



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for Middle Eastern Studies

Coffeehouse Conversations: Politics, Intrigue, Exploration (Activism) and Espresso... (Coffee and PIE)

Come explore the Ottoman Empire, its love of coffee and how it set the world on a path of rebellion, reform and our obsession with an Ethiopian Cherry.

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Description: Interactive Role Play

Students will participate in a simulation centered around a Turkish coffee house to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of coffee during the Ottoman Empire. Students will interact with numerous artifacts, take on a character role to debate a hot topic, and explore the significance of public spaces in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Subject: World History

Grades: 7-12

Time Required: 60 minutes

Materials:

*Background readings

*Role Play Descriptions

*Artifacts for 5 stations

Station One: [Told in the Coffee House: Turkish Tales](http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/30577). Cyrus Adler, Allan Ramsay. The Macmillan Company. 1898. Available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/30577>

Station Two: Mancala, Backgammon

Station Three: Coffee Grinder, Coffee Pot, electric burner, cups

Station Four: [Turkish Shadow puppets and theater](#)

Station Five: Turkish Poetry samples, pen and ink

*Decree (see attachment)

Objectives:

By role playing and experiencing the equalizing power of the “Coffee House” students will be able to: (C3- D1.1-5.9-12)

- ♦ better understand how public spaces can both empower and challenge

- ◆ recognize the diversity of social and economic classes and their interests in the Early Modern Era in general and in Ottoman Empire specifically
- ◆ describe the influence of Sufi culture to cross social and economic boundaries
- ◆ define the interests of and tensions between the significant religious, social and economic groups of the Ottoman Empire
- ◆ by extension, recognize and reflect on the contemporary power and influence of “public spaces” like modern day Coffee Houses

Through the study and use of historical information of the Role Play descriptions and supplemental readings students will be able to: (C3- D2.HIS.1-5,7, 9-14.9-12)

- ◆ explore the interests, interactions and relationships of the different characters as they engage in the social aspects of a Coffee House
- ◆ evaluate and analyze the competing interests at play in larger Ottoman society
- ◆ develop a clearer understanding of how opposing interpretations / interests could originate in the same culture

The application of the documents and historical information of the Role Play descriptions will allow the student to: (C3- D3.2,3.9-12)

- ◆ evaluate the position of various historical characters / perspectives in Ottoman society through the direct engagement of the role through acting it out and in conversation, engagement and debate with other character roles
- ◆ directly meet claims and counterclaims significant to how a society might / should be organized, governed, and interact through their own representation of the various historical character roles of the Ottoman empire
- ◆ reflect on similar challenges of the present for the origin, interaction, and perspective of competing claims

In the debriefing, assessment and extensions process students will be able to: (C3 - D4.1-8.9-12)

- ◆ explain the impact of public spaces in pluralistic societies such as the Ottoman empire
- ◆ recognize the significance of everyday socialization and entertainment to direct the politics of powerful societies
- ◆ use the exploration of coffee houses of the Ottoman Empire to explore the power of modern public spaces for shaping interests and informing public discourse
- ◆ construct a more perceptive understanding of their own world and deciding what they might do to engage with it directly to move it towards addressing their interests and needs.

Preparation:

- *Copy or share background information for students
- *Copy or share role papers for students
- *Assemble a sultan costume (or head piece) for teacher
- *Set up 5 stations with appropriate artifacts on each table (see materials list above)

Procedure:

- Background Readings and Setting the Stage (5 minutes)
Teacher welcomes students to their “classroom coffeehouse” dressed as a Sultan while playing a traditional song.
See: [Arabic Coffee](#), [Silk Road Journeys Beyond the Horizon](#), [Peter Gabriel: Passion, Coffee](#) - contemporary songs about coffee
As a whole group, read through the background information to prepare students for their simulation.
- Explore Stations (15 min)
Encourage students to visit all 5 stations.
Games, poetry, song/dance, coffee (grinding, making), puppets ([Karagoz and Hacivat, Turkish shadow play set for children & adults](#))
- Pronouncement of Decree (closing of coffee houses)- Role Play Begins (20 min)
Students are handed out brief, role play descriptions with a position on whether or not the coffee houses should be closed.
Six Roles: agent of the state, religious conservative (son of Janissary), merchant, poet, Sufi, dancer
Teacher: Sultan
In groups of 5 (one student representing each role), students discuss and debate the Decree from their role’s point of view while sipping coffee.
Vote on whether or not the coffee houses should be closed.
- Debrief (20 min)
What station did you enjoy the most? How do the different stations support the success of the coffee house?
What was the class consensus regarding the closing of the coffee houses?
How do the class results compare to historical events?
Why might there be a difference in the vote of today compared to the actual historical events?

Assessment:

*Writing Piece - Exit Slip / Reflection

Why might there be a difference in the vote of today compared to the actual historical events?

OR

What station did you enjoy the most? How do the different stations support the success of the coffee house?

Adjusting the Lesson for Distance Learning

- *Have students take on a specific role using the role cards and introduce themselves to the group (virtually, in a meeting or using Flipgrid)
- *Assign students a given role and have them meet in breakout rooms with one representative for each role in a group
- *Set up a "coffee hour" with each grouping of students for a more personal and intense experience/role play
- *Create a discussion board. Students who are normally quiet in class discussions might feel more comfortable sharing in this format
- *Incorporate emoticons into the discussion to keep participants active and engaged
- *Use the Chat Box -- Throughout the discussion, ask key questions that all participants could respond to in the chat box
- *Create an Instagram posting for the particular role. Don't forget the hashtags!
- *Have students Tweet out their views in response to the assumed individual roles. Require students to respond to at least one Tweet

Extensions:

- ***Geography Extension:** How does climate change impact the world of coffee?
[NY Times](#), [Time](#), [Scientific American](#), [Climate Central](#) - graphics
(C3- D2.GEO.2,5,7,9,10,11.9-12)
- ***Civics Extension:** public spaces as forums for civic discourse; proper role of government to regulate any commodity; public spaces as bridges or barriers to civic engagement - breaking through class / social / ideological divides
Have students make connections to present day coffee house politics:
[\(Starbucks and two black men arrested in Philadelphia incident reach private settlement\)](#)
(C3- D2.Civ.1,5,6,8-13.9-12)
- ***Economic Extension:** role of government in managing / regulating commodities / businesses
Switzerland deciding not to stockpile coffee. [BBC](#), [Smithsonian](#), [NPR](#)
[National Coffee Association](#) (producers group), [PBS - IndependentLens: Black Gold](#)
How to Make Everything - [Coffee 7 part series](#) : [The Economics and Ethics of Coffee](#)
(C3- D2.Eco.5,8,11,13,15.9-12)

*European History: [The First English Coffeehouses](#)

Resources for Teachers:

Told in the Coffee House: Turkish Tales. Cyrus Adler, Allan Ramsay. The Macmillan Company. 1898. Available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/30577>

*[Our Shared Past in the Mediterranean](#)

[The Ottoman Coffeehouse: All the Charms and Dangers of Commonality in the 16th -17th Century](#), Gwendolyn Collaco, 2011.

Supplemental Resources on Coffee and Coffeehouses:

Allen, Stuart L. *The Devil's Cup: Coffee, The Driving Force in History.* Soho Press. New York. 1999.

Blotnick, Emmy. *5 Historical Attempts to Ban Coffee.* Mental Floss. December 14, 2013. At: <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/12662/5-historical-attempts-ban-coffee>

Cortes, Ricardo. *A Secret History of Coffee, Coca & Cola.* Akashic Books. New York. 2012.

Eggers, Dave. *The Monk of Mokha.* Hamish Hamilton, 2016.

Hattox, R. S. *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East.* University of Washington Press. Seattle and London. 1988.

Moldvaer, Anette. *Coffee Obsession.* DK Press. New York. 2014.

Morris, Jonathan. *Coffee: A Global History.* Edible Series. Reaktion Books. London. 2019.

Pendergrast, Mark. *Uncommon Grounds: the History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World.* New York, 2019.

Sajdi, Dana. ed. *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century.* I.B. Tauris. London. 2007.

Standage, Tom. *A History of the World in Six Glasses.* Walker & Company. New York. 2005.

Wild, Antony. *Coffee: a Dark History.* W.W. Norton, 2005.

Zaimeche, Salah. *The Coffee Route from Yemen to London 10th-17th Centuries.* Muslim Heritage. At: <https://muslimheritage.com/coffee-route-yemen-london/>

National Coffee Association. *History of Coffee.* At NCA website: [http://www.ncausa.org/About-Coffee/History-of-Coffee.](http://www.ncausa.org/About-Coffee/History-of-Coffee)

Coffee Infographic - <https://infograph.venngage.com/p/64987/coffee-infographic>

Maps of Spread of words for Tea and Coffee around the world- <https://moverdb.com/tea-coffee/>