



# **Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition (Hermeneutics)**

*Devin DeWeese*

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This book is the first substantial study of Islamization in any part of Inner Asia from any perspective and the first to emphasize conversion narratives as important sources for understanding the dynamics of Islamization. Challenging the prevailing notions of the nature of Islam in Inner Asia, it explores how conversion to Islam was woven together with indigenous Inner Asian religious values and thereby incorporated as a central and defining element in popular discourse about communal origins and identity. The book traces the many echoes of a single conversion narrative through six centuries, the previously unknown recounting of the dramatic "contest" in which the khan Özbek adopted Islam at the behest of a Sufi saint named Baba Tükles.

DeWeese provides the English-language translation of this and another text as well as translations and analyses of a wide range of passages from historical sources and epic and folkloric materials. Not only does this study deepen our understanding of the peoples of Central Asia, involved in so much turmoil today, but it also provides a model for other scholars to emulate in looking at the process of Islamization and communal religious conversion in general as it occurred elsewhere in the world.

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