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#### TRADITIONAL DAGHESTAN CRAFTS IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD

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#### *Abstract*

Traditional craft like handiwork, decorative and applied arts, and folklore culture is a characteristic feature of the Dagestan historical economy and culture. Craft traditions, especially artistic craftwork, remained in Dagestan even today, in the twentieth century. In Soviet times, production in the form of workmen's cooperative association, state-owned factories and industrial complexes, where many craftsmen worked, were created on the craftwork basis in their historical existence centers. These enterprises helped to provide the population with consumer goods, develop new areas of decorative and applied art, and create jobs. The traditional Dagestan craft became the most important part of the economic and cultural traditions of the Dagestan peoples in the 19th century. The development of these traditions was largely promoted by the natural raw materials presence (wool, wood, stone, clay, iron ore), historical ties with the South Caucasus, the Near and Middle East, and Russia. The trade routes from these countries to Dagestan were also supplied with materials necessary for jewelry, copper minting, embroidery, etc. Merchants also bring these countries artistic craft's finished products to Dagestan. The later post-Soviet period (the end of the 20th century - the beginning of the 21st century), associated with the collapse of the USSR and the abolition of prohibitive measures relating to traditional craft occupations and entrepreneurial activities, increased trends in culture and economy's globalization of Russian Federation, contributed to the rapid development of traditional and new craft industries in Dagestan, the development of the economy hand-made, the such goods exports growth.

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**Keywords:** History, Dagestan, traditional craft, globalization, folk.



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## **1. Introduction**

The development of craft traditions in the West and in the East specifically differed in the historical past. Studies show that, for example, in Europe, as the cities were being built, many complex crafts moved there: jewelry and coinage, precise metalworking, weaponry, manufacturing of military equipment and even weaving (Svanidze, 1985). Unlike Europe, in the East, in Dagestan in particular, the traditions of handicrafts complex types persisted in the rural environment even after cities establishment. In addition, meanwhile in Europe the craft tradition in the Middle Ages had already begun to become more and more professional (“scholarly”) forms of art and production, in the East it retains the features of folk culture, in which the historical crafts traditions are clearly pronounced. The historical craft culture traditions had largely determined the originality of the Dagestan culture, and the specifics of its historical economy.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Ever since the Middle Ages, such crafts related to metalworking (blacksmithing, weapon, jewelry, brass minting, foundry), weaving and knitting (cloth, carpet making, embroidery, etc.), pottery making (pottery, glazed ceramics) the manufacture of products with woodcarving, stone, piece, etc. began to flourish in Dagestan. Many of these crafts remained in the twentieth century. Despite various legislative prohibitions, the Soviet government tried to use these traditions to develop the economy, create jobs, and develop new areas of decorative and applied art. Traditional crafts (jewelry art, embroidery. Forging copper, brass) are developing today in the form of manufacturing ceremonial weapons, women’s jewelry made of gold and silver, souvenir production. At the same time, the globalization processes of the last thirty years significantly change the economic (market orientation), design, and product range of traditional crafts.

## **3. Research Questions**

The article would attempt to show the evolution of traditional Dagestan crafts in the globalized world, to show that in the long run they can occupy a niche in the world trade of ethno-cultural handicraft industries, hand-made. The tourism development, the growing interest of the population to hand craftsmanship and historical design are promising their development. At the same time, “globalization is endangering the most important basis in history and traditions — people’s culture, their ethnic identity” (Savvina, 2009, p. 140). Therefore, the task of preserving the historical and cultural characteristics of the Dagestan craft culture folk traditions arises.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the article is to show future development of such forms of culture and production in the globalized world, the tourism development, the aesthetic tastes and preferences of the population growing diversity, etc., to show the potential of Dagestan as a region with developed traditional crafts (Magomedov, 2003) and in general folk culture (Adjiev, Alieva, Gasharova, Murtuzaliev, & Mukhamedova, 2018).

## 5. Research Methods

During the study apart from the general scientific methods, a comparative historical method was used, which allows considering questions in connection with the history of Dagestan crafts. Methods of collecting materials by interviewing experts, field materials collected by observing the actual processes in the field of crafts were also used. The authors of the article, Magomedov A.Dzh., Yusupov Kh.A., are natives for the Dagestan traditional crafts famous centers – Kubachi and Harbuk, and therefore, when writing an article, their personal impressions about the functioning of traditional crafts in the last thirty years has played an important role.

## 6. Findings

The real economic potential of the craftsmen creative practice in developing countries and in Russian regions is significant today. For example, among the former USSR regions, besides Dagestan, the great potential for development today has “national and regional markets for products of craftsmen from Central Asia (Zhumadilova, 2013). At the same time, the situation in such markets is changing very dynamically. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to talk about a coherent regional market space.

Obviously, China and India, as well as a number of other Asian countries, currently dominate the global market for craftsmen. Their basic position – low costs, a large amount of goods and products, and Western design – made this understandable. At the same time, many experts and buyers prefer original, ethnic products, which are not made in China, for example. Russian products with a combination of ethnic, national elements and modern design are becoming increasingly popular in the market and its many niches. All this opens up new perspectives for manufacturers – craftsmen.

Folk art crafts are the most important element of Russian culture. As the website of the the same name association claims, Russia is one of the few countries that have managed to fully preserve the historical traditions and stylistic features of the folk arts and crafts development. In 1990, in order to preserve the Russian folk art under market economy, to protect and represent their interests, non-governmental non-profit organization “Folk art crafts of Russia” on the enterprises’ initiative was created. On his initiative and with the Moscow Government assistance, fifteen years ago, the “Ladia” project began to work, becoming the main event representing the Russian regional traditional art. For today, it has become the only exhibition project, where the entire spectrum of folk-art trends in the country, including Dagestan, is presented. Another Association’ project aimed at supporting crafts and cottage industry, is the annual exhibition “Firebird”.

Today, Dagestan is a major center of Russian folk arts and crafts. Our research shows that many traditional and newly emerged crafts remain in Dagestan. They function both in the villages and in the cities where many former masters - itinerant workers from Dagestan, who have moved from Azerbaijan, Central Asia, and Kazakhstan for the last 30 years, work. Today, the Dagestan folk crafts and cottage industry production has become the Russian economy part. Masters’ products can be found in shops and art shops of Dagestan cities, Moscow and other largest Russian cities. Obviously, it is important to preserve the Dagestan traditional craft potential under globalization. Other researchers write about this in general terms (Gadzhiev, 2017).

Unfortunately, the Dagestan traditional crafts' potential is still poorly used in foreign trade. A good case can be made that the Dagestan handicrafts products (carpets, Kubachi, untsukulsky products, etc.) are most actively exported by persons leaving for hajj every year to Saudi Arabia. Relatively small volumes of their individuals are exported to Turkey and other eastern countries. The Dagestan state bodies, represented by the Ministry of Tourism and Folk Crafts, are also trying to establish such work, but the lack of experience and stable relations with foreign trading firms, other factors make this work difficult.

In recent decades, for Dagestan masters, the central and other country's regions have also become a good platform for selling their products. Therefore, Dagestan masters annually take part in the annual exhibition of Russian folk crafts "Ladya" (Moscow), consequently, at the All-Russian Economic Forum. At the regional (Dagestan) level, there are exhibitions at the Mezhgulsky and Liakhlinskaya factories. But at the same time, Dagestan carpets export that existed during the Soviet history (1920-1980s) "filed as a history". After the country's transition to a market economy, many of the government agencies involved in such exports collapsed. Without large investments, the carpet industries of Southern Dagestan actually fell apart. Weaving collectible carpets, the transition to dyeing yarn with vegetable dyes, the formation of commercial relations with foreign firms has proven to be a difficult task. At the same time, small enterprises began to appear in the republic, trying to fit into the export trade niche.

After Russia's transition to the market economy's rails, Dagestan's jewelry industries based on traditional technologies and design were among the most commercially successful ones in the market. They became a phenomenon not only of regional scale, but also of Russian scale. Practically all major country's trade outlets specializing in the jewelry sale have been "overwhelmed" with Dagestan silver and gold products in the past decades. The most actively worked Kubachi masters, producing silver dishes. Master jewelers engaged in gold processing worked no less actively. Their main assortment was women's jewelry in world design styles with precious stones inserts. At the same time, the craftsmen have mastered the techniques and design that are unusual for early time and the use of gold and precious stones for decorating and finishing traditional Dagestan weapons (checkers, sabers, daggers, bowie knives – finca).

Dagestan today is one of the largest regions in Russia for the traditional crafts development. Today, everyone is aware that we need investments in this area. But the lack of experience, stable external relations does not allow deploying such work. Thus, even in the jewelry fields, where the accumulation of capital in the 1990s was more intense than in other fields, the traditional technologies and the assortment revival began. But that stopped a lot.

On the intra-Dagestan scale, the main Dagestan craftsmen consumers are the townspeople. In the republic there are a lot of shops selling crafts. Most of them are located in republican cities. There is a practice of selling such products from hands, developed in Dagestan from historical times (mid-20th century) and widespread, as a rule, in regional centers and a republican cities range. The recent years crisis has hurt Dagestan jewelry. There were not only the problems of precious metal prices (they grew significantly on world markets and grew in Russia due to the almost double rise in world currency (dollar). Trade in these conditions significantly shifted towards the production of cheaper silver products. And world design turned to "White metal". But here too the market demand for the traditional Dagestan assortment with its technologies of mob and engraving, filigree and enamel has fallen. It has significantly affected demand and the slow transition to new design and new technologies jewelry case. The spread of new

technologies and the world's assortment (assortment of phony "dog chain" and others.), new trends of world fashion jewelry, jewelry production "mechanization" lead to a of Dagestan jewelry traditions backlog.

The introduction of the Dagestan masters to the world jewelry culture began in the early 1990s, when the country switched to a market economy and opened borders for exit, trade shuttle trips. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the craftsmen have mastered Turkish jewelry technologies, production and assortment most actively. It was a time when Dagestan jewelers were still on the outskirts of world design. At this time, Turkish jewelry poured into Dagestan. After the Soviet history, when the traditional jewelry crafts of the Dagestan private sphere were under various prohibitions for more than 50 years, it became possible to introduce them to world technologies and design. And all this came to the Dagestan masters from Turkey, where at one time the Armenian and Dagestan masters (who left for Turkey in the 19th century) laid many of the jewelry traditions of this country.

Turkey has become a country where Dagestan masters began to draw knowledge about new design, assortment of jewelry, precision casting technologies, and three-dimensional (3D) technologies. From Turkey, the Dagestan masters brought new jewelry equipment, materials for precision casting. Turkish jewelry at one time even became a brand in Dagestan. But due to the fact that under the conditions when Turkey does not have a state monopoly on assay stamping of products made of precious metals, and often uncontrolled (customs control was weak) import of such products into the country, Turkish masters began to reduce the metal sample (for example, hallmarked 585 sample, could not stand it). This undermined the imported jewelry popularity, and as a result, in the republic among the masters and the population even appeared the expression "Turkish gold", meaning "low-grade gold".

Under globalization processes in the last thirty years there have been other changes. Thus, the Assay Supervision State Inspectorate of the Russian Assay Chamber of the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation began to work in Makhachkala. Here in the early 1990s, Dagestan individually working jewelers began to register. Thanks to this, hundreds of jewelers in Dagestan, working in historical centers, in the republican cities, began to engage in business activities to sell jewelry, gold and silver souvenirs.

In the 1990s, so-called "gold markets" opened up throughout Dagestan (they still operate today). This was a unique phenomenon for the North Caucasus. Smaller in terms of the number of points and assortment, such markets were opened in other North Caucasus regions (in Grozny and other cities). The fact is that such markets opened, as a rule, in violation of all Ministry of Finance and the Russian State Assay Office's current instructions. At the same time, these markets created the basis for the development of many Dagestan jewelry industries (Magomedov, 2014).

The main jewelry suppliers to these markets, in addition to the "shuttle traders" going to Turkey, the United Arab Emirates for the purchase of "gold," were Dagestani craftsmen. Itinerant Dagestan workers who moved to their historic homeland during the USSR collapse years brought with them capital, gold processing technologies, and even an assortment. It was they who founded gold jewelry crafts in Dagestan in the 1990s, which became a new Dagestan folk craft direction. Dagestan "golden" markets have also become the center of wholesale Dagestan products deliveries to the regions of Central and Eastern Russia, to the Central Asian republics, and Kazakhstan. All this "worked" on semi-legal conditions.

The globalization factors in the crafts development over the past decade have been the proliferation of 3D technologies, including in jewelry (Kudryaschov, 2017). Today, many jewelers in Dagestan know

what 3D printers are and what features they carry. Therefore, individual masters purchased them or think about their purchase. Masters are well aware that such technologies accelerate the jewelers work and the jewelry products manufacture at times. This is convenient, since you do not need much effort, you do not need to spend long hours on the manufacture of models and eventually finished jewelry. For example, in Makhachkala, several jewelry companies using 3D technology are already operating today. However, with this technology, masters do not always reflect on the tasks of preserving historical traditions. Noting such globalization era costs, researcher Kolomanov (2015) said: “it turned out ... in this future-present - mass culture finally conquered a high, elite culture, and this is a mass culture of very mediocre quality. Predictions of past thinkers about “the decline of Europe” (p. 130), “entering the machine” in the man world and about the pieces of art “technical reproducibility” came true.

In traditional crafts development in the globalization context Internet has become the novelty. In retail trade, for example, Dagestan jewelry widely uses Internet technologies with the creation of websites, individual web-pages. Many enterprises, individual entrepreneurs specializing in the jewelery manufacture, advertise their products in such a way, conduct active correspondence, and take orders.

In recent years, an online service such as Instagram has been actively used to advertise products to customers. By agreement with the buyer, the products are delivered by mail. Many jewelry companies, craftsmen publish colorful product catalogs, calendars.

Different presentations became the globalization era’s innovations. They are annual, regional, interregional, All-Russian exhibitions, trade fairs. Both new design trends and well-known traditional products of folk craftsmen are displayed on them. The jewelry exhibition where Dagestan independently working masters and large Russian jewelry firms are represented has become especially popular in recent decades. In 2008, the holding the Interregional Annual Jewelry Exhibition (Makhachkala) tradition was laid in Makhachkala. The last exhibition was opened on December 21, 2018. There are not only Dagestan craftsmen products, but also craftsmen from different parts of Russia. Such cooperation gives the republic an opportunity to develop folk arts abroad. Thus, at the first such exhibition, which opened in 2008 in Makhachkala, more than 60 jewelry enterprises from almost 20 regions of the country were represented. Thanks to such exhibitions organization, Dagestan masters create bright and exclusive masterpieces, which are highly appreciated in domestic and international competitions. It improves the image of Russia on the world stage, as a result, the popularity of the jewelry industry in Dagestan and Russia is growing. Recently, Dagestan manufacturers under the leadership of the Ministry of Tourism and folk arts and crafts of Dagestan are trying to enter foreign markets. To this end, they participate in exhibitions with trips to Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and other countries.

In addition to the jewelry direction of art crafts in Dagestan, other industries are also being developed (ceramics, products of craftsmen from Untsukul). In Soviet times, for Unzukul masters it was a big problem to acquire the necessary material for complex products (hardwood - hawthorn, cornel, etc.). Today this problem is gone. And craftsmen make large vases, other crockery, various souvenirs. Masters also work on a small assortment (canes, stationery, etc.) that was popular in Soviet times. Traditional Dagestan pottery (ceramics) today also retains certain prospects for development. However, the annoying brightness of the modern household things design, complicates the possibilities of its competition.

## 7. Conclusion

Thus, the Dagestan traditional crafts in the globalization context retain certain prospects for development. Over the past 30 years after the USSR collapse and the country's transition to the market economic development basis, developed markets for craft materials were formed, many forgotten historical folk art traditions were revived, new craftsmen began to work, including many young craftsmen among them, family centers are steadily developing learning traditional craft. All this creates a good basis for the Dagestan crafts development. At the same time, significant fluctuations in the world jewelry market conjuncture (rising prices for precious metals, industrial development of new technologies (3D) and others in jewelry), poor Dagestan masters experience in the field of modern design solutions, jewelry production and trade infrastructure underdevelopment, low investment in the arts and crafts industry does not allow Dagestan craftsmen to operate at full capacity, to enter foreign markets, to create small productions with the release of sustainable perspective assortment, to increase their artistic level. An important factor in the traditional crafts development is the study of their history, the promotion of this knowledge among modern masters. As the researcher Palaguta (2017) believes, it is very important that the masters do not invent "traditions" but rely on heritage of the past.

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