

Seminar in Ottoman and Turkish Studies



Battle of Marj Dabiq, Syria, 24 August 1516

A Conquest that Changed an Empire: The Ottoman Military in Syria

Linda Darling

Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg, Universität Bonn and University of Arizona

When Selim I conquered Syria in 1516, he changed the Ottoman Empire in more ways than simply adding territory. This lecture discusses the effect of the conquest of Syria on two fundamental Ottoman military institutions—the timar cavalry system and the Janissary infantry corps—and demonstrates the use of government documents to critique the representation of these changes in the political literature of the time as illegitimate. These shifts are usually attributed to the military and price revolutions of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However well before these developments, circumstances resulting from the Ottoman presence in the Arab lands caused both military forces to intensify the recruitment of outsiders. The resulting alterations in both military systems were not confined to Syria, but spread throughout the empire and made the Ottoman Empire another kind of state, not just larger but institutionally and ideologically different.

Wednesday | 20 March 2019 | 4:00-6:00 pm

Natalie Zemon Davis Room | 2098 Sidney Smith Hall | 100 St. George Street

Sponsored by the Departments of History and of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations and by the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies