M. Saidov, The Daghestan Arabic Literature of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

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M. Saidov
Dagestanskaya literatura XVIII - XIX vek na arabском jazyke.

THE DAGHESTAN ARABIC LITERATURE
OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

ORIENTAL LITERATURE PUBLISHING HOUSE
Moscow 1980
Because of special historical conditions only a small part of the considerable number of work of Daghestan literature in the Arabic has come down to us. These works constitute a distinctive phenomenon and are therefore of interest to science.

In their bibliographical works the Arabian authors (Yaqūt, Ibn-Baṭūṭa, et al) mention but few scientists, who came from Derbent, before the 13th century. We do not anywhere find any names of Arabists from other areas of Daghestan before the 13th century because Islamization began there only in the 12th century.

The first such widely-known scientist whose works have come down to us was 'Alī of Kumukh (died in 1448) whose work "Al-mukhtassar" (Compendium) was repeatedly commented upon by many scientists of Daghestan and Egypt, for example, by Professor Al-Azhar 'Abdullāh of Sharqāwi (died in 1512). The well-known book "Dura' al-azkār" on the ḥadīth also belongs to the pen of 'Alī of Kumukh.

It stands to reason that sheikh 'Alī of Kumukh had predecessors, local alims; manuscripts of Arabian authors copied by Daghestan scientists as early as
the 14th century have been preserved. Sheikh Assel'dar of Arkas (died in 1404) had followers and pupils.

Sufism penetrated into Daghestan rather early. In the 11th century Abubakr Muhammed b. Murāh b. al-Pa-
raj of Derbent wrote a book on Sufism and the Sufis under the title of "Reyḥān al-ḥaqāiq va bustān ad-da-
qāiq" ("Basilicas of Truths and Garden of Subtleties") The naqshband trend of Sufism penetrated into Dahes-
tan in the beginning of the 19th century. The essence
of Sufism was set forth in the following treatises:
"Al-adab al-marzīye" by Jamaluddīn of Kumukh (Temir-
Khan-Shura, 1908), "Al-mashrab an-naqshbandiye" by
Abdurrahmān of Soğhratl (Temir-Khan-Shura, 1906), "Kanz
ad-durar" and "Masāḥiq al-anvār" by Muhammed of
Oboda, "Al-burūj al-musheyyih" and "Tanābīn as-sālikīn
ilā ghurūr al-mutasheyyikhīn" by Ḥassan of Qahib
(Temir-Khan-Shura, 1906-1910), "Tabaqāt al-hvāshkān
an-naqshbandiye" and "Sirāj as saʿādāt fi slyer
as-sādāt" by Shāʾbān of Baghini, "Naʾm al-anām" by
Muhammed of Kikuni (Temir-Khan-Shura, 1902), "Al-ʿassār"
by Muhammed of Yaragh (Temir-Khan-Shura, 1910), etc.

In the field of jurisprudence (fiqh), the most
elaborated field of knowledge of the medieval Moslem
world, the Daghestan jurists were not imitators or
mere commentators. They worked out many questions of
the fiqh independently. Some of these numerous works
were printed in Istanbul, Cairo and Mecca.

Particularly interesting is the personality of
Muhammed b. Murāh of Quduq (died in the city of Haleb
in 1716) who pursued his own course in science and
critically treated various questions of the fiqh. He
did not declare himself a Mujtahid, like his teacher
Ṣālih of Yemen (died in 1108/1698), but unwilling
blindly to imitate the Shafiite jurists he widely
expressed his own opinion. He left numerous glosses
on Moslem jurisprudence. Muhammed of Quduq won
great popularity. People came to study under him not only
from different Daghestan areas, but also from the re-
gion of the Volga Tatars, Circassia, the Northern Cau-
casus, etc. He was an encyclopaedist, the range of
his interests covering not only theological but also
secular sciences.

The best-known jurists in Daghestan of the 17th-
18th centuries were Abubakr of 'Aymakī (died in 1790),
'Ali b. Ḥajī b. Muhammed (died in 1750), Davud of Usi-
sche (died in 1757), Ahmed al-Yemeni of Kumukh (died
in 1451), author of the book "Vafq al-murād", Sha'bān
b. Isma'Il of Oboda (died in 1638), Salmān of Tlokh
(died in the 17th century) et al. The best-known 19th century jurists include Muhammedâhir of Qarakh, author of the book "Sharh al-maf'ûs" (Temir-Khan-Shura, 1904), Muhammed'ali of Chokh, author of "Al-fetâvâ al-chokhî" (Temir-Khan-Shura, 1902), Murtaza'ali of Orada, author of numerous fetvâs, Hassan of Alqadar, author of "Jirâb al-Memnûn" (Temir-Khan-Shura, 1912), Muslim of Orada (died in the 20th century), et al.

In the 17th century Shirvan and Azarbeyjan still retained their cultural influence on the Daghestan 'alims. Here there persisted the traditions of the most prominent mathematicians, astronomers and philosophers of the Maragha School -- Masa'ir ad-dîn of Tüs, Abû al-faraj al-Ibrî, Parîd ad-dîn 'Ali of Shirvan, et al.

Towards the 18th century the local scientists actively spread the Arabic-language culture in Daghestan. The first of these -- Mallâ Muhammed of Ghuloda (Zakatali), an encyclopaedically educated scientist, mathematician, philosopher, theologian and mystic, founded a school where the scientific works were studied in Arabic. He elaborated problems of theology on the basis of logic, philosophy and dialectics, and aided in popularizing the "Jihat al-vahdat", the work of the Shirvan scientist Muhammed Amin.

He taught Greek philosophy, logic and theology to 'Ali of Qeleb who was very active in spreading science and written Arabic in Daghestan. He is the author of works in logic and dialectics (art of discussion) and theological philosophy, dozens of articles, many glosses, commentaries and separate pamphlets.

'Ali of Qeleb gave a philosophical education to Muhammed b.Mu'sâ of Qudu, the father of the Daghestan 'alims, who organized a school where a group of future scientists was educated, including Muhammed of Ubra, Muhammed of 'Alij (Shemaha), Ma'hûd of Chokh, Ma'hûd of Khuri, Davud of Ussisha, Isma'îl of Shina, et al.

Particularly interesting is the figure of the mathematician 'Issâ of Shanghada (17th century) who received his education in the homeland and then studied under the Aghdash scientists Faysullâh in Shirvan. He associated with the well-known mathematician Behâuddîn al-Âmîlî (died in the 17th century) and acquainted the Dagestanians with his book of arithmetic -- "The Quintessence of Counting" -- "Khulâssat al hissâb". 'Issâ is the author of a number of valuable works in mathematics, philosophy and logic.

Isma'îl of Shina, a close pupil of 'Issa and Mallâ Muhammed, is considered the first in Daghestan to teach the use of the astrolabe in measuring altitude. Only after he himself made an astrolabe and described its construction and methods of employment did his pupils begin to use it. Isma'îl is the author of nume-
Qurban'ali of 'Akhalchi (died in the 17th century), father of the school of Daghestan logicians and author of critical remarks on the work of the Shirvan logician Muhammed Amīn, was one of the scientists of the school of Mallāmuḥammad of Gholoda. His remarks had caused a discussion around the work of Muḥammad Amīn and divided the Daghestan logicians into supporters and opponents of Muḥammad Amīn. Qurban'ali is an author of various glosses on logic and numerous works and glosses on philosophy and theology. Mahdīmuḥammad of Soghratl has also left a big legacy on logic and philosophy.

Damādān b.Yaqūb of Meḥeb (died in 1718) is considered the founder of the studies of mathematics, astronomy and medicine in Daghestan. He translated from the Persian into the Arabic 'Abdul'alī b.Muhammed Ḥossain al-Burzhandi's (928/1523) "Comments on Muqaddime of Ulughbek". It is a free translation noted for its laconic, clear and strict mathematical style. Damādān had an extensive knowledge of mathematics and natural science; in his works he set forth their fundamental principles in great detail, basing himself on Euclid's "Elements" or referring to the works of the prominent eastern scientists (Nassir ad-dīn of Ṭūs). He had extensive knowledge of trigonometry and in setting forth its principles accompanied them with his own conclusions. Damādān was a perfect master of the method of using proportions; he developed a compact theory of solving approximate, conjectural problems. He is the author of numerous comments, articles and critical notes on various works.

Maḥād b.ʿAyūb of Chokh (died in 1770?) worked no less fruitfully. After receiving his education from Abūbakr of 'Aymakī he went to Al-Azhar in Egypt where he mastered mathematics, philosophy, astronomy and cosmography. Muhammed b.Uṭmān, one of Maḥād's teachers, dedicated his book "Al-ʾishrāq" to Maḥād. Maḥād taught mathematics, philosophy, logic and astronomy in Daghestan and wrote a number of important works in these fields. Shayṭān 'Abdullāh and Mahdīmuḥammad of Soghratl, Dībīrqādi and Nūrmuḥammad of Khunzakh, 'Omar and Ḥassan of Kudali, 'Abdulḥalīm of Tsuyaha, and other scientists were Maḥād's pupils.

Well known among the learned astronomers of the 18th century were Zeyd of Kurkli, Marzā'ali, of Akhtī Davud of Qarabudakkent, Muhammed Usneyd of Tindi, Sadiq of Übra, Isma'īl, Mama, Attihājī and Shamsuddīn of Kumukh, and many others.
The Daghestan scientists also devoted themselves to medicine. Most of the medieval treatises on medici-
ne were known in Daghestan. Rahimativqul of Akhti translated the treatise "Tuḥfat al-mu'minīn ad-Deylemī" from the Persian into the Arabic. Nurmuḥammed, an Avarian scientist (died in 1834) translated it into the Kumyk language, while in the middle of the 19th century various books were translated into the Lak and Avarian languages.

The Russian scientist N.Pirogov highly esteemed the skill of the Daghestan surgeons and noted the profundity of their knowledge of Arabian medicine. Sayfūllāh Bash-
larov, a Lak scientist, compiled a dictionary of Ara-
bian medical terms with their equivalents in Russian and German. Rafft, scientist from Shamghada, is the author of a work on medicine in which he summed up his many years' experience. The index of his work alone covers more than 400 pages. The surgeons Jabralī of Unteukuli, the Gadjziyevs from Qoroda, the Yusufovs from Yakhsai, Buttay of Soqrhatl, and many others won wide renown.

The historical works of the Daghestan scientists shed a light mainly on the epoch of Shamil. The best-
known of these works are: "Bāriqat as-suyūt al-jaba-
liye" by Muhammedībar of Qarsakh (published by the USSR Academy of Sciences under the editorship of aca-
demician I.Krachkivsky, 1940-1949), "Al-magḥāzi" by Ḥaydarbeg of Chinhutl, "Khulāsāt at-tafsīl" and "Chronicles" by 'Abdurrahmān of Kumukh, the "Epoch of Shamil" by Ḥisāq of Urma, "Al-khabar" by Khalīl of Anghida, "Āṣāri Daghestan" by Ḥassan of Alqadar (published in the Azerbaijani language in 1912, later twice translated into the Arabic), "Tuḥfat al-
ikhvān" by 'Ālī of Salta, Jamāluddīnahāfī of Qarabu-
dakhkent, "Al-munkhūl" by Ḥassan of Kudali, "Jādīvīl at-tārīkh" by Mālā ṣaḥīḥ b.Nurmuḥammed of Tabassā-
ran, 'Ālī Qayayev, et al.

There were relatively few learned lexicographers in Daghestan. The most significant work was "Jāmi' al-lughatayn" — a Persian-Turkic dictionary with com-
ments in Arabic — by Dibirqadd of Khunsak. He was also the author of the "Tībṭān al-lisān li ta'li'm as-sībīyān" — a textbook for the study of Persian in Arabic. Abūsufyān of Qazanish repeatedly published his "Khamsat alsāna" — "Dictionary of Arabic-Kumyk-
Avarian- Lak-Dargin Languages" and his big work "Al-
khidmet al-mashkūr" (published in the city of Bu-
naqsk in 1925).

Of the school grammars, with which the study of Arabic began in Daghestan, textbooks of Iranian authors were popular in the 18th century and textbooks from Arabian countries were popular in the 19th century.
They supplemented the works of the local alims. The works of the following Daghestan authors on questions of Arabian grammar should be mentioned: Muḥammad Mani- lāu (died in 1770), ʿAbd al-Karim of Ussīsha (died 1767), Muḥammad b. Muṣṣāb of Qudūq, Muḥammad alī of Chokh (died 1902), Ibn Di-bir-la'v of Ardakan (died in the 19th century), Yūnus of Inkho (died in the beginning of the 20th century), Ghazī-Muḥammad of Qarakh (died in 1903), Qarban alī of Arghoani (died in the beginning of the 20th century), Abdullaṭīf Donogono (died in 1889), and of other scientists.

Arabian fiction came to Daghestan at the time when general Arabian culture was on the decline. Local fiction (in Arabic) began to develop at the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries. It grew up on local soil and depicted the history of Daghestan. Although the works of the Daghestan authors of this epoch have not entered the treasure-house of world literature, they were quite significant; they give vivid expression to local colour, are known for original devices, their language is often concise and expressive, and they are written, according to I. Krachkovsky, "not infrequently with great sharpness and power, which reminds us of the best samples of the classical epoch of Arabian literature".

Two principal trends are clearly traced in the Daghestan literature of the 18th and 19th centuries written in Arabic.

The first of these trends is religious-clerical, formed under the strong influence of the religious Arabian literature. The representatives of this literature elaborated the traditional themes and motifs, interpreting them in the spirit of mystic ideas. The initiators of this trend in Daghestan were 'Ali of Kumukh (died in 1448) and 'All of Baghdad (died in 1613). In the 18th and 19th centuries this trend was represented by Mallā Muḥammad of Katrukh, Shābūn of Oboda (18th century), Aqāimirza of Qagan, Di-bīrqādi of Kuṃzhak (19th century), and others.

Simultaneously with the religious-clerical trend and in close cooperation with it another trend emerged and developed. This trend was represented by the works of poets, in which we find a response to real historical events. They sought to pose urgent socio-political problems. This literature shows features of national originality. Its most characteristic genres were the ḥamāsas, nassīb, madīḥ, zamāniyāt, hijā, etc.

This trend was represented by Saʿīd of Arakan, Ḥājī-Muḥammad of Soqratī, 'Abdullaṭīf Donogono, Yūsuf
of Yakhsai, Mirsal of Akhti, Sheykham of Kumukh, Hassan of Alqadar, and Imam Muhammad of Hihat.

A new period. in the Daghestan Arabian-language literature began early in the 20th century under the enormous influence of the great historical changes. In this respect the year 1905 may be considered the turning point, since it opened a new period in the Arabian-language literature in Daghestan. This epoch was marked, in the first place, by an extension of literary and ideological ties of the Arabian-language Daghestan literature, new cultural contacts, extensive acquaintance with the printed works of the Russian Moslems, primarily the Tatars, as well as with the works of Egyptian and Syrian authors.

The make-up, the type of the poet, of the author, also changed. As a rule, it was now an alim, a poet familiar with the works and ideas of the educated people in the other Moslem countries. This could not but contribute to the artistic and genre enrichment of literature.

The most brilliant figure among the Arab poets of Daghestan in the beginning of the 20th century was Muhammad 'Abdurashid of Arakan (died in 1928). He is the author of the poem "Yaum al-'avâ" in which he depicts the battle of the Red Guerrillas with the Denikin bands.

in the mountains of Daghestan in 1919; he also wrote odes, ghazel, elegies and satirical works. The poets who also wrote in Arabic in the beginning of the 20th century included Hassan Guzun, Fakhruddin of Arghoani, Isma'il of Sholani, Sheikh al of Soqrat, Muhammed-nur and Makkasharif of Gismra, Muhammad 'Omar, and others.

The development of the Arabian-language literature in Daghestan stopped with the spread of the written native languages, when there was no longer any need in Arabic as a peculiar means of intertribe written intercourse.

The character of the Arabian-language Daghestan literature was conditioned by peculiarities of the country's historical development. Developing as a provincial literature it is of great importance for the science of Daghestan, as a historical source and interesting material of literary criticism, and for general Arabian philology since it enables us to form a clear picture of the development of one of the collateral branches of Arabian literature.