

RUSSIA'S PEOPLE OF EMPIRE

Life Stories from Eurasia, 1500 to the Present

Edited by Stephen M. Norris and Willard Sunderland



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STEPHEN M. NORRIS AND
WILLARD SUNDERLAND

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Mosaic of Imam Shamil in modern-day Gunib. Photograph by Rebecca Gould.



Imam Shamil

(1797–1871)

REBECCA GOULD

When the Georgian modernist poet Titsian Tabidze decided to commemorate his recent excursion to the mountain village Gunib, the site of Imam Shamil's surrender to the Russian general Bariatiniskii in 1859, it was not necessary to provide much context for his Georgian readers. Written in 1928, the poem was never published in his lifetime, and only made it into his collected works in 1966. Titsian was well aware of his poem's unpublishability under the conditions of Stalinist rule. The most articulate text produced by a Georgian about the Russian conquest of the north Caucasus, a conquest facilitated by Georgian generals in the Tsarist army, thereby escaped censorship. Thanks to this evasion, the words that have been preserved have not lost their resonance:

I crossed Daghestan. I saw Gunib.
 I, an infidel, now a shahid.
 My sword is an arrow; it will not bend
 Though it may kill me. [. . .]
 I see the ghost of a nest, ravaged by eagles.
 My eyes recall my shame.
 How did they embalm these cliffs?
 Why did they exterminate this sky?
 Georgia, this mountain's grief belongs to you.
 Our bones rot beside our swords and bayonets,
 I pity my gangrened Georgian flesh.
 Those who gave their lives are safe in paradise.
 As for you who remain behind,
 My Georgian brothers, memory has no mercy.
 Tonight, the wind shudders.
 Shamil prays for his men.
 You sold us into slavery, you spoiled the battle.
 The night won't weep for cowards under a foreign sky.
 I never pulled the fatal trigger.

I never donned the fighter's armor.
 But this battle moves even me to ecstasy.
 I don't want to be a poet drunk on blood.
 Let this day be my penitence.
 Let my poems wash away your treachery.¹

It is not known whether Soviet Georgian authorities were directly acquainted with Titsian's evocation of Imam Shamil's defeat. Certainly the Russian authorities were not, as the poem was never translated into Russian. Nor has the text been rendered into Russian in the eighty years since it was written. But it seems unlikely that Titsian's execution nine years later, while the poet was imprisoned on the charge of espionage and after he had undergone torture intended to extract a confession, was entirely unconnected to his authorship of this poem. Arguably his masterpiece, "Gunib" was never translated by Boris Pasternak, translator of Titsian's finest poems into Russian, and Nobel laureate for his own poetry and prose. Pasternak is largely responsible for Titsian's fame as the second-greatest modernist poet in Georgian among readers of Russian, but he remained ignorant of this particular masterpiece.

Not by coincidence, Titsian Tabidze was working on a novel about Imam Shamil when the NKVD (Stalin and Beria's secret police) arrived in his Tbilisi apartment to take him away to jail. Titsian's compatriot Grigol Robakidze did escape Soviet Russia before the purge. From his Geneva home, Robakidze wrote the story Titsian never wrote, or at least never published: "Imam Shamil" in his 1932 collection *Caucasian Novellas*.² Significantly, Robakidze wrote his account in German rather than Georgian or Russian, as if to suggest that the European Shamil was more likely to pique his readers' interest than the Shamil known to Robakidze in his own language.

Imam Shamil, who led the peoples of Chechnya and Daghestan in their resistance to the twenty-five-year Russian conquest of the northeast Caucasus (1834–59), has never lost his hold in the imaginative historiography of Russian colonialism. Born in 1797 to an Avar family in the village of Gimri in mountainous Daghestan, Shamil's original name was 'Ali. During a childhood illness, 'Ali was rechristened Shamūēl, a name meaning "that which repels sickness." Shamūēl was modified to Shamil, the name by which he is known today in both Arabic and European sources.

From birth, Shamil was a weak child, but after the name change, he grew to be strong, courageous, and widely esteemed for his eloquence and learning. By the age of twenty, Shamil had mastered all the traditional subjects taught in the *madrasas* of the north Caucasus: Arabic grammar and rhetoric, *hadith* (stories and sayings of the Prophet), and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and theology (*kalam*). This training was to prove useful in later years when it became necessary to establish a state in the Caucasus based on Islamic principles.

Shamil received his initial training in guerrilla warfare while fighting under Ghazi Muhammad, the first spiritual leader of the Daghestani Muslim forces. Ghazi Muhammad was the head of the same Sufi brotherhood that had reclaimed Daghestan from the Qajar Persians in 1813, and who, using the Sufi term for "dis-

ciple," called themselves Murids. The leaders of this organization had been inspired by the Naqshbandiyya Sufis who had been traveling to Daghestan via Shirvan since the 1810s (the history of Sufism in the Caucasus begins in the eleventh century, but the wide reach of this new Sufism was driven in part by colonial incursions). Ghazi Muhammad was killed by the Russians in 1832, after which leadership of the Murid brotherhood passed to Hamza Bek, himself killed two years later by his own followers. This left the path open to Imam Shamil, who was chosen in 1834 by the remaining members of the Murid brotherhood and the Avar *'ulama* (elders) to lead a united Daghestan and Chechnya against the Tsarist army and to serve simultaneously as head of the northeast Caucasian Islamic state.

Thus Imam Shamil became the third imam of the Caucasus, succeeding Ghazi Muhammad and Hamza. Muhammad b. al-Qarahi (d. 1882), Shamil's secretary and biographer, described the imam's rise to power in eulogistic terms that underscore the Murid movement's global outlook. Al-Qarahi wrote how the "able scholar Shamil" was "famed in the east and the west for his jihad so that the people of Mecca and Medina, the scholars of Balkh and Bukhara, and pious people from all over the world . . . prayed for his victory, success, and prosperity."³

Shamil was far more than a military leader; he was also builder of a new state. In addition to adapting shari'a to his local environment, Shamil formulated a set of ordinances for situations shari'a did not address. This second set of regulations resulted in a body of law called *nizam*, modeled on the legal system prevalent in the Ottoman Empire at the time, *kanun*.⁴ Finally, Shamil was the leading diplomat for the state he built. In his official correspondence, he applied the term *amir al-mu'minin* to himself, alongside titles such *qazi* (judge in Islamic law).⁵ The first title is both the most controversial and revealing, for *amir al-mu'minin* ("Commander of the Faithful"), generally reserved for the Caliph, who ruled from Baghdad until 1258. The title was assumed by the Ottoman sultans in subsequent centuries, but in the colonial period few Islamic rulers were daring enough to call themselves *amir al-mu'minin*.

That Shamil arrogated this title to himself reflects his formidable political ambitions. But when it came to dealing with Russian authorities, Shamil, ever the consummate statesman, uses self-deprecating terms such as "the slave of god" (*al-'abd al-faqir*) in lieu of Imam and *amir al-mu'minin*.⁶ Even when he was not directly addressing Ottoman rulers, Shamil evinced a respect for Ottoman sovereignty that appeared to exceed his regard for the Tsar. He once told Ilya Orbeliani, a Georgian officer whom he had taken captive, "There is only one God in heaven and one *padishah* on earth, the Ottoman *hünkär* [ruler]."⁷ By reserving the title *amir al-mu'minin* for himself, Shamil managed to retain at least certain aspects of sovereignty for himself.

It would be impossible to recount here all the legends recorded about the great imam. Most sources for the historiography of Shamil and his state are in Arabic, and include both contemporary chronicles and letters and decrees composed by Shamil himself. The most important such source is the official biography by Shamil's son-in-law, al-Qarahi. In addition to being a record of Shamil's life, this text is a detailed firsthand account of the events of the Caucasian war. A second class of sources

comprises largely Russian memoirs by officers in the Tsarist army and travelers to the Caucasus, as well as accounts by Russians who became acquainted with Shamil in exile, such as Maria Nikolaevna Chichagova, wife of a Tsarist official charged with monitoring Shamil in his captivity, and author of *Shamil in the Caucasus and Russia* (*Shamil' na Kavkaze i v Rossii*). The most notable officers' memoirs are Runovskii's *Notes on Shamil* (*Zapiski o Shamile*) and Zissermann's *Twenty Five Years in the Caucasus* (*Dvadsat'piat' let na Kavkaze*). A third class of sources comprises the numerous European accounts of Imam Shamil by the now-forgotten Friedrich Wagner and John Baddeley. With varying degrees of credibility, these works fashion Shamil alternately as a fanatic, a tyrant, and an enlightened, truth-seeking, idealist reformer. As indicated in Charles King's contribution to this volume, the European engagement with Shamil penetrated even into the American public sphere during the nineteenth century.

Arabic sources generally present Shamil as a devout and well-informed follower of the Naqshbandiyya Sufism, and a reformer opposed to the non-Islamic customs (*adat*) which still held sway over the Daghestani and Chechen mountaineers in the mid-nineteenth century. Shamil's scholarship in the domain of religious studies was so notable that as we have seen above, al-Qarahi underscored Shamil's preeminence in this field but had little to say about the intellectual attainments of the previous imams, Hamza and Ghazi Muhammad. Scholarship was the foundation on which Shamil mounted his critique of both the Russian infidels (*kaffur*) and the ignorant (*jahili*) not-fully Islamicized and excessively quietistic mountaineers of Daghestan and, especially, Chechnya.

The conflict between Islamic law (*shari'a*) and *adat* in Shamil's political praxis appears with particular clarity in a story concerning his treatment of his mother, Bahou Messadou. By 1843, the Caucasian War had already become too brutal for most peace-loving residents of the Caucasus to endure. The mountaineers wanted an end to the shedding of blood and the slaughtering of their neighbors. Like the majority of Chechens and Daghestanis, particularly those who resided on the plains, Bahou wished for an end to the war. She met with her son and informed him of her desires. Shamil then went to the mosque to pray.

Three days later, Shamil emerged from the mosque and announced that Allah had issued the following order: one hundred lashes to the person who advised Imam Shamil to surrender to the Russians. According to this judgment, the person most deserving of punishment was, as Shamil himself knew, his mother Bahou. A crowd assembled and his mother was brought before him, her limbs tied together to prevent her escape. Shamil lifted his whip. He delivered five strokes, after which his mother lost consciousness. Although the instruction from God had stipulated one hundred strokes, Shamil could not bear to see his mother suffer any more. He fell to the ground and instructed his assistants to whip him instead of his mother. The assistants hesitated to punish their master, but Shamil would not permit an abrogation of the sacred commandment. He threatened that anyone who refused to whip him would be executed. By his own command, Shamil suffered the ninety-five remaining lashes of the

whip. When the punishment was fully administered, the imam staggered to his feet, covered in blood, and instructed his attendants to report the incident to the community. This punishment was staged to persuade the war-weary that the fight must persist until the end.

In his youth, Shamil studied with Muhammad al-Yaraghi (also known as Mulla Magomet), the most influential leader of Sufism in Daghestan. Unlike the political theory Shamil and his scholars developed to uphold his state, Yaraghi's teaching did not include the call to *jihad*, or *gazawat*, as holy war in defense of Islam is generally termed in Daghestani contexts. The politicization of Sufism that we see in the campaigns of Shamil may have been a response to political exigency more than an expression of religious faith.

Many Sufistic movements in the north Caucasus, such as that led by Kunta Haji of the Qadiri order, were emphatically nonviolent and even quietistic to the point of enjoining a complete isolation from political events. Northeast Caucasian Sufism is often divided into two major groups: those that, like Imam Shamil, actively resisted Russian incursions, and those that opted for surrender in the interests of peace. These divisions make it all the more ironic that Imam Shamil became a poster child for political amelioration after he surrendered, while the 1864 repression of Kunta Hajji's quietist followers who belonged to the Qadiri order contributed to the popularity of the more militant Naqshbandiyyas.

It is not hard to understand why Shamil appealed to so many people in so many different ways. To those disgusted by corruption among the Islamic clerics, Shamil was at the vanguard of a reform movement that promised to cleanse Daghestan and Chechnya of religious impurities. To those grief-stricken by the bloodshed of war, Shamil offered a beam of light for Caucasian autonomy and ultimately for peace. To Russian idealists such as Tolstoy and the bestselling children's writer Lydia Charskaia, Shamil was a symbol of courage, the like of which was not to be found among the Russians, even though both writers were critical in their own ways of the Avar warrior.

Everyone who lives in the contemporary Caucasus confronts the historical memory of a man who forestalled the incorporation of the north Caucasus into the Russian Empire by the world's largest army for a quarter of a century. One interesting twist in the Shamil legacy has been the aspersion cast on him in local mountaineer sources as a result of his surrender at Gunib. Particularly in recent Chechen accounts—such as the historical trilogy by Chechnya's most famous contemporary writer, Abuzar Aidamirov (d. 2005), which opens with Shamil's imamate—Imam Shamil is portrayed as a traitor to the cause of north Caucasian freedom.⁸ During the recent Chechen wars, the Chechen bard Timur Mucuraev committed many Chechen legends to poetry. One of his most famous songs based on Chechen oral memory is called "Imam Shamil." In this poem, we learn that Shamil was responsible for the defeat of the north Caucasus. Shamil decided to accept captivity, whereas his more steadfast Chechen colleague, Baisangur, was prepared to battle the Tsar's army until his death. When Shamil surrendered to Bariatinskii at Gunib, the precipice

Titsian later memorialized in his poem, Baisangur refused to give in. Rather than allow Chechnya to become part of Russia, he left for the mountains, taking many armed Chechens with him. Anticolonial guerrilla warriors, such as the Chechen Sheikh Mansur, preceded him, and anticolonial warriors, such as Baisangur and the abrek Zelimkhan of Kharachoi, followed.⁹ This legacy of Chechen military zealousness contrasts interestingly with the pleadings of those Chechens from the plains who asked Bahou Messadou to persuade her son to make peace with the Russians. Tolstoy's portrayal of Shamil in *Hadji Murat* (1912) is another example of the Chechen-Avar split in Shamil's legacy.

Nearly all the lives that have shaped north Caucasian history ended in execution or surrender. Shamil was the luckiest among this group: he lived out his final days in pleasant exile in Kaluga, a mere one hundred twenty miles from Moscow, under the watchful gaze of the provincial administrator Chichagov and his wife. Disturbed by the cold climate of Kaluga, Shamil later moved to Kyiv, where he requested permission to perform the haj for the second time in his life. During his sojourn in Mecca, Shamil met the equally famous Sufi leader of the Algerian anticolonial resistance, 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza'iri (1808–83), whom many scholars regard as Shamil's Algerian counterpart.¹⁰ Shamil also traveled to Damascus, where he visited the grave of Ibn al-'Arabi, and to Baghdad, where he visited the grave of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, both major figures in classical Sufism. Shamil died in Medina in 1871. He is buried in the cemetery Jannat al-Baqi, not far from the graves of Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad the prophet, and four of the earliest Shi'a imams.

The images Shamil's memory has produced express distinct and often conflicting cultural and political priorities. There are many Shamils: the Shamil of the Daghestanis, the Shamil of the Chechens, the Shamil of poets and of war chroniclers. There is a Shamil viewed through the lens of the Tsar, and another generated by popular memory. There is a Shamil who sternly gazes on a gambling house in modern-day Gunib (fig. 10), and a Shamil whose exploits Modest Mussorgsky set to music in a *Marsh Shamilia* (1859) set to a Georgian text.¹¹ Most recently, Shamil the philosopher has engaged in a debate with the fourth-century church historian Socrates Scholasticus about the meaning of prayer.¹² To the Soviet authorities, who published the appropriately titled *Shamil: A Supporter of Sultanate Turkey and of the English Colonizers* (1953), Shamil was a counterrevolutionary bandit and spy for foreign powers.¹³ Each Shamil contradicts the one that came before.

In certain respects, the Soviets were right to be wary of the inflammatory implications of Shamil's deeds. The third imam did seek help from foreign powers. He wrote to Queen Victoria, complaining that "every year we must defend ourselves against the invader's fresh armies" and asking the queen to come to his aid.¹⁴ He also wrote to the Ottoman Sultan Abdülmecid (r. 1839–61), pleading for support from the Ottoman Empire in his battle with the Tsarist army, and boasted that "cannons, gunpowder, and Congreve rockets" were now being produced within the bounds of his Imamate.¹⁵ But Shamil's greatest hopes were directed further south: toward the Egyptian Pasha Muhammad 'Ali and his son Ibrahim, who in 1839 won a stunning defeat against

the Ottomans at the battle of Nezib, and thereby demonstrated the superiority of Egyptian military power to Ottoman forces. In a letter circulated across Shamil's imamate, Ibrahim promised "all the Chechen and Daghestani *'ulama* and elders" that they would "together conquer the provinces of Daghestan, recover Astrakhan', Derbend, and Azoz, and drive out the unbelievers from the land of Islam."¹⁶ Our only source for this document is a Russian translation published in the nineteenth century. Whether it did not fact originate with the son of the Egyptian pasha, or whether its origin should be traced to local Daghestani actors, Imam Shamil made the most of his public alignment with a ruling family whom a French consul in Tbilisi recognized as the regime's most respect by the mountaineers of the Caucasus. The consulate's observation that "Muhammad Ali stands much higher than the [Ottoman] Sultan, because he conquered an entire realm from him, became the supreme ruler of the Muslims, and subdued the infidel English [*Ingliz*] and French [*Ifrang*] nations" went well heeded by our master statesman.¹⁷

Shamil never lost his grip on the Soviet imagination, as we see from the writings of Titsian Tabidze and another Georgian writer, Mikheil Javakhishvili, who devoted a special section in his longest novel, *Arsena of Marabdeli* (1935), to a theory that Shamil was the bastard child of the Georgian officer Grigol Orbeliani. Not coincidentally, it was to Orbeliani that Titsian addressed the following line from "Gunib": "You sold us into slavery, you spoiled the battle. / The night won't weep for cowards under a foreign sky." The passage concerned with Shamil's genealogy was censored from later Soviet editions of Javakhishvili's novel; as a result, the Georgian claim to genealogical affiliation with Imam Shamil has remained unknown not only to foreign scholars, but to many scholars from the Caucasus as well.

More than his deeds, Shamil's most lasting legacy is his imaginative afterlife in the memory of the peoples of the Caucasus and Russia. Shamil's legacy is evident today in the names of the streets bisecting central Maxachkala, Daghestan's capital; in the city's bookstores, filled with memoirs, novels and poems about the Imam; in the names of Daghestani philanthropical projects and publishing houses; and in the practice of calling Muslim boys from the Caucasus region Shamil. Why does the third imam refuse to die?

Perhaps the best way of illuminating the contemporary relationship to Shamil would be to share a conversation I had with a half-Russian and half-Daghestani (Lezgin) woman in northern Azerbaijan's former colonial outpost Zaqatala, on the border with Daghestan. It was a July morning, and the sun was already blistering overhead. I asked for directions to the nearest hotel, and she replied, "Come inside and drink some tea with me. I have lived in this town all my life. I have pictures to show you, and I can tell you the history of everything here." I followed the old woman past the wrought iron gates opening onto her garden. A peach tree was in bloom, and white blossoms covered the ground like petrified snow.

My host extended her hand to greet me after she closed the gate. "My name is Svetlana." It was a Russian name, pronounced with an accent as fluent as that of any native speaker. Clearly Russian was her first language. I thought that maybe she was

a *pensionerka* who had wound up by some fluke of circumstance stranded on the Azeri-Daghestan border. But it turned out that her ethnic origins were as mixed as that of all the locals. “My father was Lezgin,” Svetlana explained. “He met my mother, a Russian Cossack, in Krasnodar. They came together to Zakatala and they liked it so much that they decided stay here forever.”

The first thing Svetlana showed me was a tattered copy of a newspaper published fourteen years before in Russia: the August 12, 1992, edition of *Literaturnaia Gazeta*. The headline of the article she wanted me to read was “WE WILL NOT MAKE WAR ON OUR TERRITORY.” The cover story to which the headline referred was an interview with Jawhar Dudaev, independent Chechnya’s first president, fated to die from a targeted Russian missile in 1995. The message was obvious: Russia’s literary elite was embracing the first president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Ichkeria, just as he was embracing the Russians. Even more surprising was that fourteen years after its original publication, this text had been preserved—a sacred scroll on the decaying wooden dining table in the garden of a provincial Azeri home. I asked Svetlana why she had kept this article for so long, and why she was showing it to me now.

“Dudaev was here for the unveiling of the monument,” she said reverently.

“Which monument?” I asked, confused. No history or guidebook mentioned anything about a monument relevant to Dudaev. The streets of Azerbaijan’s backwater towns were still filled with Soviet war heroes, with women who had been the first in their family to ride tractors, and who had ripped off their veils to signal their embrace of Bolshevik power. I had yet to see a monument to Chechen or Daghestani heroes in the Azeri mountains, or any other acknowledgement of the long history of resistance to foreign rule that characterized this region.

“The monument to Shamil, of course,” she said.

I asked her what monument to Shamil she was talking about. I had seen no such thing, and I had been in Zakatala for over a week.

“It’s in the park. Haven’t you seen it?”

I had been to the park many times. It was, after all, the central site in downtown Zakatala, and the most logical place for a monument. There was in fact a monument in the middle of the park. It wasn’t to Shamil, however, but rather to Heidar Aliiev, Azerbaijan’s recently deceased president. In the 1990s Aliiev led his country from the chaos of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to fragile stability. Aliiev was a former communist leader who had been transformed by the media into the saint of Azeri nationalism. In 2003, Heidar Aliiev’s son Ilham “won” the Azeri presidential elections with a landslide victory of 76.84 percent, thereby repeating a pattern common to post-Soviet and postcolonial states such as Egypt, whereby sons follow their fathers by right of lineage rather than political acumen.

As we basked silently in the aura of Azerbaijan’s illustrious president, Svetlana suddenly remembered that the Shamil monument had been relocated to the edge of the town, near the border with a village called Jar, populated by Avars rather than Azeris, and far from Zakatala’s central spaces. Shamil was himself an ethnic Avar, so the replacement of the monument was no coincidence. We decided to take an

excursion to the monument, as Svetlana had not been there since the replacement of Shamil by Aliev. Although both monuments were only a kilometer away, I insisted on taking a taxi because the blistering sun had sapped my energy. I did not understand why Svetlana insisted on walking instead of taking a taxi until we reached the park and I opened my wallet to pay the driver. Svetlana thrust forward a five-manat bill—the equivalent of five dollars—probably her pension for an entire week. She protested that she had to pay because I was her guest, but I finally prevailed on the driver to accept my money instead of hers.

Svetlana wanted to visit the park before going to the Shamil monument. We passed the regal black gates opening onto the idyllic “Heidar Aliev Park.” While the gates were still overhead, Svetlana pulled from her purse a packet of Soviet-era postcards. On the front side of every card was a severed head, the image of a war hero. On the back was an explanation of why every Soviet-citizen was duty-bound to honor the image on the obverse. One of the postcards matched the severed head that stood in the corner of park, and we headed straight for the corresponding image. The statue, of gleaming white limestone, was covered with graffiti and surrounded by refuse. Svetlana read to me from the back of the postcard: “In 1908, Zakatala was stormed by a group of Russians who called themselves Potemkinites. They were rebelling against the Tsar.”

We finally reached the center of the park, where the Aliev monument stood. Then I recalled how an Avar bus driver had recently told me that the monument to Shamil had been replaced by Aliev’s bust. How could I have forgotten what he said? “Cretins,” the Avar spat into the earth as he recalled the removal of Shamil’s monument to the edge of the town. “Traitors.”

Svetlana froze reverently. “Let us stand silently and pray,” she said finally, and closed her eyes. She rocked back and forth on her heels in a kind of trance. “Aliev was a great man,” she finally said with a sigh, and moved away.

“This is the first time I have ever been here,” Svetlana said reverently when we reached Shamil’s bust, fronting a Sunni mosque attended by Jar’s Avar population. It was on the Jar-Zakatala border. “All these years I have lived in Zakatala,” Svetlana sighed, “and I have never once visited this holy site.” Then she knelt down, scooped up a handful of earth, and pressed it to her chest.

Thus Shamil is remembered in the act of his forgetting. He is remembered even as the most troubling aspects of his legacy are consigned to oblivion by statist historiography. Shamil’s humanity is in the process of being replaced by a mythical war hero. There is no telling what this means for the future of the Caucasus. As the present changes, so does the past, and so does the need to remember it. No figure is more central to this act of memory than Imam Shamil. Shamil’s many afterlives encapsulate two centuries of colonialism and anticolonial resistance from Chechen, Daghestani, Georgian, and Russian perspectives. Ultimately, it is not Shamil the guerrilla warrior who has determined the course taken by Caucasian history, but the uses to which his legacy has been put by local memories, many of which have yet to be recorded.¹⁸

NOTES

With the exceptions of the *hamza* (') and *'ayn* ('), diacritics have been removed from Arabic-based words. I wish to thank Dana Sherry for her comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

1. Georgian text and English translation by Rebecca Gould in *Metamorphosis: A Journal of Literary Translation* 17 (1): 70–71.

2. Grigol Robakhidze, *Kaukasische Novellen*, ed. Käthe Rosenberg (Leipzig: Insel-Bücherei, 1932; reprinted Munich: n.p., 1979).

3. Muhammad Tāhir Qarāhī, *Bariqat al-suyuf al-Daghistaniyah fi b'ad al-ghazawat al-Shamiliyah* [Shining of Daghestani Swords in Certain Campaigns of Shamil], ed. A. M. Barabanov and I. G. Krachkovskii (Moscow: Akademii Nauk, 1946), 8.

4. For Imam Shamil's *nizam* in Russian translation, see "Nizam Shamilia," *SSKG* 3 (1870): 1–18.

5. *Araboiazychnye dokumenty epokhi Shamilia*, ed. R. SH. Sharafutdinova (Moscow: Izd-vo atelskaia firma "Vostochnaia literatura" RAN, 2001), letters 84 and 65.

6. *Araboiazychnye dokumenty*, letter 63.

7. V. G. Gadzhiev and Kh. Kh. Ramazanov, eds., *Dvizhenie gortsev severo-vostochnago Kavkaza v 20–50kh gg XIX veka. Sbornik dokumentov* (Maxachkala, Daghestan: Dagestanskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1959), 422.

8. Abuzar Aidamirov, *Darts: Roman, "Ekha bu'isanash" trilogin kkoalgha kniga* (Grozny: GUP, 2006). The first volume of Aidamirov's trilogy has been translated into Russian as *Dolgie nochi* (Moscow: Agraf, 1996).

9. Rebecca Gould, "Transgressive Sanctity: The Abrek in Chechen Culture," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, no. 2 (2007): 271–306.

10. For example, Boualem Bessaïh, *De l'emir Abdelkader à l'imam Chamyl: Le héros des Tchétchènes et du Caucase* (Alger: Dahlab, 1997; repr. Alger: Casbah, 2009); Michael Kemper, "The Changing Images of Jihad Leaders: Shamil and Abd al-Qadir in Daghestani and Algerian Historical Writing," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 11 (2007): 28–58.

11. Thomas M. Barrett, "The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity," *Russian Review* 53 (1994): 363.

12. R. G. Abdulatipov, *Dialog o molitve: Sokrat i Shamil'* (Moscow: AVIR VVTS, 2001).

13. Sh. V. Tsagareishvili, *Shamil'*—stavlennik sultanskoi Turtsii i Angliyskikh kolonizatorov. *Sbornik dokumental'nykh materialov* (Tbilisi: Gosizdat Gruzinskoi SSR, 1953).

14. Quoted in Leslie Blanch, *The Sabers of Paradise* (London: John Murray, 1960), 255. This authenticity of this letter has been questioned by Moshe Gammer in "The Imam and the Lord: An Unpublished Letter from Shamil to the British Ambassador in Constantinople," *Israel Oriental Studies* 13 (1993): 110. Gammer's article also adds another valuable letter to the extant archive.

15. Tsagareishvili, *Shamil'*, 367.

16. A. Iurov and N. V., "1840, 1841 i 1842-i gody na Kavaze," *Kavkazskii Sbornik* 10 (1886): 400–401.

17. Gadzhiev and Ramazanov, *Dvizhenie gortsev*, 421.

18. For the best account of the many lives of Imam Shamil, see, in addition to the works cited above, Moshe Gammer's "Nationalism and History: Rewriting the Chechen National Past," in *Secession, History and the Social Sciences*, ed. Bruno Coppieters and Michel Huyseune (Brussels: Brussels University Press, 2002), 117–40; and *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2003). Anna Zelkina's work studies the social history of Chechnya during Shamil's time: *In Quest for God and Freedom: The Sufi Response to the Russian Advance in the North Caucasus* (New York: New

York University Press, 2000); and “Islam and Society in Chechnia: From the Late Eighteenth to the Mid-nineteenth Century,” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 7, no. 2 (1996): 240–64. Both authors should be read alongside the writings of Alexander Knysh, who criticizes certain tendencies in the Romanticist approach to Shamil. See his “Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm: The Issue of the Motivations of Sufi Movements in Russian and Western Historiography,” in *Die Welt des Islams* 42, no. 2 (2002): 139–73.