

From the *Slavic Review* Editorial Board:

Slavic Review publishes signed letters to the editor by individuals with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be restricted to one paragraph of no more than 250 words; comment on an article or forum should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. When we receive many letters on a topic, some letters will be published on the *Slavic Review* website with opportunities for further discussion. Letters may be submitted by e-mail, but a signed copy on official letterhead or with a complete return address must follow. The editor reserves the right to refuse to print, or to publish with cuts, letters that contain personal abuse or otherwise fail to meet the standards of debate expected in a scholarly journal.

To the Editor:

A book review, I believe, should reflect what the reviewer considers a book's most important characteristics. Edward Lazzarini, author of the 1973 dissertation about the life and ideas of Ismail Gasprinskii, chose to devote his review of my book—*Turks Across Empires*—to a series of objections relating to the book's title, footnotes, editing, and a starkly misread paragraph from the conclusion. Nowhere does the review discuss or engage the book's content, sources, or even its main arguments. Instead, it reads more like a list of justifications for resenting the book than a good-faith effort to explain it to your readers.

One of the aspects of *Turks Across Empires* that I'm proudest of is that, in every chapter, there is something new, innovative, and important. The book examines how the pan-Turkists—long confined to bloodless accounts focusing upon their published “arguments” and “debates”—were grounded within the time and places in which they lived. Rather than depict Gasprinskii, Yusuf Akçura, and Ahmet Ağaoğlu as isolated scribblers, the book shows how their lives and careers should change our minds about the developments that defined their era, including: Russian-Ottoman trans-imperial mobility, Muslim-state interactions in Russia, Muslim political and cultural reform, and the instrumentalization of identity discourses. And this is all done using an unprecedented mix of archival, periodical, and personal-paper/correspondence sources in Russian, Ottoman, and the Turkic languages of Russia.

So thank you, Dr. Lazzarini, for your rather revealing response to *Turks Across Empires*. I guess I must be doing something right.

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