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Funerary Islamic Inscriptions in Derbend Cemetery Tombstones,
Dagestan Region, During the 13th-Century AH/ 19th- Century AD:
An Archaeological Artistic Study.

A Thesis Proposal for an MA Degree of Islamic Archaeology

by

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ABSTRACT

The cemetery of Derbend city has not only a huge number of historical tombstones, but also various burial courtyards and funerary enclosures, of which include memorial tombstones, Shrine Domes and mausoleum. Consequently, it is one of the richest Muslim tombstone collections during the 13th AH/19th century AD in the Dāghistān region.

The study also highlights historical tombstones collected inside the city as well as from the surrounding settlement during the reign of the Caucasian Khanate as such Kīrkḥliyār and Šaykḥ Ṣalāḥ cemeteries, afterwards during a period of the Russian military operation in the Caucasus, and later during the reign of the Dāghistān Imamate in the era of Imam Shamil.

The present study analyzes discovered tombstones in urban and village cemeteries based on a religio-political symbolic approach, in addition to Shrine Domes, through the depictions of Foreign Orientalists. In the course of this research, based on the field survey of cemetery visitation by Muḥammad Naser, we will answer the question: What are the symbolic connotations of decorative elements and iconographic depicted on tombstones in the ethnographic recorded throughout the Caucasian material sources?

We expand that various decorations were discharged by researcher, including inscriptions, designs, and military scenes. These decoration motifs are directly related to inscriptions content and analyzing in Arabic from their native languages i.e. Turkish, Persian, local Turkic-Dāghistān.