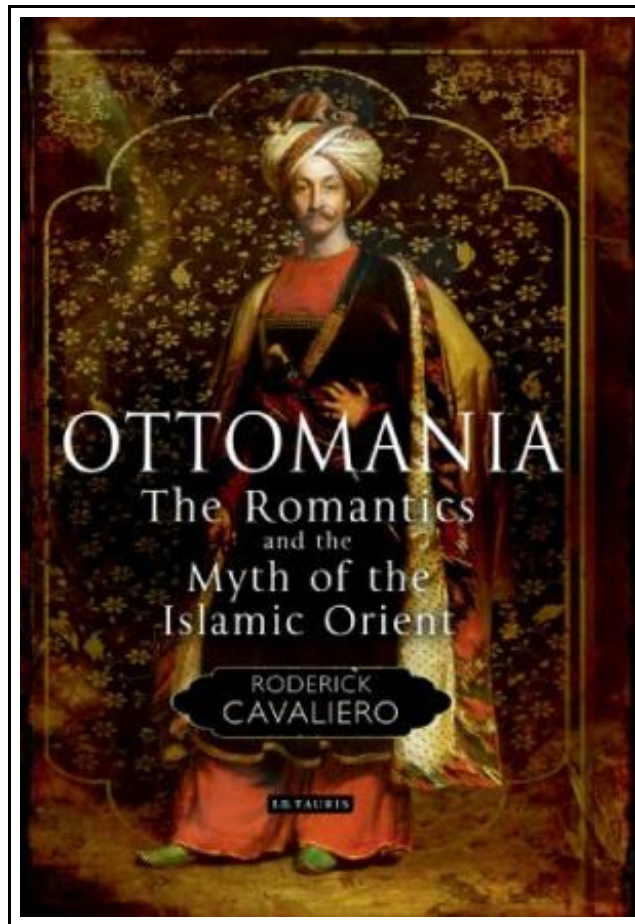


Ottomania: The Romantics and the Myth of the Islamic Orient



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(Pearl Corwin)

OTTOMANIA: THE ROMANTICS AND THE MYTH OF THE ISLAMIC ORIENT

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I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Ottomania: The Romantics and the Myth of the Islamic Orient, Roderick Cavaliero, Romanticism had its roots in fantasy and fed on myth'. So Roderick Cavaliero introduces the European Romantic obsession with the Orient. Cavaliero draws on a life-time's research in Romantic literature and introduces a rich cast of leading Romantic writers, artists, musicians and travellers, including Beckford, Byron, Shelley, Walter Scott, Pierre Loti, Thomas Moore, Rossini, Eugene Delacroix, Thackeray and Disraeli, and a host of other Romantics, who were drawn to the Orient in the 18th and 19th centuries. They luxuriate in its exotic sights, sounds, literature and, above all, in the prevailing mythology. Cavaliero analyses the Romantic vision where, as Byron writes, there are 'virgins soft as the roses they twine', but lays bare an underlying vision of cruelty and oppression, and of societies based on domestic or prisoner slavery - anathema to the 19th-century Romantic. The overarching myth was that of the Ottoman Empire, a huge and exotic superpower, an empire to rival Rome, a major threat to Europe, with an invincible military record ruled by a Sultan with absolute, even feckless, power of life and death over his subjects who lived to 'delight his senses'. But to the Romantics, fear of the absolute ruler was overlaid by frissons of oriental luxury. Thus the Ottoman Sultans were the heirs of the iconic Caliphate of Harun ar Rashid in the fabulous Arabian Nights Entertainments. Coleridge's dream of the Orient in Kubla Khan was not of the barbaric grandeur of the global Mongol empire but that of a 'stately pleasure dome in Xanadu' among incense-bearing trees and untroubled forests. Moore's Lalla Rookh was set in his visionary vale of Kashmir and is a love story in 'a land of kingfishers and golden orioles' with the backdrop of the mighty Moghul Empire. Scott was obsessed by the chivalry of the Crusades on both sides and Disraeli was...

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