

SCHEDULE*

*All times listed below are in the U.S. EDT time, the same timezone as New York. Find comparable times to where you are using [this tool](#).

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

9.00-10.30am EDT – Virtual Room 1

South Caucasus Field Archaeological Reports: Neolithic to Bronze Age

Chair-Discussant: Alan Greene (Bard Early College)

Spatial Analysis of Archaeological Excavation Data through Mixed and Augmented Reality: A Case Study of the Vedi Fortress

Hayk Azizbekyan (University of Hong Kong, and Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA) and Peter J. Cobb (University of Hong Kong)

Kurgans, Weapons, and Cultural Frontiers: Rethinking Northwest Iran within the South Caucasian Archaeological Sphere

Zahra Kouzehgari (CNRS – Université Lumière Lyon 2-Archéorient)

The Shahumyan Tomb: Social and Cultural Insights into Ararat Valley Society in the 3rd Millennium BCE (Preliminary Results of the Study of the First “Shresh–Mokhrablur” Burial)

Armine Harutyunyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA), L. Aghikyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA), Kh. Meliksetian (Institute of Geological Sciences), R. Badalyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA)

Debedavan (Armenia): A Recently Discovered Neolithic Settlement in the Kura Valley and Its Position within the Aratashen-Shulaveri-Shomutepe Tradition

Levon Aghikyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA), Bérengère Perello (Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS)), Alexia Decaix (GéoArchEon, UMR 7209 BioArch), Armine Harutyunyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA), Cécile Menager (Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS)), Tim Mibord (GéoArchEon, UMR 7209 BioArch)

The Early Bronze Age Settlement of Voskeblur (Ararat Valley, Armenia): Stratigraphy, Chronology, and Regional Context

Bérengère Perello (Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS)), Armine Harutyunyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA), Levon Aghikyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA), Sona Hovsepyan (History Museum of Armenia), Ruben Badalyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA)

9.00-10.30am EDT – Virtual Room 2

Navigating the Turn: State Power, Minorities, and Materiality in Georgia

Chair-Discussant: Ariel Otruba (Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance (VTIPG))

Becoming a Trace: Protests Outside the Public Broadcaster in Georgia’s Authoritarian Turn

Tatia Dvali (Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis)

Narratives of Fear and Silence: Georgian Azerbaijanis’ Collective Memory in 1990s in Georgia

Klaudia Kosicińska (Adam Mickiewicz University)

Chemtan Chemi Okro: Gold, Wine, and the Politics of Extraction
Rikki Brown (University of California, Santa Cruz)

10.45am-12.15pm EDT – Virtual Room 1

Identity: Genetic and Constructed

Chair-Discussant: Rebecca Mitchell (Middlebury College)

An Expanded Genomic Analysis of Western Georgian (Caucasus) Populations
Theodore Schurr (University of Pennsylvania)

Karaites as a Transimperial Group between Russian and Ottoman Empires
Aikaterini Lykoudi (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO))

When Marriage Ends Education: Girls' School Dropout in Azerbaijan
Gunel Alasgarova (The Ohio State University)

10.45am-12.15pm EDT – Virtual Room 2

Animating Archives in the South Caucasus: Audiovisual Media between Memory and Invention

Chair-Discussant: Melissa Bilal (University of California, Los Angeles)

Getting the Band Back Together: Fabricating Historical Media in Soso Chaidze's Unfinished Television Film Shvidk'atsa
Brian Fairley (University of Pittsburgh)

Listening to Armenian Baku: Musical History and Memory in Digital Diaspora
Jonathan Hollis (Independent Scholar)

Hye-Tech: Armenian Music and Generative AI
Alyssa Mathias (Knox College)

Dede: The Role of Segah in Sustaining Juhuri Music Abroad
John Szczuka (SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies))

12.30-2.00pm EDT – Virtual Room 1

Doing Historical Research in Georgia and the South Caucasus in an Age of Archival Closure

Chair-Discussant: Malkhaz Toria (Ilia State University)

The Enigma of Hasan Tahsin Khimshiashvili: On the Trail of an Ajaran Revolutionary in and out of the Georgian Archives

Harrison King (University of California, Berkeley)

Playing for Time: A Mid-Career Approach to Source Access Issues

Timothy Blauvelt (Ilia State University)

Across Countries and Archives: Conducting Research on the 19th-Century Caucasus

Evgeniya Prusskaya (Marburg University)

12.30-2.00pm EDT – Virtual Room 2

Creative Approaches to Identity

Chair-Discussant: Ecem Sariçayir (California College of the Arts)

Architectures in Dialogue: Medieval Armenian Monuments and their Legacy in Twentieth-Century Design

Elise Schlecht (Emory University)

Imperial Demographic Engineering in the Eastern Caucasus: Population Policies from the Safavid to the Russian Period

Lala Aliyeva (Baku State University)

The Spiritual Christians of the Caucasus

J. Eugene Clay (Arizona State University)

Art and the Cult of Relics in Medieval Georgia: Material Identity and Cultural Influences in Georgia's Golden Age

Marzia Ellero Ransom (University of West Florida)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

9.00-10.30am EDT – Virtual Room 1

Canceled: Russian and Soviet Imperial Legacies in Georgia and Armenia: Memories, Images, Structures

This panel has been canceled.

Yulia Antonyan will be presenting her paper as part of the session, "Stage, Song, and Archive: Cultural Agency in the Imperial and Soviet Caucasus" on Saturday, September 19 at 9:00am US EDT.

9.00-10.30am EDT – Virtual Room 2

Heritage on the Edge: Archaeology, Memory, and the Built Environment in Armenia's Border Regions

Chair-Discussant: Haykuhi Muradyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA)

Border Monuments: A Comparative Analysis of Syunik and Tavush Regions

Hamazasp Abrahamyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA)

The Role of Geographic Information Systems in Cultural Heritage Mapping

Artyom Ananyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA)

The Role of Spring Monuments in Organizing the Memorial Landscape of Movses Village, Tavush Province

Anush Safaryan (Yerevan State University)

Soviet Legacy and Architectural Heritage in Border Settlements

Haykuhi Muradyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA)

10.45am-12.15pm EDT – Virtual Room 1

Geopolitics, Law, and its Discontents

Chair-Discussant: Natia Chankvetadze, Harvard University

Reimagining Small State Agency: Foreign Policy Change in the South Caucasus

Daniel Shapiro (University of Pennsylvania)

Building Bridges? US-Armenia Relations Under 2nd Trump Administration

Emil Ordukhanyan (Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Law, NAS RA) and Josiah Marineau (University of North Carolina at Pembroke)

United We fall? Russia and Iran Soft Balancing the West in South Caucasus

Narek Sukiasyan (Yerevan State University) and Anna Gevorgyan (Yerevan State University)

Beyond Treaties and Campaigns: A Legal Culture Approach to Agency in the South Caucasus

Rimma Snesar Sanchez (University of Cambridge)

10.45am-12.15pm EDT – Virtual Room 2

Mobilities and Belonging in a Changing South Caucasus

Chair-Discussant: Stephen Jones (Harvard University; Ilia State University)

From Crossroads to Confluence: Cultural Dynamics of the South Caucasus

Norayr Mnatsakanyan (Defense Language Institute)

Intergenerational Transmission of Narratives of Nakhijevani Armenians after 1988

Lilit Saghatlyan (Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem)

From the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War to COVID-19: Gender Politics in Armenia, 2020-2024

Lori Pirinjian (University of California, Los Angeles)

12.30-2.00pm EDT – Virtual Room 1

Landmarks & Legacies: Urban Environments in Comparative Perspective

Chair-Discussant: Alexander Agadjanian (American University of Armenia; Yerevan State University)

Mapping at a Crossroads: The Cartographic Landscapes of Tiflis/Tbilisi

Maria C. Taylor (Cornell University)

Imageability and Iconicity: The Ethnography of Urban Landmarks in Tbilisi

Ketevan Gurchiani (Ilia State University)

From Desert Oil Town to Natural Wonder: Finding the Khrushchev-Era Urban Icon in Baku

Heather D. DeHaan (Binghamton University)

Imaging the Absent: Iconisation of Mount Ararat and the Semiotics of Urban Transformation in Yerevan

Arsen Abrahamyan (University of Amsterdam, Cultural and Social Narratives Laboratory | CSN Lab)

12.30-2.00pm EDT – Virtual Room 2

Coffee and Creatives Presentations

Chair-Discussant: Kevin Tuite (University of Montreal)

Presentations: [presenters will be reading their works]

Translation from the Songs of Sayat-Nova

Peter Orte (Oberlin College)

Uncommon Condition: Fractured Fairytales on Literature, Pedagogy, and Geopolitics in the Republic of Georgia

Joseph Wood (University of Alabama at Birmingham)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2026

9.00-10.30am EDT – Virtual Room 1

South Caucasus Field Archaeological Reports: From the Iron Age On

Chair-Discussant: Elizabeth Fagan (Virginia Commonwealth University)

Rethinking the So-Called “Phanagorian Regression” in South Colchis: A Geoarchaeological Perspective from Kobuleti, Georgia

Nino Gokhidze (Museum of Natural History, Paris (MNHN), FORA – Young Archaeologist Association of Achara)

“Social Space” at Karafçamirli: Reconstructing Achaemenid Court Culture in the South Caucasus

Charlotte Howley (University of California, Los Angeles)

Looking at Interconnectedness through Archaeology: How Excavations in Armenia's Vedi River Valley Help Us Understand the Exchange of Ideas and Traditions

Yishu Deng (University of Hong Kong), Peter J. Cobb (University of Hong Kong), and Hayk Azizbekyan (University of Hong Kong; Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA)

Views from the Canyons: A Decade of the Vayots Dzor Silk Road Survey

Kate Franklin (Tufts University) and Astghik Babajanyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA)

Strategies of Preservation of the Armenian Cultural Heritage in Azerbaijan Based on the Turkish Experience

Ilia Logvin (Southern Federal University (Rostov-on-Don))

9.00-10.30am EDT – Virtual Room 2

Stage, Song, and Archive: Cultural Agency in the Imperial and Soviet Caucasus

Chair-Discussant: Alyssa Mathias (Knox College)

The Human Connection: Emina Eldarova at the VII International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Moscow, 1964

Anna Carolyn Oldfield (Coastal Carolina University)

Anton Eichenwald: Criminal Impresario of the Tbilisi Opera House

Céleste Pagniello (Princeton University)

Memory, Freedom, and Belonging in South Caucasus Literature

Layla Goushey (St. Louis Community College)

Fools and Rogues in the Drama of Jalil Mammadguluzadeh

Peter Orte (Oberlin College)

10.45am-12.15pm EDT – Virtual Room 1

Contemplations of Boundaries, Conflict and Sovereignty

Chair-Discussant: Ariel Otruba (Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance (VTIPG))

Track III Dialogues between Georgian and Ossetian Youth

Lucy Minicozzi-Wheeland (Villanova University)

Posthumanist Cinematic Reconceptualizations of the Southern Caucasian (Post-)Conflict Territorialities

Luka Bedoshvili (KU Leuven & Research Foundation Flanders (FWO))

Phonetic Interference in the Process of Teaching the Georgian Language: Analysis of the Speech of Azerbaijani-Speaking Students

Ekaterine Gogaladze (Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University) and Elvira Aslanovi (Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University)

10.45am-12.15pm EDT – Virtual Room 2

Oil, Empire, and Nations: New Histories of the Soviet South Caucasus

Chair-Discussant: Kelsey Rice (Berry College)

Black Caucasians: What Shaaban Abash and Bashir Shambe tell us about Soviet Nationalities Policy and Communist Racial Discourse

Alex Jackson (Harvard University)

Lenin, Stalin, and Their Peasant Admirers: Revolution, Nation, and Anti-Imperial Orientalism in the Soviet South Caucasus, mid-1920s–mid-1930s

Diego Benning Wang (Harvard University)

Oil Field, Socialist City: Neft Daşları and Fossil Socialism at Sea

Alp Demiroğlu (Yale University)

Soviet Repression, Legality, and the Accommodation of Armenian Nationalism, 1960s–1980s

Georg Avetikyan (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO))

12.30-2.00pm EDT

Keynote Address

The Caucasus: Sovereignty Beyond the State

Harsha Ram (University of California at Berkeley)

The South Caucasus is a region where state sovereignty has been more the exception rather than the rule, something gained when national independence was wrested from empires in a state of disintegration or - at the very least - distraction. At the same time, the politics of the region have long been distinguished by such acts as gift-giving, oath-taking, lavish feasting, the custodianship of sacred sites, the capture of prisoners for ransom, raiding, and the seizure of hostages to secure pledges of fealty. The pervasiveness of such practices would thus point to the coexistence of multiple régimes of sovereignty, some consistent with the formal logic of modern statehood, others manifested by a range of local or non-state actors as a means of asserting agency or mounting resistance. While classical political theory defined sovereignty as the apex of state power, we might also ask how competing actors — state and non-state, national and regional, cultural and political — have claimed or enacted authority even during those prolonged periods when statehood was absent or only nominally present. I provide some examples from the literary archive.

Harsha Ram teaches in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California, Berkeley. He first travelled to the South Caucasus in 1999 and has been studying the region ever since. He is the author of *The Imperial Sublime: A Russian Poetics of Empire* (2003) and numerous articles on Russian-Georgian literary relations. He is presently completing a book-length study on the subject titled *The Poetics of Sovereignty. Literatures of the Russian-Georgian Encounter*.