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A Note on Transliteration and Spelling

The Black Sea region is a place of various cultures, peoples, and religions. As a consequence, the area has been characterized by a multitude of civilizations and languages, which is also reflected in different variations of designations for places, names, and terms.

The present handbook uses English forms of the most common place names (e. g., Moscow, St. Petersburg, Istanbul). In the case of places without any common English designation, the name in the administrative language of the time is used, in the original language. However, names whose "standardized English form" is a direct derivative of a specific (imperial) administrative language (such as Kiev, Odessa, Bakhchisarai, or the Dnieper) are problematic here. This is because many English place names originated in the nineteenth century, when most parts of the Black Sea region and its surrounding lands were under Russian or Ottoman imperial rule, making English names often a direct transliteration of Russian names. In the editors' view, the use of such names no longer seems justified in light of the Russian aggression towards Ukraine. Therefore, in the Ukrainian historical context, the handbook generally favors Ukrainian designations for landscapes and locations, such as Kyiv, Odesa, or the Dnipro.[1]

Otherwise, this handbook renders place names in their different forms according to time and perspective to reflect the linguistic diversity of the Black Sea area. Consequently, Feodosiia, for example, can appear in the Ukrainian or Russian form, in the Crimean Tatar (Kefe), or in the common name in the Middle Ages, Caffa, depending on the context. For better comprehensibility and classification, other forms relevant to the context or, in the case of strongly divergent names, the present-day versions are indicated in parentheses. Given the extremely large geographic and temporal area covered here, such a flexible approach cannot, of course, preclude a certain blurring and trade-offs in terms of uniformity and consistency. Especially in contexts where the question of the administrative language of the time cannot be answered unambiguously from today's perspective, or where it changed several times within a larger period, the decision ultimately depends on the focus. The same holds for personal names.

Non-Latin names are transliterated according to following systems: Russian names are transliterated following the Passport 2013 system, Ukrainian names following Passport 2007,[2] and Bulgarian names following Official Bulgarian 2006. Arabic and Persian names are transliterated following the third edition of the *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam*,

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1 However, complete consistency could not be achieved, especially since the handbook seeks to adequately represent linguistic diversity, and waters and landscapes often cross state and language borders. In this sense, for example, the name of the River Dniester, which rises in what is now western Ukraine and flows through both Ukrainian and Moldovan territory, is not fully Ukrainianized and is predominantly rendered with the standard English variant Dniester.

2 However, an exception is made here for the relevant distinction between the letters "г" and "ґ," which, contrary to this scheme, are transliterated as "h" and "g."

and Ottoman names are transliterated in line with Redhouse transliteration.[3] Exceptions are made for renowned rulers' names for which an English counterpart is commonly used (as in the case of Catherine II or Nicholas I).

In terms of spelling and transliteration, pre-modern names and designations, which for a long time did not undergo strict linguistic codification, and more specifically Turkic personal and place names, which have been documented in various scripts (Arabic, Cyrillic, and Latin), pose a particular challenge. In addition, the linguistic peculiarities of small minorities have often not been reflected in the literature, and Crimean Tatar terms, for example, have frequently been consistently rendered according to modern Turkish spelling. Yet various spelling and pronunciation variants were used by Crimean Tatars, and from around the seventeenth century on, a preference for the Oghuz variants is evident in southern Crimea, while in the north the Kipchak spellings were more commonly used. In addition, some Oghuz forms are commonly used in English, such as the dynastic name Giray (which in modern Crimean Tatar is spelled Geray). The present volume generally renders Tatar names according to the modern Crimean Tatar Latin alphabet, which in contrast to the modern Turkish alphabet entails some additional letters reflecting specific sounds encountered in Tatar (such as q or ñ). Exceptions are made to forms already domesticated in English based on the Oghuz form, such as Giray, or names found exclusively or predominantly in sources written in non-Turkic languages.[4] For names and designations concerning the Golden Horde, common English forms (such as Genghis Khan or Tokhtamysh) are used. In the case of Seljuk rulers' names, which are rendered in various spellings in English, the book uses the transliteration as indicated in the third edition of the *Brill Encyclopaedia of Islam.* Accordingly, the Seljuk rulers are referred to here as ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw, or ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubad.

This approach, of course, cannot satisfy all tastes. However, the editors hope that the linguistic diversity and complexity can be presented here without confusing the reader too much. Certainly, it was not the intention of the editors to engage in linguistic revisionism, nationalistic appropriation, or to offend anyone's sensibilities in any other way.

3 An exception is made for the indication of an *izafet* compound, which is here not adapted to the vowel harmony and is consistently rendered as an appended "-i."

4 The editors would like to thank Dariusz Kołodziejczyk and Arkadiusz Blaszczyk for their insightful comments on the complexities of Crimean Tatar spelling, even if the different views did not agree on all points. In the end, the handbook's approach was heavily inspired by Dariusz Kołodziejczyk's meticulous articulation of these complexities as found in: Dariusz Kołodziejczyk's, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th–18th Century). A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by an Annotated Edition of Relevant Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), xxxi–xxxv.