Imperial Russia's Muslims

Imperial Russia's Muslims offers an exploration of social and cultural change among the Muslim communities of Central Eurasia from the late eighteenth century through to the outbreak of the First World War. Drawing from a wealth of Russian and Turkic sources, Mustafa Tuna surveys the roles of Islam, social networks, state interventions, infrastructural changes, and the globalization of European modernity in transforming imperial Russia's oldest Muslim community: the Volga-Ural Muslims. Shifting between local, imperial, and transregional frameworks, Tuna reveals how the Russian state sought to manage Muslim communities, the ways in which both the state and Muslim society were transformed by European modernity, and the extent to which the long nineteenth century either fused Russia's Muslims and the tsarist state or drew them apart. The book raises questions about imperial governance, diversity, minorities, and Islamic reform, and in doing so proposes a new theoretical model for the study of imperial situations.

MUSTAFA TUNA is Andrew W. Mellon Assistant Professor of Slavic and Eurasian Studies and History at Duke University.

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Imperial Russia's Muslims

Islam, Empire, and European Modernity, 1788–1914

Mustafa Tuna

Duke University

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To the memory of Emine and Hüseyin Tuna,
the teachers

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Notes on transliteration and dates

The choice of characters in transliterating and transcribing the languages or dialects of the former Soviet Union's Turkic-speaking Muslim peoples is a politicized task. Muslims in the Russian empire and Transoxiana used the Arabic script until the advent of the Soviet regime. Although they had no common orthography and the spelling of words was hardly standardized in any particular Turkic language or dialect, the absence of vowels in the Arabic script (despite their prominence in Turkic languages) concealed many of the differences in local pronunciation. This situation changed in the 1920s, when the governments of Turkic Soviet republics introduced Latin-based alphabets for their titular nationalities, and again in the 1930s, when they were replaced with Cyrillic ones, in an attempt to bring the Union's Turkic peoples closer to the Russian core while simultaneously distancing them from Turkey. The vowels and many cumbersome diacritical marks in these Cyrillic alphabets marked the Soviet Union's designated Turkic nationalities from one another by highlighting and sometimes exaggerating differences in local pronunciation. Finally, since the Soviet Union's disintegration in 1992, some of those Turkic peoples have switched back to Latin-based alphabets, which partly continue to reflect the problems of the earlier Cyrillic ones. In the end, the artificial and politically charged nature of these changes leaves no standard and politically neutral way to transliterate the Arabic-script Turkic texts produced by imperial Russia's Muslims. One has to make an inevitably subjective choice.

In the footnotes and bibliography of this book, I used the Latin characters that I thought would best facilitate the identification of Turkic sources. In the main text, however, I transliterated Turkic words written in the Arabic script with a modified version of characters from the modern Turkish alphabet, with which I feel most comfortable. For people who lived both in the tsarist and Soviet periods, I transliterated from the Arabic-script version of their names. In spelling out words, I made an effort to maintain simplicity while also reflecting sharp differences in local pronunciation. When there was more than one option for

pronunciation, I relied on modern Tatar unless the word was used in a text from outside of the Volga-Ural region, such as the Crimea or South Caucasus. I left some Turkic or Arabic words that are commonly used in the English-language literature, such as "madrasa" or "sheikh," in their conventionally accepted forms.

To transliterate texts or names from the Arabic or Persian languages, I used common standard transliteration systems. I did the same for Russian words and names, but I converted texts written with the old Russian alphabet to the modern Russian alphabet before transliteration.

Readers who are not familiar with Turkic alphabets may find the following helpful in reading the main text of the book:

A/a – "a" as in f**a**ther
E/e – "e" as in p**e**n or **e**ngine, or "a" as in p**a**n
I/ı – no equivalent in English, similar to "e" in op**e**n
İ/i – "i" as in p**i**n or **i**n
O/o – "o" as in m**o**re or **o**pen
Ö/ö – "u" as in t**u**rn or **u**rge
U/u – "oo" as in r**oo**m but short
Ü/ü – similar to "u" in "c**u**be" but short
C/c – "j" as in **j**oy
Ç/ç – "ch" as in **ch**air
Ğ/ğ – no equivalent in English, indicates "ع" (ʿayn) in Arabic and is similar to the French "r" at the beginning of a Turkic word as pronounced in the Volga-Ural region; elsewhere, either silent but prolongs the preceding vowel or similar to but less pronounced than the French "r"
ʿ – indicates Arabic "ع" (ʿayn), no equivalent in English, pronounced by constricting the throat and vibrating the vocal cords with an expulsion of breath, does not exist in Turkic words but is common in Arabic-origin Turkic names
K/k – "k" in **k**ey, indicates "ك" in Arabic
Ñ – nasal "n" similar to "ng" in "E**ng**lish"
Ş/ş – "sh" as in **sh**ip
Q/q – "q" in **q**ueen, indicates "ق" in Arabic
ˆon â, û, and î – indicates prolonged vowels which are common in Arabic-origin words

I did not convert Julian calendar dates into Gregorian dates, but left them as they appeared in the original sources. I converted Hijri and Rumi calendar dates into Gregorian dates.