REVIEW ARTICLES

OTTOMAN MILITARY MATTERS

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Books mentioned in this review:


Shai Har-El, Struggle for Domination in the Middle East: The Ottoman-Mamluk War, 1485-91 (The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage: Politics, Society and Economy, 4) (Leiden: Brill, 1995), ill., maps, bibliography + index, $94.00/Eur. 81.00, ISBN 9004101802 (cloth).

Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, editors, Hungarian-Ottoman Military and Diplomatic Relations in the Age of Süleyman the Magnificent (Budapest: Loránd Eötvös University, 1994), 210 pp. + index.


Rhoads Murphey, Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700 (Warfare and History) (London: UCL Press, 1999), 276 pp., ill., maps, select bibliography + index, $55.00, ISBN 0813526841 (cloth); $25.00, ISBN 081352685X (paper).

Michael Robert Hickok, Ottoman Military Administration in Eighteenth Century Bosnia (The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage: Politics, Society and Economy, 13) (Leiden: Brill, 1997), xxiii + 190 pp., bibliography + index, $70.00/Eur. 70, ISBN 9004106898 (cloth).


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Increasing interest in the Ottoman Empire among early modern historians prompted the *Journal of Early Modern History* to solicit a review of recent publications on Ottoman war and society. Offered the opportunity to do so, I have selected works published in the last decade, which represent a variety of approaches and an international scholarly enterprise. With a couple of exceptions, the choices have been limited to monographs or collected works, and restricted to the “pre-modern” time frame, which means I have not included interesting new work on the late imperial period (Crimean War through World War II).¹ The discussion is restricted to publications in English, and to land armies, which is to neglect the decades of effort by historians in territories once under Ottoman control and in present-day Turkey. Similarly, leaving out the Ottoman navy is to miss the considerable number of recent publications about the eastern Mediterranean.²

Ottoman military historiography is a surprisingly neglected field, most particularly the period after 1600, especially as one of the general assumptions about the Ottomans is that it was an empire organized principally to engage in war with the infidel. Since the work of Shaw and Levy³ in the sixties and early seventies, little effort has been made to unravel the mysteries of continued Ottoman military survival (or more accurately revival) after the defeats embodied in the treaties of Karlowitz (1699) or Küçük Kaynarca (1774). There are a couple of obvious reasons for the neglect. One has to do with the enormity of the linguistic

¹ For example, the two brand new studies of the late Ottoman experience: James J. Reid, *Crisis of the Ottoman Empire: Prelude to Collapse, 1839-1878* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2000), and Edward J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die: a History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001).

² As in the work of Daniel Panzac, Molly Greene, Palmira Brummet, Salih Ozbaran, and Idris Bostan. Panzac does have an article on manning the Ottoman navy in *Arming the State*.