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## **In Memoriam**

### **Moshe Gammer (1950–2013)\***

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Moshe Gammer, historian of the Caucasus and Central Asia, and professor in the Department of Middle Eastern and African History at Tel Aviv University, passed away on April 16, 2013.

Moshe Gammer was a contributing author to our journal. His article ‘Proconsul of the Caucasus’: a Re-examination of Yermolov’ (published in Vol. 2, in 2003) was among the first contributions to our journal *Social Evolution & History* which had been founded only one year earlier and was making its first steps to the readers. And the contribution to the present issue – ‘Empire and Mountains: the Case of Russia and the Caucasus’ – is among his last publications.

Born in the USSR on September 24, 1950, Moshe immigrated to Israel in 1960. He studied for his B.A. and M.A. at Tel Aviv University. His B.A. thesis (1975), supervised by Dr. Baruch Gurevich and entitled ‘Shamil in Soviet Historiography’, engaged a subject that Moshe would revisit in depth during his Ph.D. studies, from 1983 to 1989, at the London School of Economics and Political Science (University of London). Indeed, his Doctoral Dissertation on ‘Shamil and the Muslim Resistance to the Russian Conquest of the North-Eastern Caucasus’, supervised by Prof. Elie Kedourie, was later reworked and published in a monumental volume.

Although a specialist on the Caucasus, Moshe's publications addressed numerous thematic issues from a comparative perspective, including ethno-nationalism, communal identity, Sufism, colonialism, written and oral cultures, and many more. The conferences that he had organized covered Islam in Central Asia, culture in Daghestan, the history of Bukharan Jews, history-writing in post-Soviet Russia, and many others. Reviews of his research typically included laudatory praise: ‘admirable’, ‘pioneering and ground breaking’, ‘a tour de force’, ‘exceptionally well-research-

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ched', 'intelligent and balanced', and 'magisterial' were some of the most commonly repeated commendations.

Professor Ehud Toledano (University Chair for Ottoman and Turkish Studies) wrote kind words in Moshe's memory: 'Professor Gammer was a scholar of a rare kind, almost extinct in modern-day academia. His research interests were very broad, including – as he himself defined them on his Department webpage – “history of the Caucasian, Central Asia and the Islamic world in general, the modern Middle East, historiography and the relation between history and politics, Russia and the Islamic world, France and the Middle East”. With English, Russian, French, Arabic, Turkish, and Hebrew, Moshe widely read primary sources of various types, but would also distribute to a list of colleagues information about forums, conferences, journal and book CFPs, and the latest theoretical developments in several social science fields.

That said, his main contribution was no doubt to the history of Central Asia and the Caucasus during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Here, he was a traditionalist, a true student of the late LSE Professor Elie Kedourie, under whose supervision he wrote his dissertation about Shamil's revolt. Among his many articles and books, he would probably like us to mention two: *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan* and *The Lone Wolf and the Bear. Three Centuries of Chechen Defiance of Russian Rule*.

Professor Gammer was a devoted and caring advisor to a number of talented graduate students, past and present. His international reputation as a leading expert on Central Asian and Caucasian history drew young, talented persons from Turkey and former Soviet Union countries, as well as from Israel, who came to study with him.

Moshe was a modest, shy, almost self-effacing scholar and gentleman, who never sought for himself campus jobs or honors. He will be sorely missed.'

#### NOTE

\* This *In Memoriam* is based on 'In Memoriam: Moshe Gammer (1950–2013)' published in *Ron Sela. Central Asia in a Historical Context* at <http://rsela.wordpress.com/2013/04/17/in-memoriam-moshe-gammer-1950-2013/> on April 17, 2013.