

**Philip MACDOUGALL, *Islamic Seapower During the Age of Fighting Sail*,
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The interest of historians in the Ottoman naval history is increasing day by day. Turkish and foreign researchers continue to address it from different perspectives. Especially those who can benefit from the Ottoman archives, as well as Turkish and English literature, fill a remarkable gap. Having said that, the interpretations and perspectives revealed by the studies using the secondary sources may lead us to consider the events and facts from a different point, too.

Philip MacDougall's book *Islamic Sea Power During the Age of Fighting Sail* promises different interpretations. The author has several books in the field of naval history, along with those that deal with different areas such as local histories and air battles. The aforementioned book, which focuses on the geography of the Mediterranean, addresses events between 17th -the mid-19th centuries. While it deals with the influx of Maghreb mariners and discusses their relationship with the Ottomans and their influences, it also indirectly discusses the British, American, French, and Spanish navies. The author examines the Ottomans' struggle with the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean through the Red Sea, the naval activities around the Persian Gulf, which is very important for the Safavids and other Iranian dynasties, and the conflict between the Mughal and other Muslim rulers with the Portuguese, Dutch and British sailors in India, which basically covers the Islamic maritime affairs all the way from Arab lands to the Indian Ocean.

As the word "Islamic" in the title indicates, the book embraces Moorish, Ottoman, Iranian, Indian, and Egyptian maritime, which came to light in the early 19th century, are

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studied. The study of the Ottoman seafaring is already problematic and exhaustive on its own, hence it seems quite ambitious to dare to examine the Islamic world as a whole. However, it should be kept in mind that although the book keeps an academic approach, it actually aims the general reader. MacDougall criticizes the English-speaking historians for handling the maritime affairs of the Islamic world only through naval wars and the temporary alliances. Instead, he sets out to use and study the sources with a more convenient method and write a different the history of Islamic Maritime than those of English-speaking historians.

The book is comprised of three chapters and a conclusion. Each chapter has a short introduction. At the beginning of the book, there is a list of illustrations, preface, abbreviations, chronology and a short glossary. After the conclusion part, bibliography and index are included.

The first chapter, entitled “*The Ottoman State Navy in the West: A Systems Failure*”, discusses the Ottoman Navy. Having summarized the Ottoman navy and its activities until the 17th century, the author focuses on the maritime administration and general functioning of the Ottoman Empire. MacDougall tries to form a basis for readers who are not familiar with the Ottoman history by describing various basic terms in the boxes, but the information in them is quite brief. The discussions about the marine starting from the mid-17th century, naval codes and regulations at the end of the 17th century are also addressed.

Under a subtitle within the chapter, the author discusses the Battle of Chesma (1770), and the technical, administrative and manpower challenges faced by the Ottomans before and after the battle. After emphasizing the efforts of Sultan Selim III’s reforms in the Ottoman Navy and the employment of foreign technical personnel, MacDougall explains how after the Battle of Navarino (1827), Ottomans attempted to compensate for the loss of ships and sailors. Although some very detailed topics are addressed in the first chapter, it is seen that comments are made around general judgments. In addition, the topics such as Imperial Arsenal (*Tersâne-i Âmire*), the ships of the Ottoman navy, the Naval Code of 1701, wars and conflicts are narrated only with a limited number of references.

It seems that common primary and secondary sources on these topics are not given in the footnotes. For example, although İdris Bostan's edition of *Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr*¹ is cited somehow, a significant amount of information about the management of the Imperial Arsenal, its employees, ships and their equipment, were taken from other studies² of Bostan, which are not mentioned at all. Another example seems to be Yusuf Alperen Aydın's article³ which is used by MacDougall without a reference regarding the Naval Code of 1701. In the first chapter (p. 38-39), information regarding the Chief Bombardier Mehmed Ağa and anchors of hammersmith Sava from Galata manufactured for the Ottoman navy are mentioned so far only by Aydın⁴, but MacDougall's narrative about the aforementioned information seems like indicates directly to the documents of the Ottoman Archive without a reference. Hence, we should be careful about the book in general.

The second chapter of the book is devoted to maritime activities in North Africa, the Maghreb states. The author, after emphasizing the emergence and motivation of Maghreb sailors at the introduction of the "*North African States and Provinces*", focuses on how pirates should be understood in regard to the term *marine ghazi*. According to MacDougall, we can speak of a structure based on various motivations with an absolute goal. Before Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha, MacDougall briefly explains the administrative structure, and commercial and social life in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Tripoli. He emphasizes the relationship between the Moorish and the Ottomans in the post-Barbaros period. To detail this relationship, the aid from the *Garb Ocakları* (The North African states), as Ottomans referred, to the maritime voyages and sieges of the Ottomans are discussed. MacDougall includes Egypt in the North African States and emphasizes that Egypt's integration into the

¹ *The Gift to the Great Ones on Naval Campaigns, (Tuhfetü'l-Kibâr fi Eşfâri'l-Bihâr)*, ed. İdris Bostan, Ankara, 2008.

² İdris Bostan, *Osmanlı Bahriye Teşkilâtı: XVII. Yüzyılda Tersâne-i Âmire*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 1992; İdris Bostan, "Ottoman Maritime Arsenals and Shipbuilding Technology in the 16th and 17th Centuries", *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation. [Encyclopaedia]*, Editor in chief: Kemal Çiçek. Co-editors: Ercüment Kuran, Nejat Göyünç, İlber Ortaylı. Executive editor: Güler Eren, Halil Inalcık. Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2000, vol. III, s. 735-744; Bostan, İdris, "Imperial Arsenal", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Three, Edited by: Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson, 2015.

³ Yusuf Alperen Aydın, "Reform of the Ottoman Navy and Ottoman Superiority at Sea (1701-1718)", *Mutazioni e permanenze nella storia navale del Mediterraneo secc. XVI-XIX*, Italy, 2010, s. 163-180.

⁴ Aydın, "Reform of the Ottoman Navy", s. 171-175.

Ottoman administration was not like other states. Egypt did not have as much autonomy as the others until the beginning of the nineteenth century, and only after the arrival of Mehmed Ali Pasha, Egypt's administration took a different shape. In this respect, the author reserves a separate space for the Egyptian navy from the beginning of the nineteenth century in the Islamic navies and discusses the reform activities of Mehmed Ali Pasha in the Egyptian navy.

The third chapter, "*The Indian Ocean*", tackles the activities of Muslim mariners from Arabian coasts to the Indian Ocean. In the beginning, the struggle between the Ottomans and Portuguese after the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans and efforts in protecting the holy land of Islam at the Red Sea are addressed. The struggles of the Iranian dynasties in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea, the activities of other small principalities of the Arabian Peninsula, and the conflict between Muslim rulers of India and the Mughal State against Portugal, Netherlands and England are discussed.

In the conclusion, MacDougall attempts at a general panorama of the navies of the Islamic states by summarizing the topics he discussed.

The book claims to cover a very long period and a vast geography, but what it presents is an assessment of the general observations in the literature. Besides, it is quite demanding to examine Muslim sea power from the Mediterranean to the edges of India by an appropriate analysis of the sources. I noted that MacDougall cites the Ottoman archival material as he is the one that studies and evaluates them without using any footnote. However, taking few before mentioned examples into consideration, I argue that he "skipped" the references to the secondary sources he actually used. Obviously, this calls the credibility of the book into question.

Some might consider the book valuable for the general audience. I believe it does not promise a more comprehensive study than Turkish publications of the same field.