

For Prophet and Tsar

ISLAM AND EMPIRE IN RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND SPELLING

The Russian empire was constructed by peoples who, like the descendants of the builders of the Tower of Babel, spoke dozens of different languages and dialects and whose literatures appeared in a dizzying array of alphabets and scripts. The Soviets built on this imperial Babel by changing these writing systems. Post-Soviet elites continue to debate the utility of Cyrillic, Roman, and Arabic orthographies, while scholars disagree about how to transliterate them.

The sources for this study reflect only a small part of this linguistic heterogeneity. In the polyglot world of the empire, words appeared in different forms, depending on the context and the language of the document; the name of one important Muslim religious figure was written as "Muḥammadjān bin al-Ḥusayn" in Tatar using Arabic script, but became "Mukhamedzhan Khusainov" in Russian-language texts. In transliterating such names, I have tried to follow the spellings found in the original sources, while including alternates in parentheses or in the notes that follow the text. For Russian sources, I have followed the Library of Congress system, with some simplifications (like "Kazan" in place of "Kazan'," "Dostoevsky" for

"Dostoevskii"). For others, I have relied on the transliteration charts found in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* and Edward Allworth's *Nationalities of the Soviet East*; however, I use modified spellings of a number of terms that are already familiar to readers in other forms (as in *mullah* for *mullā*, *'ulama* for *'ulamā*, and *fatwas* for *fatāwa*). Where names and places appear in a variety of spellings even in a single language, I draw on the comprehensive *Islam na territorii byvshei Rossiskoi imperii*. The builders of Babel would understand.

RUSSIA OCCUPIES a unique position in the Muslim world. Unlike any other non-Islamic state, it has ruled Muslim populations for over five hundred years. Though Russia today is plagued by its unrelenting war in Chechnya, Russia's approach toward Islam once yielded stability. In stark contrast to the popular "clash of civilizations" theory that sees Islam inevitably in conflict with the West, Robert D. Crews reveals the remarkable ways in which Russia constructed an empire with broad Muslim support.

In the eighteenth century, Catherine the Great inaugurated a policy of religious toleration that made Islam an essential pillar of Orthodox Russia. For ensuing generations, tsars and their police forces supported

(continued on back flap)

“Lucidly written and deeply researched, this is a revelatory analysis of how the Tsarist state sought to rule its Muslim subjects. An invaluable resource for anyone interested in comparative empires, this book speaks directly to the imperial politics of religion as well as to contemporary debates about how governments try to manage confessional minorities.”

— MARK MAZOWER, author of *Salonica, City of Ghosts:*

Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950

“This book illuminates as never before how Tsarist policies fostered structures of Islamic religious authority that came to occupy a critical position not only in the imperial administration but also in the Muslims’ own, evolving, understandings of Islam. It brilliantly demonstrates how ordinary Muslim men and women competed with the religious elite in shaping particular interpretations of Islam. This is a work of great comparative interest for the study of Islam, politics, and religious authority in the modern world.”

— MUHAMMAD QASIM ZAMAN, author of *The Ulama in Contemporary*

Islam: Custodians of Change

“Beautifully written and meticulously researched, *For Prophet and Tsar* casts relations between the imperial state and its Muslim subjects in an important new light. Crews demonstrates how the Russian imperial state established an important site of accommodation and mutual interest between the Muslim communities and state power. Remarkable for its chronological and geographic breadth, this book is an impressive achievement representing a major contribution to the field.”

— PETER HOLQUIST, author of *Making War, Forging Revolution:*

Russia’s Continuum of Crisis, 1914–1921

