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MES 1300
Intellectual Change
from Ottoman
Modernization to the
Turkish Republic
T 4-6.30

In this critical survey of Ottoman intellectual history, modernization and the formation of the modern state together with nationalism and other ideologies will be discussed. What were the ideas, concepts, and problems the educated elite of the Empire produced and tackled? How did they shape the collapse of this last Islamic Empire and the making of the modern Middle East, and the Balkans? The

Interestingly but not shockingly, it was designed by Charles Young of the British Commonwealth, so ordered by Queen Victoria to be displayed on the wall of Saint George Church in the Windsor Palace in London. After 1882 the Ottomans used it having added scales and weapons on the design, depicting 37 symbols, shapes and objects. Most of them were symbols seen in daily life, etched in the memories of many societies to this day. Like its European counterparts, the Ottoman coat-of-arms had a symmetrical graphic design and in the upper central part lay the official seal of the sultan, Abdülhamid II, placed above the State and his subjects—who were by then citizens. The seal, that is to say, the sultan, was the sun rising above Ottoman territories. The three-crescent flag on green represented the Islamic Caliphate while the red single crescent flag represented the dynasty. Today the Turkish flag is almost identical, with a completely new story behind its emergence.

In this course we will explore many such facets of modernization in a society that is no longer...