

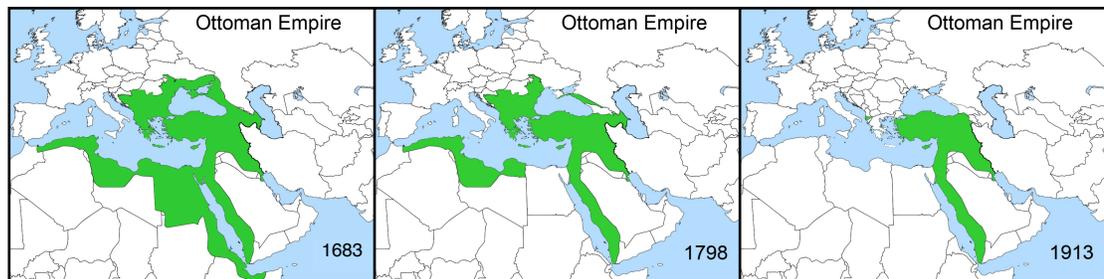
E. Triumphal Islam Through the Dark Ages

1. During the long Dark Ages following the early period of Islamic conquests, the Muslim world lived in a relative equilibrium with its neighboring cultures.
2. Control of the Muslim world shifted from one ethnic group to another. Turkish rulers (a people who had originally been conquered in central Asia, but then themselves took control of the caliphate) became notoriously harsh in their treatment of pilgrims from Europe to the Holy Land.
3. This sparked the *Crusades*—a long-running European military campaign to wrestle control of the Holy Land from Muslim rule. After an initial success, however, the Christians were consistently on the defensive, and eventually had to abandon their goal.
4. The *Crusades (1095-1291)* thus did little to discourage Triumphal Islam in its belief that it was superior to Christianity and assured of an ultimate religious victory.
5. Eventually, the Muslim invasion of Iberia was repelled, with the ultimate expulsion of the Muslims from that part of Europe coming in 1492—after which Spain’s rulers authorized Columbus’s fateful voyage. At the same time, however, the Turks were making more progress than ever before in their attacks on eastern Europe, having conquered the city of Constantinople in 1453, which had stood since Roman times as a fortress preventing the invasion of Europe.
6. Meanwhile, as we will see in our next segment on India, a Muslim empire was beginning its push for a great (if temporary) triumph over India.

F. The Decline of Triumphal Islam (1683-)

1. The military record of Islamic culture was consistently characterized by more successes than failures until the year **1683**.
2. In that year, the Turkish Ottoman Empire laid siege to the city of Vienna, in the heart of central Europe. It was only the second time that Muslim conquerors had penetrate that far into Europe.
3. On this new occasion, however, they were defeated by Polish forces that came to reinforce their Christian neighbors from the north, and then they were driven back consistently during a series of *Euro-Ottoman Wars (1683-99)*.
4. This makes the failed siege of Vienna in **1683** an important “turning point” in history. The idea of an ultimate religious triumph did not die off, but the fact that Muslim armies consistently were *losing* to European armies after **1683** caused a new phase of history to begin, in which the question that preoccupied Muslim rulers was how to *restore* their triumphal culture as it declined all around them.
5. Part of the story is a set of *twelve* Russo-Turkish wars! These started with Russia aspiring to expand its territory to the Black Sea, and then aiming at control of Constantinople itself. Eventually most of the Black Sea came under Russian control, though Constantinople remained in Turkish control.

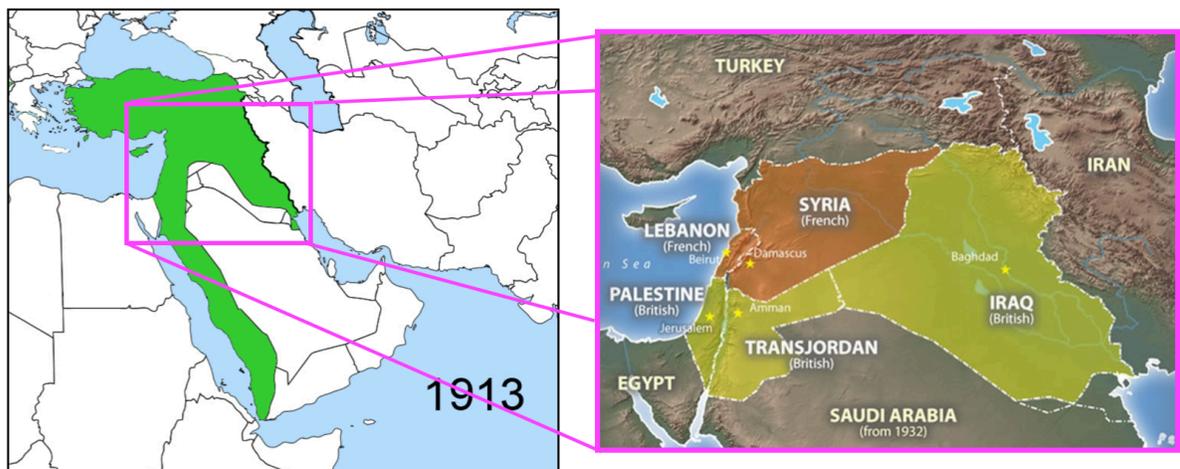
6. Meanwhile the British were beginning to take control of India away from its Muslim conquerors, and to attempt to counteract this trend the French conqueror Napoleon briefly took over Egypt in 1798 in a bid to use it as a base of operations to conquer Asia.
7. The basic character of the relationship between Islamic culture and Europe had flipped. It was now Europe that had a triumphal character. It was Europe that now would go out into the world, including all the way to China, and impose its culture.
8. In response to Europe's ascendancy, the Ottoman Turkish leaders began an unprecedented initiative to *learn* from the Europeans, by sending embassies to Europe to survey its military, industrial and scientific establishments and by recruiting from wealthy families to send their youth to Europe to study in its universities. This was known as the "Tanzimat Reforms" starting in 1839. (The word "Tanzimat" in Turkish means "reorganization.")
9. Triumphalism was not dead. The purpose of the reorganization was precisely to restore the proper, expected balance between Islamic culture and its European adversary. The reformers did not truly grasp the nature of the scientific and industrial *revolutions* that Europe was experiencing and how they would give Europe a possibly permanent advantage over Islamic culture. (They certainly have until now, some two hundred years later.)
10. Unable to truly grasp the nature of Europe's cultural advantage, the Ottoman Empire consistency declined all the way until **World War I**†.



From the turning point of the failed siege of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman Empire consistently lost ground, starting with the Black Sea coast and Egypt, and then all of northern Africa and Southeastern Europe, until by the onset of World War I, it was a much reduced remnant whose leaders were desperate to save their empire from total dissolution.

G. The World Wars and the Disintegration of Triumphal Islam

1. Despite the setbacks of the period of decline from **1683** onward, there was still a belief in the ultimate triumph of Islam within Islamic culture. That belief was shattered by the world wars, when the Islamic world was completely overpowered by Europe.
2. Desperate to restore their power, the Ottoman Turks allied with Germany in World War I, hoping that Germany and its allies, who has never attacked the Middl East, would help them defeat Russia, France, and Britain (the three countries that were most aggressive against the Islamic world).
3. It turned out to be a fateful miscalculation. The Ottoman Empire was defeated and dismembered. It was cut up into the separate countries of: Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Transjordan (later simply “Jordan”), Lebanon, and (eventually) Israel.



The modern disintegrated state of the Islamic world is mainly caused by the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, when France and Britain carved up the empire and made a number of new countries in its place.

4. Isolated further to the east, the only other major Islamic nation, Persia (which became Iran) was not directly affected by World War I. However, it was invaded and controlled by Britain and Russia during World War II. They used its railroads to ship American supplies to Europe in order to fight Nazi Germany.
5. By the end of the world wars, there was no part of the Islamic world that had not come under outside control. This was the complete reversal of the expect triumph over the world that Muslims believed in. Triumphalism was nearly extinguished. Unfortunately, an antidote to powerlessness and disintegration was devised, which put Islamic culture on the path towards its modern form...