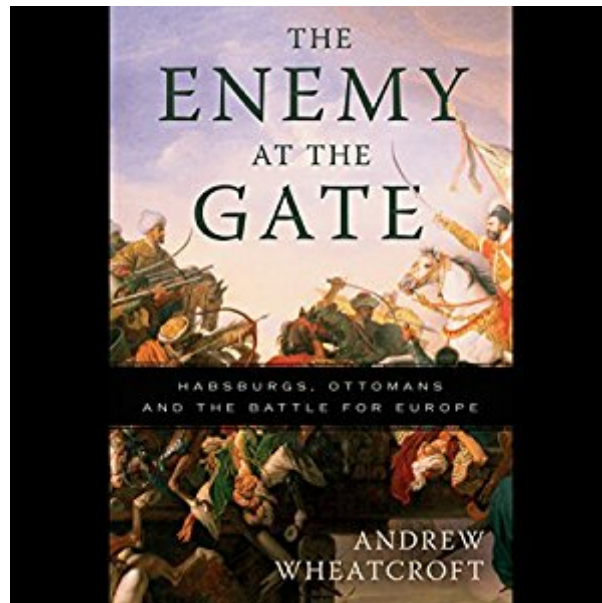


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# The Enemy At The Gate: Habsburgs, Ottomans And The Battle For Europe



## Synopsis

Major historian Andrew Wheatcroft reveals the full story behind four centuries of Ottoman incursions into the heartlands of Europe. In 1683, two empires – the Ottoman, based in Constantinople, and the Habsburg dynasty in Vienna – came face to face in the culmination of a 250-year-old struggle for power at the Great Siege of Vienna. Within the city walls, the choice of resistance over surrender to the largest army ever assembled by the Turks created an all-or-nothing scenario: every last survivor would be enslaved or ruthlessly slaughtered. Although it was their most famous attack, the 1683 siege was the historical culmination of the Turks' sustained attempt to march westwards and finally obtain the city they had long called "The Golden Apple." Their defeat was to mark the beginning of the decline of the Ottoman Empire. With Turkey now seeking to re-orient itself towards the West and with a new generation of politicians exploiting the residual tensions between East and West, *The Enemy at the Gate* provides a timely and masterful account of this most complex and epic of conflicts. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was looking for a good book about the battle of Vienna. If this is not the best book, at least it is a book; and by that I mean there are very few for Kindle (my preferred reading format). This book suffers from inelegant writing and a terrible structure. The book begins with the Ottoman launching of the campaign against Vienna, but then weaves into various expository and narratives of other

attempts to take Vienna, the wars of the Ottomans versus the Hapsburgs, and an exploration of the two empires' historical, cultural, religious, and political histories and situation. It becomes difficult not only to keep track of the various "characters" - because they appear and disappear without any real order or transition, but even the events are mixed up. Which departure from Constantinople is being discussed? Etc. I would also add that in various parts of the book some long discussion about sources and their reliability are discussed; this would normally be quickly referred to, or a dedicated chapter probably best in the appendix. It is hardly logical to place a discussion of source reliability in the middle of an account of a battle. Otherwise, the description of the siege and lifting of the siege of Vienna is good. This is followed by a sufficiently detailed recounting of the siege and capture of Budapest; and finally a brief history of Ottoman-Hapsburg relations and conflict up until the 20th century, which is sufficiently succinct. The conclusion is interesting, in suggesting that while history is interesting and a worthwhile scholarly endeavor, it is sadly subjected to political manipulation and simplification. The situation of Turkish immigrants, for example, is put in the context of the Ottoman-Christian wars - but highlighting that there really is no actual link in any negative sense. I basically skimmed through as much of the unnecessary sections as I could. Obviously, another person may value these. But again... what I was looking for was a stirring and detailed account of the Battle of Vienna. I got much more than that - some of it good, some of it not.

I received what I was looking for: a primer on Ottoman warfare and how Europe and western culture was almost lost to the invaders from the East. Detail upon detail required re-reading to maintain a time line and an understanding of the historical characters included in this account.

This is history written and told as history should. Wheatcroft serves us a superb mix of drama, action, background and close-up character studies. Fortunately he has left chauvinism out of the stew. I was told they have a Jan 3. Sobieski vodka in Poland, named after the king who tipped the battle with his hussars. That's the perfect drink to go with Wheatcroft's delicious dish.

A nice history, though it was a little slow at the beginning.

I ordered this for my 13-year-old son. He is a bit of a "history buff," and is especially interested in German and Austrian history. This book has been a good history for him of the Austrians vs. the Turks. When we were in Austria, we visited a lot of castles and they talked a lot about defense

against the Turks. But, we didn't really know much about this. Now we do. My son told me that this is a bit "heavy" for him, being 13. But, he was able to get through it and I'm sure he'll read it again in 2-4 years and get even more out of it.

most informative

Very interesting.

I had only a vague knowledge of the siege of Vienna before reading this book, in fact the most recent context in which I heard about it was during the debate on Turkey's proposed entry to the EU when a right wing politician complained that it would make "the victory at the gates of Vienna meaningless" I wanted to know more about this episode in history so I hunted down this book and was not disappointed. The author writes exceptionally well and explains both the immediate battle that occurred as well as the long conflict before and after. I am of the opinion that conflict between Islam and the West is inevitable and I think history bears this out but that aside this book was enlightening and entertaining.

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