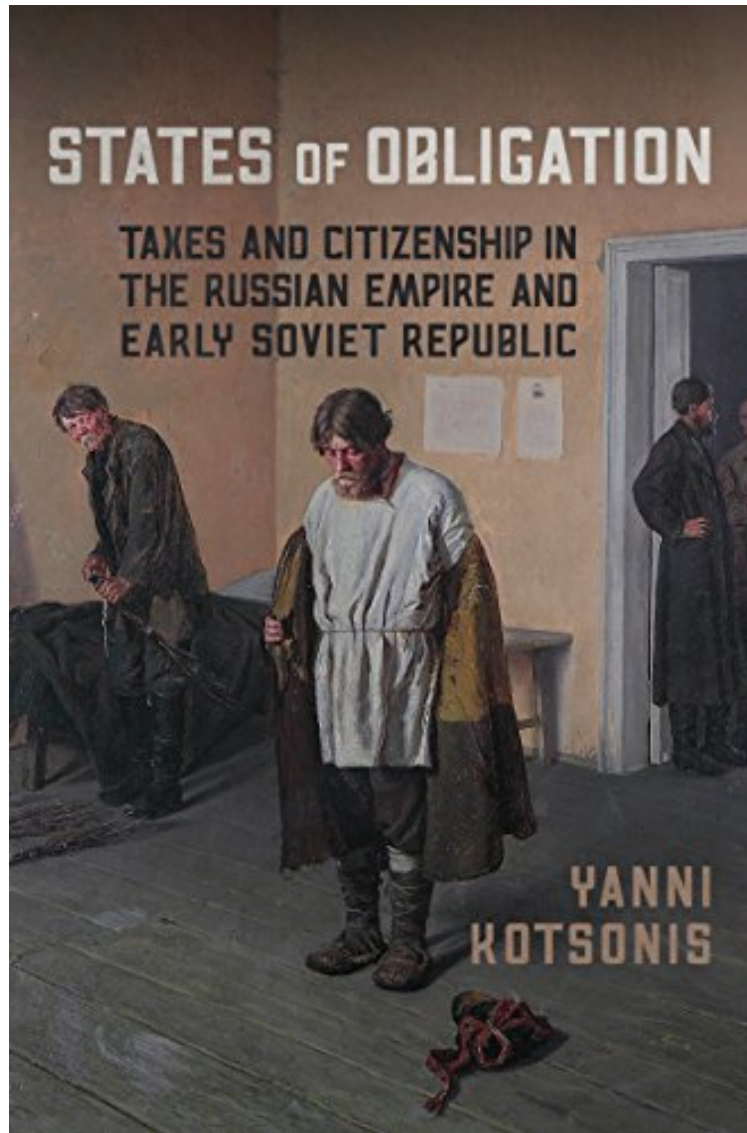


States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic

Yanni Kotsonis

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Yanni Kotsonis : States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised States of Obligation: Taxes and Citizenship in the Russian Empire and Early Soviet Republic:

Beginning in the 1860s, the Russian Empire replaced a poll tax system that originated with Peter the Great with a

modern system of income and excise taxes. Russia began a transformation of state fiscal power that was also underway across Western Europe and North America. *States of Obligation* is the first sustained study of the Russian taxation system, the first to study its European and transatlantic context, and the first to expose the essential continuities between the fiscal practices of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Using a wealth of materials from provincial and local archives across Russia, Yanni Kotsonis examines how taxation was simultaneously a revenue-raising and a state-building tool, a claim on the person and a way to produce a new kind of citizenship. During successive political, wartime, and revolutionary crises between 1855 and 1928, state fiscal power was used to forge social and financial unity and fairness and a direct relationship with individual Russians. State power eventually overwhelmed both the private sector economy and the fragile realm of personal privacy. *States of Obligation* is at once a study in Russian economic history and a reflection on the modern state and the modern citizen.

States of Obligation is destined to emerge as a classic not only for historians but also for political scientists and economists with an interest in imperial and Soviet Russia. (Scott Gehlbach *Kritika Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* vol 17:03:2016) Kotsonis's work offers much food for thought. For specialists or fellow travelers in Russian business history and economic history, this book is required reading. (Steven Nafziger *EH.Net* January 2016) With its unique focus on taxation, *States of Obligation* makes an important contribution to the field of Russian and Soviet studies. It should be of interest to those examining issues concerning the modernizing state and definitions of citizenship. (Sharon A. Kowalsky *Canadian Journal of History* vol 51:02:2016) Yanni Kotsonis has given us an erudite book, rich with insight. It is well worth reading. (Frank Weislo *Journal of Modern History* vol 89:01:2017) Yanni Kotsonis provides a stimulating and important history of the transformation of state obligations in nineteenth and early twentieth century Russia. (John Randolph Slavic vol 75:02:2016) "Yanni Kotsonis has written an original and magisterial work that will change the way we understand and teach Russian and Soviet history. Like all great books, it will be read and referenced by generations of historians. This is a superb work of scholarship—comprehensive, meticulously researched, illuminating, and humane." (Golfo Alexopoulos *The Russian*) As a study of both reformist and revolutionary state fiscal policy, an important area that has been much neglected, this is an intellectually sophisticated and stimulating work. (Steven Hoch *American Historical Review*, December 2015) This book opens the door to new questions related to the means by which state, population, and economy intersect in Russia and elsewhere. The author and press are to be congratulated for blessing us with these intellectual provocations. (David W. Darrow *Revolutionary Russia* November 2015) This is an important book, and one that transcends the field of Russian history. It is learned, mature, highly comparative—and very readable and entertaining. Not so much a financial history as a study of political economy through the prism of taxation, *States of Obligation* demonstrates the nexus of taxation and citizenship—and shows that the contemporary actors thought and spoke in precisely those terms. (Peter Holquist, Department of History, University of Pennsylvania) *States of Obligation* is a profound meditation on the Russian state, comprehensively researched and sure-handedly comparative. Revelation follows revelation—for example, direct taxes on Russia's peasants accounted for a mere 1 per cent of state income in 1913. Textbooks will have to be rewritten. (Stephen Kotkin, John P. Birkelund '52 Professor in History and International Affairs, Princeton University) Those who are familiar with the work of Yanni Kotsonis will know that they have a treat in store. His latest book breaks new ground. It provides an authoritative, articulate, and subtle account of the politics of taxation in Russia at a crucial juncture. But it does more than this. It demonstrates that debates around taxation speak to fundamental issues of social organization, economic behaviour, and political authority. *States of Obligation* is wise, provocative, and illuminating in equal measure. I am certain it will stand the test of time. (Peter Gatrell, Professor of Economic History, University of Manchester) About the Author Yanni Kotsonis is an associate professor in the Departments of History and of Russian and Slavic Studies and founding Director of the Jordan Center for the Advanced Study of Russia at New York University.