Land-Based Empires and Transoceanic Interconnections
1450-1750
Land Based vs. Maritime Empires

Ottomans, Safavids, Mughals, Russia, China

Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, England
Islamic Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, Mughals
Ottoman Empire

- Founder: Osman
- Benefitted from location on Dardanelles Strait
- Ended 1,100 years of Byzantine rule
Siege of Constantinople
(April-May 1453)

- Led by Mehmet II
- Used canons and 80,000 troops to breach walls
- Byzantine emperor died in battle

CITY FALLS IN 1453
Ottoman Empire

- **Golden Age of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566)**
  - Pushed into Christian Europe (compare to Tours)
  - Conquered Serbia and Hungary
  - Halted at Vienna in 1529 (Hapsburgs)
Devshirme ("gathering")

- "Tax" on Christian boys from the Balkans.
- Educated in Turkish, Islam, military strategy, etc.
- Top 10% became government officials, the rest became soldiers.
Ottoman Empire

- **Janissaries**: infantry (of slave origin) who were the elite of the army from 1400s - 1826.

- Military professionals of the empire (compare to samurai)
Ottoman Empire

Administration

- **Sultan** was absolute monarchs (Topkapi Palace)
- The **vizier** was the true head of state (compare to Abbasid vizier)
- Political succession was vague and often contested
Role of Women – The Harem

- Private quarters of the sultan.
- A system designed to produce heirs.
- Unique because slaves often produced royal heirs!
- Education part of life in the harem.
- “Queen mother” wielded tremendous power (“Sultinate of Women”)
Ottoman Empire

Religion

- Sultans claimed title of *caliph*
- Sunni Muslims (non-Muslims paid jizya)
- Shari’a law for Muslims
- **Millet System** for religious minorities
  - Autonomous, self-governing communities of Christians, Jews, etc.
Decline

• Lasts until WWI, but started to decline 16th-17th c.

• Reasons For Decline:
  • Could not match the growing power of Western Europe:
    • Influx of silver (16th c) from New World = inflation
    • Portuguese seized Indian Ocean trade
  • Treasury depleted from war
  • Weak sultans
  • Increasing power of viziers and Janissaries
Sunni/Shi’a Split Review

632: Death of Muhammad (no successor named)

SUNNI
- Abu Bakr (loyal friend)
- Umar (expansion of territory)
- Uthman (assassinated)
- Ali (rule challenged by Syrian governor Mu’awiyah)

SHI’A
- Ali (son-in-law of Muhammad)

SUFISM
- Mystical school music, dancing, meditation

Rightly Guided Caliphs

UMAYYAD DYNASTY
Safavid Empire

- Founder: **Shah Ismail** (1501-1524)
- Religion: Shi’á Islam
- Still the state religion of Iran.
Safavid Empire

Battle of Chaldiran 1514

- Rivalry with Ottomans due to religious differences.

- Ottoman artillery and janissaries crushed Safavids.

DEEPENED SHIA/SUNNI SPLIT!
Safavid Empire

Shah Abbas (1588-1629)
- Moved capital to Isfahan
- Modernized empire
  - Encouraged trade
  - Built bureaucracy
  - Added “janissaries”
  - Expanded
Safavid Empire

Isfahan

Royal Academy

Shah Abbas Mosque
Safavid Empire

- Main export: Carpets (often made by women)
- Most people were farmers/herders
Decline and Fall

- After Shah Abbas, the decline of the empire was rapid.
- **1722 - Siege of Isfahan**
  - High military costs, inflation, and decline of overland trade weakened the state which fell to Afghani invaders.
Mughal Empire

- Founder: Babur (1526)
- Descend from Mongols
- Military conquest
  - Used Ottoman military tactics
  - Establishes a dynasty that lasts over 300 years
Akbar

- Religious tolerance from Islam and Mongols
- Muslim rulers, Hindu subjects brought together
  - Encouraged intermarriage
  - Abolished the Hindu head-tax
  - Promoted Hindus to the highest ranks
Mughal Empire

Akbar

• Created “Divine Faith” which incorporated Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Sikh, and Christian beliefs (compare to Bhakti movement).
• Hybrid culture flourished until Akbar’s death.
Mughal Empire

- Shah Jahan (grandson)
- Building of the Taj Mahal
- SYNCRETISM (Blends Islamic geometry with Hindu ornamentation)
Mughal Empire

- Zamindars – local officials who collected taxes.
- Caste system
- Akbar’s reforms that helped women were overturned (sati returned).
Aurangzeb: Shah Jahan’s son

Two goals:
1 - extend Mughal control throughout the subcontinent
2 - purify Islam and rid the subcontinent of Hinduism
• Mughal Empire was under attack from all areas was too weak to do anything about it.

• Decline of the Mughals leads to growing military and economic intervention by the British (power shifting west!)