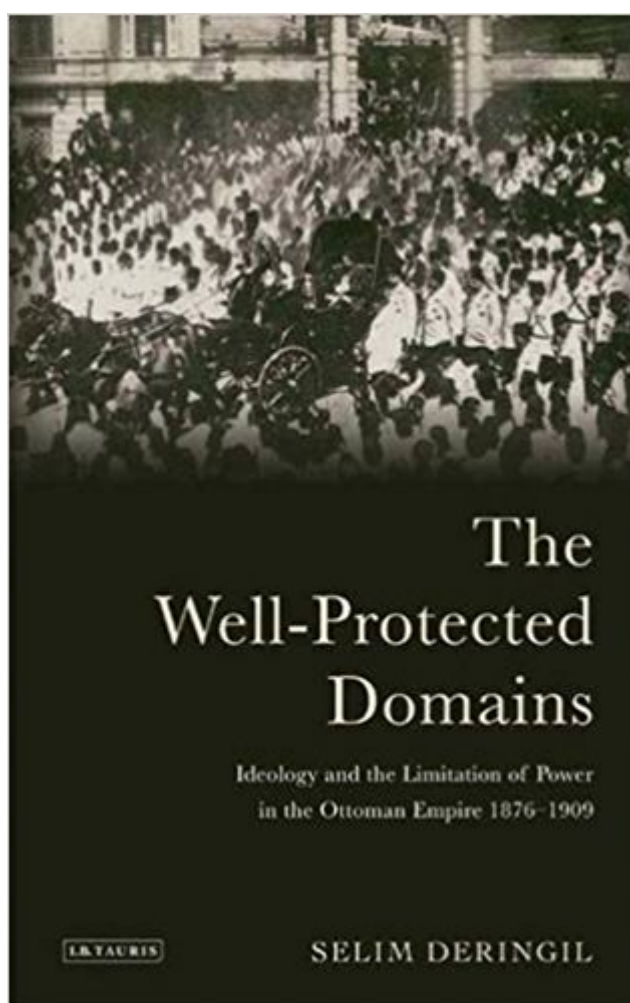


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The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology And The Legitimation Of Power In The Ottoman Empire 1876-1909



Synopsis

How did the late Ottoman Empire grapple with the challenge of modernity and survive? Rejecting explanations based on the concept of an "Islamic empire," or the tired paradigm of the "Eastern Question," the author argues that far richer insights can be gained by focusing on imperial ideology and drawing out the striking similarities between the Ottoman and other late legitimist empires like Russia, Austria and Japan. The author traces the Ottoman state's pursuit of legitimation in public ceremonial; in the iconography of buildings, music, the honors system or the language of the chancery; in its proto-nationalist reformulation of Islamic legal practices; in its efforts to inculcate, through an expanded education system; and in the efforts of the Ottoman elite to present a "civilized" image abroad.Â

Book Information

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'Selim Deringil's study of the Ottoman Empire's view of itself during its final half century gave me unalloyed pleasure. Elegantly written and impeccably researched ... stands head and shoulders above anything I have seen in recent years on contemporary Turkey.' - David Barchard, Cornucopia

Selim Deringil is Professor of History at BogaziÅŸi University, Istanbul.

Although the volume suffers occasionally from a lack of organization, this currently is probably the best single work on the nature of Ottoman State legitimacy during the reign of Abdulhamit II. Deringil

persuasively argues that the Hamidian regime did not represent a simple revival of Islam; rather, borrowing from Hobsbawm's language of "invented traditions," the Hamidian regime represented a fundamental rethinking of Islamic themes, changing their meaning and putting them to new uses as part of a general program of top-down modernization. Kemal Karpat's *Politicization of Islam* takes on many of the same themes and is perhaps broader in scope. Unfortunately, Karpat's work is too disjointed and meandering for most readers and the *Deringil* volume is probably the best choice for the classroom or for those not planning advanced degrees in the subject. Many, of course, will choose to read both volumes, and both have much to offer.

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