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Tributaries and Peripheries of the Ottoman Empire

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CHAPTER 5

Daghestan during the Long Ottoman-Safavid War (1578–1639): The *Shamkhals'* Relations with Ottoman Pashas

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There is some question as to whether we can call Daghestan during the early modern period a legitimate political unit. Firstly, Daghestan was strongly decentralized and consisted of numerous lordships, of which the *shamkhalate* (also called the *shevkalate* or *shaukhalate*) of the Kumyks (Qomuqs) was the strongest, but its authority over the smaller units was by no means indisputable.¹ Secondly, the inhabitants of the region referred to themselves by various tribal names rather than as Daghestanis. Thirdly, the suzerainty over Daghestan was claimed by neighboring monarchs, namely the Safavid shahs, the Muscovite tsars after 1568,² and the Ottoman sultans after 1578.³ Finally, Derbent, the largest fortress and trade center associated today with the name Daghestan,

- 1 For a standard English language study describing the political mosaic of the region, see Willem Floor, "Who were the Shamkhal and the Usmi?," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 160 (2010): 341–381. Although very useful, it contains many details that call for scrutiny.
- 2 In 1568, the *shamkhal* sent his grandson to Moscow to serve as an honorary hostage (*amanat*) and declared through his envoys to Tsar Ivan IV that he "wished to be under his will" ("khotchet byt' v ego vole"); see *Istorija Dagestana* [History of Daghestan], vol. 1, ed. Vladlen Gadzhiev et al. (Moscow, 1967), 283.
- 3 As a result of the victorious Ottoman campaign of 1578, Shirvan and Derbent (*Demür Kapu*) were added to the sultan's *intitulatio* and remained there even for some time after the Treaty of Qasr-e Shirin/Zuhab (1639), which formally restored Caspian provinces to Safavid Iran; in the *ahdname* sent to Poland in February 1623 Daghestan was also listed among the sultan's domains, although Shirvan and Derbent were in turn absent; cf. the *intitulations* of Ottoman *ahdnames* sent to Poland in the years 1591, 1597, 1598, 1607 (only Shirvan listed), 1623, and 1640, in Dariusz Kotodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th–18th Century)*. *An Annotated Edition of 'Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Leiden, 2000), 17, 285, 303, 324, 330, 389, and 459. Shirvan and Derbent (*Demür Kapu*) are also listed in the sultan's *intitulatio* in the first Ottoman capitulations granted to the Dutch in 1612. See Alexander de Groot, *The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic. A History of the Earliest Diplomatic Relations 1610–1630* (Leiden and Istanbul, 1978), 234.

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