

(NEO-)PAGANISM IN THE CAUCASUS: THE OSSETES BETWEEN RUSSIAN ORTHODOXY AND SALAFI MUSLIM

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Linguistic and cultural descendants of the ancient Scythians, the Ossetes of the central Caucasus have preserved numerous vestiges of archaic Iranian rituals and beliefs. In recent years their distinctive ancestral practices have come under fire from Christian and Muslim authorities alike who characterize them as relics of paganism. For many Ossetes these attacks have served only to strengthen their sense of national identity.

Speaker:

Richard Foltz is a cultural historian of the broader Iranian world whose interests span from the Kurds in the west to the Tajiks in the east. He holds a Ph.D. in History and Middle East Studies from Harvard University and has taught at Brown, Columbia, and the University of Florida. He is currently a Full Professor in the Department of Religions and Cultures at Concordia University in Montréal, Canada. His books and articles have been translated into more than a dozen languages.

Details

5.00-6.30 PM Thursday, 26 February 2026
CAIS Meeting Room Rm 2.06 & Online via Zoom
Registration: via [Humanitix](#)

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