



SECTION

1

The Ottoman Empire

GUIDE TO READING

The BIG Idea

Competition Among Countries

The Ottoman Empire grew strong as it expanded its borders.

Content Vocabulary

- janissaries (p. 484)
- sultan (p. 486)
- pashas (p. 486)
- harem (p. 486)
- gunpowder empire (p. 486)
- grand vizier (p. 487)
- (p. 487)
- ulema (p. 487)

Academic Vocabulary

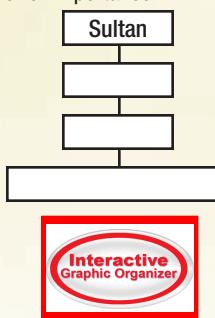
- expand (p. 484)
- domain (p. 486)

People and Places

- Anatolian Peninsula (p. 484)
- Constantinople (p. 485)
- Bosphorus (p. 484)
- Sultan Selim I (p. 485)
- Dardanelles (p. 484)
- Jerusalem (p. 485)
- Sea of Marmara (p. 484)
- Makkah (p. 485)
- Madinah (p. 486)
- Mehmed II (p. 485)
- Sinan (p. 488)

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information Create a chart to show the structure of the Ottoman society. List groups in order of importance.



At its high point under Süleyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Empire consisted of lands in western Asia, North Africa, and Europe. The Ottomans contributed a unique architectural design to world art, as seen in their magnificent mosques. They also practiced religious tolerance, which allowed subjects to follow their own religion.

Rise of the Ottoman Turks

MAIN IDEA Over a span of three hundred years, the Ottomans conquered the Byzantine Empire and expanded into western Asia, Africa, and Europe to create the Ottoman Empire.

HISTORY & YOU What would you do if you were asked to defend your city or hometown against invaders that had more advanced weapons? Learn how the Ottomans laid siege to the city of Constantinople.

In the late thirteenth century, a new group of Turks under their leader Osman began to build power in the northwest corner of the **Anatolian Peninsula**. In the early fourteenth century, the Osman Turks began to **expand** and began the Ottoman dynasty.

Expansion of the Empire

The Ottomans expanded westward and eventually controlled the **Bosphorus** and the **Dardanelles**. These two straits (narrow passageways), separated by the **Sea of Marmara**, connect the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea, which leads to the Mediterranean. The Byzantine Empire had controlled this area for centuries.



In the fourteenth century, the Ottoman Turks expanded into the Balkans. The Ottoman rulers built a strong military by developing an elite guard called **janissaries**. Recruited from the local Christian population, the janissaries were converted to Islam. Trained as foot soldiers or administrators, they served the sultan.

As knowledge of firearms spread in the late fourteenth century, the Ottomans began to master the new technology. The janissaries, trained as a well-armed infantry, were able to spread Ottoman control in the Balkans. With their new forces, the Ottomans defeated the Serbs at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. During the 1390s, they advanced northward and annexed Bulgaria.



EXPANSION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE TO 1699



The Byzantine Empire

Over the next three hundred years, Ottoman rule expanded to areas in western Asia, North Africa, and Europe.

Under the leadership of **Mehmed II**, the Ottomans moved to end the Byzantine Empire. With eighty thousand troops ranged against only seven thousand defenders, Mehmed laid siege to Constantinople.

The attack began on April 6, 1453, as the Ottomans bombarded the city with massive cannons hurling stone balls weighing up to 1,200 pounds (545 kg) each. The Byzantines took their final stand behind the walls along the western edge of the city. They fought desperately for almost two months to save their city. Finally, on May 29, the

walls were breached, and Ottoman soldiers poured into the city.

The Byzantine emperor died in the final battle, and a great three-day sack of the city began. When Mehmed II saw the ruin and destruction, he lamented, "What a city we have given over to plunder and destruction."

Western Asia and Africa

With their new capital at **Constantinople** (later renamed Istanbul), the Ottoman Turks dominated the Balkans and the Anatolian Peninsula. From 1514 to 1517, **Sultan Selim I** took control of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Arabia—the original heartland of Islam. Through these conquests, Selim I was now in control of several of Islam's holy cities.



These cities included **Jerusalem**, **Makkah** (Mecca), and **Madinah** (Medina). Selim declared himself the new caliph. That is, he was the defender of the faith and the successor to Muhammad. After their victories in the east, Ottoman forces spent the next few years advancing westward along the African coast almost to the Strait of Gibraltar.

The Ottomans were Muslims. Where possible, they administered their conquered regions through local rulers. The central government appointed officials, or **pashas**, who collected taxes, maintained law and order, and were directly responsible to the sultan's court in Constantinople.

Expansion into Europe

After capturing Constantinople in 1453, the Ottoman Turks tried to complete their conquest of the Balkans. They took the Romanian territory of Walachia, but the Hungarians stopped their advance up the Danube Valley.

Under Süleyman I, whose reign began in 1520, the Ottomans advanced anew up the Danube, seized Belgrade, and won a major victory over the Hungarians in 1526 at the Battle of Mohács (MOH•hach) on the Danube. They then conquered most of Hungary and moved into Austria. They advanced to Vienna, where they were defeated in 1529. At the same time, they advanced into the western Mediterranean until the Spanish destroyed a large Ottoman fleet at Lepanto in 1571 (see Chapter 14).

During the first half of the seventeenth century, the Ottoman Empire in eastern Europe remained a "sleeping giant." Occupied with internal problems, the Ottomans kept the status quo in eastern Europe. However, in the second half of the seventeenth century, they again went on the offensive.

By mid-1683, the Ottomans had laid siege to Vienna. Repulsed by a European army, the Ottomans retreated and were pushed out of Hungary. Although they retained the core of their empire, the Ottoman Turks would never again be a threat to central Europe.

Reading Check **Identifying** What was the capital of the new Ottoman Empire?

History ONLINE

Student Web Activity—

Visit glencoe.com and complete the activity on the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman World

MAIN IDEA

The Ottomans created a strong empire with religious tolerance and artistic achievements.

HISTORY & YOU What jobs do people have in your city or county government? Learn how the Ottomans trained bureaucrats in a palace school.

Under the rule of the sultans, the Ottoman Empire grew strong. Religious tolerance and unique architectural designs, as seen in the mosques, were among the Ottoman Empire's strengths and contributions.

The Nature of Ottoman Rule

Like the other Muslim empires in Persia and India, the Ottoman Empire is often labeled a "**gunpowder empire**." Gunpowder empires were formed by outside conquerors who unified the regions that they conquered. As the name suggests, such an empire's success was largely based on its mastery of the technology of firearms.

At the head of the Ottoman system was the **sultan**, who was the supreme authority in both a political and a military sense. The position of the sultan was hereditary. A son, although not necessarily the eldest, always succeeded the father. This practice led to struggles over succession upon the death of individual sultans. The losers in these struggles were often executed.

The Imperial Sultans

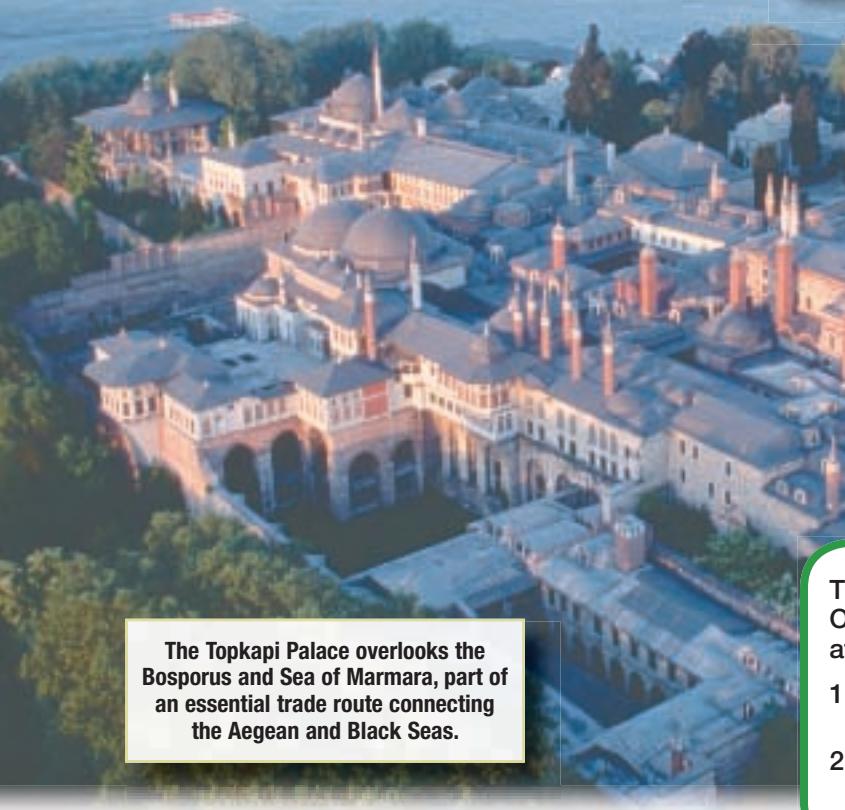
As the empire expanded, the status and prestige of the sultan increased. The position took on the trappings of imperial rule. A centralized administrative system was adopted, and the sultan became increasingly isolated from his people.

The private **domain** of the sultan was called the **harem** ("sacred place"). Here, the sultan and his wives resided. Often a sultan chose four wives as his favorites.

When a son became a sultan, his mother became known as the queen mother and acted as a major adviser to the throne. This tradition often gave considerable power to the queen mother in the affairs of state.



Topkapi Palace



The Topkapi Palace overlooks the Bosphorus and Sea of Marmara, part of an essential trade route connecting the Aegean and Black Seas.



Islam forbids the depiction of human figures because of a belief that it might encourage idolatry. Thus geometric designs decorate the painted tiles in the Topkapi Palace.

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

The Topkapi Palace, the administrative center of the Ottoman Empire for almost 400 years, was begun soon after Constantinople was conquered.

- Describing** Describe the link between faith and art in the tile work of the Topkapi Palace.
- Theorizing** What was the symbolic importance of where the Topkapi Palace was located?

The sultan controlled his bureaucracy through an imperial council that met four days a week. The **grand vizier**, a chief minister who carried the main burdens of the state, led the meetings of the council. During the council meetings, the sultan sat behind a screen, overhearing the proceedings, and then privately indicated his desires to the grand vizier.

The empire was divided into provinces and districts, each governed by officials. They were assisted by bureaucrats who had been trained in a palace school for officials in Istanbul. The sultan gave land to the senior officials. They were then responsible for collecting taxes and supplying armies for the empire from this landed area.

The Topkapi (“iron gate”) Palace in Istanbul, the new name for Constantinople, was the center of the sultan’s power. The palace was built in the fifteenth century by Mehmed II. Like Versailles in France, it had an administrative purpose and served as the private residence of the ruler and his family.

Religion in the Ottoman World

Like most Turkic-speaking peoples in the Anatolian Peninsula and throughout western Asia, the Ottomans were Sunni Muslims (see Chapter 6). Ottoman sultans had claimed the title of caliph since the early sixteenth century. In theory, they were responsible for guiding the flock and maintaining Islamic law. In practice, the sultans gave their religious duties to a group of religious advisers known as the **ulema**. This group administered the legal system and schools for educating Muslims. Islamic law and customs were applied to all Muslims in the empire.

The Ottoman system was generally tolerant of non-Muslims, who made up a significant minority within the empire. Non-Muslims paid a tax, but they were allowed to practice their religion or to convert to Islam. Most people in the European areas of the empire remained Christian. In some areas, however, such as present-day Bosnia, large numbers of non-Muslims converted to the Islamic faith.



Architecture and the Arts

The Ottoman sultans were enthusiastic patrons of the arts. The period from Mehmed II to the early eighteenth century witnessed a flourishing production of pottery; rugs, silk, and other textiles; jewelry; and arms and armor. All of these adorned the palaces of the rulers. Artists came from all over the world to compete for the sultans' generous rewards.

By far the greatest contribution of the Ottoman Empire to world art was in architecture, especially the magnificent mosques of the last half of the sixteenth century. The Ottoman Turks modeled their mosques on the open floor plan of Constantinople's Byzantine church of Hagia Sophia, creating a prayer hall with an open central area under one large dome.

In the mid-sixteenth century, the greatest of all Ottoman architects, **Sinan**, began building the first of his 81 mosques. One of Sinan's masterpieces was the Suleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul. Each of his mosques was topped by an imposing dome, and often the entire building was framed with four towers, or minarets.

The sixteenth century also witnessed the flourishing of textiles and rugs. The Byzantine emperor Justinian had introduced silk cultivation to the West in the sixth century. Under the Ottomans, the silk industry resurfaced. Factories produced silks for wall hangings, sofa covers, and especially court costumes. Rugs were a peasant industry. The rugs were made of wool and cotton in villages from different regions. Each village boasted its own distinctive designs and color schemes.

Society and the Role of Women

The subjects of the Ottoman Empire were divided by occupation. In addition to the ruling class, there were four main occupational groups: peasants, artisans, merchants, and pastoral peoples—nomadic herders. Peasants farmed land that the state leased to them.

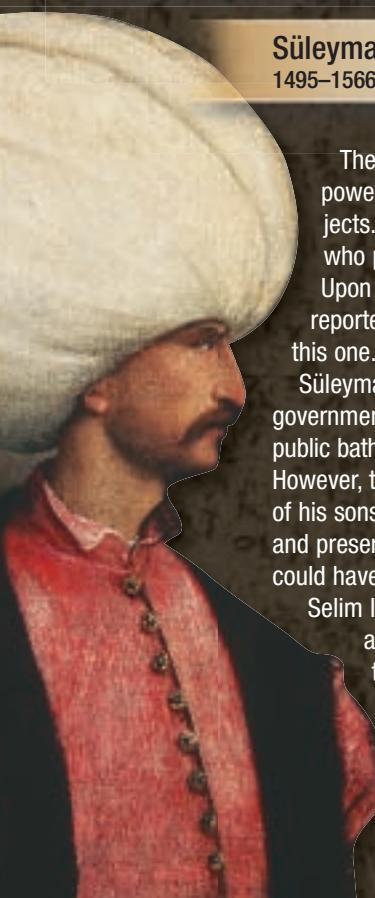
Ultimate ownership of all land resided with the sultan. Artisans were organized according to craft guilds. Each guild provided financial services, social security, and training to its members. Outside the ruling elite, merchants were the most privileged class in Ottoman society. They were largely exempt from government regulations and taxes and were able, in many cases, to amass large fortunes. Pastoral peoples were placed in a separate group with their own regulations and laws.

Technically, women in the Ottoman Empire were subject to the same restrictions as women in other Muslim societies. However, their position was somewhat better. As applied in the Ottoman Empire, Islamic law was more tolerant in defining the legal position of women. This relatively tolerant attitude was probably due to Turkish traditions that regarded women as almost equal to men. For instance, women were allowed to own and inherit property. They could not be forced into marriage and, in certain cases, were permitted to seek divorce. Women often gained considerable power within the palace. In a few instances, women even served as senior officials, such as governors of provinces.

✓ **Reading Check** **Identifying** What did the Ottomans contribute to world art?

PEOPLE in HISTORY

Süleyman the Magnificent 1495–1566 Ottoman Ruler



The Ottoman ruler Süleyman held absolute power and the right of life or death over his subjects. Yet he was known as *Kanuni*, the Lawgiver, who protected the powerless among his people. Upon visiting his empire, a Venetian ambassador reported, "I know of no State which is happier than this one. It is furnished with all God's gifts. . . ."

Süleyman was skilled in crafts as well as in government and war. He supported the arts and built public baths, bridges, and grand mosque complexes. However, this educated man would be forced to kill two of his sons and even his grandsons to avoid civil war and preserve the throne for his son Selim II. His choice could have been better. Known as the Drunkard,

Selim II left the running of the state to his advisers, and many date the slow decline of the empire to his reign. **How did Süleyman's choice of a successor affect the Ottoman Empire?**