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## Koževnikova archive project

- Svaneti Museum of History and Ethnography  
(Dr Nino Tserediani, director)
- Georgian National Museum (Manana Xizanašvili)
- SSHRC project # 435-2018-0950 *Vernacular religion in Soviet and post-Soviet Georgia*
- Elene, Vladimer & Davit Gugušvili

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Evdokia (Dīna) Koževnikova-Gugušvili	
1905.28.12	born Blagoveščensk
1908	death of father (Manchuria)
	mother with 4 children moves to Peterburg
1924	EK graduates 33rd Edinaja Trudovaja Srednjaja Škola (Leningrad) Begins study at Geographic Institute (in Ethnography)
1925	15 мая 1925 года Географический институт Постановлением СНК РСФСР был введен в состав Ленинградского Университета на правах географического факультета
1926	summer fieldwork in Rač'a
1927	summer fieldwork in Svaneti
1928.07.22-11.26	summer fieldwork in Svaneti (Mestia, Mulax, Latal, Bečo)
1929	summer fieldwork in Svaneti
1930	graduates Ethnographic Odelenie of LGU Geogr. faculty
1930.09-1931.12	komandirovka in Upper Svaneti end.IX-XII.1930 Ipari XII.1930-10.I.1931 Mulax 10.I.1931-end.V Latal VI-mid.VIII.1931 Becho mid-VIII-end.X other villages (Ipari, Kala, Ušgul) 25.IX-end.XI.1931 Ipari
1931-1934 ?	naučnyj sotrudnik at GAIMK (Государст. акад. истории материальной культуры), directed by N. Marr
1934	marries Vano Gugušvili
1934.12.17	birth of son Vladimer/Vova. EK becomes ill, gives son to mother to care for
1936.03	begins Aspirantura at ENIMKI (Inst. Lang, History, Material Culture) of Geo SSR Acad Sci.
1937.05.13	mother dies. EK takes leave until Sept 1938 to care for ill son
1938.10	birth of daughter Elene. EK remains at home with children
1942	EK & kids move to Mestia. begins work at Mestia Museum. After 8 months, EK quits museum, due to frequent illnesses of son
1942-46	lives in Vano's mother's village (Mingrelia) with children
1946 winter	mother-in-law dies
1946 summer	fieldwork in Svaneti

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## Archive contents

- Class notes from LGU: ethnography (Bogoraz, Kagarov, Shternberg), history, foreign languages, medicine, pharmacology
- Fieldwork in Svaneti: texts (in Svan), diaries, photographs; letters, drawings, poems, misc. documents
- Reports and papers on Svaneti (mostly drafts and scattered pages)

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## Upper and Lower Svaneti



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## Svaneti in 1927-1931

- i. Geography & history. The Upper Svan communes in medieval & modern times
- ii. Resistance to Tsarist Russia.
- iii. Svaneti in the first decade of Soviet power.
  - a. The 1924 uprising & its aftermath
  - b. Demography:
    - 1926 USSR census: 6289 men + 6869 women = 13158 Svans (as self-declared ethnicity)
    - 1931 Admin-territ delenija SSSR. Population on 01.01.1931: Zemo-Svaneti Raion 12006 + Kvemo-Svaneti Raion 8210 = 20216 people
  - c. Agriculture, infrastructure (lack of automobile road). Portrayal in film Džim Švante: (premodern society with feudal inequality, subsistence economy, vulnerability to climate, migrant labor & risks of winter travel, religious backwardness — costly and pointless rituals, women's impurity, corrupt priesthood; building of road to let Soviet modernity in)
  - d. Svan community leaders: Egnate Gablian (1881-1937), Silibistro Naveriani (1890-?1937)

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## Religion in early Soviet Svaneti

- i. “Dvoeverie” model: Georgian Orthodoxy and vernacular religion. Reality more complex: cohabitation and interpenetration of both systems. Priests blessing local festivals, receiving part of offerings (collected by their “starosta”). Last priest in Latali (Fr. Margiani) arrested & executed in 1937.
- ii. Svan vernacular religion as exceptionally elaborate variant of Georgian folk Orthodoxy. Basic features:
  - a. Spatial & temporal framing by Orthodoxy: church calendar & Churches as ritual sites.
  - b. Principal supernaturals: God, Archangel, Mary, George. Jesus relegated to minor role (and near-total absence of central mysteries of Christianity: virgin birth, Christ’s preaching, redemption on cross, resurrection)
  - c. Exchanges with supernaturals through speech acts and offerings: bread, alcohol, candles, animal sacrifice
  - d. Contact with the dead
  - e. Impurity of women’s blood-flow

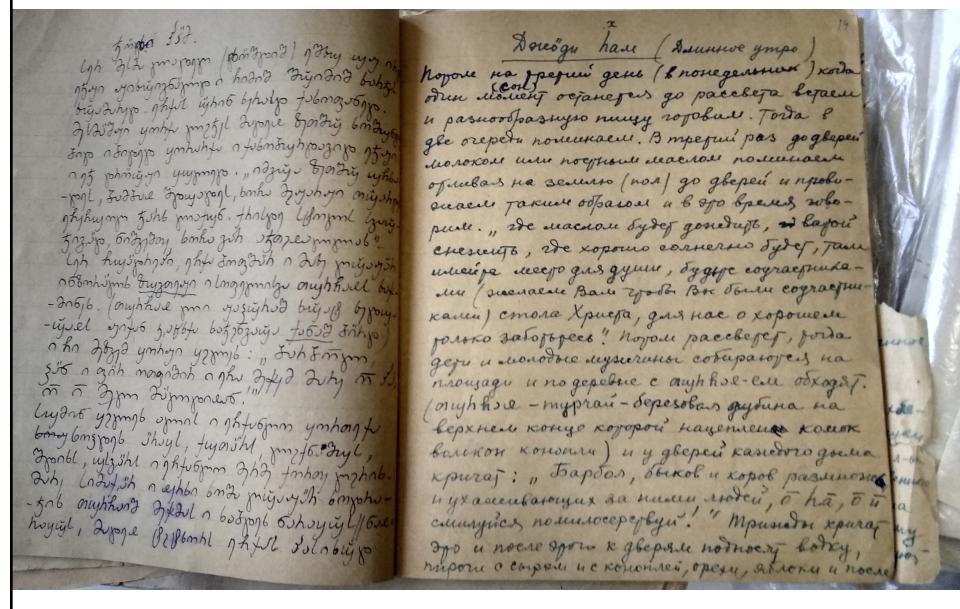
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## Distinct features of Svan vernacular religion

- a. Women’s rituals and ritual spaces — not just paralleling those of men, but having wider range, invoking both female and male-gendered deities.
- b. Expansion of Orthodox spatial distinctions (sanctuary vs. lay spaces) into public/private, with latter accompanied by sensory isolation (“unseeable” offerings, blocking of visual & auditory contact; ban on lending tools), and zones of ritual access (with attendance at New Year’s Eve allowing access throughout the year). Circles of participation, from intimate/closed to neighborhood (*lask’ar*) groups, quarters/hamlets, all-village and nearby villages
- c. Elaborate variety of offerings, according to deity, festival and function, especially *lemzir* breads (shape, filling, indentations)
- d. More complex calendar than elsewhere in Georgia

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## texts in Svan (sometimes with translations)



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## photographs and annotations

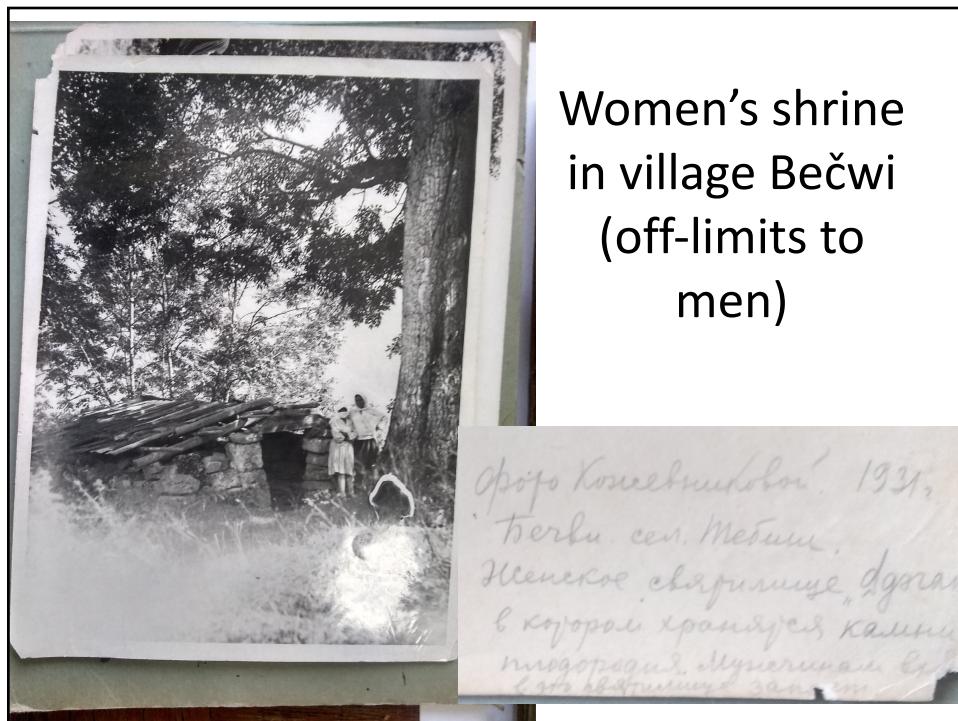


Родовое искривление  
на языке "могильный", посреди  
них, в день богоявления — за ноготь  
необходимо гениталии носа и ныроб.



Бородовое поедание изверженного  
примеси гипса на месте топки в бу-  
точке - незапаханное место среди кис-  
лосыпучих болот. Гамин

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Women's shrine  
in village Bečwi  
(off-limits to  
men)

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## scenes of mourning



Поминки на 40-й день смерти.  
За скромное изображение  
умершего в его одеснеге.  
Ларри



Родители умершего магната.  
Абдур

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Svans at work (with emphasis on pre-modern technology)



Средства перевозки.  
(Конеся Сванетия не знали).



Nogromolka к молотилке

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The first years of Soviet power in Svaneti



Комсомольская ячейка  
в Ухидарах.



Красный уголок районного комитета в Местии, 1927г.

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# data on crops & yields

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# food diary of a Svan schoolgirl

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