Overview: Making of Empire

Part 4:

Defining the State:
‘Suleiman the Magnificent’
and the waning 16th C.

(Sept. 17)
Suleiman the Magnificent

(1520-1566)
Sultan’s ‘Signature’

Tughra:

- “Suleiman shah ibn Selim shah khan al-muzzafar al-Daiman”:

- “Suleiman Shah son of Khan Selim, ever (the) victorious”

- History reflected in use of ‘Khan’ for his father (‘khan’ from Mongol ‘leader’) ‘Shah’ for himself (Persian title ‘ruler’)
The Empire in 1566

- Suleiman: ‘the Magnificent’ because empire reached geographical apex during his reign
- territorial advances in North Africa, central Europe (to walls of Vienna), Bessarabia (Moldavia) and Iraq.
Suleiman’s acquisitions (1520–1566)
Expansion of Empire

The ‘Ottoman Mediterranean’:
- Island of Rhodes ‘Christian bastion’ in Muslim sea, Mehmet II had tried and failed to take it
- Challenged Ottoman trade, protected pirates
- 1522 Suleiman attacked with a fleet of 400 ships, army of 140,000 men
- tunneled under fort, used explosives
- Navy held island under six-month siege until surrender
- Victory was message to West of Suleiman’s power
Janissaries attacking Knights of St. John, Rhodes (1522)
Expansion of Empire

Role of Navy:

- Ottoman Navy reorganized under Suleiman by Admiral Hayreddin – named Kapudan Pasha
- known in West as “Barbarosa” from ‘red beard’
- Responsible for victories in Aegean Sea
- Defeated European fleets, achieved expansion along North African coast
Suleiman receives his Grand Admiral, Hayreddin (1558)
Expansion of Empire

Expansion into Europe:
- focused on Hungary: strategic ‘gateway’ to Europe
  - 1521 conquered Danube city of Belgrade (siege undertaken from river by navy)
  - 1526 devastated Hungarian forces at Mohacs
  - 1529 Ottomans penetrated to Vienna
  - failed siege ended the Ottoman’s westward expansion
Ottomans Besiege Belgrade, 1521 (Successful)
King of Hungary, in Council
Before Battle of Mohacs, 1526 (Ottomans Victorious)
Ottoman Army Besieging Vienna, 1529 (Failed)
Expansion of Empire

Hungary annexed, 1540:

- brought Ottomans deep into Europe, inviting enmity of western powers
- Increased numbers non-Muslims in empire
- Conversion rate high but…
- non-Muslims continued under ‘millet’ system
- special taxes: Christians and Jews important in developing commercial relations with West
North African, European expansion allowed extensive commercial development.
Expansion of Empire

Campaigns to the east:

- 1549 contested region around Van Lake (Ottoman-Safavid border)
- came under Ottoman control, absorbed into administration
- 1554 last Eastern campaign launched
- 1555 formal peace with Safavids [temporary]
Suleiman with Army, 1554
(end of war with Safavids)
“Kanuni” – the Lawgiver

- Suleiman widely known for unifiying legal codes and customary practice - called ‘kanun’.
“Kanuni” – the Lawgiver

- Criminal punishment less severe: bodily punishment
  [sharia] replaced with forced servitude, fines
- More economic regulations on: markets, prices, trade, taxes
- Price controls: bread, other necessities
- Centralization public education with ulema: creation
  religious bureaucracy
“Kanuni” – the Lawgiver

Goals of Reforms:
- strengthened links between Ottoman, Islamic (sharia) law, local custom: response to geographical expansion
- addressed concerns of economy: international and domestic (price controls revealing of internal ‘problems’)
- Responding to European concerns with Islamic law and ‘barbarism’: needing to seem more ‘welcoming’
- ‘significant’ because of vision (inward, outward looking)
- epitomized the ‘modern ruler’ with concern for economic and social stability, multi-cultural realm
Suleiman and Sinan

‘Magnificence’ epitomized in architecture, the Suleimaniye Mosque:
Suleimaniye Mosque:
- epitomized Islam’s role in 16th century state:
  - Centre of education
  - medical training
  - religious scholarship
  - attached kitchen fed community, poor

Reflected power and ‘beneficence’ of Sultan
- no buildings were permitted to obscure view of Mosque
- no mosque could replicate number of minarets
… “the Magnificent”

The Suleimaniye (looking down to Golden Horn):
(school with classrooms, ‘dormitory’ and courtyard to left)
… “the Magnificent”

The Suleimaniy (looking up from Golden Horn)
Suleiman and Sinan

Architect Mimar Sinan:

- born to stoneworker’s family
- ‘enlisted’ into Janissary corps [note change in how one ‘became’ janissary]

- trained as carpenter
- became royal engineer
- traveled throughout empire, brought together range of architectural styles

Work epitomizes glory Suleiman gave to architecture and building during his reign
... “the Magnificent”

- Architect Mimar Sinan (1490-1588):

  [see Sinan in ‘Resources’]
Late Century: challenges

**Mediterranean:**

- Selim II (1566-74) noted for Naval Activity
- Critical Battles 1571:
  - Cyprus
  - Lepanto

Ottoman Galley, 16th Century
Late Century: challenges

**Battle of Cyprus:**
- Island controlled by Venice
- Paid tribute to Mamluks (Egypt) *and* Ottomans to ensure ‘peaceful trade’
- Accused of backing attacks on Ottoman vessels
- Ottomans declared peace treaty could be broken because Cyprus was Ottoman territory by virtue of tribute payments
- Attacked and laid siege to island 1571
- Victorious but unable to withstand Battle of Lepanto later same year
Colonization’ of Cyprus:

- Conquest was strategic; island had poor climate, few resources
- Difficult to attract Ottomans to settle
- Used ‘forced’ settlement: women as brides for soldiers, peasants promised land and tax relief
- became useful ‘place of exile’ for those threatening state (eg Kizilbash from Safavid border)
- ‘Cyprus’ revealing of late 16th Ottoman society

[see Additional Reading ‘Firman of Selim II – Conquest of Cyprus]
Selim II
Firman
following
Conquest of
Cyprus,
1571

(copy
of original)
Battle of Lepanto:
- fought coalition southern European Catholic maritime states
- Europeans superior in cannon, arms, ammunition
- Ottomans lacking in ‘elite troops’ (janissaries)
- Dependent on 37,000 slave oarsmen, skilled sailors
- Europeans successful
- Blocked further Ottoman maritime expansion on European coast, destroyed Ottoman fleet
- Seen in ‘symbolic’ terms as victory for Christianity over ‘Terrible Turks’
A ‘Saviour of Christendom’ Image of Battle of Lepanto
Murad III (1574-1595):

- succeeded Selim II by killing five brothers
- interested in Mysticism

- Created position Royal ‘Sheikh’: interpreted dreams, forecast future

- reflected growing role Halveti dervish in Sunni Ottoman regime
Halveti Order of Dervishes

[contemporary website at http://www.jerrahi.org/]
Solullu Mehmed Pasha:
- most famous: face of Selim II and Murad III’s governments
- Serbian aristocrat by birth, ‘recruited’ into devshirme
  [note change in process recruitment]
- Succeeded ‘Barbarossa’ under Suleiman
- Also took on governorships, military commands
- Married Selim’s daughter
- Shared Murad’s commitment to sufi mysticism: built lodge for personal sheikh (attached to mosque he also built)
Epilogue:

Murad III (cont.):
- ‘avid patron of the art of the book’
- major Ottoman manuscripts produced, illustrated in ‘traditional’ miniature style
- first to commission portraits of sultans to illustrate historical texts
- commissioned by Grand Vizier in Venice
- marked representation of ‘Sultan on his Throne’ rather than on his horse: reflected changed contemporary reality as well as controversy
  [more on this in coming weeks]

- Historical Setting for My Name is Red!!