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**HISTORIC, GEOGRAPHIC AND ETHNOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION
OF SAMEGRELO**

(ACCORDING TO NEW ETHNOGRAPHIC MATERIALS)

Numerous historical-ethnographical essays or scientific works have been written on Megrelia. However, it is clear that at least one new custom, tradition will contribute to a more complete ethnographic picture of Samegrelo (whether traditional or modern).

We believe that from the very beginning “the Georgian” as an ethnic unity was comprised of the Megrelians-Chans (the Lazs), Svans, Meskhs and other Georgian communities. They shared a common homeland.

Samegrelo is an interesting region from ethnographic perspective. Transformation of customs and traditions that has occurred within this community was a result of geographic location, advancement in economics and culture, and the “adoption of urban culture”. This led to the situation where old traditions were replaced with the new ones.

The main occupation of Samegrelo’s population has been, and still is agriculture as well as live-stock farming.

A vineyard has had a special importance for the lives of Megrelian peasants.

Beekeeping is wide-spread among the fields of economy. A major role of hunting is also attested.

Artisanship and craftsmanship, particularly weaving and pottery, were developed in Samegrelo. Blacksmithing was wide-spread.

Change in dressing habits was resulted from different life situations: imitation