
ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION

UDC 39+9

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2025-1/305-322

Original article

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THE ANCESTRAL CULT OF DZHAPUA IN THE SYSTEM OF ABKHAZIAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION

Based on the author's field materials, the paper studies one of the many clan (family) prayers that function as an institution of the Abkhazian traditional religion, from the perspective of its archaic roots and the modern state. It provides a detailed description of the ritual practice and the interpretation of its main elements. A complex study of the cult allowed the author to clarify its origin, to determine its functional purpose, and to attempt to suggest the etymology of its name.

Keywords: *Abkhazian traditional religion, clan, clan cult, clan organization, rite, ritual, prayer, sacrifice, ritual dance*

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For citation: Biguaa, V. L. 2025. The Ancestral Cult of Dzhapua in the System of Abkhazian Traditional Religion. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 1: 305–322.

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