

Reading Explorer 5 Unit 11 Lesson A

DIRECTIONS: Choose the best answer for each question.

The World of Suleyman the Magnificent

Writer Merle Severy examines the legacy of one of the giant historical figures of the 16th century - a ruler who stood at the crossroads of East and West.

[A] Near the Hungarian town of Szigetvar, a road sign caught my eye: "Szuliman." It was a dying village, the young having moved away, the old hanging on. "It was named for a sultan who came long ago," a man in his garden told me. I asked what he did there. "I heard that he died here," a woman said. "The old folks would know, but they are all dead now." My curiosity led me finally to a churchyard amid cornfields in the nearby countryside. On the church facade I saw an Ottoman Turkish inscription. A crescent stood by the wall, bathed in the light of the setting sun. It was at this site, I read, that was buried the heart of Sultan Suleyman.

[B] The 16th century was an age notable for the overlapping reigns of giant historical figures: Spanish Emperor Charles V, protector of the Christian Church; his rival Francis I, King of France; Henry VIII of England; Ivan the Terrible, all-powerful ruler of Russia.

[C] Yet, even among this hierarchy of great leaders, one ruler arguably stood taller than the rest: Suleyman, Commander of the Faithful, Shadow of God on Earth, Protector of the Holy Cities of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, Lord of the Lords of the World, East and West. Revered by his people as "Kanuni," the Lawgiver, and feared and admired by the West as "the Magnificent," Suleyman brought the Ottoman Empire to the peak of its power.

[D] Suleyman was born at a time of world war, of East against West, with two superpowers locked in mortal conflict on the lands and seas of three continents. Time and again, Christian and Muslim forces clashed in the seas around the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean, and on land in Europe from Turkey to Austria.

[E] Away from what the Ottomans called the Realm of War, the frontier against their unholy enemies, was the Realm of Peace, where races and religions coexisted with the sultan acting as a great mediator of peoples. At its heart was Constantinople (present-day Istanbul), a cosmopolitan crossroads of continents that grew so large that no other European capital overtook it until the start of the 19th century.

[F] It was Suleyman's great-grandfather, Mehmed the Conqueror, who turned Constantinople into the greatest of all European cities. Mehmed was a descendant of nomadic tribesmen from central Asia who became followers of Osman, the first Ottoman sultan, in the 13th century. From these humble origins, Mehmed rose in power, carrying the banner¹ of Islam in a series of conquests through Serbia, Greece, and Eastern Europe; only his death in 1481 prevented him from pressing the conquest of Italy and taking Rhodes, the last Christian stronghold in the east.

[G] Mehmed's dream of building a world empire that brought together East and West would eventually be taken up by his great-grandson, Suleyman. As a young man, the future sultan was educated in a river valley near the Aegean Sea where he had been assigned as governor. Well-read in history, the Koran, politics, science, astrology, and poetry, and skilled in horsemanship and archery, Suleyman had been carefully prepared for his role as a future world leader.

[H] On hearing of his father Selim's death in 1520, Suleyman rode for three days until he arrived in Constantinople. As he approached, Suleyman looked with fresh eyes at the city that would become his capital: the fortress with its great cannons; the dome of the magnificent Hagia Sophia, the wooden houses sheltering immigrant families. In this crowded city, Spanish Moors and Jews expelled by Ferdinand and Isabella² joined with Turks, Greeks, and Armenians in the shops that filled the city's covered bazaar.³

[I] On September 30, eight days after Selim's death, Suleyman took up the sword of Osman in an elaborate ceremony and was declared sultan. From that time on, he held absolute power over the welfare of his people, with the right of instant death over any subject. But as he first rode from his palace, his people gathered to raise their voice in a ritual warning to a new monarch: "Be not proud, my sultan. God is greater than you!"

[J] Suleyman's first official acts were to order a tomb, mosque, and school built in honor of his father; to free 1,500 Egyptian and Iranian captives; and to pay back merchants for goods that Selim had taken from them. These won him popular approval for piety,⁴ magnanimity, and justice. "It seemed to all men," one observer commented, "that a gentle lamb had succeeded a fierce lion."

[K] But the lamb proved to be a lion in disguise. A revolt in Syria was put down savagely. Then Suleyman set out to achieve what Mehmed the Conqueror had failed to do. In his first European campaign,⁵ the city of Belgrade - the key to Christian defenses in the Balkans - fell after weeks of massed attacks.

[L] The next summer, in 1522, he besieged⁶ Rhodes, which stood between his capital and the ports of Egypt and Arabia, including the Islamic holy city of Mecca. The siege began on July 29 and lasted 145 bloody days, until the knights⁷ desperate defense ended.

[M] Having brought into submission the strongest fortified city in Christendom, Suleyman offered generous terms. Knights and mercenaries could leave freely within 12 days, and citizens could depart at any time within three years. Again he won admiration for his magnanimity. Little did he realize the price he would pay later for letting the knights go.

[N] As success followed success in his campaigns, contemporaries wrote with awe of the glories of the sultan's empire. "I know of no state which is happier than this one," reported the Venetian ambassador in 1525. "It is furnished with all God's gifts. It controls war and peace with all; it is rich in gold, in people, in ships, and in obedience; no state can be compared with it. May God long preserve the most just of all emperors."

[O] The Venetian ambassador's glowing, and no doubt somewhat biased, description is perhaps understandable considering the spectacular show that was put on to welcome visitors to the Ottoman capital. A foreign ambassador's reception was carefully designed to show Ottoman grandeur and power at its most impressive.

[P] On approaching the sultan's Topkapi Palace, the envoy first saw the heads of executed traitors hanging from the Imperial Gate. Passing the executioner's chambers, the envoy entered a shining portico.⁸ There he was met on the sultan's behalf by the monarch's vizier, or grand advisor, who, on special occasions, led the envoy past 2,000 bowing officials and heaps of silver coins. The visitor was then offered a "hundred dishes or thereabout, most boiled and roasted."

[Q] Then on to the sacred inner precincts.⁹ The ambassador was robed in gold cloth while his royal presents were inspected, since the sultan was "not to be approached without gifts." At the door of the throne room, two officials held the visitor firmly by the arms. The visitor was led across the room, then forced to subordinate himself by kneeling down and kissing the sultan's foot. He was then raised to deliver his message.

[R] The sultan, heavy with silk, gold and silver threads, sat on a jewel-studded throne. Suleyman might make a comment or indicate with a nod that the audience was over. The ambassador was then led backwards out of the room, never turning his back on the sultan. The sultan's response might come much later, usually via his advisor.

[S] The envoys who met Suleyman in this way would scan his features for signs of his health and character. From their descriptions, we know something of how the great sultan looked and acted, but we know very little of his thoughts, of what really was in the mind of the Lord of Lords.

[T] What sort of man was Suleyman? Of his private life - his attitudes and his thoughts - we can infer very little. His campaign diaries are written in the third person, without emotion. For example, from his third campaign: "The Emperor, seated on a golden throne, receives [his] viziers ... ; massacre of 2,000 prisoners; the rain falls in torrents."

[U] Glimpses of humanity are rare, but revealing. After the siege of Rhodes, Suleyman consoles the knights' leader for his loss, praises his brave defense, then confides to a follower: "It is not without regret that I force this brave man from his home in his old age."

[V] We know that Suleyman showed wisdom as a lawgiver, creating a new code of laws and giving legal protection to minorities. He was also pious, consulting theologians on crucial decisions; just, allowing no corruption or injustice to go unpunished; and, usually, fair.

[W] Ironically, it was an act of generosity that led, years later, to his greatest defeat. As a young man, Jean Parisot de la Valette fought against Suleyman in the siege of Rhodes, but was later released. Just over four decades later, la Valette led the defense of the great Christian stronghold of Malta. The surprise defeat at the hands of the Christian knights marked the beginning of the end of Ottoman domination in the Mediterranean.

[X] As the siege of Malta ended, Suleyman was entering his 73rd year, making him the longest-reigning of all Ottoman monarchs. During his reign, he had extended his Islamic empire through southeastern Europe, across much of the Middle East, and in North Africa as far west as Algeria. His code of laws, known as the *kanun-i Osmani* ("Ottoman Laws"), was to last more than 300 years. And he presided over some of the greatest architectural achievements in the Islamic world.

[Y] Despite these achievements, Suleyman's mood became increasingly dark. To wipe out the disappointment of Malta, he set out on May 1, 1566, to capture Vienna. The sultan could no longer sit on a horse, so he rode in a carriage, making the journey painfully slow. Suddenly, word came that a Hungarian count¹⁰ had executed one of Suleyman's governors and was now hiding in Szigetvar. In a fury, Suleyman diverted his entire army to avenge the injustice.

[Z] Even with only 2,500 defenders, Szigetvar held off the Ottomans for a month, until the fortress was finally shattered by explosives. Holding up his jeweled sword in surrender, the count came out with his survivors - but there was no sultan to greet him. Suleyman had died in the night in his tent.

[AA] Following Suleyman's death, the Ottoman Empire was squeezed by Russian expansion in the east and European domination of southern Asia. Ottoman possessions in the Mediterranean lost their strategic role. Western technology overtook Ottoman military might, and - with no new lands, taxes, or manpower - imperial decline set in. During the 19th century, the empire became known as the "Sick Man of Europe." Nevertheless, when more than a dozen nations emerged from its umbrella in the early 20th century, their languages, religions, and cultures had been largely preserved - a legacy, in part, of Suleyman's tolerance of minorities.

[BB] Three weeks after the emperor's death, the sultan's successor was announced, and Selim, the son of Suleyman and his queen Roxelana, became the new Sultan Selim II. It is believed that Suleyman's heart was buried where he died, and the rest of his remains began the long journey home. When the sultan's body reached the capital, the army fell silent, as did the people who followed behind. Their leader all their lives, he raised their sacred empire to its golden age. Their descendants would look back on it with pride and nostalgia - but they would never see his like again.

¹ Someone **carrying the banner** of a specific cause or idea stands for that idea.

² **Ferdinand** of Aragon (1452-1516) and Isabella of Castile (1451-1504) were rulers of Spain.

³ A **bazaar** is a market area, usually a street of small stalls.

⁴ **Piety** is dutiful devotion, usually with reference to a particular theology (religion).

⁵ A **campaign** is a series of coordinated activities designed to achieve a goal, such as a military objective.

⁶ If soldiers **besiege** a place, they surround it in order to stop the people inside from resisting.

⁷ In medieval times, a **knight** was a man of noble birth who fought for his king or lord.

⁸ A **portico** is a porch or covered walkway with columns supporting the roof.

⁹ **Precincts** are districts, as of a city, or the parts or regions immediately surrounding or within a place.

¹⁰ A **count** is a nobleman in European countries.

- ____ 1. What is the main idea of paragraph A?
 - a. The village of Szigetvar is almost deserted now.
 - b. Suleyman's heart was discovered to have been buried near the town.
 - c. A solitary church is located in the corn fields.
 - d. It is strange that only Suleyman's heart is buried there.
- ____ 2. What is the purpose of paragraphs B through D?
 - a. to provide the international historic context for Suleyman
 - b. to list some of Suleyman's many titles and nicknames
 - c. to tell about contemporary kings and rulers of other countries
 - d. to explain why Constantinople was so large and ethnically diverse
- ____ 3. In paragraph E, what does *its* refer to?
 - a. the Realm of War
 - b. the Realm of Peace
 - c. the frontier
 - d. Istanbul
- ____ 4. In paragraph F, when Mehmed is described as carrying the banner of Islam, what was he doing?
 - a. carrying a large green flag in front of his army
 - b. insisting that the banner was a symbol of power
 - c. waving a piece of cloth in a religious procession
 - d. promoting the spread of his religion in Europe

- _____ 5. In paragraph K, what does the author mean by *the lamb proved to be a lion in disguise*?
- a. Suleyman feasted on lamb like a lion when he became sultan.
 - b. Suleyman believed that he had to sacrifice a lamb in honor of his father.
 - c. Suleyman disguised himself as commoner to find out what his subjects really thought.
 - d. Suleyman appeared to be gentle, but he was actually a fearsome leader.
- _____ 6. In paragraphs J and M, what is meaning of *magnanimity*?
- a. showing great resentment towards one's enemies
 - b. having a generous nature
 - c. insulting and mean-spirited
 - d. arrogant and self-centered
- _____ 7. When an ambassador was received at Topkapi Palace, which of these happened last?
- a. The ambassador was served a huge meal of many kinds of foods.
 - b. The ambassador had to kneel and kiss the sultan's foot before speaking
 - c. The ambassador backed out of the throne room, always facing the sultan.
 - d. The vizier led the ambassador past officials and a display of money.
- _____ 8. What is the purpose of paragraph U?
- a. to provide a rare view of Suleyman's personality
 - b. to show that the sultan was relieved to win Rhodes
 - c. to describe an old man getting ready to migrate
 - d. to contrast with Suleyman's reaction to Malta
- _____ 9. Why did Suleyman not greet the Hungarian count after the fall of Szigetvar?
- a. He was furious that the count had killed his governor.
 - b. He was too weak to leave his tent.
 - c. He was already dead.
 - d. He was concerned for his own safety.
- _____ 10. The following sentence would be best placed at the end of which paragraph?

For example, his architect Sinan designed the famous Suleymaniye Mosque and more than 300 other major buildings.

- a. Paragraph O
- b. Paragraph R
- c. Paragraph X
- d. Paragraph AA

DIRECTIONS: Complete the sentences. Choose the correct word.

- a. absolute
- b. biased
- c. confide
- d. console
- e. consult
- f. hierarchy
- g. infer
- h. nostalgia
- i. reign
- j. successor

- ____ 11. The palace of Hampton Court was restored during the ____ of King Henry VIII.
- ____ 12. Many primate groups have a(n) ____ where some animals are more important as leaders than others.
- ____ 13. I no longer read that newspaper as I think its opinions are ____.
- ____ 14. The topics covered in this physics course are quite advanced; it is not meant for the ____ beginner.
- ____ 15. The rejection letter didn't actually say so, but you could ____ that they didn't think the candidate was qualified.
- ____ 16. She tried her best to ____ her mother after her grandmother passed away.
- ____ 17. The military officer was not supposed to ____ in anyone, but he told his junior officer about the troop's travel plans.
- ____ 18. Since the rash did not seem to be responding to treatment, our family doctor suggested we ____ with a skin specialist.
- ____ 19. As soon as the president finishes his term of office, his ____ will take over immediately.
- ____ 20. When I smelled the perfume my mother used to wear when I was a child, I was overcome with ____.

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Answer Section

1. ANS: B PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Main Idea TOP: Cultural Encounters
2. ANS: A PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Purpose TOP: Cultural Encounters
3. ANS: B PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Anaphoric Reference TOP: Cultural Encounters
4. ANS: D PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Figurative Language TOP: Cultural Encounters
5. ANS: D PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Paraphrase TOP: Cultural Encounters
6. ANS: B PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Unfamiliar Vocabulary TOP: Cultural Encounters
7. ANS: C PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Sequence TOP: Cultural Encounters
8. ANS: A PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Purpose TOP: Cultural Encounters
9. ANS: C PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Supporting Detail TOP: Cultural Encounters
10. ANS: C PTS: 1 REF: Pages 225-229
OBJ: Cohesion TOP: Cultural Encounters
11. ANS: I PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
12. ANS: F PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
13. ANS: B PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
14. ANS: A PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
15. ANS: G PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
16. ANS: D PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
17. ANS: C PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
18. ANS: E PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
19. ANS: J PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters
20. ANS: H PTS: 1 REF: Page 233 OBJ: Vocabulary
TOP: Cultural Encounters