Why Daghestan is Good to Think: Moshe Gammer, Daghestan, and Global Islamic History”

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WRITTEN CULTURE IN DAGHESTAN
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Edited by
Moshe Gammer
This volume, the third in the series on Daghestan, contains some of the papers delivered at the international conference on “Written Culture in Daghestan” held at Tel Aviv University on 18–20 May 2008. The conference had a twofold aim: first, to further enhance awareness of Daghestan’s rich heritage as a major center of Islamic scholarship and of the immense quantity of manuscripts, many of them unique, preserved in practically every village, which are still being recovered; and second, to mark the eightieth birthday of Amri Shikhsaidov, the doyen and founder of the Daghestan school of Arabic studies.

From the eleventh century and until the 1920s Daghestan was a major center of Islamic learning for the entire Caucasus and beyond. Its madrasahs educated students from all over the area and beyond, and their graduates found employment all over the Islamic world. Its closest ties were with the centers of the Shafi’i school – Egypt, Syria, and especially Yemen. In the nineteenth century also the Naqshbandi networks in the Ottoman Empire and Central Asia became important foci of contacts.

This tradition of learning survived well into the Soviet period. Rukiya Sharafutdinova, who took part in field expeditions in Daghestan in 1960–68, met “excellent Arabic speakers, who could recite classical verses for hours without remission”. Furthermore, respect for learning and for the written word has survived in Daghestan until today. Manuscripts were kept with reverence from generation to generation. [...] Everyone, without exception, cultivated a relation of piety to the Arabic word and of respect to anyone who knew the Arabic script – it is as if this was in their blood, so I felt.

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2 Rukiya Sharafutdinova, personal communication.

3 Ibid.
It is out of this respect that people hid their libraries during the Stalin years, when both books and manuscripts in Arabic script and their owners were in danger. And it is with pride in their heritage that these owners allowed scholars and students from Makhachkala on field expeditions to see, record and catalog these manuscripts.

This ongoing enterprise is to a great extent the achievement of Amri Shikhsaidov. A graduate of the Leningrad Arabist School, Shikhsaidov started in the late 1950s the annual field expeditions to villages to look for manuscripts and epigraphic material. He has been carrying out this task indefatigably, for over half a century leaving each summer for the mountains. Due to his persistent efforts a modest, unassuming venture was transformed into a major project supported by both the Republican (Daghestani) and Federal (Moscow) scientific establishments and governments. This enterprise brought to light a great number of libraries and manuscript collections and provided practical training to generations of students. Many of Shikhsaidov’s students participated in the conference and all but three of the chapters in this volume were written by them.

While Arabic was by far the major literary language in Daghestan for more than a millennium and accounts for the overwhelming majority of the country’s literary output, it was by no means the only language used in writing. Still, almost all research has concentrated on Arabic. To redress that lacuna, five of the chapters in this volume deal with non-Arabic literary cultures. The first two chapters concentrate on non-Islamic written cultures. The Arabic alphabet was neither the only nor the first to be used in Daghestan. Before Islamization both the Pahlavi Persian and the Albanian scripts were used at least in some parts of Daghestan. Murtazali S. Gadjiev’s contribution deals with this topic. Jews remained the only non-Muslim minority in Islamized Daghestan until the Russian conquest. They used the Hebrew alphabet for both the Hebrew and Tat languages until the Soviet authorities banned Hebrew and created a Cyrillic alphabet for Tat. Gennadi Sosunov’s article deals with Hebrew inscriptions.

Other Islamic languages were used in Daghestan, as well. Persian and Turkic inscriptions and manuscripts have hardly been studied. Local languages written in the Arabic alphabet, known as ʿajamī, were naturally of greater interest to Daghestani scholars. Amirkhan Isaev’s and Jamalutdin Malamahomedov’s articles deal with the genesis of ʿajamī and with the problems related to its study, respectively. Mahomedkhan Mahomedkhanov’s contribution presents examples of such writings in both local languages and Arabic.

This introduces the reader to the next five articles dealing with manuscripts and printed publications in Arabic. The final part of the volume is dedicated to the history of the study of Arabic culture in Daghestan. Rukiya Sharafutdinova’s article elaborates the contribution of Ignatii Krachkovskii, the doyen of Arab studies in the Soviet Union, to this field. The last article, by Shikhsaidov, describes his life-long project, its results and the tasks ahead.

The conference could not have taken place without the financial and organizational assistance of many members of staff of Tel Aviv University. Special thanks for financial assistance are to Prof. Dany Leviatan the then Rector, Prof. Shlomo Biderman, Dean of the Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities, Prof. Ehud Toledano, Head of the Graduate School of History, Prof. Eyal Zisser, Chair of the Department of Middle Eastern and African History, Prof David Menashri, Head of the Iranian Studies Center, and Prof. Miriam Eliav-Feldon Head of the Morris E. Curiel Institute for European Studies.

Thanks are due to many for the production of this volume. First of all to Kaj Öhrnberg of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, who keenly encouraged the publication of this series. Roman Vater translated all the chapters from Russian. Dr. Ursula Wokoeck finalized them. Rachel Yorman prepared the index. Last, but not least, thanks are due to the contributors to this volume.5

Moshe Gammer
Tel Aviv,
April 2012

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5 Due to untimely death of Moshe Gammer in 2013 the editors of the Series Humaniora have decided to include one more paper in this book: the memorial essay on Moshe Gammer and Daghestani studies by Rebecca Gould opens this volume of articles. The series editors would also like to thank Prof. Murtazali S. Gadjiev for his help with the cover illustrations.
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MOSHE GAMMER
MEMORIAL ESSAY
WHY DAGHESTAN IS GOOD TO THINK:
MOSHE GAMMER, DAGHESTAN,
AND GLOBAL ISLAMIC HISTORY

Rebecca Gould

The first works of Daghestani philology, dating from the early middle ages, were in Arabic. These were commentaries, glosses, marginalia, and transcriptions of major Arabic works that had reached the Caucasus from Baghdad, Mecca, Damascus, and other centers of Arabic learning. As Islamic learning became localized over the centuries, the formerly exclusive position of Arabic was replaced by a multilingual coexistence of texts in Turkish, Persian, and Daghestani vernaculars, in particular Lak, Avar, and Dargi. As noted by Amirkhan Isaev, this vernacular philology was preserved in “epigraphic records and on the pages of some [Arabic] manuscripts from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries”. The florescence of vernacular philology in early modern Daghestan coincided with a shift in the sources of manuscripts, which were increasingly copied locally rather than imported from abroad.

Concomitantly with the increasing prominence of marginalia and inscriptions in Daghestani vernaculars, the Arabic alphabet was adapted to the “phonetic peculiarities of the Daghestani languages”. This process of adaptation began in earnest in the late fifteenth century, and resulted in a script known as ‘ajamī, that was used throughout Daghestan until the 1920s. Early modern shifts in the centers of manuscript production combined with the formalization of Daghestani vernaculars to create a new Daghestani philology. Intrinsically multilingual and

\[\text{Amirkhan Isaev, “The genesis of Arabic script for Daghestani languages”, p. 70 (this volume).}\]
\[\text{Amri Shikhsaidov, “The manuscript collections in Daghestan”, p. 223 (this volume).}\]
\[\text{Isaev, “The genesis of Arabic script for Daghestani languages”, p. 69–70 (this volume).}\]
\[\text{In addition to the chapters in this volume, see the locus classicus for the study of Daghestan ‘ajamī: A. M. Barabanov, “Poiasnitel’nye znachki v arabskikh rukopisiakh i dokumentakh Severnoho Kavkaza”, Sovetskoe vostokovedenie 3 (1945): 183–214.}\]
transregional in outlook, this philology addressed readers of different languages and backgrounds. It localized and adapted Islamic knowledge. Due to the traumatic ruptures of colonial, followed by Soviet, modernity, traces of this philology are at once obscure and everywhere on display (if one knows where and how to look) in contemporary Daghestan.

The late Soviet and post-Soviet periods witnessed the publication of major editions and scholarly monographs based on close engagements with primary sources in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Avar, Lak, and other Daghestani vernaculars. This chapter proposes a dialogue between these advances in Daghestani scholarship and contiguous subfields of Islamic Studies. My particular focus is on the contemporary moment Daghestani scholarship, and the role of the Israeli historian Moshe Gammer (1950–2013), whose tragically early death has provided the occasion for this essay, in stimulating these latest developments in Daghestani philology.

One of the first major modern Daghestani philologists, Mirza Kazem Bek (1802–1870), was born in Rasht (northern Iran) to an Azeri family. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Kazem Bek published his commentary and translation of Muḥammad Awābī Aqtāshī’s sixteenth-century Turkic version of the Darbandnāma, one of the earliest and most valuable histories of southern Daghestan, in English. While engaging in one language of colonial modernity, this example of Daghestani philology diverged from an overall trend in the direction of Russian. With remarkably few exceptions, from the onset of the colonial rule until the present, Russian has been the language of modern Daghestani philology.

Although local scholars such as Bākīkhānūf (1794–1847) and al-Alqadārī (1834–1910) knew some Russian, they did not participate fully in Russian intellectual life nor did their work conform to the norms of European historical scholarship. As a result of the divergence in epistemic modes of inquiry, major histories of Daghestan in Persian and Azeri were relegated to the time-space of

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7 Muḥammad Awābī Aqtāshī, Darbandnāma, trans. M. A. Kazem-beg as Derbend-nameh, or the History of Derbend, St. Peters burg, 1851.
the premodern, and mostly forgotten. On the rare occasions when they were remembered, these authors were accessed exclusively in Russian. Partly due to the divergence between the norms of Russian and European scholarship and the norms governing Persian, Arabic, and Turkic philology, Bākīkhānūf’s Gulistān-i Irām (Garden of Paradise, 1841) was deemed inferior to comparable works of scholarship by his European scholarly peers, who based their assessment on a Russian translation of the Persian for which Bākīkhānūf was only partially responsible. Meanwhile al-Alqadārī’s masterpiece, Āthār-i Dāghistān (Vestiges of Daghestan, 1892), was characterized by the author’s son and translator as a text that could never be classed as “a work of scholarship [nauchnim trudom]”, because it failed to “fulfill our requirements in the sphere of historiography”.

Such misconceptions shaped the reception of Daghestani philology throughout the colonial period. Although characterized by astounding erudition and profoundly invested in the diversity of local Daghestan cultures, this discipline could not be assimilated to the epistemologies of European Orientalism. As the infrastructure of Islamic and indigenous social life yielded gradually to the homogenizing forms of governance instituted by colonial rule, the language of Daghestani philology, and of official discourse in Daghestan itself, was increasingly Russian. While obscure from a European or North American point of view, Russian functioned alongside Arabic, Azeri, and Georgian as a global language within the Soviet Caucasus. Russian language and culture offered access to a broader, if still insulated, community of readers and scholars than could be obtained on the basis of Daghestani vernaculars alone.

Notwithstanding the misapprehensions between European Orientalism and Daghestani philology which affected the reception of Bākīkhānūf’s and al-Alqadārī’s masterpieces, along with the writings of many other long-forgotten local scholars, Daghestani philology equaled in rigor scholarship produced in the centers of Russian learning, Moscow and St. Petersburg. It often exceeded these standards in its engagement with local sources. Meanwhile, within mainstream Islamic Studies, Daghestan has been (and to some extent remains) off

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limits for scholars who lack experience with Russian and Soviet history. In an earlier volume to which the present essay collection serves as a sequel, Vladimir Bobrovnikov traced the limitations that plague this field to

the Russian conquest of the northern Caucasus in the mid-nineteenth century, when there appeared real political and cultural barriers separating this region from the Ottoman Empire and the other Muslim areas of the Middle East.

Colonialism is of course part of the story, but Russia’s peculiar status within European scholarship is also relevant to this marginality.

Because British, French, and Dutch colonialism had little involvement in the Caucasus and Central Asia, Daghestan was marginal to European Orientalism outside Russia already in the nineteenth century. The separation became even more extreme during the Cold War. This oblivion has manifold implications. To list a few: Africanists studying the ‘ajamī script that functioned as the written medium for Hausa, Swahili, Kanuri, and other African languages during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not engage scholarship on the contemporaneous (and slightly prior) literarization of Daghestani vernaculars along the lines that have been traced in the present volume, for the first time in English. Oblivious to the Islamic cultures of the former Soviet Union, scholars of Islamic law have omitted the interface of Sharīʿa and ‘ādāt (indigenous law) in Daghestan, thereby missing a crucial dimension of Islamic legal history.

11 Arguments from absence are notoriously suspect, but a good measure of Daghestan’s invisibility within Islamic Studies is the recent Cambridge History of Islam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). Over the course of six volumes, including multiple chapters on Africa, India, Central Asia, and China, the only two that mention the Caucasus (by Adeeb Khalid and Muriel Atkin, in Vol. 5) concentrate on Central Asia and the Volga Urals. Aside from the titles, “Daghestan” appears nowhere in these six volumes. A parallel series on Russia includes a chapter by a Daghestan specialist (Vladimir Bobrovnikov, “Islam in Russia”, in Dominic Lieven [ed.], The Cambridge History of Russia, II: Imperial Russia, 1689–1917, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 202–223), but the differing rubric – “Russia” rather than “Islam” – is revealing. The new Encyclopaedia of Islam (Leiden: Brill, 2007–) engages more successfully with Daghestan through the inclusion of important contributions by Michael Kemper and Vladimir Bobrovnikov.


14 For example, Islamic Legal Thought: A Compendium of Muslim Jurists (eds. Oussama Arabi, David S. Powers & Susan A. Spectorsky, Leiden; Brill, 2013) makes no mention of Daghestani fiqh, or indeed of fiqh from any location other than the traditional Arab heartland. For a work with a more practical orientation that discusses the Caucasus (albeit briefly), see Abdullahi Ahmed an-Na‘im, Islamic Family Law in a Changing World, New York: Zed Books, 2002, pp. 23–36.
While ignoring the salience of Daghestani vernaculars to the study of global ʿajamī scripts, and of Daghestani fiqh to the study of ʿādāt, studies of Islamic modernity similarly factor out Daghestan’s homegrown jadīd (reformist) movement, focusing instead on more familiar Egyptian, Iraqi, Iranian, and Central Asian modernisms. Empirical in origin, these omissions have had serious conceptual ramifications. Most notably, Daghestan has been excluded from the mainstream of Islamic Studies, and Arabists (not to mention Persianists and Turkologists) tend to know little of the intellectual, legal, and literary traditions that were cultivated on this borderland of the former Russian empire for over a thousand years.

The challenges facing Daghestani philology extend beyond the inaccessibility of Russophone Daghestani philology to scholars of other parts of the Islamic world. As Bobrovnikov and Babich note in their recent survey aimed at a Russian readership, “in contemporary scholarship, [a severe] deficit affects the [study of the] histories of imperial peripheries, including the Caucasus”. This critique, it should be noted, was made with respect to Russian rather than Euro-American scholarship. In another context, Bobrovnikov, who, together with Michael Kemper, is one of only two Daghestani specialists of international stature who regularly publish in English, noted that “the study of Islam in the former Eastern outskirts of the USSR […] remains [external to] academic Islamic studies in Russia” concerned as it is with “the near and distant abroad”.

If the study of Islam within the former Soviet Union is relatively underdeveloped even within the Russian Federation, it should not be surprising that the status of this field is weaker outside the Russian-speaking world, where the primary medium of scholarly discourse, English, inevitably founders on the near-total absence of serious philological work being done with Daghestani primary sources in western European languages. With the gradual decay of the St. Petersburg school of Russian philology that coalesced around I. Iu. Krachkovskii (1883–1951), and which is responsible for the most significant work on Dagh-

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15 The work of Shamil Shikhaliev promises to address this gap in the scholarly record. See his “Dagestanskoe reformatorstvo pervoi treti XX veka kak raznovidnost’ dzhadidizma”, in G. Orazaev (ed.), Ahusuf’ian Akaev: Epokha, zhizn’, deiatel’nost’, Makhachkala: Dagestanskoe knizhnnoe izdatel’stvo, 2012, pp. 52–58 (co-authored with Michael Kemper), which is a prelude to a major book on Daghestani modernism, based primarily on Arabic manuscripts, during the pre-Soviet and Soviet periods.

16 As chapters 1 and 2 in this volume attest, Daghestani culture long predates Islamic history. However, for reasons of coherence and also due to the scope of the previous two volumes in Gammer’s series, this chapter focuses exclusively on Islamic Daghestan.


estani manuscripts, the demise of Caucasus philology, both within and outside the Russian Federation, looms on the horizons.\textsuperscript{19} Funding is hard to come by, especially within the Russian Federation, and generations of Arabists are dying off without being replaced by new scholars.

However, despair is premature. While the scholarly infrastructure is disappearing, manuscripts, which are the raw material for scholarship, remains and in abundance. Because many of the most significant resources are uncatalogued, the assessment of their potential contribution to scholarship has only begun. In the final decades of his career, Moshe Gammer crucially contributed to the renewed interest in Dagestani manuscripts.\textsuperscript{20} The three volumes edited by Gammer (including this one) introduced an unprecedented number of Dagestani scholars to global Islamic Studies, in many cases for the first time in English. These volumes complement an earlier series, jointly edited by Michael Kemper, Anke von Kügelgen, Allen Frank, and Dmitriy Yermakov, which collected new and empirically rich scholarship on the Islamic cultures of Central Asia, the Volga-Urals, and the Caucasus, including many scholars who later contributed to Gammer’s volumes.\textsuperscript{21} These two series, collectively totaling seven volumes, constitute the sum total of scholarship by Dagestani scholars available in European languages other than Russian.

Although the volume of this work is small, the yield is large, and the implications for comparative research within Islamic Studies are even more substantial. These volumes demonstrate that, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ever-increasing globalization of knowledge, a new era for Dagestani philology looms on the horizon. Scholars of Islamic cultures and literatures across the globe have much to gain from engaging with the transnational scholarly networks that now span the former Soviet Union, from Uzbekistan to Armenia. When Dagestani archives are integrated into broader conversations taking place within Islamic Studies, the diversity of Islamic forms of knowledge and the many inflections of Arabic culture by vernacular learning will be better known.

\textsuperscript{19} Among living scholars, Amri Shikhsaidov (see below), studied with Krachkovskii, and A. K. Alikberov, in many respects continues this tradition with his \textit{Epokha klassicheskogo Islama na Kavkaze} (Moscow: Vostochnaia literatura, 2003).

\textsuperscript{20} The first two volumes in this series were \textit{Dagestan and the World of Islam} (2006, co-edited with David J. Wasserstein) and \textit{Islam and Sufism in Dagestan} (2009).

Taking account of these seven volumes in English and German and of their more extensive Russian counterparts, this chapter reviews some of the major achievements of Daghestani philology over the course of the past several decades. I lay particular emphasis on scholars whose work, and whose students’ work, is included in this volume: Amri Rzaevich Shikhsaidov (b. 1928), Amirkhan Amirkhanovich Isaev (1932–2012), and Shikhsaidov’s daughter Natalia Tahirova. I also take note of the major achievements in Daghestani philology that more recent generations of scholars have made possible. When integrated with global developments in the study of Islam, these achievements will mark a new beginning for Daghestani philology, a discipline that has a distinct contribution to make to the study of Islamic learning. By building on past epochs of scholarship from the precolonial, colonial, and Soviet periods, modern Daghestani philology is poised to open up these unstudied archives to global and comparative work, within and outside Islamic Studies. As Gammer announced in the first of his three edited volumes, entitled *Daghestan in the World of Islam*, a major desiderata within Caucasus Studies is the incorporation of Daghestan’s pasts, presents, and futures into the worlds of Islamic, Arabic, Persian, and Turkic Studies.

My account of the potential contributions of Daghestani philology to Islamic Studies, broadly conceived, is organized around three areas of inquiry. First, I outline some ways in which Daghestani philology elucidates the place of the vernacular within classical Islamic learning. Second, I document some Daghestani variations on Islamic legal hybridity, with a particular emphasis on the role played by new forms of Islamic legal discourse in constituting Daghestani modernity. I argue that a closer study of Daghestan’s vernacular cultures and legal modernisms can significantly enrich our understanding of modernity’s many meanings across the Islamic world. Finally, I end by suggesting how an account of modernity based on indigenous Daghestani sources can revise existing master narratives of modernity that trace this concept to the European Enlightenment. To schematize: there are three ways in which Daghestan is good to think, each of which this chapter considers sequentially. First, for the complex circulations of vernacular and global Islamic cultures throughout its compressed geography. Second, for its many interfaces between indigenous and Islamic legal cultures. Third, for the efforts by Daghestani intellectuals to pioneer alternative modernities, even when their temporal horizons were asynchronous with the paradigms that dominated European scholarly inquiry.

While Daghestan’s vernacular cultures is most outstandingly represented in the present volume, particularly in connection with the ‘ājamī script, Daghestan’s legal hybridity, as well as the reconfiguration of its intellectual genealogies
by Islamic modernity, has animated the earlier volumes in Gammer’s series, and have much to contribute to contemporary Islamic Studies. Bobrovnikov and Shikhsaidov elucidated the circulation of Daghestani vernacular cultures in the first volume, through their studies of the legendary Abu Muslim and Daghestan’s political history from the tenth to fifteenth century, respectively. They Daghestani legal cultures were outstandingly represented in the second volume, particularly in Kemper’s exegesis of Ghazi Muhammad’s treatise on customary law and Bobrovnikov’s study of sharia courts in Soviet Daghestan.

Daghestani modernities were engaged in the first volume, in two studies that compliment Tahirova’s study of Hasan al-Alqadārī’s library (chapter 8 of this volume): Kemper’s close reading of al-Alqadārī’s poetic and juridical oeuvre and Sonia Chesnin’s account of this same author (concerning whom more will be said below) as Daghestan’s last representative of classical Islamic learning. While the themes of vernacular and legal modernity do not exhaust the richness and variety of Daghestani philology, they do offer a measure of what Islamic Studies stands to gain by engaging with Daghestan’s pasts, including its polylingual archives, which span Arabic, Persian, and Turkic as they mediate between global Islamic culture and Daghestani vernaculars.

VERNACULAR ISLAMS

Thanks to the sea changes that have transpired within post and precolonial area studies during the past decades, many areas of the humanities have witnessed a renewed engagement with vernacular knowledge. While engaging with the languages of classical Islam (Arabic, Persian, and Turkish), the new vernacular turn also takes account of the vernacular ways of practicing and conceiving Islam. As might be expected, given the overlap between Asian and Islamic Studies, the renewed engagement with vernacular culture has born the fullest fruit in South

Asian archives and geographies that impinge on Islamic culture. But what happens to Islamic learning when it is transformed by vernacular knowledge? Conversely, what is vernacular about Islam? And what does the conjuncture between vernacularity and Islam tell us about Caucasus life worlds, or about life worlds within Islamic societies generally?

According to certain schools of thought, most notably the Salafis who derive their genealogy from Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792), and whose name is associated with many militant tendencies within post-Soviet Islam, Islam in its truest form cannot be reconciled with vernacular culture. Within contemporary Salafism, pre-Islamic traditions are seen as amalgams of ʿādāt, idolatry (shirk), and other accretions that have been rendered null and void by shariʿa. Although he did not directly participate in the intellectual currents inspired by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, Ghāzī Muḥammad, the first leader of the Caucasus imamate (1829–1859), similarly judged those among his contemporaries who privileged vernacular traditions above Islamic law. In an influential treatise that was published for the first time in Gammer’s series, the first imam inveighed against Daghestani elders who “judge according to general and disorganized customary law”, making determinations “according to their own opinion [raʾy], to the benefit of the side they want to win, and against the side they want to lose”. Many Daghestani scholars, sheikhs, jurists, and writers (including those who distanced themselves from Islamic reformism) shared Ghāzī Muḥammad’s suspicion of ʿādāt. The imam himself drew on polemics against indigenous law by Daghestani scholars of prior generations.

Such genealogies demonstrate that vernacular knowledge is of special interest when considered in the context of Daghestani Islamic learning. But even as many Daghestani scholars pursued training in traditional Islamic disciplines, local Daghestani religious culture nuanced the Islamic rejection of indigenous legal

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29 Translated in Michael Kemper, “Ghazi Muhammad’s treatise”, p. 95. Also see the discussion of this work in Hasan al-Alqadārī, Dīwān al-Mamnūn, Temir Khan Shura: Mavraev, 1913, p. 64. The Arabic original of Ghāzī Muḥammad’s treatise still awaits publication.
systems. Although his editorial endeavors focused on Daghestan in the world of Islam, Gammer understood well Daghestan’s anomalous position within this world. In Gammer’s volumes, Daghestan comes to life amidst a diversity of belief systems that preceded the Islamic dispensation, and which include but are not limited to Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism. Among the notable contributions in this regard are Harun Ibrahimov’s account of Daghestan in the pre-Islamic Near East in the first volume of this series.\(^{30}\) Gammer’s broad temporal, cultural, and linguistic vision for Daghestani philology is attested in this volume in Gadjiev’s study of the history of writing in Caucasian Albania during Late Antiquity (chapter 1) and Susunov’s study of the epigraphy of Jewish gravestones in southern Daghestan (chapter 2).

Even more unique about Daghestan than its plurality of religions is the plurality of languages (Islamic and vernacular), and hence of cultures, that have flourished in this region. Many regions, mountainous and otherwise, have known religious plurality; none have dealt with linguistic diversity on the scale encountered in Daghestani philology, and certainly not within such a compressed geography. With regard to this uniquely Daghestani inflection to vernacular culture, Isaev enumerates the many ways in which Daghestanis communicated with each other without requiring the mediation of Russian or even Arabic. Isaev writes:

Avars, Darghins, and Laks knew to some extent the Kumyk [= Qumyq] language there were Darghins who knew the Lak, Avar and other languages; many Laks knew the Darghin and Avar languages; speakers of Ando-Didoian languages knew Avar; many Lezghins, Tabasarans, Rutuls, Tsakhurs and Aghuls mastered the Azerbaijani tongue.\(^{31}\)

While Isaev focuses on languages used for oral communication, which does not fully encompass Daghestan’s literary landscape, the linguistic interfaces he delineates reveals that cross-cultural communication did not always require the mediation of global languages such as Russian, Arabic, or Persian. Turkic Qumyq was a lingua franca, and an adequate one for the purposes of oral communication, for much of Daghestani history.

In the spirit of the multilingual vernacularity described by Isaev, chapters 5, 6, and 8 introduce specific authors (Kharad al-Archī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, and Ḥasan al-Alqadārī, respectively) who made their mark on Daghestani literatures.\(^{32}\) Each of these authors worked in multiple fields, particularly \textit{fiqh}

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\(^{31}\) Isaev, “The genesis of Arabic script for Daghestani languages”, p. 72, n. 4 (this volume).

\(^{32}\) Of these three, only Kharad al-Archi is not known to modern scholarship (as noted in chapter 5, p. #92, where the scholar’s name is spelled Kharda al-Rochi). Al-Durgili briefly mentions
and poetry, and in multiple languages. Each traversed the Islamic world, either through their reading or in their actual travels. Although one of these three, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, never visited the Caucasus, Jāmī’s works, and in particular his commentary on Ibn al-Ḥājib’s (d. 1246) al-Kāfiyah (The Sufficient), circulated widely in Daghestani madrasas, filling “practically all private and mosque collections” to the extent that his commentary was “even more widespread than Ibn al-Ḥājib’s original work”.33

Unlike Jāmī, Kharad al-Archī and Ḥasan al-Alqadārī were local Daghestani writers whose conceptual frameworks looked beyond their immediate environs yet whose literary inclinations tied them to a vernacular environment. As Tahirotova notes, al-Alqadārī’s reading ranged from the Arabic Robinson Crusoe to traditional Arabic belles-lettres, in particularly al-Ḥarīrī’s (d. 1121) Maqāmāt (Assemblies).34 Although their everyday affairs were conducted in their local vernaculars (Lezgi in al-Alqadārī’s case and Archi in the case of al-Archī), like most Daghestani writers, these authors chose Arabic and other Islamic languages for their literary compositions.

The coexistence of the vernacular and the globally Islamic within these authors’ oeuvres adds yet one more palimpsest to Daghestani vernacularity. As a corollary to Isaev’s delineation of an oral pan-Daghestani vernacular nexus, these authors’ engagements with global Islamic languages remind us that, when narrowly understood to exclude transregional languages, the vernacular rubric alone cannot capture the range of Daghestani written culture. The Azeri of al-Alqadārī’s Vestiges of Daghestan is a case in point; while not his mother tongue, Azeri was a widely spoken language within his milieu, and therefore represented a more vernacular choice than the Arabic in which most of his work was composed. These polylingual trajectories compel us to reconceive vernacularity for the Caucasus. Daghestan philology must examine the local impact of the global circulation of languages, while doing away with absolute dichotomies between local and global linguistic and literary economies.


SCRIPT VERNACULARIZATION

Parallels between Daghestani and African vernacular cultures are inscribed into the term for the scripts that in both cultures served as the medium for vernacular literarization after the advent of Islam, ‘ajamī.35 ‘Ajamī has wide currency across the Islamic world, including in Daghestani philology. Parallels in the process through which the vernacular was committed to writing were matched by the congruent development of the same Arabic-derived literary genres in both cultures, most notably the takhmīṣ (poem praising God), in which “the lines of an earlier qaṣīda [ode, by a different author] are turned [by the imitating poet] into rhyming stanzas by being supplied with two or three additional hemistichs”.36 Attested in Persian, Urdu, and Hausa, the takhmīṣ is frequently composed in imitation of the widely circulated qaṣīda praising the Prophet known as the Burda (mantle), composed by the Egyptian al-Būsīrī (d. 1294).37 Among the many important roles that this genre has played in Daghestani literary history, a takhmīṣ by the Daghestani scholar ‘Alī Ibn Muḥammad al-Baghdādī (d. 1655) inspired the composition of one of the most important twentieth-century Daghestani biographical dictionaries, by Nadhīr al-Durgīlī (d. 1935).38

Like African writers and scribes, Daghestani authors added new letters and diacritical marks to represent specific phonemes when they adapted the Arabic script to their local languages.39 As in Africa, the linguistic phonologies shared by northeastern Caucasian languages facilitated a relatively consistent orthography across Daghestani vernaculars. The standardization of vernacular languages on the basis of Arabic orthography substantively advanced the development of vernacular literatures within Daghestan as well as across Islamic Africa.

While Daghestani authors’ complex mediations of literary traditions in Arabic, Persian, Azeri Turkish, and vernaculars such as Archi make them ideal

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37 For examples of African takhmīṣ, see qaṣīdas 35 (pp. 268–291), 49 (pp. 372–387), and 50 (pp. 388–412) of Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa.

38 Al-Durgīlī, Nuzhat, p. 22 (Arabic); p. 42 (Russian).

39 For the Avar ‘ajamī script developed by Dibīrqāḍī of Khunzakh (1742–1817), see A. M. Barabanov, “Poisnitetnye znachki v arabskih rukopisiakh i dokumentakh Severnogo Kavkaza”, Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie 3 (Moscow: AN SSSR, 1945), pp. 193–214.
case studies for research into vernacular culture, the Daghestanian reception of transregional authors like Jāmī adds to our knowledge of the circulation of Islamic learning beyond the metropole. Situated at the cutting edge of recent Daghestan philology, the research contained in this volume merits consideration alongside recent works of Russophone Daghestani philology such as Patimat Alibekova’s monograph on the polymath lexicographer Dibīrqāḍī of Khunzakh, Alikber Alikberov’s landmark study of Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Darbandī’s eleventh-century study of Sufi theology and hagiography Rayḥān al-ḥaqāʾiq wa bustān al-daqaʾiq (Sweet Basilicum of Truths and the Garden of Nuances), and Shikhsaidov’s edition of Maḥmūd of Khinalug’s chronicle of early modern Daghestan and Shirwan.

Viewed over the longue durée, however, these works only begin to suggest the relevance of Daghestani vernacular literature to our understanding of Islamic and world history. Future contributions to Daghestani philology should take account of Muḥammad al-Quduqī’s voluminous commentaries and original compositions, of Ḥasan al-Alqadārī’s many unpublished writings, including his treatises on Shīʿa teachings, and of ‘Alī al-Ghumūqī’s multifaceted journalistic writings and his biographical dictionary of Daghestani scholars, among the thousands of manuscripts held in Makhachkala archives (particularly at the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography) and in private collections and mosques across Daghestan. If pursued with attention to the interface between vernacular and Arabic textualities, Daghestani philology can introduce texts that have fallen under the radar of Soviet historiography, and yet which centrally inflected global circulations of culture.

40 For the global reception of Jāmī from the Caucasus to Central, South, Southeast, and West Asia, see the ongoing research project directed by Thibaut d’Hubert (University of Chicago) and Alexandre Papas (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique): “A Worldwide Literature: Jāmī (1414–1492) in the Dār al-Islām and Beyond” (http://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/jamidaralislam) which will result in an edited volume in the series “Handbuch der Orientalistik” (Brill).
LEGAL PLURALITIES COMPARED

As in Southeast Asia, Daghestani Islamic legal scholars developed a particularly sophisticated relationship to ‘ādāt, more commonly discussed in Daghestani usūl al-fiqh as ‘urf. The ‘ulama’ of both regions followed the Shāfi‘ī school of law. In contrast to the Ḥanafīs, Shāfi‘ī jurists did not consider ‘urf as a source for jurisprudence, but they permitted recourse to it when no legal text could be found to guide their decisions. Beyond the madhhab (school of law) they shared, the parallels between the legal cultures of Daghestan and maritime Southeast Asia (particularly the Indonesian Archipelago and Malaysia) can partly be explained by the prominence within both cultures of indigenous and polytheistic belief systems that could not be assimilated within the Judeo-Christian-Islamic nexus.

Daghestani and Southeast Asian pre-Islamic belief systems were less formalized than were the Indian religions codified as “Hinduism”, which served as an object of contention and disputation within South Asian Islam. In the latter case, conflict (and dialogue) was staged more frequently through the medium of Sufi discourse than through fiqh. While Indian Sufis confronted a codified religious system more ancient than Islam itself, Daghestani and Southeast Asian jurists engaged with pre-Islamic religious beliefs that for the most part lacked long-standing textual traditions that predated their codification within Islamic law. In both cases, the encounter between Islamic and vernacular knowledge generated new conceptual possibilities for the regulation of social life and the ethics of self-cultivation.

43 The best introduction to Daghestani ‘ādāt are the two volumes edited by Vladimir Bobrovnikov: Obychai i zakon v pisʹmennykh pamiatnikakh Dagestana V–nachala XX v., Moscow: Mardzhani, 2009. These volumes reproduce the Arabic texts of key ‘ādāt codices. For Southeast Asian ‘ādāt, see M. B. Hooker, Islamic Law in Southeast Asia, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1984.


47 For an important account of the interface between ‘ādāt and Islamic law, see Michael Kemper, “Communal agreements (ittifāqāt) and ‘ādāt-books from Daghestani villages and confederacies (18th–19th centuries)”, Der Islam 81 (2004), pp. 115–151. Also see the chapters on the Caucasus in Kemper’s volume, co-edited with Maurus Reinkowski, Rechtspluralismus in der Islamischen Welt: Gewohnheitsrecht zwischen Staat und Gesellschaft, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2005.
The special role played by Islamic law in crafting Daghestani and South-east Asian modernities is also reflected in the special role assigned to Arabic, which exceeded that of Persian within these subregions of the Caucasus, and as a language of learning rather than of military expansion. Across the southern Caucasus, Persian linked Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. Meanwhile, to the north, Arabic functioned throughout Daghestan as the guarantor of a tradition, conferring the seal of the sacred on knowledge otherwise destined for dissolution. And yet, while eminent Arabists have documented the presence of Arabic in “Malay and its modern offshoot Bahasa Indonesia”48, the historically deeper roots of Arabic in Daghestan have gone unrecognized in contemporary Arabic studies.

The story of Daghestani Arabic in European scholarship is a history of missed opportunities. The Twenty-Fifth Orientalist Conference in Moscow in 1960 is a case in point. Here, in 1960, the Daghestani scholar Magomed Saidov (1902–1985) spoke at length on the history of Daghestani Arabic learning.49 Although he managed to impress Arabists such as Gustave von Grunebaum and Michel Canard, the moment was soon forgotten. The problem with Daghestani Studies today is less that contemporary Arabists know little about Daghestan’s Islamic pasts, as that they do not perceive this ignorance as a lapse. Daghestan is thereby relegated to the margins of Islamic learning, at a time when center/periphery paradigms are increasingly seen as inadequate for the tasks of world history.

Although these Southeast Asian and African parallels are only some indications of the gains that come of situating Daghestan in the world of Islam, they suggest some of the ways in which the study of past Daghestani learning and the practice of Daghestani philology in the present can facilitate the globalization of Islamic Studies. Realizing this discipline’s transregional potential entails reconceiving still dominant Soviet and post-Soviet paradigms, which are responsible for, among other things, Daghestani philology’s overwhelming focus on the nineteenth century. That the present volume moves beyond this relatively well-researched temporal framework (and in both temporal directions) may augur a


more diverse temporal awareness within recent scholarship on Daghestan and a determination to engage with premodern, early modern, and precolonial materials.

While Gammer’s second edited volume included important studies of Soviet and post-Soviet Daghestan by Shamil Shikhaliev and Amir Navruzov, given the preponderance of tsarist, Soviet, or post-Soviet studies in most contexts, the temporal shift in this third volume is refreshing. Only two contemporary scholars who work on Soviet-era and contemporary Daghestan in English, namely Bobrovnikov and Kemper, consistently overcome the limitations of Soviet scholarship by engaging systematically and in depth with non-Russian sources, Arabic as well as European. Meanwhile, Daghestani scholarship that focuses on the Soviet period consistently fails to engage with advances in contemporary Euro-American scholarship and tends to be limited to sources in Russian, and occasionally vernacular languages. Proportionally, Makhachkala is home to more Arabists than anywhere else within the former Soviet Union, but these scholars are outnumbered by their non-Arabic literate peers. Just as engagement with Daghestan would make Islamic Studies more cosmopolitan, so would Daghestani scholarship benefit immensely from a deeper contextualization of this geography within world history. This latter goal entails reading abilities in European languages more extensive than most Daghestan scholars possess today.

**DAGHESTANI LEGAL MODERNITIES**

Judging by trends in local manuscript production, Daghestan’s vernacularizing process can be said to have begun in earnest at the end of the fifteenth century. Roughly two centuries later, a new form of intellectual inquiry, known as *ijtihād* (independent legal reasoning) began to spread throughout Daghestan. Committed to challenging traditional boundaries among the four Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence, *ijtihād* arrived in Daghestani through Muḥammad al-Quduqī (1652–1708), a Daghestani scholar who was introduced to this form of legal reasoning during his studies with the Yemeni Sheikh Ṣāliḥ al-Maqbalī (1638–1696/7). Ḥasan al-Alqadārī, who memorably recounted this chain of transmission in his paradigmatic history of Daghestan, *Āthār-i Dāghistān*,

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51 For reasons unknown to contemporary scholars, the reception of al-Quduqī in Daghestani philology differs drastically from that of his teacher Sheikh Ṣāliḥ (Shamil Shikhaliev, personal communication).
describes al-Quduqī’s efforts to inculcate the practice of *ijtihād* among his fellow Daghestanis following his return from Egypt, the Hijaz, and Yemen as a moment that marked the dawn of a new era for Daghestani learning.  

As if suggesting that no major Muslim scholar had ever crossed Daghestani territory prior to the early modern period, al-Alqadārī opened his chapter on the “scholars and teachers of Daghestan [*al-ʿulamāʾ al-mudarrisīn min ahl dāghistān*]” (231) with an account of the ruined state of Daghestani learning during the era immediately preceding al-Quduqī’s introduction of *ijtihād* to Daghestan. From the fact that, during his researches conducted at the end of the nineteenth century, he could find no traces of Arabic manuscripts predating al-Quduqī’s return to Daghestan, al-Alqadārī inferred that Daghestani rulers of that time had ceased to support scholarship (*ʿilm*) and education (*tadrīseh*).

For al-Alqadārī, the absence of Arabic manuscripts in Daghestani history before al-Quduqī was coterminous with the rule of injustice (*ẓulm*) and civilizational decay (*fasād*) that characterized this period. On the basis of the ancient books (*kutub-i ʿatīqeh*) preserved in local madrasas and mosques, al-Alqadārī deduces that the majority of Daghestani Arabic manuscripts had been collected and assembled during the lifetime and partly through the efforts of the “founder of Daghestani sciences and arts [*ʿulūm o funūn*]”, Muḥammad al-Quduqī. Al-Alqadārī follows his account of the decline of Daghestani learning and its revival following al-Quduqī’s return with the events leading up to al-Quduqī’s self-willed exile to Aleppo, where he died.

According to al-Alqadārī, al-Quduqī’s method of legal reasoning was one that the Daghestanis of his era found hard to tolerate. “During this era”, al-Alqadārī narrates, there was so much upheaval (*fitneh*) and so much injustice (*ẓulm*) that lawsuits and crimes were not decided according to the holy law (*šarʿ-i sharīf*). Instead, the majority of cases were adjudicated by indigenous law (*ʿādāt*) and custom (*rusūm*, 233). Disturbed by the neglect of *sharīʿa*, al-Quduqī reproached those who relied on the justice dispensed by *ʿādāt* courts. In Qurʾānically inflected language reproduced by al-Alqadārī, al-Quduqī declared that Daghestanis who ruled contrary to the will of Allah were idolatrous brethren (*ikhwān al-ṭāghūt*).

The fact that, on al-Alqadārī’s account, Daghestanis had lost touch with Islamic law and could not sever their ties with *ʿādāt* helps explain this mujtahid’s decision

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53 For *ṭāghūt* as idolatry, see Qurʾān 2:256, 4:51, 4:60, 4:76. It is worth noting that al-Alqadārī does not cite directly from any of al-Quduqī’s writings. Although al-Quduqī earned a reputation as a formidable legal theorist, none of al-Quduqī’s works on legal theory are extant or directly cited in Daghestani philology.
to abandon Daghestan again and to die far from his homeland. Āthār-i Dāghistān also includes a detailed description of the legacy of al-Quduqī’s Yemeni teacher, Sheikh Ṣāliḥ, who introduced his student to *ijtihād*.

Through the masterful narrative that heralds a turning point in his chronicle, al-Alqadārī dramatically situates al-Quduqī at the dawn of a new era in Daghhestani learning. In the context of the historical sensibility that animates this and other works of al-Alqadārī, this new era can be seen as a Daghhestani variant on a global early modernity that was realized in different times in different places, but which shared several crucial features in common. Like other early modernities across the globe, this one is marked by changing geographic sensibilities, shifts in manuscript culture, and new relations between past and present. That this modernity is closely tied for al-Alqadārī to *ijtihād* is evidenced by his invocation elsewhere of al-Quduqī and his Yemeni teacher in connection with this form of legal reasoning. The role attributed to al-Quduqī as a reviver of the arts and sciences suggests that, for al-Alqadārī, Daghhestani legal modernity coincided with and was indebted to the widespread embrace of vernacular and Arabic learning in early modern Daghestan, for which al-Quduqī’s *ijtihād* served as a founding ideology.

Almost precisely a century after its publication, al-Alqadārī’s narrative of early modern Daghhestani decline prior to al-Quduqī was challenged by Alikber Alikberov in his study of al-Darbandī’s *Rayḥān al-ḥaqāʾiq*. In Alikberov’s view, al-Darbandī’s twelfth-century work demonstrated that Daghhestani Arabic culture flourished many centuries prior to al-Quduqī’s appearance. Regardless of its misleading gaps and omissions, al-Alqadārī’s history of Daghhestani learning has substantially shaped subsequent perceptions of Daghhestan’s Islamic pasts. For future scholarship, al-Alqadārī’s account remains foundational for understanding the trajectories and temporalities of Daghhestan’s history, including the colonial encounter.

Al-Alqadārī’s view that Arabic manuscript production did not predate al-Quduqī was adopted wholesale by the Russian Arabist Krachkovskii. Notwithstanding his monumental contributions to Daghhestani philology and other areas

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56 Alikberov, *Epopka klassicheskogo islama*, p. 314. On Daghhestani Arabic culture before the early modern period, also see M. Ā. Abdullaliev, *Srednevekovovia sskab-musul'manskaya kultura i ee vliianie na Dagestan*, Makhachkala: Izdatel’stvo Epokha, 2005. In fairness to al-Alqadārī, it should be noted that he does not precisely claim that no indigenous Daghhestani Arabic works were produced prior to al-Quduqī; what he claims rather is that Islamic learning had fallen into decline when al-Quduqī arrived on the scene.
of Arabic Studies, Krachkovskii never discussed any work of Daghestani Arabic literature older than the seventeenth century, and appears to have been unaware of a Daghestani Arabic tradition prior to this century. As becomes evident when these Soviet narratives are contrasted to the more recent scholarship of Shikh-saidov and Isaev, and to the even more recent work of Shikhaliev and Musaev, the misleading genealogy that traces the beginnings of Daghestani Arabic culture to the seventeenth century was the result of al-Alqadārī’s and Krachkovskii’s limited access to Daghestan’s manuscript heritage. The essays in the present volume challenge these long-held misperceptions by introducing some of the many manuscript collections that have come to light across mountainous Daghestan following the collapse of Soviet rule. As a result of manuscript expeditions, we know that the rupture between al-Quduqī’s era and the era immediately preceding him was not as dramatic as al-Alqadārī suspected.\footnote{In addition to Shikhsaidov’s landmark contribution to this volume, on this subject see Shikh-saidov, “Arabic historical studies in twentieth-century Daghestan”.
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 It follows that perception of modernity as rupture which continues to dominate the social sciences will need to be challenged for this particular context. But whether or not Daghestani modernity began with the peregrinations and teachings of al-Quduqī, it is significant that, in al-Alqadārī’s eyes, this modernity was constituted by the \textit{ijtihād} of an unusually peripatetic scholar with an equally unusual intellectual pedigree, deriving from the interrogation of \textit{madhāhib} boundaries in early modern Mecca and Yemen.

Al-Alqadārī’s history of the development of Islamic learning in early modern Daghestan suggests that this new era in Daghestani learning transpired most prominently in the related realms of jurisprudence, in particular the issuing of \textit{fatawā} (legal rulings), the production of commentaries and other learned discourses, and manuscript production. When his \textit{Āthār} is read in light of the history of Daghestani vernacularity delineated above, the links between Daghestan’s linguistic diversity and ideological complexity become apparent. Al-Alqadārī’s narrative further suggests the centrality of legal discourse to Daghestani history, and the relevance of these transformations to the global history of Islamic jurisprudence.\footnote{There is no history of Islamic law in the Caucasus comparable to the works of Schacht, Hallaq and Coulson in any language known to me. Vladimir Bobrovnikov’s landmark study of indigenous Daghestani law (\textit{Musul’mane Severnogo Kavkaza: Obychat’, pravo, nasilie. Ocherki po istorii i etnografii prava Nagornogo Dagestana}, Moscow: Vostochnaia literatura, 2002) is more concerned with \textit{ʿādāt} than with \textit{uṣūl al-fiqh}. Kemper (cited in passim) has produced closely textured studies of specific aspects of Daghestani legal discourse, but these are not intended as comprehensive accounts of Daghestani \textit{fiqh}.}

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57 In addition to Shikhsaidov’s landmark contribution to this volume, on this subject see Shikh-saidov, “Arabic historical studies in twentieth-century Daghestan”.

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That Daghestan’s legal modernity paralleled its linguistic modernity is suggested by the chronology Shikhsaidov offers in his contribution to this volume, which traces a shift from reliance on manuscripts imported from abroad to local manuscript production at the beginnings of the sixteenth century. In the same spirit, Bobrovnikov has noted the changes that were inaugurated in the sixteenth century, when Daghestan became “an important pan-Caucasian centre of Arab-Muslim knowledge and missionary activities”. While the late fifteenth century was modernized through the rapid literarization of Daghestani vernaculars, and local Arabic manuscript production proliferated in the sixteenth century, as in many intellectual centers throughout the Islamic world, the early seventeenth century saw the beginnings of a more theoretically nuanced conception of modernity. This conceptual modernity was most powerfully articulated through *ijtihād*, the subsequent endorsement of *madhāhib* boundary crossing, and in al-Quduqī’s challenge to *ʿādāt*. The substantial role played by one aspect of this legal modernity, anti- *ʿādāt* discourse, in the anticolonial jihad, has been definitively traced by Michael Kemper in his ambitious account of the Islamic legal discourse of the jihad state under Imam Shamil and his predecessors.

Thanks to Kemper’s work on Daghestani *fiqh*, Bobrovnikov’s work on Daghestani *ʿādāt*, and Gammer’s work on Daghestani resistance to colonial rule, the nineteenth century is the most deeply researched period in Daghestani history. We know much less by contrast about the worlds that preceded Daghestan’s encounter with colonial violence. Modernity before colonialism – the modernity of the *ijtihād* popularized in Daghestan by al-Quduqī on the basis of what he had learned from his Yemeni sheikh, and of al-Quduqī’s students Dāwūd al-Uṣīshī (d. 1757), Muḥammad al-Ubrī, and Abū Bakr al-Rughūjī al-Awārī, each of whom envisioned new frameworks for Daghestan’s place in the world of Islamic learning – still awaits exploration within Daghestani philology.

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59 Bobrovnikov, “Abu Muslim in Islamic history and mythology” in Daghestan and the World of Islam, pp. 31–32.

60 It should be noted that, alone among specialists, Moshe Gammer recognized in English the field-transforming importance of Michael Kemper’s *Herrschaft, Recht und Islam in Daghestan: Von den Khanaten und Gemeindebünden zum ḥīdhāt-Staat* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2005) in print, in his review of it for Slavic Review 66.1 (2007), pp. 143–144. Gammer’s review remains the best overview of Kemper’s *Herrschaft* in English.


DAGHESTANI PHILOLOGY’S FUTURES

Drawing on scholarship that Gammer helped to make available in English, this chapter has argued that the role played by Daghestani vernaculars in literary history parallels that of indigenous Daghestani legal discourses in the history of Islamic jurisprudence. I have further examined how the conjuncture between linguistic and legal modernity in Daghestani history can constitute a basis for a future Daghestani philology. It remains for scholarship of the future to document how these less-trodden paths for Islamic knowledge systems can help us rewrite the disciplinary history of modern knowledge.

Among its many other legacies, the interface of the Arabic script with Daghestani vernaculars and the transmission of early modern Islamic legal discourse to Daghestan demonstrate the centrality of peripheries to our understanding of the circulation of culture in the early modern Islamic world. Indeed, these narratives challenge the core/periphery model that continues to shape area studies, particularly of the region now referred to as Eurasia. Given that the “Eurasia” rubric courts the dangers of reifying the core/periphery paradigm, it may be more beneficial to scholarship to engage with Daghestan on its own terms, not as a periphery within an imperial geography, but as a crossroads of exchange and transformation within the Islamic ecumene. Recent scholarship leads the way in this regard through its focus on pre-colonial Islamic learning. It is no accident that many of the chapters in this volume (especially 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 12) focus on early modern archives, for it was during this period that Daghestan developed distinctive traditions of jurisprudence and calligraphy, and when Arabo-Islamic culture came to be inflected most profoundly by local knowledge forms.

While the traces left by early modern Daghestani vernacular philology remain active into the present, they have not been subject to extensive scholarly investigation, even in Russian, let alone in English. The full documentation of these influences requires the publication and translation of Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Darbandī’s Sufi hagiography, of Maḥmūd of Khinalug’s (fl. 1456) historical chronicle, of Sha'bān al-Ubūdī’s (d. 1667) commentaries on classical works of Islamic learning, of the many writings of al-Quduqī and his students named above, of Dāmādān al-Mūḥī’s (d. 1717–8) scientific treatises, of Dibīrqāḍī’s (d. 1817) trilingual dictionary, and of the contributions to fiqh by Saʿīd al-Harakānī (d. 1834), Mīrzā ʿAlī al-Akhtī (d. 1858), Murtaḍā ʿAlī al-ʿUrāḍī (d. 1865), and Yūsuf al-Yakhsāwī (d. 1871), among many others.63

63 For close engagements with some of these authors, see Michael Kemper, “The Daghestani legal discourse on the Imamate”, Central Asian Survey 21.3 (2002), pp. 265–278.
When these authors’ critical interventions are made available to contemporary scholarship, and when the contributions of the many anonymous scribes, anthologists, commentators, and translators who labored over these manuscripts are clearly elucidated, then Daghestan’s contributions to Islamic learning will become as evident to the world of scholarship as they have long been to specialists. Deeper engagement with Arabic sources along lines pioneered by Amri Shikhsaidov, Michael Kemper, Vladimir Bobrovnikov, Shamil Shikhaliev, and Makhach Musaev will make Daghestan’s uniqueness visible to contemporary scholarship, and contribute to a global effort to move beyond the core/periphery paradigm. Only Islamic and Arabic Studies can provide the philological and conceptual grounding needed to understand the many texts that circulated among, and which were composed by, Daghestani scholars. Although a paucity of funding imposes significant external constraints on Daghestani philology within Russia, changes are on the horizon, thanks in part to the vast and unexplored archives that extend from Makhachkala to the private libraries spread across the mountains, and to the new possibilities for international collaboration in a post-Soviet environment.

Future undertakings within Daghestani philology will generate new networks of circulation, new genealogies for Islamic modernity, and, ultimately, new ways of writing world history. When these intellectual constellations enable us to reconsider our own geographies and temporalities, scholars should remember the prior work that made these rediscoveries possible. Among these preliminary labors, the pioneering efforts of Moshe Gammer have a significant place. Just as his Daghestani predecessors of prior centuries worked to make Islamic learning accessible to Daghestani readers, Gammer worked to make Daghestani archives accessible to the world of Anglophone scholarship. His meticulous labors helped to give Daghestan a permanent place in the study of Islamic learning.

64 Among the most promising of these projects are the publication of Mansur Gaidarbekov’s anthology of Daghestani Arabic poetry, Antologiia dagestanskoi poezii, currently available only in manuscript form in the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography (IIAE) of the Daghestani Academy of Sciences (see #p. 215, n. 49 and #p. 227 of this volume) and the Russian translation of Shuʿayb ibn Idrīs al-Bākinī’s (d. 1912) Ṭabaqāt al-Khwājagān al-Naqshbandiyyah (Damascus: Dār al-Nuʿmān lil-Ulūm, 2003) by Shamil Shikhhaliev and Makhach Musaev, both of whom are researchers at IIAE.

65 These shifts may be reflected in the recent changes to the structure of learned institutions across Russia, including the IIAE of the Daghestani Academy of Sciences, where Makhach Musaev was named director in June 2015.