

Note on Transliteration

A book involving the admixture of Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman transliteration systems is, as I have discovered, no easy matter. The standard IJMES system, which I employ throughout this book, does not fit Ottoman transliteration well. Thus, Mehmet becomes Meḥmed but *Tārīḥ-i Hind-i Gharbī* (History of the West Indies) cannot be changed to the Arabic form of *Tārīkh*. Similarly, Loḡmān looks odd when transliterated according to the Arabic system as Luqmān. The problem is compounded by modern Turkish, which uses, for example, “c” for “j.” Thus, *Cerrāḥiyyetü'l-Ḥāniyye* (Imperial Surgery) should be transliterated as *Jerrāḥiyyet* according to the IJMES system, but no one would be able to locate the book under that spelling. For this reason, the transliteration of Ottoman Turkish under the IJMES scheme cannot be foolproof. The case of Persian is easier. I apply the IJMES transliteration convention. Instead of the Persian spelling Iskander, for instance, I use Iskandar according to the Arabic convention. In order to preserve the narrative flow I have removed the prefix “al-” from the start of Arabic last names. Thus Ṭabarī instead of al-Ṭabarī, Ma'mūn

instead of al-Ma'mūn, and so on. Exceptions to this are quotes and full names.

Place-names present especially complex choices: Does one list Mecca according to common practice or according to the correct transliteration of Makka? Medina or Madina? More vexing is the correct use of names for which a local equivalent has become popular. Seville versus Sevilla is a case in point. Troublesome is the spelling for the East African tribe that forms the core of chapters 8 and 9: Buja according to Arabic orthography or Beja according to common practice? I decided in favor of common practice. So I use Mecca, Medina, Sevilla, and Beja. I transliterate only those place-names that I judge as being not well known or without an Arabic alternative—for example, Ifrīqiya, Zaghāwa, and Mafāza al-Buja.

In cases where usage of a word is common, I do not list it in its transliterated form (e.g., “sultan” not “sulṭān”). Exceptions to this are references to the Qur'ān and ḥadīth. I also elected to not transliterate dynastic names. Outside of what falls into the domain of common practice, I chose to transliterate all Arabic, Persian, and Turkish words, names, and book titles. I may have missed a few and for this the error lies with me alone.

In short, I use a hybrid IJMES system in consultation with the method adopted by the associate editor of book 1 of the second volume of *The History of Cartography*, Ahmet Karamustafa, who also had to wrestle with the transliteration scheme of three different languages and the place-name dilemma and developed brilliant solutions.

All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.