

SSWH12: DESCRIBE THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE OTTOMAN, SAFAVID, AND MUGHAL EMPIRES



Element A: Describe the development and geographic extent of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires.

SSWH12 OVERVIEW:

- Students will be expected to explain how the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals combined traditional military technologies with innovations that included the use of gunpowder weapons to build large empires with exceptionally centralized governments.
 - Students should explore how each of these empires contributed to trans-regional trade and intellectual development.
 - Further, students should explain how the geographic scope of the empires contributed to the diversity of the population which fostered cultural development and political innovations.

Western Asian Empires during 14th and 15th Centuries

- The 14th and 15th centuries saw the rise of both land and maritime empires.
 - Both the maritime empires of the Europeans and the land empires of the Muslims learned to successfully weaponize gunpowder.
 - While the Chinese and Mongols had used gunpowder in combat in the past, it was the empires of the 13th and 14th century that utilized it with great success.
 - Cannons blew down the ancient walls that protected cities leading to a new age in military conflict.
 - Walls could no longer secure a king or emperor's hold on territory.
- The Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires combined the use of gunpowder weapons with more traditional cavalry armed with composite bows with great success.



Ottoman Empire

- In the early 1300s, the Ottomans took over most of Anatolia before quickly moving into Europe and securing the Balkans within the century.
- Timur, a Turko-Mongol leader challenged their expansion in 1402, when he captured the Sultan and took territory.
 - This led to a civil war in the Ottoman Empire, after which Murad II gained power and began another period of expansion continued by Mehmed II who captured Constantinople, renaming it Istanbul.
- Suleyman "the Magnificent" presided over the Ottoman Empire's golden age.
 - At its height, the Empire reached into Europe, including Hungary and nearly Vienna.
 - It controlled most of Eastern Europe, west into the Caucasus Mountains, Mesopotamia, around to parts of Arabia, and Northern Africa along the Mediterranean Sea.
 - Importantly, it controlled the link between Europe and Asia at Gallipoli on the Dardanelles strait.



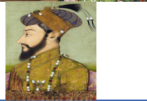
Safavid Empire

- The Safavid Empire was bounded on the West by the Ottomans and on the East by the Mughals.
 - It encompassed much of current-day Iran, and parts of Iraq.
 - The Safavids lost territory in the 1500s to the Ottomans and Uzbeks.
- In 1587, Abbas the Great came to power and reformed the military, modeling it after the Ottoman military, including the use of slave-soldiers loyal only to the Shah.
 - He defeated the Uzbeks in 1598 and in subsequent years, regained all territory that had been lost.
 - He moved the capital to Isfahan and built it into a great economic, religious, and political center. After his death in 1629, the empire declined for the next century when the last Safavid ruler abdicated in 1722.



Mughal Empire

- The Mughal Empire began in 1526 when Babur attacked and conquered the Turkish Muslims in Delhi, gaining control of the city and surrounding area.
 - The empire lasted without significant external threat until 1857.
- Akbar, Babur's grandson, managed to achieve peace and loyalty from the Hindu Indian population by marrying one of the Rajput princesses and giving Rajputs government positions.
 - He also removed the head tax levied on all non-Muslims.
- The Mughal Empire reached its height during the reign of Shah Jahan who secured almost all of India, except for a portion in the South.
- His son, Aurangzeb, seized power and instituted a strict observance of Islamic law.
 - He ended religious toleration, taxing Hindus and destroying their temples.
 - This created a costly civil war between Muslims and Hindus that drained the empire's finances and led to peasant revolts against increased taxes that combined to weaken the empire.




SSWH12: DESCRIBE THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE OTTOMAN, SAFAVID, AND MUGHAL EMPIRES



Element B: Describe the cultural contributions of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires.


Ottoman Empire

- In the Ottoman Empire, social classes were not fixed by birth, but individuals could move between the two classes based on merit.
- The Ottomans also accommodated for religious diversity.
 - Non-Muslims lived in separate religious communities called millets.
 - They remained under the Sultan's rule, but had their own governments, laws, customs, courts, and taxes.
 - Millets were also responsible for their own education and safety.
- As Sultan, Suleyman improved the justice system, built fortresses, roads, bridges and mosques.
 - He supported the arts, which thrived under his rule, including detailed miniatures and illuminated manuscripts.



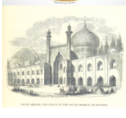
Safavid Empire

- When Ismail declared himself Shah of the Safavid Empire in the early 1500s, he also switched from Sunni Muslim to Shi'ite, and decreed that his subjects must similarly convert.
 - This transformation was enforced through a century of wars and persecutions, but it succeeded in giving Persians an identity distinct from their Sunni neighbors.



Safavid Empire

- Shah Abbas the Great who ruled the Safavid Empire from 1587 to 1629 centralized the government, encouraged foreign trade and manufacturing, especially carpet weaving and luxurious fabrics.
 - He strengthened the economy by lowering taxes on farmers and herders.
 - He built Isfahan into a world-class city with wide streets, a large central square, mosques, monuments, public baths and open markets.
- Shah Abbas tolerated non-Muslims, for example, bringing Armenian Christians to the capital to grow the silk trade and allowing them to govern themselves.
 - He also welcomed artists, poets, and scholars at court.



Mughal Empire

- The Mughal Empire under Akbar experienced a flourishing economy as a result of his improved tax system that was based on a village's 10-year average production and allowed for no taxes during lean years.
- Akbar was tolerant of all religions and supported both Hindu and Muslim arts, including a blending of Persian, Islamic, and Hindu styles in architecture.
 - This is best exemplified in the Taj Mahal built by Shah Jahan.
 - Sikh faith also emerged out of this blending of Muslim and Hindu cultures.
- Aurangzeb, in contrast to the rulers before him, ended government spending on lavish buildings, imposed Islamic law throughout the empire, and persecuted non-Muslims.