The Ottoman Empire

Crest of the Ottoman Empire
Introduction

- Lasted 641 years!! (1281-1922)
- Longest dynasty in history
- Largest Islamic empire since the Abbasid Caliphate.
- Highly centralized, technologically advanced, militarily powerful.
- “Gunpowder” Empire

For more in depth information visit: http://www.naqshbandi.org/ottomans/
Why the Middle East?

- Rich Fertile soil
- Mountainous regions provide shelter and security
- Sea Coasts offer rich fishing
- Trade Routes between Asia and Europe

Topographical Map of the Region
The Beginning

- Central Authority—sultan
  - Run by vizier (ministers)
  - Provincinan governors called (beys and pashas)
- Sultan—hereditary
  - Concubines and competition
- 1299 independence declared—Osman Gazi
- Gazi reigned until 1326
- Land amassed through diplomacy and warfare

Osman Gazi, the first Ottoman Sultan
Impact of Trade Routes

- Area rich in Spices—Able to trade with both Europe and Asia as a form of income
- Silk trade from Asia to Europe brought paper and gunpowder
- More than products exchanged—scientific, religious and artistic ideas also
The Rise of the Ottoman Empire

- Land acquired through both diplomacy and war
- Sultans often married off their children to the children of the kings and queens of neighboring countries to create allegiances
- 1453- Defeat of Constantinople w/ huge cannons. Ascendancy of a new power.
Reign of Suleyman the Magnificent

- In Power from 1520-1566
- Brilliant Military Strategist
- Loved the arts (e.g. Architecture and poetry)
- Made Istanbul the Islamic cultural center
- Also called Suleyman the Lawgiver
The Ottoman Military

- Conquered Constantinople-Istanbul
- The sultans transplanted traditional cavalry (outdated) with elite soldiers called janisarries “new troops”
  - Recruited @ childhood from xitian communities, converted, trained to be loyal. (devshirme system)
  - Slaves-but given many privileges.
- Equipped w/ muskets, received advanced training.
- Harsh system, but it kept Ottomans @ forefront of military world.
Diversity and Religious Policy

- Diverse population (Sunnis, Shiites, Jews, Christians, Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants)
- Turkish, Arabic, Persian languages (Osmanli)
- Non-Muslims do not have equal rights, but religious tolerance is the norm.
  - Not permitted to serve in military
  - Pay special Head tax
  - Divided into administrative units called millets “nation”.

“nation”.
Women:

- Influential but informal role.
- Queen mother ran the household of imperial court, controlled marriage alliances, even be involved in foreign relations.
- Harem “sacred place”
  - Social network – concubines read Koran, sew, perform music.
- In public, women not seen, but
  - Buy, sell, inherit land
  - Testify for themselves in court
The Height of the Ottoman Empire

- Rich in trade routes
- Suleyman granted “capitulations” to the French.
  - No taxation on France when trading with the Ottoman Empire (later other European Countries offered capitulations)
  - Helped to encourage trade between countries
  - Would become problematic
The Height of the Ottoman Empire

Ottoman Empire began here in 1299

Ottoman Empire at its largest
The Fall of the Ottoman Empire

--Economics

- 300 years later Capitulations still in effect
- Europeans given an advantage in Ottoman market
- Europe was able to mass produce goods
- Ottomans did not have political power to rescind the capitulations
- Europe gained economic control over the Empire
The Fall of the Ottoman Empire

--Economics

- Ottoman Empire began to borrow money from European banks
- Seeking to modernize their armies, infrastructure, industry and institutions
- Could not repay loans
- Declared Bankruptcy in 1875
The Fall of the Ottoman Empire
--Politics and Economics

- Europe: Controlled collapse
  - Did not want to upset European balance of power
  - Not act too decisively / suddenly

- Turkey is weak from invasions; jannisarries from w/in.

- Since Suleyman, there have been many Sultans many were incompetent (most lasted on average 13 years)
The Fall of the Ottoman Empire
--Politics and Economics

- Corruption in the Ottoman government and royalty leads to more weakness
- Military complacent – Jannissaries outdated and not as efficient.
- Turkey enters WW I on the side of the Central Powers (German, Austro-Hungarian forces)
- Central Powers defeated
- Britain and France colonize the area—birth of the modern nation/states
The Fall of the Ottoman Empire
--Politics and Economics

- Tanzimat reforms (1839-1836)
  - Greater tolerance for millets
  - Western science, tech, postal systems, telegraphs.
  - Possibility of constitution
  - Women access to public ed

- Alienated conservatives/traditionalists

- Modernizers-Young Turks would play a decisive role in toppling sultan rule.