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Abstracts

FABIO L. GRASSI, *Colonialismo britannico in terra ottomana. Riflessioni e approfondimenti*

This paper discusses the way the British historian Jonathan Parry narrates the economic and political penetration of the British Empire in the Ottoman lands. The author of the paper recognizes that Parry has provided many new and useful information, however notices in his book some questionable aspects: for example, in Parry's representation, British expansionism was little more than a continuous, necessary reaction to French and Russian ambitions; the "cultural history" side of the book is intriguing but doesn't provide a deep insight and a comparative pattern; important aspects of the "Ottoman commitment" of some of the dramatis personae (for instance David Urquhart) are ignored.

Criticism of the various sections of Parry's book is the starting point for a subjective conceptual road map, where reference is mainly to either old and neglected books or recent and scarcely known ones. A big parenthesis is devoted to the 3 November 1839 "Rose Garden Edict". Indeed, the British historian belittles the importance of this document and, in particular, doubts it affirmed the juridical equality among all the subjects of the Ottoman Empire. With an integral translation from Turkish of the first (and more important) part of the edict the author of this paper demonstrates that this famous document really envisaged equality, albeit in the sole possible way the fences of the Koranic law and the spirit of the times allowed, i.e., in an implicit and ambiguous way. In this section and along the paper philological clarifications are provided as well.

Keywords:

Britain

Ottoman Empire

Egypt

Colonialism

Edict of Gülhane