



Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West (Modern Middle East (Paperback))

Roderic H. Davison

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The effect of Western influence on the later Ottoman Empire and on the development of the modern Turkish nation-state links these twelve essays by a prominent American scholar. Roderic Davison draws from his extensive knowledge of Western diplomatic history and Turkish history to describe a period in which the actions of the Great Powers, incipient and rising nationalisms, and Westernizing reforms shaped the destiny of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the new Turkish Republic.

Eleven of the essays were previously published in widely scattered journals and multi-authored volumes. The first of these provides a general survey of Turkish and Ottoman history, from early Turkish times to the end of the Empire. The following essays continue chronologically from 1774, detailing some of the changes in the nineteenth-century Empire. Several themes recur. One is the impact of Western ideas and institutions and the resistance to that influence by some elements in the Empire. Another concerns the diplomatic pressure exerted by the Great Powers of Europe on the Empire, which amounted at times to direct intervention in Ottoman domestic affairs. Taken together, the essays portray a confluence of civilizations as well as a clash of cultures.

Professor Davison has written an interpretive introduction that sets out the historical trends running throughout the book. In addition, he includes a previously unpublished article on the advent of the electric telegraph in the Ottoman Empire to show how the adoption of a Western technological advance could affect many areas of life.

Of particular interest to students of Ottoman and Middle East history, these essays will also be valuable for everyone concerned with modernization in developing nations. Davison's interpretations and keen methodological sense also shed new light on several aspects of European diplomatic history.

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