



*Cambridge Central Asia Forum*

C/o Jesus College

University of Cambridge

Jesus Lane, Cambridge CB5 8BL, United Kingdom

[www.cambridge-centralasia.org](http://www.cambridge-centralasia.org)

**Assessment of Doctoral Dissertation of Mrs Galina Wood Titled: Lahij,  
Living Heritage of Azerbaijan**

Cambridge, UK  
15<sup>th</sup> of March 2016

I have known Galina Wood now for more than 12 years and have followed her academic development. She is a diligent and curious researcher with an eye for gaps in existing understanding of Eurasia and its cultural heritage. She is also an accomplished linguist, which gives a comprehensive 'toolbox' for conducting extremely original research.

Her current work, a report of which she presented as an invited speaker at University of Cambridge in 2014, is an original piece on the Ethnolinguistic and cultural history of Lahij people in the South Caucasus. This work is thorough and well above the standards of a doctoral research dissertation. In terms of research and analysis it is at the level of a scholarly book. What particularly merits this assessment is that this research not only goes deeper into ethnolinguistic and cultural context, but also captures the proper anthropological self-positioning of Lahij people in the continuum of the past and the present, the Iranian and Turkic as well as Slavophone spaces and modes of belonging.

This scholarly work will be of interest not only to those studying Central Asia and Iran, but also to those involved in the cultural studies post-Soviet space, minority studies globally and sociology and anthropology of identity and nation building.

I recommend the work for public defence.

I assess unambiguously the dissertation grade to a **Pass**.

Prof. Siddharth S. Saxena

Chairman, Cambridge Central Asia Forum Hon. Secretary of the UK Committee for Central and Inner Asia and Fellow of Jesus College, University of Cambridge.

Telephone: +44-1223-337379

Fax: +44-1223-337351

E-Mail: [sss21@cam.ac.uk](mailto:sss21@cam.ac.uk)