

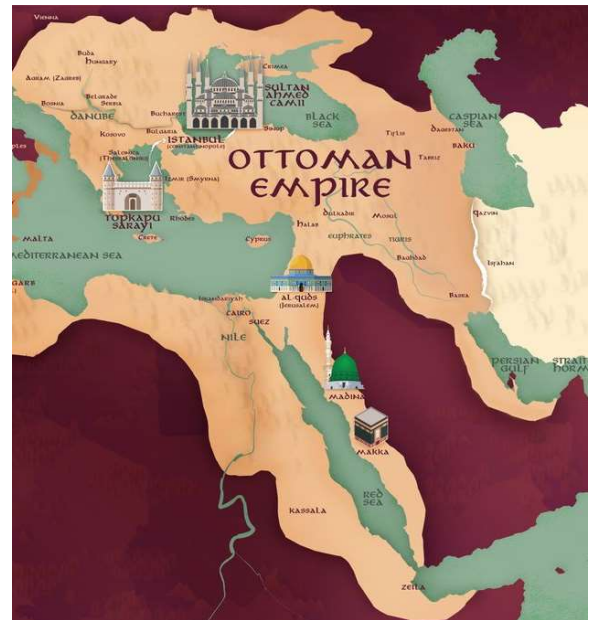
CHAPTER 3: WHO ARE THE OTTOMANS

In the heart of history's grand tapestry, a captivating chapter unfolds as we journey through the annals of Ottoman history. A tale of warriors, sultans, and empires, the story of the Ottomans offers a glimpse into a world that spanned six centuries, leaving an indelible mark on cultures, politics, and civilizations. From the distant echoes of migrations to the resounding clashes of battles, this narrative beckons us to explore the origins of the Ottomans, their rise to prominence, and the enduring legacy of their rule. So, let us step back in time, as we embark on a journey to uncover the enigmatic tales of the Ottomans, starting with the timeless legacy of the Kayi tribe and Ertuğrul Ghazi.

Why Learn Ottoman History?

Ottoman history holds immense importance due to its profound impact on global politics, culture, and the development of civilizations. Understanding the Ottomans and their legacy provides valuable insights into the following aspects:

- To understand the Ottoman Empire's significant **multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature**, comparable to other major empires
- To gain insights from Ottoman rule's **tolerance and adaptability** across diverse cultures and faiths
- To recognize the Ottoman Empire's **pivotal role in both European politics and global affairs**
- To appreciate the **economic prosperity fostered by Islamic governance** within the Ottoman Empire
- To learn from the Ottoman Empire's **modernization efforts while preserving Islamic identity**
- To grasp the **origins of ethnic conflicts** in regions like the Balkans through Ottoman history
- To reflect on the **Ottoman legacy of fostering unity** among diverse Muslim communities
- To contrast the Ottoman Empire's stable borders with the **artificially established borders in the Middle East** by European powers after its decline
- To reclaim an **accurate historical identity** by studying the Ottoman Empire's Islamic context
- To **contribute to enriched Islamic studies** by exploring the Ottoman Empire's Islamic legacy



Ottoman Basics

Origins of the Word "Ottoman":

The term "Ottoman" is believed to originate from the Arabic name "Uthman," the third caliph of Islam. The pronunciation difference in various languages led to the Turkish people pronouncing it as "Osman" and Italians pronouncing it as "Ottoman." Some theories wrongly suggest it may also have been influenced by the non-Muslim name "Attaman."

Duration of Ottoman Rule:

The Ottoman Empire ruled for an impressive 625 years, spanning from 1299 to 1924. It saw the reign of 36 rulers, with the inclusion of the last caliph making it 37.

Extent of the Ottoman Empire:

The Ottoman Empire's territorial extent is estimated at around 7.6 million square miles or 20 million square kilometers, covering approximately 30% of Europe.



Ottoman Capitals:

The Ottoman Empire had several capitals throughout its history:

- Söğüt (1299-1335)
- Bursa (1335-1363)
- Edirne (1363-1453)
- Istanbul (Constantinople) (1453-1922)

Origins of the Ottomans

The Ottomans were descendants of the Oghuz or Ghuzz, who were a Turkic people consisting of 24 tribes. These tribes began migrating around the 8th and 9th centuries, originating from diverse religious backgrounds like animism,



shamanism, and Buddhism. Some major tribes were the Seljuks, Ottomans, Artuqids, Ghaznavids, Karakhanids, and Khwarazmians. The Ottoman are reported to originated from the Kayi Tribe, one of the 24 Oghuz tribes.

Migration of the Oghuz Turks:

Several factors led to the migration of the Oghuz Turks:

- Overpopulation and competition for resources
- Political and military pressures
- Trade and economic opportunities
- Conquest and expansion
- Mongol invasion

Mongol Invasion - A Catalyst:

The Mongol invasion acted as a catalyst for the Oghuz Turks' migration. In Islam, mistakes or successes, victories and defeats are always seen as part of a greater purpose and plan of the Almighty God. Further, it has been widely reported that Osman Ghazi, was born in 1258, the very same year that the Mongols sacked Baghdad. Together with his father Ertugrul Ghazi, he aligned with the Seljuks, fought against the Mongols, and established the foundation for the Ottoman dynasty.

Factors for the Growth of the Kayi Tribe:

1. **Leadership:** Strong and capable leaders were crucial for the growth of the Kayi tribe.
2. **Location:** The Kayi tribe's geographic location in the border region between the Byzantine Empire and the Seljuk Sultanate provided opportunities for trade, alliances, and expansion. It allowed them to be involved in regional politics and benefit from strategic positioning. They could expand into and focus on bringing Islam to the Byzantine lands. Also, they were initially further away from the onslaught of the Mongols in east Anatolia, which meant other Turkish tribes looking for a safe haven were attracted to them. Also, the Seljuks and then the Mamluks, shielded the Kayi tribe from the attacks of the Crusaders and the Mongols.
3. **Military Prowess:** The Kayi tribe was known for its skilled warriors. They were experienced horsemen and archers, which made them formidable in battle.
4. **Alliances:** The Kayi tribe formed alliances with other Turkic and Muslim groups in the region. These alliances helped them gain support in times of conflict and provided opportunities for expansion.
5. **Economic Activities:** Engaging in various economic activities, such as trade and agriculture, helped the tribe sustain itself and grow. They traded goods and livestock, which allowed them to accumulate wealth and resources.
6. **Tribal Unity:** Strong tribal cohesion and a sense of identity were essential factors in the tribe's growth. The Kayi tribe members were loyal to their leaders and had a sense of common purpose and destiny, which contributed to their success.
7. **Adaptability:** The Kayi tribe adapted to changing circumstances and challenges. They were not bound by a fixed location and could move as needed to find better resources or opportunities.
8. **Faith:** Religion played a significant role in the Kayi tribe's culture, and their commitment to Islam provided them with a sense of purpose and unity. It also influenced their interactions with other Muslim groups and their resistance against non-Muslim powers.

Kayi Tribe Migrations

The Kayi Tribe initially established their roots in Ahlat, one of the earliest Turkish homelands in Anatolia. From Ahlat, they actively participated in the expansion into Anatolia, engaging in conflicts with the Georgians in the northern Anatolian region and opposing the Greek Empire of Trebizond. However, mounting Mongol pressure forced them to abandon Ahlat, leading to their migration to the Mardin-Aleppo area. Despite this move, they continued to face challenges and were gradually pushed further into the heart of Anatolia. Being pastoral nomads, the Kayi tribe depended on fertile lands and plateaus for their livelihood and herds, necessitating a secure homeland. The relentless Mongol attacks triggered a substantial migration wave into Anatolia, ultimately leading them to settle in the Pasinler Plain.



Ertuğrul Ghazi's Legacy:

Ertuğrul Ghazi, son of Suleyman Shah (or Gunduz Alp), born around 1196, emerged as a brave Ghazi warrior under the Rum Seljuk rule. His valor in the Battle of Yassicemen in 1230 and the Battle of Kosedag in 1243, earned him titles and territories, such as Karacadag and Sogut as their homeland and Domanic as a pasture, from the Seljuk Sultan Alaeddin Keyqubad I. He passed away in 1281 or 1289, leaving behind a foundation for his youngest son, Osman.



Timeline and What was Happening Elsewhere

- 8th and 9th Century: Oghuzz Tribes migrate west.
- 1187: Salahuddin recaptures Jerusalem from Crusaders.
- 1193: Death of Salahuddin.
- 1196: **Birth of Ertugrul Ghazi** (1196-1289).
- 1199: Richard the Lionheart, King of England and leader of the Third Crusade, dies, and his brother John becomes King.
- 1202-1204: The Fourth Crusade results in the sack of Constantinople, by the Crusaders.
- 1204-1237: Golden Age of Seljuks of Rum.
- 1206: Genghis Khan establishes the Mongol Empire.
- 1215: King John of England signs the Magna Carta, a document that limits the powers of the monarch and establishes certain rights for English nobles and subjects.
- 1218: Genghis Khan's invasion of Middle East and Eastern Europe.
- 1227: Genghis Khan dies, and his Mongol empire is divided among his sons and grandsons.
- 1227: **Kayi tribe cross Euphrates and enter into Anatolia.**
- 1228-1229: Sixth Crusade, Sultan al-Kamil gave Jerusalem to Fredrick II.
- 1230: **Battle of Yassicemen** against the Khwarezmian Shah Jalal Al Din.
- 1237: Death of Sultan Alaeddin Keyqubad I (r. 1220-1237).
- 1243: **Battle of Kosedag**, Seljuks lose to Mongols, become vassals under the Ilkhanate.
- 1244: Khwarezmian Turks take back Jerusalem.
- 1250: Mamluks, led by Baybars, defeat the Crusaders at the Battle of al-Mansurah.
- 1258: Fall of Baghdad to the Mongol Hulagu Khan.
- 1258: **Birth of Osman** (r. 1289-1326).
- 1260: Mongols are defeated by the Mamluks at the Battle of Ain Jalut.
- 1261: Reconquest of Constantinople by the forces of the Empire of Nicaea, leading to the re-establishment of the Byzantine Empire under the Palaiologos dynasty.
- 1265-1271: Mamluk Baybars takes over Crusader states.
- 1271-1295: Marco Polo embarks on his journey to Asia, stays at the court of Kublai Khan.
- 1277: Mamluk Baybars defeats the Mongols in Anatolia, this breaks Mongol power.
- 1284: Alaeddin Keyqubad III comes to power.
- 1289: **Ertugrul Ghazi dies** and Osman his youngest son comes to power.