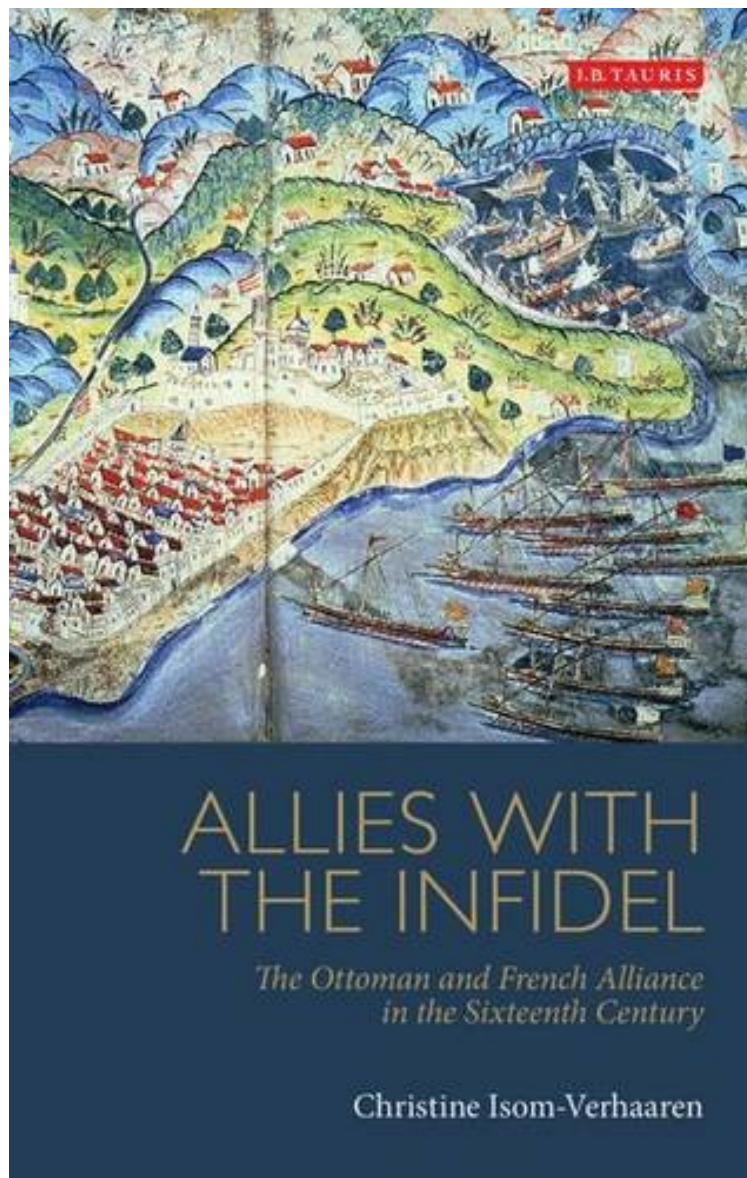


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Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century (Library of Ottoman Studies)

Christine Isom-Verhaaren

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Christine Isom-Verhaaren : Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century (Library of Ottoman Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century (Library of Ottoman Studies):

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Good information but a bit of a slog for most readers. By lyndonbrecht This is an academic study, so be prepared for that kind of writing. As an academic study it is rather good, but much of the book is a sort of argument about what can be determined from original sources. The book examines whether the historical interpretation of the French-Ottoman alliance is a product of Hapsburg propaganda (the Hapsburgs were often opponents of both French and Ottomans). That examination will be of little interest to most readers. It is not really a history of events, which could make for a lively read--Christian army and Muslim navy attack Italian city. It covers some events in passing. The typical reader should probably pass on this book, unless the subject is of great interest. As an academic type, I slogged on through. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Acceptable introduction By Elizabeth Starkey As an avid reader of history books, I know they don't have to be dry and monotonous. Unfortunately, this one is. It reads more like a Masters thesis than anything, and at the end of the day, doesn't cover much ground (185 pages of book and another 50 or so of notes). The premise is simple: we forget that Ottomans engaged with European powers prior to the--apparently well-mannered and widely accepted--wintering of their fleet on the French coast. That we've forgotten is the result of Hapsburg propaganda; there's not a lot of expansion on the "how" behind this point, it's mostly just repeated constantly throughout the text. We also get a long digression on Cem, the main point of which, again, is that there were Ottomans in Western Europe prior to the titular alliance. It's a fast read, but with a steep cover price and no profound insights, you might be better off just consulting Wikipedia.

In 1543, the Ottoman fleet appeared off the coast of France to bombard and lay siege to the city of Nice. The operation, under the command of Admiral Barbarossa, came in response to a request from Francois I of France for assistance from Sultan Sleyman the Magnificent in Frances struggle against Charles V, the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain. This military alliance between mutual ""infidels,"" the Christian French King and the Muslim Sultan, aroused intense condemnation on religious grounds from the Habsburgs and their supporters as an aberration from accepted diplomacy. Memories of the Crusades were, after all, still very much alive in Europe and an alliance with ""the Turk"" seemed unthinkable to many. Allies with the Infidel places the events of 1543 and the subsequent wintering of the Ottoman fleet in Toulon in the context of the power politics of the sixteenth century. Relying on contemporary Ottoman and French sources, it presents the realpolitik of diplomacy with ""infidels"" in the early modern era. The result is essential reading for students and scholars of European history, Ottoman Studies, and of relations between the Christian and Islamic worlds.

'This book must be required reading for anyone who studies the relations between Muslims and Christians, Turks and Europeans, or the Islamic World and the West. Dispelling the notions of an inevitable clash between civilizations, Isom-Verhaaren demonstrates that the sixteenth-century Ottoman-French alliance in general and the allied military campaign of 1543-44 in particular were very much welcome by both parties and thought to be honorable affairs that benefited them both.' - Professor Baki Tezcan, Associate Professor, Religious Studies and History, UC Davis, University of California; 'By systematically exposing the fallacy and distortion originating in notions of a monolithic Christian world in the West confronting a uniform and equally monolithic Islamic World in the East, Christine Isom-Verhaaren breathes fresh life into the oft-told tale of East-West relations told from the perspective of bi-polar confrontational politics and restores it to its fuller historical complexity. She provides a full account of the perspectives reflected both in contemporary French historical tradition and surviving Ottoman narrative and documentary accounts from the sixteenth century enabling the reader to re-examine the factual basis of this alliance free from the distorting lens that has traditionally favoured the Habsburg perspective and that has paid only marginal attention to the treatment of the French and Ottoman source traditions. As a result Dr. Isom-Verhaaren has produced a revisionist account of a much studied episode in Renaissance diplomacy that will serve as an indispensable point of reference for the future study of East-West relations in the Early Modern Age.' - Dr. Rhoads Murphey, Reader in Ottoman Studies, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, University of Birmingham About the Author Christine Isom-Verharren is Instructor at Benedictine University, Chicago.