

I. Formation of the Islamic empires

- A. The Ottoman empire (1289-1923)
 1. Founded by Osman Bey in 1289, who led Muslim religious warriors (*ghazi*)
 2. Ottoman expansion into Byzantine empire
 - a. Seized city of Bursa, then into the Balkans
 - b. Organized *ghazi* into formidable military machine
 - c. Central role of the Janissaries (slave troops)
 - d. Effective use of gunpowder in battles and sieges
 3. Mehmed the Conqueror (reigned 1451-1481)
 - a. Captured Constantinople in 1453; it became Istanbul, the Ottoman capital
 - b. Absolute monarchy; centralized state
 - c. Expanded to Serbia, Greece, Albania; attacked Italy
 4. Suleyman the Magnificent (reigned 1520-1566)
 - a. Sultan Selim the Grim (reigned 1512-1520) occupied Syria and Egypt
 - b. Suleyman the Magnificent expanded into southwest Asia and central Europe
 - c. Suleyman also built a navy powerful enough to challenge European fleets
- B. The Safavid empire
 1. The Safavids, Turkish conquerors of Persia and Mesopotamia
 - a. Founder Shah Ismail (reigned 1501-1524) claimed ancient Persian title of shah.
 - b. Proclaimed Twelver Shiism the official religion; imposed it on Sunni population
 - c. Followers known as *qizilbash* (or "Red Hats")
 2. Twelver Shiism
 - a. Traced origins to twelve ancient Shiite imams
 - b. Ismail believed to be the twelfth, or "hidden," imam, or even an incarnation of Allah
 3. Battle of Chaldiran (1514)
 - a. Sunni Ottomans persecuted Shiites within Ottoman empire
 - b. *Qizilbash* considered firearms unmanly; were crushed by Ottomans at Chaldiran
 4. Shah Abbas the Great (1588-1629) revitalized the Safavid empire
 - a. modernized military; sought European alliances against Ottomans
 - b. new capital at Isfahan; centralized administration
- C. The Mughal empire
 1. Babur (1523-1530), founder of Mughal ("Mongol") dynasty in India
 - a. Central Asian Turkish adventurer invaded India in 1523, seized Delhi in 1526
 - b. By his death in 1530, Mughal empire embraced most of India
 2. Akbar (reigned 1556-1605), a brilliant charismatic ruler
 - a. Created a centralized, absolutist government
 - b. Expanded to Gujarat, Bengal, and southern India
 - c. Encouraged religious tolerance between Muslims and Hindus
 - d. Developed a syncretic religion called "divine faith"
 3. Aurangzeb (1659-1707)
 - a. Expanded the empire to almost the entire Indian subcontinent
 - b. Revoked policies of toleration: Hindus taxed, temples destroyed
 - c. His rule troubled by religious tensions and hostility

II. **Imperial Islamic society**

- A. The dynastic state
 - 1. The emperors and Islam
 - a. All three Islamic empires were military creations
 - b. Authority of dynasty derived from personal piety and military prowess of rulers
 - c. Devotion to Islam encouraged rulers to extend their faith to new lands
 - 2. Steppe traditions
 - a. Autocratic: emperors imposed their will on the state
 - b. Ongoing problems with royal succession
 - c. Ottoman rulers could legally kill his brothers after taking the throne
 - 3. Royal women often wielded great influence on politics
- B. Agriculture and trade
 - 1. Food crops the basis of all three empires
 - a. Major crops: wheat and rice
 - b. Little impacted by new American crops
 - c. Imports of coffee and tobacco very popular
 - 2. Population growth in the three empires less dramatic than in China or Europe
 - a. Significant population growth in India from more intense agriculture
 - b. Less dramatic growth in Safavid and Ottoman realms
 - 3. Long-distance trade important to all three empires
 - a. Ottoman and Safavid empires shared segments of the east-west trade routes
 - b. Safavids offered silk, carpets, and ceramics to European trading companies
 - c. The Mughal empire less attentive to foreign or maritime trading
 - d. Mughals permitted stations for English, French, and Dutch trading companies
- C. Religious affairs in the Islamic empires
 - 1. Religious diversity created challenges to the rule of the empires
 - 2. Religious diversity in India under the rule of Akbar
 - a. Portuguese Goa was the center of Christian missions
 - b. Jesuits welcomed at court of Akbar, but he was not interested in an exclusive faith
 - c. Akbar tolerated Sikhism, a new faith combining elements of Hinduism and Islam
 - d. Advocated syncretic "divine faith," emphasizing loyalty to emperor
 - 3. Religious minorities generally tolerated in Islamic states
 - a. In Ottoman empire, conquered peoples protected, granted religious and civil autonomy in their own communities
 - b. In India, the Muslim rulers closely cooperated with Hindu majority
 - c. Under Aurangzeb: Islam proclaimed official state religion, nonbelievers taxed
- D. Cultural patronage of the Islamic Emperors
 - 1. All three sponsored arts and public works: mosques, palaces, schools, hospitals
 - 2. Istanbul, the Ottoman capital, a bustling city of a million people
 - a. Topkapi palace housed government offices and sultan's residence
 - b. The Suleymaniye blended Islamic and Byzantine architectural elements
 - 3. Isfahan, Safavid capital, the "queen of Persian cities"
 - 4. Fatehpur Sikri, Mughal capital, created by Akbar
 - a. Combined Islamic style with Indian elements
 - b. Site abandoned because of bad water supply
 - c. The Taj Mahal, exquisite example of Mughal architecture

III. **The empires in transition**

- A. The deterioration of imperial leadership, the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries
 - 1. Dynastic decline caused by negligent rulers, factions, and government corruption
 - 2. Tensions increased when religious conservatives abandoned policies of tolerance
 - a. Ottoman conservatives resisted innovations like the telescope and printing press
 - b. In Safavid empire: Shiite leaders urged the shahs to persecute Sunnis, non-Muslims, and even the Sufis
 - c. In Mughal India, Aurangzeb's policies provoked deep animosity of Hindus
- B. Economic and military decline
 - 1. Strong economies in sixteenth century; stagnated by eighteenth century
 - a. End of territorial expansion; difficult to support armies and bureaucrats
 - b. Series of long and costly wars
 - c. Officials resorted to raising taxes or corruption to deal with financial problems
 - d. Failure to develop trade and industry; lost initiative to European merchants
 - 2. Military decline
 - a. Importing European weapons only promoted European weapon industries
 - b. Imported arsenals outdated
 - c. Ottomans even purchased military vessels from abroad
- C. Cultural insularity
 - 1. Cultural conservatism
 - a. Ottoman cartographer, Piri Reis, gathered together European maps
 - b. Muslims seldom traveled to the West, confident of their superiority
 - c. Ignorant of European technological developments--hostile to telescope, 1703
 - 2. Resistance to printing press
 - a. Introduced by Jewish refugees to Anatolia, late fifteenth century
 - b. At first, Ottoman authorities banned printing in Turkish and Arabic
 - c. Ban lifted in 1729, but conservatives forced closure of a Turkish press in 1742
 - d. In India, Mughal rulers showed little interest in printing technology
 - 3. Foreign cultural innovations seen as a threat to political stability

The Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottoman, Safavid, Mughal

Common Elements:

- Nomadic Turkish conquerers
- Muslim piety a sign of legitimacy (Sufi influence on leadership)
- Autocratic rule
- Imperial family politics often involved deadly competition
- Influence of women within the Imperial family in spite of lack of public power for women
- Use of *jizya* tax on *dhimmi* (protected non-Muslim) populations

Decline:

- Entrenched aristocracy replaces meritocracy.
- Religious tension: conservatism
- Economic "peripheralization"; loss of tax revenues
- Cost of warfare and bureaucracies
- Failure, sometimes deliberate, to maintain technological development
- "Cultural Insularity" and tendency towards chauvinism

	Ottoman	Safavid	Mughal
Founding	1289 - Osman Bey	1501 - Shah Ismail (r. 1501-1524)	1526 - Babur "the Tiger" (r. to 1530)
Islam	Sunni Wahhabi (Arabian)	Twelver Shiism Sufi	Akbar's "divine faith" Aurangzeb: Sunni
Origin	Anatolia between Black Sea and Mediterranean	Iran (Tabriz)	N. India (Kabul/Qandahar)
Largest Expanse	Yugoslavia/Greece, N. Africa, Mideast to Tigris River, Black Sea	Central Asia, from Tigris river to Gandahar, Caspian Sea to Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean	Most of India, except southern tip
Significant Dates	1453 - Capture of Constantinople; renamed Istanbul	1514 - Battle of Chaldiran (vs. Ottomans)	
Military Institutions	<i>ghazi</i> "sword of God" <i>Janissaries</i> - <i>devshirme</i> slaves in the army	<i>qizilbash</i> ("red hats or heads") "slaves of the royal household"	
Great Leaders	Mehmed II "The Conquerer" (r. 1451-1481) Suleyman the Magnificent (or "the Lawgiver") (r. 1520-1566)	Shah Abbas "the Great" (r. 1588-1629)	Akbar (r. 1556-1605) Aurangzeb (r. 1659-1707)
Cultural Monuments	Topkapi palace Suleymaniye mosque complex (Istanbul)	Isfahan (capital city)	Taj Mahal (c. 1650)
Religious Minorities	<i>millet</i> system: Christians, Jews.	Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians	Toleration varies: Hindus, Jains, Zoroastrians, Christians, Sikhs
Exports	Silk, Spices	Silk, carpets, ceramics, crafts	Pepper, jewels, metal craft goods
Vices	Tobacco, Coffee		
End	End of World War I (1919)	1722, mostly absorbed by Ottomans	late 18c, mostly absorbed by British