

THE NORTH CAUCASIAN KINGDOM OF ALANIA, 850–1240

The kingdom of Alania was the most powerful polity in the medieval North Caucasus. It contained strategic mountain passes across the Caucasus Mountains, as well as urban centres larger than any in contemporary Rus'. Its kings retained power from the mid ninth to the late eleventh century, intermarried with the ruling families of Georgia and Byzantium and led armies that terrorised the South Caucasus. In this, the first book to explore the subject in the English language, John Latham-Sprinkle sheds light on how the kings of Alania came to embody the 'power of the foreign' – the status which accrued to individuals who could access the material and spiritual products of distant lands – thus rendering the development of a state structure unnecessary. Challenging existing narratives that centre elites and the state, Latham-Sprinkle provides an important contribution to the historiography of medieval state formation, Christianisation and transregional connection.

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850–1240

JOHN LATHAM-SPRINKLE

Vrije Universiteit Brussel



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For Katerina

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

Where possible, I have provided a reference to both the critical edition and a translation of primary sources. However, this has not been possible in the case of languages that I have no knowledge of (Hebrew, Armenian, Syriac, Chinese) and in cases where no critical edition or translation was available. Primary source quotations are transliterated, rather than given in the original script, in order to aid the reader in cases where the argument relies on the phonology of the text. A few terms are given in the original script where the argument relies on misspellings of these words. To aid comparability between different editions, chapter numbers are given for Greek and Latin sources only, since Arabic, Persian and Georgian sources largely only have one or two critical editions.

Greek is transcribed using the American Library Association – Library of Congress System, with rough breathings marked by an initial *h* but accents unmarked.

Russian is also transcribed using the American Library Association – Library of Congress System; thus, я is transcribed *ia* not *ya*. However, to aid readability on computers without Romanised Cyrillic Unicode fonts installed, I have eliminated accent marks, for example over *ts*. Where relevant, I have retained pre-1918 orthography and transliterated accordingly.

To aid pronunciation, Georgian is transcribed using the Georgian National System – thus გ and ბ are transcribed as *ts* and *kh* respectively, rather than *c* and *x*.

Arabic and Persian are transliterated using the American Library Association – Library of Congress System.

There are a few exceptions to these rules. I have not altered book titles or author names transliterated using different systems in order to aid the reader in locating these works. In the same vein, I have transcribed names of people and locations by their commonly used English equivalent –

Note on the Text

hence Moscow rather than Moskva and Procopius rather than Prokopios.

Dates are given in the AH system when referring to an Islamicate source that uses this dating system, with equivalent CE dates given after a slash (thus 320/932 = AH 320/932 CE).

ABBREVIATIONS

Where editions of primary sources other than the ones listed below are mentioned, the citation is given in full. Full citations for the works listed below are also given in sections referring to historiography in order to assist the reader in locating editions.

<i>AEMAE</i>	<i>Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi</i>
<i>AiV</i>	S. N. Malakhov, <i>Alaniia i Vizantiia: Istochnikovedcheskie aspekty politicheskikh i tserkovnykh sviazei</i> (Moscow, 2015)
<i>AOASH</i>	<i>Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>APKCh</i>	E. P. Alekseeva, <i>Arkheologicheskie pamiatniki Karachaevo-Cherkessii</i> (Moscow, 1992)
<i>BGA</i>	<i>Bibliotheca geographorum arabicorum</i> , 8 vols, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1870–1906)
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>DAI</i>	Constantine Porphyrogenitus, <i>De administrando imperio</i> , 2nd edn, ed. G. Moravcsik and R. Jenkins (Washington, DC, 2008)
<i>DC</i>	Constantine Porphyrogenitus, <i>The Book of Ceremonies</i> , ed. A. Moffatt and M. Tall (Canberra, 2012)
<i>DE</i>	<i>Dzegli eristavta</i> , in <i>Kartuli samartlis dzegelebi</i> , ed. I. S. Dolidze (Tbilisi, 1965); trans. in <i>Pamiatnik eristavov</i> , ed. S. S. Kakabadze (Tbilisi, 1979)
<i>El2</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd edn, ed. P. J. Bearman, T. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel and W. P. Heinrichs (Leiden, 1960–2005), referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2
<i>El3</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 3rd edn, ed. K. Fleet, G. Krämer, D. Matringe, J. Nawas and E. Rowson (Leiden, 2007–), referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3

List of Abbreviations

<i>Elr</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Iranica</i> , online edn, ed. E. Yarshater (New York, 1996–), www.iranicaonline.org
<i>HaA</i>	<i>Ḥudūd al-‘ālam</i> , ed. M. Sūtūdeh (Tehran, 1962); trans. V. Minorsky, V. Barthold and C. E. Bosworth (Oxford, 1970)
<i>HSD</i>	<i>A History of Sharvān and Darband in the 10th–11th Centuries</i> , ed. V. Minorsky (Cambridge, 1958)
<i>IAA</i>	<i>Istoriko-arkheologicheskii al'manakh</i>
<i>IESOIa</i>	<i>Istoriko-etimologicheskii slovar' osetinskogo iazyka</i> , ed. V. I. Abaev (Moscow, 1958)
<i>KCh</i> 1971–2006	<i>Materialy po izucheniiu istoriko-kul'turnogo nasledii Severnogo Kavkaza. Vyp. VIII: Krupnovskie chteniia 1971–2006</i> , ed. A. B. Belinskii (Moscow, 2008)
<i>KSRAO</i>	S. N. Savenko, <i>Kharakteristika sotsial'nogo razvitiia alanskogo obshchestva Severnogo Kavkaza po materialam katakombnykh mogil'nikov X–XII vv. n.e.</i> (Piatigorsk, 2017)
<i>KTs</i>	<i>Kartlis tskhovreba</i> , ed. R. Met'reveli (Tbilisi, 2008); trans. R. Met'reveli and S. Jones (Tbilisi, 2014)
<i>MAK</i>	<i>Materialy po arkheologii Kavkaza</i> , ed. P. S. Uvarova, 14 vols (Moscow, 1888–1916)
<i>MD</i>	<i>al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj al-dhahab wa-ma'ādin al-jawhar</i> , ed. C. Pellat, 9 vols (Beirut, 1966–79); trans. C. Pellat, <i>Les prairies d'or</i> , 2 vols (Paris, 1962)
<i>NAS</i>	D. V. Beletskii and A. Iu. Vinogradov, <i>Nizhnii Arkhyz i Senty — drevneishie khramy Rossii. Problemy khristianskogo iskusstva Alanii i Kavkaza</i> (Moscow, 2011)
<i>ODB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> , ed. A. Kazhdan and A.-M. Talbot, online edn (Oxford, 2005)
<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologia graeca</i> , 161 vols, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1857–66)
<i>PLP</i>	<i>Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit</i> , ed. E. Trapp and C. Gastgeber (Vienna, 2001), CD-ROM version
<i>PSRL</i>	<i>Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei</i> , 43 vols (Leningrad–Moscow, 1926–2004)
<i>RA</i>	<i>Rossiiskaia arkheologiia</i>
<i>REB</i>	<i>Revue des études byzantines</i>
<i>SA</i>	<i>Sovetskaia arkheologiia</i>
<i>SANGSSR</i>	<i>Soobshcheniia Akademii Nauk Gruzinskoi SSR</i>
<i>SMGH</i>	S. H. Rapp, <i>Studies in Medieval Georgian Historiography: Early Texts and Eurasian Contexts</i> (Leuven, 2003)
<i>SOTA</i>	<i>Sources on the Alans: A Critical Compilation</i> , ed. and trans. Á. Alemany (Leiden, 2000)

List of Abbreviations

TsP Iu. A. Prokopenko and S. F. Chaplygina, *Tsentral’noe Predkavkaz’e v prostranstve vlianiia Velikogo Shelkovogo Puti i drugikh transkavkazskikh torgovykh magistralei v V– nachale XIII v.* (Stavropol’, 2017)