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2.4 The Ottoman Empire

Main Idea The Ottoman Empire was a powerful empire in Southwest Asia and North Africa that lasted more than five centuries.

The heart of the **Ottoman Empire** was located in what is present-day Turkey. As you have learned, Turkey is on the Anatolian Plateau, through which several trade routes crossed. Many groups had tried to control this area, including the Hittites, the Greeks, the Persians, and the Romans, who took control in A.D. 30.

The Birth of the Ottoman Empire

When the Roman Empire split in 395, this area became part of the **Byzantine Empire**, the eastern part of the Roman Empire. The Byzantines ruled parts of Anatolia and Southeast Europe for 1,000 years. Turks from Central Asia began to invade and conquer parts of the Byzantine Empire in

the 1300s. These Turks became known as Ottomans, after **Osman**, the name of their first leader.

In 1453, the Ottomans defeated the Byzantine Empire. They captured the city of Constantinople, renamed it Istanbul, and made it the capital of the empire. Istanbul became an important center of trade and wealth under Ottoman rule.

The Empire at Its Height

The Ottoman Empire expanded its reach of power in the mid-1500s. Under the rule of **Suleyman I**, the Ottoman Empire stretched from present-day Hungary in Europe to the Persian Gulf and Red Sea in Asia. After Suleyman's reign, the empire continued to grow. It reached its farthest **extent**, or degree of spread, in the late 1600s.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, 1683



Most Ottoman wealth was gained through trade and taxation. The busiest trade routes in the region ran through the empire. The Ottomans controlled trade on rivers, as well as ports on important seas such as the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. When the empire conquered other lands, Ottoman **sultans**, or leaders, appointed officials to collect taxes from their new subjects. Taxes were a major source of wealth in the Ottoman empire.

Because it covered such a vast area, the Ottoman Empire was composed of many different ethnic groups, including Turks, Greeks, Slavs, Arabs, and Armenians. The Ottomans were Muslim and they spread Islam throughout the empire. They were known for their **religious tolerance**. Existing religious groups maintained their own practices and communities within the empire.

Internal conflicts and wars with European countries began to weaken the empire by the late 1600s. The empire lasted into the 1900s, but after World War I, it lost most of its remaining territory. In 1923, Turkey, the last remnant of the Ottoman Empire, became a republic.

Before You Move On

Make Inferences How did the Ottoman Empire grow so powerful and last so long?

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

MAP LAB



GeoJournal

- Region** According to the map, which bodies of water did the Ottoman Empire control at its height? How did such control benefit the empire economically?
- Describe Geographic Information** Look at the map. Where is the capital of the Ottoman Empire? Why might that be a good location for the capital?

Critical Viewing Topkapi Palace in Istanbul served as a palace for Ottoman sultans from the mid-1400s to the early 1900s. Based on the photo, how might you describe this palace?