

E. The Decline and Fall of Triumphal Islam

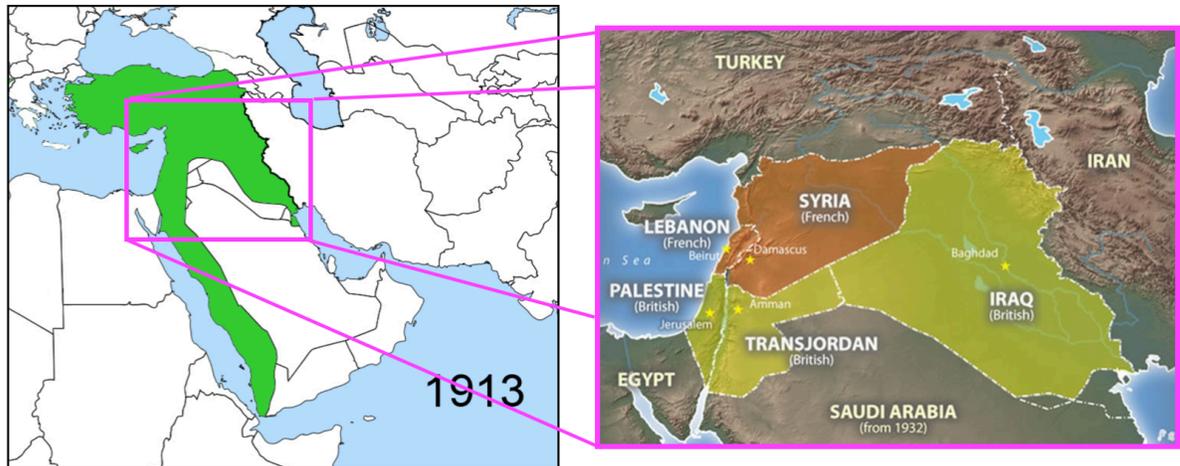
1. During the long Dark Ages following the early period of Islamic conquests, there was a balance between Islamic culture and its neighboring cultures.
2. The Europeans tried to reconquer the Holy Land (today Israel) during the *Crusades* (1095-1291), but they were eventually expelled.
3. The Muslim invaders of Iberia were eventually kicked out in 1492, but at the same time the Ottoman Empire (a Turkish Muslim empire) conquered Constantinople in 1453 on the edge of southeastern Europe.
4. Muslim armies always more successes than failures until the year **1683**.
5. In that year, the Turkish Ottoman Empire laid siege to the city of Vienna, in the heart of central Europe.
6. 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 for good.
7. This makes the failed siege of Vienna in **1683** an important “turning point” in history.
8. In response to Europe’s greater power, the Ottoman Turkish leaders began to want to *learn* from the Europeans, by sending ambassadors and students to Europe. This was known as the “Tanzimat Reforms” starting in 1839. (The word “Tanzimat” in Turkish means “reorganization.”)
9. Triumphalism was not dead yet. The purpose of the reorganization was to help Islamic culture return to being the strongest so that it could defeat all others.
10. The Ottoman leaders were not able to understand what made Europe stronger, so their empire declined all the way until **World War I**.



From the turning point of the failed siege of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman Empire consistently shrank until it became a much smaller, weaker version of itself before WWI.

G. The World Wars and the Disintegration of Triumphal Islam

1. By the time of **World War I**, the Ottoman Empire was desperate to restore its power. The Turks allied with Germany hoping to defeat Russia, France, and Britain.
2. The alliance backfired completely and the Ottoman Empire 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.
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. A belief in *Triumphal Islam* would return, however...