

--- author: Exr0n title: 20hist201 Unit 1 Essay Outline source: context: 20hist201 ---

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This is attempt 9

1 | Thesis Ideas

"kennedy said that the ming and the ottomans suffered the same downfall, and while they did both ultimately struggle due to spanish silver inflation and european traders, the inflationary loop started with emperors in ming china while the ottomans just kinda got stomped + janissaries weren't vere patriotic"

Although the economies of both the Ottoman and Ming empires suffered due to spiraling inflation and European trade, their misfortunes were not as similar as Kennedy suggests: the Ottomans' overstretched military was undermined by Europeans trading silver while the Mings' internal inflation spiral forced trade with and ultimately destruction by Europeans.

2 | Body 1 Choice A

2.1 | Topic

Kennedy said the ming and the ottomans suffered the same downfall due to centralization and economic troubles.

2.2 | Evidence

- "the ottomans were to falter ... strikingly similar Ming decline" (Kennedy 11)
- "The system as a whole, like that of Ming China, increasingly suffered from some of the defects of being centralized, despotic, and severely orthodox in it's attitude toward initiative dissent, and commerce." (Kennedy 11)
- "dislike trade" similarities
 - "Merchants ant entrepreneurs (nearly all of whom were foreigners), who earlier had been encouraged, now found themselves subject to unpredictable taxes and outright seizures of property" (Kennedy 12)
 - "The mandarins had a suspicion of trader" (Kennedy 8)
 - "The mandarins dislike of commerce and private capital ..." (Kennedy 8)

3 | Body 1 Choice B

3.1 | Topic

Both the Ming and Ottoman empires suffered from vicious cycles of economic weakness and civil unrest.

3.2 | Evidence

3.2.1 | Ming

1. Mann inflation ming: civil unrest

- "The entirely unsurprising result was a delirium of smuggling (if business is outlawed, only out-laws will do business)." (Mann 128)
- 1557 wokou struck back, "overwhelming all the resistance, the wokou 'abducted more than a thousand people and burned more than a thousand homes.'" (Mann 133)

2. Mann ming trade: unstable economy

- "'Coins received in the morning couldn't be used by evening,' explained a central-China gazetteer 1606." (Mann 137)
- "the preferred money flipped arbitrarily from one Song emperor to another."

3.2.2 | **Ottomans**

1. Military Economics

- The Ottoman military was originally made of cavalry, who administered land and fought traditionally on horses, and Janissaries, who fought on foot with modern technology and lived off wages. (Bulliet 490-1)
- As the number and cost of the Janissary corps grew, "the Turkish cavalry, which continued to disdain firearms, diminished". Then, the government tried to get rid of them by slowly reducing the number of landholding cavalrymen. (Bulliet 491)
- The Ottoman government tried to save funds in the seventeenth century by abolishing the devshirme system, but the net increase in Janissaries and their "steady deterioration as a military force more than offset these savings". (Bulliet 491)

2. Civil unrest

- "As the central government recovered control of the land, more and more cavalrymen joined the ranks of dispossessed troopers. Students and professors in the religious colleges similarly found it impossible to live on fixed stipends." (Bulliet 491)
- "revolts that devastated Anatolia between 1590 and 1610 caused by former landholding cavalrymen, short-term soldiers released at the end of a campaign, peasants overburdened by emergency taxes, and even impoverished students of religion" (Bulliet 491)

4 | **Body 2**

4.1 | **Topic**

Europeans used soft power to force the Ottoman empire into trading agreements that caused crippling inflation and corruption.

4.2 | **Evidence**

4.2.1 | **Trade Agreements**

- "The penetration of European trade and the eventual domination of Ottoman commerce by Europeans was facilitated by a series of commercial treaties, known as the Capitulations." (Cleveland 50)
- The first treaty allowed French merchants to trade freely in Ottoman ports with minimal taxes, and allowed them to be punished under French instead of Ottoman-Islamic law. (Cleveland 50)
- The treaties were originally negotiated to facilitate trade with the militarily dominant Ottomans, but when the balance of hard power shifted in favor of Europe, the foreign merchants were able to "exploit the Capitulations to the disadvantage of the Ottomans". (Cleveland 50)

- "By granting the various consuls jurisdiction over their nationals within the Ottoman Empire, the Capitulations accorded the consuls extraordinary powers that they abused with increasing frequency." (Cleveland 50)

4.2.2 | **Inflation -> government weakening**

- "The wave of inflation worked its way east, contributing to social disorder in the Ottoman Empire. European traders had more money available than Ottoman merchants and could outbid them for scarce commodities." The sudden devaluation of currency caused those living off fixed wages, especially the students and cavalry, to lose their livelihoods and revolt. (Bulliet 494)
- "Due to the inflation, some cavalry landholders saw their purchasing power decline so much that they could not report for military service." This played into the government hands because the government wanted to decrease its reliance on the outdated cavalymen. (Bulliet 491)
- In the late sixteenth century Ottoman raw materials were increasingly traded for European products, which benefited merchants greatly but hurt the government. As inflation skyrocketed, the state could no longer pay its military and "The Ottoman system was undermined." (Cleveland 49)
- "The shortage of revenue and the rise of inflation had a devastating effect on the large numbers of state employees on fixed salaries and created an atmosphere that fostered bribery and other forms of corruption." (Cleveland 50)
- **The now unemployed cavalymen helped fuel the civil unrest ultimately weakening the military and government from the inside.**

5 | **Body 3**

5.1 | **Topic**

China opened up to European trade to reverse its existing deflationary spiral, creating a European dependence on Chinese trade that ultimately incentivised its destruction.

5.2 | **Evidence**

5.2.1 | **Silver deflation**

- Paraphrase: grain price dropped despite poor harvests due to the deflation of silver. "As the price of grain falls, tillers of the soil receive lower returns on their labors, and thus less land is put into cultivation." (DBQ doc 3)

6 | **Conclusion**

China's new link with Europe ultimately resulted in Europe targeting and destroying China with hard power
