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The Muridism and Prophet Schamyl in the Works of the 19th Century French Researchers: Depping and Dulaurier

19. Yüzyıl Fransız Araştırmacıların Eserlerinde Müridizm ve İmam Şamil: Depping And Dulaurier

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ABSTRACT

The geostrategic significance of the Caucasus has led to numerous states to establish the political domination in the region by throughout history. However, Northern Caucasus attracted global attention in the 19th century due to its struggle for independence against Russian expansionism. With the establishment of the Naqshbandi Sufi order in the region, a movement known as Muridism emerged. Leaders of this movement, known as Imams, declared war against the Russians and for many years served as a barrier to Russia's territorial expansion. This movement aroused curiosity in the West, which closely monitored Russian political activities in the region, leading to various studies on the subject. The aim of this study is to examine and evaluate how Muridism, under the leadership of Imam Shamil, the movement's final leader who had fought against the Russians for 25 years, has been portrayed in French literature, specifically based on Depping and Dularier. Through this analysis, the study aims to contribute to the existing literature on the subject.

Keywords: French Literature, Russia, Caucasia, Muridizm, Imam Schamyl

ÖZ

Kafkasya'nın sahip olduğu jeo-stratejik önem tarih boyunca birçok devletin bölgede siyasi hâkimiyet kurmasına sebep olmuştur. Ancak Kuzey Kafkasya, 19 yüzyılda Rus yayılmacılığına karşı verdiği bağımsızlık mücadelesiyle tüm dünyanın dikkatini çekmiştir. Nakşibendi tarikatının bölgede kök salmasıyla Müridizm adı verilen bir hareket oluşmuştur. Hareketin başına geçen liderler (İmamlar), Ruslara karşı savaş ilan etmiş ve uzun yıllar Rusların bölgeyi ele geçirmesinin önünde engel teşkil etmiştir. Bu hareket, Rusların bölgedeki siyasi faaliyetleriyle yakından ilgilenen Batı'da merak uyandırmış ve bu konuda birçok incelemeler yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Müridizm hareketinin son İmamı olan ve Ruslara karşı 25 yıl mücadele yürüten İmam Şamil'in Depping ve Dularier özelinde Fransız yazınına nasıl yansıdığını ele alarak değerlendirmek ve böylece alanyazına katkılar sunmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Fransız Yazını, Rusya, Kafkasya, Müridizm, İmam Şamil



1-Introduction

When looked at the ambitions of Russia and her policies towards Caucasus from the past to the present, it is evident that one of the most striking goals within the expansion and expansionist policies of Tsarist Russia seems to occupy Turkey and Iran. Undoubtedly, the realization of this goal is only possible through the occupation of the Caucasus. Indeed, Russia's plan revolves around the invasion of Turkey and Iran through the Caucasus. Thus, Russia's struggle to gain control over the Caucasus began during the reign of the Terrible Ivan IV (1547-1584). The Ottoman Empire, through the intermediary of the Crimean Khanate, had control over the Russians, but due to the internal conflicts within the Crimean Khanate, Ivan the Terrible gained an important political advantage in the region. With the annexation of Kazan, Russian influence began to be more strongly felt in the North Caucasus. The Caucasian tribes, affected by the conflicts within the Crimean Khanate, tried to seek protection from Tsar Ivan the Terrible to get rid of the incursions of the Russians. Therefore, in 1552, two Circassian chieftains, and in 1555, several Chechen chieftains, went to Moscow in delegations to demand the protection of Russia from the Tsar. Subsequently, the request for help from the regiment Mirza on Terek to the Russian Tsar against his uncle, and also the arrival of men from the region of the Shamkhals in Dagestan to Moscow to seek the protection of Russia, hoping for peace and security, laid the foundation for Russia to establish garrisons and to spread the Russian influence into the North Caucasus region.¹

Therefore, in the 16th century, Russia turned its attention to Caucasus, and in the 18th century, she launched some invasion and colonial activities in the region. As a result, the Caucasian peoples faced the threat of losing their independence entirely and thus began to search for a leader and organization to govern themselves effectively. Consequently, the members of the Naqshbandi Sufi order in the region organized themselves and initiated a struggle for independence against Russia. This Sufi resistance movement, known as "Ghazavat," was termed "Muridism" by the Russians.² Having been led by Sheikh Mansur in 1785, this struggle sporadically continued until the first quarter of the 20th century in Caucasus.³ The foundation of this resistance movement led by Sheikh Mansur was based on religious unity and adherence to Sufi orders. Yüksel states that the understanding of Sufi orders in Caucasus had a unique quality that cannot be compared with other regions. This

1 Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Rusya Tarihi: Başlangıcından 1917'ye kadar*, 4. Baskı, TTK Yay, Ankara 1999, p. 155-156; Şeraftettin Erel, *Dağıstan ve Dağıstanlılar*, İstanbul Matbaası Yayınları, İstanbul 1961, p. 210; Mustafa Budak, "Rusya'nın Kafkasya'da Yayılma Siyaseti", *Yeni Türkiye Kafkaslar Özel Sayısı, Çeçenistan Dosyası IV*, issue 74, 2015, pp. 26-30.

2 Moshe Gammer, *The Muslim Resistance to the Tsar*, Frank Cass, Great Britain 1994, p. 204-217

3 Yılmaz Nevruz, "İmam Şeyh Mansur ve Kafkasya'da Millî Birlik Hareketi", *Yeni Türkiye*, 74, 2015, p. 1; Abdullah Temizkan, "Kuzey Kafkasya Mürîdizmi, Mürîdizmin Yayılma Stratejisi ve Feodal Beylerle İlişkileri", *Ege Üniversitesi Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri*, Vol. IX, No. 2, 2009, p. 165; Abdullah Temizkan, "Osmanlı Devleti İle Rus Çarlığı Arasında İmam Mansur", *Sufi Araştırmaları*, 4/8, 2013, p. 3-4.

is because these orders directly functioned as militant organizations, with the sheikh of the order also serving as a commander, and its disciples holding the status of warriors.⁴ In fact, before Sheikh Mansur appeared in Caucasus, there seemed to be resistance against Russian expansionism in the region, but it consisted mainly of sporadic, small-scale movements demonstrated by individual tribes and clans. These groups were often unaware of each other, and their influence remained limited to their respective areas. In other words, there was no unity and discipline among the Caucasian tribes to resist against the their enemy which turned her eyes to their ancestral lands. It was precisely at this point that the movement organized by Sheikh Mansur transformed the irregular structures of resistance movements into an organized form⁵. He attained considerable succces against Russia, between the years 1785 and 1789. However, in 1791, during the Battle of Anapa, Sheikh Mansur was captured by the Russians. Despite the efforts of the Ottoman government, Empress Catherine remained unconvinced to release him, and in 1794, according to some sources, Sheikh Mansur lost his life after enduring severe torture at the hands of the Russian or according to some claims he was not executed but died in captivity.⁶ After his death, a period of silence lasting about 35 years took place in the struggle of independence in the North Caucasus.

In the first half of the 19th century, the religious movement known as the “khanate” considreably started to spread in Daghestan through Shirvan. The spread of Khalidiyya, having been organized by figures like Sheikh Mohammad Yaragli, Cemaleddin Gazikumuki, and Abdurrahman El Suguri from the native population and madrasa members of Dagestan, managed to achive great success in accordance with Khalidiyye’s expansion strategy

4 Ahmet Yüksel, “Osmanlı İstihbarat Ağı ve İmam Mansur”, *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi (OTAM)*, sayı 32, Ankara 2012, p. 173.

5 Temizkan, “Osmanlı Devleti İle Rus Çarlığı Arasında İmam Mansur”, p. 14-15.

6 Budak, op. cit, pp. 27-28; Osman Kimya, “Kafkaslarda Çarlık Rusya’ya Karşı Müridizm Hareketi”, *Akademik Tarih ve Düşünce Dergisi*, 6/3, 2019, p. 1694; Kadircan Kafli, *Şimali Kafkasya*, Vakıf Matbaası, İstanbul 1942, pp. 86-87; Vasfi Güsar, “Uşurman-Şeyh Mansur 1722-1749”, *Kafkas Dergisi*, issue 1, 1957, p. 9. However, his death could not bring the independence resistance to the end. On the contrary, in the 19th century under the leadership of the leaders from Dagestan and Chechnya, the Muridism began again and lasted incessantly until the surrender of Schamyl in 1859 and it led to the mass migrations to Anatolia from the region. In fact, İmam Mansur could foresee the continuity of the Islamic movement. Moreover, as has been narrated by Caucasian researchers, he said that he was only responsible to lay the foundations for it and told that he would be replaced by someone who would put it into practice see. Cafer Barlas, *Dünü ve Bugünü İle Kafkaya Özgürlük Mücadelesi*, İnsan Yayınları, İstanbul 1999, p.43. In addition, Reynolds argues that the succsss Mansur achieved was impressive, but the extent of his appeal should not be exaggerated; for most Dagestanis, for example, refused to back him and the legend that Mansur belonged to the Naqshbandi sufi brotherhood is not clear. It is claimed that some historians have described Mansur as the first in a line of militant Naqshbandi sheikhs who strove to awaken the Muslims of the North Caucasus. Yet, no substantial evidence has ever been found to support the legend. To Reynolds, it appears that trying to establish such a link overemphasizes the significance of Sufism as an independent militant organisation. Furthermore, it inaccurately suggests that the period of almost four decades, from Mansur’s capture to Ghazi Muhammad’s assuming the İmam of Dagestan title, witnessed the North Caucasus was devoid of religious leadership, and he likens it to a ship without a captain and the direction see. Michael A. Reynolds, “Myths and Mysticism: İslam and Conflict in the North Caucasus: A Longitudinal Perspective”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 41/1, 2004 p. 36-37.

through sermons and propagandas narrating miracles. However, before Khalidiyya could gain influence in the region, there existed an unorganized resistance movement throughout Caucasus; for this resistance movement lacked ideological content in most of the parts of Caucasus, except for Chechnya because in the memory of Imam Mansur was still vivid there, and they were still in favour of the principle of defending Muslim lands against Russian invasion and refusing to live under the reign of non-Muslims, although this represented a very limited part of the population.⁷ Generally, those much closer to colonization zones in Northern Caucasus adopted a more aggressive defense stance, while those in the interior pursued a “wait-and-see” policy. Throughout the history of Caucasus, due to limited resources, the people who lived in the mountains maintained their lives through raids for plunder and pillage to make up for their deficiencies. With the implementation of Russian colonization practices, these raids targeted at Russian Cossack settlements known as stanitsas, Russian outposts, and occasionally the populous military towns established by Russians along the Caucasus line.⁸ In other words, these raids were also a response to Russian expansionism in Caucasus and represented an unorganized defence of their homeland.

As is aforementioned, since there was no single authority, the Muridism leaders emerged in the region so as to bring the khanates in Dagestan and the tribes together under a central government, some leaders appeared and they were named as “Prophet” (Imam). The state mechanism and the authority that they devised was based on the Islamic principles termed as “sharia” and it was organised under the leadership of Khalidiyya order. The jihad wars were called as “ghazavat” in order to establish an Islamic state under the leadership of the Prophet and the ones who took part in those wars were named as “murids”.⁹ Moreover, the closed-circuit preaching methods in the Khalidiyya were abandoned in favor of directly addressing the masses. This task would still be carried out by the members of the Sufi order. For this purpose, a more militaristic parallel structure was established using the organization of the order and the first Imam selected for this role was Ghazi Mohammad (1828-1832), who was Avarian. He was succeeded by Hamzad Bek (1833- 1834) and Sheikh Schamyl (1834-1859), who was born in Ghimri.¹⁰

Especially in the 19th century depending upon the political developments, such as the aggressive activities of Russia towards the invasion of Caucasus. Some Western researchers and travelers seem to have shown great interest in Caucasus, Muridism and its Prophets. However, it should be noted that Dagestan was in the spotlight and it captivated the attention

7 Temizkan, “Kuzey Kafkasya Müridizmi” p. 175.

8 Eric Hobsbawm, *Haydutlar*; çev. Fatma Taşkent, Logos Yayıncılık, İstanbul 1990. p. 22.

9 Tarık Cemal Kutlu, *Çeçen Direniş Tarihi*, Anka Yayınları, İstanbul 2005. p.192-193. The murids were carrying the swords made of wood to make themselves distinguished from the others see. Alexandre Griogirantz, *Kafkasya Halkları (Tarihi ve Etnografik Bir Sentez)*, çev. Doğan Yurdakul, Sabah Yayınları, İstanbul 1999, p. 75.

10 Temizkan, “Kuzey Kafkasya Müridizmi”, p. 176.

of the West during the third Imam, Schamyl, because when compared with his predecessors he had managed to continue a long lasting struggle against Russia and he could create a deep impact on the history of Caucasia with heroic and legendary wars accompanied especially by the Daghestanis and the Chechens, which also caused Schamyl to be an important subject in terms of history literature.¹¹ In addition, after the publication of the travelogues, the press in Europe and the United States began to take notice of the struggle for independence and freedom in the North Caucasus against Russia. Particularly, British newspapers, in response to demands from the public, brought this struggle to their pages, providing almost daily coverage of developments in the region that were closely followed by readers. Consequently, the ongoing struggle led by the third Imam Schamyl, which arose sympathy among the British public, became the subject of great attention.¹² For instance, between 1830 and 1850, numerous notable people left their mark on the Caucasian region. Some played significant roles before fading into obscurity, while others lingered in the background of history, never receiving their moment in the spotlight. Some found themselves in the Caucasus by chance, while others were drawn there due to or despite Schamyl's influence. Some were completely unaware of Schamyl and experienced a brief episode in the Caucasus without understanding its significance. Famous Russian authors like Lermontov and Tolstoy, who opposed Schamyl, came to appreciate Caucasus as an exotic revelation. Others, like the French author Alexander Dumas, viewed it as a rich source for his another travel book, captivating readers with his vivid descriptions. Dumas envisioned visiting Schamyl's camp but never had the opportunity to meet "the Lion of Dagestan" or receive an invitation to his mountain lair. Nonetheless, Dumas's romantic writings in the Caucasus serve as a reminder of the celebrated Russian writers of the time, such as Alexander Bestoujev, known as Marlinsky, whose colorful Caucasian tales were once immensely popular but are now rarely read.¹³ Besides the English and the German, because of their political and economic interests and their intention to closely watch the activities of the other European countries, it is seen that the French showed great interest in Caucasia, Muridism, its Prophets and the Caucasian wars as well. The traces of this interest in the region can be seen especially in the 19th century French literature in the form of travelogues, academic studies, official reports, poems, plays and so on. For instance, along with the travelogues of French travelers¹⁴ and researchers about Caucasia and Muridism and its leaders, it is also seen that some of the French consuls also despatched some reports

11 Fikret Efe, *Şeyh Şamil'in 100 Mektubu*, Şule Yayınları, İstanbul 2002, p. 35; Lesley Blanch, *The Sabres of Paradise*, Book Blast ePublishing, London 2015, p. 16.

12 Ayşegül Kuş, *Avrupalı Seyyahların Gözüyle Kafkasya*, Bilge Kültür Sanat, İstanbul 2021, p. 26-35; Murat Yeşil, "Batılı Kaynakların Penceresinden 19. Yüzyılda Kuzey Kafkasyalıların Ruslara Karşı Verdiği Bağımsızlık ve Özgürlük Mücadelesi", *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 6/5, 2017, p. 2676.

13 Blanch, op. cit, p. 214.

14 Alexandre Dumas, *Impressions de Voyage (Tome 3) Le Caucase*, F. Bourin, Paris 1859; Le Baron de Baye, *Au Nord de la Chaîne du Caucase, souvenirs d'une mission*, Libraire Nilsson, Paris 1889.

to the Foreign Affairs of France¹⁵. In addition, in the National French library is a war song written about Schamyl¹⁶ and a great number of local and national French newspapers and magazines regarding Schamyl¹⁷.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to reveal how the third Prophet Schamyl is portrayed and perceived in the French literature through the works of the French historian, Guillaume Joseph Depping (1829- 1901) titled as “Schamyl, le prophète du Caucase, par le major Warner” published in Paris in 1854 and the study of Édouard Leuge-Dulaurier (1807-1881), the French Orientalist, a famous scholar on Armenian studies and also Egyptologist, titled as “La Russie dans le Caucase” published in 1861. Thus, it is aimed to address Schamyl, the heroic figure described as “the Lion of Dagestan” and evaluate how he was perceived in the West through the pen of two French researchers Depping¹⁸ and Dulaurier¹⁹ and thus make some contributions to the field of literature.

2- The European Interest in Caucasia and the third Prophet Schamyl

One of the reasons why Caucasus, strategically important and naturally beautiful, became famous all over the world is the struggle for independence and freedom initiated by the Caucasian mountain tribes in the north of the region against the invading Russians in the 19th century. The great courage and the ability of the mountain tribes of North Caucasus to defend their ancient lands against Russia, which had the world’s most powerful army, for a long

15 Benningson used a French consular report regarding caucasian wars and Schamyl. See. Alexander Benningson, *Un Témoinage sur Chamil et les guerres du Caucase, Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, 7/3, 1966, pp. 311-322.

16 Maurice Patez, *Schamyl, chant de guerre*, 1854. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5459367b.texteImage>

17 Some examples of newspapers and magazines related to it can be given as “Le Nouvelliste (1848-1870)”, “Le Messager du Midi (1848-1892)”, “Journal de Toulouse (1841-1944)”, “Le Charivari (1832-1937)”.

18 Guillaume Joseph Depping, who was born on September 2, 1829 in Paris and died on July 13, 1901 in Port-Marly, was a French historian and geographer. He served as the curator of the Sainte-Geneviève Library and also was a member of the Paris Geographical Society. Depping was known as one of the leaders of the geographical movement. He argued in 1888 that “knowledge belongs to the victor,” suggesting that the real victories were those gained by Prussia’s scientific geography while France focused on the careless strategic maneuvers. Moreover, the State’s Official Journal continued to publish issues focusing on the virtues and gains of geographical discoveries and colonial adventures see. Edward Said, *Şarkiyatçılık*, çev. Berna Ülner, Metis Yayınları, İstanbul 2003, p. 230.

19 Édouard Dulaurier was born on 29 January 1807 in Toulouse. He succeeded Paul Émile Levaillant de Florival, on the former’s death in 1862, as professor of the Armenian language at the Ecole spéciale des Langues Orientales and established the chair for the Malay language. He was also a member of the Institut de France (Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres). He died in Meudon on 21 December 1881. In addition, Dulaurier made a major contribution to the “Collection of the Historians of the Crusades”, for the part related to Armenian sources which he edited and translated into French. The documents were collected and published in Paris in the 19th century, and included the documents in Latin, Greek, Arabic, Old French, and Armenian. This work is still considered a major source of the period. See. Victor Frond, *Le Panthéon des illustrations françaises au xixe siècle: comprenant un portrait, une biographie et un autographe de chacun des hommes les plus marquants*, t. 5, Paris, Abel Pilon, 1866, p. 68.

time naturally attracted the attention of the world.²⁰ Therefore, a great number of travelers flocked to the region, wrote memoirs and published them. Afterwards, regarding Caucasia a great number of articles, novels, the news and the observations obtained from some scientific researches were written about the Caucasian people, their heroic struggle against Russia and the prominent leaders of Muridism, especially Schamyl; for he had fought against Russia for nearly a quarter of the 19th century. Therefore, it can be said that he captivated much greater attention in the West than his predecessors Ghazi Muhammad and Hamzad Bek.

The struggle for freedom by the mountain tribes of North Caucasus against the invading Russian army, particularly during the era of Imam Shamil, was closely followed in the Western world and as a consequence of this interest, a great number of works were written by European travelers who visited Caucasus. The scientific studies conducted by European researchers on independence and freedom wars in the region mostly rely both on the memoirs by some adventurous travelers and the information provided by some of the English, French, German, and Russian agents sent to the region with the purpose of gathering information about Caucasia. These works are considered as independent sources by some of the local historians of Caucasia. However, Zelkina asserts the fact that the resistance movement against the expansionist and invading Russia in the North Caucasus began and continued especially in the high parts of the mountainous Dagestan and Chechnya regions and Western sources regarding the Caucasus are also limited to some of the geographical and archaeological observations of travelers visiting there. In addition, it is said that they could neither penetrate into the depths of Dagestan and Chechnya, nor could they reach the high mountainous areas where the highlanders lived and they are thought to have obtained information just from the people living on the coastlines.²¹ In this sense, the works of Depping and Dularier differ from the other works in that they mostly rely on the Russian sources rather than the travelogues regarding the independence war and its leaders and they are based on primary observations of Runovskii in charge of Schamyl during his captivity in Klauga and the opinions of some Russian soldiers involved in the Caucasian wars.

As a consequence of this interest, Caucasus started to gain popularity at the end of the 18th and later in the 19th centuries, some of these works, written in German were translated and published across Europe and America and many other writers copied them without referencing, and eventually they became classical works. Moreover, it should be noted that these works also played a significant role in shaping the fundamental characteristics of the

20 John Frederick Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of Caucasia*, Longman, Greens and Co., London 1908, p. 47-56.

21 Anna Zelkina, *In quest for God and Freedom: Sufi Responses to the Russian Advance in the North Caucasus*. King Street, Hurst & Co., London 2000, p. 5-6.

Caucasus image in the minds of the Europeans in the subsequent years.²² For instance, among the examples of these books are “Travels in the Caucasus and Georgia” written by Julius Von Klaproth, “Travels in Circassia and Krim-Tartary” and “Russia, Turkey, Black Sea and Circassia” by Edmund Spence, “Circassia or a Tour to the Caucasus by George Ditson,” “Die Völker Des Kaukasus” by F. Bodenstedt, “Der Kaukasus und das Land der Kosaken” in two volumes by Moritz Wagner, “Schamyl als Feldherr, Sultan und Prophet des Kaukasus” by Friedrich Wagner, “Impressions de voyage (3 Tomes) Le Caucase” by famous French novelist Alexandre Dumas. When looked at these sources it is seen that compared with his predecessors Ghazi Mohammad and Hamzad Bek the travelers and the researchers mostly tend to provide more information about Schamyl and his legendary and heroic resistance against Russia having lasted for 25 years. This long lasting struggle caused him to gain more fame and popularity in the Western countries.

In this sense, more than a hundred years ago, most of the leading European newspapers devoted their columns to Schamyl. For instance, some questions were asked in the House of Commons as to Britain’s commitments in Caucasus, his bravery was extolled from public platforms and even English ladies sewed an elaborate piece of bunting designed to become his flag. Schamyl’s heroic stand was interpreted with gratification as a deliberate check to Tzarist designs and intentions on the route to India. In other words, Caucasia barred the overland route to Delhi. It was quite clear that this man was an ally, “a really splendid type who stood up to tyrants and deeply religious, even if he did have several wives”. While the ladies of the parish sewing circle, accompanied by tea and cake, worked diligently on an appliqué of red stars against a white background, imagining it waving from some distant Caucasian peak. There was no doubt that Schamyl had managed to capture the imagination of England. Besides these, some enterprising music companies were selling “The Circassians’ March” adapted for the piano, while Schamyl, adorned with a vividly colored cover, portrayed a land of mountain ranges where fierce warriors wielded their swords. More interestingly, the English public seemed to be much more familiar with Schamyl during his early years than the Russians were. To them, he was initially depicted as nothing more than a menacing Tartar giant, as can be seen in crude woodcuts sold at village fairs to the girls whose sweethearts had been sent off to fight against him.²³

Similar to his fame and popularity in England, Schamyl seems to have captured the attention of the public in France as well, for he is seen to be everywhere ranging from the political magazines, poems, songs, and plays to the academic studies. For instance, in 1854 in one of the most prominent theaters of Paris, regarding Schamyl a play by a French novelist

22 Yeşil, op. cit, p. 2672-2673; , Clement P. Sidorko, “Nineteenth Century German Travelogues As Sources On the History of Daghestan and Chechnya”, *Central Asian Survey*, 21/3, 2002 p. 282-288.

23 Blanch, op. cit, p. 19.

and playwright Meurice was staged and it aroused a great interest in public.²⁴ The play became so popular that an article was written about it in the newspaper “Le Mousquetaire” published by Dumas.²⁵ In addition, in the article by Taxile Delord in a political French magazine “Le Charivari,” published on 15 July 1855, Schamyl is described to be here and there and it is stated that everyone in France was talking about Schamyl and was counting on him; namely, he was everywhere.²⁶ Moreover, Schamyl is portrayed to be brave, indomitable, heroic and invincible. The French poet Maurice Pates wrote a war song about Schamyl in which he was depicted to be very brave and the star of hope since he sacrificed all his life to the independence of Caucasia.

Barret also points out the fact that Schamiy’s image is closely tied to his immense popularity, which extended beyond the borders of the Russian Empire and earned him a legendary status in Europe. He was widely regarded as one of the most famous figures in Russia. For instance, the famous French author Alexandre Dumas even described him as the “King of the Mountains” and a formidable adversary to the Russians in his work he published after his visit to Caucaus in 1858. Shamil’s fame transcended ideological bounds and both conservative and radical voices praised his bravery and defiance against Russian rule. He also became a popular literary figure, with authors like Thomas Peckett Prest crafting romanticized tales of his adventures. Besides Dumas and Peckett, both the conservative Russophobe David Urquhart and the radical Russophobe Karl Marx repeatedly wrote about the heroic struggle of Schamyl causing him to become a literary hero as well.²⁷ In other words, it can be claimed that there was a great clash between Russian “civilization” and Caucasian “wildness” that triggered a longstanding Western interest in Shamil and the plight of the Caucasus, which is an interest that became even more intense during the Crimean War, when the political speculation arose of the possibility of linking up the cause of the mountain people with an allied attack on Russia. It is evident that the European interest in Caucaus and Schamyl increased considerably from 1854 to 1856; for during these years at least twenty eight books and translated editions on Schamyl and Caucasus were published in Europe and America, mostly in some big cities like Paris and London, but also in Vienna, Berlin, Florence, Milan, Trieste, Leipzig, Edinburgh, New York, and Boston. From the end of the Crimean war to the year of his capture in 1859, at least ten more works about Schamyl were published in the West. As a consequence of this interest towards Schamyl thirty eight books except for a great number of articles, news accounts and poems also appeared in a six year period.²⁸ In these two studies aforementioned, it is seen that both of the authors seem to

24 <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5682690r?rk=21459;2> 01.02.2024

25 https://alexandredumas.org/eJ/journal/Le_Mousquetaire/1854-07-02. 02.02.2024

26 <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k30561376.r=le%20charivari%20schamyl?rk=557942> 01.02.2024

27 Thomas M. Barrett, “The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity”, *Russian Review*, 53/3, 1994, p. 538.

28 Barrett, op. cit, p. 358-359.

provide more information about Schamyl and when giving information, they generally start with his biography, such as his childhood, his appearance as a brave warrior in Dagestan, his personality traits, and his being selected as the third Imam and his activities to make the Muridism movement acquire a more institutionalized character with established rules based on sharia, hierarchy, and organizational processes under the leadership of Schamyl to implement greater discipline and organisation under his ruling domain.

3- Some Information about Schamyl's Early and Later Life and Personality Traits

It should be noted that the details of Schamyl's earlier life and battles between Caucasia and Russia, there has been only one known local source titled "The Chronicles of Mahommed Tahir of Karahi". As Schamyl's devoted follower, he served as his secretary during the early 1850's and a great deal of his material is from Schamyl's own dictation, during his captivity.²⁹ Related to Schamyl (1796/97-1871), an Avar from Dagestan, there have been different and often conflicting views in different sources. Therefore, it is not easy to be able to have a healthy portrait of him. For example, he is the Schamyl of the Daghestanis, the Schamyl of the Chechens, the Schamyl of poets and of war chroniclers. Schamyl is also viewed through the lens of the Tsar, and or generated by popular memories. To Soviet authorities, Schamyl was both the supporter of Turkey and of England and he was a counter-revolutionary bandit and a spy for foreign powers. In other words, each Schamyl contradicts each other.³⁰ However, it is not hard to understand why Schamyl appealed to so many people in different ways. According to some people worried by corruption among the Islamic clerics, Schamyl was at the vanguard of a reform movement that promised to cleanse Daghestan and Chechnya from the religious impurities. To those tired of the bloodshed of war, Schamyl offered a beam of light for Caucasian autonomy and peace. To Russian idealists such as Tolstoy and the popular children's writer Lydia Charskaia, Schamyl was a symbol of courage, not easily found among the Russians, even though both writers were critical of this Avar warrior.³¹ Blanch also says that today even though the name of Schamyl means little outside Russia and the Near East, there are exiled Caucasian families living in Turkey, among whom there have been some of Schamyl's descendants still hanging his portrait on their walls with all the reverence accorded to an icon.³² Therefore, in order to be able to evaluate Schamyl much better, he needs to be placed first in his time, the first half of the 19th century, and then in his place, the mountains and then in turn, those mountains needs to be placed in their frame.³³ Otherwise, every attempt to understand and portray him will be incomplete.

29 Blanch, op. cit, p. 57

30 Rebecca Gould, "Imam Shamil (1797–1871)", S.M. Norris and W. Sunderland (eds.). *Russia's People of Empire-Life Stories From Eurasia, 1500 to the Present* in (pp. 117-128), Press Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012, p. 122

31 Gould, op. cit, p. 121

32 Blanch, op. cit, p. 19

33 Blanch, op. cit, p. 37

First, the French researcher Depping gives some information about his early life and says that Schamyl was born in 1797 in Ghimri (Gimri) and during his childhood, he displayed an energetic character, a serious mind, and a hunger for knowledge, while also showing a tendency for solitude. Despite having weak health, Schamyl strengthened his body through some intense exercises. Throughout his life, Schamyl was mentored by Dschlelal-Eddin (Celaleddin), to whom he remained deeply attached. Dschlelal-Eddin endeavored to explain him the Quran, narrated the tales of Muhammad's heroism, and ignited Schamyl's desire for fighting against the infidels. Dschlelal-Eddin was the only person who could most gain Schamyl's trust, because Schamyl often preferred to keep his own experiences to himself. For instance, it is narrated that one evening returning from one of his favorite walks around the wild cliffs of Himri, he was attacked by his friends who did not favour his arrogant manners and he was seriously injured, particularly in the head and lower abdomen, and he had to crawl home. However, he bandaged his wounds himself and did not tell anyone about the incident; for Schamyl could not admit any defeat.³⁴ Moreover, Depping also mentions that Schamyl always showed great respect to Dschlelal-Eddin, who taught him to interpret the Quran, narrate tales of the prophet Muhammad's valor, and ignite his desire for warfare against the infidel Russia. Therefore, Dschlelal-Eddin was the only person who managed to gain Schamyl's trust. However, Schamyl would often refrain from talking to him about his own experiences because rather than talking to people, he preferred to keep them inside himself.³⁵

Similarly, Dulaurier mentions that his activities were miraculous, and he was bravely fighting against the enemy in various parts of the Caucasus mountains and delivering sudden blows to his enemies. This young man was Schamyl and he is known to be born in the village of Ghimri in Northern Dagestan and he was just three or four years younger than Ghazi Molla, the first Imam, who died in Ghimri after being besieged by the Russian army under the command of General Velyaminof after having served as the Imam for two years. The proximity of their homes brought them together in their childhood, and the same religious and patriotic beliefs caused them to become closer friends as they approached adulthood.³⁶ King also says that he was born in 1796 or 1797, and he was the child of a free noble from

34 Guillaume Depping, *Schamyl, Le Prophète du Caucase, Par Le Major Warner*, Paris 1854. p. 23-24; John B. Dunlop, *Russia Confronts Chechnya*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p.24. The German researchers also mention that Schamyl was born in 1797 in the aoul of Himri, which was also the birthplace of his great predecessor, Ghazi Mullah see. *The Sultan, Warrior, and Prophet of the Caucasus*, trans. by Lascelles Wraaxall, Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, London, 1854, p. 58. Wagner and Bodenstedt also gives room about this interesting incidence related to the characteristic feature of his personality. However, it should be noted that this work was published based on the works of Wagner titled as "Schamyl als Feldherr, Sultan und Prophet des Kaukasus" and Bodenstedt's "Die Völker Des Kaukasus".

35 Depping, op. cit, p. 23.

36 Édouard Dulaurier, "La Russie dans le Caucase: III. Sa mission religieuses et politique, sa chute et sa captivité", *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 33/2, p. 302.

Avaria and via his mother was related to the ruling class of Kazi-Kumuk, a once powerful khanate in Dagestan. Like many young men from this social background, Schamyl was given to a respected murshid, Sheikh Jamal al-Din, and was taught the tenets and practices of the Naqshbandi tariqa. It is through the murid-murshid relationship that Schamyl was also introduced to the circle of the first Imam, Ghazi Muhammed, for whom he became a trusted fighter.³⁷ In this sense, it is pointed out that even though there are no certain records about his birth, it is believed that he was born around 1796. His father, Dengau, was an Avar nobleman and his mother, Bahou-Messadou, was of equally noble birth as well. Namely, nine generations of high-bred Avars lay behind his family. Yet Blanch asserts that he does not even need to have ancestors so noble, for like Napoleon, he could have said, “Ma noblesse date de moi” (My nobility comes from me).³⁸ As was narrated by the aged men of Himri, in his earliest youth Schamyl was distinguished from all his playmates by his solemn and reserved manners, rigid temper, curiosity, pride, and ambition.³⁹

Depping provides some information as to some of his striking physical and personality traits saying that Schamyl is of medium height, with gray eyes and red hair and his fair and white skin sets him apart from his countrymen. Even in the midst of the greatest danger, he displays a calm and emotionless demeanor. In his daily life, he does not get angry even in front of his most ruthless enemies and also he eats very little and only drinks water. A few hours of sleep are enough for him because he does not sleep much. Instead, he spends most of his time reading and praying for God. In addition, Depping mentions that Schamyl had a great talent of attractive eloquence saying that “when a Russian General said, the Russians are as numerous as grains of sand by the sea, Schamyl would promptly reply that the Circassians are like the ocean waves that scatter this light sand.”⁴⁰

Depping also gives a striking example of his eloquence talent as follows:

In one of his speeches to the Great and Little Kabardian warriors, “Do not believe,” he said, “Do you think Allah supports the greater number? No! He is always with the righteous, who are fewer in number than the unbelievers. Look around, and you’ll see this truth everywhere... Are there not fewer thorns than roses? Are there not pearls instead of manure, and more beneficial animals than harmful ones? Is gold not rarer than ordinary metal? And are we not nobler than all these treasures, because while earthly treasures

37 Charles King, *The Ghost of Freedom: The History of Caucasus*. Oxford University Press, New York, p. 77-78.

38 Blanch, op. cit, p. 58.

39 *Sultan, the Warrior*, p.58. Similarly, Erel says that Schamyl, born in 1797 in the village of Ghimri in Dagestan, attracted all attention to himself from his early childhood on and he was a fearless child. Not only he would protect the weak and vulnerable and would train himself in every sort of sports but also he received education from the region’s most leading religious scholars. According to the Dagestani poet, Bersek Bek, Schamyl is an exceptional and unusual person “in whose eyes, there are flashes of lightning, and on whose lips, there are flowers.” Indeed, he possesses a striking and beautiful eloquence unique to Eastern peoples. See. Erel, age, p. 132.

40 Depping, op. cit, p. 27.

*may all perish, an immortal life is reserved for us? And if there are more roses than weeds, should we wait for these noble flowers to perish before uprooting them?"*⁴¹

It is also reported that Schamyl's childhood memories do not go back before the age of fifteen and everything before that time was recounted to him by his family. According to this, he is said to be weak and sick, so his family did their best to restore his health. However, when it proved unsuccessful, they resorted to one of the traditional methods in Caucasia, which was changing his name. They initially named him Ali at birth and later changed his name to Schamyl in the hope of restoring his health. Thus, Schamyl became known by two names, Schamyl-Ali, but the first name eventually prevailed. Over time, the child grew stronger and his health improved. Schamyl's recollection of his youth are limited but sufficient to depict his upbringing.⁴² In addition, there have been different views about his ethnic origin. For instance, according to Çiçekova, who talked to Schamyl in Kaluga during his captivity, it is alleged that Schamyl's grandfather Ali, whose name Schamyl was given to came to Ghimri from Kumuk and his father's name was "Kumuk Amir Khan" and they descended from Turks, and therefore it is more possible for him to descend from the Kumuk Turks. However, it is recommended that more studies are needed to clarify and reveal his ethnic origin.⁴³

Through the course of time, Schamyl physically started to be strong, courageous, and widely become esteemed for his eloquence and learning. For instance, by the age of twenty, Schamyl had mastered all the traditional subjects like Arabic grammar and rhetoric, hadith (stories and sayings of the Prophet), and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and theology (kalam). taught in the madrasas of the north Caucasus. Naturally, this training was to prove useful in later years when it became necessary to establish a state in Caucasus based on Islamic principles. In addition, it is mentioned that Imam Schamyl, 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.⁴⁴

Dulaurier gives more details about his childhood years and says that Schamyl was born in the beginning of the Islamic calendar's first month, Muharram, in Ghimri 1212, corresponding to the latter part of June 1797. Therefore, he was currently 64 years old or according to his own reckoning, 67 years old on the lunar calendar. Dulaurier also focuses on some of his personal traits pointing out that in his private life, Schamyl is always calm and peaceful and he is never seen to shout or scream. He is so quiet that one does not even feel his

41 Depping, *ibid*, p. 27.

42 Dulaurier, *op. cit.* p. 309; Efe, *op. cit.* p. 48.

43 Efe, *op. cit.* p. 47-52; İsmail Özsoy, *Dağıstan'ın Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi*, Kaynak Yayınları, İzmir 1997. p. 58; Budak, *op. cit.* p. 26; Cafer Barlas, *Dünya ve Bugün ile Kafkasya Özgürlük Mücadelesi*, II. Baskı, İnsan Yayınları, İstanbul 2014. p. 120-121.

44 Gould, *op. cit.* p. 118.

presence. When he encounters a problem at home, not a word of complaint comes out of his mouth, only a slight furrowing of his brow between his eyebrows. However, a few minutes later his face returns to its calm state. He is shy and somewhat introverted towards his loved ones; however, he deeply loves them. Like the people of the Caucasus mountains, he tends to like children and shows them a paternal affection. For instance, during his captivity in Russia, when he visited Russian families, he would call the children near him, and took them in his arms, stroke them, and gives them treats offered to him. In other words, he would treat them like a good grandfather. Despite his long beard, turban, and intimidating weapons, these little beings dared to enjoy playing with him. As is seen from these accounts, contrary to the allegations related to Schamyl in most of the Russian sources displaying him as ambitious, merciless, hypocritical, fanatic, tyrant, merciless, wild and barbar and so on, he is depicted to be a person who is controlled, merciful, child-loving and affectionate.⁴⁵ His father, Dengav Mohammad, came from the noble (free) class and had a considerable income from his gardens and vineyards. His mother, Bakhou-Mécédou, was the daughter of an Avar Bek named Pir-Budak. Aside from Schamyl, they had only one daughter named Fatime. However, there were several claims about the life of Schamyl. For example, some said he was a small merchant selling grapes in Shoura (Şura) and a brave dancer performing the Lezginka dance. Some claimed he was a talented tightrope walker with unmatched agility and flexibility in his youth. However, all of these rumours are false. After his captivity, Schamyl definitively refuted all these claims by providing detailed information about his family and birth.⁴⁶

It is mentioned that Schamyl was an extremely lively and energetic person, but his energy was never aggressive or disturbing. On the other hand, his friend, Ghazi Mohammad, was serious and quiet. Ghazi Mohammad was also considered knowledgeable with his mastery of the Quran and Arabic language while serving as a qadi in Akusha (Akuşa). Schamyl initially came under his guidance and considered him the person who taught him the most and he had been introduced to religious instruction by him, who initiated him into the Naqshbandiya. In the subsequent years until the age of thirty three, Schamyl received lessons from the renowned scholars of Dagestan, known for their theological knowledge and piety. He joined Ghazi Mohammad, the first Imam of the holy war to fight against Russians. Moreover, in his spare time, he increased his physical strength through sports and also read religious books and prayed to enhance his knowledge of Islam. He had no rival in using sword and dagger. For instance, jumping over a rope held by two people or crossing 8.5 meter wide ditches were quite simple tasks for him. No one could compete with him in hand-to-hand combat

45 Dulaudier, op. cit, p. 327.

46 Dulaudier, op. cit, p. 308. There have been different views about the birthdate of Schamyl. For instance, according to Mirza Hasan Efendi, Schamyl was born in 1797, while Blanch states that it is 1796, and Abuzar Aydamirov says that it is 1798. Additionally, Kutlu notes that Schamyl and his ancestors descended from a tribe called "Caucasian Avars" and therefore he distinguishes them from the Central Asian Avars. see. Kutlu, op. cit, p. 212.

and in running. He even walked barefoot in every season to strengthen his health.⁴⁷ In line with this, Schamyl, perhaps the most outstanding political and military leader ever to emerge in the North Caucasus is described as having been an exceptionally tall, strong, and athletic man, an unrivaled horseman, highly intelligent, and well educated in the Arabic language and Muslim religious literature.⁴⁸ Even though the authors who write about the biography of Schamyl generally agree with each other, for instance, as to his height it is seen that they provide different information,

It is pointed out by Mackie that during Schamyl's adolescence, he is said to have been so ambitious of the palm in all games that whenever he was defeated he was disappointed for days feeling upset in silence. Moreover, he would not tolerate anyone to be better than him and excel. Therefore, he enthusiastically continued his training, especially focusing on horsemanship. Like all Caucasian young men, he aspired not only to master riding like a perfect centaur, charging at full speed up steep inclines and down cliffs, leaping over chasms, and swimming across torrents, but also to skillfully handle his weapons while riding. Schamyl really displayed such a great talent that he aimed to swiftly unsling his gun from behind his back, fire it while galloping, and return it to its place in an instant. He practiced hanging from the side of his horse to evade enemy fire, seamlessly dismounting to retrieve objects, and effortlessly remounting without pausing. Additionally, he trained to aim with such accuracy that he could hit even the smallest and most inconveniently positioned targets while riding at full speed.⁴⁹

Until the age of fifteen Schamyl's life had been marked by a resolute character and moral influence, culminating in a bright victory which can be exemplified best through an incidence. His father, Dengau-Mahomet, like other inhabitants of Daghestan, was fond of drinking alcohol. The principle of the Quran's prohibition of fermented beverages had been completely forgotten. Schamyl repeatedly warned his father on this matter and one day he would wait for the right moment to appear before him, holding the holy book and pointing out the passages that clearly expressed eternal damnation for those who violated this principle. Although Dengau Mahomet had sworn several times not to drink alcohol, he would return to his old habits and his neighbors would mock him. Since Schamyl was deeply saddened by

47 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 310; Dunlop, op. cit, p. 25.

48 Dunlop, op. cit, p. 24; Fethi Güngör, "Kafkasya İmamı Şamil ile Naiplerinin Destansı Mücadelesi", *Şeyh Şamil ve Kafkasya*, 1. Baskı, Eds. Mehmet Ali Bozkuş ve Hakan Yazar, Kitabevi, İstanbul 2017, p. 154. Wagner and Bodenstedt also gives similar information as to his physical traits and his talent in martial sports. To them, due to his naturally tender and weak body he tried to strengthen his body by means of some gymnastic exercises of every description. In addition, if in the martial games of Daghestan, another person receives the prize in shooting or in running, he would really feel furious and embarrassed, and he would not be seen for weeks in the public places, because he thought that he had not been the victor see. *Sultan, the Warrior*, p. 58.

49 John M. Mackie, *Life of Schamyl and Narrative of the Circassian War of Independence Against Russia*, John P. Jewett and Company, Boston, 1854, p. 29-30.

this he declared that he would commit suicide before his eyes if he did not give up alcohol. Dengau-Mahomet's overwhelming love for his son, and knowing that Schamyl would do what he said, he vowed not to drink wine again, and he kept his promise until his death.⁵⁰

Dulaurier states that the battle of Ghimri revealed Schamyl's valor, for he bravely fought against the Russian army with Ghazi Mohammad, but he was deeply wounded during the battle. He managed to escape with the muezzin Mehmet Ali, who bandaged his wounds and carried him to Ountsoukoul (Untsukl), where Abdoul-Aziz lived. Unfortunately, Abdoul-Aziz was not in the village at that time. With the approach of the Russians, he, like the other people around him, had fled into the forest. For 25 days, Schamyl remained helpless in agony. Finally, the person who would later become his father-in-law returned and treated him through some traditional methods, providing some relief to him. A twenty four hour sleep brought significant improvement and within three weeks, Schamyl had recovered. However, it would take him three months to have a complete recovery.⁵¹ In this context, it is also underlined that Schamyl participated in Ghazi Muhammad's final resistance at Ghimri in 1832, where he was one of the two survivors. His remarkable survival and recovery from a severe injury, which was neither his first nor his last, strengthened the perception that he was under extraordinary divine protection.⁵²

Similarly, Depping mentions his unbelievable escape from the Russian army during the Achulgo war. To him, despite all efforts directed towards the prolonged siege, Schamyl could not be found among the dead or the injured. The spies claimed he might have taken refuge in a cave and therefore everywhere was searched in detail, yet Schamyl was not found. Around midnight, some soldiers on duty heard a faint sound and saw a man descending using a rope, once on the ground, he looked around carefully. Following his signal, another person immediately slid down, then a third person followed, wrapped in a white cloak as Schamyl was accustomed to. The Russians instantly pounced on them and escorted them to the General's tent. However, astonishingly, the white-cloaked mountaineer turned out not to be Schamyl. Meanwhile, Schamyl managed to escape and swim across the Koi-Sou river. Thus, the Achulgo incident further increased the mystery surrounding Schamyl. Those who had always refused to believe in the divine nature of his mission now dared not cast any doubts. Indeed, this meant that miraculously, for the third time, he managed to escape from the hands of Russians, once famously emerging alive from the midst of a castle fire, and another time disappearing after a fierce battle despite his severe injuries. Therefore, this incidence caused people to believe that he was a messenger sent by God.⁵³

50 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 311.

51 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 305

52 Dunlop, op. cit, p. 24.

53 Depping, op. cit, p. 30-31.

In addition, while all of Avaria had surrendered to the will of fate and Schamyl was in agony in Dagestan, some significant events took place. First, the Mountaineers, constantly under Russian attack, were unable to do anything against the enemy without a leader. Therefore, the elderly Molla Muhammed, after the death of Ghazi Mohammed appointed Hamzad Bek as the second Imam. The ceremony took place in Irgana. Dulaurier underlines the fact that this is a sign that shows how Schamyl prioritized the interests of the Caucasus above his personal ambition, because in fact what mattered to him was the liberation of his country from the enemies and the triumph of Islam but not to be the Imam. He was very pleased when he heard that Hamzad became the Imam and he immediately set out for Ghimri and after spending a few days with his family, he went to congratulate Hamzad and told him that he would stand by his side and serve for him. Hamzad Bek, appreciating Schamyl's great value and immense influence over the Mountaineers, welcomed him well because he knew that he would never get involved in any plots to overthrow him, Henceforth, he appointed him as his assistant. To Schamyl, Hamzad Bek stood out among the Caucasian warriors for his courage. However, according to Runovskii, in fact Hamzad had limited mental abilities and he was not a successful leader. He did not have the ability to make strategic plans and even could not act on his own without Schamyl's advice. For instance, the battles he led against Russians for the first months when he was in the office were so poorly planned that they barely encountered the enemy.⁵⁴

As is understood from these accounts, Schamyl is portrayed as a person who gives more priority to his commitment to the liberation of Caucasia and fighting against Russia than his personal ambitions or interests and in this sense he stands out to be loyal and trustworthy. Moreover, although he had the opportunity to become Imam after the death of Ghazi Mohammad, he respected the decision of the majority and continued to serve under the leadership of Hamzad because he did not consider him as a rival to compete because he knew that such things would give damage to their ultimate purpose. Namely, it can be said that Schamyl is generally described as a leader who has got positive characteristics and traits as in most of the Western sources, especially when compared with his predecessors, Ghazi Muhammed and Hamzad Bek.

4- The Third Imam Schamyl as a Political Leader and Law Maker

Schamyl emerged as a political leader and legislator following the events that occurred after the sudden death of Hamzad Bek. To Dulaurier, this event presents new information about the personal traits and the character of Schamyl, as he is portrayed differently from what has been known about him so far, for he appears as an honest and selfless patriot who emerged through the free will of his own people. Contrary to what is claimed, Schamyl is

54 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 306.

not ambitious, merciless, or hypocritical, but he is willing to do anything to seize power only to serve for his homeland and liberate it from Russia. As is noted by a Russian writer, it is particularly convincing because Schamyl had no interest in hiding the truth, and he knew that there were still many who could refute what he would say. For example, when he heard of Hamzad Bek's death from Houceïn, he sent messengers everywhere to gather elders, judges, and all persons distinguished by their military talents or knowledge in their own tribe. The meeting place was determined to be Gotlokatl (Gotsatl) in the middle of the Araktau mountains and two days later, everyone gathered there accompanied by a large crowd. Then Schamyl was nominated to be the third Imam by unanimous vote of the people. However, he firmly rejected this position, stating that it required particularly active and flexible will, and that he could not undertake such responsibilities of public affairs, which he regarded as heavy burden. Instead, he agreed to support anybody else that would be appropriate for the position and proposed selecting Saghid d'Igala (Sacid), known for his religious knowledge in the region. However, Saghid honestly admitted that his personal traits made him unsuitable for this position, which especially demanded an active and firm will.⁵⁵

To Depping, if Schamyl is remarkable as a warrior, he is even more talented as a legislator because to gather people from all these tribes divided by religious and political hatred, to impose religious laws on people, to organize a permanent army, and to establish order and discipline within this army require a great talent to deal with. However, the leader of Daghestan managed to put them into effect. In addition, the institutions he created were also in accordance with the spirit and the needs of Mountaineers and the current situation.⁵⁶

Schamyl argued that it was impossible for him to rule over such undisciplined tribes and continue the war against a terrible enemy like Russia.⁵⁷ He also said that success could only be achieved by establishing institutions organized according to the principles of the Quran and eliminating the region's specific traditions (adat). Additionally, he added that if he were to become the Imam, he would be obliged to fully implement God's law, which would lead to his making several enemies. The ones present there both promised to do what he wanted and to obey him. Schamyl finally accepted the duty and upon this they all prostrated themselves to pray together and announced it to the people. This good news was greeted with great enthusiasm and joy among the Mountaineers. It took place on September 20,

55 Kutlu, op. cit, p. 213-214.

56 Depping, op. cit, p. 69.

57 In his work titled as "Dağıstan Kılıçlarının Parlaması", Karaki mentions the retreat of some of the disciples (murids) who withdrew during the Russian siege and refrained from fighting. This withdrawal may be related both to indiscipline and to a lack of wholehearted belief in the independence struggle against Russians and calls them as the ones who lack in trust in God. Additionally, Karaki describes those who disobey Schamyl's orders as the ones who lack in trust in God see. Muhammed Tahir El -Karaki, *Dağıstan Kılıçlarının Parlaması*, İnsan Yayınları, İstanbul 1999, p. 163-164

1834.⁵⁸ Thus, Schamyl's career as the third Imam started. His Imamate can be divided into two periods from October 2, 1834 to August 22, 1839, and March 7, 1840, to August 26, 1859. His first imamate period, which began in Dagestan, lasted approximately five years. It should be noted that it is during his Imamate that the name of Caucasus came to the fore and captured the attention of the European countries more than ever.⁵⁹ Following the murder of the Hamzad Bek, Schamyl became a leading candidate to succeed him. In the early autumn of 1834 the assembly of religious leaders, many of whom are from Schamyl's own village, proclaimed him as the third Imam capable of garnering widespread support in Dagestan and Chechnya. It is pointed out that as with the two previous military-religious commanders, there was a serious opposition to Schamyl's claim to supreme leadership, not only among other Sufi adepts but also among some traditional clans and princely rulers whose positions had been recognized by the Russians. Therefore, the first two years of his career were spent consolidating his authority among the remnants of Hamzad Bek's forces and defeating local rivals.⁶⁰

Depping says that Schamyl initially lived in a small fortress called "Akoulgha" or "Achulgo," where he had built a two-story European style elegant house for himself, funded by prisoners and deserters. Here, he lived in extreme poverty, as his only source of income apart from the loyalty of his soldiers was his followers' offerings. Nevertheless, despite all these hardships, Schamyl was more powerful than the richest rulers in Asia, because it is claimed that since 1834, none of the leaders of Dagestan, even Sheikh Mansur could attain such a great prestige that the Mountaineers described him as "Muhammad is the first prophet of God and Schamyl is the second."⁶¹ As is seen from these accounts, unlike the other prophets of Muridism, Schamyl seems to have gained more popularity and prestige in Caucasia with his great talent as a warrior and developing clever strategies against Russia.

After having become the third Imam, Schamyl emerged as an experienced politician, warrior, and talented ruler. The unifying the scattered tribes in the east of the Caucasus was a religious principle taught by Muridism, and their temporary alliances persisted only while they are under arms. Therefore, Imam Schamyl sought to bring those dispersed Mountaineers constantly at odds with one another together under central administration and theological state based on sharia law in order that they could have collective consciousness. However, in the beginning this was not approved by everyone and only when he could gain some military successes, he managed to gain the trust and loyalty of the people. The victories he achieved confirmed that he was chosen by God and as a respected religious figure, Schamyl had to base his power on a theocratic foundation and thus he dictated orders in the name of God and

58 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 312.

59 Kutlu, op. cit. p. 212-214.

60 King, op. cit. p. 78.

61 Depping, op. cit, p. 28.

the Prophet and demanded absolute obedience to him. Therefore, his first task was to organize and declare “gazavat” (a holy warfare) against the enemy and he made it the basis of all the institutions he established. In this context, he aimed to abolish the region-specific customs and traditions known as “adat” and replaced them with sharia law. Additionally, undisciplined groups were replaced by a regular army. He virtually created a government and a ruling system out of chaos, but these activities ultimately resulted in a disaster with his captivity by his enemies. However, the magnitude of the resistance movement that lasted for twenty five years with the weakest means against Russia’s rich resources actually proves the power of a genius like Schamyl.⁶² As has been underlined by Erketil, the charismatic personality of Schamyl in the eye of Cuacasian tribes, resulted from his great ambition to establish a unified Caucasian state from Khazar to the Black Sea and to delineate the state’s borders. More importantly, he struggled to put this policy into practice through his military and political successes. Therefore, he is loved so much and his name acquired a sacred meaning among the Caucasian peoples and his surrender triggered thousands of people to have been compelled to abandon their lands and migrate to Turkey, which considerably left a deep mark in their collective memory.⁶³

When looked at the administration system established by Schamyl, it is seen that at the head of the pyramid was the Imam Schamyl and he represented the supreme temporal and religious authority, and the title used by him in his correspondence is “Emirü’l-mü’minin” the (Commander of the Believers) and it implies his claim to full sovereignty. It is also said that this probably reveals about the motivation of the Caucasian people engaged in the long lasting war in the northeast. In fact, in principle his authority was limited by the rules of the sharia of which he was the chief interpreter.⁶⁴ In this context, regarding the administration machinery established by Schamyl, Dulaurier provides detailed information. First, to assist him in state affairs, Schamyl established a council called “divan” of which he became the president. This council consisted of the most knowledgeable scholars, his devoted disciples, and prominent leaders of the mountain communities. Schamyl convened this council in Dargo, in Greater Chechnya in 1840. Then, he relocated the council to his residence in Veden in 1845. Some of the most important members of the divan included Akhverdi-Mahoma, Hadji-Mourad, the assassin of Hamzat-Bek, the former governor of Avaristan, Kibit-Mahoma, and Daniel-Bek. Taschav-Hadji, a learned individual and one of the most influential persons in Chechnya, held the authority to administer justice and make final decisions in legal proceedings.⁶⁵

62 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 312-313. Actually, the first steps towards the creation of a state were thus taken by the first Imam. More deliberate ones were taken by Hamzad Bek. Unlike his predecessor, who had appointed deputies on an ad hoc footing, the second Imam had regular deputies, each responsible for a specific region. After the elimination of the Avar ruling family, Hamzad Bek started to adopt some attributes of a ruler as well. However, it should be noted that it was under Schamyl that this lengthy process reached its completion and by the mid-1850s the third Imam was a sovereign ruler through a complex machinery. It seems best to describe this machinery as it was at its most developed in these years see. Gammer, op. cit, p. 225.

63 Alev Erketil, *Ele Geçirilimeyen Toprak Kuzey Kafkasya*, 3. Baskı, Büyüyenay Yayınları, İstanbul 2019, p. 183.

64 King, op. cit, p. 81.

65 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 313.

Dulaurier also touches on Imam's sacred status and states that he was safeguarded by an elite unit comprised of his most experienced and devout disciples, who always remained by his side and deeply believed in the sanctity of his mission. For example, approximately 120 persons would station themselves around his residence on guard duty, while others would accompany him to the mosque. Their organization was structured according to a decimal system, similar to other military units in Asia. The first two Imams had a permanent core in the form of a few dozen, or even a few hundred devotees who followed them everywhere. These were organised by Schamyl again and called "naibi murids" to distinguish them from the usual sufi murids of the tariqa. As has been mentioned by Dulaurier here, according to the testimony of Schamyl's son, their number is about 400 and out of these 120 with 12 commanders constituted the Imam's bodyguard. In this context, based on the visit of an Armenian merchant to his cousin, one of the wives of Schamyl in Dargo where Schamyl and his family resided, Depping says that the residence of Schamyl was surrounded by balconies in European style and at the castle gate, there are generally two murids on guard duty, one outside and the other inside. Schamyl does not neglect any security measures; for instance, whenever he goes to the mosque for prayers, he passes through a line of Murids standing with their swords in hand. In the courtyard, there were also four cannons and balls of the same caliber on top of the walls.⁶⁶ The others were distributed among the naibs and the mudirs (müdür).⁶⁷ To all these the murids were both bodyguards and trusted servants who were sent on special missions when necessary.⁶⁸ In the late 1830s Schamyl had already started to lay the foundation for a larger regular force. Thus in the early 1840s every ten houses were obliged

66 Depping, op. cit, p. 52. Even though this visit is very popular and narrated in some other books, it is not mentioned in his study by Dulaurier. Depping gives detailed information about this visit that took place in Dargo in 1848 because an Armenian merchant, named Atarov was perhaps one of the luckiest persons who managed to see and talk to Schamyl. Therefore, a man called Mr. Sollogoub, who visited Mosdok, heard that Atarov had visited Schamyl and he went to his house and asked him to write about his visit to Dargo. However, Atarov accepted his offer on the condition that everything should be written as it is. The article was later reviewed by Mr. Sollogoub's friend, with only some grammar mistakes corrected, but without any changes made sent to Russia's "Northern Bee" newspaper. The article was published in the newspaper on December 18 and 19 1948 see. Depping, op. cit, p. 40-41.

67 The mudir supervised the different activities of several naibs, and led them and their men in a battle. In addition, the mudir fulfilled all the functions of a naib in his community of residence, the same as the Imam in the area around his own place of residence see. Gammer, op. cit p. 226.

68 Moreover, the "naibi murids" were renowned for their fearlessness, their absolute loyalty and their complete obedience to their Imam even to the point of sacrificing their own lives. And they also led to fear among the people. Their basic needs such as arms, horses, clothing and the maintenance of their families were met by the Imam and the mudirs and naibs. Even though the murids are fearsome and awe-inspiring, they represented a small elite force. see. Gammer, op. cit, p. 228.

to contribute one armed horseman and these horsemen, called murtaziqs (murtezak),⁶⁹ were refrained from any other work, their own and their families' upkeep, their fields and so on. Depping also mentions that it is undoubtedly a remnant of the honor guard formed by Hamzad Bek. Schamyl is surrounded by a special guard chosen from among the murids. The aouls vie for the honor of providing soldiers to this elite troop, but to be involved in it, one must have shown constant proof of bravery and loyalty. Members of this swear to renounce all family ties and those who are unmarried remain celibate, while others have no contact with their wives and children during their service. Schamyl wanted them to set an example of temperance for the people, and for all their efforts to be dedicated to the defense of the country and its leader. These guards number a thousand and more importantly, not a single one has ever fallen alive into the hands of the Russians; not a single one has betrayed their oath of allegiance. Their words are orders, and anyone who disobeys would be punished by death.⁷⁰

Additionally, Dulaurier mentions that Schamyl had an intelligence organization and this police force was always vigilant and suspicious due to the constant state of unrest and fear of desertion, and therefore they could intrude into even private lives, monitoring everyone from judges to religious scholars.⁷¹ In accordance with this, it is noted that in order to exercise control over the naibs and mudirs and collect information independent of their own reports, the Imam had "muhtasibs", (muhtesip) who travelled around incognito and reported to Schamyl on the activities of his deputies.⁷² In other words, so as to protect the local population from the tyranny of the deputies and prevent some abuses, there were secret inspectors, the number of which was uncertain, and they had no fixed residence and wherever there was suspicion of any corruption, they moved from one village to another. The institutions like divan and muhtesips are said to have been borrowed from Ottoman administration system based on the recommendation of Youcouf-Hadji (Yusuf Hacı), a Chechen who had long resided in İstanbul.⁷³

69 They were responsible for the other nine families and had to dedicate themselves to military service such as guard duties, patrols, ambushes, and so on in the vicinity of their villages. The murtaziqs were organised in separate units and fought separately from the levies of their area. The institution of the murtaziqs also provided solutions to several problems such as supplying a large and always ready force to fight against Russians or in the case of outbreak of internal rebels which do not bring any cost to the treasury. At the same time it created a large group which concentrated themselves on the continuation of the Imam's rule and could also be trusted to control its fellow-villagers. In addition to this force, Schamyl established a regular infantry unit, probably in the mid-1840s. However, not much information can be obtained from the sources about this infantry. Its name is "Nizam" and it indicates clearly its inspiration: the nizam-i cedid of the Ottoman Empire and of Mulammad Ali. It seems that the Nizam was concentrated in Schamyl's place of residence and was under his exclusive command, unlike the murtaziqs, who were under the naibs' command. The only time the nizam was put into action against Russians was in 1851. Despite this and the Russian ridicule, the Nizam forces must have played an important tool in at least being as a deterrent factor to enforce the Imam's will in his ruling area see. Gammer, op. cit, p. 228-229.

70 Depping, op. cit, p. 71.

71 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 314.

72 Gammer, op. cit, p. 226-227.

73 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 316.

Depping says that Schamyl's ruling domain is divided into twenty provinces, each governed by a naib or governor. These naibs have the same authority, except for four, the most intimate persons of Schamyl, who enjoy unlimited power. They are not accountable to the Imam for their administration and can give decision when necessary, while the others must ask for the master's advice before taking a decision. In addition, each province has a person (qadi) who serves as a judge and communicates Schamyl's orders and proclamations to people.⁷⁴ Depending on changing circumstances Schamyl also divided the region under his realm into several districts. During the peak of Schamyl's power in 1844 and 1845, this number ranged from twenty four to twenty five and each district was headed by a deputy called "naib" who held some religious, political, military, and administrative responsibilities. They also had the responsibility of collecting taxes, raising troops, enforcing sharia law, resolving disputes, and preventing personal vendettas. The naibs formed the backbone of the administrative military machinery. As has been mentioned by Depping and Dulaurier here, they were nominated by Schamyl to specific territories, usually one community only but on some occasions more. Each community was notified by Schamyl about the nomination of a naib over them. The number of naibs varied from four in 1840 to thirty three in 1856. The powers granted to the naibs and the areas under their command differed as well.⁷⁵

Each deputyship was further divided into areas under the jurisdiction of a leader called "dibir", and the dibirs were divided into neighbourhoods under the administration of a mullah with political and judicial authority. Depending on the amount of power delegated to the Imam's representative, the number and extent of villages within a deputyship varied ranging from 2,000 to 7,000 families.⁷⁶ Dibirs or "mazuns" were the assistants working under the orders of the Naibs (mezuns) and they would administer the sub regions.⁷⁷ Usually the mazuns also commanded a hundred each, while the naibs commanded several, usually five hundreds. Under the deputies or naibs, there were judges (qadis) who were also responsible for security. The judges or kadis were held responsible for regularly reporting any significant events to the deputy and promptly executing Schamyl's orders. It is said that the naibs were forbidden to pass any sentence according to the sharia law, because for these affairs each naib had a mufti (müftü) and qadis and each qadi was responsible for a mosque and its community. He had to judge according to the sharia, lead the prayer, deliver the khutba (hutbe) and generally ensure that the people in his community behaved in accordance with sharia.⁷⁸ In line with Dulaurier, Depping also says that the army established by Schamyl is well organized and each naib is obliged to provide the state with three hundred cavalymen, recruited as follows: ten families must send one and the family supplying soldier is exempt

74 Depping, op. cit, p. 69.

75 Gammer, op. cit, p. 226.

76 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 314.

77 Fikret Efe, "Şeyh Şamil'in Mektuplarının İçerik Analizi", *İslamî Araştırmalar Dergisi*, XVI/2, 2003, p. 270.

78 Gammer, op. cit, p. 227.

from paying tithe and the other nine families are responsible for equipment and maintenance. By means of this system the army became active. In addition, there was a mobile army, a kind of national guard. All inhabitants of the aouls ranging from fifteen to fifty years old were part of it and they had to train themselves in using weapons and riding horses. Their mission was also to defend their villages against enemy attacks, and if necessary, to accompany Schamyl on his distant expeditions.⁷⁹

Dulaurier also provides information as to the reforms made by Schamyl in the military field. To him, the establishment of an artillery unit in 1841 alone proves how superior and talented Schamyl was as a statesman, because he struggled to establish the unit against the opposition of his senior advisors and members at the time. For instance, he put an old six-caliber cannon into service that had been left in the mountains. The events of 1843 enabled him to capture field artillery and other weaponry, and seize hundreds of horses to swell the ranks of his cavalry.⁸⁰ Finally, in 1845, he set up a foundry in Veden, and fifty cannons were cast during his twenty-five years of rule. The production methods about which he talked to a government commissioner during his captivity in Kaluga were the most primitive; therefore, these cannons quickly became unusable and only four cannons met the requirements of ballistics. Each cannon bore the imprint of the Imam's seal with the inscription "Cast at the command of Schamyl." Moreover, there were three active gunpowder factories in Ountsoukoul, Gounib, and in Veden operated with a hydraulic device. Bullets were cast and war fuses were produced in Veden and the bullets bore the inscription "Schamyl" on one side and "May Allah increase and elevate his glory!" on the other side.⁸¹

Another reform made in the military system in 1842 was Schamyl's attempt to replace the old military hierarchy with a system of order (regular troops) that resembled the Russian infantry. Moreover, the new operations were coordinated by a complex administrative and military system, with a clearly delineated structure, uniforms that distinguished rank and function, and even a military band.⁸² For instance, he granted the rank of General symbolized by two half-silver stars to his three chief deputies, Akhverdi-Mahoma, Schwaïb-Mollah, and Ouloug-Bey and other deputies and many cavalry commanders were awarded the title of captain, distinguished by an oval medal. Deputy reserves, judges, and former leaders of aouls (villages) were granted a smaller medal. Depping also asserts that in the organization of his

79 Depping, op. cit, p. 70.

80 King, op. cit, p. 80.

81 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 316. Gammer says that In 1842 Schamyl started to build his artillery, which he used with such devastating results in 1843. At first, the artillery consisted exclusively of captured Russian pieces. Later he started to cast his own cannon, however, of poor quality. In both ways the Imam accumulated a few dozen pieces of artillery. Deserters from the Russian army played a major role in the operation and maintenance of Schamyl's artillery. The Imam did everything to facilitate his use of artillery, including the paving of special roads for the rapid movement of guns within his realm see. Gammer, op. cit, p. 229.

82 King, op. cit, p. 80.

army, Schamyl used the honorary signs, medals, and other distinctions that rewarded valor. For example, the leader of a hundred soldiers who has distinguished himself in war receives a round silver medal adorned with poetic inscriptions, the commanders of three hundred men receive triangular medals and the others receive epaulettes that exert an irresistible allure over the Mountaineers' pride.⁸³

However, his attempt to establish regular troops military failed. When they were defeated and destroyed by General Bariatinskii at Schalty on the Bassa River, in 1851. Schamyl completely abandoned the idea of having regular troops. Instead, he instructed his deputies not to march in tight formation against Russians, but constantly urged them to harass the enemy, knowing that the Mountaineers could neither withstand prolonged artillery fire, especially from cannons, or could resist the organized units. Dulaurier also focuses on the discipline in the army. He says that discipline was extremely strict, and absolute obedience was mandatory. Orders were given from the highest to the lowest ranking soldier hierarchically. For instance, depending on the situation, even the slightest violation could be punished by death. If it occurs, a piece of gray felt which was a humiliating symbol for cowardice in battle would be tied around the right arm. If a similar piece of fabric was sewn on the back, it indicated desertion. Any man bearing the mark of disgrace would be banned from his relations with women.⁸⁴ Similar to Dulaurier, Depping narrates that there is also a certain hierarchy, as there are captains and generals. As for the cowards, they are distinguished by a piece of felt attached to their back or arm. In the past, they were exposed to ridicule by being dressed in women's clothing. To Depping, this custom probably originated from the Persians, among whom a warrior convicted of cowardice was made to wear a woman's dress and parade around the camp for a whole day.⁸⁵

Yet there was also a system of graded rewards and honors and these included some gifts such as weapons, clothing, horses, cattle, and sheep, sometimes supplemented with money. For example, in 1840, a number of military decorations were made and the leaders (youz-baschis) at the head of a unit of one hundred men were awarded a round silver medal as a reward for courage, those leading a unit of three hundred men (utsch-youz-baschis) were given a triangular medal, and finally, leaders at the head of units of five hundred men (besch-youz-baschis) were awarded silver epaulettes with the same metal fittings.⁸⁶ Likewise, it is stated that in order to create more uniformity and discipline Schamyl also introduced specific colours of clothing for the regular units as well as for all the commanders and functionaries. Additionally, some standard marks of distinction for commanders as well as for anyone displaying courage on the battlefield were used in the early 1840's.

83 Depping op. cit, p. 72.

84 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 317.

85 Depping, ibid., p. 72.

86 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 317.

In terms of civil laws, although implemented with slight variations, it only encompassed the laws set forth by the Quran and followed in all Muslim countries, so Schamyl had no need to make reforms in this area. The only thing Schamyl could do was to establish sharia law instead of adat, and he fulfilled it by declaring that adat was contrary to the will of God and the Prophet.⁸⁷ Therefore, a monetary fine for violating sharia and disobeying the orders of Imam was introduced. For instance, if a thief was caught red-handed, the fine would be doubled, in that case half would go to the victim, and the other half to the treasury of the state. Moreover, there were also imprisonment and underground prison for more serious crimes and adultery, murder, betrayal, or espionage could be punished by execution. Sometimes, Murids would also be sentenced to be shot or executed by knife. To prevent clandestine dealings with the enemy, the Chechen people were divided into groups of ten, and each group's members were collectively responsible for the crime to be committed; in case of a member's betrayal or escape, each member of the group would be fined 50 rubles, without the possibility of execution if the culprit were caught.⁸⁸ In order to understand Schamyl's sharia policy properly, some facts should be taken into account, for the sharia he enforced was based on fundamentalist interpretation adopted by the Naqshbandiyya and it was enforced in opposition to or in order to uproot both the local adats or bid'as (bid'at)⁸⁹ owing to contact with the Russians and that sometimes the word sharia was understood as the Muslim way of life in its own entirety.

Schamyl also established a treasury system and the revenues were collected from various channels, such as "zakat" collected from the produce of landowners, head tax levied on families, one-fifth of the spoils (khums) obtained from enemies and the revenue obtained from fines and confiscations and so on. Related to the income of the state, Depping says that Schamyl's income initially consisted only of looting, of which one-fifth belongs to the chief, according to an age-old custom. However, Schamyl established a treasury system and

87 In this sense, King places much greater emphasis on the fact that in the self-perception of leaders in the northeast highlands, the crucial connection among the three imams, as well as with earlier figures like Sheikh Mansur, was not solely their strong hatred or opposition to Russia, but rather their devout adherence to Islam. Since their primary aim was to guide Muslim communities back to a strict adherence to the teachings of the Quran, they mainly concentrated on steering them away from the customary laws and folk religious practices. This fervor for spiritual and doctrinal purity could be directed against both Muslim and secular authorities. For instance, it is recorded that Schamyl's representative, or "naib" in Circassia replaced the name of the Ottoman Sultan (the caliph) with Shamil's own name during Friday prayers. Related to the customary law (adat) referring to the work of Muhammad Tahir al-Qarakhi, his scribe and advisor of Schamyl, King says that Schamyl is described not as a proto-national leader against Russia but as a pious man seeking to root out wicked laws and replace them with sharia. For instance, the book has Schamyl argue for the unity of Islam, denying the traditional divisions of authority in the highlands and even dismissing the differences between distinct schools of Islamic thought see. King, op. cit, p. 81-82.

88 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 318.

89 It refers to anything that emerged after Prophet Muhammad, including not only religious practices and behaviors but also new ideas, practices, and customs related to daily life that emerged later see. Rahmi Yaran, "Bid'at", DİA, issue 5, İstanbul 1992, p. 129.

there are fixed taxes that the naibs are responsible for collecting. Whereas in some provinces, the tax is paid in money; in others where metal is less abundant, it is paid in kind. All tribes provide a tithe of their crops. The lands that once belonged to the mosques, serving only to feed the laziness of priests and dervishes, have become the property of the state.⁹⁰ The accounting was maintained by Schamyl's vizier Khadjio and it should be noted that it was not as complex as one might think. Khadjio would record the revenues and expenditures on pieces of paper to be kept in a chest, which would then be used to compile the final accounts. This ensured that expenditures were made quite systematically, and the public treasury as well as the Imam's private treasury were well protected against any attempted theft. The Russian ruble, the sole currency in circulation in the Eastern Caucasus, was predominantly used in silver. Gold coins, especially half rubles and Dutch ducats, were reserved for women's jewelry. As for silver-plated coins in tin or ruble denominations, the mountaineers would strip or break off the plating when they came into possession of them. Public resources were allocated for the expenses of the holy war, soldier salaries, maintenance of mosques, and the needs of widows and orphans.

The state treasury was carried to Dargo in 1840 and then to Veden by Schamyl from 1845 onwards.⁹¹ Indeed, the state treasury was called as "bayt al-mal" (bey'tül mal) and the revenues were obtained through "zakat", "kharaj" (haraç) and "khum" (hum).⁹² Gammer provides further details related to the treasury system established by Schamyl stating that there are two main taxes, the shar'i kharaj (land tax) and zakat (alms). The former was imposed only on a few villages which was given to the Avar khans and some pasture lands and it was paid in money. The latter, zakat was paid both in money (2-5 per cent) and kind-sheep (1-2 per cent) and cereals (12 per cent). According to the statement of Schamyl's treasurer, the lowest annual income from the kharaj was 4,500 silver rubles and from the zakat 3,200 silver rubles, 3,200 sheep and 523,102 measures of cereals. In fact, the numbers were usually much higher, even double. The seven villages, exempted from military service, provided specific quotas of salt and saltpetre to the treasury and they were also obliged to sell all the surpluses to the Imam at fixed prices.⁹³

Unlike Dularier, Depping gives some information related to the post system organised by Schamyl. He organized a courier service for important news, covering vast distances with unprecedented speed. Equipped with a document signed by the naib, they only need to show it in the villages they pass through to immediately receive a fresh horse and a guide. If the courier is unable to continue his journey, he is cared for by the community, and another

90 Depping, op. cit, p. 73.

91 Dulaudier, op. cit, p. 318-319.

92 Kutlu, op. cit, p. 242.

93 Gammer, op. cit, p. 231.

messenger is chosen ⁹⁴ Dulaurier also writes about Schamyl's justice understanding pointing out that as he is a meticulous enforcer of justice, when he received any complaint of oppression and injustice, he immediately handled and tried to resolve such issues. In his eyes, including his relatives no one had a special place. Therefore, he would not even hesitate to sacrifice some of his own relatives.⁹⁵ In order to exemplify this, an interesting incidence is recounted in some of the Western sources. However, even though Dulaurier does not mention it in his study, Depping recounts this incidence in detail to reveal Schamyl's justice understanding in detail.

It is said that in 1843 surrounded on all sides by Moscovite battalions, abandoned by their Lesghi brothers, the inhabitants of Greater and Lesser Chechnya decided to send a delegation to Schamyl to ask him for a sufficient number of troops that would enable them to fight against Russians, and even to drive them out of the country where they had just erected the fortress of Wosdwichenskin which Russians planned to establish a permanent settlement. If Schamyl could not send them the assistance they needed, they begged him at least to allow them to submit to Russia, being unable to continue fighting against such a mighty power any longer. However, no one dared to undertake such a mission because to appear before Schamyl with such a proposal would mean risking one's life. Therefore, the Chechens were forced to draw lots, and four persons were chosen to send their message to him. Thus, they accepted the perilous mission and promised to bring back favorable news to them. However, the eldest of the delegation, Tépi, a wise man, warned them that not only the common people, but also the most devoted murids of Schamyl can never utter the word of submission to the *giaours* in front of him. Then he said that if they dared to utter this word in his presence, he would immediately order their tongues to be ripped out, their eyes gouged, or their heads decapitated. To escape from the destiny that awaited them, and to fulfill at least part of their mission safely, he devised a more secure plan saying that as far as he heard, the one who has much influence over Schamyl, and who can speak freely before him mouth is his mother. Therefore, via Hassim Mollah, they were able to reach her in return for two hundred gold coins. She was persuaded to talk to his son about their demands. However, Schamyl did not tell her mother about his decision and secluded himself in the mosque, after instructing all the inhabitants to assemble around the holy place and to remain there praying until his emergence. Upon hearing this news, the people rushed and surrounded the mosque and began to wait to hear his announcement. The doors opened, and Schamyl appeared. After saying a few words to the ear of one of his murids standing beside him, he ascended to the platform of the mosque, surrounded by his guards. For a few moments, he stood silent, without uttering a word, the envoys from Chechnya were there, holding their breath. The servant whom Schamyl had sent soon returned, bringing his mother with him, and she was

94 Depping, op. cit, p. 74.

95 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 320.

also led onto the platform of the mosque. Schamyl commanded her to stand before him, and, raising his eyes to the sky, he announced that God's will is that one hundred lashes must be given to the person who first spoke to him about this shameful demand and that person is his mother. When she heard of her name, the unfortunate woman cried out and fell unconscious at her son's feet. Upon this he added that since Mohammad understood his great pain, he was told that he would suffer the punishment on behalf of his mother. Thus, it was also thought that the four Tchétchens would be subjected to the most dreadful torture. The unfortunate ones were on their knees, their faces pressed against the ground, awaiting their sentence. However, surprisingly Schamyl ordered them to return to their homes and in response to their cowardly proposals, tell their fellow citizens what they had seen and heard there. It is needless to say that since this incidence, Schamyl had never received such a demand again.⁹⁶ As can be seen from this unusual incidence, in order to maintain the discipline, Schamyl seems not to give any concession or tolerate any violations from the sharia law, even for the sake of his beloved ones.

To keep the tribes at odds with one another and accustomed to unlimited freedom and more prone to uprisings against his rule due to the threat of war which endanger their own interests, under control, Schamyl would employ brutal suppression methods, such as burning, annihilation of the male population, and enslavement of women and children. In addition, those who had been disloyal or were suspected of disloyalty were sent into exile to distant places and resettled in designated areas.⁹⁷ Betrayals, whether realized or planned, were immediately uncovered by his intelligence agents and promptly punished. Therefore, his name had instilled a kind of fear and this organized regime of fear led to clandestine reactions and having enemies. However, great care was taken in the selection of those surrounding him or allowed to approach him. For instance, in public, he would only appear with his disciples and except for the very close associates, he was highly inaccessible. He had a special room in his house, which he used as both a prayer room and a study, where he would often take his meals. When he wanted to spend the night praying or reading religious texts, he would retire to this room. Only his son Gazy-Mahomet and his vizier Khadjio were allowed to enter this room and his father-in-law, the renowned mullah of Dagestan, Djemal-Eddin, was admitted to see him.⁹⁸

If any tribe showed resistance to his commands or demands or if he noticed a decrease in loyalty, he would retreat to seclusion in the mosque for five or six days. Then, he would deliver such powerful and fervent sermons on the love of God and hatred towards Russians to the people loyal to him and Muridism and in that way he aimed to increase their motivation to

96 Depping, op. cit, p. 67.

97 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 320.

98 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 20.

fight against the infidels. Similarly, Depping also notes that Schamyl never undertakes a serious matter, such as an expedition against Russians without the consent of Allah. He therefore goes into a cave or a mosque for a few days, and when his retreat is over, he appears to announce people the divine revelations. He often used this method to put an end to the bloody feuds that traditionally passed from one generation to another between Caucasian families, causing a great number of brave men to die. However, the establishment of the state based on sharia law, the Mountaineers no longer resort to blood feuds. If any crime occurs, the murderer pays the relatives of the victim a sum of money, or gives them horses or sheep. Yet Depping stresses the fact that in some districts, this barbaric custom still prevails, when two families divided by hereditary hatred reconcile, of delivering poor children who are mercilessly slaughtered so that losses are equal on both sides.⁹⁹

In addition, in the midst of his speech, he would address his naibs, condemning their injustices and oppressions, and threatening the people with the wrath of heaven. If peace were made with the Russians, he would emphasize the fact that mosques would be converted into churches, women's honor would disappear and the brave men would serve for the Russians as soldiers or slaves. In order to spread the doctrines of Muridism in Caucasia, he had established religious schools in every mosque to propagate his doctrine, in there children were raised according to the principles of Muridism, for Schamyl thought that the wild independence of Dagestan had negatively impacted societal morality. Therefore, he aimed to correct it and return to the cleanliness and purity taught by religious law.¹⁰⁰ For instance, he threatened any woman who did not dress according to Sharia with a fine, and he publicly chastised the women from the village of Inkhoulou for swimming in the river "without their trousers on". Some tribes, such as Akoual, Kalalal, Kidatl, and others, had abandoned the habit of wearing trousers, which damaged their honor in Caucasus. Therefore, his determined and persistent efforts to implement sharia laws in society at least prevented the spread of such things. These harsh and strict rules also condemned all luxuries: worldly decorations, silk garments, dance, music and the use of precious stones was reserved only for the adornment of religious books and weapons. Such sort of changes seem to direct one towards a kind of priestly or monastic life in the midst of family life. Through these reforms, Schamyl gives the impression of striving for an impossible ideal; however, the best evidence that these were accomplished with extraordinary practical understanding and met the needs of the people is the deep sorrow he left behind after a 25 year leadership. Besides these, Dulaurier remarks that even if Schamyl had a strict and harsh ruling style, he could not be accused of tyranny and cruelty, because even the Russians praised his treatment towards both his prisoners and those close to him. Furthermore, when his deputies were complained, they were immediately removed from their post and placed under supervision.¹⁰¹

99 Depping, op. cit, p. 75.

100 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 321.

101 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 321- 322.

On the other hand, Dulaurler mentions the negative effects of Schamyl's ruling system under his domain. In this context, he asserts that while investigating how Schamyl's rule served the mountain dwellers, one aspect to be considered is its destructive impact on their independence. This effect manifested itself much deeper than Schamyl predicted, for being under absolute authority weakened their strongest driving force, individual initiative, and natural resilience. In other words, Schamyl's concentraion of all power in his hand actually led to weakening because by preventing things like theft, looting, and blood feuds, suppressing disputes and rivalries, Schamyl eradicated the habits that fueled the natural warrior spirit of the Chechens and Lezgls. For instance, his best deputies, such as Akhverdi-Mahoma, Schwaïb-Mollah, Mohammad-Mouça-Käi, were known as bandits in their youth. However, Schamyl created brave, talented and enterprising leaders out of them. Yet these, who died with the weapons in their hands, did not leave successors trained in the same school to take their place behind, which led to diminishing the strength of resistance against the Russians.¹⁰²

5- Schamyl's capture by the Russians and His Captivity in Kaluga

In fact, Schamyl's downfall had been apparent for several years because besides other reasons, long years of accumulated physical or mental fatigue led to much less personal involvement in battles in his later years. However, when significant opportunities arose, he did not hesitate to fight with his soldiers, just as he did in the old days.¹⁰³ The Caucasian hero finally collapsed, having launched an attack against Russians with only a handful of followers. The four hundred people imprisoned with him in Gounib (Gunib), only forty-seven survived this disaster and the ground was packed with the bodies of the Mountaineers and Russians. Schamyl was still fighting on a hidden place carved into the rock. However, General Bariatinskii came onto the field and halted the gunfire, informing him that he was obliged to surrender. The Imam had no choice left and emerged from his refuge, advancing with dignity. Dulaurler narrates this incidence as follows:

*"So, are you Schamyl?" the prince asked. – 'Yes, I am,' he replied. – 'Well, your life is spared; you will preserve your wives and property. Tomorrow I will send you to Petersburg. Your fate lies with the emperor'. The captive bowed his head without saying anything. Suddenly, he thought he was facing death and stopped twice to pray as he was being taken to the Russian camp. However, when he saw the tea prepared in a silver set in the tent assigned to him, he began to calm down. Thus, he became a captive without losing any of the greatness and respect he had earned through his quarter-century-long heroic struggle. The generosity shown to him is as much an honorable part of the victor as it is of the one who shows it. Schamyl, greeted with respectful curiosity and sympathetic interest everywhere in Russia, did not seem not to know what to do in a civilized society, which seemed quite strange to him."*¹⁰⁴

102 Dulaurler, op. cit, p. 323.

103 Dulaurler, op. cit, p. 323.

104 Dulaurler, op. cit, p. 324.

It is said that he quickly adapted himself to the new situation. Additionally, it was notable that despite being accustomed to wielding authority and also accustomed to receiving praise from everyone, he exhibited calm, relaxed, and noble behaviors. During II. Alexander's tour of southern Russia, the reception given to Schamyl in Tchougouïev, a city within the borders of the Kharkov province, had a profound impact on him and completely eased his mind about his fate. During this meeting, the Russian Tsar expressed his desire for this mountaineer to always preserve his honor and dignity, which are more valuable than life itself for the people of the mountains, and reminded him never to lay down his arms. Moreover, he granted Schamyl an annual stipend of 10,000 rubles and settled him in Kaluga, one of the most attractive Russian towns for a Caucasian child, for the surrounding fields, forests, and rivers reminded him of the green and wild areas of Chechnya and sometimes when he was looking out of the window he would generally utter these words "Oh my God, this is Chechnya, this is truly Chechnya!"¹⁰⁵

The house allocated to him as a residence was arranged under the direction of Prince Vadborskii and turned into a three-story building in which three families could comfortably live, including the harem of the Imam and the young families of his two sons, Gazy-Mahomet and Mohammed-Schefii. It was decorated and furnished in line with the Shamyl's wishes and instructions, reflecting his extremely simple lifestyle and avoiding anything incompatible with his religious beliefs. Among the items excluded were mirrors, paintings, silks, and woven fabrics featuring human and animal figures deemed inappropriate according to Islamic teachings. Only the reception hall on the ground floor was decorated in a European style, albeit quite modestly. However, a special place allowed for the beautiful Kerima, the wife of Gazy-Mohamet, who was the daughter of Daniel-Bek, the former vizier of Shamyl in Veden, was furnished with European-style furniture.¹⁰⁶

During his early days in Kaluga, Schamyl enjoyed attending intimate gatherings where he would be warmly welcomed in the evenings. Due to his passionate love for music, he always made sure to inquire beforehand if there would be music played on the piano, as he is particularly fond of it. However, after a short while, he realized that the prolonged gatherings were wearing him out and he wanted to return to his traditional lifestyle he had had for 64 years, which was falling asleep at sunset, and waking up at dawn. There was also another reason that kept him tied to his home, which was his strict adherence to Muslim customs. According to these customs, it was forbidden for women to go outside without wearing a veil and being seen in public. Therefore, he declared that practices such as men wearing tuxedos and women leaving their faces and their shoulders uncovered to be disturbingly immoral. For instance, when traveling from the Caucasus to Petersburg and arriving in Kharkov, he was invited to the governor's house. At the entrance, the sight of ballroom made him feel very

105 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 326.

106 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 326.

disturbed and he stepped back and began to pray. When asked about what he thought about it, he ironically replied , “You Russians, you will not be able go to heaven because your heaven looks like a place more beautiful than what Muhammad promised us in the sky.”¹⁰⁷

Living in a secluded life, away from turmoil and conflicts that shaped his judgments throughout his dangerous life, Schamyl, as stated by Rounovskii, seemed to undergo a great transformation and he became like a silent lion. Moreover, Schamyl, who once instilled fear with his name now turned into a simple and pure child. In fact, Schamyl fueled by his high intellect and by the fatalistic belief unique to the people of the East, appears to accept reality with ease. Yet he was generally cheerful and smiling until the moment a memory suddenly would cast a shadow of sadness over his calm face. In such times, in order to avoid these painful recollections, he began to pray and increase his fervor. For example, he increased the number of his daily prayers from five to nine. It should also be noted that Schamyl was in great sorrow and grief after his captivity, and more probably he fully devoted himself to religious practices. However, when looked at his letters it is clearly understood that he appreciates the Russian government due to his well treatment and the respect he was shown. Moreover, in a letter sent by Schamyl to Muhammed Emin dated November 24, 1859, it is mentioned that Russia treated him with respect and generosity and she did not please his enemies who would be delighted with his captivity. On the contrary, he says that he was allocated 1000 tuman every year by Tsar and lived in prosperity.¹⁰⁸

Schamyl possessed honest and fair spirit with a warm and generous heart. Because of these attributes he managed to win the hearts of everyone who got in touch with him and he was very sensitive when sympathy was shown to him. For example, he had become so attached to Colonel Bogouslavski, who had been in charge of him for two months that when he had to leave and was replaced by another person, he went into deep sorrow for several days.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, through course of time, he developed a good and strong relationship with Bariatinskii, the Governor and the Commander of the Caucasus. For instance, in a letter sent to him Schamyl expresses his gratitude to Prince Baryatinskii for his attention and friendly demeanor, the warm reception he received not only from the Tsar but also from the Tsarina, and all the commanders. Moreover, it is understood from this letter that Prince Bariatinskii's assistance extended beyond it in that as he maintained relations with Schamyl's family and provided assistance even after his death in Medina in 1871. Some sources also indicate that Prince Bariatinskii appealed to the Tsar in order that he could live in prosperity.¹¹⁰

107 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 327.

108 Şahin Doğan, “Şeyh Şamil ve Aile Fertlerinin Knez A. İ. Baryatinskiy’e Yazdıkları Bazı Mektuplar”, *Avrasya İncelemeleri Dergisi*, IV/1, 2015, p. 125.

109 Dulaurier op. cit, p. 328.

110 Doğan, op. cit, p. 126. Additionally, in his letters Schamyl's gratitude towards Knez Baryatinskii is quite evident that due to the Knez's illness he expresses his deep sorrow in his letter dated August 24, 1860. In this letter Schamyl says that when he heard that he had to go to Germany to seek a cure for his illness, he felt deeply sad as if his own brother or son had fallen ill see. Doğan, op. cit, p. 127.

Although he is now over sixty years old, he still appears strong; tall with broad shoulders and a slender waist. It is immediately noticed that he is one of the distinct types native to the Caucasus, an oval head with sharp features and gray eyes, a long nose, and particularly slender feet. Despite the war weariness and several wounds he had including the most serious one which pierced his chest and punctured his lung, His walk is balanced and dignified. Thoughts, rigorous devotions, and the hardships of life seem to have caused him to have deep wrinkles on his face. Looking at the excellent photograph taken by the skilled Tbilisi photographer Moritz during Schamyl's passage through this city, one can easily see an impressively calm and serious demeanor accompanied by signs of kindness and courtesy. The eyes hidden beneath his thick brows also display a combination of determination and courage as if he was gazing towards the sky.¹¹¹ In addition, Dulaier focuses on the opinions of Runosvkii related to his religious perspective towards Christianity. For instance, when a large number of Russian sectarians (raskolniki) had taken refuge in the mountains and lived in colonies near Veden and in Daghestan, under the protection of the imam, they were allowed to build new churches, repair the old ones, and practice their religious ceremonies freely, without paying any taxes or submission to him. Moreover, when the Russian troops arrived near Veden, Schamyl had given them a hand and had them to move to Shoubouty, where they were provided with asylum.¹¹² In fact in Islam it is known that the non Muslims are obliged to pay tithe under an Islmaic state and territories. For example, the verse 29 of the Surah Al-Tawbah, which discusses the necessity of collecting jizyah (cizye) from the non muslims and forms the basis for the dhimma contract, essentially contains a regulation that puts an end to wars and hostilities in international relations. In practice, the dhimma contract is seen to be made not with individuals but with religious groups constituting any region or the population of a town. Indeed, Muslim jurists openly state that the main purpose of this contract is not to obtain material benefits but to compel non muslims to cease hostile relations and make peace with Muslims.¹¹³ Moreover, during the Classical period Muslim jurists established certain rules regarding places of worship within the framework of the

111 Dulaier, op. cit, p. 330.

112 Dulaier, op. cit, p. 329.

113 Ahmet Özel, "Gayri Müslim", *DİA*, issue 13, İstanbul 1996, p. 420. For more detailed information see. Ahmet Ekşi, "İslam Hukuku Bakımından Gayrimüslim Ülkelere Hicret", *ALBÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 7/13, 2019, pp. 220-241; Ali Güler, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Gayrimüslimlerin Din-İbadet, Eğitimi, Öğretim Hürriyetleri ve Bu Bakımdan Kilise Defterlerinin Kaynak Olarak Önemi: 4 Numaralı Kilise Defterinden Örnek Fermanı, sayı 09, *OTAM*, 1998, pp. 155-175. Muammer Arangül, *İslam Hukuku Açısından Gayrimüslim Ülke Kanunlarının Bağlayıcılığı*, Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, İstanbul 2015, Gülnihal Bozkurt, "İslam Hukukunda Zimmilerin Hukuki Statüsü", Prof. Dr. Kudret Ayıter Armağanı, *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi* Vol. III, No. 1-4, Ankara 1988, pp. 115-155; Gülnihal Bozkurt, "İslam Hukukunda Müs'temen'ler", *Prof. Dr. Fadıl Hakkı Sur'un Anısına Armağan*, Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, Ankara 1983, pp. 361-379; Majid, Khadduri, *İslam'da Savaş ve Barış*, Fener Yayınları, İstanbul 1998; Ahmed Özel, *İslam Hukukunda Milletlerarası Münasebetler ve Ülke Kavramı*, Marifet Yayınları İstanbul 1982; Hüseyin Yurdaydın, "İslam Devletlerinde Müslüman Olmayanların Durumu", *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, issue XXVII, 1985, pp. 97-109.

conditions of their time. It is generally accepted that non muslims are not allowed to build places of worship in cities established by Muslims. While it is agreed that places of worship in cities captured in the warfare should not be harmed, it is also commonly held that new ones should not be built. The preservation, repair, or construction of new places of worship in areas captured by means of peace agreements is subject to the terms of the treaty.¹¹⁴ From the accounts given above, it is seen that Schamyl does not compel them to pay tithe and he allows them to build their church to carry out their religious rituals freely, this might result from his hatred and political attitude towards Russia and that's why he treated them well or he might have intended to show them the justice and tolerance of Islam. In other words, since he is also a clever and a talented statesman, he might have aimed to politically sway those to his side. Namely, when it is necessary, Schamyl knows how to act in a strategic way. In accordance with this, it is noted that especially Russian, Ukranian and Polish clergymen and the political refugees were allowed to carry out their religious practices in Dagestan and Chechnya, the cradle of Muridism. In addition, in the place where Schamyl resided, some Christian buildings in which they can worship were built and there were also some Christian clergymen in Dagestan. For instance, when the two of them were killed by a Mountaineer because of the fact that his two relatives were killed by the Russians. The murderer was sentenced to death by Schamyl.¹¹⁵

Dulaurier also mentions Schamyl's charity understanding towards the poor and asserts that it extends to prodigality. He exemplifies it saying that his treasurer, the faithful Khadjio, as he went around the city, distributed alms (zakat) here and there. However, it was often given to persons who, after receiving them, immediately went to the tavern to drink. Schamyl, having gone to visit the archimandrite, the rector of the seminary of Kalouga, saw a Gospel in his library in the Arabic language and asked him to borrow it. Having borrowed this book, he never went out of his abode and avidly began to read it. He said that there were very beautiful things there, but also the things that they did not put them into practice. Schamyl noted that it is written in there that alms should be given with the right hand so discreetly that the left hand does not know it. Accordingly, he gave his orders to Khadjio. One day in the evening, the government commissioner, having gone out for a walk, saw his murid on the sidewalk talking with a man. It was an old man covered with a coarse gray woolen cloak, smelling of onions and brandy. Khadjio, standing in front of him, with his left hand carefully hidden behind his back, held in his right hand a purse from which he extracted a ruble with his teeth. The intervention of the newcomer made the beggar go away, putting the coin in his pocket. The Russian commissioner asked him if he wanted to know on which the money he gave to him would be spent and then he showed him the man in the gray coat who disappeared at the entrance of a place on whose door is written "brandy shop." He also asked him if it did

114 Özel, op. cit, p. 421.

115 Aytek Kundukh, *Kafkasya Müridizmi (Gazavat Tarihi)*, Gözde Kitapları Yayınevi, İstanbul 1887, p. 26.

not mean his going to tavern as well. Schamyl's treasurer, astonished and struck by the logic of this reasoning replied that he would definitely tell Schamyl what he witnessed. However, Dulaurier argues that Schamyl had a definite theory about charity and he did not take into account the religious belief, ethnicity of the person or what one does with it when he gives charity as in the example here.¹¹⁶

It is known that in traditional Islam the alms or "zakat" are only for the poor, the needy, those employed to collect (zakat), those whose hearts are to be reconciled, for freeing slaves, for those in debt, for the cause of Allah, and for the stranded traveler.¹¹⁷ Additionally, the term of "Müellefe-i kulub" is defined in dictionaries as those whose hearts are warmed. As a legal term, it refers to 'those to whom zakat is given to gain sympathy and support for Islam or non-Muslims whose hearts are attempted to be warmed towards Islam through some material incentives as in the example practiced by Schamyl above.¹¹⁸ As is pointed out by Dulaier, Schamyl seems to follow this principle and intends to both show the tolerance and justice of Islam and warm the heart of non-muslims. To Kundukh, even these incidences mentioned above clearly reveal the fact that Muridism can not be defined as a religious fanaticism.¹¹⁹

As is seen from these recounts, the captivity of Schamyl and his new life in Russia seem to have captivated great attention of the Russians. Therefore, nearly every detail regarding his flat in which he would live with his family, how it was furnished in accordance with his wishes, his visits to different places and the visits he received, his accomodation to his new life, his religious approach and so on are provided to satisfy the curiosity of the reader because in that way it is aimed to create a new and a different image of Schamyl, whose name they have already been familiar with through Russian literature before. Thus, they had a big opportunity to see and get to know who that man having been able to win victories against a mighty state like Russia for long years. Certainly in the story of a person like Schamyl, his manners and conduct during his captivity played a significant role in shaping how Russian society viewed him. If he had been defiant or aggressive, the perception related to him would have likely been negative. However, some sources indicate that Schamyl was a courteous captive, showing genuine loyalty to the tsar and appreciation for Russian

116 Dulaurier, op. cit, p. 328.

117 Nihat Dalgın, "Zekât Hükümleri", *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 16/16, 2004, p. 62. (pp. 43-72). For further information see. Nihat Dalgın, "İslam Hukukuna Göre Satım Sözleşmesi Açısından Mal Kavramı", *OMUİFD*, issue X, 1999, pp. 97-128; Veyzel Öz, "İslam Tarihinin İlk Dönemlerinde Zekât Müessesesi", *Ortaçağ Araştırmaları Dergisi*, issue 5, 2022, pp. 241-253; Mehmet Erkal, "Zekât", *DİA*, issue 44, İstanbul 2013, pp. 207-209; Muhammed, Zutiç, *Kuran'da Zekât Kavramı*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Uludağ Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Bursa 2015; Ali Duman, "Sadaka", *DİA*, issue 35, İstanbul 2008, pp. 383-384.

118 Zübeyir Aslan, "İslâm Hukukunda Müellefe-i Kulüb Kapsamındaki Gayri Müslimlere Zekât Fonundan Pay/Hisse Tahsisi", *Batman Akademi Dergisi*, issue 7, 2023, pp. 198-215; Cengiz Kallek. "Müellefe-i kulüb", *DİA*, issue 31. Ankara 2020, pp. 473-475.

119 Kundukh, op. cit, p. 27.

hospitality. Therefore, as is argued by Barrett, the focus should not solely be on how Schamyl adapted himself to his new life, but rather on why Russian society emotionally showed great interest in him.¹²⁰

Large groups of people gathered both inside and outside the Znamenskii Hotel where Schamyl was staying, filling the grand halls, staircases, and corridors each day, eagerly hoping to catch a glimpse of him. They continually asked to see him, saying that they had served in the Caucasus and therefore had a right to or that they were physicians and demanded to treat his wounds or that they wanted to write a biography of him. Captain Apollon Runovskii, who was in charge of Schamyl's house in Kaluga for two and a half years, recorded the remarkable final scene when he left St. Petersburg for his estate to the South. He remarks that undoubtedly, Znamenskii Square had not witnessed such a gathering of people since the railroad's inauguration. The procession of Schamyl resembled a festive atmosphere. Numerous kisses were blown through the air by lovely hands, and many people cried out and said farewell to him asking him to stay with them a bit longer and to return to us soon. In other words, they were conveying him their deep affection and best wishes.¹²¹

While there seemed to be no initial intention to retain Schamyl in Russia as a symbol of military and colonial triumph, Alexander II and his officials quickly recognized the significance of having him in their possession. There was a clear and unwavering policy to treat Schamyl with respect and provide him with a dignified and comfortable position within Russian society. Alexander II wasted no time and en route to St. Petersburg at Chuguev on September 15, he embraced him warmly and expressed his desire to become close friends. Schamyl's introduction to Russian society was accompanied by his visits to theaters, factories, and historic sites as he traveled North. He also met some notable figures in Moscow, such as General Ermolov Ignatiev (the future ambassador to Constantinople), and K. P. von Kaufmann (the future Governor-General of Turkestan) in St. Petersburg. In addition, it should be noted that the arrangements for his stay in Russia were made by some top authorities, Miliutin, the Minister of War and Bariatinskii, Viceroy of the Caucasus. Bariatinskii appears to have played a significant role in strategizing how Schamyl would be utilized as a popular symbol in favour of Russia through maintaining regular communication with him.¹²² It can be said that there have been some reasons about the use of Schamyl. For instance, Bariatinskii saw Russia as a champion of civilization in the East and therefore planned to devise various strategies to shift Russia's traditionally European-focused foreign policy. He also aimed to create an Orthodox religious order in Tiflis and worked with the Armenian church to convert Muslims in the Ottoman Empire and Persia. Additionally, he supported the Trans-Caspian

120 Barrett, op. cit, p. 355.

121 Barrett, op. cit, p. 354.

122 Barrett, op. cit, p. 355-356.

Trade Corporation. More importantly, Bariatinskii viewed the Caucasus as a gateway to the East using it as a military base, cultural hub, and model colony to showcase Russia's imperial prowess. Namely, his significant role in the capture of Schamyl must be understood and evaluated within this broader context.¹²³ As a consequence, after his surrender Schamyl was far from the ongoing developments in the region. From Ghunib he was taken across Russia to St. Petersburg to meet Alexander II.

Likewise, it is emphasized that whereas previous enemies of Russian Empire had been imprisoned, killed, or exiled, Schamyl became a national celebrity. After his surrender, he settled into a comfortable retirement in Kaluga, southeast of Moscow. "By the will of the Almighty, the Absolute Governor, I have fallen into the hands of the unbelievers." Schamyl wrote to one of his sons in November 1859. He also said that the tsar had settled him in a tall, spacious house with everything he needed. Over the dozen years of his captivity, he became something of a sideshow oddity, the once valiant Lion of Dagestan now surviving on a generous pension awarded by the tsar. He was introduced to the wonders of Russian civilization, traveling by railway to St. Petersburg parading through the imperial capitals, and touring everything from paper mills to sugar factories. He was attended by two of his wives, three of his sons, four daughters, and their families.

After having lived in seclusion with his family for several years in Kaluga, in 1866, he was permitted to move to Kiev, and two years later, he performed the Hajj. He passed away in 1871 there and was buried in Medina. His eldest surviving son, Ghazi Muhammad, served as an Ottoman General during the 1877-78 war, leading Caucasian volunteers. Schamyl's grandson, Sa'id (Sait Shamil), followed in this tradition, participating in the fighting in Chechnya in the 1920s. Another son, Muhammad Shafi, became a Russian General. Thus, it is thought that even though Schamyl's memory faded in the West and the Muslim world, in the regions like Chechnya, Daghestan, and among the Caucasian diaspora, particularly the Circassians, he remained a revered figure in their struggle for freedom. However, this led to some serious debates over his portrayal in Soviet historiography, which, in turn, only served to enhance his legacy. Within Russia, he is now regarded as a hero by Muslims beyond the Caucasus, while outside Russia he became a great symbol for Muslims' resistance or their involvement in the conflicts.¹²⁴

Conclusion

Caucasus, which serves as a gateway from Europe to Asia and the warm seas of the south, has had a geo-strategic importance, which caused many countries to capture it throughout history. In other words, Caucasus has attracted the interest of major powers for several

123 Barrett, op. cit, p. 356.

124 Gammer, op. cit, p. 294; King, op. cit, p. 92.

centuries. However, by the early 19th century, this interest towards region became even more apparent, and Caucasia turned into an arena where great powers like Russia, England and France bitterly competed with one another and struggled to display their political power and influence. In this sense, especially, the North Caucasus became a place which the Western countries turned their attention to with their heroic and legendary independence struggle launched by the Mountainous tribes of North Caucasus against the mighty Russia, following aggressive and expansionist policies to occupy their homelands. This war was first initiated and led by Imam Mansur and then in the 19th century as the Nakshabendiyye managed to spread across the region, it continued under the leadership of Imam Gazi Mohammad, Imam Hamzad, and Imam Schamyl. However, during the reign of Imam Schamyl it gained more political influence and encompassed throughout Dagestan and Chechnya. Moreover, Schamyl achieved to establish a central state based on sharia law. Thus, during those years, it is seen that some European travelers and researchers published several books regarding the Caucasian wars, Muridism and its prophets, especially Schamyl.

As is seen from the works of the French researchers Depping and Dulaurier, Imam Schamyl, who resisted the mighty Russian army with the Mountaineers for twenty five years are generally portrayed as a heroic warrior, a great commander and a talented statesman, for with the very limited resources he had, he managed to set a barrier against Russia and gave her great trouble for a long time. However, it can be argued that taking into account Depping's being the member of the Geography Society in France and Dulaurier's being noted for his knowledge on history and Eastern languages, to some extent, might reveal their real interest and sympathy towards Muridism and Schamyl. Yet this positive perspective does not only stem from their romantic or ordinary interest towards Caucasia, Schamyl and the Mountaineers. It should be acknowledged that in fact the barrier set by the Mountaineers against Russia was in favour of some political and economic interests of major European Powers including France. Therefore, in a sense these two works can be said to exemplify the extent of this sympathy and interest towards Schamyl and the independence struggle in Caucasia. In addition, both writers generally give details concerning the early and later life of Schamyl, some of his striking personal traits, his administration system based on sharia law and so on. However, it should be noted that both of these works complement each other in some aspects in that while Depping touches on two interesting incidences like the visit of an Armenian merchant to Dargo, the residence of Schamyl and the incidence that shows his justice perspective that does not tolerate any violation from the sharia law, Dularurier writes about his captivity by Russians in 1859 and his new life in Kaluga in detail. In that way, it can be said that he enables us to have a clear portrait of Schamyl before and after his captivity.

Henceforth, Schamyl and the Mountaineers are introduced to the French public in every aspect. Apart from these, during his captivity years in Kaluga, Schamyl also became

an important symbol and captivated the great attention of the Russian public. However, similar to Western countries, Russia realized the great importance of the possession of Schamyl and strategically intended to utilize him not only to pacify the Mountain tribes, but also use Caucasia as a military base, cultural hub, and model colony to display Russia's imperial power. Namely, it should be borne in mind that the capture of Schamyl by Russia be understood and evaluated from a much broader context; for it can be asserted that in the initial stages of the independence war, some leading European countries like England, France and Germany showed great interest in the region not only for their romantic tendency for the Caucasian tribes' exceptional heroism with the very limited means but also for the pursuit of their political and economic advantages in the East. As a consequence, at first even though Russia did not notice how important it is to possess Schamyl, she later realized the fact that he can serve for the great plans and objectives of Russia as well and did her best to try to put it into effect.

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