**The Golden Fleece**

While the age-old tale of Jason and the Argonauts sailing to the west coast of the Caucasus in pursuit of the Golden Fleece may be the stuff of Greek myth, the fleece itself was real.

Said Botso, “All the golden fleece is, you know, we are shepherders, and very fast rivers descend from the high mountains. They bring gold with them. What they did, they sheared the sheep and put (the fleece) under the river like a rug, left it there for a certain period of time, then took it out, burned it, and there was gold there – golden fleece.”

The fleece would sometimes be hung in trees to dry and the gold shaken or combed out. This was a basic method of washing gold from streams that is documented (circa 5th century B.C.) in the region of Georgia to the east of the Black Sea.

Missing hiking with his father in the mountains, Bosto found a hiking friend in high school. Writes Botso in his autobiography: “I started to spend summers with Dzuria in his homeland (the Svaneti region of Georgia). The snow-covered peaks where Prometheus had been chained. Cold, fast streams where shepherds stored the sheep’s fleeces under the rock to trap the gold flakes, the ‘golden fleece,’ which had attracted Jason and his Argonauts.”

(Source: Wikipedia)