

# Chapter 21: Early Modern Muslim Empires



Ms. Sheets  
AP World History  
University High School

# The Gunpowder Empires

- 13<sup>th</sup> c. Mongol invasions destroyed Muslim unity
- 3 new Muslim empires emerge; new growth of Islamic civilization
  1. Ottomans (1299-1923, Sunni)
  2. Safavids (1501-1736, Shi'a)
  3. Mughals(1528-1857, Sunni)



# The Gunpowder Empires

- Similarities
  - Originate from Turkish nomadic cultures
  - Great military and political powers; effective use of gunpowder
  - Islamic Renaissance
  - Spread of Islam to new territories; religious zeal
  - Ruled by absolute monarchs
  - Taxed agrarian populations
- Differences
  - Mughals: rule mostly non-Muslims (Hindus in India)
  - Safavids: rule mostly Muslims (Shi'a)
  - Ottomans: rule mixture of Muslims (Sunni) and Christians

# The Ottoman Rise

- 1258 CE: Abbasids fell to the Mongols.
- 1258 – 1335: Ilkhan Empire (Mongols)
- 1350s: Sunni Ottomans began building an empire based in Anatolia, Turkey
  - Named after Osman Bey, leader
  - Rapidly expand territory into Balkans and surrounding area
- 1453: Mehmed II leads the Ottomans to conquer Constantinople with 100,000 soldiers.
  - Collapse of Byzantine Empire and rapid growth of Ottomans
- Continued to extend empire: Syria, Egypt, north Africa, Hungary, Black and Red Seas.
  - Powerful army: built up firearms, cannons
  - Threat to Western Europe: 16<sup>th</sup> c. sieges on Vienna, Austria led by Suleiman I

# Height of Ottoman Empire



**The Ottoman Empire  
Under Suleiman I  
the Magnificent,  
1580**

200 Miles

# Ottoman Military: Janissaries

- Ottomans were focused on warfare; desired to create a class of warriors that were loyal to Sultan only
- Janissaries were captured conscripted Christian boys that made up the bulk of the Ottoman infantry
  - Legal slaves
  - Highly educated and placed with Ottoman families to be converted to Islam
  - Selection process: devshirme
- Janissaries controlled the artillery and firearms so they were the most powerful component of the military.
- Ultimately, would block much needed reform as empire began to decline
- Tried to translate military service into political influence.



# Ottoman Military: Navy

- Ottoman internal military problems led them to fall behind in improvements to military.
- Ottoman navy was powerful until Battle of Lepanto (1571)
  - Signaled end of Ottoman naval dominance
  - Tried to rebuild fleet a year after battle
- Portuguese naval victories in Indian Ocean weaken Ottoman presence in Indian Ocean trade.
- Ottomans fell behind in technology by ignoring Western technological innovations.





## Quick Review Question

1. Ottomans expanded into which regions?
2. What were Janissaries and how were they used?



# Ottoman Sultans and Their Court

- Absolute monarchs (sultans) who were skilled at controlling different religious and legal factions.
- Ottoman conquest often meant effective administration and tax relief for areas annexed to the empire.
- As the empire grew, sultans lost contact with their subjects.
- Administration was carried out by a grand vizier and bureaucracy.
- Islamic principles of succession were problematic.
- Sunni model means it is unclear



# The Flourishing of Ottoman Culture

- Ottomans restored capital of Constantinople.
  - Each Sultan tried to beautify the capital; this was a display of political power
  - Sultans and administrators built mansion, religious schools, hospitals, rest houses, gardens.
  - Hagia Sophia was converted into a mosque.
- Commercial center: great bazaars
  - Merchant and artisan classes
  - Turkish, then Persian, Arabic



# Ottoman Society and Gender

- Socially dominated by warrior aristocracies who originated as Turkish horsemen.
- Ottoman sultans promoted public works projects, the arts, and promoted trade.
- Ottoman women faced legal and social disadvantages.
  - Unable to become educated or participate in politics
- Elite wives and concubines exerted influences over sultans, but most women lived unenviable lives
  - Subordinate to husbands and fathers
  - Many restricted to harems



# Ottoman Decline

- Empire lasted for over 600 years (1299-1923) during which time the Ottomans were able to fight off many rivals.
- Survive for so long in large part because of European rivalries that distracted Europeans
- Janissaries are conservative and traditional; resistant to Westernized reforms
- Ultimately, the empire was too large to maintain.
- Unable to expand against other Muslim and Christian groups
- The effectiveness of the administration diminished as the bureaucracy became corrupt.
- Local officials squeezed peasants for taxes and services.
  - Officials become corrupt
  - Peasant uprisings and abandonment of lands
  - Silver from Peru and Mexico led to inflation
  - Civil strife increased



## Quick Review Question

1. Describe Ottoman rule. What is it like?
2. Describe Ottoman culture.

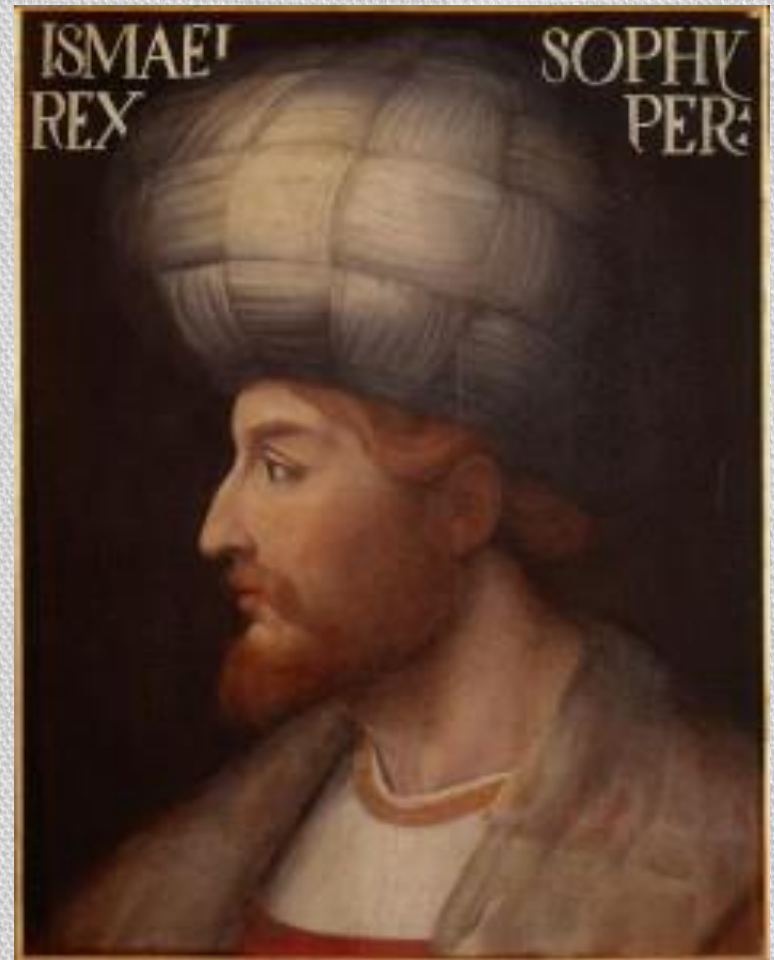
# The Shi'a Safavids

- Rose from Turkic nomadic groups after Mongol invasions.
- Practice Shi'a Islam
- Sail al-Din, Shi'ite Sufi mystic, began a militant campaign to purify and reform Islam
  - Spread Shi'a Islam throughout Turkish tribes of region (Persia and Afghanistan)



# Isma'il and the Battle of Chaldiran

- 1501: Isma'il won territory victories and was declared *shah* (emperor) of Safavid Empire.
- 1514: Battle of Chaldiran
  - Conflict with Ottoman Empire and Ottoman victory
  - Shi'ism was blocked from westward advancement



# Politics and Culture

## Under Abbas the Great

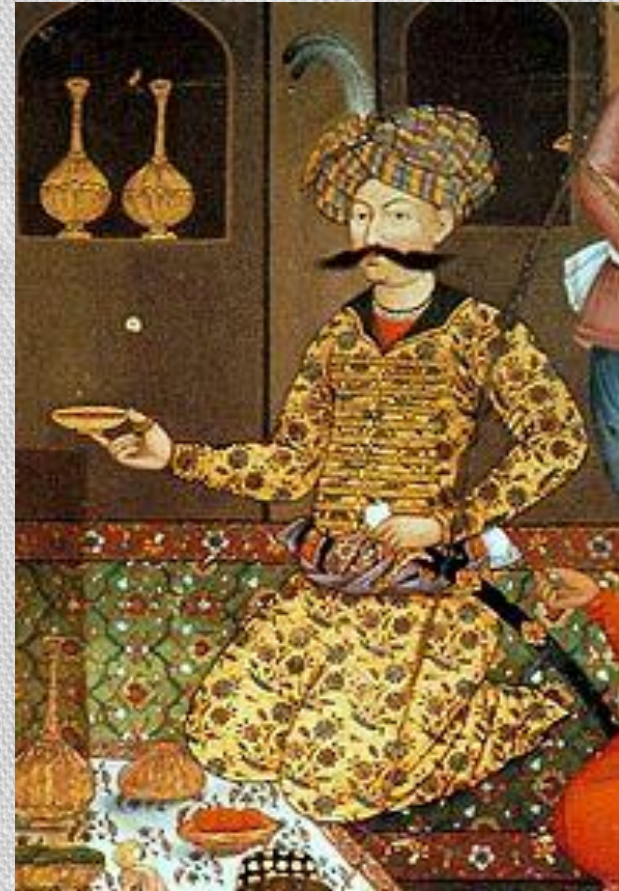
- 1587 CE- Abbas I (Abbas the Great), empire reached height of its strength and prosperity
  - Used youths captured in Russia, educated and converted to Islam, in the army and bureaucracy
    - Controlled firearm use
    - Received training from Europeans in efforts against Ottomans
- Abbas I wanted empire to be center for international trade and Islamic culture
  - Creates capital in Isfahan
  - Special building projects (elaborate palaces for shahs; mosques)





# Safavid Culture

- Originally used Turkish but switched to Persian after Battle of Chaldiran
  - Distance themselves from Ottomans
- Safavid rulers retained elaborate court life
- Mullahs (educated in Islamic theology and law) were used as mosque officials, pray leaders and bureaucrats.
  - Indicates move away from militant Shi'a ideology
- Expansion also meant expansion of the Shi'ite movement
- Greatest industry: exporting Persian rugs



# The Rapid Demise of the Safavid Empire

- Safavids reigned from 1501-1736.
  - The collapse was rapid.
- Abbas I, fearing assassinations, removed all suitable heirs.
  - Weak grandsons followed; led to decline.
  - Imperial administration collapsed.
- 1722: Isfahan fell to Afghani invaders.
  - City fell; 80,000 inhabitants died from disease and starvation



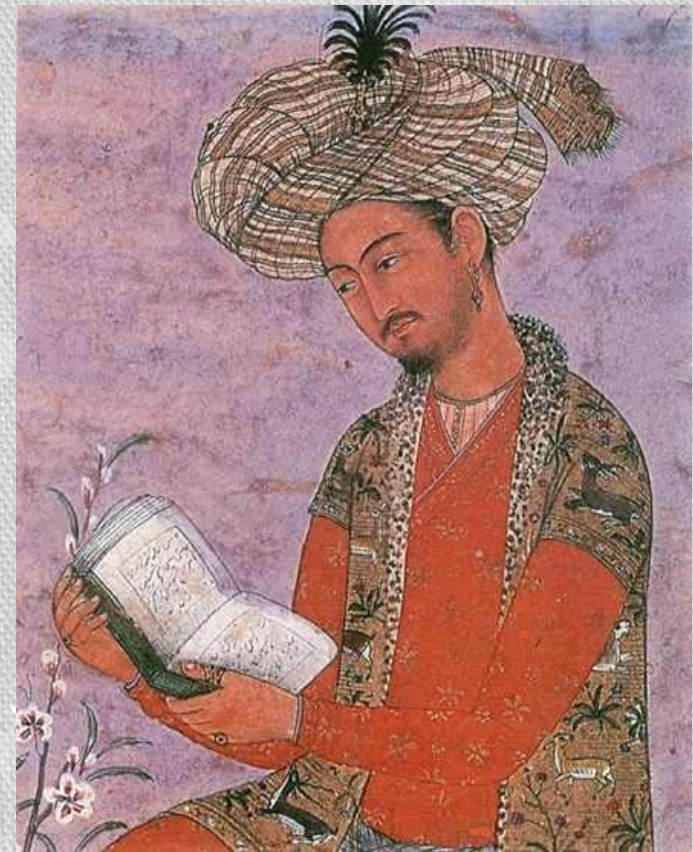


## Quick Review Question

1. What type of Islam do Safavids practice?
2. What is the Battle of Chaldiran?
3. What does Abbas the Great focus upon?

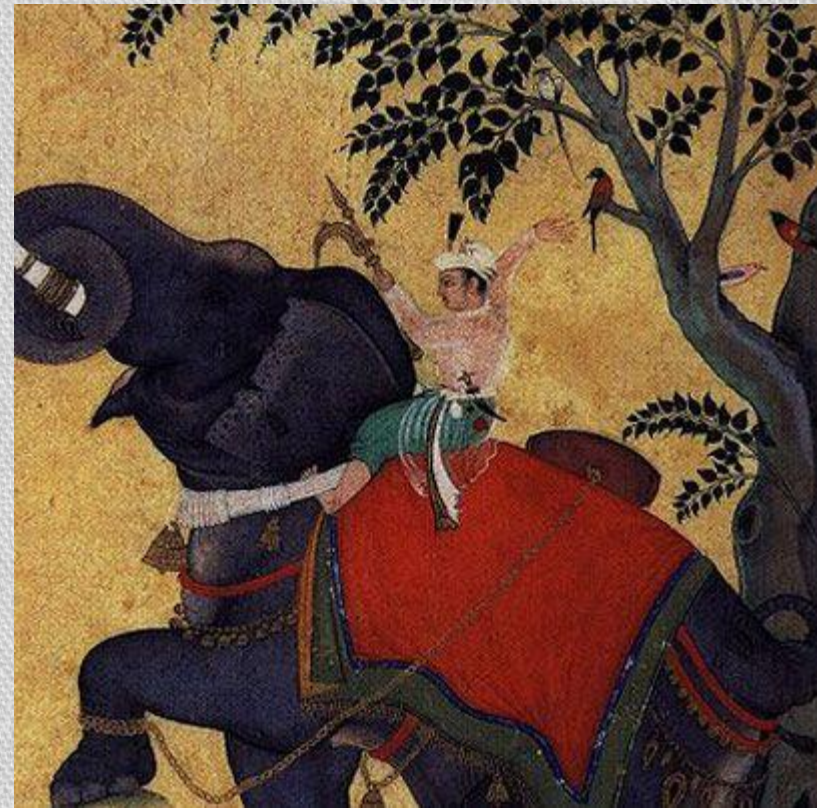
# The Mughals in India

- Founded by Babur in 1528
  - Traced his lineage back to Turkic conqueror Timur the Lame
  - Used gunpowder and military strategies to assert power over rivals in northern India.
  - More interested in territorial expansion and riches than spreading of Islam.
  - Interested in art and war, but a poor administrative leader
- Sudden death in 1530; successor is son Humayan.
  - Invasions in time of weakness
  - Humayan dies in 1556; leaves empire to Akbar.



# Akbar and the Basis for a Lasting Empire

- Akbar rules 1560-1605.
  - Comes to throne during period of invasions.
- Akbar had a vision for the empire and wanted to unite all of India.
  - Extended the empire throughout north and central India.
  - Brilliant military leader (no navy, just army)
- Used warrior aristocrats (zamindars) to run villages in newly established bureaucracy.
  - Administrative talents
  - Collect tribute (\$ or food); keep 10%



# Akbar's Social Reform and Cultural Change

- Encouraged widow remarriage; discouraged child marriages; legally prohibited sati; special market days.
- Encouraged good relationships and intermarriages between Muslims and Hindus.
  - Respected Hindu customs
  - Utilize Hindus in bureaucracy
- Great patron of arts
- Invented a new faith: Din-i-Ilahi
  - Incorporates Islam and Hinduism to unify subjects
- Mughal India reached its peak at the end of Akbar's reign and was an overseas destination for traders.



A decorative illustration of a plant with several large, pointed leaves and a cluster of small, round buds or flowers, rendered in a light brown color against a darker brown background on the left side of the slide.

## Quick Review Question

1. List some of the accomplishments of Akbar.
2. What is his primary social goal?

# Mughal Splendor (?)

- After Akbar's death in 1605, Jahangir (1605-1627) and Shah Jahan (1627-1658) reigned.
  - Neither are astute rulers, but follow Akbar's model which works for a time
- Both retained tolerance toward Hindus, kept alliances, and fought wars against enemies.
- Both great patrons of the arts.
- Famous for cotton textiles and have a large market in Europe.
  - No government control over trade; all ships are privately owned
  - British and Dutch traders grow power in region
- Majority of population in poverty
- India fell behind Europe in innovations and sciences.





# Mughal Art and Architecture

- Mughal architecture blends Persian and Hindu traditions.
- Painting workshops for miniatures.
- Mughal architecture: mix of traditional Indian white marble with Islamic arches and domes.
  - Taj Mahal: constructed by Shah Jahan as tomb for Mumtaz Mahal, his most beloved wife.
- Mughals considered one of the peaks in Indian cultural production.



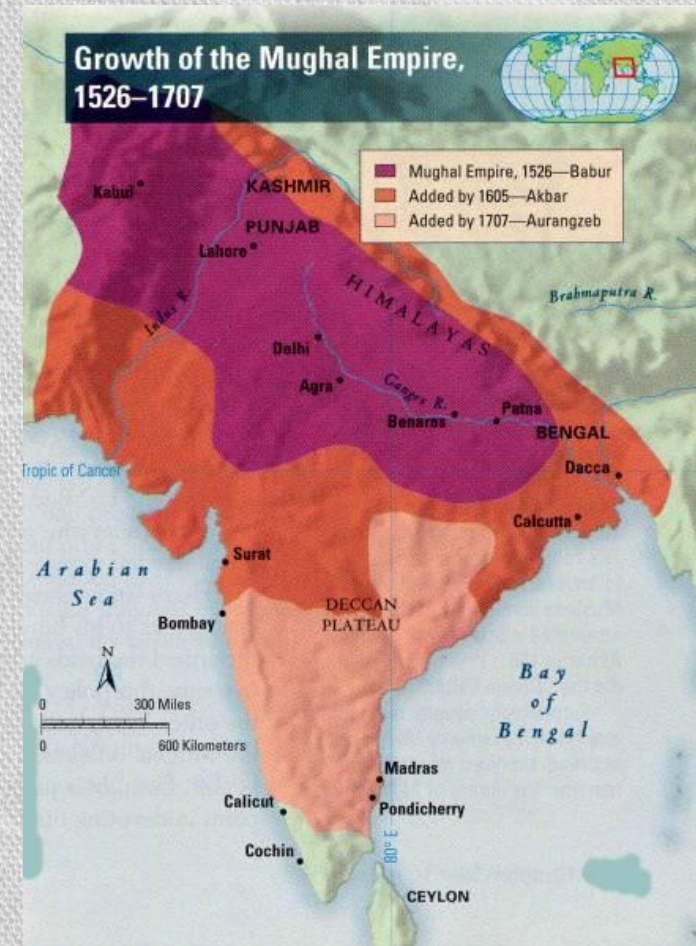
# Mughal Mistakes

- Jahangir and Shah Jahan left the administration to subordinates; thus, their wives took control of decisions.
- Zamindars keep much of the tribute for themselves → imperial revenue declined
- Elsewhere, women became more secluded; reforms of Akbar die out.
- Aurangzeb, Shah Jahan's son, came to power with two foolish goals:
  1. Determined to extend Mughal control over all India.
  2. Wanted to purify Indian Islam and rid it of Hinduism



# Mughal Decline

- By the time of his death (1707), Aurangzeb conquered most of India but drained treasury protecting borders.
- Became involved in long wars and failed to complete administrative tasks and reforms.
- His religious policies weakened internal alliances with Hindus.
- Marathas: militant Hindus who formed a breakaway state in the south and waged guerilla warfare against Aurangzeb
- Social progress had been abandoned and halted.
- Britain and France grow increasingly interested in India as a colony.
- Central government declines; India returns to local governments by 18<sup>th</sup> c.
  - British win Seven Years' War and take French Indian territory
- Sikhs became an anti-Muslim threat.
  - Sikhism is a Hindu/Islam blend without a caste system





## Quick Review Question

1. What are some of the accomplishments of Jahangir and Shah Jahan?
2. What does Aurangzeb do that causes a weakening of the Mughal Empire?