century when a census of the population of Tbilisi showed the presence of a small Kurdish community. This community greatly increased in the early 20th century when persecutions in the Ottoman Empire drove hundreds of Kurds, most of them Yazidis (Êzîdî), to Georgia. During the Soviet era, the majority of Kurds lived in Tbilisi, but smaller communities existed in Rustavi, Batumi, Kutaisi, and Telavi. The Soviet census did not distinguish between the Muslim Kurds and Yazidis (Êzîdî) and counted them as one ethnic entity. According to the 1959 census, there were 16,200 Kurds in Georgia, and their population continued to increase, with 20,700 in 1970, 25,700 in 1979, and 33,300 in 1989. The political and socioeconomic crisis of the 1990s led to emigration by many of them, which is reflected in the 2002 census that registered 2,514 Kurds and 18,329 Yezidis. The Kurds contributed to the unique urban culture of Tbilisi and Batumi; a Yezidi cultural-educational society opened in Batumi in 1926, and the Kurdish National Theatre has performed in all three Caucasian republics since the 1930s. A Kurdish international information and cultural center was established in Tbilisi in 1997 and raised concerns of the Turkish government that claimed the centers supported the Kurdish Worker’s Party, which is fighting for independent Kurdistan.

KUTAISI. Second largest city in Georgia and administrative center of the Imereti region; population of some 240,000 people. Located on the Rioni (ancient Phasis) River, Kutaisi, known in Armenian as Kota, in Greek as Aia, Kutaia, or Kotatission, is one of the oldest settlements in Asia Minor and has been populated since the second millennium BCE. In ancient times, it was the capital of Colchis, and, according to Greek mythology, it was the royal capital of King Aietes and the Golden Fleece; it was mentioned as Kutaia by Apollonius of Rhodes in his third century BCE poem about the Argonauts. Kutaisi played an important role in the history of Georgia and was contested by the Byzantine and Persian empires in the sixth century. In the late eighth century, Kutaisi became the capital of the Kingdom of Abkhazia. In 978, after King Bagrat III became king of the newly united Kingdom of Georgia, Kutaisi became its capital and was the political, economic, and cultural
center of Georgia until the recapture of Tbilisi in 1122. It was sacked by the Seljuks in 1074–1079 and later by the Mongols in the 13th century. In 1463, it became the capital of the Kingdom of Imereti and maintained this position until the Russian conquest in 1810. It was captured and burned by the Ottomans on several occasions. The city is noted for the magnificent Bagrat's Cathedral, the Motsameta complex, and the nearby Gelati Monastery and Academy, one of the greatest cultural centers of medieval Georgia. Kutaisi is an important industrial center, producing trucks, various kinds of machinery, textiles (including silk), and other consumer goods.

KVINITADZE, GIORGI (1874–1970). Georgian military commander, general. Born Giorgi Chikovani in Daghestan, he graduated from the Tbilisi Cadet Corps and continued his military studies in St. Petersburg. Serving in 153rd Regiment in Vladikavkaz, he was deployed in Poland and volunteered for service against the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905, where he gained fame as a proficient officer. After the war, he studied at the Russian General Staff Academy and continued service in the Caucasus. During World War I, he was promoted to colonel and took command of the 4th Division, capturing Erzerum for which he was decorated with the order of St. George (4th class). His later success earned him a promotion to major general. In 1918, Kvinitadze supported the Menshevik government in Georgia and played a crucial role in the creation of the Georgian national army, which he commanded. In 1918–1920, he successfully fought Armenian and Turkish forces in southwestern Georgia. In 1921, he led Georgian forces against the Red Army but was unable to halt the Bolshevik invasion. He immigrated to France, where he lived in Paris until his death on 7 August 1970. His memoirs My Recollections of the Years of Independence 1917–1921, were published in Paris in 1985.

KVIRIA. In Georgian mythology, a hero and son of gods who served as mediator between the supreme god (ghmerti) and humans. Kviria was invoked as a protector of human society and the instrument of divine justice. In some regions, he was also believed to be a deity of fertility and harvest, while in the mountains of western Georgia, Kviria was worshiped as the supreme deity. Special festivals, kveritskhovloba, honored him.
KVIRIKE. The name of several rulers of Kakheti and Tashiri (Taširi).

1. Kviriike I. Ruler (korepiskoposi) of Kakheti in 892–918. In 914, he faced the last Arab invasion led by Abu al-Kasim, who captured the fortresses of Ujarma and Bochorma. Kviriike later liberated Ujarma and campaigned, with King Constantine III of Abkhazia, in Hereti, which he briefly occupied in 916–917.

2. Kviriike II. Ruler (korepiskoposi) of Kakheti in 929–976. Early in his reign, Kviriike faced the revolt of Kakhetian lords, who appealed to King Giorgi II of Abkhazia and helped him captured several key fortresses in Kakheti. Receiving reinforcements from Kartli, Kviriike continued the struggle until 957, when a peace agreement was signed between the two parties following the death of King Giorgi II. In the 970s, Kviriike restored his authority in Kakheti and spent several years trying to expand his sphere of influence to Kartli.

3. Kviriike III the Great. King of Kakheti-Hereti in 1014–1037. During his reign, the kingdom of Kakheti-Hereti was at its peak. Kviriike initially ruled Kakheti as korepiskoposi in 1009–1010 and fought against King Bagrat III of Georgia but was captured and held captive until Bagrat’s death in 1014. Returning to Kakheti, he assumed the title of king (mepe) and was instrumental in turning Kakheti into a powerful and prosperous kingdom. Organized into seven saeristavo (three in Kakheti and four in Hereti), the kingdom was ruled from the capital city of Telavi. In 1027–1032, Kviriike successfully campaigned against the Muslim amirs of Ganja and the kings of Ossetia. In 1037, he took part in the siege of Tbilisi, where he was murdered by an Ossetian servant avenging the earlier Ossetian defeat.

4. Kviriike IV. The last king of Kakheti-Hereti in 1084–1102. He skillfully exploited the rivalry between Georgia and the Seljuk sultanate to remain in power in the 1080s. However, King David IV Aghmashenebeli defeated him in 1101 and gradually incorporated his realm into the united Kingdom of Georgia.

5. Kviriike (Gurgen) I. King of Tashiri (Taširi) and Zorageti (Xorakert) in 972–991/996. The son of the Armenian King Ashot III of Ani, he carved out his principality in Tashiri and extended his sphere of influence throughout Qvemo (Lower) Kartli.

6. Kviriike II. King of Tashiri-Zorageti in 1048/49–1089. Kviriike II played an important role in the Georgian nobility’s opposition to King Bagrat IV of Georgia. In 1064, Kviriike negotiated with the
Seljuk sultan Alp-Arslan, who later ravaged southern Georgia. In 1065–1066, King Bagrat campaigned against Kvirike and captured him near Samshvilde. After recognizing Bagrat’s sovereignty, Kvirike continued to reign until his death in 1089.

LAGHIDZE, MITROPHAN (1869–1960). Georgian businessman and philanthropist, founder of the famous soft-drinks factory. Born and raised in Kutaisi, Laghidze began his career as a pharmacist’s apprentice. In the late 1880s, he studied making lemonades and decided to use natural materials instead of imported essences. In 1900, he founded his first factory in Kutaisi and began producing natural syrups and blends of herbs and fruits. His business quickly became successful and he opened his main factory, “Tbilisi Waters,” in the Georgian capital in 1906. Laghidze’s beverages, made of natural syrups, became famous for their exceptional quality and fine aroma. In the 1910s, his beverages were awarded prizes at exhibitions in Paris, St. Petersburg, Vienna, and other cities. The Laghidze factory continued to operate during the Soviet period, although its foreign exports were curtailed. In 1943 and 1945, Laghidze supplied soft drinks for the conferences of the Allied leaders at Tehran and Yalta. After Georgia became independent in 1991, production and exports increased, and in 2000, Laghidze products won a gold medal at an exhibition in Moscow.

LAKOBA, NESTOR (1893–1936). Abkhaz revolutionary and leader of Soviet Abkhazia in the 1920s and 1930s. Born in the village of Lykhny, Lakoba studied in a seminary in Tbilisi but was expelled for his revolutionary activities. He joined the Bolsheviks in 1912 and was actively involved in revolutionary events in western Georgia and North Caucasus. In 1917, he participated in the 1st Caucasus Regional Conference of Soviets and emerged as one of the leading Bolshevik revolutionaries in the Caucasus. In 1918, he openly opposed the Georgian Mensheviks, directed the Military-Revolutionary Committee in Sukhumi, and led an Abkhaz uprising to secede from Georgia, which was suppressed by the Georgian army. Lakoba was cap-
tured and exiled from Georgia in 1919. The following year, he secretly returned to Georgia to organize the Bolshevik underground. After the Soviet takeover of Georgia, Lakoba became deputy chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of Abkhazia and later presided over the People’s Commissars of Abkhazia. In 1930–1936, he served as the chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Abkhazia and became a member of executive committees of the Georgian SSR, of the Transcaucasian Federated Republic, and of the USSR. He enjoyed close relations with Joseph Stalin, which helped him secure autonomy for Abkhazia. He died in suspicious circumstances—believed to have been poisoned on Lavrenti Beria’s orders—in 1936 and was buried in Sukhumi.


**LANGUAGE.** The region between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea has long been known for its linguistic diversity, and the mighty Cau-
casus Mountains with their numerous valleys and gorges served as a fertile ground for the development of diverse languages. Besides the presence of major language families—Indo-European, Altaic, and Afro-Asiatic—Caucasia is also home to a number of indigenous languages that are collectively known as the Caucasian languages. The Caucasian languages are divided into several groups based on geographic regions: North West Caucasian or the Adyghe-Abkhaz group; North Central Caucasian or Nakh; North East Caucasian or Dagestanians, and the South Caucasian or Kartvelian (Georgian) languages. Scholars have made many attempts to link Caucasian languages with other language families, but so far no single credible explanation exists.

The Georgian language belongs to the South Caucasian or Kartvelian group of languages. It is subdivided into four major branches: Georgian proper; Mingrelian, prevalent in the Mingrelia region in western Georgia; Svan, spoken in the mountainous region of Svaneti in the northwest Caucasus; and, Laz or Chan, spoken along the southeastern Black Sea coast. Georgian serves both as a lingua franca and as a literary language for speakers of Svan and Mingrelia, while Laz speakers are usually bilingual in Turkish, but a few also speak literary Georgian. Georgian proper is the only language in the Caucasian language family to have its own unique alphabet. Modern Georgian uses 33 letters, while Old Georgian had an additional five letters that were removed in the late 19th century.

Although the precise timing of this break is disputed, it is believed that the proto-Georgian language began to separate into these distinct branches about 4,000 years ago, with the Svan (svanuri) breaking away first in the second millennium BCE. It was followed by Zan (zanuri), which later developed into the Mingrelian (megri) and Laz (chanuri) languages. The Svan language is believed to have retained archaic elements of the proto-Georgian language, and considering the relatively isolated location of Svaneti in the Caucasus Mountains, the Svan language has fewer loan-words from Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Greek, and Russian, from which the other Kartvelian languages to the south have borrowed extensively. Despite such influences, no relationship between the Kartvelian languages and other major language families has been satisfactorily demonstrated.
The Kartvelian languages have several unique features that distinguish them from other languages. They do not have noun classes and do not distinguish between male and female in any area of grammar. They contain formal ergativity and use relative pronouns and conjunctions together with finite verb forms in subordinate and relative constructions. They have the simplest phonetic system among the Caucasian languages, which, nevertheless, allows for complex consonant clusters. Words are written as they sound and sound as they are written; there are no capital letters.

The standard literary language of Georgia is based on the Kartlian dialect of the eastern lowlands but the geographical diversity of Georgia produced a variety of dialects that are usually divided into eastern and western groups. While retaining common features, these dialects differ in phonology, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary, and some of them have been influenced by other neighboring languages. Mountain dialects such as Tushuri, Mtiuluri, Khevsuruli, and others preserve a number of archaisms that have disappeared from other dialects. The Ingilo dialect is spoken in the former Zakatala and Belakani provinces that were annexed by Azerbaijan following the 1921 partition of Georgia, and it has been greatly influenced by Azerbaijani and Avar languages. The dialects of the Georgian population of the former southwestern Georgian provinces, that fell to Turkey under the Moscow Treaty of 1921, have come under the influence of Turkish. Since the 16th century, Georgian communities existed in Persia, where the Fereydan dialect had gradually developed. Also, Georgian, in turn, has influenced other Caucasian languages, especially Tsova-Tush and some of the Tsezic languages.

Language remains one of the key elements in the Georgian identity and is a fundamental instrument in forging a nation. Its importance became evident in the late 19th century when the Russian imperial policies endangered its status within the Georgian lands. The rise of the national liberation movement was in part triggered by the desire to save and revive the Georgian language. Thus, Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, and other prominent members of this movement sought to safeguard the language and adopted a special motto “mamuli, ena, sartsmunoeba” (Fatherland, Language, Faith) for their program of national awakening in which the language (ena) became one of the three pillars of the national movement. Lan-
Language also became a subject of bitter dispute between conservative and progressive elements in Georgian society as the Mtkvardaleulni and Tergdaleulni groups discussed the language reform; the latter called for a language reform, which incensed the conservatives, and employed vernacular language in their publications in order to make them more accessible to the common people. The Society for Advancement of Literacy among the Georgians played an important role in spreading literacy to the masses and Jacob Gogebashvili’s Dedaena served as an important textbook in this process.

During the Soviet era, the Communist authorities made several attempts to abolish the Georgian language as the state language in Georgia, which led to massive protests and revitalized Georgian nationalist sentiments. Georgian dissidents, especially Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava, campaigned under the slogan “ena, mamuli, sartsmunoeba” (language, fatherland, faith) that placed major emphasis on the Georgian language as a rallying point for Georgian nationalism. In April 1978, the power of Georgian nationalism was revealed when thousands of Georgians took to the streets to protest the Soviet government’s decision to remove Georgian as the official state language of the republic. Facing escalating demands, the government decided against removing the disputed clause and effectively acknowledged its defeat. Currently, Article 8 of the Constitution declares Georgian as the state language of Georgia and the Georgian and Abkhaz languages for the territory of Abkhazia.

Discussions on the place and importance of the language in Georgian history often led to deviations. In the 1920s, the Georgian language was studied by Nikolay Marr and his disciples, who founded the Japhetic theory in linguistics. The theory claimed that Japhetic languages, Georgian among them, had existed across Europe before the advent of the Indo-European languages and could be recognized as a foundation over which the Indo-European languages had imposed themselves. Using this model, Marr attempted to apply the Marxist theory of class struggle to linguistics, arguing that these different strata of language corresponded to different social classes. In 1924, he went even further and proclaimed that all of the languages of the world descended from a single proto-language that had consisted of four “diffused exclamations” or monosyllables, sal, ber, yon, rosh.
Another important discussion stems from the 10th century scholar Ioane Zosime’s hymn *Kebai da didebai kartulisa enisa* (Praise and Glorification of the Georgian Language) that glorifies the Georgian language and its unique mission. The hymn spawned messianic tendencies in Georgia of the 1980s and 1990s. Many Georgian dissidents, especially Zviad Gamsakhurdia, explained the hymn in a strictly messianic context, turning it into a major element of nationalist ideology. It was argued that Ioane Zosime’s reference to the Georgian language as Lazarus and his four-day burial referred to the eclipsing of a Japhetic civilization, of which proto-Georgian culture was part, by Indo-European newcomers and the soon-to-be expected revival of Georgia. Furthermore, Gamsakhurdia and his supporters went so far as to claim that on the Judgment Day, the Georgian language and nation will take the position of universal spiritual leader and judge of mankind. Such sentiments, although on the decline, still remain widespread in Georgia and sustain Georgian beliefs of the superiority and unique spiritual mission of their language. In recent years, scholars, nationalists, and populist politicians have often campaigned against the influx of Western, particularly American, pop culture and the perceived decline of the Georgian language through numerous English loan-words. The younger generation is especially susceptible to adopting foreign words in the vernacular language.

LAZICA. Kingdom in southwestern Georgia, successor state to Egrisi; at its greatest extent, Lazica also included the former Colchis and Abkhazia. Christianity spread in Lazica in the first century CE, and Bishop Stratophillus of Bichvinta attended the first Ecumenical Council held in Nicea in 325. The kingdom proved to be a battleground for the great empires of Sasanian Persia and Byzantium in the sixth century, and this conflict is described in detail by Procopius of Caesarea and Agathias Scholastikos. As the Persians extended their sphere of influence to eastern Georgia, they initially recognized Byzantine control of Lazica in the Eternal Peace Treaty of 532. However, nine years later, King Gubaz II, embittered by the Byzantine oppression, organized a revolt and appealed to Shah Chosroes (Khosro Anushirvan) for help. In 542, in response to the Persian army entering Lazica, the Byzantine forces were mobilized against them. The fighting between
the two powers centered around the strategic fortress of Petra, where the Persian–Lazic troops initially defeated the imperial forces.

The success, however, proved bittersweet since Gubaz soon realized that the Persians wanted, just like Byzantium, to conquer his country. In 548, Gubaz revolted again, this time against the Persians, and requested help from Byzantine Emperor Justinian. The Imperial army led by Dagisthaeus besieged Petra but was defeated by the superior Persians. In 550, the Byzantine–Lazic army routed two Persian armies on the Phasis (Rioni) and Tskhenistskali rivers. Petra was captured and another Persian army defeated at Archaeopolis (Vanî) in 551. The tide of war soon shifted to the Persians as they seized Kutaisi and defeated Byzantine–Lazic forces at Telephis in 553. Archaeopolis was lost the following year and the defeats caused a bitter disagreement between Gubaz and the Byzantine commanders. The king complained about the actions of the Byzantine commanders Bessas, Martin, and Rusticus to the Byzantine emperor, who recalled Bessas.

In 554, the Byzantine commanders assassinated King Gubaz on the bank of the Khobistskali River. Dismayed by the murder, the population of Lazica met in a national assembly where two notables, Aïetes and Partadze, gave their famed speeches on whether to continue supporting Byzantium or turn to Persia. In the end, Egrisi sided with the Byzantine Empire, feeling cultural and religious affinity with it. Tsathes, the younger brother of Gubaz, was selected as the new king while the Byzantine emperor investigated the assassination and had Rusticus and his brother John arrested and executed. In 555, the Byzantine–Lazic forces launched a new offensive that resulted in the capture of Archaeopolis and the defeat of the Persian forces under Nachorgan near Phasis (Poti). Over the next two years, the allies drove the Persians out of Lazica. In 557, Byzantium and Persia concluded an armistice that led to the Fifty Years Peace in 562, in which Shah Chosroes I recognized the Byzantine sphere of influence in Lazica. In subsequent centuries, a large part of Lazica became known as Guria while other regions were conquered by the Ottomans in the 14th–16th centuries. There is still a large Laz population in Turkey along the southeastern coastline of the Black Sea.

LAZ LANGUAGE. See ZAN.
LEBANIDZE, MURMAN (1922– ). Prominent Georgian writer and poet. Lebanidze participated in World War II from 1942–1945 and later worked on various newspapers. He graduated with a degree in philology from Tbilisi State University in 1948 and began publishing his works in the early 1950s. In 1975, he joined the Shota Rustaveli State Prize committee. He is widely regarded as one of the finest Georgian poets of the second half of the 20th century, and among his many works are Ukvdavi kvavilebi (1971), Rcheuli (1972), Anisis agheba (1972), Uplistsikhestan siskhlisferi kakachos tsveti (1974), Rcheuli lirika (1977), and Rcheuli (1979).

LEKISHVILI, NIKO MIKHAYLOVICH (1947– ). Georgian politician and statesman, former state minister of Georgia. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from the Georgian Polytechnic Institute, majoring in high-temperature physics; he later studied at the Moscow Academy of Economy. He worked at the Georgian Polytechnic Institute in 1972–1973 and was involved with the Komsomol, rising to the position of the first secretary of the Pervomaysky District Komsomol Committee in Tbilisi and the first secretary of the Tbilisi City Komsomol Committee in the late 1970s. Throughout the 1980s, he served in various positions in the Communist Party apparatus in Tbilisi. In 1990, he became chairman of the City Executive Committee of Tbilisi and later became deputy to the Supreme Council of Georgia. A successful businessman, he also enjoyed a stellar career in politics, becoming a member of the parliament in 1992, mayor of Tbilisi from 1993–1995, and the state minister of Georgia from 1995–1998. After the Georgian cabinet resigned in July 1998, he was elected to the Parliament, where he continued his political career.

LEON I. EristsavI of Abkhazia in the mid-eighth century. Leon organized the resistance against the Arabs in western Georgia and forged an alliance with Erismitavari Archil of Kartli. He was recognized as ruler of Abkhazia by the Byzantine Emperor Leon. In 735, Leon and Archil fought against the Arab commander Marwan ibn-Muhammad, who led a punitive expedition into Kartli. After crossing the Surami (Likhi) Gorge, the Arabs invaded Leon’s domain and captured the fortresses of Tsikhegoji and Sukhumi. Leon and Archil halted the enemy near Anakopia.
LEON II. King of Abkhazia in 758–798. The nephew of Eristavi Leon I, he united Egrisi and Abkhazia in the late eighth century and became the first to receive the title of king of the Abkhaz (apkhazta mepe) from the Byzantine emperor. Strengthening his authority, Leon reorganized his kingdom into eight administrative units (saeristavo) of Abkhazia, Tskhumi (Sukhumi), Egrisi, Guria, Racha-Lechkhumi, Svaneti, Argveti, and Imereti.

LEON III. King of Abkhazia in 957–967. The son of Giorgi II, he was initially appointed to govern Kartli and later campaigned with his father in Kakheti. Ascending the throne in 957, he provided large subsidies to construct churches and established a new bishopric in western Georgia. He extended his influence to Javakheti in the south and campaigned against the Kakhetian ruler Kvirike, but he became ill and died around 967.

LEONIDZE, GIORGI (1899–1966). Georgian poet and writer. He was born in the Kakhetian village of Patardzeuli, and studied at Tbilisi Seminary and Tbilisi State University, graduating with a doctorate in philology. In the late 1910s, he joined the Georgian symbolist group tsisperkantselebi and edited the weekly journal Bakhtrioni. He also began publishing his works that were unique for their driving rhythms, whimsical metaphors, and lavish landscapes of Georgia. The 1920s proved to be a very productive time for Leonidze as he wrote Elegia, Shemogomis pikri (both 1914), Ghamis chveneba (1915), Ukhilavis simghera, Dachrili suli (both 1916), Tetri drosha, Lurji tvali (both 1917), Avtoportreti (1921), Saghrchobelidan (1922), Tupilis sasaklao (1923), Tsitsari (1925), Ghame iveriisa (1925), Kipchaghi, and others. However, the start of the Stalinist purges dramatically changed his life as his close friends, the poets Titsian Tabidze and Paolo Iashvili, perished in repressions. Leonidze himself was saved by the fact that he was working on a long poem dedicated to Stalin, Stalin: bavshvoba da krmooba (1939). In later years, he authored a number of articles and monographs on Georgian literature and served as an editor of a literary journal. He helped found the Museum of Georgian Literature, which is now named after him, and the Ilia Chavchavadze Museum in Saguramo. In 1956, he wrote one of the classics of
Georgian literature, *Natvis khe*, that Tengiz Abuladze later made into a critically acclaimed film.

**LEVAN DADIANI.** See DADIANI, LEVAN.

**LEVAN.** King of Imereti in 1583–1590. The son of Giorgi II, he ascended the throne after a bitter struggle against his uncle and concluded an alliance with the powerful Prince Mamia IV Dadiani. Levan later faced the invasions of King Simon I of Kartli, who sought to extend his authority to western Georgia. In 1588, Levan and his allies were defeated by Simon in the battle at Gopanto and fled from Imereti. Simon soon returned to Kartli, where he was threatened by the Ottomans, and Levan managed to restore his authority. However, his former allies now turned against him, and in one of the battles in 1590, he was captured by Prince Mamia IV Dadiani, who kept him imprisoned until he died later that year.

**LEVAN.** King of Kakheti in 1518–1574. Son of King Giorgi II, he was prevented from ascending the throne by King David X of Kartli, who took over Kakheti in 1513. Five years later, Levan took advantage of the Persian invasion of Kartli to seize his crown. In 1520, he defeated King David X and forced him to recognize his claims to the throne. Levan pursued a conciliatory policy with Persia and avoided violence through diplomacy and tribute. Kakheti enjoyed a period of stability and relative prosperity. In 1551–1555, he participated in the Persian campaigns throughout southern Caucasia. However, as the Persian encroachments on Kakheti intensified, Levan sought foreign help and appealed to Russia. He dispatched a first embassy to Grand Duke Ivan IV in 1563 and negotiated a military alliance between the rising Principality of Moscow and Kakheti. A Russian detachment arrived in Kakheti in the mid-1560s, but Persian threats forced Levan to repudiate his alliance and return the Russian troops.

**LEUVILLE-SUR-ORGE.** A town some 25 km outside Paris, in the Ile-de-France region of France, a seat of the Georgian government-in-exile and center of the Georgian émigré community. When the Red Army invaded Georgia in February 1921, the Georgian government withdrew to Batumi, where it voted to move to exile and sought asy-
lum in France. The members initially settled in the French capital where they established the Georgian Association, but the high cost of living expenses caused them to look for another location. In June 1922, they acquired property at Leuville, which included five hectares of land and a chateau.

Centered at Leuville, the Georgian government-in-exile continued its struggle against the Soviet authorities in Georgia. In the 1920s, it directed anti-Soviet guerrillas and helped plan the failed uprising of August 1924. In later years, a small printing press was set up at the chateau and produced Georgian literature and periodicals. As the Georgian émigrés began to die out, a special Georgian square was created at a local cemetery, where many prominent Georgian politicians and public figures are buried. See also BERLIN, GEORGIAN COMMUNITY OF.

LITERATURE. Pre-Christian Georgian literature seems to have been destroyed as Georgia underwent major religious and cultural transformations following the spread of Christianity. The Georgian oral tradition abounds in ballads, songs, and legends, the most famous of them being that of Amirani. The earliest Georgian inscriptions (early fifth century) are preserved in Jerusalem and Bolnisi, and the earliest Georgian literary text remains Shushanikis tsameba (Martyrdom of St. Shushanik) by Jacob Tsurtaveli, which demonstrates by its literary standards a pre-Christian writing tradition. Over following centuries, as the Georgian Orthodox Church developed and Christianity spread, Georgian literature expanded and developed rapidly. Books of the New and Old Testaments, liturgical collections, and religious treatises were translated. Monasteries were established throughout Georgia such as those of Opiza, Ishkhani, Shatberdi, Tskarostavi, Oshki, Khakhuli, Parkhali, Garedja, and many others that played a crucial role in the development of the Georgian literary tradition. Georgian monastic complexes in Greece, Syria, Palestine, Sinai, and other regions soon evolved into major centers of literary, philosophical, and cultural thought. Religious and secular works were translated from various languages, including Greek, Syrian, Arabic, Armenian, and Persian, and original texts were created. By the end of the 10th century, the Georgian literary tradition flourished, producing numerous hagiographic, homiletical, hymnographical, and liturgical books,
monastic typicons, etc. Georgian literature was heavily influenced by the close cultural contacts with the Byzantine world and the Muslim (Arab, Persian) world.

After the sixth century anonymous Evstati mstkhelis tsameba (Passion of Evstati of Mtskheta), the next major work of Georgian hagiography was Ioane Sabanisdz’s Abos tsameba (Passion of Abo), which described the martyrdom of Abo, an Arab perfumer from Baghdad who converted to Christianity in Tbilisi and was martyred for apostasy. A major collection of Georgian hagiographic works is Mravaltavi (Many Chapters) while the chronicles Moktsevai Kartlisai, and later Kartlis Tskhovreba, compiled various historical sources. Basil Zarzmeli authored a life of St. Serapion Zarzmeli, while Giorgi Merchule’s work contains important passages on the influential clerical figure Grigol Khandzteli. Mikel Modrekili compiled a massive hymnographic collection. In the 10th–11th centuries, prominent Georgian scholars, including Leonti Mroveli and Eprem Mtsire (Epraim the Lesser), helped advance Georgian hagiographic and philosophic body of works.

The Golden Age of Georgia (12th–13th century) is the classical period of Georgian medieval literature. King David IV Aghmashenebeli proved himself a gifted writer, composing Galobani sinanulisani (Hymns of Repentance, c. 1120), a powerful work of emotional free-verse psalms that reveal the king’s humility and zeal. Several major poems were composed and translated in later years. Mose Khoneli’s epic Amiran-Darejaniani depicted the legendary hero Amiran and his titanic exploits, while Visramiani was a Georgian version of Fakhruddin Gurgani’s lost poem Vis and Ramin. Chakhrukhadze’s Tamariani contained odes to Queen Tamar, followed by Ioane Shavteli’s Abdulmesia, another eulogy of Georgian kings. The greatest work of the period remains Shota Rustaveli’s magnificent poem Vepkhistaosani (The Knight in Panther’s Skin). The Mongol invasions in the 13th century and Tamerlane’s forays a century later marked the decline in the political and cultural life of Georgia. The eastern provinces were ravaged by the enemy invasions, and many priceless manuscripts were destroyed. The Georgian presence in monastic centers abroad also weakened. Literary work in the 14th century was mostly confined to copying old manuscripts. The fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453 dealt a major blow to Georgia, which found itself separated from Christian Europe.
The 15th–18th centuries are distinguished by an upswing of cultural life. Patriotic in nature, the new Georgian literature was marked by interpolations of and sequels to Shota Rustaveli’s *Vepkhistaosani* as well as by the influence of Persian literature. Serapion Sabashvili-Kedelauri began writing *Rostomiani*, a Georgian version of the famous Persian epic *Shahname*, and his work was completed by Khosrov Turmanidze. Among other Persian translations, Georgian writers produced *Barzunmae*, *Utrutiani*, *Saamiani*, *Baamaniani* and *Ioseb Zilikhaniani*. A sequel to *Vepkhistaosani*, *Omainiani*, followed the adventures of the offspring of Tariel, one of the major characters in the epic poem. Bagrat Mukhlanbatoni authored a treatise on Islam entitled *Motkhrobai sjulta ugrmtota ismailita* (Treatise on the Faith of the Infidel Ismailites) in which he compared Christianity and Islam. *Rusudaniani*, one of the most important works heralding the Georgian renaissance, was written in the 1640s and was later versified in 1732. Between 1681–1687, *Ioseb T bileli* wrote *Didmouravi*, an epic poem of the struggle of Georgian people against foreign threats and the exploits of Giorgi Saakadze, military commander and governor (*mouravi*) of Georgia.

The late 16th and early 17th century saw a tendency to versify many works, including Sulkhan and Begtabeg Taniashvili’s poetic version of *Amirandaredjaniani*, King *Archil*’s *Visramiani*, and Mamuka Tavakalashvili’s and Bardzim Vachnadze’s version of *Rostomiani*.

In the 17th century, King *Teimuraz I*, a talented poet who was fluent in several languages, adapted from the Persian the romances of *Leila and Mejnun* (*Leilmajnuniani*), and *Josef and Zuleika* (*Josef zilikhiani*) and wrote numerous poems, including *Tsigni da tsameba Ketevan dedoplisa*, *Gabaaseba gazafkhulisa da shemogomisa*, *Gabaaseba bagisa da ghvinisa*, *Majama*, *Tamaris sidze davit garejas*, *Gremis sasakhle*, etc., that breathed new life into Georgian literature. King Archil also proved himself a gifted writer of such works as *Archiliani* and *Gabaaseba Teimurazisa da Rustvelisa* that pulsed with patriotic sentiments. His writings influenced the contemporary Georgian literature and founded a new literary movement of realism (*martlis tqma*). King Archil also produced treatises on a number of subjects, among them *Saqartvelos zneobani*, *Leqsnis asni ormukhini*, *Leqsnis asdaatni*, and *Leqsnis aseulni*, and translated several works from Russian. Among other authors, Peshangi Bertkadze wrote
Shakhnavaziani on the life of King Vakhtang V, while Joseph Saakadze produced Didmouraviani about Giorgi Saakadze.

In 1704–1724, King Vakhtang VI became a central figure in Georgia’s literary life. A monarch, scholar, and poet, he translated Persian poems and collected and edited many historical works. On his orders, old manuscripts were sought and copied, important calligraphic schools were founded, and new translations and original works appeared. In 1709, he established the first printing press in Tbilisi. Vakhtang’s tutor and companion, Sulkhan Saba Orbeliani, produced the first encyclopedic dictionary of the Georgian language, Sitkvis kona, which remains relevant today, and authored many didactical fables, including Sibrdzne Sitruruia and Stsavlani. Mamuka Baratashvili authored a 63-verse poem, Qeba mefisa bakarisa, and his other poems celebrated earthly love; his greatest work, Chashniki anu leksis stsvlis tsigni (1731), was the first modern “poetics” treatise in Georgian. Baratashvili’s innovation included breaking free of medieval Georgian meters and themes, which made him influential for later poets. In the mid-18th century, David Guramishvili wrote his Davitiani, which included the poem Bedi Kartlisa. King Teimuraz II left a rich literary legacy that includes his famous Dghisa da ghabmis gabaaseba, Tavgadasavali, Sasakhlis qeba, Gabaaseba rustaveltan, and a translation of Timsariani.

The period is noteworthy for the work of Bessarion Gabashvili, popularly known as Besiki. His poems, Sevdis baghs shevel, Me mixvdi magas shensa bralebsa, Me shenze figrma mimarinda, Shavni shavni, and, most of all, Tano tatano and Dedopals anazed, are among the best examples of Georgian romantic poetry. His heroic poetry includes the poems Aspindzistvis and Rukhis omi, while his Rdzal-dedamtiliani, Chabua orbelianze, and other works reveal his satirical skills. His poetic rhythms and rhymes remain among the finest in Georgian literature and set the standard that succeeding generations of poets struggled to match.

Timothy Gabashvili, an official at the royal courts, traveled extensively through Caucasia and the Middle East and described his experiences in Mimoslva. Giorgi Avalishvili and David Cholokashvili translated plays from foreign languages and helped develop Georgian dramaturgy. In Tbilisi, Sayat Nova or the King of Songs established himself as one of finest folk singer-songwriters whose numerous
songs described the life and toils of common people in Georgia and the neighboring countries.

The Russian annexation of Georgia in the early 19th century began a new stage in the history of Georgian literary culture. Ioann Bagrationi wrote his *Kalmasoba*, a discussion of literary-mythological issues, and analyzed Georgian poetry. The literary school of Georgian romanticism found full expression in the works of Alexander Chavchavadze, Nikoloz Baratashvili, and Grigol Orbeliani. Chavchavadze was fascinated by the ideas of the Enlightenment and translated many works of the French philosophers. His poems, *Gogcha, Vai droni, droni, Isminet msmenno, Kavkasia*, and others lament the lost past of Georgia while his *Sikvarulo dzalsa shensa* remains one of the most romantic poems in Georgian literature. Orbeliani’s poetry is noteworthy for its feelings of patriotism and humanity. Among his major works are *Iaralis, Mukhambazi*, and *Sadghegrdzelo anu omis shemdeg ghame Ikhnine Erevnis siakhloves*. Despite leaving only some 40 poems and lyrics, Baratashvili is considered the best poet of Georgian romanticism. His ingenuous squib portrayed a complex inner world of the human soul. The feeling of loneliness runs thorough his early poems (*Twilight over the Mtatsminda*, 1836, and *Reflections on the Kura’s Banks*, 1837) and reached its climax in the poem *Lonely Soul* (1839). In his poems, Baratashvili sang of high moral ideals and sought his own path to improve society. The poet’s struggle against the powers of darkness found expression in one of his best poems, *Merani*, which has influenced later Georgian poets. With its mystical vision of the future, it also served as a symbol of progress and eternal movement forward.

The next generation of Georgian writers included Solomon Razmadze, Alexander Orbeliani, Vakhtang Orbeliani, Giorgi Eristavi, David Machabeli, Mikhail Tumanishvili, Grigol Rcheulishvili, and others. In the mid-19th century, romanticism was gradually replaced by critical realism. Giorgi Eristavi founded the first Georgian theater company in 1850 and established himself as an eminent dramatist and playwright. Among his finest plays are the bitter comedies *Dava any tochka da zapetaia* (1840) and *Gakra* (1849) that ridiculed contemporary society. His fellow dramatist, Lavrenti Ardaziani, wrote the first social novel, *Solomon Isakich Mejganuashvili*, which reflected the rise of the middle class in Georgia and the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the nobility. Georgian realism was further
developed in the works of Daniel Chonkadze, whose novel *Suramis tsikhe* criticized serfdom, nobility, and clergy.

The second half of the 19th century produced a group of Georgian writers whose works and activities were instrumental in reviving the Georgian language and in spreading literacy and awakening Georgian national consciousness. These authors, also known as *Tergdaleulni*, were often inspired by the events in Europe, especially the Revolutions of 1848 and the unification of Italy in the 1860s. They favored liberal reforms and directed their energy to the revival of the Georgian literature and language. As a result, *Tergdaleulni* clashed with older generations of writers and conservative elements of the society, often known as the “fathers” or *Mtkvardaleulni*. Unlike “the fathers,” who used the medieval language of the church, the *Tergdaleulni* used the vernacular language for their publications in order to make them more accessible to the common people and called for a language reform that incensed the conservatives. When the “fathers” closed the pages of their newspapers to them, the *Tergdaleulni* turned to the journals *Droeba*, *Sasoflo gazeti*, *Krebuli*, *Obzori*, *Iveria*, *Kvali*, and *Tifliski vestnik*, all of which played important roles in spreading their ideas. Giorgi Tsereteli earned the reputation of talented publicist and author of critical realism novels and articles on history and literary criticism. He was the first editor of the journals *Droeba*, *Kvali*, and *Krebuli*. Anton Purtseladze’s works are dedicated to historical themes and include *Marabda*, *Didi Mouravi*, *Matsi Khvitiia*, and others. Raphael (Rapiel) Eristavi gained fame for his vaudevilles and plays—*Nino*, *Ghvino*, *Mbrunavi stolebi*, *Jer daikhotsnen*, *mere iqortsines*, *Khevsuris samshoblo*, etc.—that dealt with the problems of the common people. Iakob Gogebashvili made important contributions to pedagogy and his textbook, *Dedaena*, set new standards and was important in spreading literacy in Georgia.

Ilia Chavchavadze emerged as one of the leaders of this movement, and his numerous literary works became classics of Georgian literature. His first major works, *Sakhrchobelaze*, *Katsia-adamiani? Kako-qachaghi* and *Otaraant kvrivi*, portray with subtle humor, irony, and detail the degeneration of the Georgian gentry and the life of the common people. His later works, *Mepe Dimitri Tavdadebuli* and *Gandegili*, exalt self-sacrifice and religious redemption, while his many poems, including *Achruli*, *Elegia*, *Kartlis dedas*, *Kvareli*...
mtebs, etc., are filled with patriotic sentiments. Mgavris tserilebi revealed his criticism of contemporary society and set out his goals for the national revival of Georgia.

Chavchavadze’s close associate was another great poet, Akaki Tsereteli. He helped found the Georgian Drama Society and played an important role in the development of Georgian journalism. Tsereteli established and edited several popular magazines, including Akakis tviuri krebuli and Khumara. Tsereteli’s reputation as one of the finest Georgian writers is based on the numerous poems and novels that he authored throughout his life. Among his major works are Alexandra (1860), Simghera mkis dros, Glekhis aghsareba (1863), Tsitsinatela (1869), Mukhambazi, Aghmart-aghmart, Rom itsode chemi gulis dardebi (1876), Gazapkhuli (1881), Khanjals, Qebata geba (1882), Amirani (1883), Chaghara (1886), Satrfos, Gantiadi (1892), Tqveni chirime (1905), and Momakvdavis figrebi (1911). Many of his poems were made into songs, and Suliko (1895) is still one of the most popular songs in Georgia. Tsereteli’s epic poems include Bagrat didi (1875), Tornike Eristavi (1883), Tamar Tsbieri (1885), Kikolis Naambobi (1889), Patara Kakhi (1890), Natela (1897), and Gamzrdeli (1898). He proved to be equally talented as a writer of prose, authoring Bashi-Achuki (1895–1896) and the insightful autobiographical Chemi tavgadasavali (1894–1908).

In the 1880s–1890s, another group of writers, influenced by the ideology of narodniki, established the journal Imedi in Tbilisi. Among its active members were Soprom Mgaloblishvili, Ekaterine Gabashvili, Niko Lomouri, and others. They directed their efforts to the development of specific genres, including autobiographical and social novels, which sought to publicize the toils of the common people. Ivane Machabeli emerged as a preeminent translator of European works and produced translations of Shakespeare’s King Lear, Hamlet, Othello, Richard III, Julius Caesar, and other works. In 1881, Alexander Kazbegi’s novel Elgudja caused a scandal because of its positive portrayal of mountaineers and their struggle against Tsarism. It was followed by Kazbegi’s Eliso (1882), Mamismkvleli (1882), Tsiko (1883), Khevisberi Gocha (1884) and other novels that described in fascinating and engaging detail the life of Georgian mountaineers, their customs, and how they were oppressed. Luka Razikahsvili, publishing under his pen-name Vazha Pshavela (A lad
from Pshavi), produced instant classics of Georgian literature, among them the poems Aluda Ketelauri, Bakhtrioni, Stumar-Paspindzeli, Gogotur and Apshina, Gvelischamia, Eteri, Mindia, and others. These poems describe the conflict between love and duty, individual morality, and society’s imperatives, and combine the native folklore of the Georgian mountainous regions with European literary traditions. Vazha Pshavela’s portrayals of mountain landscapes and beauty remain unsurpassed in Georgian literature.

In the 1890s, the realism movement in Georgian literature was uplifted by a new generation of authors, including Egnate Ninoshvili, Shio Aragvispireli, David Kldiashvili, Vasili Barnovi, and Alexander Eristavi-Khostaria. Their work—Ninoshvili’s Simona, Kristine, Gogia Uishvili, Paliastomi, Guriis Ajanqeba, etc; Aragvispireli’s Mitsaa, Agsdeg, Polli, Shio Tavadi, and Gabzaruli Guli; Kldiashvili’s Mikela, Solomon Morbeladze, Samanishvilis dedinatsvali, Kamushadze’s gachirveba; Mikhail Javakhishvili’s Eka, Tetri sakelo, Kvachi Kvachantiradze, Jakos khiznebi, Arsea Marabdel, and Kalis tvirti, and others portrayed social inequality, the grim reality of oppressed peasants, and the underlings and decadent lords, the struggle between individual happiness and public morality, and conflict between the individual and society. Vasili Barnovi pioneered the genre of the historical novel with his Isnis tsiskari, Sakhifato sikvaruli, Mimkrali sharavndedi, Trefbga tsamebuli, Khazarta sasdlo, Armazis mskhvreva, Giorgi Saakadze, Dedofali Bizantiisa, Tsodva sikhubkasa, Tamor mrtsemi, and others. Barnovi’s rich vocabulary and rhythmic prose style popularized the historical novel in Georgia and established the standards for this genre. In 1919, he also authored Kartuli sitkverebis istoriiis gakvetilebi, the first textbook on the history of Georgian literature. Simultaneously, folk song writer Ietim Gurji’s poems dealt with the everyday toil of artisans, merchants, and peasants and sang the praises of Tbilisi and its unique atmosphere.

The first decades of the 20th century saw the establishment of the Tsisperkantslebi group that played an important role in reviving and developing Georgian poetry and prose. It was created under the guidance of the poet Grigol Robakidze and eventually included such prominent poets as Paolo Iashvili, Titisan Tabidze, Galaktion Tabidze, Nikolo Mitsishvili, Kolau Nadiradze, Valerian Gaprindashvili, and others. The Tsisperkantslebi sought to connect the traditional
Georgian culture with modern trends and were influenced by symbolism. They thrived during the liberal years of the democratic republic in 1918–1921 but came under pressure following the Bolshevik occupation of Georgia. Some of the group members immigrated to Europe while others stayed behind. Robakidze moved to Germany, where he produced his major works Lamara, Londa, Malshremi, and Gvelis perangi. His works were prohibited in Georgia until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The repression of the 1920s and the 1930s profoundly affected Georgian literature as Socialist themed works appeared en masse. Those writers who stayed behind were persecuted by the Soviet authorities for their “decadent” poetry during the Stalinist purges in the 1930s. The most important of them were Titsian Tabidze and Paolo Iashvili, whose lyrics often combined symbolism and mysticism. However, Iashvili was persecuted and finally committed suicide inside the building of the Georgian Writers’ Union in July 1937; Titsian Tabidze was imprisoned and died in exile. Another fellow Tsisperkantseli, Kolau Nadiradze, escaped certain death when his interrogators were themselves arrested during the purges, but for the remainder of his life he distanced himself from the social scene. Galaktion Tabidze survived the purges and authored hundreds of poems that established him as one of the greatest Georgian poets and accorded him the rare honor of being known simply as Galaktion. Among his most famous poems are Usikvarulod, Me da Ghame, Karih Kris, Droshebi chkara, Sasaplaoni, etc. Tabidze committed suicide in 1959. One positive aspect of the persecution lay in the fact that many Georgian writers, unable to express their own ideas, turned to translation of European poetry and prose, which introduced Georgian readers to diverse genres and works.

Despite the Soviet censorship and emphasis on Socialist ideals, the period also produced several great writers. Foremost among them is Constantine Gamsakhurdia, who authored several epic Georgian historical novels, including Dionisos ghimili, Mtvavis motatseba, Diodostatis marjvena, Vazis kvaviloba, and Davit Aghmashenebeli. His works brought unprecedented subtlety of phrasing to Georgian prose and established new models of syntactic construction. Leo Kiacheli gained his fame with Gvadi Bigva, Tavadis Kali Maya, Almasgir Kibulan, and Khaki Adzba. Joseph Grishashvili, arguably one of the
finest Georgian poets of the past century, wrote his memorable love
lyrics and translated into Georgian the works of Armenian, Azeri, and
Russian poets. Anna Kalandadze, one of the most acclaimed Geor-
gian poets, began publishing her short and personal poems in the
1940s and quickly gained popularity with her laconic but subtle and
intimate lyrics. Grigol Abashidze revived the classical style poems
and intertwined themes of past and present, historical symbolism, and
philosophy. He later produced a series of acclaimed historical novels,
including Lasharela, Didi ghame, and Tsotne dadiani anu kartvelta
datsema da amagheba.

Although the late 1950s were politically the period of the “Thaw,”
the administration of Vasili Mzhavanadze was anti-intellectual, and
literary circles and journals were either suppressed or kept under tight
control. Major periodicals included the Literaturnai Gruzia and
Mnatobi, under the editorship of Mikheil Mrevlishvili and Vano Tsu-
lukidze, respectively, while the monthly journal Tsiskari was founded
in 1957. However, old Party functionaries often dominated these
journals and thwarted the rise of the younger talents. Throughout the
1960s and into the early 1970s, book publishing remained under di-
rect Party control. Nevertheless, younger voices could still be heard, and
Mukhran Machavariani, influenced by Walt Whitman, cele-
brated love and nature and earned fame as a talented poet and trans-
lator of European poetry, whose works have remained popular. In the
late 1950s, Tariel Chanturia emerged as one of the more artistic po-
et whose works were published in the literary journals Tsiskari and
Mnatobi. Giorgi Shatberashvili’s short story, Mkvdris mze, enjoyed
great popularity in 1959. Nodar Dumbadze remains a popular au-
thor in Georgia. His first works appeared in various journals in the
1950s, and his first anthology of stories, Sopleli bichi, was published
in 1960. The same year, Dumbadze wrote one of his best and most
popular novels, Me, hebia, iliko da ilarioni, followed by three more
successful novels, Me vkhedav mzes, Tetri bairaghebi, and Maradi-
obis kanoni, that examined social and moral problems within Geor-
gian society.

In 1972, Eduard Shevardnadze was appointed the first secretary of
the Communist Party of Georgia. Unlike his predecessor, Shevard-
nadze provided more financial and political support for Georgian liter-
icature, cinema, and theater; however, he also never hesitated to perse-
cute and severely punish any intellectual who dared to challenge his policies. In the 1970s, the number of literary journals increased: *Kritika* was founded in 1972, *Saunje* in 1974, and *Gantiadi* in 1972. Otar Ioseliani established himself as a leading dramatist whose *Sanam uremi gadabrundeba* and *Ekvisi shinabera da erti mamakatsi* enjoyed critical and popular acclaim in Georgia and eastern Germany. One of the greatest works of the 1970s came from the pen of Chabua Amirejibi, whose epic *Data Tutashkhia* (1973–1975) was conceived while he was in prison in Siberia. The novel follows the tragic life of Data Tutashkhia, who is forced to lead a life of brigandage against the Russian authorities and oppression. However, the larger theme of the book deals with the issue of fate, personal freedom, morality, and injustice. Amirejibi’s next work, *Gora Mborgali* (started in 1978), dealt with his experiences from childhood to middle age and his imprisonment in Siberia, but it was not published until 1995. In a stylistic sense, Otar Chiladze proved to be a more fluent writer as he turned away from Soviet themes and his novels sought to combine myth and history as shown in his *Gaze erti katsi midioda* (1972–1973), *Kovelman chmmena mpovnelman* (1976), and *Rkinis teatri* (1981). His latest work, *Avelum*, appeared in 1995 and dealt with the disastrous years of 1989–1991. Chiladze also wrote a number of successful plays, including *Nates tsiteli tsaghebi*, *Labirinti*, etc. In similar fashion, Rezo Mishveladze proved himself to be a master of novelettes and short stories with his collections *Mtsukhri* (1983), *Elda* (1987), *Ganacheni* (1990), *Samotsdarva akhali novella* (1997), *Ai kvekana* (1999), and others.

The 1990s saw the rise of a new generation of writers and poets who tended to break away from traditions and established norms; thus Lasha Bughadze’s recent novel on Queen Tamar led to an uproar for its graphic portrayal of intimacy between the Georgian queen and her Russian husband. The new works are written in colloquial Georgian instead of literary language, which makes them more accessible and appealing to a younger generation of readers. Guram Dochanashvili is often acknowledged as one of the more talented contemporary writers for his novels *Samoseli pirveli*, *Lodi Nasakdrali*, *Katsi romelsats literatura dzlier ukvarda*, and others. Aka Morchiladze (Giorgi Akhvlediani) enjoys critical and popular success with *Paliashvilis kuchis dzaglebi*, *Santa esperanza*, and *Gaseinreba*
karabaghshi. His works reveal the predicaments facing the Georgian society, especially the youth. David Turashvili became prominent with his travelogues and novels Katmandu, Merani, Natsnobi da utsnobi amerika, and his play, Jeans Generation. Among other prominent writers are Zaal Samadasvili, Jemal Kartskhadze, Rezo Tabukashvili, Beso Kvedelidze, Irakli Javakhadze, Nugzar Sataidze, Vazha Gigashvili, Tamar Pkhakadze, and others. Contemporary Georgian poetry is enriched by the works of Gaga Nakhutrishvili, Rati Amaghlobeli, Dato Maghradze, Vazha Khornaui, and others.

LOMINADZE, VISSARION (1897–1935). Georgian Communist Party leader and government official; also known as Besso, he was close to Joseph Stalin. Born in Kutaisi, Lominadze participated in revolutionary activities in 1910–1913 and joined the Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) in April 1917. In August, he led the Kutaisi Committee of the Bolshevik Party and was arrested for his anti-Menshevik activities in Georgia in 1918. He served as the chairman of the Tbilisi Committee in 1918–1919 and became a member of the Baku Committee and a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party in 1919–1920. In 1920, he moved to Russia, where he served in various party posts, including as party organizer in the Vyborg district of St. Petersburg, and participated in the suppression of the Kronstadt Uprising. After the Bolshevik takeover of Georgia, Lominadze became the secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party and effectively governed the country between 1922 and 1924. From 1925–1929, he worked at the Comintern and was involved in Soviet relations with the Chinese Communist Party. A candidate member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1925–1930, Lominadze became a full member in 1930 but showed Leftist inclinations and was expelled in December of the same year. Disgraced, he was sent to work as a party organizer in the Magnitogorsk Plant from 1933–1935 but committed suicide after hearing of the arrests of his close friends and comrades.

LORDKIPANIDZE, MARIAM (1922– ). Prominent Georgian historian, member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences. Born in Batumi, she graduated with a history degree from Tbilisi State
University (TSU) in 1943 and remained with the history department, becoming professor in 1948. From 1947–1986, she also worked at the Institute of History, and since 1972, she has directed the Department of Georgian History at TSU. During her long academic career, she has published some 100 scholarly works and has established herself as a preeminent scholar in the field of Medieval Georgia. She helped establish the Center for Rural History of Georgia at TSU in 1988 and the Historiography Center in 1996.

LORDKIPANIDZE, VAZHA (1949– ). Georgian scholar and statesman, former state minister of Georgia. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated with a degree in mathematics from Tbilisi State University (TSU) in 1973 and later studied history in Moscow. He began his career in various positions within the Communist Party of Georgia, becoming secretary in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia in 1988, deputy to the Supreme Council, and member of the Presidium from 1983–1987. In 1989, he became deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Georgian SSR. In the early 1990s, he worked as deputy minister of health and adviser on education and science to the State Council. In 1992, he became chief of staff to Eduard Shevardnadze and was elected to the Parliament of Georgia in 1993 and served as one of the leaders of the Citizens’ Union of Georgia. In 1995, Lordkipanidze was appointed Georgian ambassador to Russia and later served as the state minister of Georgia from 1998–2000.

LUARSAB I. King of Kartli in 1527–1556. The son of King David X, Luarsab’s reign coincided with the rise of the Safavid dynasty in Persia, whose rulers continuously raided Georgia. Shah Tahmasp alone led four major invasions in 1541, 1547, 1551, and 1554. Luarsab lost his capital city of Tbilisi in 1541 but succeeded in retaining his throne. In 1545, he supported his neighbor King Bagrat III of Imereti against the Ottomans but suffered a major defeat at the battle of Sokhoistas. Seeking foreign help, Luarsab appealed in vain to Pope Paul III and European monarchs. Despite setbacks, Luarsab resolutely pursued his policy of preserving control over the Georgian lands. In the late 1540s, he waged a guerrilla war against the Persians and succeeded in extending his domain to Samtskhe and Kola-Artaani, although he eventually lost
these regions to Shah Tahmasp between 1551–1554 and was forced to flee to Imereti. Following the Persian–Ottoman Treaty of Amasia of 1555, Luarsab returned to Kartli and continued his resistance. In 1556, during the battle of Garisi, the aged king was mortally wounded but lived long enough to see victory in the battle. He was succeeded by his son Simon I.

LUARSAB II. King of Kartli in 1606–1615. He ascended the throne of Kartli after the death of King Giorgi X and received his investiture from Shah Abbas I of Persia. In 1609, he followed the advice of Giorgi Saakadze, the Great Mouravi, and routed the Ottoman expeditionary force at Tashiskari. The following year, he visited the Safavid court and received Tbilisi from Shah Abbas I. In 1611, Luarsab married the sister of Giorgi Saakadze, which caused turmoil at the court as the great lords were opposed to the rise of the Saakadze family, which belonged to the petty gentry. A conspiracy was organized against Giorgi Saakadze, who fled to Persia, and Luarsab who was forced to divorce his wife. From then on, the king remained under the influence of the great nobles, especially Shadiman Baratashvili. Relations between Kartli and Persia soon worsened, and in early 1614, Shah Abbas led an invasion of eastern Georgia. Luarsab refused to submit and continued fighting from Imereti. Later that year, he was captured during the negotiations and taken to Persia, where he refused to convert to Islam and remained in prison until his death in 1622.

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MACHAVARIANI, ALEXEY (1913– ). Georgian composer and conductor. Born in Gori, he graduated from Tbilisi Conservatory in 1936 and remained there for postgraduate study and later joined the faculty, becoming a full professor in 1963. He began his artistic career in 1935 and produced a number of critically acclaimed plays and ballets, including the ballet Othello (1957), the operas Mat i sin (1945), Den moei Rodini (1954), the symphony Piat monologov (1971, earned the Shota Rustaveli Prize in 1971), and music to many theatrical productions, including Baratashvili and
Legenda o liubvi. He was the artistic director of the Georgian State Symphony Orchestra in 1956–1958 and directed the Composers’ Union of Georgia in 1962–1968.


MAGHLAKELIDZE, SHALVA (1893–1970). Georgian military figure, commander of the Wehrmacht’s Georgian Legion. Born to a prominent family, Maghlakelidze studied law in Germany, where he received his doctorate from the University of Berlin. Returning to Georgia, he participated in the Georgian declaration of independence and served as the governor general of Tbilisi in 1919–1920. After the Soviet invasion in February 1921, Maghlakelidze escaped to Europe where he helped to establish several societies that sought to liberate Georgia, including the Caucasian Society, Tetri Giorgi, Union of Georgian Traditionalists, and the Latvian Society of Georgians. In the 1930s, Maghlakelidze played an important role in the Georgian émigré community throughout Europe, and during World War II, he collaborated with the Nazis in order to free Georgia. In 1941, he organized the Georgian Legion consisting of Georgian prisoners of war and participated in several campaigns of the Wehrmacht. By 1944, Maghlakelidze had risen to the rank of a major general. After the war, he remained in West Germany, where he worked as a military advisor to Konrad Adenauer until the mid-1950s and directed the Georgian émigré societies. In 1954, Maghlakelidze was captured and imprisoned in the USSR. He was later released and died in Georgia in 1970.
MAISURADZE, BADRI (1966– ). One of the finest modern tenors, Maisuradze was born in Tbilisi, where he graduated from the conservatory and continued his studies in Moscow and Milan. He made his debut in Tbilisi in 1980 and later won international competitions, including the Viñas in Spain and the Bjoerling in Sweden. His professional career began in 1993 when he performed with the major European theaters, including the Deutsche Opera in Berlin, the Real Opera in Madrid, the San Carlo in Naples, and others. In 1999, he performed in Tchaikovsky’s opera Mazepa at the La Scala Opera in Milan, and in 2000, he sang at the Staatsoper in Vienna.

MAKHARADZE, PHILIPE (1868–1941). Bolshevik revolutionary and official. Born in the village of Shemokmedi, he studied at the Theological Seminary in Tbilisi and later graduated from Warsaw Veterinary Institute. He joined the Bolshevik Party in 1891 and participated in activities in Georgia and Azerbaijan. In 1903, he joined the Caucasian Joint Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) and played an active role in the 1905 Revolution in the Caucasus. He was allegedly involved in the assassination of the prominent Georgian public figure Ilia Chavchavadze in 1907. From 1907–1915, he led various Bolshevik groups in Transcaucasia, and after the February Revolution, he co-founded the Tbilisi Soviet of Workers’ Deputies. In April 1917, he was elected a delegate to the 7th RSDRP(B) Conference and served in the Bolshevik Caucasian Region Committee. In 1919–1920, he led Bolshevik groups resisting the Menshevik government of independent Georgia. After the Soviet takeover of Georgia, he became chairman of the Georgian Revolutionary Committee in February 1921 and then directed the Georgian Central Executive Committee. In 1922, Makharadze was involved in the Georgian Affair and opposed Sergo Ordzhonikidze’s designs with respect to Georgia.

Over the next decade, Makhardze headed the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic’s Gosplan (State Planning Agency), the Georgian Council of People’s Commissars, and the Transcaucasian SFSR Central Executive Committee. In 1938, he became the chairman of the Presidium of the Georgian Supreme Soviet and later rose to the position of deputy presidium chairman of the USSR.
Supreme Soviet. He attended the 12–18th Congresses of the Communist Party and directed the Institute of Marxism–Leninism. During his political career, Makharadze also authored a number works, including monographs on Alexander Pushkin and Maxim Gorkii, and books entitled Outline History of Revolutionary Movement in Transcaucasia (1927), Soviets and the Struggle for Soviet Power in Georgia (1928), Georgia in the 19th Century (1932), and Outline History of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Movement in Georgia (1932).

MAMARDASHVILI, MERAB (1930–1990). Georgian philosopher, professor. Born in Gori, he studied philosophy at Moscow State University in the 1950s, defended his doctorate in 1968, and worked in the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. He lectured on philosophy at the University of Moscow in the 1970s and later returned to Georgia, where he worked at the Institute of Philosophy of the Georgian Academy of Sciences and lectured at Tbilisi State University. He soon emerged as one of the leading philosophers of his generation. The main theme of his research was the relationship between language and consciousness.


MAMASAKHLISI. Elder elected by a local community, usually a village, or the head of a city appointed by the king, usually from among the merchants. Mamasakhlisi was also the title of ruler of the Mtskheta in the fourth century BCE.
Mamluks. Warrior caste that ruled Egypt between 1250 and 1811. Mamluks were non-Muslim slave boys, who had been kidnapped at an early age, sold at the slave markets, converted to Islam, and trained as cavalry soldiers. The Mamluks rose to power after overthrowing the Ayyubid dynasty in 1250, and over the next five centuries, two major dynasties ruled Egypt: the Bahriyya (“Bahri”) Mamluks (1250–1382), mostly of Turkish origin, and the Burji (“Burgites”) Mamluks (1382–1517, in fact, until 1811), mostly Circassians and Georgians. The first encounter between the Kingdom of Georgia and the Mamluks came between 1258–1260 when a Georgian contingent served in Hulagu Khan’s campaign in Persia and Palestine.

In the 14th century, King Giorgi Brtskinvale of Georgia enjoyed close relations with the Mamluk sultans. Between 1316–1320, he sent embassies to the Mamluk rulers of Egypt, who allowed the Georgians to take control of major Christian sacred sites in the Holy Land, including the Church of the Holy Cross, Calvary, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the keys to the Edicule of the Tomb of the Lord. With Mamluk support, the Georgians established a substantial presence in Jerusalem until the late 15th century. Although nominal vassals of the Ottoman Empire after 1517, the Mamluks took advantage of the Ottoman decline in the mid-18th century. After 1769, they attained a great degree of autonomy under the leadership of Georgia-born Ali Bey. Actual power rested with the Divan, a council of seven Mamluk Beys, which had the power to veto decisions of the Turkish pasha. Executive (and real) power was in the hands of two Mamluk Beys, the Amir al-Bilad (Commander of the Land), who was responsible for civil order and police powers, and the Amir al-Hajj (Commander of the Pilgrimage to Mecca) who acted as a political and military counterweight to the Amir al-Bilad. At the time of the French invasion, the Amir al-Bilad was Murad Bey (Shinjikashvili) and the Amir al-Hajj was Ibrahim Bey, both from Georgia.

The history of Georgian Mamluks took a different turn in 1798, when French General Napoleon Bonaparte and his forces landed in Egypt. Within one month, the superior Western weaponry and tactics defeated the Mamluk forces in several engagements, the most famous being the Battle of the Pyramids. The Mamluks continued their resistance against the French for the next three years, but their forces
were depleted. After the departure of French troops in 1801, the Mamluks resisted the Ottoman efforts to restore their authority. Although the Mamluks survived for another 10 years, their power was broken. In 1803, the Georgian Mamluk leaders Ibrahim Bey and Osman Bey wrote to the Russian general-consul in Istanbul asking him to act as a mediator with the Ottoman sultan since they wanted to conclude a ceasefire and return to their homeland, Georgia. The Russian embassy refused to mediate because the Russian government was concerned about allowing the Mamluks to return to Georgia, where they would have reinforced an already strong anti-Russian movement. The last vestiges of Mamluk power were destroyed in March 1811, when Muhammad Ali, governor of Egypt, ambushed and slaughtered most of the Mamluks in Cairo and the rest of the country. One little group of Mamluks, led by Ibrahim Bey, escaped to the Sudan and settled in Dongola, where many of them died within two or three years. In 1820, Muhammad Ali allowed the survivors to return to Egypt.

Besides Egypt, Georgian Mamluks were also present in the Husaynid dynasty of Tunisia in the 18th–19th centuries. Introduced through trade, the Georgian Mamluks rose to prominent positions following the marriage of Tunisia’s Bey Ali B. Husayn (1759–1782) to the Georgian slave girl, Mahbuba. Their two sons, the Tunisian rulers Hammuda Bey (1782–1814) and ‘Uthman Bey (1814), were surrounded by Georgian Mamluks from their childhood. The subsequent ruling Beys often gave their daughters and sisters in marriage to their favorite Georgian Mamluks to strengthen their positions. Thus, throughout the late 18th and 19th centuries, of the 34 prominent Mamluks, 16 were Georgians. The most distinguished of them held the posts of sahib al-tabī‘ or keeper of the ruler’s seals and general intermediary between the ruler and the functionaries, viziers or heads of the government offices, and kahia al-mahalla, ruler’s deputies and senior officials.

MARABDA, BATTLE OF (1625). Decisive battle between the Persian and Georgian armies on 1 July 1625. In response to Persian encroachments on eastern Georgia, the Great Mouravi, Giorgi Saakadze, raised a rebellion in Kartli in the spring of 1625 and annihilated a Persian army in the battle of Martkopi on 25 March. He
went on to capture Tbilisi and campaign in Kakheti, Ganja-Karabagh, and Akhaltsikhe. King Teimuraz of Kakheti was invited to take the crown of Kartli and thereby unite both principalities. In response, Shah Abbas I dispatched a large Persian army to destroy the insurgents. The Persians entered Kartli in late June 1625 and bivouacked on the Marabda Field while the Georgian army took up positions in the Kodjori-Tabakhmela Valley. At the council of war, Giorgi Saakadze urged King Teimuraz and other lords to remain in position and wage a guerrilla war since descending into the valley would allow the Persians to take advantage of their numerical superiority as well as firepower. However, powerful lords, especially the Baratashvils, were concerned about the Persians ravaging their estates and threatened to defect unless the battle was given at once. Thus, Saakadze was overruled and King Teimuraz ordered the attack on 1 July 1625.

The Persians, armed with the latest weaponry, were well prepared for the assault, having dug trenches and deployed their troops in four lines, with the first kneeling, the second standing, the third on horseback, and the fourth on camels. Georgians, lacking firearms, suffered heavy casualties, but the impetus of their attack pierced the Persian lines and spread confusion among the enemy. As the Persians began to flee, a small group of Georgian troops pursued them while others began to plunder the Persian camp. At this moment, the Persian reinforcements arrived charging the befuddled Georgians; in the resultant confusion, Lord Teimuraz Mukhranbatoni was killed but the rumor spread that King Teimuraz had been killed, further demoralizing the Georgian host. The Georgians were defeated, losing about 10,000 killed and wounded; among the dead were the nine brothers Kherkheulidze who defended the royal banner to the last. The Persians suffered heavy losses as well, losing some 14,000 men. Following the battle, Saakadze again led the Georgian resistance and turned to guerrilla war, eliminating some 12,000 Persians in the Ksani Valley alone. His successful guerrilla warfare frustrated Shah Abbas’ plans to destroy the eastern Georgian states and set up Qizilbash khanates on Georgian territory.

MARJANISHVILI, KONSTANTINE (1872–1933). Composer and stage director. Born in Kvareli, he began his career as a theater actor
in Kutaisi and Tbilisi from 1893–1896 before traveling with Russian theaters throughout the Russian Empire in the late 1890s. In 1904–1905, he worked as stage director for the Nezlobin Theater in Riga but was also involved in revolutionary activities and befriended the famous Russian writer Maxim Gorkii. He organized and led Kharkov the Actors Association to protect actor’s rights in 1906. In 1907–1908, he acted with Duvan-Tortsov’s troupe in Kiev and, in 1908–1909, with Bagrov’s company in Odessa. However, he was soon expelled from the theater because of the on-stage performance of the *Marseillaise*. In 1909, he returned to Nezlobin Theater and later founded the Georgian Drama Studio. From 1910–1913, he performed at the Moscow Arts Theater but then founded the Free Theater in Moscow in 1913. After the closure of the Free Theater, he moved to Rostov-on-Don, where he directed the local theater in 1914–1915.

Marjanishvili was invited to Petrograd where he took charge of the Bouffe Theater in 1916–1917. After the Bolshevik Revolution, he became one of the founders of the Soviet theater and later directed the Free Comedy Theater and Comic Opera Theater. In 1919, he served as a commissar of theaters in Kiev. In 1922, he returned to Georgia, where he directed the Rustaveli Theater. In 1928, he established the Drama Theater in Kutaisi, which later moved to Tbilisi and now carries his name. In his later years, Marjanishvili worked at Korsh Theater (1931–1932), Malyi Theater and Operetta Theater in Moscow (1933). He was awarded the title of People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR in 1931. He was famous for his lavish and massive theater shows, and among his stage productions are *The End of the “Nadezhda”* (1909), Dostoevsky’s *Brothers Karamazov* (1910), Ibsen’s *Per Gynt* (1912), Offenbach’s *Die Schöne Helena* (1913), Mozart’s *Entführung aus dem Serail* (1923), Erlistavi’s *Partition* (1823), Arakishvili’s *The Tale of Shota Rustaveli* (1923), Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (1925), Kutateli’s *Midnight Past* (1929), and Rossini’s *William Tell* (1931).

**MARR, NIKOLAY (NIKO) (1864–1934).** Philologist, orientologist, and ethnographer. Born to a Scottish father and a Georgian mother in Kutaisi, Marr graduated from the Faculty of Oriental Languages of St. Petersburg University, where he began teaching as a professor. He
became a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1909 and later presided over the Academy of the History of Material Culture from 1919–1934. He was one of the leading scholars of the history, archeology, and ethnography of the Caucasian peoples and conducted significant excavations in Georgia and Armenia, bringing to light numerous monuments of old Armenian and Georgian literature. Studying the Georgian language, he formed the Japhetic theory in linguistics. The theory claimed that Japhetic languages, Georgian among them, had existed across Europe before the advent of the Indo-European languages and could be recognized as a foundation over which the Indo-European languages had imposed themselves.

Using this model, Marr attempted to apply the Marxist theory of class struggle to linguistics, arguing that these different strata of language corresponded to different social classes. This was an attempt to extend the Marxist theory of international class-consciousness beyond its original meaning. In 1924, he went even further and proclaimed that all the languages of the world descend from a single proto-language that had consisted of four enigmatic elements sal, ber, yon, rosh. Enjoying support from the Soviet authorities, Marr ran the National Library from 1926 until 1930 and the Japhetic Institute of the Academy of Sciences from 1921 until his death. He was elected vice president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1930. However, in 1950, Joseph Stalin personally criticized Marr’s theory in his work *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*, which denounced Marr as anti-Marr and anti-scientific. Although Marr’s reputation recovered in the 1960s, his Japhetic theory was not revived.

**MARTKOPI, BATTLE OF (1625).** Major battle between the Georgian troops led by Giorgi Saakadze and Eristavi Zurab of Aragvi and the Persian forces led by Qarcheghai Khan. In 1624, Shah Abbas I, victorious on all fronts, turned his attention to Georgia. He dispatched some 35,000 men under Qarcheghai Khan and Giorgi Saakadze to subdue eastern Georgia; not trusting Saakadze completely, Shah Abbas kept his son Paata as a hostage. The Shah’s anxiety was justified since Saakadze maintained covert communications with Georgian forces and devised a plan to destroy the enemy army. It was agreed that Saakadze would exterminate the Persian leadership and coordinate an attack of the main Georgian forces.
As the Persian army camped near Martkopi on 25 March 1625, Saakadze summoned the Persian war council where he personally slew Qarcheghai Khan, while his son, Avtandil, and his Georgian escorts killed other Persian commanders. Receiving a signal, Eristavi Zurab charged with his main forces, and the leaderless Persian troops were virtually annihilated. Taking advantage of his success, Saakadze and Eristavi Zurab then raised a rebellion in Kartli, captured Tbilisi, and expanded their campaign to Kakheti and Ganja-Karabagh. Saakadze invited King Teimuraz of Kakheti to take the crown of Kartli and, thereby, united both principalities.

MARWAN IBN-MUHAMMAD (688–750). Arab commander and future Umayyad caliph (744–750), who ravaged Georgia between 735 and 737. In the early eighth century, the Iberians and Armenians organized several unsuccessful revolts against the Arabs. In 735, Marwan ibn-Muhammad led a punitive expedition into Kartli and sacked Tbilisi before crossing the Likhi (Surami) Gorge into western Georgia. Princes David and Constantine of Arqeti strongly resisted the invaders but were defeated and martyred after refusing to convert to Islam. In 736, Marwan captured the key fortresses of Shorapani, Tsikhegoji, and Sukhum in western Georgia but was finally fought to a draw by Eristavi Leon of Abkhazia and Erismtavar Archil of Kartli at Anakopia in Abkhazia. Popular tradition claims that on its way out of Georgia, Marwan’s army suffered from nature’s wrath when a flash flood claimed thousands of enemy troops, mostly Abyssinians (Ethiopians), and their horses on the banks of two rivers that are still known as Abashistskali (River of Ethiopians) and Tskhenitskali (River of Horses). Marwan’s three-year campaign in Georgia and Armenia left such devastation and desolation in its wake that he became known as Murwan Qru (Murwan the Deaf, i.e., deaf to pleas), and his name still survives in popular tradition as a symbol of complete destruction. See also ARABS IN GEORGIA.

MAXIM, SAINT (SEVENTH CENTURY). Famous Orthodox Christian theologian and saint, Maxim was born in Constantinople of noble parents and received an excellent education that paved the way for his career. He eventually rose to become advisor to Emperor Heraclius (610–641) but, a devout Orthodox, he opposed the spread of
the Monophysite creed, which the emperor himself embraced. Maxim left the court and entered the Chrysopolis monastery, where he accepted a monastic tonsure. One of the leading theologians of his time, Maxim vigorously opposed the Monophysites and was persecuted and exiled. According to Christian tradition, he was eventually tortured, and his right hand and tongue were cut off. He spent his remaining years in Georgia, where he died in August 662. Known as Maxim the Confessor, he wrote a number of influential theological works in defense of Orthodoxy, instructions on Christian love, on virtues and passions, and a discourse on prayer. See also GEORGIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH.

MAZNIASHVILI (MAZNIEV), GIORGI (1870– ). Georgian general, commander of the Georgian army during the Menshevik republic in 1918–1920. Born in the village of Sasireti in Kartli, Mazniashvili enlisted in the Russian army and distinguished himself during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905. Returning to Georgia after the February Revolution in 1917, he helped organize the Georgian national army and commanded troops on the approaches to Tbilisi against the retreating Russian troops, whom the Bolshevists tried to use to seize power. In April 1918, when the Turks launched an offensive into Guria and captured Batumi, Mazniashvili rallied the Georgian forces and counterattacked, routing the Turks and liberating the Georgian provinces. In June 1918, he became the governor and army commander in Abkhazia and fought against the White forces of General Moiseev and later suppressed a local separatist uprising. In October 1918, he became governor general of the Tbilisi district and, in December, he was given command of the Georgian army during the war against Armenia. Mazniashvili drove back the Armenian forces and later served as governor general of Akhaltsikhe.

In 1920, Mazniashvili became commandant of Tbilisi, and in February 1921, he commanded the Georgian army in Soghanlugh. During the Bolshevik invasion of Georgia, the Turks invaded western Georgia and seized parts of Guria and the strategic town of Batumi. Mazniashvili again led the Georgian troops, and within two weeks, he decisively defeated the Turks, liberating the southwestern Georgian provinces. Despite his heroic service, Mazniashvili was denounced by the Georgian Bolshevists and was arrested in 1923. Two
years later, he was expelled from Georgia to Iran and, after much struggle, he finally settled in France. In the 1930s, unwilling to live in exile, Mazniashvili petitioned the Soviet government for his return to Georgia. He could not have returned at a worse time, and in 1937, he and his son were arrested and executed by the Soviet security forces. The location of his grave remains unknown.

MDIVANI, POLIKARP (BUDU) (1877–1937). Bolshevik revolutionary and government official. Joining the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers in 1903, Mdivani established himself as an active revolutionary, operating in Tbilisi, Baku, Batumi, and other towns. In 1918, he became a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the 11th Army, which three years later invaded Georgia. He also acted as the chief of the Political Department of the 10th Army. In 1920–1921, Mdivani served in the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party. Although he participated in the Soviet occupation of Georgia in 1921, Mdivani later played an important role in the Georgian Affair of 1922; he firmly believed that Georgia should retain its national autonomy and join the Soviet Union directly, not through the Transcaucasian Federation, as Joseph Stalin, Sergo Ordzhonikidze, and other Georgian Bolsheviks demanded. As a result, Mdivani was perceived as a nationalist and was ostracized, especially for his support of the Leftist opposition. In 1924, Mdivani became the Soviet trade representative to France, but four years later he was expelled from the Communist Party for his support of the Troitskyite opposition. Reinstated three years later, he worked in various government positions, including as chairman of the Supreme Sovnarkhoz, people’s commissar of light industry, and first deputy chairman of the Georgian Council of People’s Commissars between 1931–1936. With the start of Stalin’s purges, Mdivani was expelled from the party again in 1936; he was later arrested and was executed on 19 July 1937.

MEDEA. Legendary daughter of Aietes, King of Colchis. In Greek mythology, Medea is described as the granddaughter of Helios, god of the sun, and daughter of Aietes and his wife Eidyia. She was known to possess magical powers, and was often described as a
sorceress. In the myths of the Argonauts and the Golden Fleece, she fell in love with Jason, the leader of the Argonauts, and helped him and his companions pass King Aiete’s trials and obtain the Golden Fleece. She fled with Jason to Greece and protected the Argonauts from the pursuing Colchians by killing her brother Apsirtes and scattering his remains. Medea and Jason settled in Corinth, where she bore two sons to Jason but was ultimately betrayed and abandoned by him. Famous Greek writer Euripides was instrumental in popularizing the tradition of Medea killing her sons, but in earlier traditions Medea sought to make her children immortal. Later myths describe her residing in Athens, where she helped King Aegeus and his son Theseus. Medea is featured in many Greek writings, notably Hesiod’s *Theogony*, Apollonius of Rhodes’ *Argonautica*, Pindar’s *Pithyans*, Euripides’ *Medea*, Eumelus’ *Corianthiaca*, Callimachus’ *Hecale*, and works by Pherecydes and Sophocles.

MEGHVINETUKHUTSESI, OTAR (1932– ). One of the finest actors in Georgian theater and cinema. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from the Tbilisi State Theater Institute in 1954 and subsequently acted at the Konstantine (Kote) Marjanishvili Theater (1954–1967) and Rustaveli Theater (1967–1975). He returned to the Marjanishvili Theater in 1975, and after a two-decade career there, he became the chief artistic director in 1995. During his four decades of acting, Meghvinetukhutesi created memorable roles in such classics as *Didostatis marjvena*, *Vedreba*, *Natvis khe*, *Tsofne Dadiani*, *Dzma*, *Erti tsis qvesh*, *Ganved chemgan*, and others. Arguably his best performance was the leading role in *Data Tutashkhia*, where he created the fascinating character of the brigand Data. Over the years, he earned numerous prizes including the title of People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR and the Shota Rustaveli Prize.

MELIKISHVILI, GIORGI (1918– ). Georgian scholar, historian. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated with a history degree from Tbilisi State University (TSU) in 1939 and began working at the Faculty of History of TSU. He eventually directed the Department of Ancient History and the Institute of History, Archeology, and Ethnography. Among his publications are *Sakartvelos istoris narkvevebi*, *Sakartvelos, kavkasiisa da makhlobeli agmosavletis udzvelesi*
mosakhlebis sakitxistvis, Feodaluri sakartvelos politikuri garta-nieba, Nairi-Urartu, etc. He was awarded the Ivane Javakhishvili and Lenin Prizes and was elected a member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences.

MELIKISHVILI, PETER (PETRE) (1850–1927). Prominent Georgian scholar, the first rector of Tbilisi State University. He was born to a prominent family from Akhaltsikhe and was raised in Tbilisi. In 1860, he was enrolled in Tbilisi Gymnasium, and in 1869, he continued his studies in physics at the University of Odessa. Graduating in 1872, he traveled in Europe for three years before returning to Odessa, where he began working in the field of chemistry and physics. In 1885, he became professor at the Department of Theoretical Chemistry. Over the next two decades, he produced some 80 scholarly works and earned the prestigious Lomonosov Prize in 1899.

In 1918, Melikishvili became one of the founders of Tbilisi State University, and on Ivane Javakhishvili’s nomination, he was elected its first rector on 13 January. However, the following year, he resigned following a confrontation with a fellow professor on 11 October 1919. Melikishvili remained at the university and served as the head of the Department of Theoretical Chemistry until 1927. In 1921, he was also elected as the dean of the Department of Agriculture.

MELKISEDEK III (1876–1960). Catholicos-patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church. Born Mikhail Pkhaladze in Kakheti, he graduated from Tbilisi Theological Seminary and Kazan Theological Academy. From 1900–1915 he taught at various theological establishments before being consecrated as a priest. In 1925, he took monastic orders with the name Melkisedek and was appointed archimandrite and bishop of Alaverdi. In 1927, he became bishop of Tskhum-Bedia (in western Georgia) and was elevated to metropolitan in 1935. In 1943, he became metropolitan of Urbsisi. Nine years later, the Synod of Georgian Orthodox Church elected him catholicos-patriarch of All Georgia and Archbishop of Mtshketa and Tbilisi.

MENAGHARASHVILI, IRAKLI (1951– ). Georgian statesman and foreign minister. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from Tbilisi State

MEORE DASI. Liberal group that splintered from the Pirveli Dasi movement in the second half of the 19th century. The group was formed by Giorgi Tsereteli and Petre Imukashvili as akhali akhgalgazrdoba (new youth) and published the newspaper Droeba. Meore Dasi was influenced by the ideas of their predecessors in the Pirveli Dasi movement, but they also drew their inspiration from the ideas of European socialist thinkers, including Henri de Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, and Louis Blanc. See also MESAME DASI.

MERABISHVILI, MERAB (1931–). Eminent Georgian artist, sculptor, and academician. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from the Tbilisi State Academy of Arts with a specialization in sculpture in 1955 and later began teaching at the Academy in 1861, rising through the ranks to professor in 1992. He became a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Arts in 1978 and an academician in 1989 and served in the Georgian Academy of Sciences from 1996. Over the last five decades, Merabishvili has produced numerous sculptures and monuments and has established himself as one of the leading artists of his generation. Among his major creations are the monuments of Alexander Griboedov in Tbilisi (1961), King Erekle II in Telavi (1972), and Peter Bagrationi in Tbilisi (1984) and Moscow (1999).

MESAME DASI. Social democratic group established in Georgia in 1892–1893. Initially inspired by Western European ideas, the Georgian Social Democrats sought social changes through reforms and gradually became detached from their Russian counterparts, especially the social democratic groups of Vladimir Lenin. Among the
leading members of the Mesame Dasi were Noe Zhordania, Vladimir Darchiashvili, Irakli Tsereteli, Isidore Ramishvili, Karlo Chkheidze, Silibistro Jibladze, and others.

Although influenced by the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP), the Mesame Dasi also sought to retain its self-government and national independence for Georgia, which led to the establishment of a splinter group, known as Dasi, which included Joseph Stalin, Vladimir Ketskhoveli, Mikhail Tskhakaya, among others, who called for revolutionary changes and union with the RSDRP. In 1893, the Mesame Dasi organized its conference in Tbilisi and approved a set of goals, which included economic welfare of the people, enhancement of the middle class, and civil liberties. The Social Democrats, however, clashed with the more traditional, conservative nationalist movement led by Ilia Chavchavadze. The growing revolutionary movement led to the amalgamation of social-democratic organizations and a Congress of Caucasian Social-Democratic Organizations was held in March 1903 and established the Caucasian Joint Committee of the RSDRP. After the second congress, the members of the Mesame Dasi took a Menshevik stand and opposed the more revolutionary-minded Bolsheviks. Noe Zhordania became the leader of the Georgian Menshevik faction, while the Georgian Bolsheviks rallied around young Joseph Stalin.

In 1905, after the State Duma was summoned in St. Petersburg, several Georgian Social Democrats, including Noe Zhordania, Isidore Ramishvili, and Joseph Baratashvili, attended its sessions. After Emperor Nicholas II disbanded the State Duma and called new elections, all eight deputies from Georgia were Social Democrats, among them Irakli Tsereteli, who became chairman of the Social Democratic faction in the Duma and established himself as one of the popular and able revolutionaries. After the 2nd Duma was disbanded in 1907, elections to the 3rd Duma also produced an overwhelmingly social democratic delegation from Georgia; among its members were Karlo Chkheidze and Evgeni Gegechkori. However, the more radical members of the Mesame Dasi were persecuted and arrested; Archil Japaridze, Severian Jugeli, and Mikenti Lomtatidze died in prison, and Irakli Tsereteli spent many years in exile in Siberia. The elections to the 4th State Duma produced three Social Democrats, Karlo Chkheidze, Akaki Chkhchenkeli, and Varlaam Gelovani.
After the setback in 1907–1909, the Georgian Social Democrats recovered and rallied around the journals *Eri* and *Klde*, which became their mouthpieces. In 1912, Varlaam Gelovani raised the issue of political autonomy of Georgia in the Russian State Duma, and the same year saw the establishment of the Union for Defense of the Rights of the Georgian Nation, led by Archil Jorjadze, Geronti Kikodze, Kita Abashidze, Petre Surguladze, and others, which sought to lobby the Georgian cause at various international venues and with foreign governments.

**MESKHETI (MESKHETIA).** General name for southwestern Georgia; it is derived from the Moschoi/Meskhi, one of the proto-Georgian tribes. Historically, Meskheti was known as the Samtskhe-Javakheti region and was adjacent to the neighboring Georgian regions of Tori, Kol (Kola), Artaan, Erusheti, Shavseti, Klarjeti, Tao, Speri, and Chaneti. It was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century and remained under its dominance until the Russo-Turkish War of 1828–1829 when the Russian forces recaptured it. Following the Soviet takeover of Georgia in 1921, Turkey received a substantial part of Meskheti. Constant migrations and deportations mark Meskheti’s recent history. Armenians resettled here *en masse* following the Ottoman persecutions in 1828–1829, 1877–1878, and 1913–1915. The Dukhobors, a Russian religious minority group, were also resettled to the region in the mid-19th century. During World War II, the Soviet authorities deported tens of thousands of Meskhetian Turks to Central Asia in 1944. During the Cold War, Meskheti was considered a high security zone because of its close proximity to Turkey.

Nowadays, Meskheti is organized into the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia. Armenians are the majority of the population. Tensions between Armenians and Georgians periodically flare up in the Javakheti region, and there are frequent disputes between government officials and Armenians. In the early 1990s, local ethnic Armenian political parties Javakhk and Virk initiated calls for greater autonomy from Tbilisi.

**MESKHETIAN TURKS.** Deported population of Meskheti. The ethnic origins of the Meskhetian Turks, sometimes known as Ahiska
Turks, is still debated, since some of them claim to be Turkified Georgians and others identify themselves as ethnic Turks. They were deported from the Meskheti region of southwestern Georgia between 15–17 November 1944 because the Soviet authorities feared the Meskhetian Turks would serve as a fifth column for the Axis powers and Turkish interests inside the USSR. Some 90,000–100,000 Meskhetian Turks were deported to Central Asia, and thousands of them died during transport in the first years of exile. In their Central Asian exile, the Meskhetian Turks lived under a so-called special regime, which restricted basic civil rights, including freedom of movement. In 1956–1957, Nikita Khrushchev rehabilitated many deported peoples, but the Meskhetian Turks, together with the Crimean Tatars, were not among them.

Although they received full citizen rights in 1968, the Meskhetian Turks were not allowed to return and in the 1970s sought in vain the right to return to their ancestral lands. In the late 1980s, tensions between the Meskhetian Turks and the Uzbek and Kirgiz population of Central Asia flared up periodically. Despite the hardships associated with their internal exile, many Meskhetian Turks in Uzbekistan had attained a relative measure of prosperity, proving themselves industrious agricultural producers. Overcrowded conditions in the Fergana Valley in Uzbekistan, combined with widespread poverty among the Uzbeks, fueled interethnic hostility. In May 1989, the tension was such that a supposed misunderstanding between an Uzbek and a Meskhetian Turk in a Fergana market led to a fight that sparked countrywide rioting and left about 100 people dead.

More than 70,000 Meskhetian Turks were expelled from Uzbekistan. Georgia, in the midst of bloody ethno-political conflicts, was unwilling and unable to accept so many refugees. Many of the refugees escaped to Azerbaijan and Russia, while others scattered throughout central Asia. Those who stayed in Uzbekistan have felt it prudent to assimilate in order to insulate themselves against potential future harassment. Azerbaijan is home to more than 100,000 Meskhetian Turks. The first Meskhetian Turks began arriving there in the late 1950s amid the de-Stalinization campaign initiated by Nikita Khrushchev. Although allowed to move within the USSR, they were restricted from resettling to Georgia. An estimated 20,000 to 25,000 Meskhetian Turks settled in Azerbaijan between 1958 and 1962 and
in 1989 another 50,000 fled to Azerbaijan to escape the violence in the Fergana Valley. Another major community of Meskhetian Turks is in Russia, where, for the past decade, the refugees have lived in squalid conditions in southern Russian regions. They are deprived of citizenship or any other durable legal status and are often harassed and persecuted by local authorities, especially the Cossacks. In 2004, some 15,000 Meskhetian Turks from the Krasnodarskii region of Russia were accepted for resettlement by the United States State Department. As of November 2005, more than 20,000 individuals had applied to the program, and 5,000 had settled in various cities in the United States.

Some Meskhetians managed to return to Georgia informally in 1969, and though their actions were illegal, small numbers of Meskhetians continued to quietly return over the last two decades of the Soviet Union’s existence. Following the Soviet collapse, however, the Georgian nationalist forces halted the resettlement process and began an anti-Meskhetian hysteria, which led to the expulsion of some Meskhetian Turks who had already returned. Under President Eduard Shevardnadze, new initiatives were undertaken to promote the return but only of those Meskhetians who expressed a willingness to adopt a Georgian cultural identity. Several hundred Meskhetian Turks accepted this condition and have resettled in Georgia since 1992, mostly in Tbilisi and in agricultural areas around the country.

The Meskhetian Turks are currently organized into two main groups—the Khsna and Vatan societies—in accordance with their own categorization as Muslim Georgians or as Meskhetian Turks, respectively. The Georgian perception of the Meskhetian Turks is ambivalent, and many Georgians perceive them as “Turks” and are reluctant to have them returned to Meskheti. Furthermore, many villages that formerly belonged to the Meskhetian Turks are now populated by Armenians who oppose their return as well.

In 1999, Georgia joined the Council of Europe, and, among other obligations, agreed to complete the resettlement process by 2012. Currently, plans involve the return of limited groups of several thousand Meskhetian and their settlement in various regions of Georgia, instead of compact settlement in Meskheti. However, official Tbilisi is apprehensive of resettling Muslim Meskhetian Turks in southwestern Georgia because of the geopolitical consid-
erations. This could create another potential ethnic conflict in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region with its predominantly Armenian population. Oil also plays an important role in these considerations. To operate its strategic oil and gas pipelines, Georgia needs social and political stability in areas along the pipeline route, including in the Meskheti region. Georgian officials have frequently accused Russia of trying to stir up unrest in an effort to bully Georgia into acquiescing to Moscow’s wishes on the pipeline issue. The resettlement process also requires substantial financial commitment that Georgia’s precarious economy can hardly bear. With ongoing conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia and some 300,000 refugees, Georgian authorities are less willing to address the issue of resettling the Meskhetian Turks in the near future.


MIKHAIL, GRAND DUKE (1832–1909). Viceroy of the Caucasus (1862–1881) and commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in the Caucasus (1862–1865) and of the Caucasus Military District (1865–1881). Fourth son of Emperor Nicholas I, he was enlisted in the Guard upon his birth and began active service in 1846. Four years later, he became a colonel and flügel adjutant to Emperor Nicholas. In 1852, Grand Duke Mikhail became a major general and later distinguished himself during the Crimean War (1854–1856). Promoted to general of artillery in 1860, he was appointed as viceroy of the Caucasus and commander of the
Russian forces in the region. He pursued the conquest of western regions of the Caucasus and supervised the abolition of serfdom in Georgia in the late 1860s. Grand Duke Mikhail also played an important role in introducing administrative, judicial, and financial reforms in Georgia. He commanded the Russian forces on the Caucasus front during the Russo–Turkish War of 1877–1878 that led to the recovery of southwestern Georgian provinces that had remained under Ottoman control since the 16th century. In 1881, he became the head of the State Council but became ill in 1903 and died in France in 1909.

MINGRELIA. Historical region in western Georgia, also known as Samegrelo in literary Georgian and Samargalo in Mingrelian. The majority of the population is Mingrelians (megreli, margali), an ethnic Georgian sub-group who speak Mingrelian, part of the Georgian language family.

In ancient times, Samegrelo was part of the legendary Colchis and later of the kingdoms of Egrisi, Lazica and Abkhazia. Mingrelia became part of the united Kingdom of Georgia in the 11th century and was eventually ruled by a dadian, initially a title of the ruler, which subsequently became the last name of the famous Dadiani princes. Mingrelia played an important role in the politics of western Georgia, and its rulers often held titles of kings of Imereti. In 1803, Mingrelia fell under Russian jurisdiction where it remained (with the exception of Georgia’s brief sovereignty from 1918–1921) until Georgian independence was declared in 1991.

In recent history, Mingrelia became famous as a stronghold of supporters of the first Georgian president Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Following the coup that deposed him, Mingrelia became the epicenter of Georgia’s 1991–1993 civil war until Gamsakhurdia’s supporters, popularly known as Zviadists, were defeated in December 1993. Nevertheless, the region remained a center of anti-[Eduard] Shevardnadze sentiment for the next decade. In 1998, Mingrelian supporters of Gamsakhurdia attacked the headquarters of the United Nations Mission in Georgia in Zugdidi and took four UN observers hostage. In October 1998, a military rebellion took place in Senaki but was quickly suppressed. The stability in the region still remains precarious because of its proximity to Abkhazia and the continuing tensions between the Abkhazian separatist authorities and official Tbilisi.
MINGRELIAN UPRISING OF 1856. The largest peasant uprising in Georgia from 1856–1857. During the Crimean War (1854–1856), Mingrelia was one of the secondary fronts between the warring sides. In late 1855, a Turkish force landed in Abkhazia and invaded Mingrelia, where it engaged the Russian troops. The subsequent military operations devastated the local peasantry. Following the Russian defeat in the Crimean War, the peasantry found itself being heavily taxed by both the Russian officials and local nobles who were trying to recover their losses. The uprising began in the village of Tamakoni, near Martvili, in late 1856 and spread to neighboring Salkhino, where Utu Todua, nicknamed the Just (*martalia*), quickly rallied his fellow villagers, some 4,000 men in total. Simultaneously, an insurgency began in the village of Jvari, near Tsalenjikha, under Utu Mikava, a local blacksmith, who led the rebels on a successful raid on Tsalenjikha. The third epicenter of the rebellion was in the region of Sachilao-Sujuni, where Kocha Todua led the rebels.

Unlike in other uprisings, the insurgents coordinated their operations and adopted a common plan of action. Utu Mikava assumed overall command of the rebel troops and organized them in a military manner, even issuing special red banners. In total, some 20,000 peasants participated in the rebellion, which swept through the entire Mingrelia; the regional capital, Zugdidi fell in May 1857. On invitation of local nobles, the Russian authorities dispatched substantial military forces to the region, and in a bloody conflict that lasted throughout the summer and fall of 1857, they finally suppressed the rebellion. The rebel leaders were seized and exiled, including Utu Mikava, who received a nine-year exile to Arkhangelsk. The uprising played an important role in the future of Mingrelia. Catherine Dadiani, regent of the principality, was forced to abdicate, and a Russian-dominated Council of Regency was created to rule in the interests of young Nikoloz (Nicholas) Dadiani. In 1867, when he attained his majority, Prince Nicholas was compelled to cede his sovereign rights to the Russian emperor in exchange for estates in Russia and the title of Prince Dadian-Mingrelsky. The principality of Mingrelia, thus, became part of the Russian Empire.
MIRIAN (MERIBANES) (FOURTH CENTURY). King of Iberia.
Mirian is chiefly remembered for his momentous decision to convert to Christianity and proclaim it as a state religion in 327 (or 337). Mirian was related to the Persian royal family, and he was initially married to the daughter of the ruler of Iberia; after her death, he married Byzantine Princess Nana and continued to reign over Iberia. Christian tradition tells us that St. Nino preached Christianity in Iberia in the early fourth century and cured Queen Nana, Mirian’s wife, of a serious illness. Mirian remained unconvinced, however, and, according to a Christian tradition, it took a miracle to convince him. One day while he was hunting in the forest with his retainers, a solar eclipse occurred, frightening the king and his companions. As his companions dispersed in various directions, Mirian found himself alone in “darkness” and pledged to convert to Christianity if he were delivered from this ordeal. Later that year he organized a mass baptism and had three massive wooden crosses erected on the mountain near Mtskheta, where the Jvari Church was later constructed.

MISHVELADZE, REV AZ (1940–). Georgian writer and politician.
Born in Kutaisi, he graduated from Tbilisi State University (TSU) in 1963 and lectured at the university, becoming professor in 1975. In the 1980s, he edited the journal Kritika and became head of the Department of History of Modern Georgian Literature at TSU in 1988. He rose to prominence through his engaging short novels and stories that deal with everyday life as well as the Georgian past. Among his books are Mtsukhri (1983), Elda (1987), Ganacheni (1990), Samotsdarva akhali novella (1997), Ai kvekana (1999), and others. He has received numerous wards including the Akaki Tsereteli (1993), David Kldiashvili (1995), and Shota Rustaveli (1998) Prizes and the Ivane Javakhishvili Medal (1999). He served in the Parliament of Georgia throughout the late 1990s.

MKHARGRDZELELI. Important noble family in Georgia and Armenia between the 11th and 14th century; also known as Zakarids. Little is known about the early history of this family, and it is believed that they were Armenized Kurds who initially gained prominence in Armenia. The first historically traceable Mkhargrdzeli was Khosrov, who moved from Armenia to southern Georgia during the Seljuk in-
vasions in the early 11th century. Over the next hundred years, Zakarids gradually gained prominence at the Georgian court, where they became known as Mkhargrdzeli (Long-shoulder) and became vassals of the Bagratoni kings. Under King Giorgi III, Sargis Mkhargrdzeli was appointed as governor of the Armenian city of Ani in 1161. In 1177, the Mkhargrdzeli seized their chance during the rebellion of Prince Demna and the Orbeliani family and supported the monarchy against the insurgents. The uprising was suppressed, and King Giorgi III persecuted his opponents and elevated the Mkhargrdzeli. His daughter, Queen Tamar, appointed Sargis as the amirspasalar (commander in chief) of the Georgian army in 1185. Sargis later received as a hereditary possession the province of Lore (Lori).

Starting in 1190, the Mkhargrdzeli rose quickly in power. Sargis’ offspring, Zakare (Zakaria) and Ivane Mkhargrdzeli, commanded the Georgian armies for almost three decades, achieving major victories at Shamkhor in 1195 and Basian in 1203 and leading raids into northern Persia in 1210. Zakare became mandartukhutsesi, combining the duties of commander of the royal bodyguard and the keeper of the royal seal. His brother Ivane served as msakhurtukhutsesi or majordomo of the royal court. They amassed a great fortune, governing all of northern Armenia; Zakare and his descendants ruled in northwestern Armenia with Ani as their capital, while Ivane and his offspring ruled eastern Armenia, including the city of Dwin.

After the death of Zakare in 1213, his brother Ivane combined the two powerful positions of atabeg and amirspasalar. The Mkhargrdzeli family maintained its power through the mid-13th century and distinguished itself fighting against the initial Mongol invasions in 1221 and the Khwarazmean forces of Jalâl al-Dîn at Garhni and Bolnisi in 1225–1226. In the late 13th century, Zakare’s son Shahan-shah (Šahan-Šah) served as msakhurtukhutsesi while Ivane’s son Awak was amirspasalar and atabeg of the Georgian armies. The family fortunes declined by the 1300s, and little information is available on their history in later periods. In the 18th century, the Armenian branch of the Zakarids entered the ranks of the Russian nobility and became known as Argutinskii-Dolgoruky.

MKHEDRIONI. Paramilitary organization that played a significant role in the events of the civil war in 1992–1993. It was outlawed in
1995, but was later reconstituted as the Union of Patriots political party. The organization was founded and led by Jaba Ioseliani and adopted the name mkhedrioni or horsemen, a reference to the medieval men of war. The group claimed to have the goal of defending the Georgian nation and its traditions and the Orthodox Christian faith. The organization was established in 1990 when ethnic-based conflicts were brewing in Abkhazia and Ossetia and nationalistic sentiments were on the rise throughout Georgia. Heavily armed, the organization quickly increased its membership and eventually rivaled the Georgian National Guard itself. Ioseliani clashed with President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and was imprisoned in early 1991. In the fall of the same year, the Mkhedrioni supported an anti-Gamsakhurdia alliance of former Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua and former National Guard commander Tengiz Kitovani. In December 1991, its members joined Kitovani’s National Guard troops in a violent coup d’etat against Gamsakhurdia in Tbilisi.

After overthrowing Gamsakhurdia, Ioseliani, who had been released, Sigua, and Kitovani established a Military Council that assumed the leadership of the country. Relying on his powerful organization, Ioseliani wielded enormous power, and the Mkhedrioni enjoyed a privileged status. Many of its members were involved in racketeering, extortion, and other criminal activities. The Mkhedrioni was instrumental in the conflict in Abkhazia, where it followed the National Guard in August 1993. In the subsequent war in Abkhazia, many of the Mkhedrioni members were accused of committing crimes ranging from robberies to murders and atrocities. They showed particular violence against the local populations of Mingrelia, which had remained the stronghold of pro-Gamsakhurdia sentiments. In November–December 1993, the Mkhedrioni became infamous for widespread carnage in Mingrelia, and the word Mkhedrioni is still synonymous with looting and criminal enterprise in Georgia.

By early 1994, the new head of the Georgian government, Eduard Shevardnadze, began a gradual process of reducing the Mkhedrioni’s power. In February 1994, the organization was formally reorganized into the so-called Rescue Corps (mashvelta korpusi), but Ioseliani remained its leader and the group effectively functioned as his private army. Following an assassination attempt in August 1995, Shevardnadze exploited the event to eliminate his opponents; the
Rescue Corps was outlawed and Ioseliani was imprisoned. Although the Mkhedrioni had lost its power, it continued its existence underground. In 1999, it was restored as a political party and, the following year, Ioseliani was released from prison. The Mkhedrioni could not register in the elections under its old name but reconstituted itself as the Union of Patriots political party in 2002.

MOKALAKE. In feudal Georgia, influential urban dwellers. The term was initially limited to the residents of Tbilisi but was later used to describe a privileged class of merchants and craftsmen. Unlike common inhabitants (temiskatsi), the mokalake were considered royal serfs, who permanently resided in Tbilisi and paid corresponding taxes. They were prominent merchants, artisans, or craftsmen who attained great wealth and respect in society. The mokalake elite was further subdivided into ordinary and honored mokalakes, and the Georgian king occasionally elevated them to the nobility. The majority of mokalakes in Georgia were of Armenian descent. See also PATRONQMOBA; TBILISI, REVOLT OF THE GUILDS.

MOSCOW, AGREEMENT OF (1994). Russia-mediated agreement between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides concluded on 14 May 1994. It provided for a lasting ceasefire between the warring sides. A security zone was established where no armed forces or heavy military equipment from either side was to be allowed. Another restricted weapons zone was created where the sides agreed not to deploy heavy military equipment. The Georgian and Abkhaz authorities were to maintain law and order on their respective sides. The Moscow Agreement provided for the deployment of Commonwealth of Independent States’ peacekeeping forces on both sides of the Inguri River, where it was to maintain the ceasefire, promote safe conditions for the return of refugees, and supervise the withdrawal of troops and equipment. One of the provisions called for the deployment of observers of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) to monitor the implementation of the agreement.

MOSCOW, GEORGIAN COMMUNITY IN. The Georgian community, popularly known as the Georgian colony, was established in the late 17th century when a group of Georgian nobles settled in the vil-
lage of Voskresenskoe. King Archil II established the first Georgian printing press at the village of Vsekhsvyatskoe and produced several Georgian books, mostly of religious nature. By the late 1720s, the colony grew to some 3,000 people after the turmoil in eastern Georgia forced King Vakhtang VI and his entire court to seek asylum in Russia; Vakhtang VI was granted new lands—Gruzinskie sloboda—and allowed to expand the colony. Georgians received certain privileges and the right of self-government within the colony limits. By the mid-18th century, they had established a thriving Georgian cultural center where scholars, writers, and poets produced important treatises and literary works; among them were Vakhushti Bagrationi, David Guramishvili, Mamuka Baratashvili, Bakar Bagrationi, and others. The Georgian community was important in maintaining political and cultural ties between the Georgian states and Russia. It grew significantly after the Russian annexation of Georgia in the early 1800s.

MOSCOW, TREATY OF (1920). An agreement signed between Soviet Russia and the Menshevik Georgia in Moscow on 7 May 1920. The treaty was signed by Grigol Uratadze for Georgia and Lev Karakhan for Russia. The Bolshevik government granted Georgia de jure recognition of independence and pledged to refrain from any kind of interference in the affairs of Georgia. In return, official Tbilisi agreed not to host troops of powers hostile to the Bolshevik Russia and allow a local branch of the Russian Bolshevik party to function freely in Georgia. The later provision drew much criticism in Georgia, especially from the National Democratic Party, due to fears that it would facilitate the spread of the Bolshevism in Georgia.

The treaty was an important achievement for the young Menshevik republic because it facilitated obtaining de jure recognitions from other countries. However, for the Bolshevik Russia, it presented a temporary concession since secret plans were already underway for forceful Sovietization of Georgia. Under the treaty, official Tbilisi released imprisoned Bolsheviks and allowed the establishment of the Communist Part of Georgia, which was coordinated by the Caucasian Bureau of the Communist Party of Russia. The increasing Bolshevik agitation soon compelled the Menshevik government to crack down on the Communist part, a move which was fiercely protested by the
Bolshevik Russia. Georgia, in return, accused Moscow of fomenting secessionist and Bolshevik sentiments among ethnic minorities, notably the Abkhazs and Ossetians. The treaty of Moscow remained in effect for nine months before it was violated by the invasion of the Red Army in February 1921 (see Bolshevik Invasion of 1921).

**MOSCOW, TREATY OF (1921).** Agreement signed between Turkey and Soviet Russia on 16 March 1921 that determined Turkey’s northeastern frontier and established friendly relations between the two nations. After the October Revolution of 1917, Soviet Russia withdrew from World War I and ceased hostilities against the Ottoman Empire. Diplomatic relations between Turkey and Russia began in August 1920 and led to the Treaty of Moscow, which settled border disputes by giving Kars and Ardahan and adjacent historical Georgian lands to Turkey while Batumi and the territory northeast of it was ceded to Russia; the legitimately elected Menshevik government of Georgia was, naturally, kept out of negotiations. The Georgian government denounced the treaty and refused to recognize its articles. Soviet Russia, meanwhile, supplied Turkey with weapons and ammunition, which the Turks used in a war against Greece in 1921–1922. See also Batumi, Treaty of; Kars, Treaty of.

**MTAVARI.** Grand noble or dynastic prince. Initially, the term was similar to eristavi or tavadi, but starting in the 15th century, it was applied only to the very few powerful ruling houses of Georgia. Even among these grand nobles, the title was reserved for the head of the undivided house only.

**MTIULETI.** Historical and geographic region in northeastern Georgia. Traversed by the valley of Tetri Aragvi River, Mtuleti provides one of the major routes across the Caucasus Mountains, which has added strategic significance to the region throughout the ages. Mtuleti is famous for its picturesque alpine meadows and isolated villages with medieval towers.

**MTSKHETA.** Ancient capital of Georgia. Located on the Kura (Mtkvari) River and the Georgian Military Road, it is only 16 km from
Tbilisi. Founded in the first millennium BCE, Mtskheta was the capital of ancient Iberia between the third century BCE and fifth century CE. It was conquered by the Roman General Pompeus in 65 BCE. Although King Vakhtang Gorgasal moved the capital to Tbilisi, Mtskheta remained the religious center of the country. The Svetitskhoveli Cathedral served as the see of the Archbishop of Mtskheta and Catholicos of All Georgia as well as the royal burial chamber where the remains of Kings Vakhtang Gorgasali, Erekle II, and other rulers rest. Mtskheta contains many historical monuments, including the famous Jvari Church (6th century) overlooking the town from the nearby mountains, the ruins of the Armazistsikhe acropolis (first millennium BCE) and fortress (3rd century BCE), the Samtavro Monastery (11th century), and the remains of the Bebris Tsikhe fortress (14th century).

MUKHADZE, GREGORY (1879–1948). Prominent Georgian physician and surgeon. Mukhadze studied at the University of Tomsk and later practiced medicine in the Minusinsk and Krasnoyarsk hospitals in 1908–1911. In 1911, he became head of the surgical department of the Chiatuara Trades Hospital. Earning his doctorate in 1912, he became director of the Traumatological Institute in 1918 and helped found Tbilisi State University (TSU), where he was a professor. In 1919–1921, he occupied the Chair of General Surgery of TSU, and in 1921–1948, directed the Chair of Hospital Surgery. In 1932, he established the blood transfusion unit in Georgia, which later was transformed into the Institute of Hematology and Blood Transfusion. In 1944, he was accepted as a member of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences and the Georgian Academy of Sciences (GAS). From 1944–1948, he founded and directed the Institute of Experimental Surgery and Hematology of GAS and pioneered a number of surgical techniques. A hospital and street in Chiatuara, the Tbilisi Surgical Society, and the Tbilisi Institute of Hematology and Blood Transfusion bear his name. See also ASATIANI, MIKHAIL; ELIAVA, GIORGI.

MUKHRANBATONI, IVANE (1809–1895). Georgian prince and general of the Russian army. After receiving a military education in St. Petersburg, Mukhranbatoni began his military career in the Russian army and distinguished himself serving against Imam Shamil in
Chechnya in the 1830s. During the Crimean War in 1854–1856, he commanded Russian troops in western Georgia and successfully fought against the Ottomans. Attaining the rank of lieutenant general, Mukhranbatoni retired in 1881 and returned to Georgia where he was elected marshal of nobility in Tbilisi and gained fame as an innovator and reformer. His estate became exemplary for its European-inspired organization and modernization and especially for its winery, which produced one of the best wines in the Russian Empire.

MURAD BEY (? – 1801). Prominent Mamluk statesman and military commander, Murad Bey was born to a Georgian peasant family near Tbilisi and was kidnapped at an early age. He was raised as a Mamluk of Muhammad Bey Abu l’Dhahab. After Mamluk leader Ali Bey’s death, Murad married his widow and inherited enormous wealth. Although the Arab chronicles are overly critical of him, Murab Bey did have some accomplishments, including the establishment of the Cairo arsenal, a flotilla on the Nile River, and reconstruction of the Mosque of Amr Ibn al-Aas. A man of music and of letters, Murad was also excessively proud and ruthless against his enemies. He had no military education but possessed instinctive martial talents.

In the 1770s, Murad attempted to assassinate Ismail Bey, the khush-dash and mamluk of the former Egyptian ruler Ali Bey. In the ensuing civil war, he was defeated and fled to Upper Egypt. He returned to Cairo in 1777, but his intrigues led to a new factional struggle. From 1778–1781, Murad Bey unsuccessfully fought the Alawiyya (mamluks of Ali Bey) and had to recognize their authority. However, Murad Bey soon succeeded in forcing his co-ruler, Ibrahim Bey, out of Cairo and seizing power in the country in late 1784. Still, he had to reconcile with Ibrahim Bey whom he restored as shaykh al balad in February 1785.

In late 1785, Ibrahim and Murad received Ottoman demands for tribute but refused to comply. On 18 July 1786, Murad Bey failed to contain the Ottoman expeditionary force sent against him, and as a result, the Turks set up a new government in Cairo in August 1786. Murad and Ibrahim Bey withdrew to Upper Egypt where they resisted the Ottoman forces for the next six years. Returning to Cairo in July 1791, Murad Bey continued to rule Egypt for seven years, sharing power
with Ibrahim Bey. In 1798, he served as sari askar (commander-in-chief) of the Mamluk forces against the French troops under General Napoleon Bonaparte but was decisively defeated at Shubra Khit (10–13 July) and Inhaba (Embaba) (21 July). He rejected Napoleon’s offer to govern Girga province and withdrew to Upper Egypt where he tied down considerable numbers of French troops under General Desaix. Demonstrating notable administrative and military skills, he fought the French to a draw at Sediman (El Lahun, 7 October 1798) but was defeated at Samhud (22 January 1799). Nevertheless, his guerrillas constantly harassed the French communication and supply lines.

Concerned about his authority, Murad Bey allied himself with the British and Turks against the French in 1800. Yet, he realized the potential dangers of this alliance and abandoned the Ottoman troops on the eve of the Battle of Heliopolis, joining forces with French Generals Jean Baptiste Kléber and Jacques-Abdallah Menou. Murad Bey died of the plague on his way to Cairo in 1801 and was buried at Sohaj.

MURADELI, VANO (1908–1970). Georgian composer. Born in Gori, he received his musical training at Tbilisi Conservatory and worked as a composer and actor at various theaters in Georgia from 1931–1934. He moved to the Moscow Conservatory in 1934, directed the Composers’ Union of Georgia in 1938–1939, and served as principal and artistic director of the Central Ensemble of the Soviet Navy from 1942–1944. After World War II, he served in the Composers’ Union of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and became secretary in 1968. Over the years, he produced a number of popular songs, including Nas volya Stalina vela, gimn Moskve, Gimn mezhdunarodnogo soyuza studentov, Pesnia bortsov za mir, Moskva-Pekin, Pesnia molodezhi, Gimn Leningradu, Pesnia o Pobede, and Mi fashistov razobiem. He also composed the operas Velikaia druzha (1948), and Oktyabr (1961), and the ballet Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya. Among other awards, he was recognized as a People’s Artist of USSR in 1968 and awarded two Stalin Prizes in 1946 and 1951.

MUSKHELISHVILI, NIKOLOZ (1891–1976). Distinguished Georgian scholar, mathematician, and physicist. After graduating from the
1st Classical Gymnasium in Tbilisi, Muskhelishvili continued his studies at the University of St. Petersburg, where he studied mathematics and physics from 1904–1914 and later worked as a researcher from 1915–1918. Returning to Georgia, he began teaching at Tbilisi State University (TSU), becoming a professor in 1922. From 1926–1928, he was dean of the Polytechnical Faculty of TSU, and between 1928–1930, he directed the Georgian Polytechnical Institute. In 1933, Muskhelishvili became director of the Institute of Mathematics, Physics, and Mechanics at TSU and head of the Department of Theoretical Geophysics at the Georgian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In 1935, he was elected vice president of the Georgian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and six years later, he became the first president of the Georgian Academy of Sciences.

During his long career, Muskhelishvili researched boundary singular integral equations, value problems for analytic functions, the theory of elasticity, and other problems. His major publications include Applications des intégrales analogues à celles de Cauchy à quelques problèmes de la physique mathématique (1922), Basic Problems of the Mathematical Theory of Elasticity (1933), Basic Equations, Plane problem, Torsion and Bending (1935), Singular Integral Equations (1953), and others. For his work, Muskhelishvili was awarded the Stalin Prizes in 1941 and 1947, the title of Hero of Socialism in 1945, the Mikhail Lomonosov Gold Medal in 1972, and five Orders of Lenin between 1941 and 1975.

MYTHOLOGY. See AMIRANI; ARMAZI; BERIKA; COSMOLOGY; DALI; DEVI; DOBILNI; GHMERTI; GIORGI; Jvari; Kaji; Kopala; Kviri; Ochokoche; Ochopintre; Paskunj; Rashi; Tkashi-Mapa.

MZHAVANADZE, VASILY (1902–1988). Georgian party and government official. Born in Kutaisi, he worked in Tskulikidze in 1915–1924 before enlisting in the Red Army in 1924. He graduated from the Military-Political Academy in Leningrad in 1937 and immediately began political agitation in military units. During World War II, he served as a commissar in various units, was promoted to lieutenant general in 1944, and was deputy commander for political
affairs in Kiev, Karkov, and the Carpathian Military Districts from 1946–1953. In 1953, he was brought to Georgia, where he governed the country as the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party for the next 19 years. From 1957–1966, he was a candidate member of the Presidium of Central Committee, and in 1966–1972, he was a candidate member of the CPSU Presidium (Politburo). However, his rule was marked by increasing corruption and stagnation, leading to his eventual downfall. In 1972, he was forced to retire in favor of the young Eduard Shevardnadze. See also TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS OF 1956.

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NADIR SHAH (?–1747). Ruler of Persia between 1736–1747. Nadir, also known as Nadir Quli Beg, was born into the powerful Afshar tribe. Following the Afghan invasion of Persia in 1722, the Afshars began a struggle against the Afghans in which Nadir established his military reputation. He helped expel the Afghans from Persia and engaged troops from the Ottoman Empire in the western provinces. In the 1730s, he restored Persian influence in Kartli-Kakheti, inaugurating a new period of qizilbashoba or Persian yoke in eastern Georgia. Nadir was supported by some Georgian nobles, the most important of them being Teimuraz of Kakheti and his son Erekle. Teimuraz used Persian might to deal with his opponents and secured his hold over Kakheti and Kartli. In the 1740s, Prince Erekle accompanied Nadir, who proclaimed himself shah in 1736, on a campaign in India, where he distinguished himself during an assault on Delhi. In 1744, Nadir gave the throne of Kakheti to Teimuraz II and that of Kartli to Erekle II, who were crowned at the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral on 1 October 1745, the first Christian coronation of Georgian kings in over a century. Despite his ability in military affairs, Nadir was less adept in governing Persia; he gradually alienated various factions, and his heavy taxes levied to support the military drained the country’s resources. He was assassinated by one of his own bodyguards in 1747.

NADIRADZE, ALEXANDER (1914–1987). Prominent Georgian engineer and head of the design bureau responsible for the creation of
Soviet missiles. Born in Gori, he graduated from the Transcaucasian Industrial Institute in 1936 and the Moscow Aviation Institute in 1940. During World War II, he participated in theoretical and experimental research on artillery and missile systems, including the development of the Katiusha rocket artillery system. In 1945, Nadiradze became chief designer and head of the construction bureau at the Moscow Mechanical Institute of the People’s Commissar of Ammunition (Narkomat boepripasov), where he experimented with two-stage rockets. In 1948, he continued work at the KB-2 of Minelkhозmash and, after 1953, directed experiments on the Voron system. He also constructed the first meteorological rocket MR-1 that was launched in 1951. In later years, Nadiradze played an important role in the development of the SS-20 missile and in short-range, solid propellant missile systems. From 1961–1987, he was director and chief designer of NII-1 at the Ministry of the Defense Industry. In 1981, he was elected to the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and was twice awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor (1976, 1982) and the Lenin Prize (1966).

NAPOLEONIC WARS, GEORGIANS IN. Sons of a small nation in the mountains of the Caucasus, the Georgians participated in the Napoleonic Wars both as the allies and foes of Napoleon. They fought the French in Egypt, where many of the Mamluks were of Georgian descent. The famous Mamluk leaders, Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey were ethnic Georgians, kidnapped and sold into slavery in their childhood; Napoleon’s famous Mamluk bodyguard, Rustam, was an Armenian from Tbilisi. On his return to France, Napoleon created a Mamluk company of the Imperial Guard, where several Georgians served throughout the Napoleonic Wars. At the same time, after Russia annexed Georgia, many Georgians served in the Russian military, and Georgian units participated in the Russo-Turkish War of 1806–1812. Some Georgian officers eventually achieved prominent positions in Russian army and society. Prince Bagrat, son of King Giorgi XII, was the first to study the Georgian participation in the Napoleonic Wars, and in his 1823 work, he identified 49 Georgian officers serving in the Russian army. However, this study is far from complete and overlooks some prominent Georgians; the total number of Georgian officers who participated in the
Napoleonic Wars is now estimated at 70–80 men, including 12 generals.

Prince Peter Bagration was undoubtedly the most distinguished Georgian commander of the Napoleonic Wars. The descendant of King Iese, he rose through the ranks to command the Russian troops in every war that Russia waged between 1794 and 1812. He was considered one of the best tactical commanders of his time, but his career was cut short when he was mortally wounded at the battle of Borodino in September 1812. Two Yashvil (Iashvili) brothers also rose to the top of the Russian army. Major General Vladimir Iashvili distinguished himself during the Russo–Turkish War of 1787–1791 but later participated in the conspiracy against Emperor Paul I and was among the officers who murdered the tsar on 23 March 1801; however, Paul’s son and successor, Emperor Alexander, had Iashvili exiled and placed under house arrest for the rest of his life. General Leo Iashvili’s career was more successful as he commanded the Russian artillery throughout the Napoleonic Wars.

The Panchulidze brothers also enjoyed successful careers, serving under the famous Generals Alexander Suvorov and Mikhail Kutuzov; Lieutenant General Ivan Panchulidze commanded the Chernigov Dragoon Regiment throughout the wars while his brother, Major General Semen Panchulidze, led the Pavlograd Hussars in 1803–1806 and the Ingermanland Dragoons in 1806–1815. Major General Anton Chalikov (Shalikashvili) served with the Sumsk Hussars at the decisive battles of Austerlitz, Heilsberg, and Friedland in 1805–1807 before he took command of the Life Guard Uhlans Regiment and fought in Russia, Germany, and France in 1812–1814. His comrade-in-arms, Major General Semen Gangeblishvili, served in Poland, Italy, and Switzerland from 1794–1799, and commanded a jager regiment in the Crimea, Caucasus, and Germany from 1803–1813. Major General Pavel Bibiluri, serving under the name of Loshkarev, commanded the Volhynia Infantry regiment from 1806–1811 and the Siberia Infantry Regiment from 1811–1814 but was severely wounded at Borodino, where he partially lost his vision. The Javakhishvili family produced several notable military figures—Major General Ivan Zhevakhov (Javakhishvili) distinguished himself leading the Akhtyrsk Hussars from 1808–1811 and the Serpukhov Dragoons from 1811–1815. His cousin, Major Gen-
eral Spiridon Zhevakhov, served with the Pavlograd Hussars for almost two decades, commanding it from 1810–1814. Philip Javakhishvili commanded the Ukrainian militias in 1812, while Nikolay Javakhishvili distinguished himself at the battles of Borodino and Leipzig, where he was mortally wounded.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY. One of the leading parties of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the National Democratic Party (erovnul demokratuli partia, NDP) was founded at the start of the 20th century and played a prominent role in the Menshevik republic before being suppressed by the Bolsheviks in 1921. It was unofficially restored in 1981, and, under the leadership of Giorgi Chanturia, soon emerged as a powerful force in the events leading to Georgian independence and the early Third Republic. The NDP opposed President Zviad Gamsakhurdia’s policies and later served as an opposition party to Eduard Shevardnadze’s government. In 1992, the party gained 14 seats in the Parliament and, three years later, retained 12 seats. After Chanturia was assassinated in 1994, his wife Irina Sarishvili-Chanturia assumed the party leadership but eventually compromised herself through close association with the government of Shevardnadze. The party failed to gain seats in the 1999, 2003, and 2004 elections but continues to play a prominent role in Georgian political life.

NATIONAL FORUM. Central organ of the national liberation movement in 1990–1991. Following the bloody events of 9 April 1989, the opposition groups organized the Committee of National Recovery (CNR, erovnuli gadarchenis komiteti), which united the Helsinki Union (led by Zviad Gamsakhurdia), the National Democratic Party (led by Giorgi Chanturia), the Union of National Justice (led by Irakli Shen-gelaya), and the Party of National Independence (led by Irakli Tsereteli). The CNR sought to have Georgia secede from the Soviet Union and restore its independence. In March 1990, another conference of Georgian political groups and organizations was summoned in Tbilisi, and the National Forum (erovnuli porumi) was established. Although they shared a common goal of gaining independence, the participating groups failed to reach a consensus on the means to achieve it. The struggle became increasingly personalized, and the personalities of party
leaders, especially of Gamsakhurdia and Chanturia, were important in subsequent events. Another important factor was the nationalists’ attitude toward the non-Georgians, who were perceived as “guests” of Georgia and whose loyalty to Georgia was uncertain. Thus, Gamsakhurdia and his supporters forced the government to make amendments to the electoral law stipulating that only parties operating on the entire territory of Georgia could participate in elections. This automatically disenfranchised non-Georgian groups who enjoyed support in specific districts or regions. The nationalist leadership also denounced anyone opposing it, often using labels such as “traitor,” “agents of the Kremlin,” “stooges of Moscow,” etc. The rhetoric of the nationalist leaders, especially of Gamsakhurdia, became increasingly militant and was crucial in arousing apprehension among the non-Georgian populace of Georgia.

The national movement itself soon split with more radical groups, gathered around Zviad Gamsakhurdia, and refused to have any association with the Soviet authorities and rapidly increased their demands. Thus, the Helsinki Union, the Society of St. Ilia the Righteous, the Union of Traditionalists, the National-Liberal Union, and other groups broke away from the National Forum and established a new alliance, the Round Table—Free Georgia (mrgvali magida—tavisupali sakartvelo). Among the moderates remaining in the National Forum were the National Democratic Party, the National Independence Party, and the Union of National Justice. In May 1990, their leaders—Giorgi Chanturia, Irakli Shengelaya, and Irakli Tsereteli—organized the National Conference, where hundreds of delegates represented various groups from the regions and decided to hold their own elections to a Georgian National Congress (erovnuli kongresi) that would lead the country toward independence. Elections were held in September 1990, with the National Independence Party taking the highest number of seats, followed by the National Democratic Party.

By the parliamentary election of October 1990, the National Forum was effectively split into five major blocs, the Round Table—Free Georgia, the Concord, Peace, Rebirth bloc, the Freedom Bloc, the Liberation and Economic Rebirth bloc, and the Democratic Georgia bloc. However, the National Democrats and their allies boycotted the elections.
NATISHVILI, ALEXANDER (1878–1959). Prominent anatomist and scholar, pioneer of functional morphology. Born in Tbilisi, he studied at the University of Kharkov and practiced medicine in Kharkov province from 1905–1907. He served as a dissector and assistant professor at the Chair of Normal Anatomy of the Kharkov Women’s Medical Institute from 1907–1918. Returning to Georgia, he helped found Tbilisi State University, where he established the Medical Faculty in 1918 and served as its director through 1959; he also served as dean of the Medical Faculty in 1919 and from 1928–1929. Between 1920 and 1935, he also founded and directed the Chair of Histology and Embryology of TSU (1920–1930), Chair of Plastic Anatomy at Tbilisi Academy of Arts (1921–1932), Chairs of Anatomy of Domestic Animals (1932–1946) and of Dynamic Anatomy (1935–1938) at the Georgian Zootech and Veterinary Institute. In 1930–1931, he was deputy director of the Tbilisi Medical Institute, and from 1934–1936 presided over the Medical Education Board of the Georgian People’s Commissariat of Health. In 1944–1945, Natishvili was deputy director of Tbilisi Institute of Postgraduate Medical training. Between 1925 and 1959, he served in various ranks on the Learned Medical Council of the Georgian People’s Commissariat of Health. In 1946, he established the Institute of Experimental Morphology of the Georgian Academy of Sciences and led that Institute through 1959.

NATURAL RESOURCES. Georgia is rich in mineral resources, and some 300 deposits of raw materials have been discovered but only few have been fully exploited. Since the tumultuous events of the 1990s, Georgia has lacked the financial resources required to modernize its Soviet-era equipment and train its work force. The manganese mines at Chiatura rival those of India, Brazil, and Ghana in quantity and quality of products but operate at an annual output of only 850–970 tons of high-quality manganese. By 2005, a joint venture of Russian, Georgian, and Austrian companies won the privatization tender for the manganese plant, and its revitalization is expected in the near future. Zinc deposits in the Java region have the production capacity of 100,000 tons of zinc per year, while arsenic deposits in the Ambrolauri region yield about 2,000 tons annually. Bentonitic clay was mined in Ozurgeti while andesite is quarried in
the Borjomi region. Diatomite and technical agate are extracted in the Akhaltsikhe region, and gold is mined at the Madneuli mine and quartz at the Kvartsitii mine. There are also large deposits of marble, copper, barite, metallic sulfur, and facing material.

Of greater importance are oil and gas resources. While oil reserves are yet to be fully explored, there are several small oilfields in Georgia with estimated reserves of 30 million tons. According to some experts, Georgia has potential resources of some 2 billion tons of oil, but, in 2003, Georgian oil production amounted to only 140,000 tons. Oil deposits have been located near Batumi and Poti under the Black Sea, and their reserves in Georgia’s sector of the Black Sea have been put in a wide range of between 70 million and 1.3 billion barrels. Large volumes of natural gas—as high as 125 billion cubic meters of gas—are thought to exist in Georgia and reserves of 8.5 billion cubic meters have already been explored. Coalfields at Tkvarcheli and Tkibuli are estimated to have some 400 million tons and are actively explored.

One of the major obstacles in developing a stable economy is the constant shortage of electricity that Georgia has experienced for most of the last 15 years. In January 2006, as a result of sabotage acts in Russia, Georgia was left without any gas or electricity in the midst of the coldest winter in a century, which greatly affected its economy, contributed to escalating Russo-Georgian tensions, and further increased feelings of desolation among the citizens. Georgia currently generates almost 75% of its electricity by hydropower plants, and several thermal power plants satisfy another 10% of demand. However, to satisfy its demand, Georgia also imports electricity from Russia and Armenia. Unlike neighboring Armenia, Georgia has no nuclear plants but has considerable waterpower resources. The deepest and most powerful rivers for hydroelectric purposes are the Rioni and its tributaries, the Inguri, Kodori, and Bzyb as well as Kura, Aragvi, Alazani, and Khrami rivers in the east. However, the technical condition of hydropower plant turbines is poor, causing them to remain idle for extensive periods. Thus, in 2004, some 1,100 mW of power was wasted out of a total capacity of 2700 mW and almost 2.7 billion kWh equivalent water was spilled. The situation is similar in thermal power plants, which are largely obsolete and dilapidated. However, the government is pursuing several projects to revive or build additional thermal power plants.
NICEPHORUS IRBACH. See CHOLOKASHVILI, NIKOLOZ.

NIKO THE BOER. See BAGRATIONI, NIKO.

NIKOLADZE, JACOB (IAKOB) (1876–1951). Georgian sculptor. Born in Kutaisi, he studied at Stroganov Art College in Moscow and Odessa Art College from 1892–1899. He later traveled to France, where he studied French art and worked at Auguste Rodin’s famous studio from 1904–1910. Influenced by the impressionist movement, he became one of the leading Georgian sculptors and produced numerous works, including busts of Shota Rustaveli (1897), Shio Aragvispireli (1902), Akaki Tsereteli (1914), Ilia Chavchavadze (1937), and Galaktion Tabidze (1939). He also trained such prominent Georgian sculptors as S. Kakabadze and M. Merabishvili.

NIKOLADZE, GIORGI (1888–1931). Georgian mathematician and scholar. The son of Niko Nikoladze, he graduated from the Tbilisi Gymnasium and studied in St. Petersburg and Paris, where he received his doctorate in mathematics in 1928. Nikoladze supported the establishment of Tbilisi State University in January 1918 and remained at the university for the rest of his life. He laid the foundation for algebraic geometry in Georgia by publishing a number of important works in the 1920s.

NIKOLADZE, NIKO (1843–1928). Georgian publicist, revolutionary, and public figure. Born in Kutaisi, he studied law at the Universities of Zurich and St. Petersburg, where he was active in student movements. In 1861, he was arrested for his part in student demonstrations. After his release, Nikoladze returned to Georgia where he became an active member of the Tergdaleulni group. He traveled to Europe, where he earned his doctorate in law and helped publish the revolutionary journals Left Bank and Sovremennost in Switzerland. In 1865, he met Karl Marx in London and became acquainted with Alexander Herzen, collaborating with him on the newspaper Kolokol in 1865. From 1871–1875, he shuttled between Georgia and France and established a number of revolutionary periodicals, including Krebuli in Tbilisi in 1871, Drosha in Paris in 1873, Mimokhilva in Tbilisi in 1875.
Nikoladze was arrested in 1880 and exiled to Stavropol, but he continued his involvement with revolutionary publications. After 1886, he led the liberal-bourgeois group Meore Dasi in Georgia, and from 1887–1891, he edited the newspaper Novoe obozrenie in Tbilisi. In 1894, he became the mayor of the coastal town of Poti. Under Nikoladze’s able leadership for the next 18 years, Poti modernized and developed, becoming one of the major Black Sea port cities. In 1917, Nikoladze became the leader of the Georgian Nationalist-Democrats and served in the Georgian Constituent Assembly and the Menshevik government in 1918–1921. Following the Soviet occupation in 1921, he immigrated to London, where he remained for three years before returning to Georgia. In addition to his political career, Nikoladze was a prolific writer of articles on Georgian poetry and artists; among his major works are Emancipation of the Peasants in Georgia (1865), Criticism and Its Importance in Literature (1871), Decadent Press (1873), and Hard Labor and Exile (1927).

9 MARCH 1956. See TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS OF 1956.


NINO (NINA), SAINT. Religious figure to whom the Christian conversion of Iberia is attributed. Christian sources tell us that she was a daughter of the Roman official (in some versions general) Zabulon, a relative of St. George, and Susanna, sister of the patriarch of Jerusalem. When Nino was 12 years old, she traveled with her parents to Jerusalem, where her father obtained the patriarch’s blessing and departed into the Jordan wilderness to serve as a monk. Nino stayed with her mother in Jerusalem, where she had a vision of the Virgin Mary directing her to convert the Iberians. In the early fourth century, Nino left Jerusalem for Georgia, and some Christian sources describe her perilous journey with the Armenian princess Ripsimia (Hripsime) and her companions as they fled the persecutions of the Emperor Diocletian.

Nino reached Georgia from the southwest and first preached the Christian message at Khertvisi and Urbnisi. Arriving in Mtskheta, she gathered a number of disciples and preached Christianity with a
vine-leaf cross, winning respect from the people by her good deeds and the miracles she performed, including curing Queen Nana of a serious illness. According to the legend, King Mirian III initially remained unconvinced, but during a solar eclipse in 327 or 337, he pledged to convert to the new religion. Nino remains one of the most venerated saints in Georgia and is buried in the village of Bodbe in Kakheti.

NINOSHVILI, EGNATE (1859–1894). Georgian writer. Born into a peasant family in western Georgia, Ninoshvili studied in a local school in Kela and later continued his studies in a seminary at Ozurgeti in 1876. In 1878, he was expelled from the seminary for participating in student strikes and had to work at several menial jobs for the next eight years. In 1886, he managed to travel to France where he studied at Montpellier for one year. Returning to Georgia, he was unable to find a steady job and worked as a potter and unskilled laborer in Batumi, Zestapini, and Chiatura. He was exposed to social democratic ideas, and in 1892 helped found a Mesame dasi cell in Zestaponi. However, because of hard work and financial constraints, Ninoshvili’s health rapidly deteriorated and he died in Archeuli in May 1894.

Ninoshvili started publishing his works only in 1887, and the first ones appeared in the newspapers Iveria, Kvali, Moambe and others. In the early 1890s, he published the short stories Gogia Uishvili, Gankarguleba, Chveni kveknis raïndi, Paliastomis tba, Partakhi, Mose Mtserali as well as his major works, Ramdenime motkhroba, Simona, and Kristine, in which he criticized contemporary society, revealed the decline of the Georgian nobility, and described the miserable conditions and oppression of the peasantry and workers.

NIORADZE, GIORGI (1886–1951). Georgian archeologist. Founder of the Chair of Archeology at Tbilisi State University, Nioradze discovered and studied Paleolithic cave-dwellings at Devis-Kvreli, Sakazhia in western Georgia and the Neolithic, Bronze, and Iron Age monuments at Mtskheta, Zemo Avchala, Dmanisi, Kakheti, etc.

NOGHAIDELI, ZURAB (1964– ). Georgian statesman and prime minister. Born in Kobuleti, he graduated with a degree in physics
from Mikhail Lomonosov State University of Moscow and worked at various institutes of the Georgian Academy of Sciences. He entered politics in the early 1990s and was elected to the Parliament of Georgia in 1992, where he directed the Committee of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources. Reelected in 1995, Noghaideli served in the Supreme Council of Adjara in 1996–1997 and directed the Committee of Taxes and Revenues of the Parliament of Georgia in 1999–2000. In May 2000, he was appointed minister of finance but left this position a year later and was involved in private business for the next two years. He was reappointed to lead the Ministry of Finance in November 2003 following the Rose Revolution. In February 2005, after the death of Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania, Noghaideli was appointed to replace him in this post.

NUTSUBIDZE, SHALVA (1888–1969). Distinguished Georgian scholar and public figure. He graduated from the University of St. Petersburg in 1910 and continued his studies at the University of Leipzig from 1911–1915. Returning to Russia, he worked as an associate professor at the University of St. Petersburg in 1916–1917 before moving to Georgia. He was one of the founders of Tbilisi State University in 1918 and was a professor there for the next five decades; from 1920–1929, Nutsbidze served as a vice rector of the university. He was elected to the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 1944. During his long academic career, Nutsbidze authored works in many fields, including Georgian history, Rustvelology, and history of Georgian philosophy. He played an important role in the study of identity of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and the Georgian philosopher Peter the Iberian. His major publications include Philosophie und Weisheit: Specielle Einleitung in die Aletheiologie (1931) and History of Georgian Philosophy in two volumes (1956–1958).

OCHOKOCHI. In Georgian mythology, a forest deity that combined human and animal features. Ochokochi was believed to have thick fur, large claws, and spiky horns on its chest. Living in remote cor-
ners of the forest, Ochokochi wandered in the woods, frightening hunters or shepherds they encountered with their appearance. Ochokochi was believed to be enthralled by Tkashi-Mapa, whom he constantly chased in order to copulate. However, mortal hunters protected Tkashi-Mapa from his advances.

**OCHOPINTRE (OCHOPINTE).** In Georgian mythology, a deity of wild animals. Ochopintre has attributes similar to Pan of the Greek mythos. Born with the legs and horns of a goat and the upper body of a human, he helps the goddess of hunting, Dali, herd the animals. Hunters usually made sacrifices in his name since no one could hunt the animals without his help. The fate of a person entering the forest was believed to be fully in his hands.

**ODISHI.** See MINGRELIA.

**OIL AND PIPELINES.** Georgia only has limited reserves of oil, but the coastline of its neighbor, Azerbaijan, on the Caspian Sea sits atop extensive oil and gas fields. Underexplored during the Soviet era, these oil fields are now being actively exploited by international consortiums, and the Caspian Sea oil production is forecast to rise to about 1.5 million barrels per day. Previously, the only way to export oil to European consumers was through the Russian pipelines, some of which passed through the volatile region of Chechnya. With the collapse of the USSR and the start of war in Chechnya, this system fell into disarray. International consortia of oil companies as well as the government of the United States sought several options for the Caspian oil exports. Although Armenia and Iran provided shorter routes, political aspects of such arrangements made them impractical; Azerbaijan and Turkey have strained relations with Armenia, while the U.S. was reluctant to have a pipeline constructed through Iran. Thus, Georgia emerged as a strategic transit route to transport oil and gas to European and world markets. In the end, two main oil routes Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan and Baku–Supsa were selected; in addition, the Baku–Tbilisi–Erzurum natural gas line is scheduled to be completed in 2006–2007.

In 1996, Georgia and Azerbaijan signed an agreement to transport oil from the Caspian fields to the Georgian ports of Supsa and Batumi.
on the Black Sea. Substantial upgrades were made to the existing 824-km pipeline along the Baku–Supsa route, and a new oil terminal was constructed at Supsa. The pipeline became operational in April 1999. Of greater importance is the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline. The idea of constructing this pipeline initially emerged in the mid-1990s, and construction began in 2003 after an inter-governmental treaty was signed by Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey and sponsored by an international consortium of oil companies. It was completed at a cost of almost $4 billion in May 2005 and began operation in November 2005. The pipeline was laid on the territory of Georgia, bypassing Armenia, and transports oil to the Turkish port of Ceyhan on the Mediterranean. Of its total length of 1,760 km, 440 km lay in Azerbaijan, 248 km in Georgia, and 1,070 km in Turkey; the 17-km-long section of the pipeline through the Borjomi Valley, famous for its environment and mineral waters, remains a matter of great concern for environmental groups. The BTC pipeline has a projected lifespan of 40 years and a capacity to transport approximately 1 million barrels of oil per day. In October 2005, the government of Kazakhstan announced that it would undertake to build a trans-Caspian oil pipeline from the Kazakh port of Aktau to connect with the BTC pipeline.

The oil pipelines are of great strategic importance to Georgia. In economic terms, Georgia would receive substantial transit fees of over $50 million per year. Construction of the BTC brought the largest foreign investment (around US$1 billion) into the Georgian economy and some 3,000 Georgian landowners received over US$18 million in compensation for the lands where the pipeline was constructed. The construction of the Georgian section also employed some 4,000 Georgian citizens. The pipelines are expected to provide Georgia with relatively low-cost oil and gas and decrease its energy dependence on Russia. Furthermore, the pipelines are crucial for their political importance. Georgia was, and still is, perceived as Russia’s backyard, and the recent history of Georgia clearly shows the Kremlin’s willingness to protect its interests in the region. However, the BTC project effectively diverted the oil from the Russian pipeline system and cut any potential benefits that Russia might have enjoyed. The United States and other Western nations are currently closely involved in regional affairs, and Georgia has been trying to use their in-
volvement to counter Russian encroachments. The Georgian leadership also hopes to turn the pipeline politics into a guarantee for the country’s economic development and political stability. In May 2005, a preliminary agreement was reached between Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey to provide assistance in case of a security threat to the pipelines.

Pipelines, and the energy security that they guarantee, have become of greater importance since late 2005 when the Kremlin began to use its vast gas and oil resources as a tool of political pressure against its opponents. In December 2005, the Russian state-owned Gazprom company announced its decision to double the price of gas for Georgia and quadruple it for Ukraine in response to their pro-Western policies. Although Russia denied using energy resources for political pressure, the fact that her close allies, notably Byelorussia, continued to receive gas at subsidized prices argued otherwise. Georgia grudgingly agreed to the price increase while a bitter row between Russia and Ukraine was resolved only under intense pressure from the European Union. During the presidency of Vladimir Putin, the Russian government has sought to consolidate its control over the pipeline infrastructure of the Commonwealth of Independent States and has used the state-controlled companies, particularly the giant Gazprom, to further its interests. Gazprom was involved in disputes with Ukraine and one of its goals was to gain control over the Ukrainian pipeline system. Russia has similar interests in Georgia, where Russian and pro-Russian Georgian business groups control large shares of the Georgian economy; the Russian gas company Itera benefited from privatization of Georgian gas enterprises and holds a virtual monopoly in this sector. However, despite attempts to do so, Gazprom has so far been unable to take control of Georgian pipelines since Tbilisi is determined to establish itself as a strategic transit route for commerce and energy resources between Europe and Asia. In March 2006, Ukraine, Georgia, and the European Union announced their plan to construct a new gas pipeline to supply Caspian gas to European countries, and a specially created international consortium has begun work on the project.

**OKRUASHVILI, IRAKLI (1973– ).** Prominent Georgian politician, minister of defense of Georgia. After graduating with a law degree
from Tbilisi State University in 1995, Okruashvili pursued private law practice for the next five years. In 2000, he became deputy minister of justice and joined the newly established United National Movement in 2001. He was elected to the City Council of Tbilisi in 2002. A close ally of Mikhail Saakashvili, he supported the opposition during the Rose Revolution in November 2003 and briefly served as President’s Representative in the Shida Kartli region, where he launched operations against corruption and smuggling. Appointed prosecutor general, Okruashvili earned the reputation of a hard-hitting prosecutor who prosecuted corrupt former and current government officials. In May 2004, he became the minister of internal affairs and launched a wide-ranging reform of this organization. In December 2004, he became the defense minister and supervised the restructuring and expansion of the Georgian forces over the next two years. One of the most influential politicians, he is perceived as a hard-liner in Mikhail Saakashvili’s administration and often adopts a confrontational stance with the separatist authorities of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

ORAKHELASHVILI, MAMIA (IVAN) (1881–1937). Communist Party and government official. Born in Kutaisi, he studied medicine at the University of Kharkov and St. Petersburg Military Medical Academy. In the 1900s he became involved in revolutionary activities and joined the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) in 1903. He participated in the 1905–1907 events in St. Petersburg and was arrested and exiled to the Transcaspian oblast, where he practiced medicine from 1908–1914. During World War I, he served as a field surgeon in the Russian army. Following the February Revolution of 1917, he became chairman of the Vladikavkaz RSDRP(B) Committee and of the Vladikavkaz Soviet of Workers and Soldiers’ Deputies. From 1917–1921, he served in the Caucasian Region RSDRP(B) Committee and later in the Caucasian Bureau of the Communist Party (Kavbyuro). He played an important role in the Bolshevik occupation of Georgia and was entrusted with organizing an alleged uprising in Georgia that served as a pretext for the Red Army invasion in February 1921.

After the occupation of Georgia, Orakhelashvili served as chairman of the Georgian Revolutionary Committee and secretary of the
Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party. He later became deputy chairman of the Georgian Council of People’s Commissars and chairman of the Transcaucasian SFSR Council of People’s Commissars. Between 1923 and 1937, he served as deputy chairman of the USSR Council of People’s Commissars and first secretary of the Transcaucasian Communist Party Committee. In 1930, Orakhelashvili joined the editorial board of the main Communist newspaper Pravda. From 1932–1937, he also worked as deputy director of the Institute of Marx–Engels–Lenin and wrote a number of books on Communist Party history and Bolshevik activities in Transcaucasia and Georgia. He was arrested and executed in December 1937.

ORBELIANI, GRIGOL (1804–1883). Georgian romantic poet. The son of King Erekle II’s daughter, he received an excellent education and began military service in the Russian army. Orbeliani participated in the Russo–Persian and Russo–Turkish Wars, distinguishing himself and quickly advancing through the ranks. In 1832, however, he was implicated in the conspiracy of Georgian nobles and was exiled for six years. Returning to Georgia, he distinguished himself in the Russian campaigns against Imam Shamil in Chechnya and served as a governor of Avaria and Daghestan. In later years, he attained the rank of general and performed the functions of the governor of Georgia. In the 1880s, he played a leading role in establishing a standard text for Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani. Orbeliani’s poetry is noteworthy for its patriotism and humanity. Among his major works are Iaralis, Mukhambazi and Sadghegrdzelo anu omis shemdeg ghame lhini Erevnis siakhloves.

ORBELIANI, SULKHAN-SABA (1658–1725). Prominent Georgian statesman, religious figure, and scholar. Related to the royal family, Sulkhan Saba Orbeliani was raised in Kartli and entered the monastery of David Gareja in the late 1690s. He tutored the young Vakhtang VI and became his close adviser following his accession to the throne in 1703. For the next 20 years, Orbeliani was instrumental in launching a series of reforms that brought stability and relative prosperity to Kartli. After King Vakhtang was imprisoned by the Safavid court in Persia, Orbeliani sought help in Europe, traveling to the court of the French King Louis XIV and Pope Clement XI in
1713–1714. King Vakhtang was released in 1719, and having returned to Georgia, Orbeliani continued to advise the king and followed him into exile in Russia in 1724. He died in Moscow in January 1725.

Besides his political career, Orbeliani was a towering figure among contemporary scholars, and his humanistic ideas left an indelible mark on Georgian literature. He participated in the founding of the first printing press in Tbilisi and the establishment of a commission of scholars to collect historical documents and manuscripts. Orbeliani produced the first encyclopedic dictionary of the Georgian language, Sitkvis kona, and authored many didactical fables, including Sibrdzne Sitsruisa and Stsvlani.

ORBELIANI, VAKHTANG (1812–1890). Georgian poet and writer. Orbeliani was born to a prominent noble family and was the grandson of King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti. In 1832, he participated in the conspiracy against the Russian authorities and was sentenced to death, a sentence that was later commuted to exile in Kaluga. After several years, Orbeliani returned to Georgia where he reconciled with the authorities and enjoyed a successful career in the Russian army. In 1860, he became a major general and served in various administrative posts in the northern Caucasus from 1858–1863. Despite his compromise with the imperial government, Orbeliani remained bitter over the loss of Georgian independence. His poems—Dzveli Dmanisi, Ori shenoba, Imedi, etc.—express his grief and nostalgic sentiments.

ORDZHONIKIDZE, SERGO (GREGORY) (1886–1937). Bolshevik revolutionary and government official. Born in the village of Goresha in Kutaisi province, he studied medicine at the Kharagauli Medical School and Mikhailov Hospital Medical School in Tbilisi. He became actively involved in Marxist circles, and after leaving school, he worked as a propagandist and agitator. In 1905–1907, he participated in the revolutionary events in Georgia, where he met another Georgian revolutionary Iosif (Joseph) Jughashvili (Joseph Stalin). Arrested while smuggling weapons in December 1905, he was released in May 1906 and immigrated to Germany. A year later, he returned to Transcaucasia and directed Bolshevik groups in Baku, becoming a member of the Baku RSDRP Committee.
Arrested twice in 1907, Ordzhonikidze was exiled to Siberia but fled two years later. In 1909–1910, he lived in Iran where he was involved in revolutionary activities as well, and maintained close communications with the Bolsheviks in Transcaucasia and with Vladimir Lenin himself. In 1911, he studied at the Bolshevik Party school that Lenin established near Paris and helped organize the 6th RSDRP Conference in Prague in 1912 where he was elected a member of the Central Committee of the RSDRP. He then traveled to Vologda to meet fellow revolutionary Stalin, who was in exile there. Later that year, Ordzhonikidze was arrested in St. Petersburg and served three years in Schlüsselburg Prison before being exiled for life to Yakutsk province.

After the February Revolution of 1917, Ordzhonikidze was released and returned to the Russian capital where he joined the Petrograd Bolshevik Committee and the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet. He helped Lenin go underground and maintained communications between the Bolshevik leader and the party in June–October 1917. He played an active part in the Bolshevik Revolution in November 1917 and was later appointed emergency commissar for Ukraine (December 1917) and of the Southern Region (April 1918).

During the Civil War in 1918–1921, he served with Red Army units at the front and helped organize the defense of Tsaritsyn. He became a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Don Republic and chairman of the North Caucasian Defense Council in 1918, a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the 12th Army (Western Front), and of the 14th Army (Southern Front) in 1919. Serving in this capacity, he participated in the defeat of General Denikin’s forces and the capture of Oryol, Donbas, Kharkov, and other territories. In January 1920, Ordzhonikidze joined the Revolutionary Military Council of the Caucasian Front and was among the first to enter Baku in May. In 1920, he was actively engaged in the establishment of Soviet power in Armenia and was instrumental in organizing the Bolshevik invasion of Georgia in 1921. He defied the instructions of the Central Committee of the RSDRP and single-mindedly pursued his goal of overthrowing the Menshevik republic. Serving as secretary of the Party’s Caucasian (later Transcaucasian) Bureau, he employed ruthless, high-handed methods to establish
Soviet authority in Georgia, and his anti-nationalist policies caused some Georgian Bolsheviks to oppose him in the so-called **Georgian Affair of 1922**.

In 1921–1930, Ordzhonikidze served in various other positions, including head of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, secretary of the Transcaucasian Communist Party Committee, first secretary of the North Caucasian Communist Party Committee, chairman of Central Control Commission, the USSR people's commissar of workers and peasants inspection, and deputy chairman of the USSR Council of People’s Commissars and Labor and Defense Council. In 1926, he became a candidate for Politburo membership and joined it four years later. In 1930, he headed the Supreme Sovnarkhoz (Regional Economic Council), and in 1932 became commissar for heavy industry. Ordzhonikidze committed suicide during the Stalinist purges on 18 February 1937.

**OSSETIA, CONFLICT IN.** Despite centuries-old favorable relations between the two peoples, Georgians and Ossetians found themselves engaged in a bitter conflict in the early 1990s. In the late 1980s, with the Georgian national liberation movement on the rise, nationalist sentiments also spread through South Ossetia and the Ossetian Popular Front (*Ademon Nykhas*) demanding unification with North Ossetia. In May 1989, the first clashes between Ossetians and Georgians took place on the anniversary of the declaration of Georgian independence. In August 1989, the Supreme Council of Georgia, affected by the tragic events of 9 April in Tbilisi—when an anti-Soviet demonstration dispersed by the Soviet Army, resulted in 19 deaths and hundreds of injuries—called for greater use of the Georgian language in public spheres, promotion of Georgian history, unofficial Georgian national holidays, and the resettlement of Georgians in areas dominated by minorities. Such measures compounded the insecurity felt by the Ossetians.

In response to Georgian activities, the *Ademon Nykhas* prepared an appeal to the USSR Council of Ministers, the USSR Supreme Soviet, and the CPSU Central Committee protesting the Georgian activities and asking that the question of a unification of North and South Ossetia be discussed at the CPSU Central Committee plenum of nationalities. In November, the Supreme Council of South Osse-
Ossetia passed a resolution demanding that Ossetian should be the official language of the autonomous district; the Supreme Council also demanded that its status should be changed from autonomous district to autonomous republic. Tbilisi immediately condemned the South Ossetian action as an illegal act and annulled its decision. However, the South Ossetian effort had a profound impact on the Georgian population that had just experienced the massacres of peaceful demonstrators in April and feared that the Kremlin would orchestrate separatist movements to partition Georgia. Agitated by the leaders of the national liberation movement, especially Zviad Gamsakhurdia, thousands of Georgians marched in protest to Tskhinvali in late November 1989. This was naturally perceived by the Ossetians as a power demonstration and a threat to their interests, and the Georgian processions were stopped by the Ossetian militia and the troops of the Soviet Ministry of the Interior on the approaches to the city. Sporadic clashes between militant groups on both sides occurred, and the first blood was spilt.

In April 1990, the USSR Supreme Council adopted the Law on the Resolution of Issues of Secession of Union Republics from the USSR, which gave the autonomous regions and republics within the Soviet Union an opportunity to actively participate in determining their political status as independent subjects of the union, including their secession from the union republics to which they were subordinated. Effectively, official Moscow opened a Pandora’s box of nationalistic movements in these autonomous regions, creating artificial conflicts in the defiant union republics that resulted in the subsequent political and military interference by the Kremlin. South Ossetia took advantage of this law and began the process of political determination of its status. In August 1990, the Georgian government banned the regional parties, including the Ademon Nykhas movement, from running for the Georgian Parliament. In response, the South Ossetian Soviet declared the region the South Ossetian Soviet Democratic Republic on 20 September and appealed to Moscow for help and protection.

Events took a different turn in October 1990 when Zviad Gamsakhurdia’s Round Table bloc won the elections in Georgia and refused to schedule elections in Ossetia. In response, on 9 December 1990, South Ossetia organized elections to its Supreme Soviet,
effectively challenging the central authorities of Georgia. According to Ossetian sources, 72% of the population of the republic took part in the election, which exceeded the percentage of the Ossetian population. Two days later, the Georgian Supreme Soviet adopted a law abolishing the South Ossetian autonomy, a politically imprudent decision that quickly escalated the conflict. On 11 December, a new round of clashes occurred between Georgians and Ossetians and, the next day, a state of emergency was declared in South Ossetia.

In December 1990–January 1991, the Georgian police entered the Ossetian administrative center, Tskhinvali, on the pretense of disarming paramilitary forces but soon found itself engaged in clashes with the local population; both sides accused each other of committing atrocities. On 7 January, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, in an attempt to pacify the growing discord, annulled the South Ossetian Supreme Soviet's decision to proclaim a secessionist republic and the Georgian Supreme Soviet's decree on abolition of the Ossetian autonomy. Both sides were ordered to withdraw the military forces but neither complied. In mid-January, Gorbachev dispatched Rafik Nishanov, president of the Chamber of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet, to mediate between the two sides. Under the new agreement, Georgia was to place its police under the Soviet Ministry of the Interior but received concession to deal with South Ossetia as an internal matter. However, the erratic policies of the Georgian government only intensified the disagreements; on 29 January, Torez Kulumbegov, chairman of the Ossetian Supreme Council, was given guarantees of immunity to attend a meeting with the Georgian side in Tbilisi and was then arrested and imprisoned for almost a year.

In March 1991, South Ossetia participated in the all-Union referendum on the fate of the USSR, which was boycotted by Georgia. The overwhelming majority of Ossetians voted in favor of staying in the Soviet Union. Later that same month, South Ossetia paid no heed to the Georgian referendum on independence. Both populations regarded each other with ever-increasing suspicion and began attacking each other, with militants often committing atrocities.

Simultaneously, President Gamsakhurdia’s government came under attack in Tbilisi and was overthrown in a military coup. Taking advantage of the Georgian weakness, the South Ossetian leaders organized a referendum, boycotted by local Georgians, in January 1992 on acces-
sion to the Russian Federation. They refused to enter into negotiations with the new Georgian authorities until all Georgian troops were removed from the region. On 29 May 1992, the Supreme Council of South Ossetia adopted a Declaration of Independence and ceded from Georgia. Fighting continued despite several ceasefires, through June 1992 and resulted in the destruction of numerous Georgian and Ossetian villages and creating thousands of refugees on both sides. The strategic pipeline supplying Georgia with gas from Russia was cut. Georgia was now in the throes of widespread anarchy as the fighting escalated in Abkhazia, a Zviadist insurgency began in Mingrelia, and the Mkhedrioni paramilitary units pillaged major towns. Furthermore, the Confederation of Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus organized volunteer units to fight against the Georgians. Russia also warned that if Georgia failed to stop the violence in the region, the Russian Parliament would consider granting South Ossetia’s request to join Russia; Vice President Alexander Rutskoi even threatened to use the Russian aviation to bomb Tbilisi.

To avoid a large-scale confrontation with Russia, the Georgian side agreed to attend a Russian-mediated meeting in Dagomys and signed the Sochi Agreement on 24 June 1992. Both sides agreed to the deployment of Joint Russian, Georgian, and Ossetian Peacekeeping Forces (JPF) and established the Joint Control Commission (JCC) comprised of Russian, Georgian, and South and North Ossetian members. The JPF included three battalions: two battalions of Georgian and Russian servicemen and the third battalion of Russian citizens of North Ossetia. The Russian side appointed the commander of the JPF.

In September 1993, Ludwig Chibirov became the chairman of the South Ossetian Supreme Soviet, later renamed the State Nykhas (Council of Elders). On 2 November 1993, the Supreme Council of South Ossetia adopted a constitution. Three years later, the Georgian and Ossetian sides signed the Moscow Memorandum pledging to seek a peaceful resolution of the conflict and avoid another round of bloodshed. In 1996, changes were made to the Ossetian Constitution, and the office of president was created. Chibirov successfully ran for his first term and remained in this post until 2001 when he was defeated by Eduard Kokoiyi.

Although the negotiations began in full force in 1997, little progress was made in conflict resolution as both the Tbilisi and
Tskhinvali authorities adopted irreconcilable positions on the status of the region. In 2000, the so-called Baden Package was signed providing for political and legal relations between the two sides and guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Georgia.

Tensions between Tbilisi and Moscow-backed Tskhinvali escalated following the election of Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili, who pledged to restore the territorial integrity of Georgia. In June 2004, the Georgian authorities accused South Ossetia of facilitating smuggling and contraband and shut down a large market at Ergneti, which served as a major emporium for the illegal trade of goods from Russia. In response, South Ossetian forces closed the main highway between Russia and Georgia for several days. The same month, Georgian authorities intercepted a Russian convoy carrying military equipment, including missiles, into South Ossetia, and Moscow and Tbilisi exchanged accusations and bitter reprimands. The situation continued to escalate throughout July, and as clashes between Georgian and Ossetian security forces intensified, the two sides found themselves on the verge of a full-scale confrontation. South Ossetia claimed that other separatist regions, including Abkhazia and Transnistria, pledged their support in the efforts against Georgia and mobilized their volunteer forces. The North Ossetian region of the Russian Federation also threatened to intervene in case of war. The situation was, however, resolved after the international community exerted great pressure on the sides involved; the opening of the strategic oil Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline played a considerable role in attracting the attention of the international community. In mid-July, the Georgian and Ossetian sides participated in the Russia-mediated talks in Moscow, and a tentative peace accord calling for a ceasefire was signed.

Over the next year, the ceasefire was repeatedly broken by both sides, and the hostilities continued. The South Ossetian leader Kokoity rejected Georgian offers of the widest possible autonomy and demanded full independence or unification with the North Ossetian region of the Russian Federation. Relations between Tskhinvali and Tbilisi remained tense. On 20 September 2005, a military parade was held in Tskhinvali to mark the unrecognized republic’s 15th anniversary of de facto secession from Georgia. It was attended by delegations from Russia, Abkhazia, Transnistria, and Nagorny-
Karabakh and featured a large number of troops and military hardware that violated all of the agreements on demilitarization that had been signed since 1992. Russian peacekeeping forces, while acknowledging the fact of violations of demilitarization agreements, failed to intervene. The parade was interrupted after a mortar attack wounded 10 people including women and children. The South Ossetian authorities accused Georgian forces of firing a mortar, but official Tbilisi denied any involvement and called for a joint investigation of this incident. The South Ossetian side then refused to participate in the Joint Control Commission, demanding an apology from Georgia for the mortar fire shelling. As accusations flew in both directions, Russia called on both sides to exercise restraint in their actions and urged them to continue the peace talks to defuse tensions in the conflict zone.

Georgia intensified its criticism of the Russian peacekeeping forces in light of their failure to prevent the South Ossetian authorities from deploying military hardware, including tanks and armored vehicles, in a demilitarized zone. Tbilisi also suggested changing the JCC’s format because this four-party body left Georgia in the unfavorable position of facing the three aligned sides of South Ossetia, Russia, and North Ossetia, which failed to act as unbiased mediators.

In late September 2005, President Saakashvili addressed the United Nations General Assembly and proposed a new plan for the resolution of the South Ossetian conflict and called for support from the international community. The plan included discussion of a new negotiating format, a demilitarization process, adoption of a law on restitution, direct contacts between Georgian and Ossetian organizations, creation of a free trade zone in the region. On 27 October 2005, the Georgian authorities unveiled their Action Plan on South Ossetia, which called for a peaceful resolution of the conflict through a direct Georgian–South Ossetian dialogue and promotion of a political settlement based on the Baden Package. However, in December 2005, Russia rejected Tbilisi’s plan and accused it of fueling tensions in South Ossetia. The same month, Ossetian leader Kokoity presented his own plan for a peaceful solution of the conflict, which largely repeated Tbilisi’s Action Plan.

Relations between Tbilisi and Tskhinvali deteriorated in early 2006, when Georgia demanded the withdrawal of Russian peacekeeping
forces from the conflict zone; in response, the Russian and South Ossetian sides accused Tbilisi of “direct propaganda of war.” Georgia continued to accuse the Russian peacekeepers of remaining inactive in their mission and of tolerating illegal armaments in the conflict zone. On 15 February 2006, the Parliament of Georgia unanimously approved a resolution reprimanding Russian peacekeepers and instructed the government to revise the Sochi Agreement of 1992 and replace Russian peacekeepers with international troops. The Ossetian authorities, backed by the Russian government, denounced this resolution and ruled out changes to the current mandate of Russian troops. Some leaders of the Russian Parliament called for the recognition of Georgia’s secessionist enclaves. The Kremlin launched a full-scale diplomatic offensive against Georgia, refusing to participate in a preplanned meeting of the Joint Control Commission in Vienna on the grounds that the meeting should be held “closer to the area of conflict.” Moscow and Tskhinvali organized a meeting in Moscow, without the participation of the Georgian side and the OSCE. After the meeting, on February 21, Russia refused to receive the Georgian prime minister in Moscow and stopped issuing visas to Georgian citizens. Furthermore, the Russian 58th Army launched exercises involving armored troops along the Georgian borders, and the Russian fighter planes violated Georgian airspace. The situation remains tense in the region, and despite Tbilisi’s assurances of its peaceful designs, there are serious concerns that events will lead to the escalation of the conflict and resumption of hostilities. In March, the South Ossetian officials began a new campaign for unification with Russia, and some Russian officials hinted that the Kremlin might make “a principled decision” on unification of breakaway South Ossetia with Russia’s North Ossetian Republic. This revelation elicited a strongly worded response from both official Tbilisi and the OSCE.

Tensions between Russia, South Ossetia, and Georgia flared anew in August–September 2006. A helicopter carrying the Georgian defense minister was shot at by separatists in a breakaway enclave on 3 September. The incident boosted a hard-liner stance in Tbilisi, where some politicians denounced it as a “terrorist act” and called for forceful resolution of the stagnated conflict.

The fall of 2006 saw an interesting change in the political dynamics in South Ossetia. With presidential elections of South Ossetia set on 12 November, official Tbilisi supported establishment of alterna-
tive polls for pro-Georgian candidates. Four candidates (Eduard Kokoity, Oleg Gabodze, Inal Pukhaev and Leonid Tibilov) run in the presidential polls of the unrecognized republic while five other candidates (Maia Chigoeva-Tsaboshvili, Giogi Chigoev, Teimuraz Jeregoev, Tamar Charaeva and Dimitri Sanakoev) competed in the alternative polls. The Tbilisi-based Russian-language Alania television, which was launched in late 2005 to target South Ossetian viewers, broadcasted political ads and other programs in support of candidates with pro-Georgian agenda. South Ossetian separatist authorities denounced Georgian actions and argued that the Tbilisi-backed alternative presidential polls aim at “dividing the Ossetian people.

As in the conflict in Abkhazia, Russia played a crucial role in Ossetia. Moscow wields enormous influence as a key mediator and guarantor of fulfilling the agreements, but its actions often speak otherwise and are manifestly pro-secessionist. Statements made by senior Russian officials and the appearance of the Russian government representatives, including members of the State Duma, together with the South Ossetian de facto authorities, highlight Russian support for official Tskhinvali. Ossetian leaders regularly visit Moscow for consultations and seek closer integration within the Russian Federation. Russian peacekeeping forces have proved to be ineffective or reluctant to engage the separatists and have often been implicated in illicit activities.

OSSETIA, CONFLICT IN (1918–1920). Unlike the rest of Georgia, Ossetians proved to be more susceptible to the Bolshevik ideas. In August 1917, local Bolsheviks organized the Union of the Revolutionary Working Peasantry (soyuz revolutsionnogo trudovogo krestyanstva) at the village of Ortevi. In March 1918, the Union helped organize an uprising against the Transcaucasian Seim and briefly seized Tskhinvali before the government forces drove them back. In July, local Bolsheviks established an organizational bureau of the Russian Communist Party at the village of Java and began creating cells throughout the region. In June 1919, the first conference of the Bolshevik cells formed the Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party and began preparations for an insurrection against the newly established Menshevik government of Georgia. The Ossetians claimed that they joined Russia voluntarily, not as part
of the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti in 1783, and in the agreement nothing was mentioned distinguishing North and South Ossetia; therefore, they argue, when Georgia ceded from the Russia Empire in 1918, it was natural for South Ossetia not to stay within the framework of Georgia.

The revolt began in the Roki district in October 1919 where Soviet authority was proclaimed. As the insurgents advanced to Tskhinvali, the Georgian government forces counterattacked and suppressed revolt, with many dissenters fleeing across the mountains into the Northern Ossetia where they continued plotting against Menshevik Georgia. In late April 1920, another revolt began in the Roki district, and Soviet authority was again proclaimed in early May. However, the government offensive in June 1920 crushed the insurgency. The region remained relatively calm for the next eight months before the Bolshevik invasion of Georgia in February 1921 toppled the Menshevik government. The conflict had important consequences for future Georgian–Ossetian relations. The Ossetians perceived it as a denial of their right to self-determination, and, claiming some 5,000 Ossetians killed and 13,000 more dead from hunger and epidemics, they consider the conflict to be the “first ethnic cleansing” committed by the Georgians. From the Georgian perspective, the conflict was due to the Ossetian attempt to seize Georgian territory as well as the Russian attempt to destabilize Georgia by encouraging separatist tendencies of its minorities. This sentiment was further reinforced when the Bolshevik authorities created the South Ossetian Autonomous District in 1922. Thus, the Georgians see South Ossetia as a concept forcibly and artificially introduced when Georgia was annexed by Soviet Russia.

OSSETIA, SOUTH. Former autonomous region within Georgia, enjoying de facto independence since the early 1990s. The territory of the former Autonomous Region of South Ossetia remains a matter of bitter dispute. Georgia refuses to acknowledge its status, and officially it remains part of Shida Kartli region. Georgians regard this area as an ancient Georgian land of Kartli and often refer to it as Samachablo, land of the Machabeli family, who ruled it in the 17th and 18th century. In recent years, official Tbilisi has adopted the term Tskhinvali District to refer to Ossetia, stressing that it is part of Shida
Kartli region. Ossetians, on the contrary, seek independence from Georgia and have proclaimed a Respublikæ Khussar Iryston or Republic of South Ossetia.

The Ossetians, also known as Oss or Alans, are descendants of Iranian/Indo-European speaking tribes that migrated from Central Asia in ancient times and settled in the North Caucasus. Through their military prowess and lighting raids, they played an important role in the politics on both sides of the Caucasus Mountains. The Ossetian principality remained under strong Georgian influence throughout its existence, and Georgians and Ossetians often joined forces to repel foreign threats, and, in general, they enjoyed friendly and sociable relations. The majority of Ossetians are Christians, but there is also a significant Muslim minority. The number of Ossetians in northern Kartli increased in the late 17th and 18th centuries when they migrated across the Caucasus Mountains in search of better lands. A part of the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti, South Ossetia was annexed by Russia in 1801; however, some Ossetians claim that the region was annexed by Russia in 1774 when a separate treaty between Russia and the North Ossetians was concluded. This argument is often used to support separatist tendencies of South Ossetian authorities that allege that the region remains a part of Russia since it never agreed to secede from either the Russian empire or the Russian Federation.

The region suffered from heavy taxation and oppression leading to major uprisings in 1804, 1810, 1830, 1840, and 1850. Serfdom was abolished in 1864. Following the Russian Revolution, Georgia proclaimed its independence in 1918 but faced increased Bolshevik activity in Ossetia, where the Menshevik government of Georgia had to use force to suppress uprisings instigated by the local Bolsheviks. However, following the Bolshevik occupation of Georgia in February 1921, Ossetia was given the status of an autonomous district in April 1922. During the Soviet period, the Ossetians felt discriminated against by both the Georgians and the Russians and sought greater autonomy. In 1989, Ossetian attempts to revise their status within Georgia led to an ethnic conflict and the establishment of an unrecognized republic under the Russian protectorate. Ossetia currently has its own constitution, legislative body, and president. It is organized into the four regions of Dzau, Znaur, Leningor, and Tskhinvali.
OTSKHELI, JOSEPH (1862–1919). Georgian pedagogue and public figure. Born in Kutaisi, Otskheli converted to Catholicism and studied in a Catholic school and the University of Odessa in the 1880s. Returning to Georgia, he worked as a clerk in the Tbilisi State Bank before starting his pedagogical career. He was closely involved in the Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians and became the first Georgian inspector of the Georgian Nobility School in Kutaisi in 1901. Four years later, Otskheli helped reorganize the school into the Georgian Nobility Gymnasium, the first Georgian high school in western Georgia, which he directed. In later years, Otskheli was instrumental in founding the Kutaisi People’s University, where he trained many future scholars and public figures.

OTTOMAN EMPIRE, GEORGIA AND. Aside from occasional raids, Georgia did not encounter Turkic tribes until the 9th–10th centuries when the Abbasid caliphs became overly dependent on these warlike tribes to bolster their power. In the early 11th century, the Seljuk tribes began migrating to Asia Minor and the Caucasus. After founding the Seljuk Sultanate in 1055, they expanded their sphere of influence to Iran, Iraq, and Syria and launched several attacks against Georgia in the 1060s; between 1064–1068, Sultan Alp-Arslan led two invasions of southern Georgia. In 1080, the so-called didi turkoba (“Great Turkish Troubles”) period began in Georgia when the Turkic tribes arrived in large numbers to settle on Georgian lands and turned the occupied territory into pastures, undermining the local agriculture and economy. Georgia was forced to recognize Seljuk dominance and paid tribute to the Seljuk sultans. However, Georgia recovered by the late 11th century, when King David IV Aghmashenebeli stopped the tribute in 1095, successfully repelled the Muslim invasions, and expanded his realm to the entire south Caucasus. His successors, King Giorgi III and Queen Tamar, successfully maintained Georgia’s predominance in the region until the early 13th century.

The Mongol invasions in the mid-13th century had a profound effect on Caucasus and the Middle East and contributed to the rise of the Ottoman state a century later. Under Osman I, the Ottoman Turks successfully campaigned against the Byzantine Empire and carved out their principality in western Anatolia. The 15th century brought
dramatic changes to the geopolitical situation of Georgia as a new powerful state of the Ottoman Turks emerged. In 1453, the Turks captured Constantinople and destroyed the Byzantine Empire. Another Christian power and former Georgian vassal state, the Empire of Trebizond fell to the Turks in 1461, and the Khanate of Crimea was established as an Ottoman vassal in 1475. Thus, Georgia found itself isolated from direct contacts with European culture and new international trade routes, and faced a powerful and hostile empire. The term osmaloba is used to describe the period of Ottoman domination in Georgia.

*Osmaloba in Western Georgia.* The Ottomans initially expanded their sphere of influence to southwestern and western Georgia. **Atabeg Kvarkvare** of Samtskhe countered their moves by negotiating an anti-Ottoman alliance with Western European powers. In 1459, his envoys joined those of King Giorgi VIII on a mission to Vienna, where Georgian emissaries met with Emperor Frederick III, who approved the alliance. The Georgian embassy then traveled to Florence and Rome, where they were received by the Pope, and continued on to France and Burgundy in 1461. Although European rulers supported the Georgian efforts against the Ottomans, none were willing to provide actual assistance, and this entire enterprise soon collapsed. Meanwhile, the Ottomans achieved considerable success since the local Georgian principalities feuded with each other and often assisted the Ottomans in their conquests. For example, **Atabeg Mzechabuk** of Samtskhe allowed the Ottoman troops to pass through his realm to attack his rival King **Bagrat** (1510–1565) of **Imereti** in 1510. The latter responded with a punitive expedition against Samtskhe in 1535, when he annexed this region to Imereti. Local nobles then invited the Ottomans to drive the Imeretians out of Samtskhe, and King Bagrat was defeated in the decisive battle at Sokhoistas in 1545. The battle signaled the start of the *osmaloba* in Samtkhe, which was turned into the Akaltsikhe pashalik by 1579 and later into the Gurjistan vilayet of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks began introducing Turkish customs and converting the local population of Samtskhe, Adjara, and Chaneti, which remained under Ottoman domination for the next three centuries.

In the mid-16th century, Ottoman interests in Georgia were challenged by the rising **Safavid Persia**, but the Persian–Ottoman
struggle for control of Caucasus was temporarily interrupted by the Treaty of Amassia in 1555. The peace agreement divided the region between the two rivals, with Kartli, Kakheti, and eastern Samtskhe in the Persian sphere of influence and western Georgia and western Samtskhe under the Ottomans. The Ottomans took advantage of this partition, and over the next 20 years they sought to extend their dominion to the rest of western Georgia. In 1590, Persia and the Ottoman Empire signed the Treaty of Istanbul, which confirmed their division of south Caucasus into eastern and western spheres of influences. The Kingdom of Imereti and the principalities of Guria and Samegrelo (Mingrelia) fought the Ottomans with varying degrees of success but ultimately had to acknowledge the Ottoman sovereignty. Local rulers ceaselessly sought ways to reduce foreign encroachments, but internal fighting and weak royal authority prevented them from achieving this goal. The Turco–Persian rivalry added another dimension to this struggle as the Georgian rulers sought to side with one empire to overthrow the other. In 1630–1639, the Turco–Persian War ended with another peace that again confirmed previous arrangements. In the late 17th century, the Ottoman Empire also encountered a new enemy, Russia, which quickly expanded its territory to the Caucasus. In 1681, the Russians were temporarily contained, but the Turks suffered defeat in Eastern Europe where the Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699 effectively put the Ottomans on the defensive in Europe. However, the Turks continued to exert their influence in western Georgia. In 1703, a large Ottoman army occupied Imereti, Guria, and Mingrelia, but subsequent turmoil in the Ottoman Empire helped the Georgians drive them back. Nevertheless, Ottoman garrisons remained in strategic places inland and along the Black Sea coast. In 1738, King Alexander V tried unsuccessfully to obtain military support from Russia. As the royal authority declined, the grand nobles (tavadis) gained in power, and their incessant intrigues and struggles only weakened the western Georgian principalities.

In 1750, King Solomon I sought to curb the power of the great nobles and drive the Ottoman forces out of western Georgia. On 14 December 1757, he won a decisive victory over the Ottoman army at Khesili, and the following year, he negotiated a military alliance with Kartli-Kakheti against the Porte. In 1759, Solomon prohibited the slave trade, perpetuated by the Turks, and ruthlessly persecuted
pro-Ottomans elements. Solomon’s policies soon produced results and led to peace with the Ottoman Empire in 1767. The following year, the Imeretian king appealed to Russia for help against the Turks. Although a Russian detachment under General Totleben arrived in Imereti in late 1769, the Russian involvement had produced no results by the time they left three years later. In the 1770s, the united forces of Imereti and Mingrelia repelled several Ottoman invasions and celebrated victories at the Chkherimela River (1774) and Rukhi (1779). Solomon I’s death in 1784 led to a struggle for the crown that continued for five years and weakened western Georgia.

The new Imeretian king, Solomon II, faced serious problems both within his realm and from abroad. Great nobles continued to defy his authority, and Solomon II’s attempts to extend his power to the rest of western Georgia only antagonized the powerful rulers of Mingrelia and Guria. In 1804–1810, Russia expanded its influence to Mingrelia and Guria and removed King Solomon from Imereti.

Osmaloba in Kartli. In the early 16th century, Kartli remained in the Persian sphere of influence, and the Treaty of Amassia only confirmed this. However, as the Persian state declined, Ottoman influence increased. In 1578, the Ottomans occupied Kartli, turning it into one of the imperial provinces and appointing an Ottoman official (beglarbeg) to govern it. Gori was turned into a special administrative unit (sanjak). The anti-Ottoman resistance was led by King Simon I, who earlier had been imprisoned by the Persians but had been released following the Ottoman successes against Persian troops. In 1578–1582, Simon’s energetic actions led to the liberation of key fortresses, including Tbilisi. In 1582, the Georgians routed a large Ottoman army on the Mukhrani Valley, and six years later, King Simon negotiated a peace treaty with the Ottomans, who recognized him as the Christian king of Kartli and pledged not to interfere in his affairs. By 1606, the Ottomans were driven from all of Kartli, which was now back under Persian domination. The eastern Georgian rulers made several attempts at creating an anti-Ottoman alliance, the most important being that of 1595. King Simon of Kartli, King Alexander of Kakheti, and Shah Abbas I of Persia concluded an alliance against the Ottomans and sought to gain the support of Western European powers. An embassy led by Ter-Jacob (Ter-Iakobi), was dispatched to Rome, Madrid, and Vienna in 1596 but failed to secure any effective
help since the European states were reluctant to engage the Ottoman sultan. Another attempt to rally the European powers was made in 1626 when King Teimuraz I sent his envoy Nikoloz Cholokashvili to Rome and Madrid.

The Ottomans regained their dominance in Kartli in the 1720s when they took advantage of the Safavid collapse in Persia in 1722 and the subsequent turmoil in Kartli in 1723. In 1724, the Russo–Turkish Treaty was concluded in Istanbul according to which the Turks claimed virtually all of Transcaucasia. In 1728, the Ottoman authorities divided Kartli between the Georgian nobles, whose constant feuding made it easy for the Ottomans to control them. In 1735, the Georgians, with Persian support, succeeded in driving the Ottomans out of Kartli.

In the mid-18th century, the kingdoms of Kartli-Kakheti and Imereti established military alliances to fight the Ottomans. King Erekle II was successful in his rapprochement with Russia, and during the Russo–Turkish War in 1769, the Georgian troops of Kings Erekle II and Solomon I opened a second front against the Ottomans, besieging the Atskhuri and Akhalkalaki fortresses and defeating the Turks at Aspindza on 20 April 1770. The Russo–Turkish Treaty of Küçük-Kaynardja of 1774 brought no territorial changes to the lands of Georgia, but the Porte renounced the tribute it had collected from western Georgia.

GEORGIA AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN THE 19TH AND 20 CENTURY

The Russian annexation of Georgia in the early 19th century began a new stage in the history of Georgian–Ottoman relations. In this respect, the Russian imperial expansion had a positive effect on Georgia since the Russo–Turkish Wars of 1806–1812, 1828–1829, and 1877–1878 led to the recovery of many Georgian provinces—Adjara, southern Guria, parts of Chaneti, Meskheti, Javakheti, etc.—that had been under Ottoman control for decades, if not centuries. Thus, the Russian Empire inadvertently accomplished the consolidation of the Georgian lands.

Naturally, the Ottomans refused to be reconciled with the loss of their eastern possessions and made several attempts to recover them.
World War I provided them with a great opportunity to recover lost territories after the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917. The Ottoman forces negotiated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Bolshevik government of Soviet Russia, which surrendered the Kars, Ardahan, and Batumi regions to the Porte. The Georgian authorities denounced this treaty and attempted to negotiate a new peace treaty with the Ottomans. As the Transcaucasian Federation disintegrated into the independent states of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, a conference was held at Batumi that ended with the signing of three agreements. The first made peace between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia and guaranteed the frontiers set by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The second reduced Armenia to Ottoman vassalage; and the third agreement established Ottoman control over the strategic railway in Georgia. The disastrous terms of the Treaty of Batumi led to the surrender of Georgian and Armenian lands, including the districts of Batumi, Kars, Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Alexandropol, Echmiadzin, and others. Georgia lost 11,381 km² and tens of thousands of Georgian people, while the Armenian losses amounted to some 18,125 km². Fortunately for Georgia, the treaty was abolished after the Ottoman defeat in World War I later that year.

In 1919, the Ottomans tried to seize the Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki regions, but they were defeated by the Georgian army under General Giorgi Kvinitadze. Two years later, as the Bolshevik forces invaded Georgia, Turkish troops attempted to capture the strategic port of Batumi. Although General Kvinitadze routed the Turks in Adjara, the Menshevik government was unable to turn the tide of the war against the Bolsheviks and immigrated to Europe. In October 1921, an agreement was signed between Turkey, Soviet Russia, and the Bolshevik authorities of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Known as the Treaty of Kars, it surrendered substantial territories of Georgia and Armenia to Turkey, but the latter, in turn, agreed to cede to Georgia suzerainty over Batumi and the territory to the north of the frontier under special conditions. The local population of Adjara was to enjoy administrative autonomy, and Turkey was to be assured free transit through Batumi. Turkey and Georgia also agreed to facilitate the crossing of the border by the inhabitants of the border zones on condition of the observance of the customs, police, and sanitary regulations.
Until the late 1980s, relations between Georgia and Turkey remained tense because Turkey had joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and was considered a possible threat to the Soviet Union. However, after a tumultuous history of hostilities and tensions, Georgia rediscovered its neighbor Turkey as a friendly and reliable partner after the collapse of the USSR. The two countries developed close relations that are further strengthened by the multi-billion-dollar pipeline projects that carry oil through Georgia to Turkey. At present, a large population of Laz live in the northeastern provinces of Turkey, which formerly constituted the ancient provinces of Tao, Klarjeti, Shavsheti, and Lazica. The majority of them converted to Islam but retained proficiency in Chan or Georgian languages and traditional customs. The precise number of this Georgian population is difficult to ascertain because of the Turkish nationality policies that censor or underreport data on ethnic minorities. The 1965 census divided the ethnic Georgian population into Laz (55,158) and Georgians (44,943) proper for a total population of 100,101. However, Georgian estimates place the total Georgian/Laz population in Turkey at well over 1.5 million.

OZAKOM. See SPECIAL TRANSCAUCASIAN COMMITTEE.

PAKOURIANOS, GREGORY. See GREGORY PAKOURIANOS.

PALESTINE. See HOLY LAND, GEORGIANS IN THE.

PALIAVSHILI, ZACHARY (1871–1933). Composer and conductor. Born in Kutaisi, he studied at the Tbilisi College of Music and the Moscow Conservatory. He began his career as a conductor and music teacher in 1903 and produced several original pieces. From 1908–1917, he directed the Georgian Philharmonic Society, and from 1919–1932, he worked as a professor and director of the Tbilisi Conservatory. Starting in 1922, he was the chief conductor of the Tbilisi Opera Theater, which now carries his name. Among his many works are the operas Abesalom and Eteri (1919), Dusk (1923), and Latavra (1928).
Paliashvili had two brothers who also became prominent composers and conductors. His brother Ivan Paliashvili (1868–1934) studied under the famous Russian artists Rimsky-Korsakov and Josef Suk and began his career as choirmaster and concertmaster in 1887. Over the next three decades he directed opera companies in St. Petersburg, Tbilisi, Odessa, Kiev, Kharkov, Riga and other cities. In 1922–1925, he worked as a professor of the Tbilisi Conservatory and was named People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR in 1924. Zachary’s other brother Polikarp Paliashvili (1875–1941) studied at the Moscow Conservatory and worked in Tbilisi theaters in 1903–1920 before joining the Paliashvili Opera and Ballet Theater and Opera Studio of Tbilisi Conservatory in the 1930s. He was named Honorary Artist of Georgian SSR in 1941.

PANASKERTELI-TSITSISHVILI, ZAZA (15TH CENTURY). Georgian political figure and scholar. His family originated in Panaskerteli in the historical Tao-Klarjeti province and settled in Kartli, where it eventually became one of the most powerful noble families. Zaza himself was the last representative of the Panaskerteli and founded the Tsitsishvili family, a name that he adapted from his father, Tsitsi. He helped found the hereditary realm of Satsitsiano in Kartli. His most important legacy is a medical volume, *Samkurnalo tsigni-Karabadini*, that contained theoretical and practical discussions of contemporary medicine and treatment. He applied reason and scientific methods to diagnosing and treating illnesses. The book became a standard medical manual for generations to come and had an important role in the development of the medical profession in Georgia.

PANKISI GORGE. About eight miles long and two and a half miles wide, the Pankisi Gorge is located just south of the Georgian–Chechen border in the northeastern district of Akhmeta. It is an important route across the Caucasus Mountains, and most of its inhabitants are descendants of ethnic Chechens and Ingush, who migrated into the region from the North Caucasus between 1830 and 1870. Called Kists in Georgian, they are typically bilingual in Chechen and Georgian. In the late 1990s, the region saw an influx of over 7,000 refugees from the conflict in Chechnya. These events later contributed to tensions in Russo–Georgia relations, as the Kremlin
accused Tbilisi of harboring the Chechen terrorists. The presence of so many refugees certainly had a negative effect on the region, and it became a haven for criminal activities, including drug smuggling and kidnappings. The Pankisi Gorge became the focus of international attention in 2002 when the United States and Russian authorities asserted that Islamic radicals fleeing Afghanistan and Chechnya were moving into the region. To help Georgian authorities reestablish control of the region, the U.S. government provided technical and financial assistance to train Georgian counterinsurgency forces. The arrival of U.S. military advisors was initially denounced by Moscow, where it was taken as evidence of American encroachment into Russia’s traditional sphere of influence. The Georgian forces launched several operations in the Pankisi Gorge in 2002–2004, extending the reach of the central authorities to the region. Many Chechen refugees began leaving the valley in 2004–2005.

PANTHEON OF PUBLIC FIGURES. Cemetery for prominent public figures, artists, and scholars around St. David Church on Mt. Mtatsminda in Tbilisi. The idea of establishing a pantheon of public figures was first advanced in 1915, and the pantheon was officially opened in 1929. It remains the most esteemed place of final rest for many Georgian writers, actors, scholars, and public figures. Among those buried there are writers Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, Nikoloz Baratashvili, Vasily Barnovi, Jacob Gogebashvili, Alexander Griboedov, Dimitri Eristavi, Vazha Pshavela, David Kldiashvili, Niko Nikoladze, Dimitri Kipiani, Joseph Grisashvili, Giorgi Leonidze, Galaktion Tabidze, Leo Kiacheli, and Simon Chikovani; artists Lado Gudiasvili, Kote Mardzhanisherivili, Sergo Zakariadze, I. Nikoladze, I. Paliashvili, and A. Khorava; scholars Nikoloz Berdzenishvili, Ilia Vekua, Nikoloz Muskhelishvili, and Simon Janashia; and public figures S. Todria, P. Makharadze, M. Tskhakaya, and Ekaterine Geladze-Jughashvili, who was Josef Stalin’s mother. In the 1990s, Merab Kostava, one of the leaders of the Georgian national liberation movement, was buried there, and in 2005, the remains of Kakutsa Cholokashvili, leader of the anti-Soviet resistance in the 1920s, were transferred from France to the Pantheon.
PARADZHANOV, SERGEY (1924–1990). One of the most highly acclaimed film directors of the 20th century. Born into an Armenian family in Tbilisi, he studied at the Kiev Conservatory of Music in 1942–1945 and the Moscow Film Institute (VGIK), graduating in 1951. He began his career as a director at the Kiev Dovzhenko Studio in 1953 and quickly established himself as an imaginative and innovative director, whose work reflected the cultural diversity of Georgia, where he was raised, and of the Caucasus in general. His Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors (1965) became a breakthrough film and international success, garnering the British Film Academy Award in 1966. His next film, Sayat nova (The Colour of Pomegranates) revealed his mastery of film art and the complexity of his vision that produced a series of unforgettable scenes. Facing increasing pressure from the Soviet authorities, Paradzhanov remained uncompromising in his pursuit of an ideal. In 1974, he was arrested on trumped-up charges of immorality, trafficking, etc., and was sentenced to six years of hard labor. He was released after international and Russian protests in 1978 but was not allowed to make films for years. In 1984, Paradzhanov finally was allowed to work at the Georgian Film Studio and directed two major films—Legenda o Suramskoi kreposti (1985) and Ashik Kerib (1988)—that further enhanced his stature as the preeminent Soviet director of his generation.

PARNAVAZ I (PARNABAZUS). King of Iberia in the third century BCE and founder of the Parnavazid dynasty. He was a nephew of Mamasakhldi Samara, one of the elders of Mtskheta. In the fourth century BCE, the Georgian principalities found themselves involved in the whirlwind of Alexander the Great’s campaign in the east. There is no historical evidence that Alexander himself campaigned in the Caucasus, but according to the medieval chronicle Kartlis tskhovreba, some Macedonian troops did reach Iberia, which they occupied and placed under the governorship of Azo. The “Greek” authorities proved to be harsh and uncompromising, which caused increasing discontent among the local population. According to Georgian tradition, young Parnavaz, a nephew of the last ruler of Mtskheta who had been assassinated by the new authorities, contacted Ereistavi Kuji of Egrisi and, with his support, launched a successful rebellion against Azo.
Parnavaz married the daughter of Kuji and thus controlled both the eastern and western Georgian principalities. He founded the Parnavazid dynasty and divided the eastern and southeastern Georgian lands into seven regions under the governorship of eristavis (Argveti, Kakheti, Gardabani, Tashir-Abotsi, Javakheti-Kolas-Artani, Samtskhe-Adjara, and Kvarjeti) and established Shida Kartli as a special region ruled by a spaspet. Western Georgia remained a subordinate state ruled by Kuji, Parnavaz’s father-in-law. King Parnavaz is credited with spreading the Georgian alphabet throughout the kingdom and introducing the cult of the Armazi and the goddess of fertility, Zaden. Under Parnavaz’ rule, Armazis-tsikhe, the citadel of Mtkskheti, was expanded and reinforced, and an immense statue of Armazi was erected here. Parnavaz maintained friendly relations with the heirs of Alexander the Great, especially with the Seleucid Empire in Asia.

PARNAVAZID (PHARNABAZID) DYNASTY (THIRD CENTURY BCE–2ND CENTURY CE). Founded by King Parnavaz I of Iberia, the Parnavazid dynasty was important in the development of Iberia. Governing Iberia, Egrisi and the southwestern regions of Tao-Klarjeti and Speri, the dynasty contributed to closer contacts among the Georgian population and paved the way for the eventual formation of a Georgian national identity.

PARSMAN I (PHARASMENES). King of Iberia in the mid-first century CE. King Parsman actively interfered in the affairs of neighboring Armenia, placing his brother Mithradates on the Armenian throne in the mid-first century and skillfully maneuvering between the powerful empires of Rome and Parthia. However, Mithradates later defied Parsman, who sent his son Radamist to Armenia. Radamist defeated Mithradates and seized the throne. Relations between father and son soon deteriorated, and Parsman had Radamist assassinated. The Iberian presence in Armenia disappeared after the Treaty of Rhandeia of 63 CE between Rome and Parthia allotted the privilege of nomination to the Parthian Arsacids and the right of investiture to the emperor of Rome.

PARSMAN II QVELI. King of Iberia in the mid-second century CE. Although Iberia enjoyed friendly relations with Rome in the late first
century, King Parsman openly opposed Rome and refused to pay homage to the Roman Emperor Hadrian (117–132) during his visit to Asia Minor, although the Roman emperor presented him with a war elephant and 500 troops. With the help of the Alans, Parsman attacked the Roman and Parthian tributaries in Albania and Armenia and expanded his sphere of influence.

**PARSMAN III.** King of Iberia between 135 and 185 CE. During the reign of Parsman’s predecessor, King Parsman II, relations between Iberia and Rome deteriorated and the Iberian ruler sought to extend his sphere of influence. Under Emperor Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE), the relations between the Roman Empire and Kartli (Iberia) significantly improved, and King Parsman III, accompanied by a large retinue, visited Rome to a royal welcome. According to Roman historian Cassius Dio, he was given a special privilege of offering a sacrifice on the capitol, and his equestrian statue was placed in the Temple of Bellona. In later years, he successfully fought against Parthia.

**PASKUNJI.** In Georgian mythology, a phoenix-like animal that helped and protected heroes and humans. Living in the underworld, *Paskunji* often warred with *gveleshapis* (dragons) and was summoned by burning one of his feathers. *Paskunji* could transport heroes to other places and heal wounds and illnesses. In some myths, *paskunjis* were also hostile to humans and persecuted them.

**PATIASHVILI, JUMBER (1940– ).** Georgian Party and government official, first secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia. Born in Lagodekhi, Patiashvili graduated from the Institute of Agriculture and began his career in the Communist Party apparatus. Between 1964 and 1985, he served in various party positions, including first secretary of the Central Committee of Komsomol and first secretary of the Town Committee of Gori. In 1985, he succeeded Eduard Shevardnadze as the first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party. Patiashvili tried to suppress the Georgian national liberation movement but, following Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms, it quickly grew in intensity. Patiashvili failed to reach a consensus with the opposition leaders and, on 9 April 1989, he turned to the Soviet military for help against the demonstrators. The subsequent massacre of peaceful
protestors resulted in the dismissal of Patiashvili. However, his political career was revived three years later when he was elected to the Parliament. Patiashvili subsequently organized the opposition Party of Unity and was reelected in the Parliament in 1999. He unsuccessfully ran in the presidential elections against his former boss Eduard Shevardnadze. In November 2003, he supported the Rose Revolution against Shevardnadze and was elected to the Parliament in 2004. See also TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS OF 9 APRIL 1989.

PATRONQMOBA. System of vassalage and personal dependence in ancient and medieval Georgia; the term stems from patroni or lord and qmoba or serfdom, but oftentimes terms batoni and batonqmoba are used instead. Patronqmoba was already a well-developed system by the eighth century CE. In the 11th century, the system was formalized, and the king began to grant fiefs under various conditions, i.e., those granted for life were known as sakargavi while those in hereditary tenure were defined as mamuli. The nobility (aznauroba) consisted of didi aznaurebi (great nobles) who turned into mtavrebi and didebulni by the late 12th century, and aznaurebi or petty gentry, who often served as vassals to the former as well as to the king and the church. The lower classes included the urban population, free peasantry, serfs, and slaves.

The grand nobles (tavadi) owned large estates (satavado) where they exercised supreme power, controlling every aspect of life. Each satavado has its own sign of distinction that was granted by the king; after the tavadi died, the sign was returned to the king, who granted it to the new tavadi. A candidate for the tavadi title was selected by the family members and usually was the eldest son of the late tavadi. The selection process was often accompanied by intrigues and struggles between the competing candidates and frequently led to violence. According to King Vakhtang VI’s legal code, there were three types of tavadis, didebulni, and middle and lesser tavadis. Thus, the code valued a didebuli’s life at 1,536 tumans, middle tavadi’s at 768 tumans, and that of a lesser tavadi at 384 tumans. The circle of didebulis was limited, and there were only six didebulis in Kartli: the eristavis of Aragvi and Ksani, and the lords Baratashvili, Mikhranbatoni, Amilakhvari, and Tsitsishvili; Imereti had even fewer didebuli families. Tavadis regularly
warred against each other, and although nominally subordinated to the king, they often defied the royal authority.

Relations between the *tavadi* and *aznaurs* (minor gentry) were often tense, and they were based on the feudal vassalage system. *Aznaurs* were considered to be the slaves (*kmansi*) of their lords. In the Middle Ages, they were divided into those born into nobility (*mamesuln* or *natesavt aznaurni*) and those who were granted it by the king or a lord (*aghzevebuln*). In the 18th century, Georgian criminal law divided the *aznaurs* into three classes—*gandidebuli* (great), *shua* (middle), and *tsalmogvi* (lesser)—based on their material possessions and specific punishment was assigned for crimes against them. Thus, the legal code valued the life of *gandidebuli aznaur* at 192 tumans, of a *middle aznaur* at 96 tumans, and of a *tsalmogvi* at 48 tumans.

In the towns, the majority of urban residents were artisans and merchants. Artisans were usually enserfed while merchants were organized into four categories. The highest category, or wealthiest merchants, was equal in status to the first two classes of *aznaurs*; the second category was on a par with the *tsalmogvi aznaurs*; the third ranked with the *msakhuri* (servants); and the fourth category, or meager merchants, was equated with the peasantry.

The Georgian peasantry was organized around large patriarchal households led by older males. Families usually included several generations living under one roof, on an average 20 to 30 individuals. Labor was divided between the family members, each specializing in a certain line of work. As in any other feudal society, the Georgian peasantry was required to pay taxes and render services. The manner in which the peasants were enserfed varied and led to the emergence of various categories of peasants. The majority of peasants were *mebegre* or those who paid feudal dues and taxes. A *Tskalobis qma* was a serf given from one lord to another or granted by the king to a lord; a *shetsiruli qma* (clerical serf) was given by the king or lord to the church; a *naskidi qma* was bought and sold between the lords; *samkvidro qma* were hereditary serfs who passed to an heir as part of a noble’s inheritance; *nebieri qma* entered serfdom in order to receive protection and land; and a *sheudzebeli movale* was enserfed because of a debt.

By the mid-19th century, these categories had evolved into a system of peasant hierarchy. *Msakhuri* were domestic servants of a
lord, but some of them were able to achieve the status of vassal gentry. Below them were *azati* or freed peasants who were freed from their obligations to a lord but paid taxes to the royal treasury. King Erekle II decreed that any peasant who was kidnapped or sold into slavery and managed to return to his village received his freedom and became *azati*. The *tarkhani* were petty gentry and wealthy peasants who were semi-dependent on a lord, paying some taxes or rendering a few services to their master. The peasants who lost their land and worked as hired hands were known as *bogano*. Those who had lost their land with a lord and rented land from another lord were known as *khizani* or *mobarebuli*—effectively tenant farmers. At the bottom of the peasant hierarchy were the *mojalabe*, serfs who had no rights and lived in near-slavery. In the 19th century, small landowning nobles with fewer than 21 serfs made up almost 50% of nobility in Kartli-Kakheti and over 75% in western Georgia. In the 1860s, 137 nobles owned between 100 and 500 serfs, and only 2 nobles owned more than 1,000 serfs in the Tbilisi province, while in Kutaisi province, seven nobles owned more than 500 serfs and four owned more than 1,000.

The case of Aragvi Saeristavo can be used to illustrate the social and administrative structure of Georgian society. In the early 15th century, the saeristavo’s social structure was arranged in the following order: *didebuli* (lord), *aznauri* (petty nobles), *erovani* (commoners), *msakhuri* (servants), and *glekhi* (peasants). But in later centuries, it was transformed to *tavadi* (lord), *aznauri* (petty nobles), *msakhuri* (servants), and *mebegre glekhi* (serfs). In administrative terms, the eristavi or head of saeristavo was assisted by ganmgebeli (in charge of specific districts), khevistavi (in charge of valleys), kheviseri (village elders), tskhistavi (fortress commandants), and others. The eristavi’s private affairs were handled by a sakhl-ukhutsesi (majordomo), bokault-ukhutsesi (in charge of security), baziertukhutsesi (in charge of hunt), mouravi, and others. The emancipation of serfs in Georgia in the late 1860s created a new governing system on a local level. Villages were often merged into communes led by mamasakhlisi (head of the village or commune) and new administrative positions were created, i.e., *gziri* (errand-boys), *mevele* (field guards), *merue* (irrigation ditch sentry), and others. See also GARIGEBA KHELMTSIPIS KARISA.
PERADZE, GRIGOL (1899–1942). Georgian ecclesiastic figure, theologian, and historian. Born in the village of Bakurtsikhe in Kakheti, he graduated from Tbilisi Theological Seminary and Tbilisi State University with a degree in philosophy. Following the Soviet takeover of Georgia in 1921, Peradze immigrated to Germany where he continued his studies at the University of Berlin, receiving his doctorate in history. From 1925–1932, he was an associate professor of history at the University of Bonn and later taught at the University of Warsaw in Poland from 1933–1942. Deeply religious, Peradze was ordained as a Greek Orthodox priest in 1931 and rose to the rank of archimandrite in 1934. In the late 1920s, he founded the St. Nino Orthodox Church in Paris and began publishing the scientific journal Jvari Vazisa (Cross of Vine) from 1931–1934. As a result of Peradze’s work, many important Georgian manuscripts were discovered in Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, and Italy. In 1933, he moved to Warsaw. During World War II, he participated in the anti-Nazi resistance and was arrested by the Gestapo in May 1942 for hiding Jewish families. Later that same year, he was sent to Auschwitz concentration camp, where, on 6 December, he sacrificed himself in a gas chamber to save a Jewish family. Grigol Peradze was canonized by the Georgian Orthodox Church in 1995.

PERSIA, GEORGIA AND. Relations between Georgia and Persia date back many centuries. In the sixth and fifth centuries BCE, as Achaemenid Persia expanded its territory, its influence helped to shape political institutions, social structure, and culture of early Georgian states. According to Herodotus, Georgian tribes were included in the 18th and 19th satrapies and participated in the Persian campaigns against Greek cities. Herodotus recorded the Georgian tribes of Moschi, Tibareni, Macrones, and Mossynoei with “wooden helmets . . . shields and small spears with long points,” the Mares with “plaited helmets . . . [and] small shields of hide and javelins,” and the Colchians with “woolen helmets and small shields of raw ox-hide and short spears and sword withal.” By the late fifth century, some Georgian tribes had organized large tribal associations and enjoyed relative independence from Persia. The famous Greek commander Xenophon noted in the Anabasis that these Georgian tribes, including the Colchians, had ceased to be under Achaemenid rule.
The Hellenistic expansion under Alexander the Great gave impetus to the formation and consolidation of an independent Georgian monarchy under Parnavaz, who often adopted Persian institutions as models in organizing his government. Over the next centuries, Georgian states, especially the eastern principality of Iberia, maintained a precarious existence between the two great rivals for control of the Caucasus, namely Persia and Rome (later succeeded by Byzantium). Georgian rulers often successfully played these powers off against one another to secure their position and independence. The situation changed in 224 CE, when the Sasanian Empire was established in the place of the declining Parthia. Eastern Georgia was dominated by the Sasanian state and took part in its campaigns against Rome; Iberian rulers enjoyed a status of a high dignitary, not a vassal, of the Sasanian realm. As a result of this close relationship, the religion of Zoroastrianism was introduced in Iberia.

In the third and fourth centuries, Georgia again found itself involved in the struggle between the Sasanian Empire and Rome. The Treaty of Nisibis (298) established Roman control of eastern Georgia (Kartli) for the next 60 years. This was an important period, since Christianity was proclaimed the state religion by King Mirian in 337, forever changing the relations between Georgia and Persia. After the Roman defeat at Ctesiphon, Persia gained control of Kartli and its king Varaz-Bakur II (363–365) became a Persian vassal under the Peace of Acilisene in 387. Later, King Pharsman IV (406–409) ceased to pay tribute to the Sasanian rulers, but Persia soon restored its control and instituted the practice of appointing a viceroy (piťaɪaɪxe/bid axe) to control Iberia. This office eventually became hereditary in the ruling house of Lower Kartli and established the piťaɪaɪxeat, which included extensive territory in Iberia, and turned it into a center of Persian influence in eastern Georgia. Relations between the two states deteriorated due to differences of religion, and the Sasanian attempts to replace Christianity with Mazdaism (a term effectively synonymous with Zoroastrianism). Although Georgian nobles tended to convert to Mazdaim, their commitment proved shallow, while Christianity quickly spread among the commoners.

The religious conflict was closely connected with the political struggle. King Vakhtang I, who was supposedly related to the Persian royal house on his mother’s side and was married to a Persian
princess, initially supported the Persians in Georgia and even participated in Persian campaigns against Byzantium and India. However, he gradually reversed his position and led several uprisings against Persia. He was also instrumental in gaining an autocephalous status for the Georgian Orthodox Church. After Vakhtang’s death, Kartli was forced back into the Sasanian sphere of influence. In the sixth century, Byzantium and Persia continued their struggle for supremacy in the Caucasus, and Georgia—especially Lazica and Colchis—turned into their battlefield. This imperial contest had a tremendous influence on Georgia. In 580, Hormozd IV (579–590) abolished the monarchy in Kartli and turned it into a Persian province governed by a Persian-appointed governor (marzban). Although the Byzantine Empire recaptured this region in mid-580, Emperor Maurice and Shah Khusrau II later agreed to divide Iberia between them, with Tbilisi remaining in Persian hands and Mtskheta, the old Iberian capital, coming under Byzantine control.

As the war between the empires resumed in the early seventh century, Eristaveristavi Stepanoz I joined forces with Persia to reunite the eastern Georgian territories. However, in 627–628, Kartli suffered from the Khazar invasions followed by Emperor Heraclius’s offensive that ravaged Tbilisi.

Weakened by continuous fighting, eastern Georgia was unable to confront the Arabs in the mid-seventh century. Stepanoz II had to recognize the sovereignty of the caliph and pay tribute; an Arab amir was appointed in Tbilisi around 653. Persia also suffered from the Arab invasions and the subsequent rise of the Turkoman states. However, in the 11th century, Georgia emerged under King David IV Aghmashenebeli to become one of the foremost states in the Near East and dominated the South Caucasian region for the next two centuries. Georgia’s decline began with the Mongol invasions of the 1220s and the subsequent rise of the Ottoman Turks in the 14th–15th centuries. Georgia soon fragmented into three kingdoms (Kartli, Kakheti, and Imereti) and the duchy of Samtskhe-Saatbago. Meanwhile, Persia, led by the Safavid dynasty, gradually recovered from its decline and challenged the Ottoman Empire over the Caucasus, and Georgia in particular. In the 15th–16th centuries, the two powers fought each other over Georgia from 1514–1555, 1578–1590, 1602–1618, and 1623–1639. As Georgia became a theater of war,
thousands of Georgians perished or were taken captive. In 1540–1541, the Safavids captured Tbilisi and plundered it and the surrounding region; Shah Tahmasp then returned in 1546–1547, 1551, and 1553–1554. The Treaty of Amassia of 1555 divided Georgia between the two powers, with Kartli, Kakheti, and eastern Samtskhe in the Persian sphere of influence and Imereti and western Samtskhe in Ottoman hands. The Safavid rulers of Persia used this opportunity to tighten their authority in eastern Georgia and introduced Persian social and political institutions and appointed Georgian converts to Islam to the thrones of Kartli and Kakheti. Furthermore, numerous Persian raids against Georgia brought tens of thousands of captives back to Persia. The introduction of Georgians into Persian society and the court had a long-lasting effect. Over the next century, many Georgians rose in the army and civil administration and had a significant influence on the character of Safavid society. The Safavid shahs began to rely on the Ġolām or royal slave troops, largely composed of Georgians, to secure and maintain their authority in the struggle against local military aristocracy (qızılbaş). This became especially evident under Shah Abbas I the Great, who was born to a Georgian mother and skillfully manipulated Georgians to achieve his goals. Abbas used his Georgian ġolām troops to crush the power of the Qızılbaş aristocracy and used the wealth he acquired from confiscated properties to further reinforce his position. He surrounded himself with many Georgian nobles, appointing them to key positions throughout Persia. Among his wives were Leila, the sister of King Luarsab II of Kartli, Helene, the sister of King Teimuraz I of Kakheti, and Fahrim-jan Begum, sister of King Simon I of Kartli. However, his fondness for Georgians did not prevent him from exacting brutal reprisals against the defiant Bagrationi rulers of eastern Georgia. From 1614–1618, Shah Abbas launched three invasions of the eastern Georgian principalities of Kartli-Kakheti, in which tens of thousands were killed and more than 200,000 Georgian were resettled into Persia, where they helped to develop agriculture and other industries; their descendents still reside in various provinces, mainly in Fereydan, of Iran. Abbas also ruthlessly persecuted the Bagration rulers, giving his blessing to the murder of King Alexander of Kakheti in 1605, castrating Princes Levan and Alexander in 1620, killing King Luarsab II of Kartli in 1622, and torturing to death Queen Ketevan of
Kakheti in 1624. Abbas’ policies soon backfired as he faced a widespread uprising in Georgia in 1615–1625. Georgians, led by the maverick commander Giorgi Saakadze, successfully engaged the Persian army at Marabda, Martkofi, and Isani Valley and thwarted Shah Abbas’ plans to destroy the Georgian principalities.

In Persia proper, Georgian converts to Islam enjoyed a high status in society and at the court. John Fyer, who was in Esfahan in 1677, claimed that the “Queen-Mother [of Persian shahs] is always of the Family of the Georgian princes.” The case of Allahverdi Khan (Undilaidze) clearly demonstrates this. In 1595, he became the commander-in-chief (qullar-aqasi) of the golām troops, one of the five principal offices in Safavid Persia, and later served as the governor of Fars, becoming the first golām to attain equal status with the Persian qizilbas tribal chiefs. In 1597, Allahverdi Khan became the governor of Kohgiluya province and participated in Shah Abbas’ campaign in eastern Persia. By 1600, he was the most powerful man in Persia after the shah and proved himself a capable and cunning administrator. He assumed supreme command of the Persian army and was the first to receive the title of sardar-e laskar (commander-in-chief). In 1601–1602, he conquered Bahrain and later commanded the Persian army against the Ottoman Empire in 1603–1612. During his lifetime, Allahverdi Khan was responsible for the construction of many public buildings, including the still-standing bridge across the Zayanda-rud at Isfahan.

After the death of Shah Abbas, Shah Sefi I ascended the throne with the help of Georgian golāms led by Khosro Mirza and Rostom Khan Saakadze, who were opposed by a rival faction of Allahverdi Khan-Undilaidze’s two sons Imamquli Khan and Daud Khan. In 1632, King Teimuraz of Kartli-Kakheti campaigned against the Persian province of Ganja-Karabagh and was secretly supported by Daud Khan, who sought to weaken his opponents and replace Shah Sefi with one of the other sons of Shah Abbas. After the expedition turned into a fiasco, Sefi appointed Khosro Mirza to govern Kartli and Selim Khan to govern Kakheti, effectively defeating the Undilaidze faction.

The Persian influence in eastern Georgia increased in the mid-17th century when Kartli-Kakheti became, in effect, a province of Persia and regularly paid tribute and gifts. The Georgian economy was
closely linked to that of Persia, and Georgian literature was enriched by translations of Persian classics and adaptations of Persian genres. Unlike Kartli, Kakheti knew little peace as its Bagrationi rulers continued the struggle against Persia. The region was repeatedly invaded until its King Teimuraz was driven into exile in 1648. In order to end the resistance in Kakheti once and for all, the Safavids attempted to populate the country with Turkmen nomads, which led to a widespread Bakhtironi Uprising in 1659. Although the revolt halted the settlement of Turkmens, Kakheti remained in the Persian sphere of influence. The reigns of Georgian converts Rostom Khan and Shah Nawaz (Vakhtang V) ushered in a period of relative peace and prosperity in Kartli that helped develop its culture and economy. Vakhtang V used Persian support to strengthen the central authority in Kartli and create conditions for the cultural and economic development of the country. To achieve his goal of uniting the Georgian principalities, he arranged the assassination of the Kakhetian ruler Eristavi Zaal of Aragvi and took control of virtually all of Kakheti. In 1661, he interfered in western Georgia, and taking advantage of civil strife there, he placed his son Archil on the throne of Imereti. He then campaigned against Odishi (Mingrelia), which he gave to his son-in-law Levan. By the 1670s, Vakhtang had, in effect, united the Georgian principalities into a single kingdom. However, the rise of a powerful Georgian kingdom alarmed factions at the Persian and Ottoman courts, who thwarted Vakhtang’s master plan and forced him to relinquish his conquests.

Vakhtang’s successor Giorgi XI (1678–1688) tried unsuccessfully to achieve the unity his father had sought. He eventually reconciled with the Safavids and entered their service under the name of Gorgin Khan. He had an illustrious, albeit tragic, career. Giorgi initially became the beglarbeg of Kerman and suppressed the Baluchi incursions. In 1703, facing the invading Afghani tribes, Shah Soltan Hosayn appointed him sepahsalar or commander-in-chief of the Persian army and the governor (beglarbeg) of Qandahar. Since Giorgi had no offspring, his nephew Kaikhosro (Kosrow Khan) was appointed to rule Kartli in his absence. Giorgi quickly subjugated the Afghani tribes in 1704 but proved to be unforgiving toward the local population, requisitioning goods and raising taxes. On Ash Wednesday 1709, the Afghans attacked and slaughtered the Georgian garrison in Qandahar, taking advantage of the absence of the Georgian de-
tachment of Prince Alexander Luarsabis-dze who had marched off to pacify one of the nearby regions. After learning of this disaster, Shah Sultan Husayn in 1711 dispatched Giorgi’s nephew Kaikhosro with 30,000 Persians and 1,200 Georgians to suppress the uprising. However, this expedition was doomed from the start, since the Persian grand vizier, who had intrigued against the Georgian faction, allegedly conducted a secret correspondence with the Afghans and informed them of the Georgian moves; in addition, the troops were not properly funded and the Persian contingent was placed under separate command. Kaikhosro initially managed to defeat the Afghan forces and besiege Qandahar. However, the Afghans gathered their reinforcements and the Persian troops began to desert in large numbers, leaving the Georgians to fight. In the final battle, only several hundred Georgians and Persians survived out of the entire expeditionary force; both Kaikhosro and Prince Alexander Luarsabis-dze perished. The loss of capable Georgian generals and their elite troops left Persia exposed to future attacks that eventually culminated in the Afghan Invasion of 1722.

Back in Kartli, the nephew of King Giorgi XI, Vakhtang VI was appointed as a regent of Kartli while Giorgi campaigned in eastern Persia and Afghanistan. Taking advantage of the Persian support, Vakhtang attempted to strengthen the royal authority, abolish the slave trade, and introduce reforms. He created a standing army (ntsvelta jari) in order to deal with defiant lords. In 1705, he convened a church council, which reorganized the church and selected a new catholicos patriarch Domentius. Vakhtang also initiated lasting legal reforms and supervised the codification of Georgian law and studied Greek, Armenian, and Jewish precedents to reform the legal system. He also adopted a new set of laws, Dasturlamali, which thoroughly reorganized the government. Vakhtang began the systematic resettlement of the population to the devastated and depopulated regions in Trialeti, Baidar, Tashir, etc. Major towns were renovated, and palaces were built in Tbilisi and Gori. Roads were repaired, and a sophisticated irrigation system was constructed in Kartli. In 1709, Vakhtang established the first printing press in Georgia and began publication of religious texts; three years later, the press produced the first printed version of Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani, which was edited by the king himself. Advised by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani,
Vakhtang established several commissions to translate foreign treatises and laid the foundation for Rustvelology, the study of Rustaveli’s epic. He supervised the scholarly commission, led by Monk Egnatashvili, that gathered surviving historical texts throughout eastern Georgia and produced an edited and updated version of *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, the main source of Georgian history between the 5th and 17th centuries.

Vakhtang’s regency was interrupted by the tragic events of 1711, when King Giorgi IX and his successor King Kaikhosro died in Afghanistan. Vakhtang was recalled to receive his investiture to Persia, where the shah demanded his conversion to Islam. Vakhtang initially refused and was imprisoned for four years. In the meantime, his closest adviser Orbeliani traveled to Europe and appealed for help from King Louis XIV and Pope Clement XI. With no European help anticipated, Vakhtang agreed to conversion and was confirmed as king of Kartli in 1716 but was kept in Persia for another three years. Returning to Georgia, he found the situation had dramatically changed. His renegade brother Iese had reversed some of his reforms and tyrannized the population. Embittered by his experience in Persia, Vakhtang sought new allies and negotiated a military alliance with Russia’s Tsar Peter the Great in 1720. A joint Russo–Georgian campaign was planned against Persia in 1722, and the Russian troops marched into Dagestan, seizing Derbent, before they were called back. Vakhtang, meantime, rallied 40,000 Georgians and Armenians at Ganja and awaited Peter for a joint offensive into Persia. After three months of waiting, during which he rejected Persian appeals for help against the Afghans, Vakhtang made the momentous mistake of disbanding his army. The shah dismissed him from the throne, which he gave to King Constantine of Kakheti. In 1723, the Persian and Dagestani armies led by Constantine invaded Kartli, devastating the countryside and pillaging Tbilisi. Later that year, the Ottomans jumped into the fray, capturing Tbilisi and installing a new government. The period of Turkish domination (1723–1735), known as *Osmaloba* in Georgian, saw a rapid deterioration of the local economy and cultural life. The Turks laid a heavy tribute on the population that led to the depopulation of many regions.

In 1735, Nadir Khan, a maverick Persian commander, launched his conquest of Transcaucasia and was assisted by some Georgian nobles, among whom Prince Teimuraz of Kakheti was the most important and
privileged. The Georgian hopes of gaining independence by turning the
Persians against the Turks were dashed when Nadir, who crowned him-
self shah in 1736, began establishing a Persian administration. Thus,
the Osmaloba was replaced by the Qizilbashoba or the Persian yoke.
The exorbitant taxes levied by Nadir Shah soon provoked an uprising
in Kartli and Kakheti, forcing the shah to make concessions. In 1744,
his gave the throne of Kakheti to Teimuraz II and that of Kartli to
Teimuraz’s son Erekle II. The death of Nadir Shah in 1747 led to civil
war in Persia, allowing Kings Teimuraz and Erekle to secure a respite
for eastern Georgia. Their reign proved to be one of the happiest peri-
ods in the history of Georgia. Both kings conducted numerous expedi-
tions into Transcaucasia and played important roles in the ongoing civil
strife in Persia. In 1752, King Erekle routed the Afghan Azad Khan, a
rival of the Persian Zand dynasty, near Yerivan and later captured him
at Kazakh in 1760. The Georgians successfully campaigned in Arme-
nia in 1765, 1770, and 1780, and almost every year they drove back the
incursions of the raiding bands from Daghestan. In 1762, after the
death of Teimuraz II, Erekle proclaimed himself King of Kartli and
Kakheti, thereby uniting eastern Georgia. The reign of King Erekle re-
vived the country as measures were taken to settle the depopulated ar-
eas, to revive industry and trade. Erekle strove to introduce Western-
style industry in Georgia inviting specialists from Western Europe and
sending Georgians to master various trades.

In spite of all these successes, Georgia remained in a precarious
position, and Georgian monarchs continued to seek assistance from
Russia. King Teimuraz had traveled to Russia in 1760 but arrived a
few days after the death of Empress Elizabeth. King Erekle was more
successful in his rapprochement with Russia and participated in the
Russo–Turkish War in 1769–1771. He also appealed to St. Petersburg
for protection, and the treaty between Georgia and Russia was signed
on 24 July 1783, at Georgievsk. According to it, the Kingdom of
Kartli-Kakheti came under the protectorate of Russia and recognized
the supremacy of the Russian rulers. The latter, in turn, pledged to
safeguard the unity of the kingdom. King Erekle II and his heirs were
guaranteed the throne, and the Georgian Orthodox Church was al-
lowed to remain independent; King Erekle was also promised mili-
tary aid, including that needed to reunite within his realm the Geor-
gian lands under the jurisdiction of foreign countries.
The Russian orientation of Erekle II and the arrival of Russian troops in Georgia alarmed the neighboring powers. Persia, just emerging from the throes of civil strife, found itself under a new ruler, Agha Muhammad Khan of Qajars, who brought most of the Persian lands under his sway. He demanded from King Erekle II to denounce the Treaty of Georgievsk and recognize the Persian suzerainty. Erekle’s refusal and commitment to the alliance with Russia threatened the Persian interests in the region. In 1795, Agha Muhammad Khan attacked eastern Georgia, where King Erekle made a desperate attempt to halt the invaders but managed to rally only some 5,000 men against the 35,000 Persians. In a three-day pitched battle at Krtsanisi on 9–11 September 1795, the Georgian forces were defeated, and Tbilisi was taken and pillaged in a dreadful fashion. The Persian invasion was followed by an invasion of Daghestanians that further devastated Kartli-Kakheti. In response to Erekle’s pleas for help, only two Russian battalions arrived and they did not reach Kartli-Kakheti until long after the invasion was over. Russia declared war on Persia in March 1796, but in November, Empress Catherine II died and her son Paul I recalled the Russian troops from Transcaucasia at once. Agha Muhammad Khan of Persia set out again for Georgia but was assassinated near Shusha in June 1797.

Devastated by the Persian invasions, Kartli and Kakheti were annexed by Russia in 1800, supplanting the Persian domination. In the early 1800s, Prince Paul Tsitsianov, Russian commander-in-chief in Georgia, successfully campaigned in south Caucasus and expanded the Russian territory into Armenia and Azerbaijan. Russia and Persia clashed again over Georgia between 1804 and 1813, and the Qajar court supported anti-Russian movements in Georgia and sheltered many discontented nobles, including Prince Alexander Batonishvili. In 1807, Persia negotiated an anti-Russian alliance with Emperor Napoleon, who recognized the Persian claims to Georgia; however, the treaty became ineffective six months later when Napoleon concluded an alliance with Russia at Tilsit. The Russo–Persian War of 1804–1813 ended with the Treaty of Gulistan that forced Persia to give up all claims to Kartli and Kakheti in favor of Russia, thereby effectively ending its centuries-long involvement in Georgian political affairs. Although Russia and Persia were at peace, the Persian rulers still had hopes of reclaiming Georgia. The two empires fought
another war in 1826–1828, which ended in another Persian defeat and the Treaty of Turkmanchay confirmed Russia’s control of Georgia. Persia was never again able to challenge Russia’s supremacy in Georgia.

In recent history, Georgia has enjoyed normal relations with Iran. In 2004, President Mikhail Saakashvili visited Tehran to negotiate economic agreements and expand cooperation between the two countries in order to establish stability in the region and work in such fields as energy and transit. In January 2006, after acts of sabotage in Russia left Georgia without gas and electricity amid the coldest winter in a century, Iran became an alternative source of energy and provided Georgia with gas.

PERSIA, GEORGIAN COMMUNITIES IN. Georgians were introduced into Persia in the 16th century when the raids of the Safavid shahs resulted in the capture of thousands of Georgians. The Georgian community in Persia was further augmented by Shah Abbas, who campaigned in Kakheti and Kartli in the early 17th century and resettled 200,000 Georgians in Persia. Most of these Georgians were settled in Fereydan in Esfahan Province, where they helped to develop agriculture and other industries. Unfortunately, data on the Georgians of Fereydan before the 19th century is scarce; at that time, several European travelers passed through this region. In 1840, Sir Austen Henry Layard described a Georgian “colony” where Christians had retained their native language and their religion. “They were industrious, and their villages, which were numerous and surrounded by gardens and orchards, had a prosperous appearance. They were to be recognized at once by their features, which differed from those of the surrounding populations. Their women went unveiled, and many among those whom I saw were strikingly handsome. An abundance of water from the mountains, carried by innumerable watercourses and subterranean channels to all parts of the plain, irrigate a vast number of melon beds, producing fruit of excellent quality, which was sent for sale to Isfahan and elsewhere. A kind of clover, bearing a small fragrant flower, was also largely cultivated.”

Lado Agniashvili claimed that in 1895 there were 14 Georgian villages in Fereydan with 2,500 households or 15,000 people. Ten years later, the European traveler A. F. Stahl described about 5,000
Georgian households, most of them converts to Islam, living in the villages of Akhureh Bala, Akhureh Pa’in, Afus, and Dash Kasan. In 1922, a Georgian newspaper claimed that as many as 8,000 Georgian households or approximately 35,000 people lived in Fereydan. Five years later, the Georgian scholar Arnold Chikobava reduced this estimate to about 3,000 households and 20,000 people. The renowned scholar Nikolay Marr studied the Georgian communities in Persia in 1925 and interviewed locals who provided him with details on the Georgian villages of Akhore bala or Martqopi, Dchughruti, Jaqbaqi, Simaki, Tashkesana, Boyni, Kiamaritoleli, Afusi, Shaurdi, Khamisliani, and Uzun bulaqi. All of these villages had over 200 households or at least 800 to 1,000 Georgians.

The Georgian communities in Iran retain their Georgian identity and traditions and speak Georgian that is heavily influenced by the Persian language. Relations between these communities and Georgia remain close, and some Fereydan Georgians travel to study in Tbilisi. In 2004, President Mikhail Saakashvili visited Fereydan, where he was greeted by thousands of local Georgians.

**PETER THE IBERIAN (PETRE IBERI) (ca. 411–491).** Prominent Christian neo-Platonic philosopher thought by some scholars (Shalva Nutsubidze, Ernest Honigmann) to be a Georgian prince, who wrote under the assumed identity of Dionysius and is generally known to scholars as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. According to these authors, the son of King Buzmar of Iberia, Prince Murvan, left secular life and became a well-known theologian whose works laid the foundation for the school of Christian Neoplatonism and development of dialectical philosophy. In 452–491, Peter the Iberian was Bishop of Majum and founded a Georgian monastery near Bethlehem. He wrote a philosophical work, *Corpus areopagiticum*, that became the basis of the medieval Christian philosophy and greatly influenced Christian theology. He is believed to be buried in a monastery near Gaza. Two major sources on his life are biographies by John Rufus and Zacharias Rhetor.

**PETRITSONI MONASTERY.** Georgian monastery in Bulgaria, and one of the most important Georgian cultural and religious centers outside Georgia; also known as Bachkovo Monastery. Petrit-
soni Monastery is located on the Chepelare River 80 km from the Bulgarian capital, Sofia. Surrounded by the hills of the Rhodopi Mountains, it remains one of the most visited monasteries in Bulgaria. It was founded around 1083 by Prince Gregory Pakurianos (Grigol Bakurianis-dze or Bakouriani), a prominent Georgian statesman and military commander in the Byzantine service. Over the next two centuries, the monastery became one of the largest Georgian cultural centers outside Georgia, producing many original works and translations. However, with the decline of the Georgian kingdom in the 13th century, Georgians lost their control over the monastery, although a few Georgian monks remained there. In the 14th century, it became a center of Bulgarian religious and cultural life, and Bulgarian Patriarch Euthymios of Trnovo was exiled here in 1393.

The original monastery was severely damaged over centuries of warfare, and only a few parts of the original buildings survive. The ossuary church is one of original buildings, and some of its 11th-century murals were painted by Ioan Iveropoulos, a Georgian monk. The Cathedral of the Virgin Mary was constructed in 1604, and its frescos are particularly impressive for their artistic value. The monastery also keeps the famous icon of the Virgin Mary, brought here from Georgia and believed to be wonder-working. Among other buildings, the monastery also has two small churches of St. Archangels (13th–14th c.) and of St. Nikola (1834–1837). The monastery museum contains rare religious items.

**PIPERLINES.** See OIL AND PIPELINES.

**PIROSMANI (1862–1918).** Georgian artist, world famous for his primitivism paintings. Niko Pirosmanashvili, also known as Niko Pirosmani, was born into an impoverished peasant family in the village of Mirzaani in Kakheti. In 1870, his family moved to Shulaveri, where his parents and eldest brother Giorgi soon died in succession, leaving Niko and his two sisters orphans. Pirosmani’s sisters, Pepe and Mariam, later married, and Niko was taken in by the family of a rich merchant, Ahverdi Kalantarov, and remained with them between 1872–1890. Pirosmani showed his artistry at an early age, but he was never able to study painting; instead, he experimented on his own. A
gentle soul, he was unable to find his place in contemporary society, and his affections for one of Kalantarov’s daughters and later for Margarita (Margot de Sevres), a singer in a small restaurant, both ended in heartbreak. In 1890, Pirosmani moved to Tbilisi, where he began working at a railway station.

After three years of hard work, Pirosmani was fired and turned to vending, selling various provisions in the streets of Tbilisi. Despite hardship and disillusion, Pirosmani pursued his passion of painting, producing numerous drawings that became a reflection of the Georgian national character and soul. His art was “discovered” in 1912 and was acclaimed throughout Europe. In 1916, however, Pirosmani was deeply hurt by a newspaper ridicule of his paintings and stopped all contacts with the artistic society, gradually distancing himself from society. Living in poverty in a basement, he became seriously ill and died unnoticed on 7 April 1918. His remains were buried in the section for the homeless in a local cemetery, but his grave has never been discovered. His fame and recognition only came years later when the full scale of his creativity and the essence of his art was fully appreciated and understood.

PIRVELI DASI. First group of the national liberation movements of the second half of the 19th century. Members of the Pirveli dasi adopted the ideas of utopian socialism and published several important periodicals, including Sakartvelos moambe, Droeba, and Iveria. They fought against autocracy and serfdom, supported the establishment of democratic institutions, and sought a revival of the Georgian language and culture. They did not oppose private property, but they supported theories of utopian socialism. Ilia Chavchavadze was acknowledged as the leader of the movement, and among his closest companions were Akaki Tsereteli, Jacob Gogebashvili, Alexander Kazbegi, and Vazha Pshavela. In the 1880s and 1890s, the group was challenged by the Mesame dasi or third group of Social Democrats who pursued more radical goals.

POLITICAL PARTIES. The political landscape of Georgia was dominated by the Communist Party until the 1980s when several unofficial political groups were formed. The most important of them were the National Democratic Party (erovnul demokratiuli partiia, NDP),
Helsinki Union (*helsinki kavshiri*), and the Saint Ilia the Righteous Society (*tsminda ilia martlis sazogadoeba*). The events of 9 April 1989 (See TBILISI DEMONSTRATIONS OF 9 APRIL 1989) and the subsequent election campaign of 1990 saw the expansion of the number of political parties. By October 1990, numerous political parties had united into several alliances. The *Round Table–Free Georgia bloc* consisted of the Helsinki Union, the Saint Ilia the Righteous Society, Merab Kostava Society, Union of Georgian Traditionalists, Popular Front-Radical Union, the National-Christian Party, and the National-Liberal Union. The *Concord, Peace, Rebirth bloc* included the Union for National Concord and Rebirth and Peace and Freedom (Afghans). The *Freedom Bloc* united the Republican-Federal Party, Democratic Choice for Georgia (DASI), Liberal-Democratic National Party, Party of Georgian Greens, Association for National Concord, and Christian-Democratic Union. The *Liberation and Economic Rebirth bloc* allied the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the Progressive-Democratic Party, and the Labor Party. The *Democratic Georgia bloc* comprised the Ilia Chavchavadze Society, the Republican Party, the Union of Free Democrats, the Ivane Javakhishvili Society, the Archil Jorjadze Society, the Democratic Popular Front, and the Georgian Demographic Society. These early parties were noteworthy for their anti-Soviet and nationalist stand, while the ideology of some radical groups bordered on xenophobia.

The 1990 elections were dominated by the Round Table–Free Georgia coalition (*mrgvali magida-tavisupali sakartvelo*), led by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, which won 155 seats in the 250-seat chamber, followed by the Communist Party and the Georgian Popular Front. As Georgia became engulfed in civil war in 1991–1992, its political landscape became extremely convoluted as the parties sought to survive through heavy-handed tactics and alliances. Supporters of President Gamsakhurdia were persecuted, and many of them were imprisoned for their political views. The Communist Party of Georgia (*Sakartvelos komunisturi partia*), after seven decades of political dominance in Georgia, lost its authority, and its membership was greatly diminished; in the mid-1990s, the party splintered into two groups, the Communist Party (*komunisturi partia*) led by Ivane Tsiklauri, and the United Communist Party (*ertiani komunisturi partia*) led by Panteleimon Giorgadze. None of these Communist groups
was able to launch successful campaigns in the subsequent six election campaigns and are usually perceived as pro-Russian elements in Georgia. Contemporary politics were dominated by the rising paramilitary organizations, the most important of which was the Mkhedrioni, that also provided a political platform for their leaders. Furthermore, the arrival of Eduard Shevardnadze, a shrewd and experienced politician with worldwide fame, introduced an additional element to the already complicated matrix of politics.

Shevardnadze initially supported the Peace Bloc, a coalition dominated by the newly established Democratic Union of former party and government officials. However, other parties were concerned about their electoral chances and sought to mitigate the potential risks. Thus, a special law was adopted to create a post of speaker of the Parliament to accommodate Shevardnadze, and no other candidate dared to challenge him for this post. Forty-seven parties took part in the elections, some within alliances and blocs. The Peace Bloc, supported by Shevardnadze, was the overall winner of the October 1992 elections and gained 35 seats. Its rival, the October 11 Bloc of moderate reformers, gained 19 seats, followed by the Unity Bloc and National Democratic Party, each with 15 seats. Representation was also obtained by President Gamsakhurdia’s former supporters who had broken with him in late 1991. The Charter-91 won nine seats; the Monarchist Union of Georgian Traditionalists, seven seats; the Merab Kostava Society, seven seats; the Union of National Agreement and Revival, five seats; and the National Independence Party, four seats. The biggest surprise of the elections was the reemergence of Jumber Patiashvili, the former leader of the Georgian Communist Party who had been vilified for his role in the events of 9 April 1989.

The political climate in Georgia rapidly deteriorated in 1993–1994 when the government became embroiled in bloody conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Civil discourse was barely maintained in the capital and throughout the rest of the country, where paramilitary units wielded considerable power. In his quest to secure his power and dispose of his opponents, Shevardnadze and his supporters began a gradual process of reducing the electoral margin necessary to gain representation. Several changes were made to the electoral system for the 1995 elections, the most important of them being a new 5%
threshold. Furthermore, in 1993, Shevardnadze helped create a new political entity, the Citizen’s Union of Georgia (sakartvelos mokalaketa kavshiri, CUG), which soon emerged as the dominant political party in Georgia. In Adjara, Aslan Abashidze also furthered his political goals by establishing the All-Georgian Union of Revival to challenge Shevardnadze’s party.

In the 1995 parliamentary elections, boycotted in Abkhazia and in parts of South Ossetia, only three parties succeeded in crossing the 5% threshold, and of them Shevardnadze’s Citizen’s Union of Georgia won the largest number of seats (111), followed by the National Democratic Party (36), and Abashidze’s All-Georgian Union of Revival (32 seats). The CUG’s sweeping victory established a virtual single party rule and ensured Shevardnadze’s control of both the executive and legislative branches. The party was initially widely popular and was perceived as a vehicle of reforms, attracting a number of young and talented politicians, including Nino Burdjanadze, Mikhail Machavariani, Mikhail Saakashvili, Zurab Zhvania, etc. However, it gradually lost its appeal because of the widespread corruption of government officials and electoral manipulation to which it resorted in subsequent years. Among the minor parties that benefited from the 1995 elections was the newly founded left centrist Labor Party (Leiboristuli partia). Led by Shalva Natelashvili, T. Obgaidze, M. Mdivani, and V. Khidasheli, the party gained eight seats in the Parliament and favored a federal arrangement of the country, a balanced economy, free healthcare, education, and services, subsidies to agriculture, and state neutrality. The party was, and remains, one of the vocal critics of the governments of Eduard Shevardnadze and Mikhail Saakashvili. Another neophyte party was the Socialist Party (sotsialisturi partia, SPG), also founded in 1995. This left-centrist party, led by Vakhtang Rcheulishvili, gained seven seats in the Parliament in 1995 but failed to cross the 7% threshold in the subsequent elections and moved into opposition. Its campaign goals included democratic socialism, socialist market economy, state support of industry, and state regulation of market economy.

Between 1995 and 1999, the Georgian political scene was dominated by the rivalry of Shevardnadze’s Citizen’s Union and Abashidze’s Union of Revival. The former sought to limit the opposition’s involvement in politics and adopted a constitutional
amendment, which increased the minimum requirement for parliamentary representation from 5% to 7% of the votes cast. This requirement effectively eliminated most of the smaller parties and allowed the major political groups to dominate parliamentary politics. In the 1999 elections, the CUG increased its representation by 19 seats, securing 130 mandates, while the Union for the Revival gained 58 seats. The elections saw the rise of a neophyte party, the Industry Will Save Georgia bloc, which bested the National Democratic Party to secure 15 seats.

The political dominance of the Citizen’s Union of Georgia continued for another four years. However, by 2003, the CUG had lost its allure, had become engulfed in corruption and nepotism scandals, and was struggling against growing criticism. In 2001, one of its leaders, Mikhail Saakashvili, left the party, accusing the party and the government of rampant corruption, and a year later he was joined by two other prominent members, Zhvania and Burdjanadze. Saakashvili, Zhvania, and Burdjanadze established the United National Movement, which challenged the CUG in the 2003 elections.

The 2003 parliamentary elections represented a change in the political landscape of Georgia. The political groups of the national liberation movement and the early 1990s were largely gone, and new political parties contested the ground. The elections were much anticipated both by the opposition and the public, which sought to curb the CUG’s hold over political life in Georgia. The United National Movement (gaertianebuli erovnuli modzraoba) was established in November 2001 and campaigned for the rule of law, against corruption, and for economic development. Led by Mikhail Saakashvili, Giorgi Arveladze, David Kirkitadze, and Mikhail Machavariani, the party became an influential force in Georgian politics, especially during the hard-fought 2003 elections. Among the other emerging parties was the United Democrats led by Zurab Zhvania. In August 2003, Zhvania and Burdjanadze, the new speaker of the Parliament, allied their forces in the Burdjanadze–Democrats bloc. Shevardnadze, who had abandoned his faithful Citizen’s Union of Georgia, supported a new party, For a New Georgia (akhali sakartvelosatvis). In bitterly disputed elections, the official results initially favored Shevardnadze’s party, followed by the Adjarian leader Aslan Abashidze’s Democratic Union of Revival and Saakashvili’s National Movement.
However, international monitors from the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) denounced them for numerous electoral irregularities and the falsification of results. In the subsequent events of the Rose Revolution, President Shevardnadze was forced to resign and new elections were scheduled for 2004.

The new government, led by interim president Nino Burdjanadze, refused to lower the representation threshold from 7 to 5%, a requirement that kept many smaller parties out of parliamentary politics. In the elections, a coalition of Mikhail Saakashvili’s National Movement, United Democrats, and the Republican Party won 135 of the 235 seats. Among the winners was the newly formed alliance the Rightist Opposition that united the former rivals New Conservative Party (akhali memarjveneebi) and Industry Will Save Georgia. Both parties previously had fought each other for support of the private enterprise community but eventually agreed to join forces to form the center-right alternative to the National Movement led by Saakashvili. Led by David Gamkrelidze and Gogi Topadze, the alliance seeks a flat tax system in Georgia, reduction of government regulations on business, promotion of liberal democratic institutions, and defense spending.

The parliamentary majority, however, soon experienced internal feuding, which caused some of its members, including Koba Davitashvili and Zviad Dzidziguri, to establish a splinter faction, which later evolved into the Conservative Party of Georgia. The Republican Party of Georgia also defected and joined the opposition. The National Movement–Democrats emerged as a ruling coalition and united President Saakashvili’s National Movement, the late Prime-Minister Zurab Zhvania’s United Democrats, the Republican Party, supporters of Parliamentary Speaker Nino Burdjanadze and ex-President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. The 2003–2004 elections revealed that some parties were nothing more than vehicles of ambition for some key politicians and lacked a self-supporting ideology. The power base of former President Shevardnadze, the Citizens’ Union, broke apart and virtually disappeared from the political arena. Abashidze’s Democratic Union of Revival shared a similar fate. Concerns were expressed about the high threshold of representation (7%) that allowed only the National Movement–Democrats and the Rightist Opposition
to pass this barrier. As a result, despite 47 political parties and alliances registered with the Central Electoral Commission in 2005, Georgian political life is dominated by the broad political movement of the National Movement Democrats.

POTI. Major port city on the Black Sea coast, Poti is one of the most ancient towns in Georgia. Although its oldest section is now submerged beneath the sea, Poti was originally a Greek trading colony of Phasisi and is mentioned in the Greek myth of the *Argonauts*. A Colchian academy flourished here between the third and sixth centuries CE. In the Middle Ages, it served as a major trading post for the Kingdom of Georgia and later for Imeretian rulers and local lords. Beginning in the 16th century, Poti was constantly contested by the Ottoman Empire, which secured its control by the early 18th century. The city soon became a center of the slave trade in Georgia. It was not until 1828 that the city was finally recaptured and absorbed into the Russian Empire. It acquired the status of a port and flourished during the governorship of Niko Nikoladze in the late 19th century when Poti was modernized and developed into one of the major Black Sea port cities.

POTSKHVERASHVILI, KONSTANTINE (1880–1959). Georgian composer and conductor. Born in the Zestaponi region, he graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and starting in 1901, he studied Georgian folk music. Between 1921–1935, he directed the State Academic Choir of Georgia and was declared a People’s Artist of Georgia in 1933. Among his many works are the operas *Manana* and *Armazi*, symphonic works *Overthrow of Idols* and *Amirani*, chorus songs *Song of Victory*, *Lashkruli*, *Adjarian Makruli*, and others.

PRIVATIZATION. Georgia began its privatization process in 1992 when the state program of privatization of state enterprises and relevant legislative acts were adopted. Georgian legislation recognized four methods of privatization of state property: auction, competitive bidding (tender), direct sale, or lease redemption. The program was partly funded by the World Bank’s Third Structural Adjustment Credit (SACIII) and Structural Reform Support Project. The Ministry of State Property Management supervised the privatization of state
property that started in March 1993. Ten years later, the ministry was reorganized into two separate bodies: the Department of Privatization within the Ministry of Economic Development deals with privatization issues, and the State Property Management Agency handles issues related to state property management without authority to sell state property.

Privatization of small enterprises proceeded with considerable success, and about 17,571 enterprises were privatized over the next 11 years. The largest number of small enterprises (2,765) was privatized in 1995 as the country emerged from civil war and ethnic conflicts. The process again spiked in 1998 when 1,881 enterprises were privatized at the zero reserve price auctions. In recent years, the process has slowed considerably, and only 761 small enterprises were privatized in 2003. More than 45% of small enterprises (8,049) belonged to the service sector, followed by commercial enterprises (5,608), agriculture and food (1,026), social sector (786), health (667), construction (406), and manufacturing and processing (341). Of the 17,571 small enterprises privatized by 2003, the majority (5,454) was located in Tbilisi, highlighting the capital’s importance as a commercial emporium of the country. The Imereti region had the second highest number of privatized small enterprises at 3,416, followed by Kvemo Kartli (1,693), Mingrelia (1,554), and Kakheti (1,438).

The privatization of medium and large enterprises proved to be a slow process that encountered many daunting problems. Most enterprises were bankrupt and indebted and their infrastructure obsolete and decrepit. A total of 1,377 enterprises were privatized between 1993 and 2003. Most of them were turned into joint stock companies in agriculture (308), manufacturing and processing (306), construction (168), energy (133), and transport and communications (131). Almost a third of them (428) were concentrated in Tbilisi, followed by the Imereti region (246), Mingrelia (198), Kvemo Kartli (119), and Kakheti (111). Among the largest privatized enterprises were the Azot factory (90% of shares bought by the Russian Itera) and the Zestaphoni Ferroalloys Plant (51% bought by the Austrian DECOmetal). In 2004–2005, about 10% of some 1,800 enterprises up for privatization were sold, generating over US$310 million in revenue. There were, however, several cases of unsuccessful or failed deals, i.e., Tbiltskalkanali (Tbilisi Water Utility) was leased for 10
years to a French company, but the tender results were annulled a few months later. The Ocean Shipping Company was initially sold to the Armstrong Holding Corp. for US$161 million but the corporation subsequently backed out of the deal and the Georgian shipping fleet was sold for US$90 million to a joint British–American venture. More significant was the failure of the privatization deal for the Chiatura Manganese Factory that was initially bought for US$132 million by Russian EvrAzHolding and Austrian DMC-Ferro, which later backed out of the deal; the botched deal created a gap in the state budget since the government had included its expected income in its fiscal plan for 2005.

The privatization process was far from transparent and objective, and nepotism and corruption frequently influenced it. Large enterprises were often sold to close associates of senior government officials at well below the market prices. Russian and pro-Russian Georgian business groups assumed control of large shares of the Georgian economy, especially in the energy sector. After the Rose Revolution of 2003, the administration of Mikhail Saakashvili adopted a new strategy and the prominent Russian tycoon of Georgian descent, Kakha Bendukidze, was appointed to supervise the process. Bendukidze, acting on the principle that “everything can be sold, except conscience,” pushed for a new, more vigorous round of privatization and a radical deregulation of the economy to mobilize private investments. He called for sale of state-run ports, railways, hydroelectric power plants, gas pipelines, and other strategic enterprises. The government found itself engulfed in a controversy after President Saakashvili and State Minister for Economic Reforms Bendukidze revealed their intentions to sell the state-controlled gas-pipeline system to the Russian conglomerate Gazprom. The news alarmed many government and opposition members and drew criticism from the United States, compelling the government to adopt a cautious and selective approach to privatization of strategic objects. The Georgian government plans to restructure many enterprises and implement liquidation/bankruptcy procedures to make some enterprises more attractive for foreign investors. But the investment climate is often not favorable for foreign investments, especially considering the taxation policies of the new administration and the “frozen” conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
RACHA. Historical region in the northeastern part of western Georgia; it is divided into Mountainous (mtis), Upper (zemo) and Lower (kvemo) Racha. Throughout ancient times, Racha was part of several other principalities, first of the Takveri saeristavo within the Kingdom of Egrisi and later of the Racha-Lechkhumi saeristavo. In the Middle Ages, it evolved into Racha saeristavo under the rule of Rati Baghvashi. Between the late 12th and mid-13th century, Racha was ruled by the Kakhaberisdze princes, one of whom participated in the Kokhtastavi conspiracy against the Mongols. In the 1280s, Racha saeristavo was abolished by King David Narin but, in the 14th century, its status was restored under the rule of the Charelidze and Chkhetidze dynasties. After the collapse of the Kingdom of Georgia, Racha became part of the Kingdom of Imereti until the Russian annexation in the early 19th century.

RAMISHVILI, ISIDOR (1859–1937). Menshevik revolutionary. Trained as a teacher, he represented Kutaisi province at the 1st State Duma in 1905 and later served as a delegate of the Tbilisi Social Democrats to the 4th (amalgamative) RSDRP Congress and of the Baku Social Democrats to the 5th Congress. He was arrested for his revolutionary activities and exiled from 1908–1917. Returning to Georgia, he became a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet in 1917. A year later, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly of Georgia and served in the Menshevik government in 1918–1920. See also DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE; ZHORDANIA, NOE.

RAMISHVILI, NOE (1881–1930). Prominent Georgian Menshevik politician and statesman. Ramishvili joined the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in the early 1900s and gradually emerged as one of the leading Georgian Mensheviks. After the October Revolution, he served as an interior minister for the Transcaucasian Federated Democratic Republic and actively participated in the events leading to the Georgian proclamation of independence. In the newly established Democratic Republic of Georgia, he served as the head of the government between May and June 1918 before being appointed as an interior minister. The following March, he also combined the posts of minister of
education and of defense. He was instrumental in the suppression of the peasant and Bolshevik unrest in 1918–1919 but was criticized for his ruthless methods. After the Bolshevik take over of Georgia in March 1921, Ramishvili emigrated to France, where he continued his struggle. In 1924, he was involved in the failed August Uprising in Georgia. In later years, he was involved in the Prometheism, a Polish movement aimed at undermining the Soviet Russia. Ramishvili was assassinated by a Bolshevik agent in Paris on 7 December 1930.

RASHI. In Georgian mythology, a beautiful winged horse. Rashis can be of different kinds. Rashis of the land were well disposed to humans and heroes and could perceive the future. Rashis of the seas were more hostile to humans and could take heroes to the depths of the sea, while their milk was believed to cure many illnesses. Heavenly rashis were winged, fire-breathing animals, very difficult to subdue but loyal to their riders.

RAZMADZE, ANDREA (1889–1929). Georgian mathematician and scholar. He studied mathematics at the University of Moscow and Academie de Paris, where he received his doctorate in 1925. Razmadze taught mathematics at the University of Moscow in 1917 but joined the newly established Tbilisi State University in 1918. He played an important role in developing Georgian mathematical studies and concentrated his research on calculus of variations. Among his works were Deux propositions du calcul des variations (1919), Sur les solutions discontinues dans le calcul des variations (1925), and Sur un théorème de la théorie des surfaces minima (1925). The Institute of Mathematics of the Georgian Academy of Sciences was named after him.

REGIONS, OF GEORGIA. Georgia is divided into separate parts with different climatic, linguistic, cultural, and economic characteristics. These parts create 13 historic-cultural regions: Kakheti, Shida Kartli, Kvemo Kartli, Tbilisi region, Mtianeti and Samtskhe-Javakheti (Meskheti) in eastern and southern Georgia; Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi, Samegrelo (Mingrelia), Guria, Svaneti, Adjara and Abkhazia in the west. In administrative terms, Georgia officially recognizes nine major regions and two autonomous units of Abkhazia.
and Adjara. All regions consist of districts, cities, towns, and villages (See Appendix D). The Autonomous Region of South Ossetia was abolished in 1990, and although officially part of the Shida Kartli region, it is under control of separatist authorities and currently enjoys defacto autonomy. Following the bloody conflict in 1992–1994, Abkhazia also gained defacto independence through covert Russian support and continues to reject any association with Georgia.

**RELIGION.** Historically, Georgia has been a confluence of major religions and religious movements. In the pre-Christian epoch, local paganism, Mazdaism, Judaism, and elements of Greek and Roman religion existed on the territory of Georgia; eastern Georgia was more under the influence of Mazdaism while the west remained firmly under the Greek and Roman sway. Christianity was introduced and spread in the first to third centuries and was proclaimed the state religion by the early fourth century. By the seventh century, the Georgian and Armenian churches split and followed different creeds. At the same time, Arab raiding parties introduced Islam, which shaped Georgian cultural and political life for the next 1,300 years. Buddhism spread in the 20th century but remains limited to small groups.

Currently, 88% of the population of Georgia identify themselves as Christians and 83% are associated with the Georgian Orthodox Church (GOC). Among other Christian denominations are the Russian Orthodox Christians, which also include a small number of ethnic Russian adherents of dissident Orthodox schools, the Molokani, Starovery (Old Believers), and Dukhobory (Spirit Wrestlers), who were exiled to Georgia in the 19th century. The parishioners of the Armenian Apostolic Church constitute approximately 3.9% of the population of Georgia and are concentrated mainly in Tbilisi and the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. Catholicism has been present in Georgia since the 14th century, and the Roman Catholic Church at present has approximately 50,000 devotees, mainly ethnic Armenians, Georgians, and Assyrians. The Greek community, residing in southern Kvemo Kartli region, also used to be relatively large, but political and economic strife, coupled with emigration, have reduced it to approximately 15,000.

Following the Russian annexation of Georgia, the autocephaly of the GOC was abolished by the Russian authorities in 1811. After a
brief restoration in 1917–1921, the GOC was once again suppressed under Soviet rule when it was placed under surveillance of the Committee for State Security (KGB). However, since Georgia’s independence in 1991, the GOC has enjoyed a period of revival, and the number of active churches and monasteries has increased sharply. The GOC is the largest and strongest Christian church in Georgia and currently maintains several theological seminaries, academies and schools, and 27 church dioceses.

The second largest religious denomination is Islam, which is professed by 9.9% of the population. There are three main Muslim populations: ethnic Azeris, ethnic Georgian Muslims of Adjara, and ethnic Chechen Kists in northeastern Georgia. There are four large madrassahs (religious schools) attached to mosques in eastern Georgia, two of which are Shiite, financed by Iranian religious groups, and the remaining two are Sunni, funded by Turkish religious groups. There are also several smaller madrassahs in Adjara that are financed by Turkey.

Judaism has been present in Georgia since antiquity, and at one time, it was practiced in Jewish communities throughout the country. However, the number of Jews residing in Georgia declined sharply after the 1990s, and currently less than 4,000 Jews reside in Georgia, mainly in the largest cities of Tbilisi and Kutaisi.

There are several smaller denominations present in Georgia. Baha’is, Hare Krishnas, and Buddhists have recently gained some converts, but their numbers remain small and limited to urban centers. A small number of Kurdish Yezidis (approximately 18,000) have lived in Georgia, mainly in Tbilisi, for centuries. Beginning in the 19th century, the Russian authorities settled large numbers of Protestant Germans in Georgia, but currently their numbers remain low; Lutheran worshipers number fewer than 1,000; Baptists, among them Russians, Georgians, Armenians, Ossetians, and Kurds, total approximately 8,000 adherents; Pentecostals, Seventh-day Adventists, the New Apostolic Church, and the Mormons have several hundred devotees. The Jehovah’s Witnesses claim to have as many as 16,000 adherents, but official estimates put their numbers much lower.

Georgia historically enjoyed a reputation of tolerance, and foreigners visiting Tbilisi are usually guided to the old city where a mosque,
a synagogue, Armenian and Georgian churches, and ancient Avesta shrines all share less than 2 km\(^2\). There was no historical pattern of anti-Semitism in the country, and the 2,600 years of tolerance toward Jews leading up to the current peaceful Georgian–Israeli relations were celebrated in the late 1990s. Relations between Sunni and Shiite Muslims are very good, and they have worshipped together in Tbilisi’s main mosque since 1996. Despite occasional minor incidents, relations between Muslims and Christians are peaceful, and the majority of incidents are of non-religious nature. Furthermore, religious groups frequently cooperate on various events and projects, e.g., ecumenical memorial services for the victims of the terrorist attacks on New York’s World Trade Center and Beslan’s high school (Russia), a joint effort of Muslims and Lutherans to construct a new stadium in the Dmanisi region in 2004, to mention only a few.

Nevertheless, in recent years, Georgia’s reputation for tolerance was somewhat tarnished by increasing conservatism and hostility toward non-Georgian Orthodox denominations. One reason is the Georgian attitude toward Orthodox Christianity. While many residents are not particularly observant, Orthodox Christianity and national identity are often inseparable. A small Christian nation in the midst of non-Christian empires, the Georgian identity, “Georgian-ness” itself, was equated with being an Orthodox Christian, and ethnic Georgians who converted to other religions or denominations were, and still are, scorned. Muslim Georgians are often derisively referred to as Tatars or Turks; Catholic Georgians became known as prangi (the Franks); and those who converted to the Gregorian–Armenian denomination are usually described as somkhebi (the Armenians). Such attitudes were reflected in the slogans of the late 19th century national liberation movement, which rallied the populace under the slogan of “mamuli, ena, sartsmunoeba [fatherland, language, and faith]” where faith implicitly stood for the Georgian Orthodox Christianity. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the slogan was slightly modified to “ena, mamuli, sartsmunoeba” (language, fatherland, and faith), which emphasized the Georgian language as a rallying point for Georgian nationalism but retained the Georgian Orthodox Christian faith as an essential component.

While maintaining their historical tolerance toward religious minorities, Georgian society and the Georgian Orthodox Church both
have been wary of the spread of proselytizing Protestant religions, especially the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, and Pentecostals, and argue that these groups exploit the dire economic conditions in Georgia to gain converts through financial aid. Evangelical Protestants are often described simply as “sects” and as a threat to the national and cultural values. A June 2005 survey revealed that 73% of respondents believed that the Jehovah’s Witnesses create serious problems for society, and 87% felt that the group should be banned. Naturally, such sentiments are greater in conservative rural regions, where Orthodox priests often criticize minority religions and interfaith marriages.

One aspect of this problem stems from property disputes between the GOC, Armenian Apostolic, and the Roman Catholic churches, but especially between the first two. After almost 1,700 years of coexistence, the Georgian and Armenian churches often shared or took over churches and other religious facilities that once belonged to each other. The two churches are involved in bitter disputes over churches in Tbilisi, Samtskhe-Javakheti, and eastern regions of Georgia, where both Georgian and Armenian clerics accuse each other of purposely altering existing churches so that they would be mistaken for Armenian or Georgian religious facilities. Both the Armenian and Roman Catholic churches have had difficulty obtaining permission to construct new churches because of influence from the GOC. Similarly, the Jewish community also struggled to restore property confiscated during Soviet rule. Despite a Supreme Court ruling in 2001 in favor of the Jewish community, a theater group still has not vacated the central hall of a former synagogue in the old section of Tbilisi. Relations between the GOC and the Russian Orthodox Church are also marred by the larger political context of Russo-Georgian interaction in Abkhazia. The GOC accused the Russian Church of supporting websites that encourage Abkhaz secessionist sentiments and training Abkhaz priests loyal to the Kremlin.

Conservative elements in the church forced Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II to withdraw the Georgian church from two major ecumenical bodies, the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches, in 1997. Conservative organizations like Jvari and the Society of Saint David the Builder often spearhead these traditionalist tendencies. While the GOC and the Georgian authorities
have publicly denounced any harassment, they also have taken no measures to persecute perpetrators and prevent future attacks. The most prominent example of such practices remains the actions of the excommunicated Orthodox priest Basil Mkalavishvili, whose supporters (popularly known as Basilists), perpetrated a number of attacks, some of them violent, against nontraditional religious minorities, including Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, and, most of all, Jehovah’s Witnesses. Under international pressure, the Georgian authorities were finally forced to react, and Mkalavishvili was sentenced to six years imprisonment in 2005. Nevertheless, sporadic harassment of nontraditional religions continues since some local Orthodox priests organize their parishes against the minority groups and lead opposition to constructing places of worship or holding religious services. The Catholic church also continues to face difficulties in attempting to build churches in the towns of Kutaisi, Akhalsikhe, Chiatura, and Ozurgeti.

In theory, the Georgian Constitution provides for freedom of religion and obligates the government to respect and treat equally all religious denominations. The separation of church and state is established, but the Constitution also recognizes the special role of the Georgian Orthodox Church in the country’s history. In 2002, the Georgian Parliament ratified a concordat with the Georgian Orthodox Church, granting it a privileged status compared to other religions based on the church’s contributions to the history and culture of Georgia. The Concordat secured the GOC’s tax-free status and granted it the exclusive right to the military chaplaincy as well as the authority over decisions on historical church property. The GOC also received a consultative authority in the sphere of education, which effectively made all religious literature, including non-Georgian Orthodox, subject to the approval by the GOC. Although the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, and Armenian Apostolic churches and representatives of the Jewish and Muslim communities signed agreements with the GOC agreeing to the Concordat, they later disputed some of the its articles.

The separation of church and state is virtually non-existent in practice, and the majority of government officials favor the GOC and show a tendency to harass nontraditional religious minorities. Orthodox icons or pictures of Orthodox religious figures are openly dis-
played in public and in government buildings, including schools. The Ministry of Interior and Prosecutor’s Office regularly make statements denouncing religious intolerance but rarely prosecute offenders. While Eduard Shevardnadze’s government was more complacent regarding the treatment of the religious groups, Mikhail Saakashvili’s presidency actively sought to rectify some of the problems. Elective religious courses on Orthodox theology were introduced in public schools, with the GOC having exclusive influence over the material taught. A new law on education stipulates that teachers cannot participate in prayers, proselytize, or preach any religion on school grounds. Muslim New Year was declared a voluntary holiday for Muslim citizens of Georgia, and amendments were passed to the Civil Code allowing for the registration of religious groups. Any unregistered religious group is subject to fines and is prohibited from constructing religious facilities, renting office space, or importing literature.

**REPUBLICAN PARTY.** Founded in 1978, the Republican Party (*republikuri partia*, RPG) played an important role in the national liberation movement. In the Soviet era, the party, led by Vakhtang Dzabiradze, Levan Berdzenishvili, David Berdznishvili, and Vakhtang Shonia, called for restoration of state independence of Georgia, political pluralism, democratic institutions, free media, and free market economy. Its members published the underground magazine *Samreklo*. In the mid-1980s, the party leadership was arrested and imprisoned for anti-Soviet activities, but the RPG continued its involvement in the national liberation movement. The RPG gained three seats in the Supreme Soviet of Georgia in 1990, and the following year, it joined forces with the Popular Front to form the first opposition parliamentary faction Democratic Center. In 1992, the party was represented in the State Council and later won six seats in the parliamentary elections. The party, with the support of the political organization DASI (Democratic Choice for Georgia), formed a parliamentary faction Republicans, led by Vakhtang Khmaladze. In 1994, it united with the Popular Front and Charter-91 to create the United Republican Party (URP), but after failing to gain seats in the 1995 elections, the RPG ceded from the URP. In 1999, it joined with the National Democratic Party to establish the National Democratic
Alliance. In 1999, it failed to overcome the 7% electoral threshold. Led by David Berdzenishvili, David Usupashvili, and Roman Gotsiridze, the RPG contested the 2003 elections and gained seats in the parliamentary elections of 2004.

**ROBAKIDZE, GRIGOL (1884–1962).** Prominent Georgian writer and philosopher, one of the founders of the modern Georgian psychological novel. Born in the village of Sviri in Imereti, he studied at the Universities of Leipzig and Tartu. Returning to Georgia, he became the leader of the Symbolist group *tsisperkantselebi* (Blue Horns) and helped found the Union of Georgian Writers, where he served in the Presidium. In 1918–1919, he edited the periodical *Sakartvelo* and engaged in politics. In 1919, he participated in the Paris Peace Conference as a member and secretary of the Georgian delegation. After the Soviet occupation in 1921, Robakidze became an active member of the national liberation movement. In 1931, he immigrated to Europe, where he lived in Germany (1931–1945) and Switzerland (1945–1962), and led the Committee for the Independence of Georgia.

In 1942, Robakidze co-founded the Union of the Georgian Traditionalists and the organization *Tetri Giorgi* that struggled for Georgian independence. He was also an active member of the European Association of Writers and served on the editorial board of the journal *Bedi Kartlisa*. He died in Geneva in 1962 and was reburied at the Georgian cemetery in Leville, near Paris. Among his major works are *Lamara*, *Londa*, *Malshtremi*, and *Gvelis perangi* (Snake-Skin Shirt), which were published in Germany with an introduction by Stefan Zweig. After immigrating to Germany in 1931, he published *Die gemordete Seele* (The Murdered Soul), *Die Huter des Graals* (The Guardians of the Grail), and other works in which he attacked the Soviet ideology and state. His writings were prohibited in the Soviet Union until the late 1980s.

**ROSE REVOLUTION.** Popular name for nonviolent demonstrations in Georgia in November 2003 that ousted President Eduard Shevardnadze. By 2003, Georgia had been governed by Shevardnadze for 13 years, but there had been no changes in social and economic conditions. The government lost its credibility amid charges of rampant
corruption and embezzlement. The political crisis reached its peak in the fall of 2003 when parliamentary elections were held on 2 November 2003. Shevardnadze’s political alliance, For a New Georgia, and Adjarian leader Aslan Abashidze’s Union of Democratic Revival of Georgia were opposed by popular opposition parties, the most important of them being the United National Movement, led by Mikhail Saakashvili and Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burdjanadze’s Democrats. The official election results greatly favored Shevardnadze’s party, but the elections were denounced by local and international observers for widespread vote rigging and voter intimidation.

The opposition claimed its victory based on independent exit polls and called for demonstrations and nonviolent civil disobedience against the authorities. The opposition parties soon united and demanded the ouster of Shevardnadze and a rerun of the elections. By mid-November, massive anti-governmental demonstrations were organized in Tbilisi and other major cities. The student organization Kmara played an important role in rallying the populace for these protests and emerged as a vocal voice of the opposition. To counter them, the government organized its own rallies, and, in a surprise move, Shevardnadze’s former rival, Aslan Abashidze, sent hundreds of his supporters to hold a pro-governmental counter-demonstration in Tbilisi. To avoid a confrontation and show the non-violent nature of their protest, the opposition parties distributed roses to their opponents and governmental security forces, hence the name Rose Revolution.

The protest reached its peak on 22 November when the election results were to be certified in the opening session of a new Parliament. As President Shevardnadze began his speech, the protesters led by Saakashvili made a dramatic entrance into the session hall of the Parliament of Georgia, forcing the president to interrupt his speech and flee under protection of his bodyguards. On 23 November, with the army and police defying orders, Shevardnadze agreed to step down following a meeting with the opposition leaders, mediated by Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. Parliament Speaker Nino Burdjanadze assumed the presidency until new elections could be held. In the presidential elections on 4 January 2004, Saakashvili won an overwhelming victory and was inaugurated as the new president of Georgia. Three months later, new par-
Parliamentary elections were won by an alliance of Saakashvili, Burdjanadze, and Zhvania.

The events of the Rose Revolution were widely covered around the world, and Saakashvili himself made several appearances on international news media. The revolution was hailed as a major step toward democracy for this former Soviet republic. Saakashvili made drastic changes in the government, launched an anti-corruption campaign, and introduced a series of reforms. In a major coup, he succeeded in restoring central authority in Adjara, and its defiant leader Aslan Abashidze was forced to flee to Russia. In another important feat, the new government hosted the U.S. President George W. Bush in Tbilisi in May 2005.

While the population of Georgia largely supported the ouster of Shevardnadze, various claims were made about the very nature of the November events. The Russian media and politicians denounced the “revolution” as an American coup against the legitimately elected authorities. Emphasis was placed on the role of the Open Society Institute, funded by the billionaire philanthropist George Soros, that provided substantial funding to the opposition. Questions were also raised about the student movement Kmara and its alleged training by the Serbian opposition group, Otpor.

The events in Georgia had important consequences and provided a template for opposition parties in other countries. It certainly inspired the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and Saakashvili himself openly supported the opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko. The Georgian government also seems to have played a role in the so-called Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan in March 2005. In the fall of 2005, Saakashvili found himself in a dilemma with respect to protest rallies in neighboring Azerbaijan, where the results of presidential elections were denounced by local and international observers for vote rigging and voter intimidation. Activists from the Kmara organization were involved in training opposition groups in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Byelorussia. The Georgian government also seems to take on the role of a leader of “color revolutions.” Following its involvement in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, Georgia supported the Byelorussian opposition on the eve of the presidential elections and began a war of words with President Alexander Lukashenko. In March, Byelorussian authorities detained a delegation of Georgian members of the
Parliament that arrived to monitor elections and Georgian activists were also arrested during the opposition rallies following the elections on 19–20 March.

ROSTOM. King of Imereti in 1590–1605. He seized the throne of Imereti with the help of the Imeretian nobles and Prince Mamia IV Dadiani. However, several months into his reign, his rival Giorgi II Gurieli led the Ottoman invasion that ousted him from the throne. Rostom managed to return with Mingrelian support and fought against King Simon I of Kartli, who sought to unite the eastern and western Georgian principalities. In the decisive battle of Opshkveti, Rostom defeated the Kartlian ruler and continued to rule for the next 15 years.

ROSTOM KHAN (ca. 1565–1658). King of Kartli in 1632–1658; although nominally a wali (viceroy) of Kartli, he used the title of king in official correspondence and ceremonies. The illegitimate son of Daud Khan, he was born as Kaikhosro Batonishvili in Esfahan and raised at the Safavid court of Persia. He was converted to Islam early in childhood and named Kosrow Mirza. He proved himself a capable, gallant, and shrewd man, quickly advancing through the ranks. Under Shah Abbas I, he became the commander-in-chief (qullaraqas) of the golam troops, one of the five principal offices in Safavid Persia, and later governed the Persian capital as well. After the death of Abbas I, Kosrow Mirza helped his grandson Sefi to secure the Persian throne.

In 1632, Kosrow Mirza was appointed wali of Kartli and adopted the new name of Rostom Khan. Unlike his predecessor King Teimuraz I, who spent decades fighting the Persians, Rostom Khan pursued a more subtle policy. He married the daughter of Levan II Dadiani of Mingrelia, securing an alliance with this western Georgian principality. He avoided any confrontations with the Safavid court and used the Persian forces to subdue any opposition in Kartli, including uprisings in 1636, 1638, and 1642. Rostom Khan also successfully fought King Teimuraz I, but he also avoided inflicting much damage on Teimuraz since as long as the Persians remained concerned about Teimuraz’s actions they would continue to support Rostom Khan in Kartli.
Rostom Khan’s reign brought relative prosperity to Kartli. To appease the Safavid rulers, he introduced the Persian language and customs into his administration and everyday life. More important, his policies prevented Persian raids and invasions that had ravaged eastern Georgia for over a century. This greatly contributed to increased prosperity and growth of trade, re-population, and recovery of devastated regions in Kartli. Rostom Khan launched a wide-ranging construction works program at Gori, Surami, and Tbilisi, where fortresses were repaired and new buildings, including caravan-serais and palaces, were erected. New towns were established on the Tedzami and Khrami rivers, and the irrigation system was renovated. Despite Persian pressure, he refused to enforce Islamization policies and pursued a policy of tolerance. He provided subsidies for the renovation of damaged churches and monasteries but also constructed new mosques. He died at the age of 93 and was buried in the holy town of Qum in Persia. Rostom Khan died childless, but he had adopted Prince Vakhtang of the Mukhranbatoni branch of the Bagrationi dynasty, who succeeded him as Vakhtang V.

RIUSI-URBNISI CHURCH COUNCIL (1102–1003). Council that reformed the Georgian Orthodox Church. The Georgian church had a period of ascendancy in the 11th century and came into possession of vast land holdings, turning into “a state within a state” and clashing with the royal authority. The Ruisi-Urbnisi Church Council, summoned by King David IV, limited the Church’s authority, expelled rebellious clergy, and expanded the royal administration. The office of the powerful archbishop of Chqondidi was merged with that of mtsignobartukhutsesi, chief adviser to the king on all state issues. The new office of Chqondideli-Mtsignobartukhutsesi introduced direct royal authority into the church.

RUSSIA. Georgian–Russian relations date from the early Middle Ages, but they initially were sporadic and were mainly limited to trade. Some sources indicate that Georgian artists participated in the decoration of the Kiev-Pechersk Monastery, the church of Savior-on-Nereditsa in Novgorod (12th century), and the Dmitrovsky Cathedral in Vladimir (12th century). Political ties became stronger in the 12th century, when Georgia emerged as a powerful principality in the
Caucasus. King David IV Aghmashenebeli certainly had contacts with the Russian princes when he decided to resettle their enemies, the Qipchaks, to Georgia in 1118–1119. King Demetre I (1125–1156) secured an alliance with the Kievan Rus through the marriage of his daughter to Prince Izyaslav II of Kiev. In the late 1180s, Queen Tamar was married to Yuri Bogolubsky, the son of Prince Andrey Bogolubsky of Rostov-Suzdal, but the marriage was not successful and Tamar had it annulled several years later. The Mongol invasions of the 13th century weakened both the Georgian and Russian states. Most Russian states were devastated and lay in ruins while the rising Principality of Moscow was too weak to be of assistance to Georgia in its struggle against the Ottomans and Persians.

As the Muscovite principality strengthened by the late 15th century, Georgian rulers sought its help against foreign threats. King Alexander I of Kakheti (1476–1511) became the first Georgian ruler to establish formal diplomatic contacts with the Russian principalities when, in 1483 and 1491, he dispatched two embassies to Grand Duke Ivan III of Moscow. In 1563, King Levan of Kakheti (1518–1574) appealed to the Russian rulers to take his kingdom under their protection against the Ottomans and Persians. Tsar Ivan the Terrible responded by sending a Russian detachment to Georgia, but Levan, pressured by Persia, had to turn these troops back. King Alexander II (1574–1605) also appealed for Russian support against the Persians and the Ottomans. In September 1587, he negotiated the Book of Pledge, forming an alliance between the Georgian and Russian kingdoms. However, as the “Times of Troubles” began in Russia, the Georgian principalities could not count on foreign assistance in their struggle for independence.

In the early 18th century, Russia emerged as a powerful state led by Peter the Great, who established close contacts with the Georgians. By the late 17th century, a Georgian community existed in Moscow when King Archil and other members of the Bagrationi dynasty immigrated there. Alexander Batonishvili became the first general of ordnance (feldzeugmeister) of the Russian army. In 1721, Peter the Great and King Vakhtang VI of Kartli negotiated a joint military operation against Persia with Tsar Peter the Great of Russia. The Russian army reached Darband but later returned to Russia, leaving Georgia to face
the Persian retaliation. King Vakhtang immigrated to Russia later that
year and laid the foundation for Georgian communities in Moscow
and Astrakhan. While the Ottomans and Persians dominated Georgia
in the 1730s–1750s, the prospects of successful Russo–Georgian rela-
tions were dim. However, as Kings Teimuraz II and Erekle II
strengthened their positions in Kartli and Kakheti, they renewed their
efforts to get Russian help. King Teimuraz traveled to Russia in 1760
but arrived a few days after the death of Empress Elizabeth and could
not negotiate in the ensuing turmoil at the Romanov court.

King Erekle was more successful in his rapprochement with Rus-
sia. At the beginning of the Russo–Turkish War in 1769, a Russian
force, under the command of General Gotlib Totleben, arrived in
Georgia and a joint Russo–Georgian campaign was planned to seize
the Akhaltsikhe vilayet. In 1770, the Russian and Georgian troops be-
sieged Atskuri fortress but, during the fighting, Totleben deserted the
Georgians on the battlefield and withdrew his troops. Nevertheless,
Erekle won a decisive victory over the Turks near Aspindza, tying
down substantial Ottoman forces in the Caucasus, while the Russians
engaged the Porte along the northern coast of the Black Sea. Despite
Georgian support, Russia was unwilling to protect their interest dur-
ing the peace negotiations with the Porte.

The Russo–Turkish Treaty of Küçük–Kaynardja of 1774
brought no territorial change to the lands of Georgia, but the Porte re-
nounced the tribute it had collected from Georgia. Despite the set-
back, King Erekle continued his pro-Russian policy and appealed to
St. Petersburg for a protectorate. The treaty between Georgia and
Russia was signed on 24 July 1783, at Georgievsk. According to this
document, the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti recognized the supremacy
of the Russian rulers, who, in turn, pledged to safeguard the unity of
the kingdom. King Erekle II and his heirs were guaranteed the throne
and the Georgian church was allowed to remain independent.

The death of King Erekle on 23 January 1798 was a turning point
in the history of Russo–Georgian relations. Three years later, in a
breach of the Treaty of Georgievsk, Emperor Alexander of Russia
unilaterally abolished the Georgian Kingdoms of Kartli and Kakheti
and had them annexed to the empire. The Bagrationi royal family was
detained and exiled, and the autocephaly of the Georgian church
abolished.
Eastern Georgia was divided into gubernias (provinces) anduezds (districts) with Russian officials responsible for maintaining law and order and Russian was declared the official language of the country. Oppressive Russian rule in Georgia quickly led to successive uprisings. In 1802–1804, rebellions flared up in Mtiuleti, spreading to Samachablo, Pshavi, Khevsureti, and parts of Kakheti. A major uprising took place in Kakheti in 1812, followed by peasant revolts in Guria in 1841 and Mingrelia in 1856–1857. Many Georgian nobles, however, became content with their equalization in rights with the Russian aristocracy and entered Russian military service, often reaching the highest ranks. The commander of the Caucasus, Prince Pavel Tsitsianov himself, was the scion of the noble Georgian family of Tsitsishvili and governed the region in 1802–1806. The western Georgian principalities were annexed to the Russian Empire later in the century. Russians conquered the kingdom of Imereti by force of arms in 1810 and forced the remaining principalities to enter the empire, preserving their autonomy for quite some time; Guria survived until 1828, Mingrelia until 1857, Svaneti until 1858, and Abkhazia until 1864.

The establishment of Russian rule in Georgia had both positive and negative aspects. Protected by the Russian troops, Georgia was finally able to enjoy relative peace and stability and was not subjected to major enemy invasions for the rest of the 19th century. The governorships of Mikhail Vorontsov (1845–1854) and Grand Duke Mikhail Vorontsov (1862–1881) were periods of particular prosperity, educational promotion, and commercial development. The Russian authorities established a number of schools and hospitals, greatly improved communications, and allowed new generations of Georgian nobles to study in Russian and European universities. Western ideas and Western-inspired reforms were introduced to Georgia through the Russian administration. The period had a profound effect on the Georgian literature as generations of Georgian poets and writers became exposed to Russian and European poetry and prose. Furthermore, the ongoing Russo–Turkish Wars of the 19th century led to the Russian annexation of numerous Georgian provinces that had been under continuous Ottoman domination. The Russian Empire, thus, inadvertently accomplished “the gathering of the Georgian lands,” the dream that guided so many Georgian kings.
Russian rule also had a sinister side to it. The imperial government considered Georgia a colony that was to supply raw materials and was reluctant to develop major industries in the region. Its authorities often attempted to settle Georgian regions with loyal colonists and a Christian, but a non-Georgian, population (Armenians, Greeks, Germans, Russian religious minorities, north Caucasian tribes) was settled in various provinces, including Meskheti, Javakheti, Adjara, Abkhazia and Kartli. Cultural repression became a particular cause of resentment, and the suppression of the Georgian Orthodox Church in 1811 turned into a rallying cry for the national loyalties. In 1830–1832, a conspiracy of Georgian nobles made the last attempt to throw off Russian rule in Georgia, but it was betrayed, and with its fall, all hopes of a Bagratid restoration ceased.

The late 19th century was marked by the intensification of Pan-Slavist policies that proved ominous for the non-Russian minorities. The Russian Empire never recognized the existence of a single Georgian nation and instead contrived various ethnic groups of “Kartvelian origin.” In 1872, the Russian government banned the use of Georgian for instruction. In an effort to weaken the nationalist revival, it also tried a subtler plan of introducing teaching in the primary schools and public worship in other Kartvelian languages, Megrelian, and Svan, which had never before been used for these purposes. The fulfillment of this design would have meant the dismembering of the national unity. Although the Georgian intelligentsia succeeded in undermining this policy, it appeared more successful in Abkhazia, where the Russian liturgy and education resulted in the gradual Russification of the local population and their alienation from the Georgians, with whom they shared a common historical and cultural heritage.

This Russian oppression, however, facilitated the growth of the national movements led by a generation of writers and public figures, all of them educated in Russia. The works and activities of Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, Rapiel Eristavi, Giorgi Tsereteli, Alexandre Qazbegi, Vazha Pshavela, Niko Nikoladze, and others were instrumental in awakening the Georgian national awareness and inciting social reforms. In the late 19th and early 20th century, Georgia, like the rest of the Russian Empire, was in the throes of revolutionary movements. Among rising political fac-
tions was the Georgian Social-Democratic Mesame Dasi, initially influenced by the Russian revolutionaries but later splitting from them. Some Georgian social-democrats, the most famous of them being Irakli Tsereteli, became active participants of the revolutionary events in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The revolutionary upheaval of 1917 in Russia and the collapse of the imperial government created unexpected conditions for the outlying regions. In May 1918, Georgia proclaimed itself independent. Its relations with Soviet Russia were tense from the start since the Georgian republic was dominated by the Mensheviks as opposed to the Bolsheviks in Russia. The newly-born Menshevik government faced challenges from every direction. Bolshevik uprisings were instigated in various regions, particularly in Abkhazia and Ossetia where separatist calls were made. Although Soviet Russia recognized Georgian independence in May 1920, the Bolsheviks also made unilateral concessions to the Ottomans in the Brest-Litovsk and Moscow Treaties that greatly affected Georgia. Furthermore, after 1920, Soviet Russia actively sought to extend its hegemony to south Caucasia. Georgian Bolsheviks, mainly Sergei Ordzhonikidze, coordinated the Bolshevik policies in the region and were fervent exponents of sovietization of Georgia. In February 1921, the Red Army invaded and occupied Georgia, overthrowing the Menshevik government.

The sovietization of Georgia, as of other regions under Bolshevik control, was brutal but continued unabated. Between 1922 and 1936, Georgia was part of the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (ZKFSR), which also included the neighboring Armenia and Azerbaijan. In 1936, the new Constitution of the USSR made Georgia one of the constituent republics of the USSR. Although the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was a Georgian, Georgia was not treated leniently and had its share of suffering during the notorious purges of the 1930s.

The Soviet regime also brought a rapid development of Georgian science, culture, and economy. By the 1970s, Georgia was one of the most prosperous republics in the USSR. Yet, the progress took a heavy toll on Georgian society. The Soviet cultural and political oppression, although ideological in nature, was perceived by many as a continuation of the Russification policies of the Russian Empire. As
a result, matters of language and culture assumed unprecedented importance in Georgia, where a Georgian sense of identity merged with the determination to preserve the Georgian language and culture from foreign domination. The Soviet attempts to introduce changes with respect to the Georgian language led to large demonstrations in 1978 and 1989, the latter being savagely dispersed by Soviet troops. The events of [Tbilisi demonstrations in] 9 April 1989 intensified the Georgian nationalist movement, which eventually led to the Georgian declaration of independence in 1991.

The Georgian secession opened a new round of Russo–Georgian relations. Russia, as an heir to the Soviet Union, retained many former policies in the region and loomed large in Georgian politics throughout the last decade of the 20th century. Georgia was important to Russia for a number of reasons. For strategic purposes, it was, and still is, essential for Russia to maintain its control over the southern Caucasus, which serves as a Russian buffer zone against any foreign threats. Russian military bases operated in Georgia throughout the 1990s. In 1999, Russia agreed to have them withdrawn under its OSCE obligations but the process was delayed for a number of reasons. In 2005, Georgia and Russia finally concluded an agreement to have the military bases removed by 2008 and the first Russian military columns began to evacuate military equipment in the summer of 2005.

After the collapse of the USSR, Russian access to the Black Sea was greatly diminished and undermined its strategic and economic interests. Russia’s presence in Abkhazia provides it with this much-needed access to the coast. Oil and pipelines play an important part in Russo–Georgian relations. Previously, Russia had transported the Caspian oil through its pipeline system running across the northern Caucasus. However, the war in Chechnya and instability in the neighboring regions undermined this capacity. Georgian involvement in the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan project effectively diverted oil from the Russian pipelines and cut the potential benefits Russia could have enjoyed. Furthermore, these pipelines lured the United States and other Western states, which became closely involved in regional affairs, a development Russia perceived as a threat to its interests.

To protect its interests, Russia often played a sinister role in Georgian politics. In the 1990s, Russia imposed an economic blockade of Georgia and continues to use its economic might to dictate its
policies. In 2005, Russia—the sole provider of gas to Georgia—unilaterally increased gas prices for Georgia and rejected Georgian attempts to buy cheaper gas from Kazakhstan. Russians seek to gain control of Georgian pipelines, and according to Georgian officials, Russian politicians and government officials pressure Georgia to be compliant or face serious consequences. Such threats became a reality when in January 2006 both major gas pipelines supplying Georgia were blown up, causing a war of words between Georgia and Russia. President Mikhail Saakashvili blamed Moscow for what he called a preplanned act of sabotage, orchestrated by Russian officials; Moscow branded these statements as hysterical and outrageous.

More importantly, Georgia firmly believes that the conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia were instigated and carried out with Russian support. Although the Kremlin denies any involvement in the war, its policies in the region contradict this. The Russian military actively participated in both conflicts and provided weapons and training to separatists. Illegal acquisition of property belonging to the Georgian refugees in Abkhazia by Russian companies and individuals continues despite Georgian protests. Russia extended citizenship rights to Abkhaz and Ossetians, and the Russian authorities often use this fact to justify their interventions as the protection of Russian citizens. The Russian peacekeeping troops not only failed to perform their obligations but often sided with the separatists and were repeatedly accused of contraband and trafficking. The frequent visits of Abkhaz leaders to Moscow reveal their great dependence on the Russian authorities, who usually have the final say in decision-making. Therefore, the Georgians perceive both conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia as a struggle against Russia and view the separatist leadership as pawns of Russian strategic interests in the Caucasus.

Russo–Georgian relations deteriorated after the Rose Revolution of 2003 and the election of Mikhail Saakashvili in 2004. The new Georgian authorities quickly moved against the pro-Russian leader of Adjara and restored their control of this region. Tbilisi and Moscow then clashed over the Russian policies in Abkhazia and Ossetia, and both sides periodically attack each other in official statements and charges. Georgia spearheaded several attempts to forge alliance with states that would counterbalance Russian influence. In 1997, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova established a consultative forum, which was later formalized as the GUAM organization. GUAM serves as a diplo-
matic means of countering the influence of Russia in the member states in the Caspian–Black Sea regions. Following the wave of peaceful revolutions in 2003–2004, Georgia and Ukraine combined their efforts against Russia. In November 2005, in response to the Russian denial of visas to its delegation members, the Georgian government insinuated that it might withdraw from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The following month, the presidents of Ukraine, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Moldova announced the formation of the Community of Democratic Choice that was unmistakably anti-Russian in nature. In response, Russia resorted to its surreptitious weapon, gas, to influence her neighbors. In December, the state-owned GAZPROM company announced its decision to double the price of gas for Georgia and quadruple it for Ukraine in response to their pro-Western policies. Although Russia denied using gas as a tool of political pressure, the fact that her close ally, Byelorussia, continued to receive gas at a subsidized price argued otherwise. Georgia grudgingly agreed to the price increase while a bitter row between Russia and Ukraine was resolved only under intense pressure from the European Union. However, in January 2006, acts of sabotage in Russia left Georgia without gas and electricity amid the coldest winter in a century. Russia’s lackluster response further strained Russo-Georgian relations and forced Tbilisi to seek alternative sources of energy. The Russo-Georgian dispute deepened after Russia refused to receive the Georgian prime minister in Moscow and stopped issuing visas to Georgian citizens (it was resumed in late March). Moscow also launched military maneuvers of the 58th Army along the Georgian borders and Russian fighter planes violated Georgian airspace. Furthermore, in April, Russia effectively declared a trade war against Georgia and began to ban Georgian products from Russian markets. In March–April, Russian authorities closed borders for Georgian fruit exports and later proscribed Georgian wine and mineral water products that constitute major elements of the Georgian export economy. In response, the Georgian government announced that it was considering withdrawing its membership from the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The summer of 2006 proved even more volatile as Russia and Georgia criticized each other for failure to resolve conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In early September, Georgian authorities arrested members of pro-Russian political parties, including ex-security chief Igor
Giorgadze’s Justice Party, and charged them with plotting a coup against the government. Only few days later, Emzar Kvitsiani, leader of the failed uprising in the Kodori Gorge, has threatened to launch a partisan warfare against Georgian governmental forces but official Tbilisi denounced it as the Russian-backed attempt at destabilizing Georgia. The situation became even more tense in late September when NATO invited Georgia to begin an Intensified Dialogue on Georgia’s aspirations to alliance. Russia quickly responded with a warning that Georgia’s further integration into NATO would directly threaten Russian political, military, and economic interests. On 22 September, President Saakashvili harshly criticized Russia at the UN General Assembly and accused Moscow of annexing Georgian territories and waging an economic blockade. A week later, Georgian authorities arrested several Russian intelligence officers in Tbilisi and accused them of organizing a spy ring and conspiring against the Georgian state interests. To detain other members of the alleged spy ring, a security cordon was organized around the headquarters of the Russian Forces in the Transcaucasia. In response, Russia stopped issuing visas to Georgian citizens and recalled its ambassador from Georgia. In a sign of deepening tensions between two countries, Moscow announced its plans to launch partial evacuation of its citizens from Georgia and some Russian senators hinted at a possibility of a war against Georgia. President Putin denounced Georgian actions as a “state terrorism” and authorized a series of sweeping measures that targeted Georgians. The government-controlled press and television launched an anti-Georgian propaganda campaign that carried undertones of xenophobia. The Russian authorities raided and closed Georgian businesses while security apparatus began detaining Georgians, many of whom were expelled from the country. Official Tbilisi described these measures as a “mild form of ethnic cleansing.” Thus, the relationship between Russia and Georgia remains at its lowest and it is hard to envision that it will recover in the near future.

**RUSTAVI.** One of the major cities in eastern Georgia. Throughout its history, Rustavi served as a key strategic fortress guarding the approaches to the Georgian capitals, Mtskheta, and Tbilisi. In the Middle Ages, it developed into a trading emporium as one of the Silk Road routes passed through it. During the Soviet era, Rustavi underwent a major transformation as part of Joseph Stalin’s accelerated
industrialization and several large steelworks and chemical plants were constructed. However, during the tumultuous early 1990s, many plants and factories were shut down and looted, significantly affecting the quality of life in Rustavi.

**RUSTAVI 2.** Privately owned TV Company in Georgia. Established in 1994, Rustavi 2 soon emerged as the leading TV broadcaster in Georgia, and its Western-style format and quality of programming appealed to the population and allowed the company to dominate its rivals. Since 2002, Rustavi 2 also broadcasts via satellite to Europe and the Middle East. From its very inception, the company was noticeably anti-government in its coverage, and its criticism of President Eduard Shevardnadze’s government only increased over the years, prompting several attempts to shut it down. In July 2001, Rustavi 2’s popular journalist Giorgi Sanaia was found dead in his apartment in what many considered to be a political murder related to his journalistic investigations. In October of the same year, as the company intensified its criticism, the government security forces raided its offices in an attempt to close it down. However, public outrage and massive demonstrations in support of Rustavi 2 forced the resignation of the entire cabinet.

Rustavi 2 emerged even more popular and was perceived as a bulwark of opposition. However, its coverage also seemed to become one-sided. Its bias against the government became especially evident during the elections of November 2003 when Rustavi 2 supported Mikhail Saakashvili and Zurab Zhvania and, in effect, organized an opposition propaganda campaign that helped rally forces in support of the *Rose Revolution* and forced the resignation of Shevardnadze on 23 November.

Its programs remain the most watched in Georgia, especially the news program *Courier*, investigative program *60 Minutes*, and entertainment programs *Psycho*, *The Night Show with David Gogichaishvili*, *Who Wants 20,000*, and the animated political satire, *Our Neighborhood*.

**RUSTAVI ENSEMBLE.** One of the most renowned Georgian folk ensembles. It was created in 1968 by Anzor Erkomaishvili, who was instrumental in collecting and reviving Georgian folk songs
and music. After graduating from the Tbilisi Conservatory, Erkomaishvili gathered singers from various parts of Georgia, among them Hamlet Gonashvili, who was popularly known as the Voice of Georgia, and began to build a repertory that combined regional styles and vocal timbres. The result was an innovation in the performance of Georgian music that synthesized the powerful sound characteristic of the traditional regional folk choirs with a more finely honed aesthetics and established new standards of authentic voicing and vocal timbres.

RUSUDAN (ca. 1194–1245). Queen of Georgia, daughter of Queen Tamar and David Soslan. She succeeded her brother, King Giorgi IV Lasha, in 1223 and had the misfortune to reign on the eve of the one of the worst invasions that ever befell Georgia. In late 1225, the Khwarazmian army of Jalal al-Din Mengiberdi, fleeing from the Mongols, invaded the southern Caucasus and defeated the Georgian army at Garnisi in early 1226. This was the first time Georgia had been invaded in almost 150 years, and Jalal al-Din spread death and destruction on an unprecedented scale. Tbilisi was captured on 9 March 1226, and thousands of its Christian residents were massacred. Queen Rusudan was unable to contain the enemy and fled to western Georgia. The Khwarazmian army remained in Kartli for one year before retreating to Armenia; the Georgians recaptured Tbilisi in the spring of 1227 but were later forced to abandon it again after another crushing defeat at Bolnisi. Rusudan sought help from the neighboring rulers of Rüm and Khlat as well as Christian powers. Jalal al-Din remained in Georgia until 1230 when he was routed by the Mongol army. However, the five years he spent in Georgia proved crucial since he completely devastated the once mighty kingdom and left Queen Rusudan facing even stronger opponents, the Mongols. Rusudan had no other choice than to submit, and by 1240, most of eastern Georgia was under the Mongol yoke. Rusudan agreed to pay a heavy tribute and provide Georgian troops for the Mongol campaigns.

Rusudan married the Seljuk prince Muhammad Mughis ud-din Turkan Shah, a grandson of the great Seljuk ruler Kilij Arslan II in 1224. She later gave birth to a son David and daughter Tamar. Fearing that her nephew David, the child of a morganatic marriage of King Giorgi IV Lasha, would claim the throne, Rusudan held him prisoner at the court
of her son-in-law, Sultan Kay Khusrau II, and arranged the Mongol con-
firmation of her son, also David, as her heir apparent. The Mongols,
however, also supported the claims of David, the son of Giorgi, and kept
both princes as hostages for several years. Waiting for her son’s return,
Rusudan died in 1245. Upon her death, the Mongols confirmed both
Davids as the rulers of Georgia, naming David, the son of Giorgi, as ulu
or senior and David, the son of Rusudan, as narin or junior.

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SAAKADZE, GIORGI (ca. 1570–1629). One of the most important
Georgian military and political figures of the early 17th century.
Saakadze is also known as the Great Mouravi, or, in foreign accounts,
as Mourav Beg, Maghraw, Meurab, and Mehrou. Giorgi’s father
Siaush Saakadze was an aznaur (petty squire) who, for his loyal ser-
service, was awarded estates in the present day Kaspi region in lower
Kartli. As Georgia struggled against Ottoman Turkey and Safavid
Persia, Giorgi Saakadze participated in several campaigns in which
he distinguished himself, and he became a close associate of young
King Luarsab II of Kartli and the son-in-law of an important lord,
Zurab Eristavi. Saakadze was named mouravi (governor) of Tbilisi in
1608. In the summer of 1609, the Ottomans launched a sudden raid
into Kartli with the goal of capturing King Luarsab. However,
Saakadze quickly raised a local militia and routed the invaders at
Tashiskari. Shortly after this victory, King Luarsab married
Saakadze’s sister. However, the sudden rise of a petty aznaur embit-
tered powerful feudal lords, who conspired against Saakadze. After
the death of Luarsab’s wife, these lords, led by Shadiman
Baratashvili, succeeded in turning King Luarsab against Saakadze
and attacked the mouravi’s estates. Saakadze was warned in the nick
of time and managed to escape to Persia in 1612.

Arriving in Esfahan, he was welcomed by Shah Abbas, who
quickly appreciated his military ability and intelligence. Saakadze
converted to Islam and entered the shah’s service, commanding Per-
sian troops in several campaigns. After the Ottomans recognized the
shah’s sovereignty over eastern Georgia, Shah Abbas launched a se-
ries of campaigns against the defiant kings of Kartli and Kakheti. In
1613–1617, the Persians tightened the control over these principalities as Kings Luarsab and Teimuraz I had to flee to Imereti. Shah Abbas invaded Kakheti on several occasions, razing numerous towns and monasteries; some 200,000 Georgians were forcibly resettled in Persia, where they helped develop local agriculture and industry. In 1623, the Persians summoned 10,000 Kakhetians, who were then massacred on the spot. Saakadze’s role in these events is unclear, but it is known that he accompanied and advised the shah. Facing the hostility of powerful Georgian lords, he pursued his political goal of unifying the Georgian principalities by exploiting Persian military power to destroy the feudal opposition. In 1619–1620, the shah appointed Saakadze as a guardian to Simon Khan, the Georgian prince turned Muslim who was left to govern Kartli.

In 1621–1623, Saakadze participated in Shah Abbas’ campaigns in Afghanistan and Baghdad, where his physical strength, military abilities, and keen mind became the stuff of legends. In 1624, Abbas, victorious on all fronts, turned his attention to Georgia. Fearing a potential revolt, he dispatched some 35,000 men under Qarcheghai Khan and Saakadze to subdue eastern Georgia—not trusting Saakadze completely, Shah Abbas kept his son Paata as hostage. The shah’s anxiety was justified, since Saakadze had maintained covert communications with the Georgian forces and devised a plan to destroy the enemy army. As the two armies gathered for a battle near Martkopi on 25 March 1625, Saakadze summoned the war council at which he personally slew Qarcheghai Khan while his son Avtandil and Georgian escorts killed other Persian commanders. The leaderless Persian troops were virtually annihilated. Taking advantage of his success, Saakadze then raised a rebellion in Kartli, captured Tbilisi, and expanded his campaign to Kakheti and Ganja-Karabagh. In late 1625, he routed the Persians near Aspindza and seized the major fortresses of Atskuri and Khertvisi. He then invited King Teimuraz of Kakheti to take the crown of Kartli and thereby united both principalities.

Enraged by Saakadze’s treachery, Shah Abbas beheaded Saakadze’s younger son Paata and dispatched some 60,000 men under Isa Khan to destroy the Georgians. Unfortunately for the Georgians, Saakadze’s sound war plan of engaging the Persians in the narrow Kodjori Valley
was rejected by powerful lords who feared their estates would be ravaged by the Persian troops. On 1 July 1625, some 20,000 Georgians attacked the superior Persian army on the plain of Marabda near the Algeti River. The Georgians pierced the Persian center and captured the baggage train. However, their troops then busied themselves looting the Persian camp while the arrival of Persian reinforcements turned the tide of the battle. Losing almost half of their army, the Georgians were forced to retreat. As the Persian army, which suffered some 14,000 casualties at Marabda, began its advance through Kartli, Saakadze mounted a guerrilla resistance and achieved several victories, including the destruction of some 12,000 Persians in the Ksani Valley alone.

The news of the Georgian resistance and heavy casualties on the Persian side inspired the Ottoman sultan to resume the war against Persia forcing Shah Abbas to recall his army from Georgia. In early 1626, Saakadze drove out the Persian garrisons from several major fortresses in Kartli but faced increased resistance from pro-Persian lords, who feared his growing power. Failing to win a war, Shah Abbas now turned to intrigue, reviving feuds between the Georgian nobles and succeeding in alienating King Teimuraz from the Great Mouravi, which led to a civil war. In the crucial battle on the shores of the Bazaleti Lake in the fall of 1626, Giorgi Saakadze was defeated by the supporters of King Teimuraz and had to flee to the Ottoman Empire. He was welcomed by the sultan, again accepted Islam, and was granted a governorship in Anatolia. In 1627–1628, Saakadze participated in campaigns against Erzerum. However, Grand Vizier Khusrev Pasha, fearing Sakadze’s popularity and suspecting his ongoing contacts with the Georgian nobles, had the Great Mouravi and his entourage executed on 3 October 1629 on alleged charges of treason.

Giorgi Saakadze remains one of the most popular, albeit controversial, figures in Georgian history. Some have condemned him as a traitor to his country, while others have honored him as a national hero. Saakadze was indeed a remarkable man and charismatic leader with great military abilities, but he also showed himself cunning and treacherous. However, his successful resistance frustrated Shah Abbas’ plans to destroy the Georgian states and set up Qizilbash khanates on Georgian territory. To this patriotic vision, Saakadze even sacrificed his own son.
SAAKADZE, ROSTOM-KHAN (ca. 1588–1643). Prominent Georgian commander in the service of the Safavid shahs. He escaped persecutions from powerful lords in native Kartli in 1599 and was sheltered by Shah Abbas I of Persia, who appointed him to various court positions. In 1632, Rostom-Khan took command of the Persian artillery, and two years later, he commanded the Persian army in Azerbaijan and Iraq. He successfully campaigned against the Ottomans in Iraq and seized Baghdad and Erevan. A talented commander, he developed new tactics for the Persian army that incorporated newly introduced firearms and artillery. In the 1630s, Saakadze helped Rostom Khan secure his authority in Kartli. Despite his loyal service for over four decades, he became victim of court politics and was executed by Shah Abbas II in 1643.

SAAKASHVILI, MIKHAIL (1967– ). Third president of Georgia. Saakashvili graduated from the School of International Law of Kiev University in 1992 and continued his studies at the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg, Columbia University, where he earned his master’s degree, and at George Washington University, where received his doctorate in law in 1995. After a brief career with a New York law firm, Saakashvili returned to Georgia where he entered politics and worked in the government of Eduard Shevardnadze. He emerged as one of the leaders of Shevardnadze’s Union of Citizens of Georgia and presided over several parliamentary committees. He was involved in Georgia’s bid for membership in the Council of Europe, and following Georgia’s accession in 1999, Saakashvili was appointed vice president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. In October 2000, he became minister of justice and initiated a series of publicized reforms in the Georgian criminal justice and penitentiary system, which raised his national and international profile and earned him the reputation of a crusader against corruption and an enemy of poverty.

In late 2000, Saakashvili began to gradually distance himself from Shevardnadze and accused the government of rampant corruption and profiteering. He caused a national scandal when he produced documents that he said showed his fellow ministers had acquired expensive villas from the proceeds of crooked deals. In September 2001, he resigned his post in protest over the government’s cronyism
and inaction and joined the opposition. He founded the United National Movement (UNM), and only weeks after his resignation, he was overwhelmingly reelected to Parliament in October 2001. Saakashvili later resigned his seat in Parliament and successfully campaigned in city elections in Tbilisi, where he was elected chairman of the City Assembly (sakrebulo). He used this position to continue his criticism of the government and attempted a series of reforms that made him one of the most popular politicians in Georgia. In 2003, he ran on the platform “Georgia without Shevardnadze.” When the parliamentary elections became tainted by allegations of fraud, Saakashvili joined forces with Zurab Zhvania and Nino Burdjanadze and organized nonviolent civil disobedience actions throughout Georgia. The massive protests, now popularly known as the Rose Revolution, ended on 23 November when Saakashvili made a dramatic appearance with his supporters inside the Parliament building and forced the resignation of President Shevardnadze. Campaigning on promises of political stability, economic development, and the fight against corruption, Saakashvili won the 2004 presidential elections, making him the youngest national president in Europe.

Saakashvili’s first great success came in removing Aslan Abashidze from Adjara and bringing this region back under control of the central authorities. He sought to reconcile Georgian society by rehabilitating the late former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and releasing Gamsakhurdia’s supporters who had been imprisoned by the Shevardnadze government. Saakashvili also pushed through the change of state symbols and adopted a new national flag and coat of arms in 2004. Saakashvili pursues a strongly pro-Western, particularly pro-United States, foreign policy and seeks Georgian membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union. In May 2005, he hosted the first visit of the president of the United States to Georgia, when George W. Bush made a stop of several hours in Tbilisi. Using the U.S. backing, Saakashvili achieved a historic agreement with Russia on the withdrawal of military bases; the process has already begun and is scheduled to be completed by 2008. Saakashvili also attempted to improve relations with Russia but often clashed with the Kremlin over the situation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Saakashvili’s administration directed its efforts to fighting the widespread black economy, reforming tax codes, imposing more
rigorous tax collection, and making the country more attractive for foreign investment. Georgia’s economic reforms and new round of privatization earned praise from the international community and helped secure new credit lines from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. The military forces were substantially modernized and increased. More far-reaching and dramatic was the new government’s anti-corruption campaign that purged the government bureaucracy of thousands of officials. It remains to be seen if Saakashvili and his team will be able successfully to reform the country over the long term.

SABA MONASTERY. One of the most important Georgian monasteries and cultural centers outside Georgia. The monastery was founded in the vicinity of Jerusalem in 480 and attracted a growing number of Georgian monks, who built their own church in 532 and began conducting services in Georgian. By the 8th–9th centuries, the St. Saba Monastery emerged as one of the leading centers of Christian thought, and Georgians played an important role in the process. They wrote or helped translate philosophical and theological works in Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Georgian, and Armenian languages. The Georgian community significantly increased in the 9th–10th centuries when the Georgian monks began reforming the Georgian literary language and developed Georgian hymnography and exquisite calligraphy of the so-called Sabatsmides style. Among the Georgian monks at the monastery were Basil, Ioane Zosime, Malkari Leteteli, Giorgi Tbileli, and others. St. Saba Monastery had close contacts with Georgia and exerted great influence on the monastic communities through its typicons and translations of various works. The monastery was active through the 11th and 12th centuries but the continuous warfare, persecutions, and squabbles with other monks, especially the Greeks, made living conditions difficult for the Georgian monks, who finally had to move to other Georgian monasteries.

SADROSHO. Military districts in feudal Georgia, similar to sanjaks of the Ottoman Empire. Each district was initially under the command of an appointed royal official, but eventually the position became hereditary and led to the creation of several prominent noble families. These powerful nobles often defied the royal authority and con-
tributed to decentralization of the Georgian monarchy. In the 16th century, King David VIII of Kartli tried to reform the military structure of his kingdom and established four sadrosho. Similar reform was introduced in Kakheti, but local sadroshos were placed under command of bishops, not tavadis.

SAFAVID DYNASTY. Persian dynasty founded by Shah Ismail I (1501–1524) following his victory over the Aq Qoyunlu. At its peak, the Safavids controlled Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, parts of Armenia, Georgia, and Afghanistan. They drew their power from the local Qizilbash tribes but later had to resort to golan (ghulam) troops to keep these tribes under control. The late 16th century proved disastrous to the Safavids as rebellions in Gilan (1570–1571) and Tabriz (1571–1573) coincided with the Ottoman expansion from the west and Uzbek attacks from the east. The rise of Shah Abbas I (1588–1629) turned the tide in favor of the Safavid dynasty, and Azerbaijan, Georgia, Khorasan, and Iraq were recovered by 1629. The Safavids also employed thousands of Georgians who gradually became more and more important in the political life of Persia. The Safavids introduced many reforms to the taxation system, the state administration, and the military that further strengthened their central authority. Yet, the early 18th century experienced an economic and political decline of the Persian state that culminated in the Afghan invasion in 1722. The last Safavid ruler, Shah Tahmasp II (1722–1732), was overthrown by the military commander Nadir Shah Afshar in 1736.

SAGHARADZE, GURAM (1929– ). Georgian theater and cinema actor. Born in Tbilisi, he graduated from Tbilisi State Theatrical Institute in 1951 and began his career at the Rustaveli Theater, where he gained fame for his dramatic performances. He later taught at the State Institute of Theater and Cinema and was cast in several successful movies. For his work, Sagharadze was rewarded the USSR State and Georgian State prizes and the Rustaveli Prize.

SAINGILO. Historic region of Georgia, part of the kingdoms of Hereti and Kakheti. In 1921, following the Bolshevik occupation of Georgia, the new Soviet authorities partitioned Georgia, transferring the Saingilo
region, including the districts of Kakhi, Belakani, and Zakatala, to Azerbaijan. According to 1999 census results, approximately 15,000 Georgians, known as Ingilos, live in the region. Although the Constitution of Azerbaijan guarantees human rights and freedoms to all minorities, ethnic and religious discrimination of Georgians in Azerbaijan has continued for years. The Azeri officials pressure the Georgians to change their religion and adopt Azeri surnames. Many Georgian villages have already been converted to Islam, and the few surviving Georgian churches were damaged or demolished.

SAKHOKIA, TEDO (1868–1956). Prominent Georgian scholar, ethnographer, lexicographer, and translator. A participant in radical and revolutionary groups. Sakhokia was closely associated with prominent members of the national liberation movement in Georgia such as Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli, as well as with the underground revolutionary movements. Sakhokia was active in the Revolution of 1905–1907 and illegally acquired weapons for revolutionaries in Georgia. In 1886–1887 he was a student at the University of Geneva, and in 1888 he studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. From 1900 to 1905 he studied at the Higher School of Anthropology in Paris. Sakhokia was the author of more than 60 scholarly and publicist works dealing with the ethnography of the Georgian people, a three-volume collection of figures of speech used by the Georgians, and similar material.

SAMEBA CATHEDRAL. One of the largest Christian churches in the world, the Sameba or Holy Trinity Cathedral was completed on Elia Mountain in Tbilisi in 2004. It was one of the largest constructions undertaken in the newly independent Georgia and stands as a symbol of the nation’s perseverance and unity; it is symbolic in that the church is located in the Avlabari district of Tbilisi that is densely populated by religious and ethnic minorities.

The cathedral was initially conceived in the early 1990s, but civil turmoil and economic crisis delayed the start of construction; an architectural design contest initially produced no winners, but architect Archil Mindiashvili’s design was eventually selected. Over the next decade, the Georgian Orthodox Church gathered contributions throughout the country and from the Georgian community abroad to complete the cathedral. Despite widespread poverty in the country,
many shared their savings with the church, perceiving the Sameba Cathedral as the symbol of unity and brighter future; names of Georgian business tycoons are also mentioned among the contributors. Almost 100 meters high, the cathedral includes a large complex of chapels and accommodations for clergy.

SAMTSKHE-JAVAKHETI. See MESKHETI.

SARAJISHVILI, DAVID (1848–1911). Prominent Georgian businessman and philanthropist. He was born into the family of a wealthy merchant and landowner Zachary Sarajishvili and graduated from Tbilisi Gymnasium with honors in 1866. The same year, he enrolled in the University of St. Petersburg and later continued his studies at the Universities of Munich and Heidelberg, where he received his doctorates in chemistry and philosophy in 1871. He remained in Europe for another seven years and studied agricultural science in Germany and France, where he specialized in viticulture and winemaking. He was particularly enthralled by cognac, and upon his return to Georgia in 1880, Sarajishvili began developing and promoting cognac distillery. He bought, upgraded, and built new distilleries and soon established a thriving business, producing high-quality spirits. By the early 20th century, his products held a large share of the market in the Russian Empire, and between 1899 and 1913, they won 14 awards, including eight gold medals.

Sarajishvili used his immense wealth for widespread charity work and philanthropy. He provided good working conditions for his employees, introduced the eight-hour day, two-week paid vacations, and reading rooms for workers. His house became a literary salon for the Georgian nobility and intelligentsia, and such prominent writers as Ilia Chavchavadze, Raphael Eristavi, and Akaki Tsereteli often presented their works there for the first time. He provided generous support for the establishment of Tbilisi State University, financed the construction of the new Kashveti Church in Tbilisi and the restoration of the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and numerous churches and historic sites throughout Georgia, and saved the Iveria newspaper from bankruptcy. He was actively involved in the Society for the Advancement of Learning among the Georgians, the Committee for Revival of the Georgian Peasantry, and the Historical and
Ethnographic Society. In 1907, he provided financial support for the scientific expeditions led by Ekvtite Takaishvili in southern Georgia. He became seriously ill and died while undergoing treatment in Berlin in June 1911. In his will, he left most of his immense wealth to be used for the benefit of the Georgian people. The bodies of Sarajishvili and his wife were initially buried at the Didube Pantheon of Public Figures. However, the Bolshevik authorities later exhumed their bodies and had them moved to a cemetery on the outskirts of Tbilisi. In 1995, their remains were transferred in a special ceremony to the graveyard of the Kashveti Church in the center of Tbilisi.

SASIRETI, BATTLE OF (1046). Battle between the armies of King Bagrat IV (1027–1072) of Georgia and the powerful Lord Liparit IV Baghvashi of Kldekari at the village of Sasireti, near modern Kaspi. A dispute between King Bagrat IV and Lord Liparit Baghvashi gradually developed into a bitter struggle over power. In his youth, Bagrat had been held hostage in Constantinople after his father King Giorgi I (1014–1027) lost the first Georgian–Byzantine War for the southwestern Georgian lands. Ascending the throne in 1027, Bagrat fought the second Georgian–Byzantine War in 1027–1030, which ended in a peace agreement between the two states. However, the Byzantine Empire often interfered in Georgian affairs, supporting the renegade nobles against Bagrat. In 1032, Amir Jafar of Tbilisi was captured by the powerful Georgian lords Liparit Baghvashi of Kldekari and Ivane Abazas-dze. However, influenced by the nobles who were resentful of Liparit Baghvashi, Bagrat released the Arab ruler, a decision he later came to regret. Liparit Baghvashi was offended by the royal decision and gradually turned against the king.

In 1038, Bagrat and Lord Liparit besieged Tbilisi for two years, but the king later signed a peace agreement with Amir Jafar without consulting Liparit Baghvashi, who now became Bagrat’s sworn enemy. In 1046, the Byzantines allied themselves with Liparit Baghvashi and launched a major campaign to defeat Bagrat and replace him with his half-brother Prince Demetre. In 1046, Liparit Baghvashi routed Bagrat IV’s army, which also included Viking mercenaries, at Sasireti, capturing Tbilisi and forcing Bagrat to retreat into eastern Georgia. The battle undermined the royal authority in Georgia and further accelerated the decentralization process, leaving Georgia vul-
nerable to the Seljuk attacks. It would take King Bagrat another six years to restore his authority over the eastern and southwestern Georgian provinces.

**SAYAT NOVA (1712–1795).** Famous bard and troubadour of Armenian origin in Tbilisi; his real name is often given as either Aruthin Sayadian or Haroutin Sayakin. Fluent in several languages, Sayat Nova or “King of Songs” established himself as one of the finest folk singer-songwriters (Arm. kousan), whose numerous songs described the life and toils of common people in Georgia and the neighboring countries. Although some 220 of his lyrics have survived, the true number of his poems is likely to be in the high hundreds. Sayat-Nova initially worked as a weaver, but he later became the court minstrel of King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti. He is also credited with helping King Erekle in his diplomatic relations with Armenian and Azerbaijani regions. However, as tradition claims, he fell in love with the king’s sister and was dismissed from the court in disgrace. In 1770 he entered a monastery in Haghbat and later became a traveling bard. He died during the Persian invasion of eastern Georgia in 1795.

**SELJUKS.** The commonly used name of the Oghuz Turks, who established several dynasties throughout the Middle East. The founder of the first Seljuk dynasty was Tughril, who seized Khorasan in 1037 and Baghdad in 1055. His successor, Alp Arslan, founded the sultanate of Rum and brought under his control Armenia and all of Persia, including Azerbaijan. In 1064, Alp Arslan led a successful incursion into the southern regions of Georgia, and four years later, he ravaged eastern Georgia and even reached Imereti in the west. In 1071, the Seljuk victory over the Byzantine army at the crucial battle of Manzikert opened the way for their systematic invasion of the Caucasus. In 1080, the so-called “Great Turkish Onslaught” (didi turkoba) began in Georgia when the Turkish tribes arrived in large numbers to settle on Georgian lands and turned the occupied territory into pastures, undermining local agriculture and economy. King Giorgi II (1072–1089) was forced to recognize their supremacy and paid tribute to the Seljuk sultan. The Seljuk domination continued unchecked for almost a decade during which the country was ravaged by enemy invasions, internal dissent, and natural disasters. In 1089, a bloodless coup d’état forced King...
Giorgi to abdicate in favor of his 16-year-old son David IV, who quickly rebuilt the country and attacked isolated Seljuk troops. In 1092, he ceased the payment of the annual tribute to the Seljuk sultan and halted the seasonal migration of the Turks into Georgia. Despite their attempted invasions, the Seljuk armies were defeated in 1105 and 1121, the latter attempt ending in the Georgian “miraculous victory” (dzlevai sakvirveli) at Didgori. During the reign of Queen Tamar, the Seljuks were largely on the defensive but often counterattacked. In 1195, their troops were crushed in the battle at Shamkhor and then at Basian in 1203. By 1209, the Georgians controlled the emirates of Kars, Erzurum, and Erzinjan.

**SHALIKASHVILI, JOHN MALCHASE DAVID (1936– ).** American general, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1993–1997. He was born to a Georgian émigré family in Poland, where his father Dimitri lived following his emmigration from Soviet Georgia. His father had served in the Georgian Legion units of the Wehrmacht but was captured by the British and held in a prisoner of war camp until the end of the war. John Malchase lived in Warsaw throughout the war and fled with his family to Germany in 1945. Reunited with Dimitri, the family immigrated to the United States in 1952. After graduating from Bradley University in 1958, John Malchase became a U.S. citizen in 1958 and enlisted in the U.S. Army. He graduated from Officer Candidate School and rose through the ranks over the next three decades of service. In 1993, he was appointed to the highest-ranking position in the U.S. armed forces, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He retired from the service in 1997 and began teaching at Stanford University.

**SHALVA AKHALTSIKHELI (?–1226).** Georgian military commander and court official. Lord Shalva belonged to the Akhaltsikeli branch of the powerful Toreli family and owned large estates in Akhalkalaki and other regions of Javakheti. Lord Shalva served as the mechurchletukhutsesi (treasurer) and later mandartukhutsesi (grand chamberlain) at the court of Queen Tamar and King Giorgi IV Lasha. He distinguished himself at the battle of Shamkhor in 1195, where he seized the enemy royal flag and delivered it to Queen Tamar. In the 1200s, Shalva and Sargis Tmogveli, commanded the
Georgian troops during the victorious campaign against Kars. In 1203, he and his brother Ivane led the Georgian advance guard at the battle of Basian. In 1210, he successfully campaigned throughout southern Georgia and Armenia. However, he also clashed with the influential Mkhargrdzeli family, and their feud proved critical in a forthcoming battle in 1225. During the Khwarazmean invasion of Jalāl al-Dīn in that year, Shalva Akhaltsikheli led the Georgian advance guard and engaged the enemy at Garhni. Despite repeated pleas from Akhaltsikheli, Ivane Mkhargrdzeli, the commander-in-chief of the Georgian forces deployed on the nearby heights, refused to commit his forces in support of his rival lords and watched as the Khwarazmean troops slaughtered them. Shalva survived the battle but was captured and delivered to Jalāl al-Dīn. He refused to convert to Islam and secretly informed the Georgian forces of the enemy numbers and movements, for which he was executed in late 1225.

SHAMKHOR, BATTLE OF (1195). Major battle between the Georgian army and Atabeg Abu-Bakr of Arran in June 1195 near Shamkhor (present-day Shamkir, Azerbaijan). In the mid-1190s, a bitter struggle between Atabeg Abu Bakr of Azerbaijan and Sirvan-shah Aghsartan led to the defeat of the latter. Aghsartan, enjoying a close relations with the Bagrationi dynasty, appealed from Georgia for help. In 1195, Queen Tamar dispatched her army under King Consort David Soslan to Shirvan. Atabeg Abu-Bakr rallied the forces of the neighboring Muslim principalities and met the Georgians near Shamkhor in June 1195. In a skillfully executed maneuver, David Soslan directed his troops toward the city of Shamkhor, which was a diversionary move while his main forces made a flanking attack against the Muslim troops. The Atabeg’s forces were surrounded and routed, and the city capitulated some time later. Among the Georgian trophies was the standard of the caliph, which was donated to the Kakhuli Monastery. The Georgians launched a vigorous pursuit, seizing the key fortress of Ganja. Queen Tamar restored Aghsartan in Shirvan under the terms of vassalage, thereby greatly expanding her sphere of influence.

graduated from the University of St. Petersburg in 1913 and began teaching at the Faculty of Armenian and Georgian Languages in St. Petersburg. In 1918, he became one of the founders of Tbilisi State University, where he later directed the Faculty of Armenian Language (1918–1930), of Georgian Language (1919–1945), and of Ancient Georgian Language. He was one of the founders of linguistics in Georgia and produced many ground-breaking works in the study of Georgian language and literary works. During his long career, Shanidze trained generations of Georgian historians and linguists. He laid the foundation for the study of the lost Caucasian Albanian language and directed scientific projects examining ancient Georgian inscriptions and texts, including Shota Rustaveli’s Vepkhistkaosani. His major works include Umlauti svanurshi (1925), Kartuli zmnis saktsvevi (1927), Kartuli gramatika: Morfologia (1930), Kartuli khalkhuri poezia: Khevsuruli (1931), and Kartuli enis gramatikis sapudzulebi (1953). Since the 1940s, generations of Georgians have been taught with Shanidze’s textbooks on Georgian grammar and language. He became a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1939 and of the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 1941. In 1943, he received the title of honorary scientist of Georgia, and, in 1967, of Armenia. From 1948–1950, he served as the vice president of the Georgian Academy of Sciences.

SHARTAVA, ZHIULI (1944–1993). Georgian politician, head of the Council of Ministers of Abkhazia. An engineer by education, Shartava entered politics in the late 1980s and was elected to the Parliament of Georgia in 1992. He opposed the separatist calls in Abkhazia and was elected head of the Council of Ministers of Abkhazia. After the start of the conflict in Abkhazia, he directed the Council of Self-Defense of Abkhazia against the separatists, and despite the fall of Sokhumi, he remained in the city. In late September 1993, he was captured by the Abkhaz militants and was tortured and executed without a trial.

SHATILI. Village located in Svaneti, on the north slope of the Great Caucasus Ridge. A medieval (14th–18th century) fortress-village blocking up the Argun River valley, it remains one of the most important architectural complexes of Georgia. The village comprises of...
residential dwellings with battle and watch towers, chapels, and subsidiary structures. After completion of the ongoing restoration project, Shatili is intended to become a living historical-architectural ethnographic museum.

SHENGELAIA, EL DAR (1933–). One of the finest Georgian directors. He graduated from the Moscow State institute of Cinematography in 1959 and worked in the Georgian Cinematographer’s Union in the 1970s and 1980s and later served as its president. His directorial debut came with Legenda o ledyanom serdtse in 1957, and Shengelaia’s subsequent works established him as one of the leading directors of his generation. Afterward, relatively successful films appeared, such as Snezhnaya skazka (1959), followed by Tetri karavani (1963), and Miqela (1965). Shengelaia produced a series of films that became classics of the Georgian cinema and their characters became part of popular culture. These were Arachveulebrivi gamofena (1968), Sherekilebi (1983), Samanishvilis dedinastvali (1978), and Tsisferi mtebi an daudjerebli ambavi (1983). He was declared People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR in 1979 and of the USSR in 1988. In the 1990s, Shengelaia entered politics and served as a deputy of Supreme Council (1990–1992), member of the State Council (1992), deputy of the Georgian Parliament, chairman of the culture commission (1992), and deputy chairman of the Georgian Parliament (1995).

SHEVARDNADZE, DIMITRI (1885–1937). Georgian artist and public figure. Born into a prominent family, Shevardnadze studied at the Academy of Arts in Munich from 1907–1914. Returning to Georgia, he had a significant role in the cultural life at Tbilisi. He founded the Association of Georgian Artists and the Georgian National Gallery and was instrumental is establishing the Academy of Arts and the State Museum of Fine Arts. In the 1930s, Shevardnadze was involved in theater and cinema production and designed several operas and movies, including Abesalom da Eteri and Vin aris damnashave. In 1937, he was arrested during the Stalinist purges and was executed.

Georgia from 1995–2003. Born in the village of Mamati in Guria, he studied at Kutaisi Pedagogical Institute and joined the Communist Party in 1948 after two years as a Komsomol instructor. Gradually rising through the ranks, he served as head of Mtskheta and Pirveli Maisi Regional Committees of the Communist Party before becoming a member of the Georgian Supreme Soviet in 1959. He was appointed minister of internal affairs of the Georgian SSR in 1968, and over the next four years, he gained a reputation for his fight against corruption. In 1972, Georgian First Secretary Vasily Mzhavanadze was replaced by Shevardnadze, following a corruption scandal, and soon became notorious for his harsh treatment of dissidents, many of whom were persecuted and imprisoned.

Shevardnadze’s seemingly unrelenting struggle against corruption soon caught the attention of the Kremlin. He was appointed to the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1976, and two years later, he was promoted to the rank of candidate member of the Soviet Politburo. A shrewd politician, he avoided the political limelight while consolidating his reputation for personal honesty and austerity. In 1985, with General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev starting his reforms, Shevardnadze replaced veteran Communist Andrey Gromyko as the Soviet minister of foreign affairs. He became privy to Gorbachev’s circle of young reformers and played an important role in formulating Soviet foreign policy in the late 1980s. He is credited with devising the so-called “Sinatra Doctrine” of allowing the Soviet Union’s eastern European satellites to [do it their way] determine their own futures. In 1988–1989, Shevardnadze opposed the hard-liners in the Politburo and rejected calls for Soviet intervention in Eastern European socialist states, thus paving the way for a peaceful transformation in these countries. Shevardnadze played a crucial role in the unification of Germany in 1989, but his involvement and moderate views were perceived by the die-hard Communists, Russian nationalists, and army officers as a betrayal and earned him the enduring antagonism of powerful figures. By 1990, under the pressure of hard-liners, Gorbachev toned down his liberal reforms, which put him at odds with Shevardnadze, who advocated further political and economic liberalization. In December 1990, Shevardnadze resigned in protest and warned of a possible coup by the Communist hard-liners, which occurred in August 1991 and precipitated the collapse
of the Soviet Union. Shevardnadze briefly served as the Soviet foreign minister in November 1991 before resigning after the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union in December of that year.

After a year in private life, Shevardnadze was again thrust onto the political scene. The newly independent Georgia was in the throes of a civil war as President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who had been imprisoned by Shevardnadze’s government in the late 1970s, was deposed in a military coup d’état in 1992. The military junta of Tengiz Sigua, Jaba Ioseliani, and Tengiz Kitovani invited Shevardnadze to lead the new Georgian government. In March 1992, he became the acting chairman of the Georgian State Council. Facing the daunting task of leading his country in turmoil, Shevardnadze displayed his remarkable political cunning and acumen. Over the next three years, he outmaneuvered his political opponents and consolidated his authority; Ioseliani and Kitovani, among others, were imprisoned. In 1995, as the new Constitution was adopted, Shevardnadze was elected president of Georgia. Five years later, he was reelected for the second term, although the elections were marred by claims of vote-rigging.

Shevardnadze’s presidency constitutes one of the most important periods in recent Georgian history. On his arrival in Tbilisi, the country was ravaged by a civil war and ethnic conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The economic and industrial infrastructure was largely destroyed. Georgian society itself was demoralized and was divided into factions supporting former President Gamsakhurdia and various other political groups, all of whom opposed Shevardnadze. Thus, two assassination attempts were made against him in August 1995 and February 1998. Irritated by Georgia’s pro-Western course, Russia actively encouraged separatism in Abkhazia and Ossetia while effectively declaring an economic blockade that resulted in widespread cuts in electric power and natural gas in Georgia. The escalating war in Chechnya further deteriorated Russo-Georgian relations, as Russia accused Shevardnadze of harboring Chechen guerrillas. Using his former contacts in the diplomatic world, Shevardnadze initially established close relations with the United States, which both sides perceived as a counterbalance to Russian influence in Transcaucasia. Georgia soon became a major recipient of U.S. foreign and military aid, signed a strategic partnership with the North Atlantic
Treaty Organization (NATO), and even declared its goal of joining the NATO and the European Union. One of Shevardnadze’s major achievements was securing a multi-billion-dollar oil pipeline project to transport oil from the Caspian Sea to the European markets through Georgia.

However, Shevardnadze’s relative success in foreign affairs was more than outweighed by domestic failures. He succeeded in maintaining Georgia’s territorial integrity in the face of strong separatist pressures but was unable to restore central authority in some regions, especially in Adjara. Crime and corruption became rampant, and Georgia became known as one of the world’s most corrupt countries. Shevardnadze’s closest advisers, including members of his family, exerted disproportionate economic power. His family members controlled large portions of the oil trade, media holdings, and mobile phone networks. Shevardnadze was repeatedly accused of shielding corrupt officials and using his patronage to consolidate his authority. In 2001, Shevardnadze, with the approval of international donors, launched an extensive anti-corruption reform, which proved to be an empty gesture. A far-reaching anti-corruption campaign would have meant attacking members of the ruling elite on whom he relied and would weaken his power. Although he facilitated the development of civil society, Shevardnadze’s government resorted to voting fraud to secure its position.

The charges of dishonesty and fraud left Shevardnadze vulnerable during the parliamentary elections of 2003. The officially announced results of this election favored Shevardnadze’s ruling party but were immediately denounced as rigged and unfair by the opposition and by international election observers. This sparked massive demonstrations in Tbilisi demanding the resignation of the president. Led by Mikhail Saakashvili and Zurab Zhvania, Shevardnadze’s one-time protégés, the protesters broke into the Parliament on 21 November 2003, forcing Shevardnadze to escape with his bodyguards. Although Shevardnadze initially refused to resign and declared a state of emergency, he later participated in a meeting with the opposition leaders that was mediated by emissaries from the U.S. and Russia. To avoid any violence and contingent upon the guarantee of his personal safety and immunity, Shevardnadze announced his resignation on 23 November. After the Rose Revolution, as the November events became
known, Shevardnadze remained in Tbilisi, residing at the presidential residence in Krtsanisi.

SHIRVAN. Region in northern Azerbaijan on the western shore of the Caspian Sea. Shirvan was ruled by a succession of dynasties of Shirvanshahs who controlled a large territory between the Kura River and the Caspian Sea. The principal dynasties of Shirvanshahs were the Arab Mazyadids (9th–early 11th centuries), the Kesranids (11th–14th centuries), and the Derbent Shirvanshahs (1382–1538). In the 12–13th centuries, Georgian Bagrationi rulers successfully campaigned in Shirvan forcing its rulers to acknowledge their sovereignty. The Bagrationi dynasty intermarried with the Shirvan rulers, and the Georgian kings often used the title shirvanshahs. Shirvan was annexed by the Safavids and became one of the Persian provinces in 1538. It regained its independence in 1748 and formed the Shirvan Khanate. The Russian Empire annexed the region in 1805.

SHOTA RUSTAVELI (13TH CENTURY). Georgian poet, author of the epic Vepkhistaosani (The Knight in the Tiger’s Skin); his name is often spelled as Rusthaveli or Rust’haveli. Despite his acclaim as the greatest Georgian poet, Shota Rustaveli is still an enigmatic figure, and even his full name remains unidentified since Rustaveli means “from Rustavi,” indicating that he was either from Rustavi or owned an estate in Rustavi. There is no reliable information about his origin, date of birth, or date of death. It is known that he lived during the reign of Queen Tamar (1184–1213). His epic poem clearly shows that he was very well educated. Among the documents surviving from that period there is one carrying the signature of Rustaveli, and suggestions were made that Shota Rustaveli was the mechurcheletukhutsesi (royal treasurer) of Queen Tamar. Fortunately, his appearance is known since a fresco in the Georgian Monastery of the Cross in Jerusalem has his portrait on one of the walls. Popular tradition holds that Rustaveli was hopelessly in love with Queen Tamar and that he dedicated his epic to her. Toward the end of his life, Rustaveli went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem where he spent the remaining years at the Monastery of the Holy Cross.

Rustaveli’s Vepkhistaosani is one of the greatest epics of world literature. Containing a total of 1,637 verses, it is written in a
unique style with 16 syllables in each verse, whose rhymes and rhythms remain unsurpassed to this day in Georgian literature. The epic follows two story lines, one about the Indian knight Tariel and his beloved Nestan-Daredjan and the other about the Arab knight Avtandil and his love Tinatin. The poem follows the warrior’s quest in search of Nestan-Daredjan, who is kidnapped and imprisoned in Kadjeti fortress, a symbol of tyranny and wickedness. Throughout his poem, Rustaveli preached his underlying principle that justice and righteousness prevails over lawlessness and evil. Vepkhistkaosani combines the elements of Christianity, neo-Platonism, and Eastern religions into a unique philosophy that breathes with humanistic ideas.

Far ahead of his time, Rustaveli called for individual freedom as well as freedom of thoughts and emotions, a life free of predestination. He demonstrates the influence of Greek philosophers and cites works of Plato, Proclus, Nemesius, and Dionysius the Areopagite. There are no references to Christ and only a few passing references to biblical persons and events, which exposed the poem to the attacks of the Georgian clergy. Rustaveli’s only surviving image was preserved in a fresco in the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, which now belongs to the Greek Orthodox Church. Unfortunately, the fresco was severely damaged when an unknown vandal scraped it off the wall in June 2004. The Shota Rustaveli Prize was established in 1965 as the highest award in the fields of arts and literature. Its first recipients were the great artists Constantine Gamsakhurdia, Lado Gudiaishvili, and Irakli Abashidze. See also LITERATURE.

SHUSHANIK (FIFTH CENTURY). Christian martyr and female protagonist of Jacob Tsertveli’s Shushanikis tsameba, the oldest surviving piece of the Georgian literature. Shushanik was the daughter of the prominent Armenian statesman Vard Mamikonian, who led an Armenian uprising against Sasanid Persia. Shushanik’s husband, Varsken, was, on the contrary, pro-Persian and served as a royal official (pittaxae/vitaxae) in eastern Georgia. He was closely allied to Shah Peroz and participated in the Persian campaigns against the Huns. On one of his visits to the Persian court, Varsken converted to Mazdaism and sought to convert his family as well. Shushanik’s refusal to renounce Christianity infuriated him, and he subjected her to
brutal treatment and torture, which ultimately caused her death. Jacob Tsurtaveli, her confessor, left a detailed account of her martyrdom, which contains important details on the political, cultural, and social history of contemporary eastern Georgia.

SIGUA, TENGIZ (1934– ). Georgian statesman and former prime minister. An engineer by profession, he participated in the national liberation movement in late the 1980s, serving as a chairman of the Shota Rustaveli Society. He became the prime minister in Zviad Gamsakhurdia’s government in November 1990. However, he soon disagreed with the president and joined the opposition in August 1991. Sigua supported Tengiz Kitovani and Jaba Ioseliani during the military coup against Gamsakhurdia and became the head of the Military Council that was established following Gamsakhurdia’s ouster. In 1992, the Military Council invited the former Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze to lead the new government. Sigua soon clashed with Shevardnadze and was forced to resign in August 1993. He joined the opposition parties and criticized Shevardnadze’s government. In 1995, he was arrested during an attempted march of Georgian refugees to Abkhazia and was imprisoned for several months. After his release, Sigua returned to private life and avoided active politics.

SILK ROAD. Ancient trading route linking the Far East with the West. The route originated in central China and passed through territories of Central Asia and the Middle East to Europe. While the main route passed much to the south of Georgia, several minor trade routes led through Georgia to the Black Sea coast. The Silk Road was the economic lifeline of the regions it traversed, but the economic traffic was often disrupted by wars and the Silk Road route gradually faded away with the development of maritime commerce in the 15th century. In the 1990s, an attempt was made to revive this ancient trade route, and the Europe–Caucasus–Asia Transport Corridor was established. In 1998, 12 nations signed a trade agreement to develop rail, road, air, and sea links between China and Europe through Transcaucasia, bypassing the territory of Russia.

SIMON I (1537–1611). King of Kartli in 1556–1569 and 1578–1599. The son of King Luarsab, he distinguished himself at the battle of
Garisi against the Persians in 1556. After the death of his father, he ascended the throne and spent the next four decades fighting against Persia and the Ottoman Empire. He established an alliance with Kakheti in 1559 and unsuccessfully attempted to recapture Tbilisi from his renegade Muslim convert brother Daud Khan (David XI) in the 1560s. In 1567–1569, Simon achieved major victories over the Persian forces led by Daud Khan at Dighomi Field and Samadlo but was later defeated in the decisive battle of Partskhisi, where he was betrayed and captured by the Persians. Refusing to convert to Islam, Simon was imprisoned in Persia between 1569–1578.

The Ottoman expansion into southern Caucasia in 1578 forced the Safavid rulers to release Simon I to fight the common enemy. Simon achieved considerable success in Kartli, where he rallied the Georgian forces and captured the key fortresses of Lori and Gori before besieging Tbilisi in 1579. In 1580, he repulsed the Ottoman expeditions in Kartli and, in 1582, he routed a major Ottoman army on the Mukhrani Field. Forging an alliance with Manuchar II Jakeli of Samtske, he helped raise a rebellion in this region. As the Ottomans diverted reinforcements to Kartli, Simon faced an uphill struggle against a superior enemy. In 1588, he negotiated an armistice with the Ottoman sultan, who recognized him as a Christian king of Kartli in return for tribute.

From 1588–1595, Simon concentrated on domestic affairs and sought to exploit a civil strife in western Georgian principalities to extend his authority. He waged several campaigns in Imereti but was unable to secure his authority there because of the Ottoman pressure and resistance of local nobles. In 1595, Simon joined the anti-Ottoman alliance of Kakheti and Persia and drove the Turks out of Kartli, capturing Gori in 1599. However, later that year, he failed to defeat the Ottoman punitive expedition at Partskhisi, where he was captured and taken to Istanbul. He spent the last 12 years of his life in the notorious Yedi Kule prison, where he died in 1611.

SIMON II. Ruler of Kartli in 1619–1631. The son of Bagrat VII, he was raised at the Safavid court of Persia, where he converted to Islam. In 1619, Shah Abbas I appointed the young Simon as khan of Kartli and sent Giorgi Saakadze to advise him. Saakadze quickly seized the reins of authority and began preparations for an insurrec-
tion. In 1625, he defeated the Persian troops and forced Simon Khan to flee to southeastern Georgia. Following the Georgian defeat at Marabda in July 1625, Simon was restored to the Kartlian throne, but his authority was limited to Tbilisi and its vicinity. In 1630, he was assassinated on the orders of King Teimuraz I and Eristavi Zurab of Aragvi.

SINAI, MOUNT. Major center of Georgian cultural and religious life outside Georgia. By the third century CE, Mount Sinai had become a center of the Christian community, and the Georgian community appeared there as early as the sixth century. Georgians seem to have played a dominant role since the second half of 10th century when a number of chapels and complexes were built by the Georgian kings. Over the next decades, the Georgian community on Mount Sinai increased and contributed to the cultural and religious life of Georgia. Manuscripts were written and illuminated, and many Greek and Arab works were translated and interpreted. Among the monks living there were Ioane Zosime, Ioane Kumurdoeli Mikael Panaskerteli, Ezra Kobuleanisdze, and others. Currently, St. Catherine Monastery houses one of the largest collections of Georgian medieval manuscripts. The Institute of Manuscripts of the Academy of Sciences of Georgia conducted several expeditions to Mount Sinai (in 1975, 1990, 1994, 1996, and 2000) to study the manuscripts and recorded more than 140 manuscripts and numerous fragments.

SOCHI AGREEMENT (1992). Russian mediated ceasefire between the Georgian and Ossetian sides concluded in Sochi, Russia, on 24 June 1992. In late spring 1992, the conflict in South Ossetia escalated after North Ossetia, an autonomous region in Russia, threatened to intervene against Georgia. South Ossetian troops were later observed using heavy weaponry with Russian identification marks, which Georgia interpreted as further involvement of Russia in the conflict. On 10 June 1992, Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the State Council of Georgia, met A. Galazov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of North Ossetia at Kazbegi, where the two sides agreed on a ceasefire. The Kazbegi meeting laid the foundation for the eventual negotiations that led to the Sochi agreement signed on 24 June. Under this agreement, both parties pledged to observe a complete ceasefire and
withdraw their forces to create a demilitarized zone in the region. A Joint Control Commission (JCC)—of Russian, Georgian, North Ossetian, and South Ossetian representatives—was established to guarantee the cease-fire, disband local militias, ensure security in the region, and help with the return of refugees and economic reconstruction of damaged areas.

SOCIALIST FEDERALIST PARTY (SOTSIALIST FEDERALISTEBI, SFP). The party was formed from a group joined around the newspaper Tsnobis purtseli and was formalized at a conference in Geneva in April 1904. Among its leaders were Archil Jorjadze, prominent Georgian public figure and editor of the journal Sakartvelo, Giorgi Laskhishvili, Giorgi Dekanozishvili, and others. The party opposed the anti-nationalist position of the Social Democrats, supported the Socialist Revolutionary program on agrarian questions, and called for autonomous status for every nationality in the Russian Empire, which was to be reorganized into a federation. It was involved in a revolutionary struggle against the Russian authorities and supported the restoration of Georgian independence on an autonomous status within the Russian Empire. See also POLITICAL PARTIES.

SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING AMONG GEORGIANS. The society was established by a group of Georgian writers and public figures, including Ilia Chavchavadze, Akaki Tsereteli, and Jacob Gogebahsvili. Its aim was to reform the Georgian language, increase the literacy rate among Georgians, and revive the national language and culture. The society was instrumental in organizing and completing the Georgian language reform, which modified the Georgian alphabet by removing five letters and simplifying the grammar rules. In the 1880s and 1890s, the society organized lectures, published textbooks, and taught language and culture classes for Georgians and helped established the Georgian Nobility Gymnasiums in Tbilisi and Kutaisi.

SOKHUMI. Administrative center of Abkhazia, Sokhumi also served as a major port, rail junction, and a Black Sea resort, whose sulfur and other mineral baths have been frequented since Roman
times. The Greek colony of Dioscurias was founded on the site of the city in the 6th century BCE and was later known as Sebastopolis under Rome and Byzantium. A part of the kingdoms of Abkhazia and Georgia throughout the Middle Ages, Sokhumi, also known as Tskhumi, fell under Ottoman influence in 16th–17th century and was turned into an Ottoman fortress Sukhum-Kale. Russia acquired it in 1810, and the town prospered under the Russian administration and received the status of a city in 1847. In the Soviet period, it emerged as one of the most popular tourist destinations on the Black Sea, famous for its scenery and entertainment, including the famous Botanical Gardens with thousands of subtropical and tropical plants. Among the city sights were King Bagrat III’s palace, Besleti Bridge, Gumista Fortress, Kelasuri caves, and Kamani Cathedral, etc. There were several institutions of higher education, including a university, and museums, among them of Dimitri Guilia and Nestor Lakoba. In the late 1980s, Sokhumi saw the rise of Abkhaz and Georgian nationalism and, during the conflict in Abkhazia in the 1990s, it was the scene of bloody fighting between Georgian and Abkhaz forces. Its fall on 27 September 1993 decided the outcome of the conflict and led to the subsequent ethnic cleansing of the entire region. Currently, Sokhumi is a capital of the self-proclaimed republic of Abkhazia.

SOLOMON I (1735–1784). King of Imereti between 1752 and 1784. The son of King Alexander V, Solomon proved to be a strong ruler who sought to extend his authority to all of western Georgia. However, he was opposed by powerful lords, who often rose in rebellion. Immediately upon his accession to the throne, Solomon was attacked by the mighty eristavi of Racha and had to abandon his capital for a year. He then secured an alliance with the princes of Mingrelia and used the support of the gentry in his struggle against the grand nobles. He prohibited the slave trade that had devastated the Georgian principalities, which embittered the Ottomans who actively interfered in Imeretian affairs against King Solomon. In 1757, the Imeretian king scored a major victory over the Ottomans at Khresili. The same year, he negotiated a military alliance with King Teimuraz II of Kartli and Erekle II of Kakheti, providing for mutual support against internal and foreign threats. In 1759, he launched a reform of the
Orthodox Church of western Georgia and strengthened his authority. Between 1760–1763, he defeated several Ottoman expeditions and achieved another important victory at Chkhari in 1768. In 1769, he finally managed to capture his major rival, Eristavi Rostom of Racha, and abolished the Racha saeristavo completely.

During the Russo–Turkish War of 1769–1774, Solomon was offered Russian military help against the Ottomans. Russian troops arrived in Imereti in late 1769, and Solomon was able to capture a series of fortresses, including Shorapani, Baghdadi, and Kutaisi, and defeat his main opponent, the ruler of Guria. In 1774, Solomon appealed to Empress Catherine II for protection, but Russia was unable to satisfy his request because of Ottoman pressure. The same year, Solomon routed the Ottomans on the banks of the Chkherimela River. By the mid-1770s, Solomon had extended his control to large parts of western Georgia and used his enhanced powers to introduce many changes in his kingdom, which led to discontent among the nobility. In 1778, Prince Alexander led an uprising against Solomon, but it was suppressed. In 1779–1780, Solomon repelled the Ottoman invasion and was victorious at Rukhi. From 1781–1784, he fought in Guria, but he died before seeing the results of his campaigns.

SOLOMON II (1772–1815). King of Imereti 1789–1810. The nephew of King Solomon I, he was born David, the son of Prince Archil, and was raised at the court of King Erekle II in Kartli-Kakheti. After the death of the childless Solomon I, the struggle for power began in Imereti and the nobles rallied around two claimants, Prince David, the son of Prince Archil, and David, the son of Prince Giorgi. In the decisive battle at Matkhoji, David, the son of Archil, was able to defeat his opponent with the help of King Erekle II and Prince Grigol Dadiani in 1789. Becoming king of Imereti, David changed his name and became Solomon II.

Solomon faced serious problems both within his realm and from abroad. Some nobles continued to defy his authority, and Solomon II’s attempts to extend his power to the rest of western Georgia only antagonized large numbers of nobles. In 1801, Russia annexed the neighboring Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti and slowly expanded its authority to the west. In April 1804, Solomon II was compelled to recognize the
sovereignty of the Russian Empire but continued his struggle to gain more independence. In 1810, the tensions escalated into open conflict and Solomon raised a rebellion against Russia. He was overthrown and captured by the Russian troops. However, later that year, Solomon escaped from a prison in Tbilisi and rallied his forces. He was defeated again and forced to flee to the Ottoman Empire, where he remained for the next five years. In his exile, Solomon sought foreign help against Russia and appealed to Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte and the ruling dynasties of Persia and the Ottoman Empire. Unable to secure any aid, he died in Trebizond in 1815. His remains were returned to Georgia for re-burial in the early 1990s.

SOTKILAVA, ZURAB (1937– ). Georgian tenor. Born in Sokhumi, he studied at the Tbilisi Polytechnic Institute and Tbilisi Conservatory and began his career at the State Theater of Opera and Ballet in 1965. From 1966–1968, he trained at the La Scala Opera in Italy before joining the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow in 1974. From 1968–1979, he won gold medals and a grand prix at international competitions in Sofia, Barcelona, and Moscow, and in 1979, he was named People’s Artist of the USSR. From 1976–1988, he taught at the Moscow State Conservatory. Sotkilava gained worldwide fame for his soulful performances and powerful voice. Among his memorable acts are Abesalom in Zakaria Paliashvili’s Abesalom da Eteri, Otello in Verdi’s Otello, Don Jose in Bizet’s Carmen, and Arzakan in Taktakishvili’s Mtvaris motatseba. See also BURCHULADZE, PAATA; GAMREKELI, DAVID; THEATER.

SPECIAL TRANSCAUCASIAN COMMITTEE. The committee (Osobyi Zakavkazskii Komitet) was established on 9 March 1917 following the February Revolution and the overthrow of Tsar Nicholas II. It operated as the Provisional Government’s agent in Transcaucasia and represented the national groups to the central authorities. It was chaired by Russian Constitutional Democrat V. Kharlamov, who was assisted by Georgian Menshevik Akaki Chkhenkeli, Georgian Social Federalist K. Abashidze, Armenian Kadet M. Papajanian, and Azeri Musavatist M. Jafarov. The committee was dissolved after the October Revolution of 1917 and was replaced by the Transcaucasian Commissariat.
STALIN, JOSEF (1878–1953). Soviet dictator, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, supreme commander of the Soviet Armed Forces, and marshal of the Soviet Union. One of the most powerful and feared rulers in history, he concentrated enormous power in his own hands and made skillful use of the Communist Party apparatus, differences of opinion among revolutionaries, and terrorist means to establish his dictatorship in the USSR. Arguably, except for Vladimir Lenin, no other statesman or revolutionary had such dramatic impact on the course of Russian/Soviet history, leaving imprints in politics, culture, art, science, and virtually all aspects of life. Under Stalin’s rule, the fledgling Russian Empire was transformed from an agricultural nation into a global superpower, and his legacy still reverberates in the former Soviet republics.

Born Iosif (Joseph) Vissarionovich Jughashvili (Dzhugashvili) in Gori, Josef Stalin was the only child of his parents to survive infancy. Many facts of his life were later changed and reinvented to embellish his life; thus, according to church records, police files, and Stalin’s own notes, he was born on 18 December 1879, but after he came to power, the date was inexplicably changed to 21 December 1879, which is still celebrated as his birthday. Stalin’s parents were semiliterate, and his father worked as a shoemaker and cobbler while his mother was a washerwoman and domestic servant. He initially studied in Gori Theological College and entered the Tbilisi Theological Seminary in 1893. While studying, he was introduced to Russian socialism and Marxism, joined the Social Democrats in 1898, and participated in various revolutionary activities, for which he was expelled from the seminary. In 1900, he was elected a member of the Tbilisi Committee of the Russian social democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) and went underground after the May Day demonstrations in Tbilisi 1901 to protest working conditions. Later that year, he moved to Batumi, where he worked for the local party committee. In 1902, he helped organize a strike and demonstrations and was arrested and exiled to Siberia. In 1904, he escaped from exile and returned to Tbilisi, where he served as a member of the Transcaucasian Joint Party Committee.

Using the party name Koba, Stalin gained his fame by organizing “expropriations” and counterfeiting in support of the Russian Social Democratic Party. By 1905, he sided with the Bolshevik faction of
the RSDRP (although Georgia was a stronghold of the Menshevik faction), led by Vladimir Lenin and directed the illegal Bolshevik organ *Borba proletariata*. In late 1905, he attended the Tammerfors Party Conference and, in 1906–1907, he was at the 4th and 5th RSDRP Congresses in Stockholm and London. Returning to the Caucasus, he helped publish that illegal newspaper *Bakinskii rabochii* in Baku but was arrested and exiled to Vologda province in 1908. During the next five years, he escaped and was rearrested several times and briefly stayed in St. Petersburg, where he worked for the *Zvezda* and *Pravda* newspapers in 1911. Arrested for the final time in spring 1913, he was sent to the Turukhansk region, where he remained for four years until the February Revolution of 1917 when he was released and returned to St. Petersburg; during this period, he also adopted his new party name Stalin meaning “a man of steel.” He became a member of the Central Committee of the RSDRP(B), editor of the party newspaper *Pravda*, and participated in the 6th RSDRP(B) Congress in late 1917. Despite later official propaganda, he played only a minor part in the Bolshevik seizure of power in October 1917.

Stalin’s “expertise” on the nationalities question led to his appointment as people’s commissar of nationalities and later as people’s commissar of peasants’ inspection in the new Bolshevik government. Through the Civil War period (1918–1922), he established himself as one of the Bolshevik leaders but was overshadowed by his more talented comrades Leon Trotsky, Lev Kamenev, and Nikolai Bukharin. In 1918–1920, he was a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Southern, Western, and Southwestern Fronts. In 1922, at Lenin’s suggestion, he was elected general secretary of the Central Committee and with that position gained de facto control of the Politburo. To Stalin fell the day-to-day management of the party, which gave him considerable leverage in placing loyalists in key positions. From 1925, he was a member of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of Comintern.

Following Lenin’s incapacitation by stroke in 1923 and subsequent death on 21 January 1924, Stalin began to secure control of the organs of Soviet governance; by the mid-1920s, he had already begun his campaign against his arch rival Leon Trotsky and succeeded in having the Trotskyist–Zinovyevite block expelled from the party. From
1929–1932, he began to purge the Old Bolsheviks, both his former adversaries and comrades in his quest to maintain and strengthen his hold on power. He gradually intensified his purges, directing them at subordinate officials and low-ranking party cadres, many of whom were tortured to death, executed, or perished in gulag camps. The period of Great Purges (1934–1938) was characterized by Stalin’s use of mass terror and dramatic public “show trials”; millions of ordinary citizens were arrested on trumped-up charges and sent to gulag camps in Siberia. In 1937, after the destruction of his party adversaries, Stalin purged the Red Army officer corps, which eliminated hundreds of senior officers and effectively decapitated the military leadership.

In economic terms, Stalin reversed Lenin’s New Economic Policy (NEP), which had introduced a degree of capitalism in order to revive the economy, and began a massive collectivization program, ruthlessly purging the middle-class peasants (kulaks). Stalin’s collectivization is estimated to have claimed millions of victims, including over four million deaths in Ukraine and the lower Volga region alone. Stalin also implemented a series of five-year plans to accelerate the industrialization process. His main emphasis was the exploitation of Soviet natural resources and development of heavy industry as well as armaments production. Although considerable progress was made, it came at a heavy price in human lives and living standards for the Soviet people.

In foreign affairs, Stalin initially pursued an internationalist course, and in 1934 the USSR joined the League of Nations and secured defensive pacts with other nations. However, by the late 1930s, many Western leaders distrusted Stalin. Always pragmatic, Stalin arranged a non-aggression pact with Germany in 1939 that allowed Adolph Hitler to invade Poland without fear of war with the Soviets; Germany and the USSR then divided the Polish territories and the Baltic states. Stalin also hoped thereby to gain time to strengthen his own military. In 1939, after the Finnish leaders rejected his demands, Stalin ordered Soviet forces to invade Finland in order to secure territory and bases against a possible German attack. He also continued to strengthen his positions, becoming chairman of the USSR Council of People’s Commissars in 1940 and supreme commander in chief of the Soviet Armed Forces in 1941. Stalin rejected numerous warnings that Germany was preparing to attack the Soviet Union, seeing these
as efforts by the Allied powers and the United States to trick the Soviet Union into war with Germany. As a consequence, the Soviet forces were largely unprepared for the German invasion in June 1941 and suffered horrendous losses.

During World War II, Stalin effectively commanded the Soviet forces and all important—and a few less important—strategic and operational decisions required his approval as supreme commander; in 1943, he was given the title of generalissimo. Most of all, he was extremely effective in launching a propaganda machine that rallied the enormous human and natural resources of the Soviet Union. He rapidly moved the entire Soviet industrial production east of the Volga River, far from German reach, to sustain the Red Army’s war machine with astonishing success. In the fall of 1941, with the Germans driving to within 80 km of Moscow, he ordered the evacuation of the Soviet government and diplomatic community to Kuibyshev but remained himself in the Kremlin, directing strategic operations, throughout the siege of Moscow and the remainder of the war. In November, he organized the famous parade on Red Square in Moscow that rallied the Soviet people and armed forces. However, his wartime leadership also caused a colossal human loss that is usually estimated at up to 27 million lives.

In the later stages of the war, Stalin demonstrated his pragmatic approach to foreign affairs as he negotiated with the Western powers at conferences in Tehran in 1943 and Yalta and Potsdam in 1945. He was successful in securing Soviet control of Eastern European states that were turned into satellites to keep out Western influence. As the Iron Curtain fell over Eastern Europe, Stalin continued to rule the Soviet Union with an iron fist until the day of his death on 5 March 1953. He was initially interred in the Lenin Mausoleum, but in 1961, his body was removed from the Mausoleum and buried by the Kremlin Wall on Moscow’s Red Square. Nikita Khrushchev, Stalin’s eventual successor, denounced his mass purges and cult of personality in 1956, initiating the process of “de-Stalinization.”

**STATE COUNCIL.** Political body established in the wake of the ouster of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Following a successful coup in January 1992, the triumvirate of Jaba Ioseliani, Tengiz Sigua, and Tengiz Kitovani established the Military Council to rule
the country. In mid-January 1992, Sigua began the formation of a new government, and an Interim Consultative Council was established in an attempt to create a stable government; former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was invited to lead the new body. In early March 1992, Shevardnadze returned to Georgia, and the State Council was formed to replace the Military Council in legislative and executive matters. The State Council, chaired by Shevardnadze, consisted of 50 members, drawn from all the major political organizations and included Sigua, Ioselian, and Kitovani in key government positions. The State Council was later replaced by the Supreme Council following the October 1992 elections.

STRABO (FIRST CENTURY). Greek geographer and historian, author of the famous Geographika (Geography), a multi-volume description of various peoples and places. Strabo left a detailed account of both Colchis and Iberia. In western Georgia, he noted a bustling trade on the Phasisi (Rioni) River and described several towns, including Sarapana (Shorapani) and Dioscurias. According to Strabo, the local residents produced high quality linen, hemp, wax, and pitch. In Iberia, he recorded towns with advanced architecture and agriculture. The Iberians were organized into four castes; the highest being the king and the royal family, the second was of priests and court and military officials, the third of soldiers and merchants, and the fourth was the common people.

STURUA, ROBERT (1938– ). Critically acclaimed director of the Georgian theater. Sturua graduated from the Tbilisi State Theater Institute in 1961 and began his career at the Shota Rustaveli Theater, where he became chief director in 1979 and chief artistic director in 1982. He staged more than 120 spectacles and gained worldwide fame for his masterful interpretation of William Shakespeare’s plays, including Richard III, Macbeth, King Lear.

SUMER. Ancient city-state and site of the earliest known civilization located in the southernmost part of Mesopotamia between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. Emerging in the third millennium BC, Sumer comprised the cities of Kish, Erech, Ur, Lagash, and others that often vied for ascendancy. Sumerians were also engaged in a
long conflict with Elamites and later the Akkadians. They were con-
quered and were gradually assimilated by Amorites in the second
millennium. Their legacy includes many technological and cultural
contributions, including the first city-states, the first codes of law,
and the first system of writing (cuneiform). Some Georgian re-
searchers suggested that the Georgian alphabet is derived from the
Sumerian.

SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA. The highest judicial authority,
the Supreme Court of Georgia (SCG) is located in Tbilisi, and its
structure and authority are defined by Article 90 of the 1995 Con-
stitution of Georgia. The SCG supervises the implementation of justice
by the common courts of Georgia and reviews particular cases that
were decided in the lower courts. Article 63 gives the Supreme Court
concurrent jurisdiction with the Constitutional Court to hear im-
peachment of the president. The court consists of a chairman and 12
judges, who are nominated by the president and elected by the Par-
liament for at least 10 years.

SUPREME GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA. Consultative body
established in 1801 to advise the Russian commander-in-chief of
eastern Georgia. After the kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti was annexed
in 1801, the Russian authorities began to replace the Georgian
royal institutions with the Russian administrative bodies. The
commander-in-chief—the first being Karl Knorring, replaced by
Paul Tsitsianov in 1803—were advised by the Supreme Govern-
ment of Georgia (verkhovnoe gruzinskoe pravitelstvo) that began to
operate in April 1802. It consisted of four departments (ekspeditsia)
for executive, economic, criminal, and civil affairs that were
headed by Russian officials and staffed with Georgian princes and
Russian officials (mdivanbegs). The Supreme Government retained
some Georgian laws, notably King Vakhtang VI’s Code for civil
cases, but introduced the laws of the Russian Empire. It was abol-
ished during the general reorganization of the Transcaucasian re-
gion in December 1838.

SVANETI. Historic province in northwestern Georgia. The Svan lan-
guage (self-designation is Lushnu nin) is divided into four dialects:
Upper Bal (Ushgul, Kal, Ipar, Mulakh, Mestšia, Lenjer, and Laţal subdialects); Lower Bal (Becho, Tskhumar, Etser, Par, Chubekh, and Lakham subdialects); Lashkh; and Lentekh (Kheled, Khopur, Rtskhmelur, and Cholur subdialects).

Known as Suaneti in ancient times, the province had been influenced by the neighboring Colchis, Lazica, and Iberia for centuries. In the Middle Ages, Svaneti was part of the united Kingdom of Georgia, where it became a saeristavo governed by an eristavi. The Svans gained a reputation as fierce warriors and the region was rarely, if ever, conquered by outside forces. As a result, Svaneti served as a cultural safe house. In the 15th century, following the collapse of the united Georgia, Svaneti was split into two parts, with Lower Svaneti under control of Mingrelian rulers, while Upper Svaneti, also known as Free Svaneti, formed an independent duchy. Led by the Dadeshkeli family, Svaneti recognized Russian sovereignty in 1833 but survived well into the 19th century before being abolished in 1857. Nevertheless, the region continued to enjoy semi-independence because the Russian authorities were unable to exert their control in the impregnable valleys of the Caucasus Mountains. In the Soviet era, Svaneti was officially divided into two districts, Mestia and Lentekhi. Svaneti is well known for its architectural treasures, especially medieval towers, diverse flora, and picturesque landscapes. Several architectural monuments of Upper Svaneti are included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

SVETITSKHOVELI CATHEDRAL. One of the largest cathedrals in Georgia, and by far the most important. According to tradition, it was built on the spot where Christ’s chiton (robe) was buried. Elioz and of the Jewish community in Mtskheta, an ancient capital of Georgia, traveled to Jerusalem and were present at Christ’s crucifixion. Elioz was able to obtain Christ’s chiton from the Roman soldier to whose lot it had fallen and brought it to Mtskheta. Legend tells us that his sister Sidonia took it from him and died in a passion of faith. No one was able to take the robe from her grasp, so they were buried together. Some time later a large cedar tree grew on her grave. The builders of the first church cut through its trunk but it hovered in the air and would not fall down. Only St. Nino was able, though her prayers, to bring it down, and the tree was used as a main support pil-
lar for the original church. Another version of the story has it that St. Nino made the tree whole again and caused it to blossom and produce healing oil. Thus, the name of the church Svetitskhoveli means “Life Giving Column.”

Archeological evidence shows that the initial wooden church was built in the fourth century, and it was replaced by a stone basilica by King Vakhtang Gorgasali (late fifth–early sixth century). In the 11th century, King Bagrat III commissioned the architect Arsukisdze to build a magnificent cathedral. While constructing the new Svetitskhoveli Cathedral between 1010–1029, Arsukisdze proved himself an innovative engineer, changing the old basilica into a domed temple and erecting the largest ecclesiastical building in Georgia. Of note is a small chapel inside the church that is a replica of the chapel of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Tradition claims that Arsukisdze surpassed all other architects in mastery of his craft and that these rivals conspired to have his hand chopped off. The central arch of the northern facade has a relief of a hand holding a bevel square with the inscription underneath “The hand of the servant of God Arsukisdze, pray for him.” Despite being damaged by the Mongol invasions in the 13th century, the forces of Tamerlane (Timur) in the 14th century, and Ottoman and Persian raids in later decades, Svetitskhoveli remains one of the most impressive churches in Georgia. It is the burial ground of the Bagrationi dynasty, and King Vakhtang Gorgasali and Erekle II are buried there.

SYRIAN FATHERS. Thirteen Syrian monks traveled from Nisibin, Edessa, and other Christian centers in Syria to preach Christianity in Georgia in the sixth century. They founded a number of churches and monasteries throughout Georgia and laid the foundation for monastic life and principles. The Syrian Fathers were Abibos, Bishop of Nekressi, Antony of Martkopi, David of Gareja, Ioane of Zedazeni, Tade (Thaddeus) of Stepanatsminda, Bishop Isse (Eshu) of Tsilkani, Bishop Joseph of Alaverdi, Isidor of Samtavissi, Michael of Ulumbi, Pirr (Pira) of Breti, Stephan (Estepanos) of Hirza, Shio of Mghwime, and Zenon of Ikalto. The fathers were the disciples of Ioane of Zedazeni, who received a divine call to select 12 disciples and travel to Georgia to spread Christianity. After arriving in Georgia, the fathers dispersed throughout the country. Bishop Abibos went to the
north, to Nekressi, where he baptized locals and built new churches. Joseph became Bishop of Alaverdi, which soon developed into a major center of Christianity in eastern Georgia. Father Shio retreated to a cave overlooking the Kura River near Mtskheta where he established a monastery that eventually became one of the leading centers of ecclesiastical thought in Georgia. Father David of Gareja, arguably the most famous of them, initially preached in Tbilisi, where he lived on the mountain later christened Mtatsminda (Sacred Mountain), and established the Kashveti Cathedral. He later retreated to the desert in eastern Georgia, where he and his disciples built a vast cave monastery that is still functioning. See also GEORGIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH.

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TABIDZE, GALAKTION (1892–1959). Georgian poet. Born in the village of Chkviisi, he studied at the Tbilisi Theological Seminary but became involved in revolutionary circles. In 1908, he published his first writings and later traveled to Russia and Europe, where he was influenced by the symbolists. A remarkably talented poet, he authored thousands of poems that established him as one of the greatest Georgian poets and accorded him the rare honor of being known simply as Galaktion. Among his most famous poems are Usikvarulod, Me da Ghame, Kari hkris, Droshebi chkara, and Sasaplaoni. Although he survived the Stalinist purges, the deaths of his wife and friends plunged him into depression and alcoholism. He was eventually committed to a psychiatric hospital but jumped to his death from the hospital window in 1959.

TABIDZE, TITSIAN (1895–1937). Georgian symbolist poet. Born in the village of Shuamta, he was a cousin of Galaktion Tabidze. He studied at the University of Moscow and helped establish the Georgian symbolist group Tsisperkantselebi. Later, he turned to surrealism and sympathized with the Soviet regime. However, he was denounced and executed during the Stalinist purges in 1937.

TAKAISHVILI, EKVTIME (1863–1953). Distinguished Georgian historian and archeologist, one of the founding fathers of Tbilisi State
University. Born in Likhauri in Guria, he graduated with a degree in history from the University of St. Petersburg. In 1887–1894, he taught history, geography, and Greek/Latin languages at the Tbilisi Classical Gymnasium for Nobility and later directed it between 1894–1904. He soon gained fame for his thorough knowledge of Georgian historical sources, and in 1907, he co-founded the Georgian History and Ethnography Society, which he directed until 1921. In 1911, the authoritative Russian Imperial Archeological Society awarded him a gold medal for his work *Material on Caucasian Archeology* (1909). He discovered and compiled ancient handwritten manuscripts of Vepkhistkaosani, including the illuminated versions of 1646 and 1680, and of Garigeba Khelemsips karis. Beginning in 1902, Takaishvili led several scientific expeditions to study monuments in southwestern Georgia and produced several ground-breaking monographs on Georgian history and culture.

In 1918, Takaishvili helped found Tbilisi State University, where he became a professor and continued to teach for many decades. He was actively engaged in politics and became one of the founders of the National Democratic Party of Georgia in 1917. From 1919–1921, he served as a deputy chairman of the Constituent Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Georgia. During the Bolshevist invasion of 1921, Takaishvili evacuated much of the Georgian cultural heritage to France, saving it from certain destruction. Despite a destitute life in France from 1921–1945, he refused to part with the priceless artifacts in his possession and preserved them for almost a quarter of a century until he finally managed to safely return them to Soviet Georgia in 1945. While in France, Takaishvili continued his academic studies and was elected to various scholarly societies, including the Asiatic Society of Paris, the Society of Numismatics of France, and the editorial board of the academic journal *Georgica*. Returning to Georgia in April 1945, he began working as a professor at Tbilisi Syaye University and became a member of the Georgian Academy of Sciences in 1946. He authored some 250 academic works in Georgian, Russian, French, and English, including *Georgian Antiquities* (3 vols, 1899–1910), *Ancient Georgia* (4 vols, 1909–1915), *Origins of the Georgian Annals* (1990), and *Regulations of His Majesty’s Court* (1920).
TAMAR. Queen of the Kingdom of Georgia between 1184 and 1210. The eldest daughter of King Giorgi III (1156–1184), Tamar was made a co-regent in 1178 and succeeded her father six years later. However, her accession was not without difficulty. Powerful lords took advantage of the passing of the king to reassert themselves. Queen Tamar was forced to agree to a second coronation that emphasized the role of noble families in investing her with royal power. Furthermore, Tamar was compelled to dismiss royal officials from non-noble families, including the influential amirspasalar (army commander) Qubasar and the msakhurtukhutsesi (master of the royal household) Apridon. The nobility, led by mechurchletukhutsesi Qutlu Arslan, then demanded the establishment of the karavi, a political body with legislative and judicial power. Tamar’s refusal to satisfy this demand brought the Georgian monarchy to the verge of a civil war that was averted through negotiations. In the end, the royal authority was significantly limited and the responsibilities of the royal council, dominated by the nobles, was expanded. Nobles were also actively involved in choosing a husband for the young queen. On their decision, Queen Tamar married Russian Prince Yuri Bogolubsky, the son of Grand Duke Andrei Bogolyubsky of Suzdal in 1185 but the marriage was dissolved because of Prince Yuri’s debauchery and intrigues. Tamar later married Prince David Soslan, a member of the Ossetian branch of the Bagrationi dynasty, in 1189. From 1189–1191, Tamar’s former husband Yuri allied himself with certain Georgian nobles and organized two unsuccessful revolts.

Despite internal dissent, Georgia remained a powerful kingdom and enjoyed major successes in its foreign policy. In 1193–1194, the Georgian army occupied Bardav, Erzerum, and other southwestern provinces. In 1195, a large Muslim coalition was crushed in the battle at Shamkhor, allowing Tamar to expand her sphere of influence into southeastern Caucasia. In July 1202, she achieved another triumphant victory when a massive coalition of Muslim states, led by the sultan of Rum, was crushed at Basian. The Georgians annexed Ani, Arran, and Dvin in 1201–1203, and in 1209, their armies captured the Emirate of Kars while the mighty Armen-Shahs, the emirs of Erzurum and Erzinjan, and the north Caucasian tribes became their vassals. Georgian influence also extended to the southern coast of the Black Sea, populated by a large Georgian-speaking population. The
Empire of Trebizond, a Georgian vassal state, was established there in 1204 and soon became a major trading emporium, surviving for over 250 years. The Georgians then carried war into Azerbaijan and advanced as far as Ardabil and Tabriz in 1208 and went on to Qazvin and Khoy in northern Iran in 1210. The year of Tamar’s death remains debated and some scholars argue in favor of 1210 while others indicate 1213. Her burial place remains unknown as well. She was succeeded on throne by her son Giorgi IV Lasha.

These victories brought Georgia to the peak of its power and glory, establishing a pan-Caucasian Georgian empire stretching from the Black Sea to the Caspian and from the Caucasus Mountains to Lake Van. Tamar’s reign, therefore, is generally regarded as the Golden Age of Georgia. The political and military development of Georgia was accompanied by an expansion of its religious and cultural presence throughout Asia Minor. Stability and strong central authority facilitated the growth of towns and the development of trade and crafts. A sophisticated irrigation system in the Samgori and Alazani valleys covered some 50,000 hectares of land. Tbilisi, with a population of up to 100,000, became a center of regional and international trade, linking China, Central Asia, and Europe.

Tamar’s reign also stimulated a renaissance of Georgian sciences and art. Numerous scholarly and literary works (Amiran-Darejani, Abdulmesia, Tamariani, and others) were produced both within Georgia and abroad, while the art of illumination of manuscripts and miniature painting reached their zeniths. Georgian craftsmen, especially Beshken and Beka Opizari, gained fame for their unique goldsmith works. Georgian monasteries, generously sponsored by the queen, flourished throughout the Holy Land and Asia Minor. Finally, Shota Rustaveli’s epic poem Vepkhistaosani was dedicated to Tamar and remains the greatest cultural achievement of this age.

TAMARASHVILI, MIKHAIL (1858–1911). Georgian theologian, scholar, and public figure, also known as Michel Tamarati. He was born into a Georgian Catholic family in Akhaltsikhe and studied at a local seminary before traveling to Istanbul, where he enrolled in the Catholic school at the Georgian Catholic monastery and later studied for three years in Spain. Tamarashvili was ordained as a priest and moved to France where he finished his studies at the Seminary of St.
Lazarus in Paris. In late 1888, he returned to Georgia but was quickly condemned for his anti-Tsarist sermons. The following year, Tamarashvili left for Europe, where he received a doctorate in theology from the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in 1894. Throughout his life, Tamarashvili tirelessly studied Georgian history and culture, and his work proved crucial in uncovering numerous sources and artifacts throughout Europe. He wrote landmark studies on the history of Christianity in Georgia, including his famous *L'Eglise géorgienne des origines jusqu'à nos jours* (1910). He died at the age of 53 while saving a person from drowning in open sea near the village of Santa Marinella in Italy on 16 September 1911. His remains were transferred to the Pantheon of Public Figures in Tbilisi in 1978. See also CATHOLIC CHURCH; PERADZE, GRIGOL; TARKHNISHVILI, MIKHAIL.

**TAMERLANE (TIMUR LENG) (1336–1405).** Conqueror of central Eurasia, the Caucasus, and much of the Middle East. He injured his leg in one of his early raids and earned the nickname Timur the Lame (Timur Leng). Skillfully maneuvering between various factions, he became the master of Transoxiana by 1370 and established his control of the Chaghatayid khanate a decade later. In the early 1380s, he campaigned in western Persia. From 1386–1387, 1394–1396, and 1399–1403, he subjected Georgia to some of the most dreadful invasions in its history. During his first invasion in 1386–1387, Tbilisi was sacked and King Bagrat V (1360–1393) was captured. The Georgian king was forced to convert to Islam, but after his release, he successfully ambushed a large Mongol detachment and launched a guerrilla war. The country had hardly recovered when Tamerlane returned in 1394 and devastated central Kartli, despite the efforts of the new King Giorgi VII (1393–1407). Two years later, King Giorgi VII helped the neighboring Armenians at the Alindjak fortress drive back Tamerlane’s forces.

Learning about Georgian actions, Tamerlane left Samarkand at the head of a large army and began the systematic destruction of southern Georgia in 1399. More than 60,000 Georgians and Armenians were led into slavery, and some Georgian regions were completely depopulated. However, the Georgians continued their struggle. Following his victory over the rising Ottoman state in 1402, Tamerlane returned to Georgia again in 1403, spreading death and destruction to
the already desolate countryside. Later that year, peace was finally signed between King Giorgi VII and Tamerlane, removing the Mongolian warlord from Georgia for the final time.

Tamerlane’s campaigns in Georgia produced destruction on an unprecedented scale. Entire cities lay in ruins and tens of thousands of Georgians were massacred or taken captive. Incalculable losses were inflicted in terms of property and livestock. Tamerlane took thousands of Georgian captives back to Central Asia where Georgian artisans helped build magnificent palaces and buildings decorated in intricate mosaics. Some decorations contain Georgian elements, including inscriptions in the Georgian alphabet that are disguised as elaborate artwork.

**TAO.** Region, known as Tayk in Armenian, is acknowledged as Tao-Klarjeti in Georgian. It is currently in northeastern Turkey but historically consisted of the provinces of Tao, Klarjeti, Shavsheti (Şavşat), Kola (Kogh), Artaani (Artahan), Erusheti, and others. The Georgians regard Tao-Klarjeti as one of the cradles of their culture, but their claims are disputed by the Armenians; depending on the time period, the population of the region was often of mixed Georgian and Armenian origins. The history of Tao could be traced to the emergence of the tribal confederation of Diauchi (Taochi, Tao) at the end of the second millennium BCE. Diauchi was engaged in war with the powerful kingdom of Urartu, and the inscriptions of the Urartu kings Menua (ruled 810–786 BCE) and Argishti (786–764) reveal the wealth and power of this early Georgian principate. In the mid-eighth century BCE, Diauchi was destroyed by the neighboring Colchis and Urartu and part of its territory was annexed by the Colchis and eventually, by Egrisi.

The region was bitterly contested by the Georgian and Armenian rulers throughout the following centuries. In the fourth and fifth centuries, following the Byzantine–Persian partition of Armenia in 387, Tao came under Persian influence, and its western border served as a boundary between the two empires. In the sixth century, the Byzantines took control of Tao and expanded it by adding the provinces of Kola and Bolha. Medieval Georgian sources recorded the Upper (southwest) Tao and Lower (northwest) Tao, of which the former was in Bagratid/Bagrationi possession while the latter was ruled by the Guaramid house.
By the late eighth century, Tao proved to be the most important region by far of the emerging Georgian feudal states. The Bagrationi family eventually took control of both Upper and Lower Tao and gradually expanded its sphere of influence. Ashot I led popular resistance to the Arab invasions before being assassinated ca. 830. He patronized monastic life initiated by the prominent Georgian ecclesiastic figure Gregory of Khandza (Grigol Khandzteli, ca. 759–861) in the deserted Tao-Klarjeti, which soon became one of the most important cultural and religious centers of Georgia.

Frequent internal feuds significantly weakened the Bagrationis of Tao. Thus, after the death of David I in 881, the Bagratid principality of Tao-Klarjeti found itself in turmoil as one of the throne claimants, Nasri Gvaram Mamfalis-dze, tried to carve out his own realm with the help of King Bagrat of Abkhazia in 888. However, Adarnase II defeated his rivals and seized the throne, firmly securing his position in Tao-Klarjeti. He was the first Bagratid prince to adopt the title of the King of the Georgians (kartvelta mefe) in 888 and was given the title of curopalate by the Byzantine emperor in 891. Adarnase spent two decades fighting to place the Georgian lands under his control and actively interfered in the affairs of the neighboring Armenian kingdom. During the reign of Adarnase’s successors, the kingdom of Tao-Klarjeti endured the Byzantine attacks and internal feuds that led to its division between the two branches of the Bagrationi family with the main branch retaining Tao and the title of King of the Georgians and another controlling Klarjeti and nominally recognizing the sovereignty of the king.

In the second half of the 10th century, Tao-Klarjeti became a large and powerful principality during the rule of one of its greatest princes King David III Curopalates. The growth and consolidation of this principality contributed to the expansion of Georgian cultural and economic ties with other kingdoms and principalities. The might of the Tao-Klarjeti principality was clearly demonstrated in 979, when Byzantine Emperor Basil, facing a large rebellion of Bardas Scleros (976–979), appealed for help to David Curopalates. A Georgian expeditionary corps under Tornike Eristavi defeated the insurgents and restored the emperor’s authority. Throughout his reign, David Curopalates pursued his grand design of the unification of Georgia. Supported by Ioane Marushisdze, the powerful eristavi of Kartli, he
succeeded in having his adopted son Bagrat placed on the throne of Kartli in 975 and of Abkhazia in 978. Following David’s death in 1001, King Bagrat III inherited Tao-Klarjeti and annexed Kakheti and Hereti in 1008–1010, thereby uniting the eastern, western, and southern Georgian lands into a single state with its capital in Kutaisi.

Over the next five centuries, Tao-Klarjeti was an integral part of the Kingdom of Georgia. It was later placed within Samtskhe-Saatabago, ruled by the Jakeli family. In the mid-16th century, this region was conquered by the Ottoman Empire, which retained it for the centuries to come. After the Russian annexation of Georgia in 1801, the region was contested between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in a series of wars throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. After the Russo–Turkish War of 1877–1878, one part of Tao-Klarjeti, now designated as Artvin province, was ceded to the Russian Empire. However, the Russian territorial gains in Tao-Klarjeti were reversed in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk between Ottoman Turkey and Bolshevik Russia in 1918. Although the Democratic Republic of Georgia briefly regained its control of the region in 1919–1920, the subsequent invasion of the Red Army in 1921 led to the territorial partition of Georgia in which Turkey received the provinces of Tao-Klarjeti.

Tao is within the boundary of modern-day Turkey. Armenian residents were largely forced out of the region during the early 20th century, but the Georgian populace remains. More importantly, the region contains numerous Georgian historical monuments, notably the Bagrationi capital of Artanuji, the fortresses Ojdemi, Panaskerti, Melo, and Tsereti, the churches and monasteries of Ishkhani, Bana, Doliskana, Shatberdi, Shavsheti, Kakhuli, Oshki, Tbeti, and others. Recent study has found most of the surviving monuments in satisfactory condition, but some have been vandalised and immediate conservation and renovation is urgently needed.

TARKHNISHVILI, MIKHAIL (1897–1958). Georgian scholar and ecclesiastical figure. He was born to a Catholic family in Akhaltsikhe and studied in the Georgian Catholic seminary in Istanbul from 1913–1917 and in Germany in 1917–1919. After his brief visit to Georgia in 1919, he spent five years studying and conducting research in Istanbul and then in Austria from 1924–1929. In 1930, Tarkhnishvili moved to Rome, where he studied at the Pontifical
Oriental Institute and graduated with a doctoral degree. He was ordained as a priest in 1931 and spent the remaining years of his life researching Georgian history and culture and supporting the Georgian émigré community in Europe. He discovered many Georgia-related documents in the archives of the Vatican and produced several studies and translations of ancient Georgian literature. He was also among the first to study the newly discovered Georgian inscriptions in Palestine in the 1950s. See also CATHOLIC CHURCH; PERADZE, GRIGOL; TAMARASHVILI, MIKHAIL.

TBILISI. Capital of Georgia; the city is known as Tiflis in Persian/Arabic and pre-1936 Russian sources. Archeological excavations revealed that humans had inhabited this location since 3000 BCE, and in ancient times a small fort was located here. Tbilisi as a capital city was founded by King Vakhtang Gorgasali in 455–458, and tradition ascribes this decision to the king’s fascination with the warm springs (tbili means warm) that abound here. The original Tbilisi included a small citadel and a walled town that extended along the banks of the Kura/Mtkvari River.

The city had a tumultuous history and is said to have been razed some 40 times. It was contested by the Sasanid Persians in the fifth and sixth centuries and besieged by the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius in 627–628. It was captured by the Arabs in 736 and became the capital of an emirate that survived for almost four centuries. Despite repeated attempts by the Bagrationi kings of the united Georgia in the 11th century, the city remained in Arab hands until 1122 when King David IV Aghmashenebeli recaptured it and proclaimed it the capital of the Kingdom of Georgia.

Over the next century (1122–1225), Tbilisi lived through its golden age when it emerged as one of the largest cities in Asia Minor, known for its religious tolerance and as a center of philosophy, theology, history, and law as well as commercial activity. Prominent Georgian scholars like Shota Rustaveli, Ioane Shavteli, Mose Khoneli, and Chakhrukhadze lived here, and numerous other scholars translated Persian and Arabic poetry and scholarly works. The Khwarazmian invasions of 1225–1230 put an end to this period; the Khwarazmian commander Jalāl al-Dīn captured the city on 9 March 1226, seizing enormous booty and, according to Georgian chronicles, executing
thousands for their refusal to convert to Islam. In the 13th century, Tbilisi was further devastated by the Mongols and then pillaged several times by Tamerlane (Timur) between 1385–1403. In the 15th and 18th centuries, the city changed hands between Georgians, Ottomans, and Persians numerous times and gradually declined in its importance and prosperity. After the united Kingdom of Georgia collapsed in the late 15th century, Tbilisi served as the capital of Kartli, and after 1762, of Kartli-Kakheti. It was often garrisoned with the Persian troops, but occasionally the Ottoman forces managed to get control of it. The city enjoyed periods of brief revival during the reigns of King Vakhtang VI of Kartli (1703–1724) and King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti (1762–1798); the first printing press was established in 1709, and many workshops were set up in the mid-18th century. However, Tbilisi was razed by the Persian invasion of Agha Muhammed Khan in 1795.

After the Russian annexation of eastern Georgia, Tbilisi became the administrative center of Tbilisi province and gradually expanded. Throughout the 19th century, the city, with its ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity, played an important political, economic, and cultural role in the Caucasus. It gradually acquired diverse architectural monuments and its own urban folklore and language. The governorship of Mikhail Vorontsov in the mid-19th century was particularly beneficial to the city. In 1872, Tbilisi was linked by rail to Poti on the Black Sea and, in 1883 to Baku on the Caspian Sea. The first funicular railway in south Caucasia was constructed on the Mtatsminda (Mount of St. David) in 1905, and a spacious park was built atop the mountain. In 1966, an underground railway was opened in Tbilisi.

Tbilisi has a number of important landmarks. Its architecture combines elements of traditional Georgian with Byzantine, Neo-Classical, Middle Eastern, and Soviet styles. Thus, the oldest suburbs, Abanot-Ubani, Avlabari, and Sololaki, show Georgian and Middle Eastern influences while the new suburbs of Gldani, Varketili, Didube, and others display the architectural style common during the Soviet era. The 1990s saw numerous unsanctioned building projects, and the government has taken measures to curb them. Among its historical places of interest are the Sioni Cathedral (6th century, rebuilt in 1710), the Narikala Citadel (17th–18th centuries), the Anchiskhati Church (6th century), the Lurji (Blue) Monastery (13th century), the
Bethany Monastery (12th century), the Metekhi Church (13th century), the Kashveti Cathedral (present building built in 1904–1910), the Russian viceroy’s palace (1807, reconstructed in 1865), Sameba Cathedral (2004), the old bath-houses, the buildings of Parliament and presidential administration, the National Museum, the National Public Library, and many others. In the 17th–19th centuries, Tbilisi was largely populated by Armenians, who played a major role in city life and held a trade monopoly. The Georgian population rebounded only in the early 20th century.

During Soviet era, Tbilisi grew significantly in size and population and became more industrialized. It retained its high profiles on the all-union level and, along with Kiev and St. Petersburg, served as one of the cultural and political centers of the USSR. The city also was the site of frequent anti-Soviet demonstrations and witnessed clashes in 1956, 1978, and 1989. In the late 1980s, Tbilisi became the focal point of the national liberation movement. After independence, the city experienced a period of instability and turmoil that greatly affected it. The city endured numerous demonstrations in 1991 and a bloody civil war in December 1991–January 1992. In later years, it was dominated by paramilitary organizations, most notably the Mkhedrioni, and suffered from the lack of gas and electricity. Large segments of its society became impoverished, and Tbilisi, once one of the most prosperous cities in the USSR, saw its quality of life plummet dramatically. Demonstrations were common in the first years of the 21st century as well. Massive protest rallies contested fraudulent elections in November 2003, and smaller protest marches challenged the government policies in 2004–2006.

The city began to recover in the late 1990s and saw a rapidly improving economy, growing foreign investment, and expanding tourism. Central districts that had been devastated during the civil war were rebuilt with foreign investments, and housing construction is booming. In 2004, the Sameba Cathedral, one of the largest Christian orthodox churches in the world, was completed as a symbol of the nation’s unity and perseverance.

Modern Tbilisi is one of the largest cities in the Caucasus; although its population reached 1.3 million in 1989, subsequent political and economic strife reduced the city’s population to 1,074,000 by 2003. It remains a major cultural, religious, and educational center,
with Tbilisi State University, numerous other institutions of higher education, more than 100 research establishments, major theaters, the seat of government, foreign embassies, and corporations. Tbilisi has important industrial facilities for the production of electric locomotives, machine tools, agricultural machinery, and electrical equipment as well as textiles, leather goods, beer, wine and spirits, and a range of foodstuffs.

TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS IN (1901). Mass protest rallies of workers on 5 May (22 April in Julian calendar) 1901. The Tbilisi Committee of the Russian Social Democratic Party of Workers (RSDRP) planned demonstrations to celebrate 1 May (international labor day) and demand better working conditions and wages. On 5 May, several thousand workers led by G. Telia and M. Mochoridze gathered in Tbilisi but faced police and regular army units that were brought in to prevent the rallies. In the subsequent clashes between protestors and government forces, 14 workers were seriously wounded and 50 arrested. The May 1901 demonstration is often considered the start of open revolutionary movement in the Caucasus. See also BATUMI STRIKE.

TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS IN (1956). Bloody crackdown on Georgian demonstrations on 9 March 1956. The death of Joseph Stalin ushered in a period now known as “the Thaw” when Soviet Premier Nikita Khruschev began the de-Stalinization process. In February 1956, he made his famous speech at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party and denounced Stalin’s policies and the “cult of personality.” The speech was supposed to be secret but rumors about its content leaked out. To the majority of Soviet citizens, such revelations came as a great surprise and it was particularly true in Georgia, where attacks on Stalin were perceived as directed against the entire Georgian nation. Following Khruschev’s speech, on 3 March, protest rallies were organized by the Georgian students in Tbilisi. Two days later, a large demonstration gathered near the Stalin monument on the bank of the Kura River to mark the third anniversary of Stalin’s death. The situation gradually spiraled out of control and the protestors rapidly grew in numbers, with their slogans becoming more and more radical. Protests were also staged in Gori, Telavi, Kutaisi, and
Batumi. The Students played an important role in mobilizing the demonstrators and pushing a more nationalistic program of demands. As the demonstrations paralyzed all of Tbilisi, the Georgian Communist leadership was unable to cope with the situation and turned to the Soviet military for help.

On 9 March 1956, the Soviet armed forces, including heavy armor, opened fire and launched a bloody crackdown on the protesters. The precise numbers of casualties remains unclear, but estimates indicate that some 150 were killed and hundreds more were wounded and/or arrested. The event was quickly covered up without the rest of Soviet Union learning about it, and any information concerning the incident was restricted for years to come. The vicious but effective measures used against the demonstrators ensured that the Soviet authorities would face no repetition of such events for the next two decades.

**TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS IN (1978).** The 1970s witnessed the gradual development of the national liberation movement led by Georgian dissidents, notably Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Merab Kostava. The power of Georgian nationalism was revealed in 1978 when the Soviet authorities decided to amend the Georgian constitution and remove an article affirming Georgian as the sole official state language of the republic. On 14 April 1978, several thousand Georgians rallied in the streets of Tbilisi, and their numbers grew by the hour. As the situation escalated, First Secretary Eduard Shevardnadze personally met with the demonstrators and negotiated a peaceful resolution of the situation. Later that day, the Supreme Soviet decided against removing the disputed clause and effectively acknowledged its defeat. The events clearly demonstrated the potency of Georgian nationalism and contributed to the increasing popularity of the national liberation movement.

**TBILISI, DEMONSTRATIONS IN (1989).** Crackdown of the peaceful anti-Soviet demonstration in Tbilisi on 9 April 1989, a watershed event in the history of Soviet Georgia and the Georgian national liberation movement. The 1980s saw the resurgence of Georgian national liberation societies, although initially they functioned underground. Taking advantage of Mikhail Gorbachev’s liberal policies, leading Georgian dissidents such as Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava, and Giorgi Chanturia organized a series of protests in late
1980. The most important issue facing them was that of language and national self-determination. This was especially true in late 1988 and early 1989 when tensions in Abkhazia heightened after the Abkhaz nationalists called for Abkhazian independence from Georgia. On 18 March 1989, the Popular Forum of Abkhazia (Aydgilara) organized a demonstration in Lykhny for the restoration of Abkhazia’s status as an independent Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR). In response, a series of rallies began on 25 March 1989 in Tbilisi, and demands were made to contain the Abkhazian separatists; gradually the calls became more radical, and eventually they also included demands for the national independence of Georgia.

On 4 April, some 150 Georgian nationalist activists began a hunger strike in front of the Supreme Soviet on Rustaveli Avenue in Tbilisi. They demanded full independence for Georgia and complete integration of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia within Georgia. Two days later, tens of thousands of people took to the streets of the capital and demonstrated their solidarity with the hunger strikers; they were joined by hundreds of supporters from the countryside. By then, the idea of nonviolent protest against the Soviet authorities was predominant. To quell the demonstrations, the Georgian Communist authorities called for reinforcements, and military forces were deployed in the streets of Tbilisi. The crowd showed no signs of violence as many demonstrators danced and sang national songs and religious hymns. Late on the evening of 8 April, Catholicos Patriarch Ilia II joined the demonstrators, warning them of the danger of possible violence by the Soviet troops. He proposed that the crowd move to the churches for sanctuary, but the demonstration leaders declined this request, and the people supported them. In a remarkable show of unity, the crowd numbering in the thousands, joined the patriarch in a public prayer under candlelight.

At dawn on 9 April, the Soviet authorities decided to use force to disperse the demonstrators. The troops attacked demonstrators with armored vehicles, sharpened spades, and toxic gases, killing 19 demonstrators, mostly women and teens. The toxic gases left 2,000 persons sick for weeks and months after, in hospitals and at home. According to witnesses, some soldiers attacking demonstrators were yelling, “This is what you get for Stalin.” The brutality of the Soviet forces against the peaceful demonstrators was recorded on tape, and
when the tape was broadcast later that year, it shocked the entire Soviet Union. On 10 April, Tbilisi was placed under military curfew, but tensions between the residents and Soviet troops remained high; a violent confrontation was barely avoided at Tbilisi State University, which was surrounded by the military.

The roles of the Politburo in Moscow and Georgian Communist leadership in Tbilisi in making the decision to use troops against the demonstration is still a matter of debate. Eduard Shevardnadze, then the minister of foreign affairs of the USSR, and other Politburo members maintained that there had been no Kremlin meeting of the Politburo to discuss the situation in Georgia and that they had no knowledge of the decision to use troops. Shevardnadze, who was then traveling abroad, canceled his visit to Germany and immediately flew to Tbilisi to investigate the incident. A special Politburo meeting was convened to discuss his report on the events in Georgia. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was infuriated with the inability of Jumber Patiashvili (the first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party) to reach an understanding with the demonstrators, and according to Gorbachev’s adviser, he noted in frustration that “The Georgian leadership crapped in their pants.” Another Politburo member Nikolay Ryzhkov criticized Patiashvili’s handling of the incident, especially his failure to provide the Politburo members with adequate information on the current situation.

Following the Tbilisi massacre, the Congress of People’s Deputies of the USSR set up a special investigation commission led by the mayor of Leningrad, Anatoly Sobchak. Initially, the commander of the Soviet troops in Transcaucasia, General Igor Rodionov, popularly nicknamed “the Butcher of Tbilisi,” categorically denied the use of any toxic gases against the demonstrators. The refusal of the Soviet military authorities to release to the medical community any information about the use of toxic agents against the demonstrators hindered the treatment of hundreds of victims. Only two weeks after the event, it was concluded, on the basis of clinical and toxicological evidence, that the Soviet troops had used three gas agents, CN, CS, which are forms of tear gas, and chloropicrin. Nobel Prize winner Academician Andrey Sakharov, who had flown to Tbilisi in mid-April, was instrumental in obtaining information on these gases to cure the victims. Unable to get further information from the Russian
military, Sakharov contacted the U.S. Embassy in Moscow to inquire about the antidote to the CS tear gas that had been used by police in the United States for crowd dispersal.

The Kremlin succeeded in quieting the situation in Georgia by making changes in the Georgian party and government. First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party Jumber Patiashvili was removed from his post. The parliamentary commission found General Rodionov guilty of the civilian deaths, and the Congress of People’s Deputies removed him from his position but appointed him to the prestigious post of the commandant of the General Staff Academy in Moscow. The commission presented its report to the Congress of People’s Deputies in December 1989, blaming the military for the civilian deaths. The Ministry of Defense responded in its own defense and conducted another investigation showing alleged threats to the government and accusing the demonstrators of provoking the clashes. Shevardnadze prepared his reply to these allegations, but he was forbidden by Gorbachev to present it and threatened to resign in protest.

The massacre of 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi had a major influence on the future of Georgia and the Soviet Union in general. Although there were several protests in various republics prior to 1989, most of them were suppressed by the local authorities without public exposure. It was the 9 April demonstration in Tbilisi with its attendant bloodshed and widespread publicity that sparked renewed nationalism throughout the Soviet Union. In addition to the terms “Bloody Sunday” and “Black Sunday,” the term “Tbilisi Syndrome” was introduced referring to the Kremlin’s inability to use force to impose its will on its opponents. The national liberation movements in the Baltic states were already underway, and the tragic events in Tbilisi gave them greater credibility and strengthened their demands for sovereignty.

The Tbilisi tragedy also had an important impact on the leadership. Shevardnadze knew that he had been hurt personally and politically by this incident. By blaming General Rodionov, a popular figure in the Soviet military forces, Shevardnadze had deepened his rift with the military that was still fuming over Shevardnadze’s role in the unification process of Germany. The Tbilisi events also revealed Gorbachev’s lack of understanding of the country’s nationalism problems, in particular the political and social dilemma in Transcaucasia.
His early reforms ignored ethnic complications, and his notorious anti-alcohol campaign in 1986 seriously undermined the Georgian economy. Finally, Gorbachev’s approval of the report of the Ministry of Defense and his rejection of Shevardnadze’s request to speak to the Congress were the first signs of a split between the two men. Apparently, Gorbachev preferred to sacrifice his liberal ally and side with the military and hard-liners. When Shevardnadze finally resigned, Gorbachev had become dependent on conservatives in his government, who would later plot a coup d’etat in August 1991 that resulted in Gorbachev’s ouster and the accession of Boris Yeltsin and hastened the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The massacre of the 9 April had a profound effect on the people of Georgia. Despite its tragic nature, the whole event played a crucial role in uniting the nation, especially the youth, around the cause of independence. In the weeks after the tragedy, hundreds of thousands rallied in the streets of Tbilisi, wearing black as a sign of grief and carrying national banners. A huge crowd of tens of thousands of Georgians marched through the center of Tbilisi on 26 April to celebrate the anniversary of the declaration of independence of the Georgian Democratic Republic in 1918. Another series of demonstrations took place in May–July, when thousands of demonstrators shouting “Down with the Russian empire” marched through the streets of Tbilisi demanding independence. The day of 9 April became a symbol of both the mourning of innocent lives lost and tribute to heroes who sacrificed their lives for independence. Following the successful elections, the new Georgian authorities, led by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, adopted the Declaration of Independence on 9 April 1990.

**TBILISI, EMIRATE.** Arab principate in Georgia between 736 and 1122. Following their initial appearance in the 640s, the Arabs quickly extended their authority through eastern Georgia and installed an *amir* in Tbilisi. As the power of the Abbasid Empire declined, the Arab rulers of Tbilisi became virtually independent, defied central authorities, and minted their own coins. Initially, their authority extended throughout Kartli, but by the 11th century, it was largely limited to Tbilisi and vicinity. The *Amirs* successfully defended themselves against several attacks of the Bagrationi rulers of Georgia before King **David IV** Aghmashenebeli captured the town in 1122.
The five centuries of Arab presence greatly influenced the town that developed its own unique Arabic/Georgian and Muslim–Christian features.

**TBILISI HIJACKING INCIDENT (1983).** Hijacking attempt by seven young Georgians opposing the Soviet authorities. All of the hijackers came from well-educated and affluent families but sought to publicize their struggle against the Soviet regime by hijacking an aircraft to Turkey. Among them were artists Soso Tsereteli, David Mikaberidze, Gega Kobakhidze (with his fiancée Tamar), and Gia Tabidze, and physicians Kakhi Iverieli and Paata Iverieli. On 18 November, during its Tbilisi–Leningrad flight, the Tu-134 airliner was diverted toward Turkey. Hijackers Iverieli and Tabidze managed to burst into the cockpit and opened fire, wounding members of the crew Zaven Shabartyan and Anzor Chedia. In the ensuing gun battle, the pilots Vladimir Gasoyan, Akhmatger Gardapkhadze, and Stanislav Gabaraev drove the hijackers out of the flight deck and made sharp maneuvers with the airplane to prevent them from standing and breaking through the door. The aircraft returned to Tbilisi, where security forces of the Alpha Group surrounded and later stormed the plane at dawn on 19 November. The entire incident claimed the lives of three crew members, two passengers, and three hijackers. The surviving hijackers were arrested, tried, and sentenced to death. Their confessor priest, Theodore Chikhladze, was also executed, although he was not involved in the hijacking. It was assumed that because he received their confessions he would have been aware of the plot.

The hijacking incident remains a controversial topic in Georgia. For many Georgians, these nine young people were heroes fighting the evil of the Soviet regime. Officials claimed that the hijackers killed several passengers and crew members, while the families of the hijackers, and public opinion in general believed that the security forces used excessive force that led to high casualties. The aircraft itself sustained more than 60 bullet holes in the attack. The trial was conducted in secret, and family members were not allowed to attend it; some of them learned the fate of their children only years after the execution. **Eduard Shevardnadze**, then the first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, directly supervised the operation and
later the trial of the hijackers and is believed to have pressed for capital sentences instead of long-term imprisonment. During his presidency of independent Georgia in the late 1990s, the details surrounding the incident were generally suppressed. When, in 2001, a young playwright decided to stage a theatrical production based on the 1983 hijacking, the administration of the Marjanishvili State Theater rejected it out of fear of infuriating the president; nevertheless, the play was later staged at a private theater.

**TBILISI, REVOLT OF THE GUILDS (1865).** Uprising of traditional guilds of artisans and merchants against the Russian authorities. In June 1865, the mayor of Tbilisi, Shermazan Vartanov, and the Russian authorities decided to levy a new tax on population without consulting the guilds, which responded with a general strike. Despite the orders of Governor Grigol Orbeliani, the strike continued for four days and rallied tens of thousands of artisans, workers, and merchants, who attacked the mayor’s house and killed one of the government officials. Although the uprising was finally subdued, the Russian authorities introduced substantial reforms to avoid such unrest in the future. In 1866, the new law organized the tax-paying residents of Tbilisi into four estates of hereditary nobility, personal nobility, prominent citizens, and commoners. The mayor and city assembly were to be elected by the estates. Under an indirect election system, each estate chose 100 electors who then selected 25 delegates to the city assembly; the electors also voted for a mayor. This reform opened the doors for the nobility to dominate city politics while the guilds lost their power; the merchant guilds were abolished in 1866. This system remained in effect until 1874.

**TBILISI, TOWN HALL MASSACRE IN (1905).** In August 1905, Emperor Nicholas II agreed to convene a consultative assembly or Duma but limited the franchise. The imperial edict was condemned as inadequate by many parties, and the Georgian Social Democrats were among those opposing what they perceived as a half-hearted measure. On 29 August 1905, they organized a public meeting in the Tbilisi Town Hall to discuss the issue but encountered police, who barred the entrances to the building. The organizers, nevertheless, managed to force their way into the Town Hall and, ignoring police
orders, opened a meeting attended by an estimated 2,000 persons. Hearing about the meeting, the Governor of Tbilisi, General Yatskevich, ordered several hundred infantry and Cossacks (part of the Russian troops garrisoned in Tbilisi) to surround the building and ordered the assembly to disperse. After the governor’s orders were ignored, the Russian troops opened fire on the public, killing about 60 and wounding several hundred. The event was widely publicized, and journalists gave gruesome accounts of the massacre. Thirty-two members of the Tbilisi Town Council resigned in protest, and a general strike was organized on 1 September. The Georgian Social Democrats used the event to condemn the Tsarist authorities and call for an uprising. General Yatskevich was dismissed from his post and the Cossack barracks were bombed in retaliation to the massacre in mid-September.

**Tbilisi State University.** Established on 26 January 1918, Tbilisi State University (TSU) is one of the premier centers of education in southern Caucasia. It was established by the Founding Society of noted Georgian scholars and public benefactors, including **Ivane Javakhishvili**, **Dimitri Uznadze**, **Petre Melikishvili**, **Ekvtime Takaishvili**, **Shalva Nutsubidze**, and others. Petre Melikishvili was elected as the first rector of TSU. In the 1950s, the university was called the **Joseph Stalin State University of Tbilisi** but the name was reverted to Tbilisi State University after Stalin’s death. In 1989, the university was officially renamed Ivane Javakhishvili State University but the TSU designation is widely used as well.

The university has 3,275 faculty, including 55 academicians and 595 professors. With a student body of some 35,000 men and women, TSU has eight regional branches (Sukhumi, Meskheti, Ozurgeti, Sighnaghi, Zugdidi, Poti, Javakheti, and Marneuli) throughout Georgia and comprises six departments, over 80 scientific-research laboratories and centers, 161 educational centers, several museums, university libraries, and a university press. TSU has close scientific and educational contacts with many foreign universities and centers, including Great Britain, France, Germany, the United States, Spain, Turkey, Switzerland, Armenia, Sweden, Poland, Ukraine, Iran, and Russia. TSU was, and still is, considered the premier center of education in Georgia, but its quality of education was marred by claims
of nepotism and corruption throughout the 1990s. Lack of funding also had a major effect on its infrastructure, most of which is dated and in need of updating. President **Mikhail Saakashvili**’s government launched a major overhaul of the education system to bring it up to the European and world standards.

**TEIMURAZ I (1589–1663).** King of Kakheti from 1606–1648 and of Kartli-Kakheti from 1625–1632. Teimuraz Bagrationi is one of the most tragic figures in Georgian history. The son of Queen **Ketevan** and grandson of King **Alexander II**, he ascended the Kakhetian throne in 1606 following the Persian massacre of the royal family at Dzegami Palace the previous year. He rallied the Kakhetians and fought the Persians for the rest of his life. In 1614, he fought against Shah **Abbas** of Persia but was unable to defeat him and fled to Imereti. In 1615, he returned to Kakheti to lead an uprising. After the revolt failed, Teimuraz again escaped to Imereti, where he remained for several years. His surviving family was captured by the Persians; Teimuraz’s mother, Queen Ketevan, was tortured to death, and his three sons died after brutal castration. In 1625, the Great **Mouravi Giorgi Saakadze** defeated the Persian army at **Martkopi** and invited Teimuraz to take the crowns of Kartli and Kakheti. Teimuraz and Saakadze then launched a joint campaign to drive the Persians out of eastern Georgia.

However, the two soon clashed, in part because of the intrigues of Georgian lords resentful of Saakadze’s success and also due to Shah Abbas’ political maneuvering. In 1626, Teimuraz’s army defeated Saakadze’s troops near the Bazaleti Lake and forced the Great Mouravi to flee to the Ottoman Empire, where he was eventually executed. Although the Safavid court confirmed him as the king of Kartli-Kakheti, Teimuraz faced increased Persian pressure and had to concede his vassalage. He continued his resistance and actively sought military and political aid from Russia and dispatched several embassies to the Romanov court between 1615–1649 and personally traveled to Russia in 1658. In 1626, he sent his adviser **Nikoloz Cholokashvili-Irubakidze** (known as **Niceforo Irbachi** in Europe) to negotiate an anti-Persian coalition with European powers and the Ottomans.

After the death of Shah Abbas in 1629, Teimuraz attempted to strengthen his authority by arranging assassinations of his rivals Si-
mon Khan and Eristavi Zurab of Aragvi. In response, Shah Sefi I replaced him with Rostom Khan in 1632. Teimuraz moved to Imereti but continued to inspire and direct an anti-Persian resistance in Kartli-Kakheti; in 1634, he failed in another attempt to liberate Kartli but defeated the Persians in Kakheti and recovered his crown. Eight years later, a conspiracy he had organized against Rostom Khan of Kartli was discovered and was effectively suppressed. In 1648, Rostom Khan led his Persian and Kartlian troops into Kakheti and defeated Teimuraz at Magharo. The Kakhetian king fled to Imereti again and remained in this exile for the next 13 years. In 1661, after a struggle of nearly five decades, Teimuraz abandoned secular life and entered a monastery. In an ironic twist of fate, King Vakhtang V of Kartli invaded Imereti that year and captured Teimuraz, who was later surrendered to his archenemy, Persia. Teimuraz rejected offers to convert to Islam and was imprisoned in Astrabad prison where he died in 1663. Georgians secretly returned his remains to Kakheti, where he was buried in the Alaverdi Cathedral. Despite his unfortunate political career, Teimuraz remains a towering figure in the 17th-century Georgian cultural renaissance. A talented poet and fluent in several languages, he adapted from the Persian the romances of Leila and Mejnun (Leilmajmuniqani) and Josef and Zuleika (Joseb zilelikhanqani) and wrote numerous poems, including Tsinga da tsameba Ketevan dedoplisa, Gabaaseba gazakhulisa da shemodgomisa, Gabaaseba bagisa da ghvinisa, Majama, Tamaris sidze davit garejas, Gremis sasakhle, and others that breathed new life into Georgian literature.

TEIMURAZ II. Wali (regent) of Kakheti in 1709–1715, king of Kakheti in 1733–1744 and king of Kartli in 1744–1762. Teimuraz was one of the most important political figures of 18th-century Georgia. A shrewd statesman, he used Persian power to his advantage and supported Nadir Khan in his campaigns to restore the Persian Empire in the 1730s. Teimuraz defeated the Ottomans at the battle of Magharo and then suppressed an anti-Persian uprising led by Givi Amilakhvari. Teimuraz’s policy of rapprochement with Persia paid off when Nadir Shah confirmed him and his son Erekle as the kings of Kartli and Kakheti and allowed them to perform Christian coronations. Teimuraz was crowned at the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral on
1 October 1744, the first Christian coronation of a Georgian king in over a century. As he strengthened his authority, Teimuraz, supported by his son Erekle II, successfully expanded his sphere of influence to the Yerevan, Ganja, and Nakhichevan principates, which became tributaries of Teimuraz.

In 1751–1752, Teimuraz defeated a coalition of Azat Khan of Tabriz and Aji-Chalab of Shakki-Shirvan (Šaki-Šarvani) and established the political supremacy of Kartli-Kakheti in the entire region. In 1754–1755, he engaged the Lezghians, whose raids constantly harassed eastern Georgia, and defeated them at Mchadijvari and Kvareli. As Persian power declined, Teimuraz adjusted his foreign policy and sought allies against Persia. In 1760, he traveled to Russia to negotiate military aid or financial subsidies against Persia. He died in St. Petersburg on 8 January 1762 and was buried in the Georgian church in Astrakhan. An accomplished statesman and military commander, Teimuraz was also a talented poet and author of such poems as *Dghisa da ghamis gabaaseba*, *Tavgadasavali*, *Sasakhlis qeba*, *Gabaaseba rustaveltan*, and a translation of *Timsariani*.

**TELAVI.** Administrative center of Kakheti and former capital of the Kingdom of Kakheti. Located some 500 m above sea level, Telavi (“city of elms”) was historically overshadowed by its neighboring town, Gremi, which had served as the Kakhetian capital since ancient times. However, after the Persians destroyed Gremi in the 16th century, Telavi emerged as the new capital. Nowadays, it is the largest town (approx. 30,000 residents) in Kakheti and is the site of a royal palace of kings Teimuraz and Erekle II. The famous David Gareja Monastery is located nearby in the Gareja Desert. See also BATUMI; BORJOMI; KUTAISI; POTI; TBILISI.

**TERGDALEULNI (LATE 19TH CENTURY).** Georgian literary and political movement. The *Tergdaleulni* (literally, “those who drank the water of the Terek”) were a young generation of Georgians who travelled across the Terek River to study in Russia. Returning to Georgia, these Georgians, led by such prominent writers as *Ilia Chavchavadze*, *Akaki Tsereteli*, *Rapiel Eristavi*, and *Niko Nikoladze* emphasized the importance of reviving the Georgian culture and language and supported a thorough reform of social structure in
Georgia. Perhaps the most radical and active among them was Niko Nikoladze, who joined student demonstrations in St. Petersburg in 1861, was expelled from the university, and hoped to introduce far-reaching reforms in Georgia. The moderate Ilia Chavchavadze was the acknowledged leader of the movement, who favored a liberal emancipation of the serfs and peasants and directed his energy to the revival of Georgian literature, culture, and, above all, language.

As a result, Tergdaleulni clashed with the older generation and conservative elements of society, often known as the “fathers” or Mtkvardaleulni. Starting in 1861, both movements were engaged in a polemical struggle in various newspapers, most notably in Tsiskari and Sakartvelos moambe. Unlike “the fathers” who used the medieval language of the church, Tergdaleulni called for a language reform, which incensed the conservatives, and employed the vernacular language in their publications in order to make them more accessible to the common people. When the “fathers” closed the pages of their newspapers to them, Tergdaleulni turned to the journals Droeba, Sasoflo gazeti, Krebuli, Obzori, Iveria, Kvali, and Tifliski vestnik, which were important in spreading their ideas and raising Georgian national consciousness.

TETRI GIORGI. One of the names of St. George, meaning White St. George. The cult of Tetri Giorgi combines elements of a pagan deity of the moon with features of the Christian martyr St. George, the patron saint of Georgia. The image of Tetri Giorgi was popular in Georgian heraldry, and several royal and state coats of arms, including the current one, prominently feature it. Tetri Giorgi is still revered in the mountainous region of Georgia. In the 1920s, a political organization Tetri Giorgi was formed by Georgian émigrés with the goal of liberating Georgia from Soviet occupation. Among its members were such prominent Georgians as Grigol Robakidze, Leo Kereselidze, Mikhail Tsereteli, Shalva Maghlakelidze, Alexander Manvelishvili, and Kalistrate Salia. In 1926, an underground cell of the Tetri Giorgi was established in Georgia, but it was discovered and suppressed by the KGB in 1937. During World War II, the members of the Tetri Giorgi group collaborated with the Wehrmacht, hoping to use German support to achieve their goals, and served in the ranks of the Georgian Legion.
TEVDORE, PRIEST (17TH CENTURY). A Georgian Orthodox priest, Tevdore was captured by the invading Ottoman army that sought to ambush King Luarsab in his summer residence in 1609. The Turks forced Tevdore to guide them to the royal residence, and the priest agreed but secretly led them in the wrong direction, which allowed the locals to alert the Georgian king. The Turks finally realized Tevdore’s ruse and had him tortured and executed. However, the priest’s sacrifice was not in vain since King Luarsab and Giorgi Saakadze managed to rally the Georgian forces and route the Ottomans near Tashiskari.

TEVZADZE, DAVID (1949– ). Former minister of defense of Georgia, lieutenant-general, chief of Main Military Inspection of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. Born in Sukhumi, he graduated from the Department of Philosophy of Tbilisi State University in 1971 and did his post-graduate studies at the Institute of Philosophy of the Georgian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Foreign Languages. In 1974–1992, he conducted his research at the Institute of Philosophy and Tbilisi State University. After Georgian independence, he joined the army and commanded the Orbi battalion (1992), the 11th Reconnaissance Brigade (1992–1993), and the 1st Brigade (1993-1994). He studied at NATO military college, the Marshall Center’s College of International and Security Studies, and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas (1996–1997). Working at the Ministry of Defense, he became head of the Office of Foreign Relations (1994–1997) and was appointed minister of defense in 1998. Tevzadze supervised the reorganization of the Georgian army in the late 1990s and was closely involved in Georgia’s bid for NATO membership. Among his other achievements, he was awarded the Order of Vakhtang Gorgasali (1993) and was one of the founders of the Georgian Karate Federation.

TEXEL, GEORGIAN UPRISING ON (1945). Revolt of the Wehrmacht’s 822nd Georgian Battalion against the German forces on the island of Texel, a municipality and an island in the Netherlands, in April 1945. The island is often described as Europe’s last battlefield of World War II. The island of Texel was important for its strategic location and was heavily fortified by the Germans as part of their
“Atlantic Wall” defense system. Among the units serving there was the 822nd Georgian Battalion raised from the Georgians who had been captured on the Eastern front who agreed to enlist in the Wehrmacht in the hopes of liberating Georgia from Soviet rule. The battalion, some 800 strong, was part of the Wehrmacht’s Georgian Legion and was redeployed in late 1943 from the Eastern Front. Memoirs of some of the surviving legionnaires (Sh. Maghlakelidze and G. Gabliani) reveal that Georgian legionnaires opposed redeployment from the Russian front since their goal was to fight the Soviet forces and liberate Georgia. As a result, the morale of the unit plummeted and willingness to fight for the Nazi regiment declined. With the German army on the defensive in early 1945, the Georgians on Texel decided to turn against their former allies.

On the night of 5–6 April 1945, the Georgians, led by Lieutenant Loladze, rose against the Germans and, after killing some 400 German soldiers, seized a large portion of the island but failed to capture crucial naval batteries to the north and south of the island. Within days, the Germans poured in reinforcements and launched a counter offensive supported by armor. The vicious fighting continued for an entire month, even after the German capitulation in the Netherlands (5 May) and general surrender to the Allies on 8 May. The combat ended only after the Allies diverted Canadian forces to take control of Texel on 20 May 1945, almost two weeks after the war was over in Europe. Nevertheless, the Georgians refused to surrender and the Canadian commander was so impressed by their resistance efforts that he refused to classify them as enemy personnel and allowed them to retain arms until their evacuation on 16 June 1945. The uprising claimed lives of over 500 Georgians, 120 Texel residents, and between 800–1,000 Germans; the fallen Georgians were buried in a common grave also known as Lieutenant Loladze’s Cemetery.

The Canadian authorities praised the Georgians as valiant Soviet allies whose rebellion had resulted in heavy German casualties and requested permission to rehabilitate them. However, the survivors from the Texel Rebellion were sent to the USSR by British forces where they were arrested on charges of treason, and most of them were either imprisoned or exiled. Their rehabilitation occurred posthumously in late 1950. Their story received publicity in Georgia when the Soviet authorities distorted some of its facts in order to use
the story for propaganda purposes, and the Georgians were portrayed as prisoners of war and not as active servicemen in the Wehrmacht. The Aeronautical Museum on Texel features a permanent exhibition dealing with this event.

**THEATER AND OPERA.** The earliest theater space in Georgia dates back to the third century BC and can be found at Uplistsikhe. Despite a lack of theatrical texts, performances certainly occurred in Georgia and developed into a unique festive theatrical art with singing, dancing, and reenactment of epics. In the Middle Ages, theatrical festivals like *berikaoba* often became a means of protest against conquerors or feudal oppression and helped preserve oral traditions. Satires and folk performances with masks were common in the period.

The history of modern theater begins in the 19th century. Giorgi Eristavi emerged as the leading dramatist of this age, and in January 1850, he established his own theater where several Georgian plays were produced. In 1879, another company was established in Tbilisi with the help of such luminaries as Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli. This theatrical center, which soon became the famous Rustaveli Theater, was a cultural center of Georgia, where ideas of liberty, humanism, and reforms were discussed. The theater quickly gained a following and began producing performances that combined modernity with traditional folk style. Productions varied from Georgian satires and comedies to European and Russian tragedies and plays. The early 20th century was one of the most important periods in the development of the Georgian theater. The theater prospered through the work of Valerian Shalikashvili (1874–1919), Alexander Tsutsunava (1881–1955), Mikhael Koreli (1876–1949), Kote Andronikashvili (1887–1954), Akaki Paghava (1887–1962), and others.

The most important of these artists was the ingenious Konstantine (Kote) Marjanishvili, under whose direction the Georgian theater rose to a new level. Marjanishvili himself enjoyed close relations with the finest stage directors of this period—Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko—and merged the elements of Russian and European theatrical art with Georgian romantic and heroic traits. In 1928, Marjanishvili established a new company in Kutaisi, which was later named after him, and produced his first play Ernest Toler’s *Popola, We Are Living*. He was supported in his work by such promi-
inent artists as Shalva Dadiani (1894–1959), Polikarpe Kakabadze (1895–1972), and others. Among Marjanishvili’s many stage productions were The End of the “Nadezhd” (1909), Dostoevsky’s Brothers Karamazov (1910), Ibsen’s Per Gynt (1912), Offenbach’s Die Schöne Helena (1913), Mozart’s Entführung aus dem Serail (1923), Eristavi’s Partition (1823), Arakishvili’s The Tale of Shota Rustaveli (1923), Shakespeare’s Hamlet (1925), Kutateli’s Midnight Past (1929), and Rossini’s William Tell (1931), etc. Following in Marjanishvili’s footsteps was Alexander (Sandro) Akhmeteli, who was instrumental in the further development of the Georgian theater. He sought to create a heroic and monumental stage production that had a unique rhythmical structure and engaging characterizations. Akhmeteli produced such successful theater and opera works as Glebov’s Zagmuk (1926), Shanshiashvili’s Anzor (1928), Lavrenyov’s Break-up (1928) Kirshon’s City of the Winds (1929), Dadiani’s Tetrnuldi (1931), and Arakishvili’s The Tale of Shota Rustaveli.

The establishment of Bolshevik rule in Georgia influenced the development of the Georgian theater. In the 1930s, theatrical productions featured characters of workers, peasants and Soviet revolutionaries, and depicted the life on a collective farm or a worker’s toils in a factory. In the 1940s, theater performance shifted its focus to the Georgian past in an attempt to appeal to nationalism during World War II. In the 1950s, plays based on works by European authors were staged, including Shakespeare’s Othello, Antony and Cleopatra, Richard II, Sophocle’s Oedipus Rex, plays by Lope de Vega, Carlo Goldoni, Pierre Augustin Beaumarchais, Bernard Shaw, Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolay Gogol, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and others. The period produced directors such as Vakhtang Tabliashvili (1914–?) and Vaso Kushitsashvili (1894–1962); and the actors Akaki Khorava (1895–1972), Sergo Zakariadze (1909–1971), Erosi Manjgaladze (1925–1982), and Akaki Vasadze (1899–1978); designers Ioseb Charlemagne (1880–1957), Irakli Gamrekeli (1884–1943), Vladimir Sidamon-Eristavi (1889–1943), David Kakabadze (1889–1954), Elene Akhvlediani (1901–1975), Tamar Abakelia (1905–1953), Peter Otskhali (1907–1937), and the great Suliko Virsaladze (1909–1988).

In the 1960s–1980s, Georgian theater gradually turned away from realism and experimented with new genres and styles. The period is noteworthy for the works of Giga Lordkipanidze (1928– ). Robert
Sturua (1938– ), and others. Sturua emerged as a master of the epic form and gained worldwide fame for his direction of Shakespeare’s plays *Richard III* (1979) and *King Lear* (1987) and the critically acclaimed direction of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1975). Playwrights N. Dumbadze, G. Abashidze, T. Chiladze, A. Chkhaidze, Sh. Shamandze, Lali Roseba, and others authored many successful plays. During the period of civil strife in Georgia in the 1990s, the Rustaveli Theater continued to operate under the artistic direction of Robert Sturua, producing new performances including such experimental ones as *ABC*, *Life Is a Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Lamara*, *Irine’s Happiness*, *Women-Snake*, and others.

The two most important theaters in Georgia are the Rustaveli and the Marjanishvili theaters. Another company, the Tumanishvili Studio Theater of Film Actors, was established in 1977 and serves as a stepping stone for lesser known artists or recent graduates in theatri-cs. The Royal District Theater has operated since 1992.

The Opera and Ballet Theater has functioned in Tbilisi since 1851 and produced performances of works by Georgian musicians such as Z. Paliashvili’s *Abesalom and Eteri* and *Daisi*, Taktakishvili’s *Mindia*, Dolidze’s *Keto and Kote*, along with the better known operas and ballets that are part of the standard repertoire. Tchaikovsky’s *Queen of Spades*, *Swan Lake*, and *Nutcracker*, Bizet’s *Carmen*, Mascagni’s *Cavalleria rusticana*, Puccini’s *Tosca* and *La Boheme*, Verdi’s *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto*, Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, and many others.

The Griboedov Russian Drama Theater, founded in 1845, and the Armenian Drama Theater, established in 1863, are other major centers of theatrical art in Tbilisi as well as smaller theaters such as the Rustavi Theater is in Rustavi, the Meskhishvili Theater in Kutaisi, the Dadiani Theater in Batumi, and the Youth Drama Theater in Akhaltsikhe. The Abkhazian and the Sukhumi Georgian Theaters operated in Sukhumi prior to the conflict in Abkhazia, and several Georgian and Ossetian theaters were open in Tskhinvali. In 1986, the Theater Studio was established on the Rustaveli Theater’s small stage. Tbilisi is also the home of the Russian–Georgian Youth Theater and the Russian Youth Theater. In 1982, the State Pantomime Theater was established in Tbilisi and developed under the direction of Amiran Shalikashvili and Kira Mebuke. The Marionette Theater of Rezo Gabriadze has been successfully performing for decades now and gained worldwide fame for its works.
Currently, there are 40 theaters in Georgia, drawing some 266,000 spectators annually. In addition to classical theaters, Georgia is also famous for its dance theaters. In 1886, a Georgian Ballet Theater was established under the direction of Maria Perini and later Mikhail Mordkin. But it was Vakhtang Chabukiani who transformed the classical ballet by introducing Georgian traits and characteristics. He became the ballet company’s leading dancer and brought a unique spirit and energy to his dances. Chabukiani was the choreographer and artistic director of the Paliashvili Theatre of Opera and Ballet from 1941–1973 and was ballet master and director of the Tbilisi Choreographic Academy from 1950–1973. Under his direction, the ballet developed a new archetype of a male dancer with strong legs, general athleticism, and uninhibited energy. Among many productions of this period were Heart of the Mountains (1941), Sinatle (1947), Laurencia (1948), Gorda (1950), For Peace (1953), Othello (1957), Demon (1961), Bolero (1971), Hamlet (1971), Apasionata (1980), and others. Simultaneously, Iliko Sukhishvili and Nina Ramishvili founded the Georgian State Dance Company in 1954 and played a crucial role in refining Georgian folk dances. The Sukhishvili Dance Company toured worldwide with great success and remains the finest dance company in Georgia.

THEODOSIUS. King of Abkhazia from 975–978. The son of King Giorgi, he was raised at the Byzantine court in Constantinople. Returning to western Georgia, he challenged his brother Demetre III for the throne but was unsuccessful, and when he was captured his brother had him blinded. Nevertheless, after Demetre III died in 975, Theodosius succeeded him on the throne. Already ailing, he adopted his nephew Bagrat III Bagrationi, who united the Georgian principalities following Theodosius’ death in 978 and became the first Bagration king of the united Kingdom of Georgia.

TIMUR. See TAMERLANE.

TKASHI-MAPA. In Georgian (Mingrelian) mythology, a goddess of the forest and animals. With golden hair, she was believed to be of unsurpassed beauty and often tempted hunters who entered her domain. However, the hunter could not reveal the secret of his liaison
with Tkashi-mapa, and those who failed to keep their word were turned into stone together with their hounds. Ochokochi was believed to be enthralled by Tkashi-Mapa, whom he constantly chased in order to copulate. However, mortal hunters protected Tkashi-Mapa from his advances. Tkashi-mapa is often associated with the cult of Dali that was widespread in other regions of Georgia.

TODRIA, SILVESTR (1880–1936). Government and party official. Born in the village of Yanauli, he began his career as a typesetter in Batumi in 1897, and after being exposed to Marxist circles, he participated in the printers’ strike in 1901 when he joined the Bolshevik Party. In 1902, he helped establish an illegal Social Democratic printing house in Batumi and later worked in Baku in 1903–1905. Moving to Moscow, he took part in the events of the 1905 Revolution and was arrested and imprisoned in December of that year. After his release, he worked at the Central Committee of RSDRP (B) and helped operate illegal presses in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Vyborg in 1907–1915. Returning to Tbilisi in late 1915, he headed the printers’ union and became a member of the Tbilisi and Caucasian Region Party Committees in 1917.

After the February Revolution of 1917, Todria established an illegal printing house in Tbilisi but had to flee Georgia during the period of the Menshevik republic. In 1918–1919, he helped organize propaganda work in the North Caucasus and played an important role in the creation of the Terek Republic. After the Bolshevik invasion of Georgia in 1921, Todria became chairman of the Tbilisi Revolutionary Committee and people’s commissar of social security. In 1921, he was appointed people’s commissar of agriculture and helped found the Georgian Association of Proletarian Writers in 1922; two years later, he rose to the position of the secretary of the Central Executive Committee of Georgia. In 1927, he became people’s commissar of labor, and the following year, he again returned to the position as secretary of the Central Executive Committee of Georgia, retaining it for the next five years. From 1933–1936, Todria was secretary of the Central Executive Committee of the Transcaucasian SFSR. Simultaneously, he also became a member of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR. He wrote a number of satirical works, including Smekh skvoz sliozi (1927), Satira i yumor (1934), and Vetkhie i novii zaveti (1934).
TOIDZE, MOSE (1871–1953). Georgian painter. Born in Tbilisi, he studied at Repin’s workshop at the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg from 1896–1899. Involved in Marxist circles, he was expelled from the Academy for participating in student demonstrations in 1899 and returned to Tbilisi where he began his career as a painter and took part in revolutionary activities from 1901–1920. In 1922, he founded and directed the People’s Art Studio in Tbilisi, and from 1930–1953, he served as head and professor of the Chair of Painting at the Academy of Arts in Tbilisi. He was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor in 1932 and of People’s Painter of the USSR in 1953. Toidze’s early works reflected his impressionism with national themes, but he later turned to realism and Socialist realism. Among his major works are Mtsekhetoba (1899–1901), Portraits of a Mother (1904–1905), Laundry, Craftsman, A Moonlit Night (1905–1910), Bazaskhana, Revolution (1910–1918), Chitaura Studies, Happy Life (1934), and the Song of Victory (1948). See also GUDIASHVILI, LADO; KAKABADZE, DAVID; PIROSMANI; SHEVARDNADZE, DIMITRI.

TORNIKE ERISTAVI (10TH CENTURY). Prominent Georgian statesman and military commander, also known as Ioannis Tornikios or John Tornikios. He achieved prominence while serving David III Curopalates of Tao Klarjeti, but around 963, he abandoned secular society for a monastic life and worked under the name of Ioane (Ioannis, John) in the Athanasius Lavra on Mount Athos. In 978, Byzantine Emperor Basil, facing a powerful rebellion of Bardas Scleros (976–979), appealed for help from David Curopalates, who asked Tornike Eristavi to return temporarily to a layman’s life and lead the Georgian army. A Georgian expeditionary corps under Tornike Eristavi was dispatched to Basil’s aid and defeated the insurgents and restored royal authority to the emperor in 979. The Byzantine emperor generously rewarded Tornike Eristavi and allowed him to found the famous Iviron Monastery on Mt. Athos. Tornike donated all his possessions to this monastery and spent the rest of his life there as a monk. The Iviron Monastery became one of the most important Georgian cultural centers, where Georgian monks produced original illuminated manuscripts, translations, and treatises.
TOTLEBEN, GOTLIB HEINRICH (1715–1773). Russian military commander, major general. Totleben began his career in the Saxon army and later served in the Dutch and Prussian military before entering the Russian service. During the Seven Years War (1756–1763), he distinguished himself at Kunersdorf in 1759 but was later accused of treason and arrested. He was released in 1763, but his property was requisitioned. He was restored in rank only in 1768, when during the Russo–Turkish War he was given command of a detachment dispatched to support the Imeretian King Solomon I. In August 1769, Totleben contacted King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti, offering him a joint campaign against the Ottomans. The Russian troops reached Imereti in September 1769, and the next April, Totleben and King Erekle launched an offensive against the Turks in the direction of Akhaltsikhe. However, the two commanders disagreed on the strategy to pursue during the siege of Atskuri. On 19 April 1770, Totleben suddenly lifted the siege and withdrew with his forces, abandoning King Erekle against the Turks. He marched back to Kartli and attempted a coup, proclaiming King Erekle deposed and the kingdom under the Russian sovereignty. However, the Georgian victory at Aspindza and Erekle’s quick return to Kartli forced Totleben to flee to Imereti, where he took part in King Solomon’s campaigns along the Black Sea coast. He was defeated at Poti and was recalled to Russia. The Totleben affair threatened to undermine Russo–Georgian relations, but King Erekle II persevered in his determination to place eastern Georgia under Russian protection. In 1783, he signed the Treaty of Georgievsk with Empress Catherine II of Russia.

TOUMANOFF, CYRIL (1913–1997). Eminent American scholar of Georgian and Armenian history. Born into an Armeno–Georgian noble family (Tumanishvili/Tumanian) in St. Petersburg, Toumanoff moved to the United States in 1928 and studied at Georgetown University, where he received his doctorate in 1943. Remaining with his alma mater, Toumanoff studied pre-modern Caucasia and earned a reputation for his meticulous research and proficiency with ancient sources. In 1963, he published his magnum opus, Studies in Christian Caucasian History, which remains a standard account of the subject. In the late 1960s and 1970s, Toumanoff published a series of ar-
articles in the journals *Traditio*, *Speculum*, and *Le Muséon* in which he explored unknown aspects of medieval Georgia and Armenia.

**TOURISM.** Georgia’s landscape and climate provide ample opportunity for the development of a world-class tourism industry. Prior to the fall of the USSR, Georgia was one of the most popular destinations for Soviet citizens and attracted some 1.5 million tourists annually, mostly to its resorts on the **Black Sea**. However, following the outbreak of civil conflict in the early 1990s, there was an almost complete cessation of tourism. Despite the ongoing efforts to regenerate the sector, the tourism industry still faces major obstacles, including a dilapidated infrastructure, economic volatility, “frozen” conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and the lack of government control in the **Pankisi Gorge**. Nevertheless, the tourism industry is expanding, and, according to the World Tourism Organization there were 85,000 tourists in 1995, 313,000 in 2003, and 368,000 in 2004. International tourism receipts also increased from US$97 million in 2000 to US$177 million in 2004.

Georgia’s diverse culture and landscape has tremendous potential for future development. Numerous historical buildings—churches, fortresses, etc.—are some of the primary attractions. Among major destinations are the **Alaverdi Cathedral** and the **David Gareja Monastery** in **Kakheti**, **Svetitskhoveli**, the historic **Tbilisi**, **Mtskheta**, and **Uplistsikhe** in **Kartli**, **Vardzia** in southern Georgia, the historic **Kutaisi** and **Vani** in **Imereti**, and the medieval villages with their watchtowers in the **Caucasus Mountains**. The ski resorts at Gudauri and **Bakuriani** remain popular with foreign tourists in the winter months. Other attractions include the mineral spas in **Borjomi** and Tskaltubo, sanatoriums in Abastumani in southern Georgia, and the Black Sea resorts in **Adjara** and Mount Kazbek. Ecotourism has a great potential considering the pristine scenery of **Racha**, **Svaneti**, **Tusheti**, and **Khevsureti**.

**TRADE AND SERVICES.** The services sector contributed an estimated 59.1% of GDP in 2003 and engaged 36.8% of the employed labor force. Trade and transport and communications are the sector’s most significant areas of activity, with telecommunications and hotels and restaurants demonstrating the greatest growth in 2000–2003.
According to the World Bank, the GDP of the services sector decreased, in real terms, by an annual average of 8.6% from 1995–2000. However, real sectoral GDP increased by 1.7% in 1999 and by 5.5% in 2000. According to World Bank estimates, the sector increased by an annual average of 4.9% in 2002 and 11.5% in 2003.

Trade accounts for the third highest share of GDP, and in 2004, retail trade outlets and individual entrepreneurs sold over US$2 billion worth of goods. According the State Department for Statistics of Georgia, in 2004, small traders sold (chiefly at bazaars) US$1.56 billion worth of consumer goods; 61% of consumer goods were sold over-the-counter, 32% at bazaar retail outlets (shops, stalls), and 7% by small retailers. Of the products sold, 28.4% was food and beverages, 3.9% alcohol and tobacco, and 2.9% animals.

In 2002–2004, Georgian exports rose from US$346 to $648 million but imports also increased from US$794 million to $1.9 billion, creating a trade deficit of US$1.2 billion. Russia remains the largest trade partner of Georgia, followed by Turkey, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Great Britain, and the United States. Major exports include iron and steel, aircraft, wine, ferrous metals, sugar, copper ores, nitrogen fertilizers, wheat, and mineral waters. Imports consist of crude petroleum and petroleum products, automobiles, natural gas, tubes and pipes, medicines, and wheat. Tbilisi is the largest commercial hub in Georgia and accounts for 30% of domestic trade; among other regions, Imereti claims 24% of commercial activity, Mingrelia, 9.9%; Kakheti, 8.3%; Kartli, 6.6%; and Adjara, 5.6%. See also ECONOMY.

TRANSCAUCASIA. Russo-centric term used to describe the region that lies south of Russia across the Caucasus Mountains. The region consists of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia and covers the southern slopes of the Greater Caucasus mountain range, the Colchis Lowland, the Kura Depression, the Dzhavakhet–Armenian Plateau, the Lesser Caucasus, and the Talysh Mountains with the Lenkoran Lowland.

TRANSCAUCASIAN COMMISSARIAT (ZAKVKOM). The first government of the independent Transcaucasia between November 1917 and April 1918. The Transcaucasian Commissariat replaced the Ozakom following the Bolshevik seizure of power in St. Petersburg in November 1917 and was headed by the Georgian Social Democrat
Evgeni Gegechkori. Anti-Bolshevik in its political goals, it consisted of 12 members from various political organizations, including the Socialist Revolutionaries, Cadets, Mensheviks, Musavatists, Dashnakists, etc. The Commissariat sought separation of Transcaucasia from Russia and signed treaties with separatist forces, including the anti-Bolshevik leaders of Dagestan, the Kuban Rada, and the White Guard Ataman A. M. Kaledin. In late 1917 and early 1918, the Commissariat took measures to suppress Bolshevik influence in the region and ordered the seizure of the Tbilisi arsenal, the disarming of pro-Bolshevik troops, the closure of Bolshevik newspapers, and other measures. Among its other reforms were the decree on land, the abolition of social distinction, labor conditions, and the circulation of currency (bonds). In December 1917, it signed a peace agreement with the Ottoman Empire at Erzinjan and established the Transcaucasian Seim to oversee the secession of Transcaucasia from Soviet Russia in February 1918. One month later, the Transcaucasian Seim dissolved the Transcaucasian Commissariat after Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan declared independence from Russia.

**Transcaucasian Federation.** An independent state made up of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan that existed between 22 April and 26 May 1918; its official designation was Transcaucasian Federative Democratic Republic (ZFDR). Following the Trebizond Peace Talks with the Ottoman Empire, the Transcaucasian Seim proclaimed the establishment of the ZFDR, and the government under the Georgian Menshevik Akaki Chkhenkeli was organized in Tbilisi. The ZFDR faced serious economic and political problems, especially the threat of Turkish expansion into southern Caucasus. On 26 May 1918, Georgia, encouraged by Germany’s promises of defense against Turkey, withdrew from the Federation and declared its independence. The subsequent declarations by Armenia and Azerbaijan on 28 May put an end to the short-lived Transcaucasian Federation.

**Transcaucasian Seim (Diet).** Regional legislative body convened by the Transcaucasian Commissariat in Tbilisi in February 1918 following the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly of Russia by the Bolsheviks. The membership of the Seim was determined by lowering the minimum number of votes to one-third of that which
had been required for a seat in the Constituent Assembly. As a result, the larger parties increased the number of their deputies and the minor groups obtained representation that voters had previously denied. The Bolsheviks protested against the creation of the Seim and refused to participate. The Seim consisted of 24 Mensheviks, 24 Dashnakists, 30 Musavatists, 3 Socialist-Federalists, and 10 representatives of smaller parties. In March 1918, the Seim voted on the formal secession of Transcaucasia from Soviet Russia, and on 22 April 1918, it proclaimed Transcaucasia an independent federal republic, the Transcaucasian Federative Democratic Republic. Four weeks later, when Georgia declared its independence, the Seim dissolved itself on 26 May 1918.

**TRANSCAUCASIAN FEDERATIVE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (ZFDR).** See TRANSCAUCASIAN FEDERATION.

**TRANSCAUCASIAN SOVNET FEDERATED SOCIALIST REPUBLIC (TRANKA VAKSILI SABCHOTA FEDERATSIULI SOTSIALISTURI RESPUBLIKI).** A socialist republic made up of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan that existed within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from 1922 to 1936. The ZSFSR was formed with the aim of rebuilding Transcaucasia following the Bolshevik takeover of the local independent states and to combat local nationalist sentiments. In March 1922, a conference of representatives of the Central Executive Committee of the soviets from Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan was convened in Tbilisi to approve the formation of the Federated Union of the Transcaucasian Soviet Socialist Republics; its government consisted of the conference of representatives from the three former republics and the Union Council that was elected by the conference. The first conference, convened in December 1922, sought closer integration of the republics and reorganized the federated union into a federated republic designated as the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. A Georgian delegation led by Budu Mdivani opposed the establishment of the ZSFSR and, in a **Georgian Affair of 1922**, it sought, unsuccessfully, to establish Georgia as a separate constituent republic of the USSR. On 30 December 1922, the ZSFSR joined the Russian, Ukrainian, and Byelorussian Soviet Republics to form the USSR. It remained in
existence until 1936 when the new Constitution of the USSR made Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia constituent republics of the USSR.

TRANSPORTATION. Georgia’s location between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, at the perceived crossroads of Europe and Asia, makes it a crucial corridor for commercial transportation. It is especially important for the rapidly developing economies of Central Asia, notably of Kazakhstan. In the late 1990s, Georgia initiated the Transport Corridor Europe–Caucasus–Asia (TRACECA) that envisages the creation of a transport corridor and modernization and expansion of the transport infrastructure in the Caucasus and Central Asian countries. Thus, transportation comprises 9.8% of GDP, ranking fourth after agriculture, trade, and industry. Georgia inherited a relatively dense transportation system from the Soviet era, but most of it now needs upgrading. The government gradually improved the infrastructure by building roads, tunnels, and bridges. The recently enacted Millennium Challenge Account provided over US$100 million toward rehabilitation and construction of major highway in southern Georgia.

Truck transportation accounted for nearly 60% of all carried cargo, while railway cargo transport accounted for 90% of total turnover. Tbilisi is connected by rail with both Sukhumi and Batumi on the Black Sea and Baku on the Caspian Sea. The railway has a double track that allows trains in opposite directions to easily pass each other and expedite turnover. Currently, there are talks underway to build a rail connection to Turkey bypassing Armenia and to reopen rail links with Russia through Abkhazia that were closed for nearly a decade due to regional conflict.

Georgia also serves as a corridor for major pipelines transporting oil and gas from the Caspian oilfields to European markets. An oil pipeline connects Baku to Supsa on the Black Sea, where a modern terminal serves as a gateway for oil exports to Europe. In 2005, the multi-billion-dollar Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan oil pipeline began pumping oil from Baku via Georgia to the Mediterranean coast of Turkey. Another natural gas pipeline, designed to deliver up to 7 billion cubic meters from the Shah Deniz gas field, is under construction and will run alongside the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline to Turkey. In March 2006, Ukraine, Georgia, and the European Union announced plans to construct a new gas pipeline to supply Caspian
gas to European countries and a specially created international consortium already started its work on the project.

Georgia’s location also promises to provide an important link in air transportation between Asia and Europe. The major cities of Tbilisi, Kutaisi, and Batumi operate airports. Tbilisi International Airport is serviced by Georgian and foreign companies, including British Airways, Lufthansa, Austrian Airways, and Turkish Airways. In 2006, work started on refurbishing and bringing the Tbilisi airport closer world standards.

**TREBIZOND, EMPIRE OF.** Successor state of the Byzantine Empire founded with Georgian help in 1204. By the early 13th century, Georgia had emerged as one of the most powerful states in Asia Minor. The reigns of King David IV Aghmashenebeli and Queen Tamar significantly expanded the Georgian sphere of influence. In this period, Queen Tamar was involved directly in the events of the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204) and in the establishment of the Empire of Trebizond. In 1185, a violent revolution resulted in the death of the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos I Komnenos. However, his two infant grandsons, Alexios and David, sons of the sebastokrator Manuel and a Georgian princess, were saved through Georgian intervention and taken to Tbilisi, where they were raised at the court of Tamar. In 1203, Tamar donated large sums of money to the Georgian monasteries in Antioch and Mount Athos. However, Emperor Alexios III Angelos confiscated Tamar’s donation. Infuriated by this action, Tamar used this hostile act as a pretext for her expansion along the southwestern coast of the Black Sea. In 1204, as the Fourth Crusade sacked the Byzantine capital, a Georgian army under the command of Alexios and David Komnenos attacked the Byzantine realm from the east and seized Trebizond (modern Trabzon, Turkey), where they established a pro-Georgian state. The following year, David Komnenos commanded the Georgian troops in a successful campaign that resulted in the conquest of territory between Trebizond and Herakleia Pontike (mod. Ereğli, Turkey). David even threatened the Niceaean Empire, but was beaten back by Theodore Laskaris in 1205.

The Empire of Trebizond soon emerged as a major commercial emporium and political force in Asia Minor. It outlived both the Despotate of Epirus and the Nicaean Empire and successfully resisted the attacks
of the Seljuk Turks, Sultanate of Iconium, and the Ottomans. As a major commercial transit point, Trebizond grew in wealth and prestige. In the 15th century, Manuel III allied himself with Tamerlane (Timur) to escape destruction that befell Georgia and the Ottoman Turks. His successors also preferred diplomacy to war and successfully maneuvered between the Ottomans, Aq-Qoyunlu, and Kara Qoyunlu states. Their fortunes, however, changed with the rise of a powerful Ottoman state under Sultan Murad II. The Ottomans unsuccessfully besieged Trebizond in 1442 but returned again in 1461 when Sultan Mehmed II finally seized the city and destroyed the Empire of Trebizond.

TREBIZOND, PEACE TALKS (1918). Peace conference between the Transcaucasian Seim and Ottoman Turkey held in Trebizond in March–April 1918. The purpose of the talks was to end the hostilities in the region. The Seim wanted a return to the 1914 international boundaries and self-determination for eastern Anatolia. The Ottoman delegation asked the Seim to declare its independence from Russia and accept the provisions of Article 4 of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which surrendered Batumi, Kars, Ardahan, and their neighboring regions to Turkey. The Seim’s delegation, led by Akaki Chkhenkeli, countered with an offer to maintain the 1914 international boundaries. However, the delegation itself soon became divided over the issues of independence and collaboration with the Ottomans, whose interests were lobbied by the Musavatist Party of Azerbaijan.

Failing to achieve a breakthrough, the Seim voted to continue the war against the Ottomans on 13 April and recalled its peace delegation the following day. In response, an Ottoman offensive seized Batumi and Ardahan but was checked at Kars. A new ceasefire was signed on 22 April, and peace talks were resumed. Under the pressure from Ottoman Turkey, the Seim declared independence of the entire Transcaucasia, established the Transcaucasian Federation, and agreed to hold another round of talks with the Turks at the Batumi Peace Talks.

TSABADZE, GIORGI (1924–1986). Georgian composer and singer. He graduated from Tbilisi Conservatory in 1956 and worked with the Georgian Philharmonic from 1956–1975. He composed and performed many popular songs, musicals, and operettas, including the

**TSERETELI, AKAKI (1840–1915).** Georgian writer, public figure, and benefactor, one of the leaders of the national movement in the late 19th century. Tsereteli was born into a prominent noble family in *Imereti* and was related to King Solomon I of Imereti. Educated at Kutaisi Gymnasium, he continued his studies at St. Petersburg University in 1859–1863. Tsereteli began writing poems early on, and upon returning to Georgia, he began publishing his poetry and prose as well as publicist works. He joined forces with Ilia Chavchavadze and campaigned against the older generation of Georgian nobles that refused to accept changes. He sought to revive the Georgian culture and language and published a series of articles in the magazine *Tsiskari*. He co-founded the **Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians** and the Georgian Drama Society and played an important role in the development of Georgian journalism. He established and edited several popular magazines, including *Akakis tviuri krebuli* and *Khumara*. By the 1900s, Tsereteli, together with *Ilia Chavchavadze*, had become one of the most important leaders of the national movement, known simply as Akaki, and was crucial in reviving the Georgian national consciousness.

Tsereteli’s reputation as one of the finest Georgian writers is based on the numerous poems and novels he authored throughout his life. Among his major lyrics are *Alexandra* (1860), *Simghera mkis dros, Glekhis aghsareba* (1863), *Tsitsinatela* (1869), *Mukhambazi, Aghmart-aghmart, Rom isode chemi gulis dardebi* (1876), *Gazapkhuli* (1881), *Khanjals, Qebata qeba* (1882), *Amirani* (1883), *Chaghara* (1886), *Satrfos, Gantiadi* (1892), *Tqveni chirime* (1905), **Momakvdavis fiqrebi** (1911). Many of his poems were turned into songs and *Suliko* (1895) still remains one of the most popular songs in Georgia. Tsereteli’s epic poems include *Bagrat didi* (1875), *Tornike Eristavi* (1883), *Tamar Tsberi* (1885), *Kikolis Naambobi* (1889), *Patara Kakhi* (1890), *Natela* (1897), and *Gamzrdeli* (1898). He proved to be
an equally talented writer of prose, authoring Bashi-Achuki (1895–1896) and the insightful autobiographical Chemi tavgadasavali (1894–1908).

Tsereteli’s public prominence was fully revealed in 1908 when his 50th jubilee and trip to Racha-Lechkhumi became a national celebration that was attended by many Georgian writers and public figures and produced the very first Georgian documentary film.

TSERETELI, ALEXANDER (1889–1967). Distinguished Georgian historian, one of the founders of ancient world history studies in Georgia. Born in Imereti, Tsereteli studied in Kutaisi and Kharkov, where he received his first degree in history in 1915. Returning to Georgia, he began teaching ancient world history and Georgian history at Kutaisi Nobility Gymnasium, where he was actively involved with the Society for the Advancement of Learning among Georgians and became a close associate of Ilia Chavchavadze and Akaki Tsereteli. He published a series of articles on Georgian literature and history and authored the landmark Dzveli istoria in 1918. He supported the establishment of Tbilisi State University (TSU) in May 1918.

Tsereteli was also involved in politics and was a member of the Georgian Socialist Federalist Party. He was elected to the Constituent Assembly for the period 1919–1921. Following the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1921, Tsereteli joined the opposition but opposed forceful measures and violent resistance. He continued working at TSU, where he earned his doctorate in 1927. Over the next eight years, he chaired the Department of Ancient World History at TSU and published several landmark studies, including Skola da sakhaluko ganatleba dzvel saberdznetshi (1923), the two-volume Dzveli aghmosavleti (1925, 1935), two volume Dzveli saberdzneti (1929, 1932), Khetelebi da mati qvekana (1931), and Kreta-mikenis anu egeosis kulta.

With the start of the Stalinist purges, Tsereteli became a prime target for persecution. He was arrested in 1935 and exiled to Central Asia where he remained for the next two decades. Tsereteli was allowed to return to Georgia two years after Joseph Stalin’s death and was given the position of professor of ancient world history at TSU. He continued his fruitful research, publishing Siria da pinikia (1956),
the two-volume *Dzveli romi* (1957–1961), and *Dzveli saberdznetis tskarotmtsodneoba* (1963).

**TSERETELI, GIORGI (1904–1973).** Prominent Georgian historian and scholar. Born into a noble family, he was the son of Vasil Tsereteli, a well-known physician and man of letters, and nephew of Mikhail Tsereteli, an eminent historian. Tsereteli graduated from *Tbilisi State University* (TSU) in 1927 and continued his studies at the Academy of Sciences of the USSR from 1928–1931. He began his career as an associate professor at the Leningrad State Institute of Living Oriental Languages in 1931. Two years later, he moved to Tbilisi State University, where he remained for the next four decades, becoming a professor in 1942. He also worked as a senior research fellow at the State Museum of Georgia in the 1930s and directed the Department of Oriental Languages at the Institute of Linguistics of the Georgian Academy of Sciences (GAS) in 1940–1960. In 1945, he helped establish the Faculty of Oriental Studies at TSU, where he later directed the Department of Semitology. In 1960, he founded the Institute of Oriental Studies at GAS and directed it for the next 13 years. A full member of GAS since 1946, Tsereteli served as its vice president from 1967–1970 and then became a member of the Academy Presidium from 1970–1973.

During his long career, Tsereteli produced more than 100 works that deal with linguistics, Arab, Hebrew, and Aramaic studies, a history of writing systems, a history of Georgia and the Caucasus, and others. Among his major publications are *Arabskie dialekti tsentralnoi Azii* (1956), *Bilingual Inscriptions from Armazi* (1941), and *Ancient Georgian Inscriptions from Palestine* (1960).

**TSERETELI, IRAKLI (1881–1960).** Georgian statesman and Menshevik revolutionary. The son of Giorgi Tsereteli, he studied at Tbilisi Gymnasium and Moscow University where he became involved with Marxist circles and was expelled for leading student demonstrations in 1902. He was arrested and sentenced to five years exile in Yakutsk in Siberia. Spending less than two years in exile, Tsereteli joined the Siberian Union of Social Democrats and was involved in local political movements. Released in late 1903, he returned to Georgia, where he joined the Tbilisi Committee of the RSDRP, edited the journal
Kvali, and was elected to the 1st Congress of the Caucasian Union, where he argued against further centralization of the Social Democratic Party organization. In 1904, he traveled to Europe, where he studied in Germany and attended the Menshevik congress in Switzerland in 1905. Returning to Tbilisi, he was elected to the 2nd Duma where he became chairman of the Social Democratic faction. Tsereteli soon established himself as one of the popular and able revolutionaries and his fiery oratory gained him national prominence.

After dissolution of the Duma on 3 June 1907, Tsereteli was brought to trial with his entire faction and was sentenced to five years exile in Siberia. Officially released in 1913, he was detained in Irkutsk for another four years and was able to return to Petrograd only in March 1917. He quickly plunged into politics, leading the Menshevik faction, and served in the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet in 1917. He adopted a defensist stand and advocated cooperation with the Provisional Government. He accepted the offer to serve in the first coalition government in May and became minister of posts and telegraphs. In June 1917, he was made a full member of the All-Russian Central Executive and, the following month, he served as minister of interior in Alexander Kerensky’s government. In October 1917, he traveled to Georgia to see his family and, returning to Petrograd as a delegate to the Constituent Assembly, he led the anti-Bolshevik bloc and was forced to flee Russia because of Bolshevik orders to arrest him.

In Georgia, Tsereteli played an important part in the establishment of the Menshevik republic and its subsequent political life. From 1918-1920, he served on various diplomatic missions to the Western powers and was instrumental in gaining international recognition of Georgian independence. In 1919, he led the Georgian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference and later took part in the Second International. After the fall of Georgia in 1921, he lived in exile in Paris and the United States where he died in 1960. See also MESAME DASI; ZHORDANIA, NOE.

**Tsereteli, Mikhail (1878–1965).** Distinguished Georgian scholar and statesman known as Michael von Zereteli in Western Europe. He was born into a prominent noble family and studied at the University of Heidelberg before graduating with a doctoral degree in
history in 1913. From 1913–1916, he was involved with the Georgian National Democrats and helped establish the Free Georgia group and later the Committee for the Independence of Georgia. He taught history at the University of Berlin and served as the representative of Georgia in Lausanne and as the ambassador to Sweden and Norway in 1917–1918. He returned to Georgia in 1919 and continued his academic work as a professor of Tbilisi State University until 1921. After the Soviet occupation of Georgia in 1921, he fled to Western Europe, where he taught at the University of Brussels from 1922–1933 and the University of Berlin from 1933–1945. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, he was actively involved in the Georgian émigré community and presided over the Georgian National Committee that endeavored to overthrow the Soviet regime in Georgia. Over the years he produced numerous studies on Sumerology, history and culture of Georgia, and other subjects. His publications include Nation and Mankind: Sociological Investigation, Sumerian and Georgian: A Study in Comparative Philology, and Georgien und der Weltkrieg. He died in Munich in March 1965 and was buried in the Georgian cemetery in Leville in France.

TSERETELI, ZURAB (1934– ). Prominent Georgian painter, architect, and sculptor. After graduating from the Academy of Arts in Tbilisi, Tsereteli went on to earn worldwide fame for his works. Among his best known statues are Good Defeats Evil on the grounds of the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, Peter the Great in Moscow, Christopher Columbus in Puerto Rico, and Tear of Grief, the latter given to the United States and placed on the Bayonne, New Jersey, waterfront as a memorial to the victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks. Tsereteli supervised the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior and the Manege Square in Moscow and the World War II memorial on the Poklonnaya Gora. He also produced many exquisite enamel pieces and paintings. He was a professor and president of the Russian Academy of Arts, vice president of the Russian Academy of Creative Endeavors, and president of the International Center of Design and the International Academy of Information Science. In 1996, he became the Good Will Ambassador for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Tsereteli’s works often drew public protests and criti-
cism for their monumental size, such as the 94-m bronze statue of Peter the Great and the 100-m statue of Columbus.

**TSISPERKANTSELEBI.** A group of Georgian Symbolist writers known as *Tsisperkantselebi* or the Blue Horns. The group was important in reviving and developing Georgian poetry and prose. It was created under the guidance of the poet Grigol Robakidze on his return from Germany in 1915. The group eventually included such prominent poets as Paolo Iashvili, Titsian Tabidze, Galaktion Tabidze, Nikolo Mitsishvili, Kolau Nadiradze, and Valerian Gaprindashvili. The *Tsisperkantselebi* published the weekly paper *Bakhtrioni* and sought to connect the traditional Georgian culture with modern trends, greatly influencing contemporary and later poets. They thrived during the liberal years of the democratic republic in 1918–1921 but came under pressure following the Bolshevik occupation of Georgia. Some members of the group initially welcomed the Bolsheviks but later opposed them; Robakidze fought against the new authorities, participated in the 1924 Uprising, and later immigrated to Europe. The remaining members of the *Tsisperkantselebi* group were persecuted for their “decadent” poetry during the Stalinist purges in the 1930s. Paolo Iashvili committed suicide inside the Georgian Writers’ Union building in July 1937, while Titsian Tabidze and Nikolo Mitsishvili were imprisoned and died in exile. Kolau Nadiradze escaped certain death when his interrogators were themselves arrested during the purges but for the remainder of his life he distanced himself from the social scene. See also LITERATURE.

**TSKHAKAYA, MIKHAIL (1865–1950).** Georgian government official and Bolshevik revolutionary. Born in Khuntsi, he studied at a local school and became involved in revolutionary activities at an early age. He organized a Marxist circle among workers, helped establish a Georgian social democratic group *Mesame dasi,* and distributed revolutionary propaganda in western Georgia in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi, and Baku from 1880–1896. He was arrested and expelled from Georgia for five years in 1897, working in Kharkov and Yekaterinoslav (Dnepropetrovsk). Arrested again in 1900, he was returned to his native village and placed under police surveillance until 1902. Tskhakaya escaped and went underground and served in the Caucasian
Joint RSDRP Committee, helping to prepare the 2nd and 3rd RSDRP Congresses. In 1905, he helped organize the Baku Soviet. Arrested for the third time in 1906, he was imprisoned in Metekhi Prison but was released the following year. In 1907, he was elected a delegate to the 5th Party Congress in London and remained in Europe to escape the Tsarist authorities, living in Switzerland between 1907 and 1917.

Following the February Revolution in 1917, he returned to Russia together with Vladimir Lenin in April 1917 and was dispatched to strengthen the Bolshevik movement in Transcaucasia. In May 1917, he joined the Caucasian Region Soviet, and in October, he became a member of the Caucasus Region Committee of the RSDRP (B). From 1918–1920, he was a member of the Tbilisi Party Committee and agitated against the Menshevik government of Georgia, for which he was arrested and jailed in Kutaisi Prison in 1919. Released in May 1920, he resumed his activity against the Georgian Menshevik government and was elected to the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party.

After the Bolshevik Invasion of 1921 and the subsequent takeover of Georgia, he served as plenipotentiary of the Georgian SSR to the Russian Federation in 1921–1922 and became chairman of the Presidium of Central Executive Committee of the Georgian SSR in 1923, virtually governing the entire republic. Tsakhakaya later served as one of the secretaries of the Central Executive Committee of the Transcaucasian SFSR until 1930. He was a delegate at the 11th, 13th, 15th, and 16th Party Congresses and joined the Executive Committee of the Comintern. In 1931, he became a member of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR and of the International Control Commission. In later years, he took part in all Comintern Congresses (except the first) and in the USSR Supreme Soviets of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd convocations.

**TSITSIANOV, ALEXANDER (1850–1885).** Georgian revolutionary-narodnik. Born to a prominent family, he studied at Tbilisi Gymnasium and traveled to Switzerland where he was exposed to radical ideas. Returning to Russia, he enrolled in the University of Moscow and was active in student movements. A member of the All-Russian Social Revolutionary Organization, he was captured in 1875 and tried in the famous Trial of the Fifty, receiving 10 years of exile. Re-
leased in 1883, he became seriously ill and died in Kirensk in 1885. See also JABADARI, IVANE.

**TSITSIANOV, PAUL (PAVEL) (1754–1806).** Georgian commander of the Russian forces in Transcaucasia, who had a significant part in the establishment of the Russian administration in south Caucasus. He was born into a prominent Georgian noble family of Tsitsishvili and was related to the royal family. Living in Russia, he was enlisted in the Life Guard Preobrazhensk Regiment in 1761 and rose to colonel by 1785. He commanded a grenadier regiment during the Russo–Turkish War of 1787–1791 and earned his promotion to major general in 1793. He served in Poland in 1794 and participated in the Persian Campaign, serving as the commandant of Baku in 1796–1797.

Promoted to lieutenant general in 1801, he became the commander-in-chief of the Russian troops in Georgia and launched a series of administrative and social reforms. He forced the Caucasian mountaineers to pledge allegiance to the Russian emperor and suppressed anti-Russian fractions within the Georgian nobility. In 1804, he forced Prince Gregory Dadiani of Mingrelia to accept Russian sovereignty. To secure the Georgian frontiers, he captured the strategic fortress of Ganja in 1804 for which he was promoted to general of infantry. Returning to Georgia, he forced King Solomon of Imereti to pledge an oath to Emperor Alexander. In the summer of 1804, he advanced against the Persian forces in Armenia and defeated them at Gumri, Echmiadzin, on the Zang River, and at Yerevan. His aggressive actions forced the khans of Sheka, Shagakha, and Shurag to pledge allegiance to the Russian emperor in early 1805. Thus, within two years, Tsitsianov pacified most of Georgia and conquered neighboring principalities, greatly extending the Russian sphere of influence.

In July 1805, Tsitsianov repulsed the Persian invasion on the Araks River and launched a counteroffensive in the fall of 1805. He occupied Shirvan, compelling the local khan to accept Russian rule in January 1806. In February 1806, Tsitsianov reached Baku, intending to impose Russian authority on the local khan. On 20 February 1806, the Khan of Baku agreed to personally meet Tsitsianov and sign the pledge. However, Tsitsianov recklessly went to the meeting accompanied only
by his adjutant and was treacherously hacked to death by the khan’s guards. His body was thrown into a ditch near the city walls. However, after the Russians captured Baku a few months later, Tsitsianov’s remains were buried in the local Armenian Church. Five years later, his body was transferred to the Zion Cathedral in Tbilisi (Georgia).

**TSURTA VELI, JAKOB (FIFTH CENTURY).** Georgian writer and author of the hagiography, *Martyrdom of Shushanik* (also known as the *Passion of St. Shushanik*), the oldest surviving piece of Georgian literature. Tsurtaveli witnessed and later described the story of Shushanik, the daughter of a prominent Armenian Prince Vardan Mamikonian and wife of the Persian official Varsken, who had her tortured for refusing to renounce Christianity and convert to Mazdaizm. Shushanik’s martyrdom indirectly contributed to King Vakhtang Gorgasali’s revolt in 484 and Varsken was put to death for his actions. Tsurtaveli’s work is of great interest for its information on society, politics, and gender relations in the fifth century Kartli. Although this work marks the beginning of the history of Georgian literature, the skill with which it is written and the author’s references to previous works suggest the existence of earlier volumes of literature that are now irreparably lost.

**TURKEY.** See OTTOMAN EMPIRE.

**TURKMANCHAI, TREATY OF (1828).** Peace treaty of 21 February 1828 ending the Second Russo–Iranian War of 1826–1828. Under Article 4 of the treaty, Iran ceded sovereignty over the khanates of Yerevan, Nakhichevan, Talysh, Ordubad, and Mughan in addition to regions that Russia had annexed under the Treaty of **Gulistan**. The Aras River was declared the new border between Iran and Russia. In Articles 6–8, Iran agreed to pay reparations of 20 million rubles in silver and transferred to Russia the exclusive right to maintain a Caspian Sea fleet. In addition, the capitulatory rights guaranteed Russia preferential treatment for its exports, which generally were not competitive in European markets. In Article 10, the shah recognized Russia’s right to send consulate envoys to anywhere in Iran. The Treaty of Turkmanchai was the definitive acknowledgment of the Persian loss of the Caucasus region to Russia and of the permanent division of Azerbaijan.
TUSHETI. Historical-geographic region in northeastern Georgia; also known as Tushetia. The region borders Chechnya and Dagestan in the north and east, respectively, and Khakheti and Pshav-Khevsureti in the south and west. The region traditionally included four communities of Tsova, Gometsari, Chaghma, and the Pirikiti Tusheti; in addition, the Bats people also maintained their communities in Tsova.

Tushetia historically was under the sway of the kings of Iberia and Georgia; however, the Tush societies were usually excluded from the administrative-territorial divisions of feudal Georgia and were considered as borderland regions. After the collapse of the united Georgian kingdom, Tushetia was part of the eastern Georgian principalities of Kartli and Kakheti, and the Tushs participated in the many conflicts against Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and the North Caucasian mountaineers. In early 19th century, the region, together with the rest of Georgia, was annexed by the Russian Empire.

Over the past millennia, the Tushs have been involved in sheep raising and produce high quality wool and cheese, especially the famed guda cheese. Although predominantly Orthodox Christians, they also retain many pre-Christian archaic traditions in their life and religion. The region itself is one of the most ecologically preserved areas and is rapidly becoming a favorite place for ecotourists.

UNION OF GEORGIAN TRADITIONALISTS (SAKARTVELOS TRADITSIONALISTA KAVSHIRI, UGT). This political group was founded by Georgian émigrés, including Shalva Amirejibi, Zurab Avalishvili, Irakli Bagrationi, Spiridon Kedia, and Grigol Robakidze in 1942 but was later suppressed by the Soviet authorities. Following the events of 1989 when each of the Soviet republics had acquired its own Parliament and its own president, the group was restored by Akaki Asatiani, Gubaz Sanikidze, Levan Akhmeteli, Gaioz Kordzadze, and others in 1990. Campaigning under the slogan “Georgia Above All,” the UGT participated in the 1990 elections within the bloc Round Table-Free Georgia and gained 22 seats in the Supreme Council. Its leader, Akaki Asatiani, was elected deputy
chairman of the Supreme Council of Georgia in November 1990 and chairman in April 1991. The UGT later opposed the policies of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and joined the opposition, although it distanced itself from the forces that ousted Gamsakhurdia in January 1992. In the 1995 elections, the UGT won four seats running on a program of law and order, free market economy, and human rights protection. In 2003, the party joined the Burdjanadze-Democrats bloc and took part in the Rose Revolution. In December 2003, it joined the National Democratic Party for the 2004 parliamentary elections, but both parties were to be penalized by the Central Electoral Commission for failing to submit proper documentation. UGT has periodically published its newspaper Kartveli Eri since 1990.

**UPLISTSIKHE.** Ancient cave city in Kartli. Uplitsikhe is one of the oldest places of settlement in the Caucasus and was found in the late Bronze Age. A large complex emerged by the sixth century BCE and developed into a major center of paganism in ancient Georgia. In the Middle Ages, Uplitsikhe was an important trade center and boasted a population of about 20,000 people; the number of cave dwellings is estimated at over 700. Built at a strategic location, the city also played an important role during the enemy invasions. Besides dwelling caves, the city also had an ancient theater built in the southwest part overlooking the river, the 10th century Uplistsulis (Prince’s) Church, and Tamaris Darbazi, a large hall with two towering columns carved into the rock.

**URARTU.** Ancient state in the mountainous region southeast of the Black Sea and southwest of the Caspian Sea; major Urartian settlements were located between the four lakes of Çildır and Van in Turkey, Urmia in Iran, and Sevan in Armenia. Emerging in the early 13th century BC, Urartu established itself as one of the foremost powers by the ninth century. It was engaged in a bitter struggle with neighboring Assyria and proto-Georgian tribal alliances. King Sarduri I (c. 840–830 BC), Menua (c. 810–781), Argishti I (c. 780–756), and Sarduri II (c. 755–735) campaigned against the proto-Georgian states of Diauchi and Colchis. Under Argishti I, Diauchi (“the Land of the Sons of Diau”; Assyrian Daiaeni) was finally defeated and the Urartian sphere of influence extended to the north. Further advance
to the northwest was checked by a new adversary, the kingdom of Colchis (Qulha), which successfully resisted the Urartian invasions. Despite initial success against Assyria, Urartian armies were defeated during the period 744–715, resulting in the renewal of Assyrian expansion, and the country found itself in decline. Shortly after 714, Cimmerians, a nomadic people from the North Caucasus, invaded Colchis and Urartu. In a series of setbacks, Urartu was defeated, which facilitated the rise of the Armenians toward the end of the seventh century BC.

Urartu had a profound influence on the proto-Georgians. The proximity of such a powerful state certainly impacted the cultural, political, and economic development of early Georgian states. The Urartian and Georgian populations certainly intermixed and scholars continue to study the relations between the Georgian and Urartian languages; although from different language families, they both share a common link and some Urartian words are still preserved in Georgian.

**UZNADZE, DIMITRI (1886–1950).** Eminent Georgian scholar and public benefactor, founder of the Georgian scientific school of psychology, and co-founder of Tbilisi State University and the Georgian Academy of Sciences (GAS). Uznadze graduated from Kutaisi Gymnasium and studied philosophy at the Universities of Leipzig and of Wittenberg, where he received his doctorate; he later also earned a doctorate in psychology in 1935. Returning to Georgia, he taught history in Kutaisi and participated in the national liberation movement. After Georgian independence in 1918, he helped establish Tbilisi State University, where he served as professor and head of the Department of Psychology from 1918 through 1950. In 1941, Uznadze co-founded the Georgian Academy of Sciences, where he became the first director of the Institute of Psychology. A man of many interests, Uznadze left a diverse legacy, and his studies cover history, philosophy, pedagogy, and psychology.

**VACHNADZE, NATO (1904–1953).** Georgian actress. Vachnadze was one of the leading Georgian actresses before her tragic death in
a plane crash in June 1953. Among her various awards were the titles
of People’s Artist of the Georgian SSR (1941) and Honorary Artist of
the RSFSR, three Orders of the Red Banner of Labor, and the Stalin
Prize (1941). Her major movies include Arsen the Brigand (1923),
Pillar of Shame (1924), Three Lives (1925), Horsemen from the Wild
West (1925), the Living Corpse (1928), the Gadfly (1928), the Last
Masquerade (1934), the Golden Valley (1937), Kadjana (1941), and
others.

VAKHTANG GORGASALI (452–502?). King of Georgia and one of
the most colorful characters in Georgian history. The son of King
Mirian/Mihrdat V, Vakhtang married an Iranian royal princess, Bal-
endukht, and was nicknamed Gorgasali (“wolf headed,” from the
Persian Gorg-a-sar) because of the shape of the helmet he wore. He
initially backed the Persians and used the support of Yazdgar II
against the Byzantine Empire during his campaigns in western Geor-
gia from 455–472 and against the warlike tribes of Alans (Oss, Os-
etes). Georgian chronicles also allege that Vakhtang participated in
the Persian campaigns in India in the 470s, but this seems less plau-
sible. He later grew irritated with Persian interference in his affairs
and reversed his political orientation. In 482, Vakhtang, in alliance
with the Armenians, led an uprising against Sasanid Persia, but inter-
nal dissension and failure to secure help from Byzantine Emperor
Justinian doomed the rebellion; Georgia was ravaged by the Persian
punitive expeditions in 483 and 484.

Over the next several years, Vakhtang formed an alliance with
Byzantium and married Princess Helena, a relative (supposedly
daughter) of Emperor Zeno (474–491). He adopted Zeno’s famous
Henoticon of 482 and secured the autocephalous status for the Georgian
Orthodox Church. In 502, Vakhtang led another uprising that
proved to be more successful. The Georgians defeated Shah Kavad’s
army on the Samgori Veli in Kartli, but King Vakhtang himself died
when one of his renegade servants betrayed him and mortally
wounded him through a defect in his armor; some scholars argue that
Vakhtang survived the battle but was forced to flee Iberia and lived
in exile in Lazica until 522. Vakhtang supervised the construction of
such centers as Ujarma, Cheremi, Khornabuji, Artanuji, etc. One of
his lasting accomplishments was transferring the capital from Mt-
skheta to the nearby small fortress of Tbilisi, which had been set up as a new capital.

VAKHTANG II. King of Georgia in 1289–1292. The son of King David VI Narin, he succeeded his cousin King Demetre II after the latter’s execution by the Mongols in 1289. He remained loyal to the Mongols and supported their campaigns in the Near East. Although titled king of Georgia, Vakhtang effectively controlled only the eastern regions while western Georgia was ruled by his father and his brother Constantine (1293–1327). He died in 1292 and was succeeded by his cousin David VIII.

VAKHTANG III. King of Georgia in 1298 and from 1302–1308. Facing the resistance of King David VIII, the Il-Khan Mongols confirmed his brother Vakhtang as king of Georgia in 1298, but the latter’s authority was limited to Tbilisi and the southern provinces of Georgia. The brothers clashed over power but later agreed to rule the kingdom jointly. While David remained in Georgia, Vakhtang commanded the Georgian corps in Mongol campaigns from 1299–1308; he distinguished himself at Damascus and Gilan.

VAKHTANG IV. King of Georgia from 1442–1446. The son of King Alexander I, he ascended the throne after his father retired to a monastery. Two years into his reign, the Qara Qoyunlu Turkoman tribes raided Georgia, but Vakhtang was able to halt them near Akhaltsikhe.

VAKHTANG V (?–1675). King of Kartli from 1658–1675, also known as Shah Nawaz. The son of Teimuraz Mukhranbatoni, he was the first of the Mukhranbatoni branch to ascend the Bagrationi throne. Vakhtang initially ruled Samukhranbatono from 1629–1654 and was sympathetic to the Persians, supporting King Rostom. In 1654, he traveled to the Persian court, where he converted to Islam and adopted the new name of Shah Nawaz. Four years later, Shah Abbas II confirmed him as wali (viceroy) of Kartli. Vakhtang used Persian support to strengthen the central authority in Kartli and to create conditions for cultural and economic development of the country. The Persian attempt to settle Turkoman tribes in Kakheti led to widespread
Bakhtrioni Uprising in 1660, and Vakhtang used this opportunity to extend his authority to this province. In 1661, he interfered in western Georgia and, taking advantage of civil strife there, he placed his son Archil on the throne of Imereti. He then campaigned against Odishi (Mingrelia) and made his son-in-law, Levan, ruler of this duchy.

By the 1670s, Vakhtang had, in effect, united the Georgian principalities into a single kingdom. However, his success proved to be fleeting. Concerned by the Persian-backed expansion of Vakhtang, the Ottomans actively interfered in western Georgia and forced Vakhtang to remove his son Archil from Imereti. Nevertheless, Vakhtang remained in firm control of eastern Georgia, where his peaceful reign brought much needed stability, prosperity, and development. Although a Muslim, Vakhtang provided large subsidies and donations to the Christian monasteries and churches, helping build and renovate many of them. Yet, the rise of a powerful Kartli-Kakheti became worrisome to Persia itself. Shah Suleyman soon clashed with Vakhtang and supported another Bagrationi prince, Erekle, grandson of Teimuraz I, in his claims to the Bagrationi crown. In the ensuing struggle between Erekle and Vakhtang’s son Archil, the former was forced to flee to Imereti and then to Akhaltsikhe, where he contacted the Ottomans. The Persians took advantage of this event to accuse Vakhtang of contacts with the Ottomans and recalled him to Esfahan. In 1675, Vakhtang became ill and died on his trip to Persia. His body was transported to Persia where he was buried in Qum.

VAKHTANG VI (? –1737). Regent (janishin) of Kartli from 1703–1714 and king from 1716–1724. His reign was noted for reviving the cultural and economic life of eastern Georgia. The nephew of King Giorgi XI, Vakhtang was appointed regent (janishin) of Kartli while King Giorgi campaigned in eastern Persia and Afghanistan. Vakhtang attempted to strengthen the royal authority, abolish the slave trade, and introduce reforms. He created a standing army (mtsvelta jari) in order to deal with defiant lords. In 1705, he convened a church council, which reorganized the Georgian Orthodox church and selected the new catholicos patriarch Domentius. Vakhtang also initiated lasting legal reforms and supervised the codification of Georgian law and studied Greek, Armenian, and Jewish precedents to reform the legal system. He also adopted a new set of laws, Dasturlamali, which thoroughly reorgan-
ized the government. Vakhtang began systematic resettlement of the population to the devastated and depopulated regions in Trialeti, Baidar, Tashir, etc. Major towns were renovated and palaces were built in Tbilisi and Gori. Roads were repaired, and a sophisticated irrigation system was constructed in Kartli.

In 1709, Vakhtang established the first printing press in Georgia and began publication of religious texts; three years later, the press produced the first printed version of Shota Rustaveli’s *Vepkhistaosani*, the Georgian national epic poem, which was edited by the king himself. Advised by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, Vakhtang established several commissions to translate foreign treatises and laid the foundation for Rustvelology, the study of Rustaveli’s epic. He supervised the scholarly commission, led by Monk Egnatashvili, that gathered surviving historical texts throughout eastern Georgia and produced an edited and updated version of *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, the main source of Georgian history between the 5th and 18th centuries.

Vakhtang’s regency was interrupted by the tragic events of 1711 when King Giorgi IX and his successor King Kaikhosro both died fighting the Afghans. Vakhtang was recalled to receive his investiture in Persia, where the shah demanded his conversion to Islam. Vakhtang initially refused and was imprisoned for four years. In the meantime, his closest adviser, Orbeliani, traveled to Europe and appealed to King Louis XIV and Pope Clement XI for help. With no European help anticipated, Vakhtang agreed to conversion and was confirmed as king of Kartli in 1716 but was kept in Persia for another three years. Returning to Georgia, he found the situation dramatically changed. His renegade brother, Iese, had reversed some of his reforms and tyrannized the population. Embittered by his experience in Persia, Vakhtang sought new allies and negotiated a military alliance with Tsar Peter the Great in 1720. A joint Russo–Georgian campaign was planned against Persia in 1722, and the Russian troops marched into Daghestan before they were recalled. Vakhtang, meantime, rallied 40,000 Georgians and Armenians at Ganja and waited for Peter for a joint offensive into Persia.

After three months of waiting, during which he rejected Persian appeals for help against the Afghans, Vakhtang made the momentous mistake of disbanding his army. The shah dismissed him from the throne, which he gave to King Constantine of Kakheti. In 1723, the
Persian and Daghestanian army led by Constantine invaded Kartli, devastating the countryside. With the fall of the Safavids in Persia and turmoil in Kartli, the Ottomans quickly intervened and advanced to Tbilisi, which they seized in 1724. Facing superior enemies, Vakhtang made another crucial decision to immigrate to Russia with his entire entourage of 1,200 men in July 1724. He was well received in Russia and received an estate in Voskresenskoye, where his followers established a Georgian colony near Moscow. In 1726–1727, he traveled to Persia to negotiate but failed to reach an agreement. In the 1730s, Vakhtang moved to Astrakhan, where he died on 26 March 1737 and was buried in a local church.

VANI. Site of an ancient city, about 40 km southwest of Kutaisi. Vani was one of the major centers in southern Caucasia and flourished between the sixth and the first centuries BCE. Archeological excavations have produced Colchian jewelry, Colchian and Greek pottery, religious altars, ruins of temples, and baths.

VARDZIA. Large cave city in southern Georgia, Vardzia is a cultural symbol for Georgians. It was built in the 12th century by King Giorgi III, who envisioned it as a fortification site. Later, his daughter Queen Tamar established a monastery here, which eventually grew into a major cave city with a population of some 50,000 people. Tradition says that Vardzia’s name was created after Tamar strayed from her companions during a hunting trip and, when called, she answered from the caves, “Ak var dzia” (I am here, uncle). The impressive complex is built in several levels (in some places up to 13 levels) inside a mountain face and consists of dwellings, markets, administrative units, and several churches, the most important of which is the Church of the Assumption with the frescoes of the royal family. Vardzia was known as a bastion of Georgian culture and religion and flourished until the late 13th century, when it sustained major damage in an earthquake. After the collapse of the Georgian kingdom, the city declined and was looted on several occasions. Currently, renovation works are underway, and Vardzia houses an active monastery.

VARSHALOMIDZE, LEVAN (1972–). Leader of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara. He studied international law at the Institute of
International Affairs of the University of Kiev where he continued his post-graduate work and defended a doctorate in civil law and international private law in 1999. Returning to Georgia, he directed the Division of Bilateral Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia in 1999–2000 and served as the head of the Executive Department at the Ministry of Justice in 2000–2002. A close ally of Mikhail Saakashvili, Varshalomidze’s fortunes soared following the Rose Revolution in 2003, when he was appointed general director of the Georgian Railways in January 2004. Following the Adjarian leader Aslan Abashidze’s departure, President Saakashvili imposed direct presidential rule in Adjara and established a 20-member Interim Council, chaired by Varshalomidze. On 20 July 2004, the Adjarian Supreme Council approved Levan Varshalomidze as the chairman of the Autonomous Republic’s government.

VAZHA PSHAVELA (VAZHA OF PSHAVI) (1861–1915). One of the finest Georgian poets. He was born Luka Razikashvili in the mountainous village of Chargali in Pshavi. Luka’s brothers also proved to be artists. Niko (1866–1927) became a poet in his own right, known as Bachana, and Tedo (1869–1922) became an ethnologist and collector of folk poetry. Young Luka studied in seminaries in Telavi, Gori, and Tbilisi before traveling to St. Petersburg, where he briefly studied law. Returning to Georgia, he taught Georgian language in primary and high schools. Publishing under his pen-name Vazha Pshavela (A lad from Pshavi), his mountain-themed works quickly became classics of Georgian literature, among them the poems Aluda Ketelauri, Bakhtrioni, Stumar-Paspindzeli, Gogotur and Apshina, Gvelischamia, Eteri, Mindia, etc. These poems deal with the conflict between love and duty, individual morality, and society’s imperative, and combine the native folklore of the Georgian mountainous regions with European literary traditions. His portrayals of mountain landscape and beauty remain unsurpassed in Georgian literature.

VEKUA, ILIA (1907–1977). Distinguished Georgian physicist and mathematician. He studied at the Department of Physics and Mathematics of Tbilisi State University in 1925–1930 and continued his research at the USSR Academy of Sciences in the 1930s, where
he defended his doctorate in 1940. Between 1929 and 1940, he worked at the Georgian Geophysics Observatory, Tbilisi State University, Mathematical Institute and Geophysics Institute of the Georgian Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences. From 1939–1947, he held the theoretical mechanics chair at the Transcaucasian Institute of Communications and the chair of geometry of Tbilisi State University. From 1943–1951, he also directed the Applied Mathematics Department at the Tbilisi Mathematical Institute. In 1944, he became provost of Tbilisi State University and later headed the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the Georgian Academy of Sciences. In 1951, he moved to the Russian federation, where he worked at the N. E. Zhukovski Central Aerodynamical Institute, the Institute of Precise Mechanics and Computer Hardware, and V. A. Steklov Mathematical Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences. From 1951–1954, Vekua held the chair of theoretical mechanics at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Engineering. In 1959, he became rector of the University of Novosibirsk and directed the Hydrodynamics Institute of the Siberian Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In 1964, he was elected to the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and became vice president of the Georgian Academy of Sciences. He served as rector of Tbilisi State University for two terms in 1953 and 1966–1972. From 1968–1977, he was director of the Applied Mathematics Institute at Tbilisi State University and presided over the Georgian Academy of Sciences in the 1970s. He authored over 100 scientific studies that garnered him, among other awards, the Stalin Prize, the Hero of Socialist Labor, and the Order of Lenin.

VEPKHISTKAOSANI. Georgian poem by Shota Rustaveli, a landmark work in world literature; it is known in English as The Knight in the Tiger's Skin or the Lord of the Panther-Skin. Rustaveli's Vepkhistkaosani is the most enduring monument to Georgian medieval literature and history. It was written during the reign of Queen Tamar between 1178 and 1213 and consists of some 1,576 to 1,669 quatrains, depending on the version. Quatrains are written in a unique style with 16 syllables in each verse, whose rhymes and rhythms remain unsurpassed to this day. While there are few surviving examples
from earlier centuries, the oldest surviving manuscript dates to 1646. The first printed version of the poem was produced in 1712 by King Vakhtang VI’s printing press in Tbilisi.

The epic has as its theme courtly love, knightly comradeship, and heroic quest. It follows two story lines, one about the Indian knight Tariel and his beloved Nestan-Daredjan and the other of the Arab knight Avtandil and his love Tinatin. The poem follows the knights’ quest in search of Nestan-Daredjan, who has been kidnapped and imprisoned in the Kadjeti fortress, a symbol of tyranny and wickedness. Throughout his poem, Rustaveli preaches the underlying principle that justice and righteousness prevail over lawlessness and evil. Vepkhistaosani combines elements of Christianity, neo-Platonism, and Eastern religions into a unique philosophy that breathes with humanistic ideas. Far ahead of his time, in his poem he calls for individual freedom as well as freedom of thought and emotions and life free of predestination. He demonstrated the influence of the Greek philosophers and cited works of Plato, Proclus, Nemesius, and Dionysius the Areopagite. There are only a few passing references to biblical persons and events, which exposed the poem to the attacks of the Georgian clergy. Many of the poem’s verses have become Georgian proverbs and aphorisms. In medieval Georgia, Vepkhistaosani was often regarded as one of the most treasured possessions, and, until the 19th century, tradition required brides to bring a copy of it in their dowries.

VIKINGS, IN GEORGIA. Although separated by several thousand kilometers, medieval Georgia and Scandinavia, surprisingly, had a common link. Around 1036, a Viking force, known as Varjagi/Narangi, unexpectedly appeared near the village of Bashi on the Rioni River in western Georgia. The old Georgian chronicle Kartlis tsoreba described them as 3,000 men who had traveled from Scandinavia through Russia, rowing down the Dniepr River and across the Black Sea. King Bagrat IV welcomed them to Georgia and accepted some of them into the Georgian army; several hundred Vikings fought on Bagrat’s side at the Battle of Sasireti in 1046. Other Vikings continued westward, thereafter disappearing from history. Swedish researchers recently suggested that the story in the Georgian chronicle was about the Swedish expedition by the Viking chieftain Ingvar den Vitfarne (Ingvar the Far-Traveled), which features in many rune stones in mid-Sweden.
VIRSA LADZE, SIMON (SULIKO) (1909–1990). Theatrical designer, one of the most influential theatrical artists in the Georgian and Russian theater and ballet. Born in Tbilisi, Virsaladze studied at the Academy of Arts in Tbilisi from 1926–1927, the All-Union Technical Arts Institute (VHUTEIN) in Moscow from 1928–1930, and Academy of Arts in Leningrad in 1930–1931. He began his career as a designer at the Theatre of Working Youth in Tbilisi in 1927 and soon became chief designer of the Paliashvili Theatre for Opera and Ballet from 1932 through 1936. As his stage settings received critical acclaim, Virsaladze became a designer at the prestigious Kirov Ballet in Leningrad in 1937 and chief designer in 1940. Over the next two decades, he also designed theatrical productions for Maly Theatre Ballet and Novosibirsk Theatre. In 1964, Virsaladze became the chief designer of the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow and worked with the famous ballet director Yuri Grigorovich. A man of enormous talent, culture, and erudition, he created stage productions and costumes of astounding beauty and a subtle juxtaposition of colors. His works greatly influenced the subsequent development of the Soviet ballet as well as Georgian folk dancing that was transformed by Virsaladze’s costumes. For his work, he received the State Prize of the USSR in 1949, 1950, and 1977, and the Lenin Prize in 1970; he was declared the People’s Designer of the USSR in 1976.

VIRSA LADZE, SPIRIDON (1869–1930). Distinguished therapist and health service official. Virsaladze graduated from Tomsk University and began his career as a physician working under A. Nechayev, V. Bekhterev, and I. Pavlov in St. Petersburg. He defended his doctorate in 1909 at the St. Petersburg Military Medical Academy and continued his studies in Rome, Berlin, and Hamburg. Returning to Georgia, he became assistant chief physician and head of the Therapeutic Department at Mikhail Hospital in 1913. Three years later, he helped establish the Georgian Society of Physicians and Natural Scientists, and in 1918 he co-founded the Medical Faculty of Tbilisi State University. In 1918, he organized campaigns against malaria and other tropical diseases in Georgia. From 1919 through 1930,Vir saladze held the Chairs of Special Pathology and Therapy and of Hospital Therapy at Tbilisi State University and played an important role in establishing these medical fields in Georgia. In 1919, he established and edited the
first Georgian medical journal *Ekimi*; between 1924 and 1930, he founded and directed the Institute of Tropical Diseases, which now bears his name. He is considered the father of the Georgian school of tropical medicine, and he trained an entire generation of specialists, including M. Kandelaki, N. Kipshidze, G. Kvitashvili, T. Mamaladze, and others. In later years, Virsaladze co-edited the first *Large Medical Encyclopedia*.

**VORONTSOV, MIKHAIL (1782–1856)**. Russian military commander and viceroy of the Caucasus from 1845 through 1856. He was born into a prominent Russian family of princes, the son of Semen Vorontsov, Russian Ambassador to London. He was enlisted in the army at the age of four and spent essentially his entire life in the military service. Vorontsov distinguished himself in the campaigns against the Persians in 1803–1804, participated in the Napoleonic Wars in northern Europe in 1805–1807, and fought the Turks in the period 1809–1811. He quickly rose through the ranks during the 1812–1814 campaigns against Napoleon Bonaparte and finished the war with the ranks of lieutenant general and viceroy (*namestnik*) of Bessarabia. Promoted to general in 1825, he participated in the Russo–Turkish War in 1828–1829 and remained in the Danubian Principalities until 1845 when he became the viceroy and commander-in-chief of the Russian troops in the Caucasus. Over the next 10 years, he undertook many administrative and social reforms and was instrumental in the economic development of the Georgian provinces. He solved the divisive problem of who qualified for nobility and confirmed the noble status of many claimants and granted the nobles some privileges, which encouraged them to support him and the Russian administration in general.

Vorontsov helped establish the free transit of European goods and lower tariffs for imports that helped revive trade. He helped found glass, textile, and silk plants and played an important role in the transformation of Tbilisi into a Western-style town. On his orders, new buildings and wide avenues and squares were constructed in the old part of Tbilisi, and the first Georgian and Russian theaters and public library were opened between 1846 and 1850. He also established and funded a number of schools and hospitals, greatly improved communications, and allowed new generations of Georgian
nobles to study in Russian and European universities. At the same time, Vorontsov also launched massive offensives against the Chechens, led by Imam Shamil, but failed to subdue them. Vorontsov was conferred the title of his highness prince (svetleishii kniaz) in 1852 and received the rank of general field marshal in 1856.

VORONTSOV-DASHKOV, ILLARION (1837–1916). Russian statesman and the last viceroy of the Caucasus. Vorontsov-Dashkov began his career in the army, where he quickly advanced through the ranks becoming adjutant general in 1875 and general of cavalry in 1890. A close friend of Emperor Alexander II, he was traumatized by the latter’s assassination and organized the Sacred Druzhina (svyazhennaya druzhina), which sought to curb the spread of revolution in Russia. He served as minister of foreign affairs from 1881 through 1897 and was appointed to the State Council in 1897. Following the 1905 Revolution, he was appointed viceroy of the Caucasus, where he remained for the next 10 years, attempting to contain revolutionary activities. In 1914–1915, he was commander-in-chief of the Caucasian Front but did not command the troops, who were entrusted to General N. Yudenich.

WALI. Position of governor (viceroy) of Persian tributary states. In the 16th through the 18th centuries, the Safavid shahs of Persia often forced the Bagration kings of Kartli or Kakheti to recognize their supremacy and confirmed them as wali. There were four walis in Persia, those of Gurjistan (eastern Georgia), Arabistan, Luristan, and Kurdistan. In eastern Georgia, the wali were always members of the Bagrationi dynasty, and Georgian sources usually referred to them as kings (mepe).

WARDROP, OLIVER (1864–1948), AND MARJORY SCOTT WARDROP (1869–1909). Sir Oliver was a British scholar and Chief British Commissioner of Transcaucasia from 1919 through 1921. He was educated at Repton and Balliol College, Oxford and had a long and distinguished career in the consular service, serving in St. Petersburg, Kertch, Sevastopol, Poland, Rumania, Tunis, Haiti, Bergen,

He and his sister, Marjory Scott Wardrop (1869–1909), translated and published a series of books on Georgia and its literary works. After World War I, interests in oil reserves in the Caspian Sea led to Great Britain’s involvement in Georgian affairs. A British protectorate was proclaimed in Adjara, and British troops were stationed in the region in 1918. In July 1919, Oliver Wardrop was installed in Tbilisi as British Chief Commissioner of Transcaucasia and remained in this position until the Bolshevik invasion two years later. Returning to England, he was for many years a governor of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Oliver and Marjory Wardrop played important roles in the development of Georgian studies in Europe. Marjory Wardrop’s translation of Shota Rustaveli’s *Vepkhistkaosani* has long been considered the standard English version of this quintessentially Georgian work of chivalry and romance. Following his sister’s death, Sir Oliver helped establish a fund for the encouragement of Georgian studies at Oxford and later presented his entire collection of Georgian works to the Bodleian Library. The Wardrop Collection now consists of 1,454 items, including rare manuscripts, 215 periodicals, and 73 series.

**WINE.** Wine holds a central place in every Georgian’s life and in Georgian culture in general. It is widely believed that winemaking began in the Neolithic Period (8500–4000 BC). Although there is no definitive proof that Georgia is the location of the first viniculture, the concentration of archaeological evidence and written references have led many scholars to favor the idea that winemaking began in southern Caucasus and then spread to Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and throughout the world. The modern English word *wine* itself is etymologically traced to Latin *vinum* and Greek *oinos*, which, some scholars argue, were derived from the Georgian *gh-vino*. Recent archeological excavations produced evidence of viniculture in Georgia dating back as far as 5,000 BCE.

The importance of wine in Georgian culture is evident in the Christian tradition of St. Nino baptizing Georgia with a cross made from a
vine. Thus, the Christian cross of vine and its final product, wine, became inextricably linked in the Georgian psyche and culture. The elements of vine can be seen incorporated in the architecture of many Christian churches and cathedrals throughout Georgia. Over hundreds of years, an intricate culture developed surrounding wine production and consumption. Georgian families usually owned (and some still do) a consecrated place, or marani, beside their main house, where large clay vessels (kvevri) were buried and the wine was matured, thanks to the cooling properties of underground streams. When the kvevri were filled with the fermented grape juice, they were then topped with a wooden lid and covered and sealed with earth. Winemaking is also closely connected with the Georgian tradition of feasts led by tamadas or men respected for their eloquence, expressive toasts, and ability to drink deeply. Aided by their assistants (merikipes), the tamadas propose numerous toasts that lead their guests on a journey through the history and tradition of Georgia.

During the Soviet period, the Georgian wineries dominated the Soviet market, and their products were exported for sale to other countries. However, following the declaration of independence in 1991 and the subsequent years of conflicts, the wine industry collapsed and production hit rock bottom. The Georgian wine industry was weighed down by outdated machinery and highly competitive export wine markets. Politics also played an important role for the industry since its largest export market remains Russia, which has frequently adopted unfriendly policies toward Georgia. The greatest problem, however, is the widespread counterfeiting of Georgian wines in the markets of Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and elsewhere in Europe. According to estimates by the Georgian Ministry of Agriculture, international markets contain some 17 million bottles of the two top Georgian red wines—Kakheti’s Kindzmarauli and Racha’s Kvanchkara—even though Georgian wineries can only produce some 2.5 to 3 million bottles of the two wines annually. The Russian wine market alone contains some 120 million to 150 million bottles of wine branded as Georgian, and as little as 15 to 16% of that total is actually produced in Georgia. The reputation of Georgian wines has therefore been significantly undermined. In recent years, American and French companies have made investments in the Georgian wine industry, which shows signs of reviving.
There are about 500 local vine sorts maintained in Georgia today, and some 60 wines are commercially produced. Some of the best Georgian wines are Rkatsiteli, Saperavi, Manavis Mtsvane, Tsolikauri, Tsitska, Khvanchkara, Pino, Khikhva, Krakhuna, Chkhaveri, etc. There are five major zones for viniculture, Kakheti, Kartli, Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi, and the subtropical zone. The largest wine production comes from Kakheti, followed by Kartli and Imereti regions. Since the 1950s, Georgian wineries have been awarded over 270 medals, including some 140 gold.

WOMEN, STATUS OF. Georgian legislation, in particular Article XIV of the Constitution, recognizes and guarantees gender equality and equal access to education and jobs. However, the status of women in Georgian society is full of contradictions. On the one hand, women are traditionally held in high regard and are treated with the utmost courtliness. Many important concepts, including the Earth (dedamitsa), mother language (deda ena), central pillar of house (dedabodzi), the Sun (mze) and capital (dedakalaki), are female in their meaning. Women have played significant roles in Georgian history, to name a few, the Virgin Mother is considered the protector of Georgia, St. Nino introduced Christianity, Queens Tamar, Rusudan, and Ketevan set a precedent of a strong female ruler, while any visitor to Tbilisi is greeted by the very symbol of Georgia—the monument to Kartlis deda or Mother Georgia that watches over the capital with a bowl of wine in one hand and a sword in the other to greet friends and enemies accordingly. It is often said that Georgia developed a culture of chivalry toward women; the family honor was projected onto them, and any offense against them was considered an insult to all kin. Historically, many feuds were mediated by women, whose dropping of a handkerchief (mandili) between the warring parties was a signal to stop a fight.

Despite such reverence toward women, Georgia has not yet embraced feminism, and the status of women is far from satisfactory. Urban society is experiencing transformations, and younger generations challenge the established social norms, but the provinces remain more conservative in their outlook toward women. Prevailing social norms and traditions, as well as ineffective enforcement of laws create conditions for discrimination and prejudice against women. Few, if any,
cases, of gender discrimination ever reach court proceedings, and domestic violence and sexual harassment are mostly unreported due to social stigma; thus, the true extent of such abuse is difficult to verify. Conservative views toward women remain the most important obstacle. Social norms prescribe women the role of a housekeeper, obedient wife, and mother, limiting their freedom and privacy. Premarital sexual relations are castigated, and women are expected to remain virgin prior to the marriage, while no such prerequisite exists for men. Families usually pressure young women to get married by their mid-20s, and male firstborns are often given preference over girls. After marriage, woman usually moves in with her husband's family, changes her last name, and assumes the role of a traditional housewife.

The official census results show 2.3 million women and 2 million men residing in Georgia in late 2004. The life expectancy of women (74.6 years) remains consistently higher than of men (69 years). The decade of political and economic crisis had a profound social effect on Georgian society. In 2003, the birth rate was only 50% compared to 1990, and the number of registered marriages has decreased by 65%. Women’s average age at the time of marriage slightly increased in the past decade, from 23 in 1990 to 25 in 2003. In 2004, the number of abortions increased by 23% from the previous year. The use of contraceptives—disapproved of in the past—has grown by almost 40% in 2004-2005. While women’s involvement in commerce or other trades had been frowned upon in the past, recent economic hardship has forced a change in this outlook, as thousands of women became the sole breadwinners, especially in smaller towns and villages, often working abroad to support their families back home. It is noteworthy that women have started to play a more active role in Georgian politics. Between 1995 and 2004, an average of 18 female deputies were elected to the parliament, with five of them serving as deputy heads of the parliamentary committees and two as the heads. In 2004, the administration of the president employed 79 women, and the staff of the Parliament employed more women (470) than men (302). By July 2005, there were three female members of the cabinet, including two ministers. Nino Burdjanadze, Irina Sarishvili-Chanturia, and Salome Zurabishvili are prominent examples of female involvement in political life. The Georgian judiciary is also relatively open to women, with 132 female judges serving in 2004.
Women have equal access to education, and they constitute 62.5% of students in public secondary schools and 50.3% in institutions of higher education. In 2004, the number of post-graduate female students rose to 65%, and women made up 54% of science researchers. In terms of employment, women represent 57% of the labor force, but their employment rate lingers at 48%. The highest rate of unemployment falls on women aged 15 to 24, a third of whom are without jobs. Almost 40% of female employees have secondary education, and 74% of them work in the private sector; the unemployment rate is relatively high among women with advanced degrees, and 37% of jobless women had higher education. The largest sector of female employment is agriculture, followed by education, trade, health, manufacturing, public administration, and other social services. However, the average wage for women in any field is much lower than for men, which indicates the still-prevailing discrimination against them.

– X –

XENOPHON (427–355 BCE). Greek commander and author of Anabasis, in which he described the Georgian tribes. A student of Socrates, Xenophon served as a mercenary in Persia and participated in the struggle between Cyrus the Younger and Artaxerxes II. Following Cyrus’ defeat at Cunaxa, Xenophon led his 10,000 Greek soldiers on the famous march out of Persia. In 401–400 BCE, they fought their way north through Armenia and southwestern Georgian lands to reach the Black Sea coast, from where they sailed back to Greece. Xenophon described his encounters with the Georgian tribes of Chalybes, Taochi, Phasian, Mossynoei, and others in his famous Anabasis.

– Z –

ZAAL, ERISTAVI (?–1660). Powerful lord who effectively controlled Kakheti in the late 17th century. After becoming the eristavi of Aragvi in 1633, Zaal supported King Teimuraz I of Kartli-Kakheti
against the Persians and later fought pro-Persian Rostom Khan of Kartli. Following Teimuraz’s defeat in 1648, he changed his allegiances, reconciled with Shah Abbas II, and exerted great influence in Kakheti. When the Persian ruler started to settle Turkoman tribes in eastern Georgia, Eristavi Zaal organized and led the powerful Bakhtroni Uprising in Kakheti that expelled Turkoman tribes in 1659–1660. However, Zaal also clashed with ambitious Vakhtang V of Kartli, who had arranged his assassination in May 1660.

ZADEN. One of the major deities in pagan Kartli, believed to be as powerful as Armazi. It was introduced as a deity of fertility by King Parnajom in the second century BCE, and a statue was erected near Mtskheta. The cult disappeared after the spread of Christianity.

ZAKARIADZE, SERGO (1909–1971). Renowned artist of the Georgian cinema. Zakariadze began his career in the Rustaveli and the Marjanishvili theaters in Tbilisi, where he established himself as one of the leading performers of his generation. He was awarded the title of People’s Artist of the USSR in 1958, the Lenin Prize in 1960, and State Prizes in 1946 and 1952. His best roles in cinema were, among others, in Poslednie krestonotsi (1933), Giorgi Saakadze (1943), Otets soldata (1964), Ne gorui! (1964), and Waterloo (1970).

ZAN. Third member of the Kartvelian language group. The Laz and Mingrelian languages represent two dialects of the Zan language. The form Zan/San/Chan can be traced back to the ancient Greek writers (Procopius of Caesaria, Strabo, etc.). The Mingrelian dialect is spoken in Mingrelia (Samegrelo) province in the western part of Georgia, while Laz is spoken along the seacoast of the Black Sea between Batumi and Samsun and the nearby mountainous regions, most of the territory being within the border of Turkey. Both dialects are further divided into subdialects. There are three major Laz dialects—Khopa, Vitse-Arkabe, and Atina—while Mingrelian includes two main dialects, Zugdi-Saurzakan or northwestern, and Senaki or southeastern dialect.

ZHORDANIA, NOE (1870–1953). Georgian politician and leader of the Democratic Republic of Georgia in 1918–1921. Born into an impoverished noble family in Guria, Zhordania graduated from the
Tbilisi Seminary and the Warsaw Veterinary Institute. In the 1890s, he became involved in revolutionary circles and became the leader of the Georgian Marxist groups Mesame dasi. As the leading Marxist theorist in Georgia, he was persecuted and was arrested on several occasions; he went to Europe in 1893 and remained there until 1897. Returning to Georgia, he worked as editor of the Marxist newspaper Kvali in Tbilisi. In 1903, he was elected a member of the Caucasian Union Committee of Social Democrats and attended the 2nd Congress of RSDRP. By 1905, he was the leader of the Georgian Mensheviks and edited the influential newspaper Sotsial-Demokratia. He was a deputy from Tbilisi to the 1st State Duma, where he opposed Bolsheviks and led the Menshevik faction. In 1907, he was elected to the Central Committee of the RSDRP and later collaborated with Leon Trotsky. During World War I, Zhordania took a defensist position and further distanced himself from the Bolsheviks. In 1917, he became chairman of the Tbilisi Soviet and of the Caucasian Region Center of Soviets.

Zhordania was elected to the Transcaucasian Seim in 1918 and played an important role in the events leading to the proclamation of Georgian independence in May 1918. One month later, he was chosen to lead the first Menshevik government of the Georgian republic. He held this post for three years, preparing a land reform and comprehensive social and political legislation and resisting the Bolshevik underground activities. His foreign policy led to Georgia’s recognition by Germany, Italy, Turkey, Britain, Japan, Belgium, France, and Russia. However, his growing rift with the Bolsheviks ultimately led to the invasion of the Bolshevik forces in February 1921. Zhordania immigrated to France, where he lived in exile in Paris and continued political struggle for an independent Georgia until his death in 1953. See also DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

ZHVANIA, ZURAB (1963–2005). Prominent Georgian politician and prime minister of Georgia. Zhvania graduated with a biology degree from Tbilisi State University and co-founded the Ecological Association, which eventually evolved into the Green Party. In the late 1980s, he became involved in the national liberation movement and was elected to Parliament in 1992. The following year, he threw his support behind the new president, Eduard Shevardnadze, and his
Citizen’s Union, of which Zhvania soon became secretary general. In 1995, Zhvania was elected speaker of Parliament and held this post for the next six years.

In 2001, he split with Shevardnadze amid allegations of corruption against the latter. Zhvania founded a new party, the United Democrats, and conducted an effective anti-governmental campaign for the next two years. In 2003, he played a crucial role in the events of the so-called Rose Revolution, when he and Mikhail Saakashvili successfully challenged Shevardnadze’s government. After this bloodless revolution, Zhvania became the new prime minister. A shrewd and experienced politician, he played an important role in the new government and often tempered its more radical members. Unfortunately, Zhvania died on February 3, 2005, along with a friend whose home he was in, of carbon monoxide poisoning, apparently due to an inadequately ventilated gas heater.


After a brief period as the French ambassador to Georgia in 2003, she was granted dual citizenship by President Mikhail Saakashvili and was appointed minister of foreign affairs of Georgia in 2004.
Zourabichvili launched a thorough reform of the Georgian diplomatic corps aimed at establishing a more professional body of diplomats. She was actively involved in the conflict resolution processes in Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as Georgia’s integration with European organizations, including the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). A milestone agreement with Russia over withdrawal of the Russian military bases from Georgia reached in May 2005 is regarded as Zourabichvili’s greatest achievement in her position of Georgian foreign minister. However, despite her success, she was subjected to attacks by members of the Parliament over a number of issues and was dismissed from her position on 19 October. Undaunted, she organized a large rally of supporters in Tbilisi and entered national politics.

Zubalashvili, Brothers. A family of businessmen and benefactors. The Zubalashvili family gained prominence in the seventeenth century and established themselves as successful merchants conducting business throughout Asia and Europe. They helped Kings Vakhtang VI and Erekle II establish printing presses in Tbilisi in the 18th century. After the Russian annexation of Georgia, the Zubalashvilis developed a profitable trade network that covered Russia, the Ottoman Empire, India, and Persia. In the mid-19th century, they also began establishing the first industrial plants in Georgia. Ivane Zubalashvili (1792–1864) built the first sugar refinery and vodka plant in late 1830s, while Constantine Zubalashvili (1828–1901) and his sons Stephan, Peter, and Jacob, used their large fortune for public charity and left a legacy in many buildings in Tbilisi and throughout the country. They constructed hotels, a music school, shelters, a public library (currently Marjanishvili Theater), and the building of the Noble Gymnasium and funded the construction of several churches throughout the country. They also financially supported the national liberation movements of the late 19th century, providing finances to the Society for the Advancements of Learning among the Georgians and several newspapers and journals, including Iveria and Jejili.

Zviadists. Popular term describing supporters of former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Although the term is often used in reference to the Mingrelians, Zviadists are not solely from Mingrelia.
(Samegrelo) nor do they constitute a separatist minority. They include representatives from virtually all regions of Georgia who supported the government of former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, denounced the events of 1991–1992, and opposed Eduard Shevardnadze’s authority. Zviadists played important roles on a number of occasions in recent Georgian history. They emerged as a group following the military coup d’etat against President Gamsakhurdia in January 1992. Gamsakhurdia initially fled to neighboring Chechnya while the military junta invited Shevardnadze to lead the new government. As Shevardnadze became involved in the conflict in Abkhazia, Gamsakhurdia returned to Georgia where he rallied forces in his native region of Mingrelia; simultaneously, frequent demonstrations were organized in Tbilisi, and in June 1992, Zviadists seized the state television center but were driven out by the government forces. During the conflict in Abkhazia, the pro-Gamsakhurdia forces under Colonel Loti Kobalia launched a surprise attack against the government troops in Mingrelia and occupied strategic positions in the region in 1993. Shevardnadze was forced to make concessions to Russia and join the Commonwealth of Independent States in return for Russian military support against the Zviadists. Thus, the Zviadist intervention in 1993 contributed to bringing about the near collapse of the Georgian state and an increase in Russian influence over Georgia, which Gamsakhurdia himself wanted to avoid.

In October 1993, Georgian government forces, supported by Russian troops, launched a counterattack against Gamsakhurdia’s forces. The Russian navy landed troops at the strategic port of Poti. Heavy fighting took place around Samtredia, Khobi, Senaki, and Zugdidi. The fighting between the government forces and the Zviadists was particularly savage in Mingrelia proper, where the Mkhedrioni paramilitary units went on a rampage. These atrocities contributed to the eventual antagonism of Mingrelians toward Shevardnadze and his government. By December 1993, most of Mingrelia was under government control and the Zviadist leaders were imprisoned. Although Shevardnadze’s government continued to deny the existence of political prisoners, some Zviadists remained in prison for the duration of his time in power. Rallying around Manana Archvadze-Gamsakhurdia, former first lady, they organized numerous anti-government demonstrations and often clashed with government forces. In 1998,
an assassination attempt was made on Shevardnadze, which was widely blamed on the Zviadists. Several weeks later, Zviadists attacked UNOMIG headquarters in Zugdidi and took four UN observers hostage, whom they intended to exchange for the arrested comrades. In October 1998, a military rebellion took place in Senaki led by Akaki Eliava, who had commanded the Zviadist forces in 1993 but had received amnesty. With over 200 troops and a few tanks, the rebels marched on Kutaisi demanding Shevardnadze’s resignation and claiming that Georgia’s territorial integrity would not be reestablished as long as Shevardnadze was president. After a brief exchange of fire with the government troops, the rebels agreed to talks and retreated to Senaki, where most of them were arrested; Eliava was later killed by security forces.

During the Rose Revolution in 2003, the Zviadist faction joined the opposition groups of Mikhail Saakashvili and Zurab Zhvania to oust Shevardnadze. In an attempt to reconcile a divided society, President Saakashvili praised Gamsakhurdia’s role in recent Georgian history and began the process of his rehabilitation, releasing Zviadist prisoners.

ZVIADIST REVOLT OF 1998. Military uprising led by Colonel Akaki Eliava in Senaki on 19–20 October 1998. Eliava had participated in the civil war in 1992–1993 before he was pardoned and allowed to serve in the Georgian army. Discontented with Eduard Shevardnadze’s government, Eliava organized a military revolt in Senaki, a major city in Mingrelia, and marched some 200 soldiers with several tanks and armored vehicles to Kutaisi. On the approaches to this city, Eliava’s rebels encountered government forces that prevented their further advance. After a brief clash, the rebels agreed to talk and retreated to Senaki, where most of the soldiers and their officers were arrested. Eliava himself fled but was killed by security forces in 2000. Eliava had counted on considerable parts of the army and population joining him after an initial success but had misjudged the government’s hold over the population. Allegations were also made that the revolt was instigated by Russia to destabilize Georgia.
Appendix A
Sovereigns and Governments of Georgia

**DIAUCHI**
- 12th century BCE  Sien
- Mid-9th century BCE  Asia
- Late 9th century–early 8th century BCE  Utupurshini

**COLCHIS**
- 2nd millennium BCE  Savlak (legendary, based on Plinius and Herodotus)
- 1st millennium BCE  Aietes (legendary)

**COLCHIS/EGRISI**
- ca. 190 BCE  Aka
- ca. 179 BCE  Acusilos
- 1st century BCE  Mithradates IV Evpator of Pontus.
- 63–49 BCE  Aristarchus
- 49 BCE  Pharnacus II

**KARTLI/IBERIA**

*Parnavazians*
- ca. 302–237 BCE  Parnavaz I
- ca. 237–162 BCE  Saurmag I (Sauromaces)

*Nimrodids or Second Parnavazian dynasty*
- ca. 162–112 BCE  Mirian I (Meribanes)
- ca. 112–93 BCE  Parnajom

*Arsacids*
- ca. 93–81 BCE  Arshak I
- ca. 81–63 BCE  Artag
- ca. 63–32 BCE  Parnavaz II (Bartom)
Nimrodids, or Second Pharnavazian dynasty
32–23 BCE Mirian II
20–1 BCE Arshak II

Third Parnavazian dynasty
1–58 Aderk
58–106 Mithridates I
106–116 Amazasp
116–132 Parsman II Kveli
132–135 Radamist (Adami)
135–185 Parsman III
185–189 Amazasp II

Arsacids
189–216 Rev I Martali
216–234 Vache
234–249 Bakur I (Bakurius)
249–265 Mithridates II (Mihrdat)
260–265 Amazasp III, anti-king
265–284 Aspagur I (Aspacades)

Chosroids
284–361 Mirian III
345–361 Rev II, co-regent
361–363 Saurmag II (Sauromaces)
363–365 Varaz-Bakur I (Aspagur II)
365–380 Mithridates (Mihrdat) III
380–394 Varaz-Bakur II (Aspagur III)
394–406 Tiridat (Trdat)
406–409 Parsman IV
409–411 Mithridates (Mihrdat) IV
411–435 Archil
435–447 Mithridates (Mihrdat) V
447–502 Vakhtang I Gorgasal (Toumanoff: 447–522)
502–514 Dachi (Toumanoff: 522–534)
514–528 Bakur II (Gurgen) (Toumanoff: 534–547)
528–542 Parsman V (Toumanoff: 547–561)
542–547 Parsman VI (Toumanoff: 561–?)
547–580 Bakur III (Toumanoff: ?–ca. 580)
PRESIDING PRINCES OF IBERIA

**Guaramids**
- 588–590  Guaram I
- 590–627  Stephanoz I

**Chosroidis**
- 627–637  Adarnase I
- 637–650  Stephanoz II
- 650–684  Adarnase II

**Guaramids**
- 684–693  Guaram II
- 693–748  Guaram III

**Nersianids**
- 748–760  Adarnase III Nersiani
- 760–772, 775–780  Nerse

**Guaramids**
- 780–786  Stephanoz III

**Bagrationis**
- 813–830  Ashot I
- 842–876  Bagrat I
- 876–881  David I
- 881–891  Gurgen I (overlaps with Adarnase I)
- 888–923  Adarnase I (*King of the Georgians*)
- 923–937  David II (titular king)
- 923–954  Ashot II Curopalate
- 954–958  Sumbat I Curopalate (titular king 937–958)
- 958–994  Bagrat II the Simple (titular king)
- 958–961  Adarnase III Curopalate
- 990–ca 1000  David III Curopalatte
- 994–1008  Gurgen II (co-king since 975)

**KINGDOM OF ABKHAZIA**
- 736–767  Leon I
- 767–811  Leon II
- 811–837  Theodosius II
- 837–872  Demetre II
872–878  Giorgi I Aghtsepeli
878–879  Ioane I Shavliani
879–887  Adarnase I
887–899  Bagrat I
899–916  Constantine III
916–960  Giorgi II
960–969  Leon III
969–976  Demetre III
976–978  Theodosius (succeeded by Bagrat III of the united kingdom of Georgia)

PRINCIPALITY OF TAO-KLARJETI
HOUSE OF BAGRATIONI

786–826  Ashot I Curopalates
826–876  Bagrat I
876–881  David I (David I)
881–891  Gurgen Curopalates
888–923  Adarnase II (King of Georgians)
923–937  David II
937–954  Ashot II
945–958  Sumbat I
958–961  Adarnase Curopalates
937–994  Bagrat II, titular king
990–1001  David III Curopalate

KINGDOM OF UNITED GEORGIA (975–1478)
HOUSE OF BAGRATIONI

975–1014  Bagrat III
1014–1027  Giorgi I
1027–1072  Bagrat IV
1072–1089  Giorgi II
1089–1125  David IV Aghmashenebeli
1125–1156  Demetre I
1155  David V
1156–1184  Giorgi III
1184–1210/1213  Queen Tamar
1213–1222  Giorgi IV Lasha
<table>
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<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1222–1245</td>
<td>Queen Rusudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1245–1292</td>
<td>David VI <em>Narin</em>; reigned together with David VII <em>Ulu</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>1247–1270</td>
<td>David VII Ulu</td>
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<tr>
<td>1270–1288</td>
<td>Demetre II <em>Tavadebuli</em></td>
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<td>1289–1292</td>
<td>Vakhtang II</td>
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<tr>
<td>1293–1311</td>
<td>David VIII</td>
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<td>1302–1308</td>
<td>Vakhtang III</td>
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<td>1299–1346</td>
<td>Giorgi V <em>Brtskinvale</em></td>
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<td>1311–1313</td>
<td>Giorgi VI</td>
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<tr>
<td>1346–1360</td>
<td>David IX</td>
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<td>1360–1393</td>
<td>Bagrat V</td>
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<td>1393–1407</td>
<td>Giorgi VII</td>
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<td>1407–1411</td>
<td>Constantine I</td>
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<tr>
<td>1412–1443</td>
<td>Alexander I</td>
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<tr>
<td>1443–1446</td>
<td>Vakhtang IV</td>
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<td>1446–1466</td>
<td>Giorgi VIII</td>
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<tr>
<td>1466–1478</td>
<td>Bagrat VI (King of Kartli and Imereti)</td>
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**KINGDOM OF IMERETI (Western Georgia) 1466–1815:**

**HOUSE OF BAGRATIONI**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Years</th>
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<tr>
<td>1463–1478</td>
<td>Bagrat I</td>
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<tr>
<td>1484–1510</td>
<td>Alexander II</td>
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<td>1510–1565</td>
<td>Bagrat II</td>
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<td>1565–1583</td>
<td>Giorgi I</td>
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<td>1583–1590</td>
<td>Levan (Leo)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1590–1604</td>
<td>Rostom</td>
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<tr>
<td>1604–1639</td>
<td>Giorgi II</td>
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<td>1639–1660</td>
<td>Alexander III</td>
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<td>1660–1661, 1663–1668, 1669–1678, 1679–1681</td>
<td>Bagrat III</td>
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<td>1661–1663, 1678–1679, 1690–1691, 1695–1696, 1698</td>
<td>Archil II</td>
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<td>1698–1701</td>
<td>Alexander IV</td>
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<td>1703–1711, 1713, 1714–1716, 1719–1720</td>
<td>Simon</td>
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<td>1720–1741, 1741–1746, 1749–1752</td>
<td>Giorgi III</td>
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<td>1741</td>
<td>Alexander V</td>
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<td>Giorgi IV</td>
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1746–1749 Mamuka
1752–1784 Solomon I
1784–1789 David II
1789–1810/15 Solomon II

KINGDOM OF KARTLI (Central Georgia) 1479–1762:
HOUSE OF BAGRATIONI
1479–1505 Constantine II
1505–1525 David X
1525–1534 Giorgi IX
1534–1558 Luarsab I
1558–1601 Simon I
1564–1579 David XI
1601–1606 Giorgi X
1606–1615 Luarsab II
1615–1619 Bagrat VII
1619–1631 Simon II
1632–1658 Rostom
1658–1675 Vakhtang V
1664–1675 Archil
1676–88; 1703–09 Giorgi XI
1709 Levan
1703–16; 1719–24 Vakhtang VI
1709–1711 Kaikhosro
1714–16; 1724–27 Iese
1717–1719 Bakar
1727–1732 Constantine II
1744–1762 Teimuraz II

KINGDOM OF KAKHETI (East Georgia) 1466–1762:
HOUSE OF BAGRATIONI
1466–1476 Giorgi VIII
1476–1511 Alexander I
1520–1574 Leo (Levan)
1574–1605 Alexander II
1601 David I
1601–16; 1623–48 Teimuraz I
1688–1703 Erekle I
1703–1722 David II
1722–1733 Constantine II
1731–1744 Teimuraz II
1744–1762 Erekle II (after 1762, King of Kartli and Kakheti)

KINGDOM OF KARTLI AND KAKHETI 1762–1801:
HOUSE OF BAGRATIONI
1762–1798 Erekle II
1798–1800 Giorgi XII
1800–1801 David, heir apparent
September 1801 Russia annexed Kartli-Kakheti

PRINCES OF MINGRELIA
HOUSE OF DADIANI
12th century Vardan I Dadiani (based on tradition)
1184–1213 Vardan II Dadiani
early 13th century Shergil Dadiani
ca. 1250–ca. 1260 Vardan III Dadiani
ca. 1260–ca. 1300 Tsotne Dadiani
ca. 1300–1303 Giorgi I Dadiani
1323–1345 Mamia I Dadiani-Gurieli
1345–1384 Giorgi II Dadiani-Gureli
1384–1396 Vamek I Dadiani
1396–1414 Mamia II Dadiani
1414–1470 Liparit I Dadiani
1470–1474 Samsan ud-Daula Dadiani
1474–1482 Vamek II Dadiani
1482–1512 Liparit II Dadiani
1512–1533 Mamia III Dadiani
1533–1546 Levan I Dadiani
1546–1573 Giorgi III Dadiani
1574; 1582–1590 Mamia IV Dadiani
1574–1582 Giorgi III Dadiani
1590–1611 Manuchar I Dadiani
1611–1657 Levan II Dadiani
1657–1658 Liparit III Dadiani
### PRINCES OF GURIA

**HOUSE OF GURIELI**

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<td>1658–1662</td>
<td>Vamek III Dadiani</td>
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<td>1662–1681</td>
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<td>1681–1691</td>
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<td>1691–1704; 1710–1715</td>
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<td>1793–1794; 1802</td>
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<td>1680–1685; 1689</td>
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<td>1685–1689</td>
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<td>David Dadiani</td>
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<td>1853–1867</td>
<td>Nikoloz Dadiani</td>
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**HOUSE OF GURIELI**

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<td>ca. 1470s–1483</td>
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<td>1512–1534</td>
<td>Mamia I Gurieli</td>
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<tr>
<td>1534–1566</td>
<td>Rostom I Gurieli</td>
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<td>1566–1583; 1587–1600</td>
<td>Giorgi II Gurieli</td>
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<td>1583–1587</td>
<td>Vakhtang I Gurieli</td>
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<td>1600–1627</td>
<td>Mamia II Gurieli</td>
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<td>1627</td>
<td>Simon Gurieli</td>
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<td>1627–1660</td>
<td>Kaikhosro I Gurieli</td>
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<td>1660–1664</td>
<td>Demetre Gurieli</td>
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<td>1664–1684</td>
<td>Giorgi III Gurieli</td>
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<td>1684–1685; 1689</td>
<td>Malakia (Malkhaz) Gurieli</td>
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<td>1685–1689</td>
<td>Kaikhosro II Gurieli</td>
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<td>1689–1702; 1711–1712</td>
<td>Mamia III Gurieli</td>
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<td>1711–1726</td>
<td>Giorgi IV Gurieli</td>
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<td>1726–1756; 1758–1765; 1771–1776</td>
<td>Kaikhosro III Gurieli</td>
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<td>1755–1758; 1765–1771; 1776–1778</td>
<td>Mamia IV Gurieli</td>
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<td>1788–1791; 1794–1802; 1802–1804</td>
<td>Grigol Dadiani</td>
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<td>Manuchar II Dadiani</td>
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<td>1793–1794; 1802</td>
<td>Tariel Dadiani</td>
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<td>Levan V Dadiani</td>
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<td>David Dadiani</td>
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<td>1853–1867</td>
<td>Nikoloz Dadiani</td>
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1744–1778; 1780s–1792
1780s
1792–1803
1803–1823
1823–1829
Simon II Gurieli
Kaikhosro III Gurieli
Vakhtang II Gurieli
Mamia V Gurieli
David Gurieli

RUSSIAN RULE 1801–1918
Commanders-in-Chief of Russian Forces in the Caucasus
1801–1803 Karl F. Knorring
1803–1806 Pavel Tsitsianov
1806–1809 Ivan Gudovich
1809–1811 Alexander Tormasov
1811–1812 Filipp Paulucci
1812–1816 Nikolay Rtischev
1816–1827 Alexey Yermolov
1827–1831 Ivan Paskevich
1831–1837 Gregory Rosen
1837–1842 Eugene Golovin
1842–1845 Alexander Neidhardt

Viceroys of the Caucasus
1845–1854 Mikhail Vorontsov
1854–1856 Nikolay Muravyev-Karsky
1856–1862 Alexander Baryatinsky
1862–1881 Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolayevich
1905–1915 Illarion Vorontsov-Dashkov
1915–1917 Grand Duke Nikolay Nikolayevich

Governors of the Georgian Province (gruzinskaya gubernia)
(1801–1840)
1806–1807 Litvinov
1807–1811 Akhverdin
1811–1813 Mark Malinsky
1813–1815 Simonovich
1815–1824 Karl Stal
1824–1829 Roman von der Howen
1829–1832 Peter Zaveleisky
1832–1837 Nikolay Palavandov
1838–1840 Dmitry Akhlestyshev
Governors of Georgian–Imeretian Province  
(*Gruzino–imeretinskaya gubernia* (1840–1846))

1840–1841 Semen Kakhanov
1841–1843 Andrey Scalon
1843–1845 Vasily Sotnikov
1845 Mikhail Zherebtsov

Governors of the Tbilisi Province (*Tiflisskaya gubernia*)  
(1846–1917)

1846–1849 Sergey Yermolov
1849–1856 Ivan Andronnikov
1856–1858 Nikolay Lukash
1858–1860 Alexander Kapper
1860–1866 Grigol Orbeliani (governor general)
1860–1876 Constantine Orlovsky
1876–1878 Maxim Osten-Sacken
1878–1883 Constantine Gagarin
1883–1887 Alexander Grossman
1887–1888 Karl Zisserman
1888–1897 Giorgi Shervashidze
1897–1899 Fedor Bykov
1899–1905 Ivan Svechin
1905–1907 Paul Bernhard Raush von Traubenberg
1907–1911 Mikhail Lubich-Yarmolovich-Lozina-Lozinsky
1911–1914 Andrey Chernyavsky
1914–1916 Ivan Strakhovsky
1916–1917 Alexander Mandrik

Governors of the Kutaisi Province (*Kutaissskaya gubernia*)

1847–1851 Constantine Belyavsky (military governor)
1851–1853 Alexander Gagarin (military governor)
1853–1856 Ivan Bagrationi-Mukhransky (military governor)
1857 Alexander Gagarin (governor general)
1857–1860 Giorgi Erstov (Erstavi) (governor general)
1857–1858 Alexander Vrangel (governor general)
1858–1861 Nikolay Ivanov (governor)
1860–1863 Nikolay Kolubakin (governor general)
1861–1866 Alexander Ogolin (governor)
1863–1866  Dmitry Svyatopolk-Mirsky (governor general)
1867–1878  Vladimir Levashov (military governor)
1878–1883  Nikolay Malafeyev (governor)
1883–1887  Alexander Smekalov (military governor)
1887–1890  Alexander Grossman (military governor)
1890–1898  Mikhail Shalikov (military governor)
1898–1901  Fedor Gershelman (military governor)
1901–1905  Alexey Smagin (military governor)
1905–1906  Vladimir Staroselsky (governor)
1906–1907  Alexander Yazikov (governor)
1907–1914  Adam Slovochinsky (governor)
1914–1916  Lev Potulov (governor)
1916–1917  Alexander Gudovich (governor)

**TRANSCAUCASIAN COMMISSARIAT** (November 1917– March 1918)
Evgeni Gegechkori, Chairman

**TRANSCAUCASIAN SEIM** (February–May 1918)
Niko Chkheidze, Chairman of the Seim
Akaki Chkhenkeli, Chairman of the Council of Ministers

**TRANSCAUCASIAN FEDERATION** (April–May 1918)
Akaki Chkhenkeli, Chairman

**FIRST REPUBLIC (1918–1922)**

**Chairman of the National Council**
May–October 1918  Noe Zhordania

**Chairman of the Parliament**
October 1918–March 1919  Noe Zhordania

**Chairman of the Constituent Assembly**
March 1919–March 1921  Nikolay Chkheidze

**Heads of Government**
May–June 1918  Noe Ramishvili
June 1918–February 1921  Noe Zhordania
First Government (May 1918)
Minister of War G. Giorgadze
Minister of Interior N. Ramishvili
Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Chkhenkeli
Minister of Agriculture N. Khormeriki
Minister of Justice Sh. Aleksishvili
Minister of Commerce and Industry G. Zhuruli
Minister of Education G. Laskhishvili
Minister of Communications Ivane Lordkipanidze
Minister of Labour and Supplies G. Eradze

SECOND REPUBLIC (1921–1990)

First Secretaries of the Communist Party of Georgia
1920–1921 Mamia Orakhelashvili
1921–1923 Philipe Makharadze
1922–1923 Vissarion Lominadze
1923–1926 Lavrenti Kartvelishvili
1926–1930 Levan Gogoberidze
1930–1931 Samson Mamulia
1931–1932 Lavrenti Beria
1932–1934 Peter Agniashvili
1934–1938 Lavrenti Beria
1938–1952 Candide Charkviani
1952–1953 Akaki Mgeladze
1953 Alexander Mirtskhulava
1953–1972 Vasily Mzhavanadze
1972–1985 Eduard Shevardnadze
1985–1989 Jumber Patiashvili
1989–1990 Givi Gumbaridze
1990–1991 Avtandil Margiani

Chairmen of the Central Executive Committee
1922–1924 Philipe Makharadze
1924–1925 Mikhail Tskhakay"a
1925–1927 Philipe Makharadze
1927–1928 Lavrenti Kartvelishvili
1928–1929 Philipe Makharadze
1929–1930 Mikhail Tskhakay"a
1931–1938 Philipe Makharadze
Chairmen of the Presidium of the Supreme Council
1938–1941   Philipe Makharadze
1942–1948   Giorgi Sturua
1948–1952   Vasily Gogua
1952–1953   Zachary Chkhubianishvili
1953   Vladimir Tskhovrebashvili
1953–1959   Miron Chubinidze
1959–1976   Giorgi Dzotsenidze
1976–1989   Pavle Gilashvili
1989   Otar Cherkezia
1989–1990   Givi Gumbaridze

Chairmen of the Council of People’s Commissars
1922–1923   Sergo Kavtaradze
1923–1924   Mikhail Tskhakaya
1924–1929   Shalva Eliava
1929–1930   Philipe Makharadze
1930–1931   Levan Sukhishvili
1931–1937   German Mgaloblishvili
1937–1938   Levan Sukhishvili
1938–1946   Valerian Bakradze

Chairmen of the Council of Ministers
1946–1952   Zachary Chkhubianishvili
1952–1953   Zachary Ketskhoveli
1953   Valerian Bakradze
1953–1975   Givi Javakhishvili
1975–1982   Zurab Pataridze
1982–1986   Dimitri Kartvelishvili
1986–1989   Otar Cherkezia
1989   Zurab Chkheidze
1989–1990   Nodar Chitanava

THIRD REPUBLIC (1990–)

Heads of State

Chairman of the Supreme Council of Georgia
1990–1991   Zviad Gamsakhurdia

Chairmen of the Military Council
1992   Jaba Ioseliani / Tengiz Kitovani
Chairman of the State Council
March–October 1992  Eduard Shevardnadze

Chairman of the Parliament and Head of State
1992–1995  Eduard Shevardnadze

President
1995–2003  Eduard Shevardnadze
November 2003–January 2004  Nino Burdjanadze (interim)
2004–  Mikhail Saakashvili (acting)

Heads of Government

Prime Ministers
1991  Murman Omanidze
1992–1993  Tengiz Sigua
1993  Eduard Shevardnadze
1993–1995  Otar Patsatsia
1995  Bakur Gulua

State Ministers
1995–1998  Niko Lekishvili
1998–2000  Vazha Lordkipanidze
2000–2001  Giorgi Arsenishvili
2001–2003  Avtandil Jorbenadze
2003–2004  Zurab Zhvania

Prime Ministers
2004–2005  Zurab Zhvania
Feb. 2005  Giorgi Baramidze (interim)
Feb. 2005  Mikhail Saakashvili (interim)
2005–  Zurab Noghaideli (acting)
# Appendix B

## Resident Population of Georgia (in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Population on the territories controlled by the central government of Georgia</th>
<th>Estimated population on the territories not controlled by the central government</th>
<th>Of which:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Abkhazian AR</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>5400.8</td>
<td>5400.8</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>525.1</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>5424.4</td>
<td>5424.4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>526.9</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>5453.3</td>
<td>5453.3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>528.2</td>
</tr>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>5467.4</td>
<td>5467.4</td>
<td>567.2</td>
<td>521.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>5345.8</td>
<td>4778.6</td>
<td>578.2</td>
<td>506.0</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>5208.9</td>
<td>4929.9</td>
<td>279.0</td>
<td>218.0</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>5061.7</td>
<td>4794.2</td>
<td>267.5</td>
<td>207.9</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>4933.3</td>
<td>4674.5</td>
<td>258.8</td>
<td>200.7</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>4808.8</td>
<td>4558.4</td>
<td>250.4</td>
<td>193.7</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>4749.5</td>
<td>4504.9</td>
<td>244.6</td>
<td>189.4</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>4710.6</td>
<td>4469.8</td>
<td>240.8</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>4672.2</td>
<td>4435.2</td>
<td>237.0</td>
<td>184.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>4634.8</td>
<td>4401.4</td>
<td>233.4</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>4601.5</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>4571.1</td>
<td>4342.6</td>
<td>228.5</td>
<td>179.0</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>4543.0</td>
<td>4315.2</td>
<td>227.8</td>
<td>178.4</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>4516.3</td>
<td>4289.1</td>
<td>227.2</td>
<td>178.0</td>
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### Urban and Rural Population of Georgia (in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Total population (thousand persons)</th>
<th>Out of which:</th>
<th>In percentage with total population</th>
<th>Average annual changes (growth +, loss −)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban population</td>
<td>Rural population</td>
<td>Urban population</td>
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<td>1913</td>
<td>2601.0</td>
<td>666.0</td>
<td>1935.0</td>
<td>25.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>2677.0</td>
<td>594.2</td>
<td>2083.0</td>
<td>22.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>3540.0</td>
<td>1066.2</td>
<td>2473.8</td>
<td>30.1</td>
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<td>1959</td>
<td>4044.0</td>
<td>1712.9</td>
<td>2331.1</td>
<td>42.4</td>
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<td>1970</td>
<td>4686.4</td>
<td>2239.8</td>
<td>2446.6</td>
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<td>5014.8</td>
<td>2600.5</td>
<td>2414.3</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>5443.3</td>
<td>3035.7</td>
<td>2407.6</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>4355.7</td>
<td>2282.3</td>
<td>2073.4</td>
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Appendix C
Economic Activity
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Hunting, and Forestry</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>16.2</td>
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<td>Industry</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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<td>Trade</td>
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<td>26.0</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
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<td>12.8</td>
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<td>13.4</td>
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<td>Transport and Communications</td>
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<td>8.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
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<td>Other Branches</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>Agriculture, hunting, and forestry</td>
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<td>Electricity, gas, and water supply</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
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<td>Transport and communications</td>
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<td>Health and social work</td>
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Appendix D
Regions of Georgia
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Other Administrative Units</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kakheti</strong></td>
<td>Gurjaani, Amkheta, Dzoplistskaro, Kveireli, Sagarejo, Telavi, Lagodekhi,</td>
<td><strong>Cities</strong>: (9): Akhmeta, Gurjaani, Dzoplistskaro, Telavi, Lagodekhi, Sagarejo, Signagi, Kveireli, Tsnori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area: 11,310 km²</td>
<td>Telavi, Lagodekhi</td>
<td><strong>Villages</strong>: 276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population: 407,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center: Telavi</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mtskheta-Mtianeti</strong></td>
<td>Akhalgori, Dzsheti, Kazbegi, Mtskheta, Tianteti</td>
<td><strong>Cities (2)</strong>: Mtskheta, Dzsheti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area: 6,785 km²</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Towns (7)</strong>: Zages, Akhalgori, Zhinval, Pasanauri, Tianteti, Sioni, Kazbegi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population: 125,800</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Villages</strong>: 582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center: Mtskheta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kvemo (Lower) Kartli</strong></td>
<td>Rustavi (city), Bolnisi, Gardabani, Dzmanisi, Tseti Tkaro, Marneuli, Tsalka</td>
<td><strong>Cities (7)</strong>: Rustavi, Bolnisi, Gardabani, Dzmanisi, Tseti Tkaro, Marneuli, Tsalka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area: 6,528 km²</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Towns (8)</strong>: Dzdi Lilo, Kojori, Kazreti, Manglisi, Tamarisi, Saumiani, Bediani, Trialeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population: 497,000</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Villages</strong>: 338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center: Rustavi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shida (Inner) Kartli</strong></td>
<td>Tskhinvali, Gori, Kaspi, Kareli, Java, Khashuri</td>
<td><strong>Cities (4)</strong>: Gori, Kaspi, Kareli, Khashuri</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area: 4800 km²</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Towns (2)</strong>: Surami, Agara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population: 36310</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Villages</strong>: 366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center: Gori</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Samtskhe-Javakheti**  
Area: 6,413 km²  
Population: 208,000  
Center: Akhaltsikhe

**Imereti**  
Area: 6600 km²  
Population: 700,000  
Center: Kutaisi

**Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo (Lower) Svaneti**  
Area: 4,954 km²  
Population: 51,000  
Center: Ambrolauri

**Adjara**  
Area: 2880 km²  
Population: 376,000  
Center: Batumi

**Cities (5):** Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, Vale, Ninotsminda  
**Towns (7):** Bakuriani, Bakurianis, Andeziti, Tsaghveri, Akhaladaba, Adigeni, Abastumani, Aspindza  
**Villages:** 254

**Cities (10):** Kutaisi, Tkibuli, Tskaltubo, Chiatura, Baghdati, Vani, Zestaponi, Terjola, Samtredia, Sachkhere, Khoni  
**Towns (3):** Shorapani, Kulashi, Kharagauli  
**Villages:** 529

**Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo (Lower) Svaneti**  
Area: 4,954 km²  
Population: 51,000  
Center: Ambrolauri

**Adjara**  
Area: 2880 km²  
Population: 376,000  
Center: Batumi

**Cities (3):** Ambrolauri, Oni, Tsageri  
**Towns (2):** Lentekhi, Kharistvala  
**Villages:** 251

**Cities (2):** Batumi, Kobuleti  
**Towns (7):** Makhinjauri, Chakvi, Ochkhium, Keda, Khelvachauri, Shuakhevi, Khulo  
**Villages:** 333

(continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Other Administrative Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guria</td>
<td>Chokhatauri</td>
<td><strong>Cities</strong> (2): Lanchkhuti, Ozurgeti</td>
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<td>Ozurgeti</td>
<td><strong>Towns</strong> (5): Laituri, Naruja, Nasakirali, Ureki, Chokhatauri</td>
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<td>Lanchkhuti</td>
<td><strong>Villages</strong>: 186</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samegrelo-Zemo (Upper) Svanet</td>
<td>Poti (city)</td>
<td><strong>Cities</strong> (8): Abasha, Zugdidi, Martvili, Senaki, Poti, Tsalendjikha, Jvari, Khobi</td>
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<td>Zugdidi</td>
<td><strong>Towns</strong> (2): Chkhorotsku, Mestia</td>
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<td><strong>Villages</strong>: 490</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Martvili</td>
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<td>Tsalendjikha</td>
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<td>Mestia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Senaki</td>
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<td>Abasha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abkhazia</td>
<td>Sukhumi (city)</td>
<td><strong>Cities</strong> (7): Sukhumi, Tkvarcheli, Gagra, Gudauta, Gali, Ochamchire, Akhali Atoni</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gagra</td>
<td><strong>Towns</strong> (4): Gulripsh, Bichvinta, Gantiadi, Miusera</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tkvarcheli</td>
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<td>Gali</td>
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<td>Gulripshi</td>
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<td>Sukhumi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ochamchire</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gudauta</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Villages</strong>: 514</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Glossary

Amirbar Constable.
Amkarebi Guilds in feudal Georgia. Amkarebi were led by an amkarbash (ostati or ustabashi), who were usually elected by members and ratified by royal officials. Heads of the largest guilds were appointed by the king.
Atabeg Chief tutor and guardian to the royal offspring, second high office of the court. After the 13th century, atabegs also ruled Samtskhe region.
Azat Former serf freed by his lord.
Aznauri Feudal lord in 5th–12th-century Georgia; lower order of the feudal nobility in the 12th–18th centuries.
Batoni Lord, feudal baron.
Batonishvili Son of a lord, usually the title of a prince of the royal blood.
Baziert-ukhtsesi Master of the falconers, master of the royal hunt.
Begara Peasant labor obligation.
Bogano Landless peasant.
Bokault-ukhtsesi Chief police constable or official in charge of security at the court.
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Official designation of an organization of the former republics of the Soviet Union established after the collapse of the USSR in 1991.
Council of People’s Commissars The Bolshevik governing body, also known as Sovnarkom (abbreviation for Soviet narodnykh komissarov). It was created after the 1917 revolution, and was divided into departments or commissariats dealing with specific areas of government. It operated under this name until World War II.
Curopalates Byzantine titles of presiding princes granted to Georgian and Armenian princes in the sixth to ninth centuries.
Darbazi  Palace, hall; consultative body at the royal court.
Dedopali  Queen regnant or queen consort.
Didebulni  Noble, higher order of feudal aristocracy in Georgia in the 11th–12th centuries.
Ejibni  Chamberlain.
Eri  Nation; in ancient Georgia, freemen.
Eshikaghabashi  Chief of the police and administrative apparatus in late feudal Georgia.
Exarch  A bishop, second highest position after a patriarch. In 1819, the Russian authorities appointed exarch to govern the Georgian church.
Ezomodzghvari  Comptroller of the royal household.
Ganmget-ukhutsesi  Lord Steward.
Ghala  Peasant obligation in the amount of 10 to 25% of the grain harvest.
Glekhi  Peasant.
Gziri  Chief of police.
Karachokheli  A city craftsman, who wore black chokha (traditional men’s wear).
Khevisberi  Ruler of a khevi, secular and ecclesiastical head among mountain-tribes of eastern Georgia.
Khevisuphali  Head of the valley, usually subordinated to eristavis.
Khizani  Peasant forced out from the lands of his lord and renting land from another lord.
Khorepiskopos  Byzantine title of rulers of Kakheti in the 8th–9th centuries.
Kinto  A street merchant, known for his resourcefulness, humor, and ingenuity.
Kulukhi  Peasant obligation to pay up to 25% of grape harvest or wine produced.
Mamasakhlisi  Head of the household; in ancient Iberia, chief elder of Mtskheta. In later periods, head of a village or mayor of a city appointed from the merchant class by the king.
Mamuli  Land granted in hereditary tenure. In a general sense, motherland.
Mandaturt-ukhutsesi  Chief overseer of the court, in charge of the palace guard and matters of protocol.
Mdabioni  Lower strata of the population.
Mdivanbegi  Chief Justice.
Meabjret-ukhutsesi  Master armorer.
Mechurchlet-ukhutsesi  Royal treasurer.
Meghvinet-ukhutsesi  Master of the royal wine cellar.
Mejamet-ukhutsesi  Chief butler of the royal household.
Melik (or malik)  Arab term for ruler or high official; the term was often used with respect to Armenian officials in charge of cities, i.e., mayor of Tbilisi.
Meremet-ukhutsesi  Master of the horse.
Mestumret-ukhutsesi  Master of ceremonies.
Mojalabe  Indentured peasant without land.
Mona-spa  Royal guard.
Mouravi  Royal official in charge of a region.
Msakhuri  Domestic servant or a serf raised to vassal gentry.
Msakhurt-ukhutsesi  Chief chamberlain, in charge of royal property, buildings, court ceremonies and receptions.
Mtsignobarth-ukhutsesi  Chief secretary of the king; in 1104, the office was merged with that of Archbishop of Chqondideli to create the first office of the court.
Mtavari  Dynastic prince.
Namestnik  Viceroy of the Russian Emperors in the Caucasus.
Nomenklatura  Body of senior government and Party officials appointed by the Secretariat of the Communist Party. The term was often used to refer to Soviet political elite and also as a derogatory name for government bureaucracy.
Patroni  Proprietor, master or lord.
Qma  Serf; vassal.
Sadroshe  Military-administrative unit that provided specified number of men for the royal army.
Saeristavo  Territory under control of eristavi.
Sakhaso  Demesne, lands directly held by the king.
Sakhtukhutsesi  Majordomo.
Samtavro  Literally territory ruled by mtavari, landed estate.
Satavado  Territory ruled by tavadi.
Satavistavo  Lands held by individual nobles.
Sauplistsulo  Appanage; royal or legislative land grant.
Sepetsulni  Royal children.
Shetsiruli qma  Clerical serf given by the king or lord to the church.
Spasalari  Commander-in-chief.
Spaspeti  In ancient Iberia, the highest official at the court, governor of Shida Kartli province and military commander. In later periods, a military commander.
Tavadi  Prince; initially heads of noble families, later a separate class of nobility.
Tskalobis qma  A serf given by one lord to another or granted by the king to a lord.
Ukhutsesi  Elders.
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This bibliography—lists of selected books and other materials on Georgian history, culture, and economy, as well as other areas—is naturally a limited one since the literature on Georgia is vast and diverse and all of the items could not be included here. Furthermore, not all works are in print, and some are difficult to obtain outside Georgia. Works in English have been given prominence, while notable items in Georgian, Russian, French, German, and Italian languages are also listed.

The literature on Georgia has its strengths and weaknesses, especially with respect to historical works. Much of it was written during the Soviet era and is tinged with the prevailing Soviet ideology, while works produced in the late 19th century and after 1989 were influenced by romanticism and nationalism. The majority of books, articles, and other publications are in Georgian, which limits their utility, since very few non-Georgian scholars have mastered the language. As a result, much less is published in English and other Western European languages, although during the Soviet period many works were authored or translated into Russian, which is a more common research language. In recent years, the English language has begun to supplant Russian as a second research language for Georgian scholars, and new works are beginning to become available to a wider audience. Nevertheless, there are some themes of Georgian history—notably the Menshevik republic of 1918–1921 and the post-1989 period—that lack balanced studies and require new approaches and a fresh look.

No study of the Georgian past can be complete without consulting the works of such Georgian writers as Ivane Javakhishvili, Pavle Ingorokva, Giorgi Melikishvili, Nikoloz Berdzenishvili, and Ekvtime Takaishvili. Javakhishvili’s extensive volumes on the history of the Georgian nation and Georgian economic and legal history are particularly invaluable in research. For English speakers, the best introduction to general Georgian history currently is Ronald Grigor Suny’s *The Making of the Georgian Nation* (1988, 1994), while David M. Lang’s two older books, *Modern History of Soviet Georgia* (1962) and *The Georgians* (1966) and William Allen’s classic *History of the Georgian People from the Beginning Down to the Russian Conquest in the Nineteenth Century*, contain a wealth of information. For a more detailed discussion of the Georgian past, the reader will benefit from the works of Cyrille Toumanoff, Steven Rapp, and David Braund. Since the late 1980s, Stephen F. Jones has produced a series of articles on the post-1989 history.

Georgian religious history can be gleaned from the works of Platon Ioseliani, Gobron Sabinin, Mikhail Tarkhnishvili, and others. Mikhail Tamarashvili’s *L’Eglise géorgienne des origines jusqu’à nos jours* (1910) remains a classic account, while David M. Lang’s *Lives and Legends of the Georgian Saints* contains English translations of various religious accounts and hagiographies. The Georgian language and literature have been studied in detail by Nikolay Marr, Arnold Chikobava, Tamaz Gamkrelidze, Akaki Shandzidze, Korneli Danelia, Korneli Kekelidze, Simon Janashia, Shota Dzidziguri, and others. The standard English studies are those by George Hewitt and Donald Rayfield, while Hans Vogt, Josef Karst, Edzard Furnée, and G. Deeters produced French and German studies.

Paul Hillery’s website (http://www.armazi.com/georgian/) is arguably the best online source for the study of the Georgian language. Georgian literary works are translated in numerous languages, and Shota Rustaveli’s *Vepkhistkaosani* is probably the most widely translated Georgian literary work and is available in all Western European languages. Kevin Tuite’s recent work contains an anthology of Georgian folk poetry. Several interesting travel books have appeared in recent years, among them Peter Nasmyth’s *Georgia: A Rebel in the Caucasus* (1992) and *Georgia: In the Mountains of Poetry* (1998), Robert Kaplan’s *Eastward to Tartary* (2000), Tony Anderson’s *Bread and Ashes: A Walk Through the Mountains of Georgia* (2003), and Roger Rosen’s *Georgia: A Sovereign Country of the Caucasus* (2004).

The Internet has a growing collection of Georgian literary works that can be found at websites: Georgian Literature (http://literatura.iatp.ge/), Georgian Proverbs (http://web.sanet.ge/meskhitb/gp.htm), and “Matiane” collection of historical documents and sources (http://www.matiane.com/). Online Georgian–English (http://www.kvali.com/dictionary/v1/) and Georgian–German (http://www.foreignword.com/dictionary/Georgian/default.htm) dictionaries are also available. Additional materials can be found in various directories of Georgian web portals: http://www.internet.ge/en/, www.geres.ge, or http://www.qartuli.com/. Russian translations are presented at Georgian Literature (http://geolit.nm.ru) and Moshkov’s E-Library (http://www.lib.ru). Armazi Project (http://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de/framee.htm) at the University of Frankfurt is the largest effort to digitize ancient Georgian texts and provide a scholarly analysis of some of them.

The National Parliamentary Library serves as a central repository of printed materials and its catalog can be searched at http://www.nplg.gov.ge. The National Library runs another interesting website *Sakartvelos biblioteka* (http://library.ge), which contains information on Georgian libraries. The Georgian Library Association (http://www.gela.org.ge) provides information on legislation, educational system, and other issues. Georgian manuscripts are studied and preserved at the Kekelidze Institute of Manuscripts (http://www.acnet.ge/manuscr.htm) of the Georgian Academy of Sciences (http://www.acnet.ge/). Major collections of Georgian books and other materials are available at some American universities. The Harvard
library has one of the most important collections of government documents and other materials of Menshevik Georgia, which the university bought from Georgian émigrés in 1974 and returned to the Georgian government in 1997. A copy of the archive, containing over 200 reels of microfilm, is available in the Houghton Library at Harvard University. Large collections of books on Georgia and the Caucasus can be found in the libraries of the universities of Yale and Stanford and the University of California Los Angeles as well as in the U.S. Library of Congress.

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About the Author

Alexander Mikaberidze graduated with a degree in international law from Tbilisi State University (TSU) in Georgia in 1999 and continued his legal studies at the Viadrina-Europe University (Germany) and Central European University (Hungary). He worked as an international law expert for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia from 1996–2000. His lifelong interest in history led to his founding of the Napoleonic Society of Georgia in 1999 and organizing the International Napoleonic Congress at TSU a year later. In 2000, he was invited to the Institute on Napoleon and the French Revolution at Florida State University (USA), where he completed his doctorate in history in 2003. He has taught courses in European, world and Middle Eastern history at Florida State and Mississippi State Universities, and has lectured on strategy and policy for the U.S. Naval War College.

His major publications include the critically acclaimed Russian Officer Corps in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (Savas Beatie, 2004), Czar’s General: The Memoirs of a Russian General of the Napoleonic Wars (Ravenhall Books, 2005), the forthcoming Napoleon’s Hollow Victory: Battle of Borodino, 1812, and The Lion of the Russian Army: Life and Career of Prince Peter Bagration.