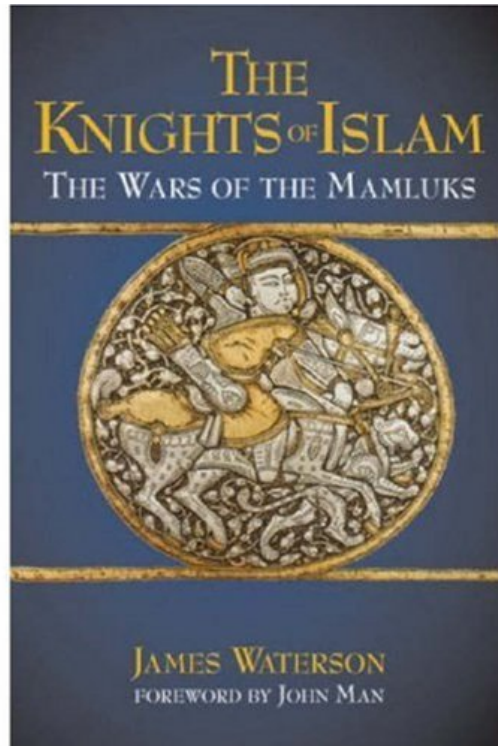


(Download) The Knights of Islam: The Wars of the Mamluks

The Knights of Islam: The Wars of the Mamluks

James Waterson

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James Waterson : The Knights of Islam: The Wars of the Mamluks before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Knights of Islam: The Wars of the Mamluks:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's a good one. Get this. It will help you write your paper and teach you what Westerners don't know. By Danny Cannon Pretty good read. Easy to follow. Secondary source, but a well thought-out one. Has a few minor discrepancies between the Fatimid to Abbassid Caliphate transition in Egypt. Overall, well-written and usable for research purposes. It has the best time line of the Mamluks from the death of Mohammed (pbuh) to the destruction by the Ottoman Empire. The single best resource for English speakers is still David Ayalon. 27 of 28 people found the following review helpful. Good history of the Mamluks By Peter Lyon Waterson's book is a good overview of the Mamluk period of Middle Eastern history. It concentrates on the earlier period 1250-1330 when the state was at its most vibrant and facing many external threats, especially the Mongols. The coverage of the later history is less complete, and almost perfunctory in places, which is a shame as the decay of empires is just as interesting as their time of strength, and in some ways at least as important. Waterson draws from many sources, especially the period manuscripts on combat (the furissiya), and avoids the Eurocentric view of history well. My main gripe, considering that he is discussing the history of a military dynasty, is that he sometimes is woefully misinformed in military facts and terminology. He does not understand the difference between a compound bow (the term he uses throughout, and which only applies to a type of bow developed in the twentieth century) and a composite bow. On page 270 he states that the muskets deployed at Waterloo had a range on only 130 metres (this

should mean effective range only; the maximum range would be over 400 metres) while a light arrow could be fired up to 250 meters (which is correct). In the same paragraph he states that arrows are easily made while bullets require a developed industrial base; good arrows actually require a high skill level to make, and the drawing together of materials from many areas, while bullets are actually easier to make if the lead is available in bar form. The complexity is more in the production, storage and delivery of the powder, and the creation and maintenance of the guns. Aside from these flaws, which are relatively minor, this is a very readable book that covers the subject well, without becoming pedantic or boring. 9 of 13 people found the following review helpful. A handful of black-and-white and color plates illustrate this fascinating medieval military history. By Midwest Book Review Teacher James Waterson presents *The Knights of Islam: The Wars of the Mamluks*, a historical chronicle of the Mamluks - perhaps the greatest warriors of the Medieval Age. Originally slave soldiers of Islamic masters, they evolved into a fierce independent force with its own warrior caste and culture. They were the first military power to defeat the Mongols; they waged wars against the Crusaders and the Ottomans; they created a unique martial code comparable to Western chivalry or Japanese Bushido; and they ruled Egypt for hundreds of years. The story of Mamluks is one of strategy, betrayal, the long struggle between Christendom and Islam, courage, and the rise and decline of tenaciously formidable warriors. A handful of black-and-white and color plates illustrate this fascinating medieval military history, enthusiastically recommended for library shelves.

The Mamluks were, at one distinct point in history, the greatest body of fighting men in the world and the quintessence of the mounted warrior. They were slave soldiers, imported as boys into the Islamic Empire from the pagan Steppes, but they became its savior, bringing defeat to the Mongols and forming the machine of jihad that ultimately destroyed the Crusader Kingdoms of Palestine and Syria. They entered the Islamic world as unlettered automatons and through a total application to the craft of the warrior they became more than soldiers. After a bloody seizure of power from their masters, the descendants of Saladin, they developed a martial code and an honor system based on barracks brotherhood, a sophisticated military society that harnessed the state's energies for total war and produced a series of treatises on warfare that more than compare to Sun Zi's *Art of War* in their complexity, beauty of language and comprehensive coverage of the bloody business of war. Their story embraces many of the great themes of medieval military endeavor. The Crusaders and the deadly contest between Islam and Christendom, the Mongols and their vision of World Dominion, Tamerlane the Scourge of God and the rise of the Ottoman Empire whose new slave soldiers, the Janissaries, would be the Mamluks' final nemesis.

"... the author brings together a wealth of information which has, until now, only been available in highly specialised academic journals and scholarly books" - David Nicolle
About the Author James Waterson is a graduate of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He worked and taught in the United States and China for a number of years and now lives in Italy.