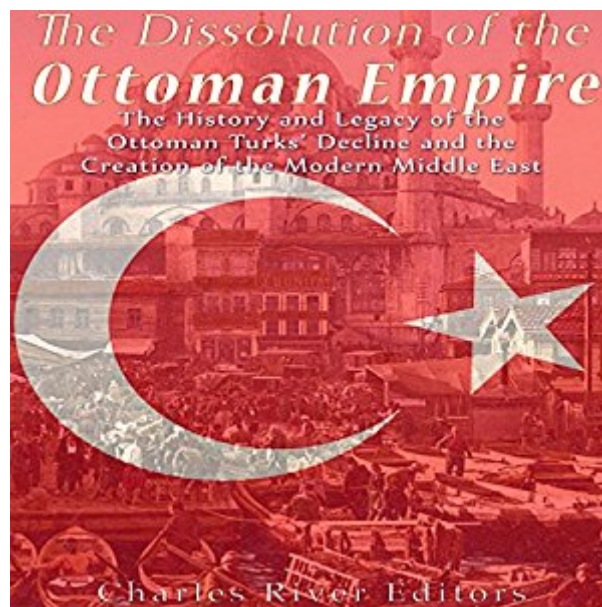


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# The Dissolution Of The Ottoman Empire: The History And Legacy Of The Ottoman Turks' Decline And The Creation Of The Modern Middle East



## Synopsis

In January 2011, the Turkish television channel "Show TV" released *A Magnificent Century* (*Muhtesem Yüzyıl*), which would become one of Turkey's most popular TV shows for the coming years. The show, which takes place during the years of the Ottoman Empire's longest reigning Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, was popular even outside of Turkey, including in countries such as Bosnia, Macedonia and Greece. At the same time, *Muhtesem Yüzyıl*'s success prompted concerns over Turkish attempts to use what some perceived as a form of nostalgia for the Ottoman Empire, and this led to criticism from various local figures (including the Bishop of Thessalonica in Greece as well as a ban on Turkish soap operas in Macedonia). Nonetheless, the success of *A Magnificent Century* is a testament to the vivid influence the multi-secular empire still has in the Middle East and the Balkans almost 100 years after its dissolution. The long agony of the "sick man of Europe", an expression used by the Tsar of Russia to depict the falling empire, could almost blind people to its incredible power and history. Preserving its mixed heritage, coming from both its geographic position rising above the ashes of the Byzantine Empire and the tradition inherited from the Muslim Conquests, the Ottoman Empire lasted more than six centuries. Its soldiers fought, died, and conquered lands on three different continents, making it one of the few stable multi-ethnic empires in history - and likely one of the last. Thus, it's somewhat inevitable that the history of its dissolution is at the heart of complex geopolitical disputes, as well as sectarian tensions that are still key to understanding the Middle East, North Africa and the Balkans. Looking at the events of the empire's last two centuries, and interpreting the fall of the Ottoman Empire as a slow but long decline is what could be called the "accepted narrative". At the start of World War I, the Ottoman Empire was often described as a dwindling power, mired by administrative corruption, using inferior technology, and plagued by poor leadership. The general idea is that the Ottoman Empire was "lagging behind", likely coming from the clear stagnation of the Empire between 1683 and 1826. Yet it can be argued that this portrayal is often misleading and fails to give a fuller picture of the state of the Ottoman Empire. The fact that the other existing multicultural Empire, namely the Austro-Hungarian Empire, also did not survive World War I should put into question this accepted narrative. Looking at the reforms, technological advances and modernization efforts made by the Ottoman elite between 1826 and the beginning of World War I, one could really wonder why such a thirst for change failed to save the Ottomans when similar measures taken by other nations, such as Japan during the Meiji era, did in fact result in the rise of a global power in the 20th century. Overall, the history of the dissolution can be defined as a race between the Empire's growing illness on one side (the Ottoman's inability to appease and federate the various people within its territory), and

constant attempts to find a cure in the form of broad reforms. These questions are often presented together, but that tends to shift the focus outward, onto the various peoples and their aspirations, along with Europe's growing influence over the fate of the Ottoman Empire. To consider both the illness and the cure, it's necessary to separate them, before moving on to the direct cause of the empire's dissolution (World War I) and its heritage.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Learned much about the lead up to today's mess in that part of the world.

I knew the Ottoman Empire was disbanded in the wake of World War I, but this book really explains what put the empire in decline before the war, and all that was wrong entering the 20th century. The book also explains the process of dissolving the empire and carving the region up into conflicting spheres of influence, most notably with the Sykes-Picot Agreement.

At school studied my history, but after more than fifty years forgot parts of it. Most of the wars and fights going on 18th, 19th and 20th centuries still going on. Russian aggression, unrest in Arab countries. We still didn't learn anything from history. Flag at the front of the book was adapted as Ottoman empire flag at the early 1800's. In the book how Mustafa Kemal came to power, later he was and still is called just Ataturk., means father of Turks.

A concise summary of the Denise of the Ottoman Empire, the Young Turk revolution and the disastrous decision to ally with Germany in World War 1.

No review.

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