

Ottoman Empire 1300 – 1600,

At the same time that Edward III ruled England; cannons were first being developed; the Ming Dynasty was ruling China; the Moors were invading Spain, India was the land of the Khans; Italy was made up of city states, including the Roman Papal State, Venice, and Florence; Robert Bruce ruled Scotland; Islamic traders traveled across Northern and Eastern Africa, and the Olmec and Mayan peoples dominated Central America, a Ghazi (warrior/ruler) ruler, Osman, led his armies to conquer Byzantine cities and forts in Turkish Anatolia (present day Western Asian Turkey). Osman declared himself Sultan in 1299 and in so doing, founded the empire that would bear his name – Ottoman. Conquered peoples were ruled under a newly devised institution, the millet. The millet allowed non-Turks and non-Muslims to live their lives fairly much as always, with the exception of taxes and military service.

Within one hundred years, Osman's Dream of a three continent empire was coming true. His son and grandson, Orhan and Murad I, expanded the empire throughout Turkey and European Thrace, minus the Byzantine stronghold and capital, Constantinople. The Italian city-states of Genoa and Venice were unable to help the Byzantines defeat the Ottomans. Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia, along with the rest of the Balkans (the lands just beyond Thrace), became concerned, knowing they were not well prepared to fight off the Ottoman invaders. Bulgaria faced a second threat from Hungary, who also wanted the rich land on the Black Sea.

Serbia had been the ruling force of much of the Balkans, but a weak leader in the mid-1300's caused the various lands to throw off Serbian control and divide into smaller, more vulnerable countries known as principalities. Among these were Thessaly, Epiros (both former Greek provinces), Albania, and Macedonia. Attempts by Serbian lands to unite against the Ottomans were unsuccessful and the Ottoman control of food supplies to Byzantium increasingly led to Ottoman land holdings being extended to the north and west.

Further conquests in the 1380's and 1390's were enhanced through the practice of taking young men from conquered Christians to become the standing army.

(devirsme). One of the most crucial battles was the Battle of Kosovo on June 28, 1389; a resounding victory for the Ottoman and vassal agreements with Serbia's princes.

In 1396, the Hungarian king Sigismund organized a crusade against the Ottomans. The primary battle took place in Nikopol and was a crushing defeat of the French and Hungarian knights. Because Bulgaria had allowed the Crusaders to pass through its lands, the Ottoman Sultan invaded Bulgaria and took all the territory, ending the existence of Bulgaria until the 20th century.

Attacks by the Mongol khan, Timor, from the East interrupted the quest for more lands and expansion of the empire. Additional squabbling between the sons of the Sultan who had died in captivity also interfered with the acquiring of new lands and adequate administration of the Balkan lands.

- By Linda Waagen

(incomplete – I'm working on it!)

From Kidipede <http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/islam/history/turks.htm>

The Ottomans

The Ottoman Empire 🌍 arose out of the leftovers of the old [Seljuk](#) sultans of Anatolia 🌍 (Turkey 🌍). Beginning in 1299 [AD](#), one of these Seljuks, Osman, began to expand his kingdom.

The weakness of the [Byzantine Empire](#) after the [Fourth Crusade](#) and the [Black Death](#) of 1347 allowed the Ottoman sultans to cross over into Europe 🌍 in 1352 and begin conquering [Greece](#) and the Balkans 🌍. By 1361, Murad I had captured Adrianople 🌍, and by 1386, Bayezid I had taken Sofia 🌍 (modern Bulgaria 🌍).

Although things were going well in Europe, in West Asia 🌍 the Ottomans were attacked in 1400 by a new enemy - the [Mongols](#), under their new leader Tamerlane. A lot of their West Asian land was lost. Bayezid 🌍 was so upset that he killed himself.

Because they were losing their battles in Asia 🌍, the Ottomans focused more and more on Europe. They fought many wars with [Venice](#) over control of the Eastern Mediterranean 🌍 [shipping routes](#). In 1453 the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II and his Janissaries even conquered Constantinople 🌍 (modern Istanbul 🌍) from the [Byzantine emperors](#), ending the last piece of the Roman Empire.

In 1492, when King [Ferdinand](#) and Queen Isabella made all the [Jews](#) leave Spain 🌍, many of them came to live in the Ottoman Empire, where the sultans welcomed them and let them follow their religion.

By 1517, the Ottomans had defeated the [Mamluks](#) to gain control of [Egypt](#), and gradually they extended their control over the North African coast to conquer the [Hafsids](#) and the [Marinids](#) as well.

From CMES readings:

AN OUTLINE OF TURKISH HISTORY

- **The history of Turks covers a time frame of more than 4000 years.** Turks first lived in Central Asia around 2000 BC. Later, some of them left Central Asia and spread around, establishing many states and empires independent from each other within a vast area of Asia and Europe; including The Great Hun Empire (established during the 3rd Century B.C.), Göktürk Empire (552- 740), Uygur Empire (741- 840), Avar Empire (6-9 Century A.D.), Hazar Empire (5-10 Century A.D), Great Seljuk Empire (1040- 1157) and many others.
- **Turks in Anatolia:** The Turks started to settle in Anatolia in the early 11th century by way of continual migrations and incursions. The Malazgirt victory in 1071 against the Byzantines literally opened up the gates of Anatolia to the Turks. It is following this date that the Turks fully conquered the whole of Anatolia and established the Anatolian Seljuk State there (1080-1308). This was the first Turkish State in Anatolia and was sometimes called, after its capital city of many years, the Konya Sultanate.
- **OTTOMAN AGE 1299 – 1923:** The Seljuk State rapidly declined with the Mongol invasion of Anatolia which started in 1243. During the period of the decline of the Anatolian Seljuk state and after its disappearance, many Turcoman principalities were established in Anatolia towards the end of the thirteenth century. One of these was the Ottoman Beylic founded by Osman Bey in 1299 in the environs of Söğüt in Eskişehir in the northwestern corner of the peninsula. The Ottoman Beylic rapidly expanded throughout the fourteenth century and thus arose the **Ottoman Empire, which ruled over a vast territory on three continents and lasted for 623 years until the end of First World War.**

- The Ottomans captured Constantinople in 1453, during the reign of Sultan Mehmet II (1451-1481) The Byzantine Empire fell and Middle Ages ceased with the New Age beginning at this point in time. In the reign of Sultan Mehmet II, who assumed the title of “The Conqueror”, the Ottoman State entered into an era of rapid development which would last until the end of the sixteenth century. During its heyday, the Ottomans ruled over what is today Greece, Bulgariü, Yugoslavia, Albania and Romania in the Balkans, over all the islands in the Eastern Mediterranean, over what is today the Middle East. The borders of the Empire extended from the Crimea in the North to Yemen and Sudan in the South, and from Iran and The Caspian Sea in the East to Vienna in the Northwest and Spain in the Southwest
- **However, starting with the sixteenth century the Ottoman Empire lost its economic and military superiority in comparison to Europe, which had developed rapidly with the Renaissance and the geographical discoveries. Ottoman Empire failed to adapt to these new developments.** Thus the balance of power developed in favor of the European States. The nationalist movements that started in the nineteenth century and the rebellions of the Balkan nations organized and supported by the European States and Russia brought about the emergence of independent states within the Ottoman territories in the Balkans.
- **WORLD WAR I 1914 –1918:** The weakening of the Empire continued until World War I. The Ottoman Empire entered the First World War in 1914 on the side of the allied powers and emerged defeated from the war in 1918 and was compelled to sign the **Mondros Armistice on October 30, 1918. Under the terms of this Armistice, the territories of the Ottoman Empire were occupied by Britain, France, Russia and Greece. This was the actual end of the Ottoman Empire.**
- A national resistance movement commenced. In many areas of the country The Society For Defense of Rights started to spring up, and the military arm of the society, called the Kuvayi Milliye started to take action.
- These resistance movements, sporadic and disorganized at first, were transformed later into a complete war of independence, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Under his leadership, the resistance became cohesive and its forces progressively turned into an organized army.
- **THE NATIONAL WAR OF INDEPENDENCE: was an effort to create a new state from the ruins of an Empire, which had completed its life. The Independence War lasted for four years (1919-1922) under very difficult conditions and achieved success at last against the armies supported by the most powerful countries of that time.**
- The Lausanne Peace Treaty signed on 24 July 1923 with Great Britain, France, Greece, Italy and others, recognized the creation of a Turkish State and guaranteed her complete independence. Thus, it marked the successful culmination of the National War of Independence.
- **REPUBLIC OF TURKEY: The Republic was proclaimed on 29 October 1923 in order to give the state a democratic form** in the contemporary sense. Mustafa Kemal, the founder of the Turkish Republic was elected as the first president of the Republic of TURKEY.
- **As president for 15 years, until his death in 1938, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, introduced a broad range of reforms- in the political, social, legal, economic and cultural spheres- virtually unparalleled in any other country.**
- He created a new political and legal system based on the principles of parliamentary democracy, human rights, national sovereignty and division of powers, private ownership and secularization. All Religious laws and religious school order were abolished and a new Turkish Civil Code was accepted.

One of the most important reforms initiated by Atatürk was the preparation of a new Turkish Alphabet. In 1928, the Arabic script, which had been used by the Turks for a thousand years, was replaced with the Latin alphabet. The adoption of this new phonetic alphabet was an important step taken to help increase the literacy rate which had been very low.

- **The New Turkey's ideology was, and remains, "Kemalism", later known as "Atatürkism". Its basic principles stress the republican form of government representing the power of the electorate, secular administration, nationalism, and mixed economy with state participation in many of the vital sectors and modernization. Atatürkism introduced to Turkey the process of parliamentary and participatory democracy. The first Muslim nation to become a Republic, Turkey has served since the early 1920's as a model for Muslim and non-Muslim nations in the emerging world.**