



THE ARMENIANS OF ABKHAZIA

IDENTIFICATION & SELF-IDENTIFICATION
IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY

Lecture by *Zadig Tisserand*, researcher
At the *NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building*

Hybrid event (in-person & streaming live on Zoom & Youtube)

NOVEMBER 8, 2022
AT 7:30PM



National Association for
Armenian Studies and Research

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Having arrived in successive waves on the shores of the Black Sea in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Armenians of Abkhazia today constitute over 20% of the population of the de facto Republic of Abkhazia. The Armenian community of Abkhazia, the members of which self-identify as “Hamshen,” emigrated from northeast Turkey and have preserved their traditions and dialects, which they still use in the private sphere.

Thirty years after the war in Abkhazia (1992-1993), the Armenians of Abkhazia are embedded in the fragile process of Abkhazian national construction. Within this young ethnic democracy, they are thus regularly questioned on several aspects of their identity: Are they Abkhazians or Armenians? Are the Hamshen and Armenian identities contradictory? How do they identify themselves and how are they identified by the Abkhazian State? Finally, what might their relationship to the Republic of Armenia be?

Zadig Tisserand received a BA in Political Science (2018) and an MA in Political Theory (2020) from Sciences Po Paris. His master's thesis, based on six months of field research in the de facto State of Abkhazia, examined the political mobilization of Abkhazian Armenians within that ethnic democracy. He continues to study the geopolitics of the South Caucasus. An article on the Persian Gulf-Black Sea Transit Corridor is forthcoming in the academic journal *Confluences Méditerranée*.

We recommend the wearing of masks to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

Zoom Registration Link:

<https://bit.ly/NAASR-Tisserand>

NAASR YouTube Channel Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ArmenianStudies>