

Enriching Knowledge Series for the Secondary History Curriculum:
Rise and Development of the Islamic Civilisation up to the 19th century
Lecture 2: The Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire and Ottoman Empire (New)
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Introductions

What is an empire?

Examples?

Questions of the day

Why did the Islamic empires become so powerful?

Why did they fall?

How much did it matter that they were Islamic?

Rise and Fall: The Big Picture

Three powerful Islamic empires

Ottoman Empire (Middle East, North Africa, Balkans, part of Mediterranean)

Safavid Empire (Persia, present-day Iran)

Mughal Empire (most of Indian peninsula)

Gunpowder empires (?)

Marshall Hodgson and William McNeill (both at University of Chicago)

1500s/1600s: power of these empires

Ottoman Turks pushing into central Europe

over-ran Hungary at Battle of Mohacs (1559)

Mughal emperors extending southward

Islam spreading to Africa, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia

great highways of international trade all in Muslim hands

1700s: Islamic commercial, political, and military power in retreat almost everywhere

rise of European military and economic power

But: more to the picture than rise and fall

Ottoman Empire: once most powerful, organized state in Europe or Islamic world

highly developed military (Janissary)

huge annual state revenues

sophisticated legal system

thorough education system

great building projects

mosques, libraries, hospitals, roads, bridges, public baths

cultural, intellectual, and artistic vitality

poetry, prose, music, painting, cartography, historiography, astronomy

developments in medicine

pharmacology, quarantining, inoculations against smallpox, lunatic asylum

religious and ethnic diversity (“frontier empire”)

birth of coffeehouse and Ottoman urban culture

Mughal Empire: one of the most prosperous in the world

Taj Mahal (built by fifth emperor, Shah Jahan)

Safavid Persia: splendid capital at Isfahan

So: why focus on rise and fall?

intersection of internal and external factors

Ottoman Empire (1299-1922)

Founded by Osman (1259-1326)

Mehmet the Conqueror takes Constantinople (renamed Istanbul) (1453)

Siege of Belgrade (1456)

Ottomans control all of SE Europe and much of Ukraine (1512)

Habsburg Emperor (Charles V) seeks alliance with Safavid Persia (1526)

Ottoman Empire reaches peak under Suleyman/Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-66)

Long road to decline

Naval battle of Lepanto (1571)

Spanish-Italian-papal naval force ends Turkish expansion in Mediterranean

failure to take Vienna (1683)

no match for European and Russian neighbours (18c)

Explaining decline

weak rulers after Suleyman I

Suleyman II (“Suleyman the Drunkard” or “Suleyman the Sot”)

rise of Portuguese trading and naval power in Indian Ocean

failure to keep up with military advances of Western rivals

corruption

economic problems

number of Janissaries triples

discouraging exports, encouraging imports

population increase (the price of peace!)

manufacturing falls behind

inflation and taxes => revolts

ethnic and religious divisions

various ethnic and religious groups effectively ruled by own authorities
under sultan

price of tolerance

failure to make transition from conquest state to peacetime state (?)

“capitulations” with European powers

French merchants exempted from Ottoman law (1536)

English merchants gain right to trade in Ottoman territory (1590)

Habsburg merchants get same trading rights (1615)

failure to take into account rise of European power

early signs of fragmentation of Ottoman Empire (by early 1800s)

Russia declares itself official protector of Christians under Ottomans

Southern provinces autonomous or independent

Serbia and Greece successfully rebel against Turkish overlords (early 19c)

“the sick man of Europe”

still: Tanzimat Reforms (1839-1876)

new parliament (1876)

modern conscripted army

centralized banking system

secular law

WWI and Treaty of Versailles

Arab Revolt

Turkish War of Independence (1919-1922)

Turkey => secular republic under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Mughal Empire (1526-1540/1555-1857)

Mughals’ two challenges

conquering and organizing large state

finding formula for Hindu-Muslim coexistence

Founded by Babur (1483-1530)

“Mughal” = Persian for “Mongol”

Consolidated by Akbar the Great (r. 1556-1605)

understanding need for ethnic/religious harmony

“Divine Faith”

blend of Muslim, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Sikh, Christian beliefs

cultivating a warrior image

Accomplishments of Mughal Empire

world’s largest economic power

proto-industrialization

Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707)

expensive military campaigns

new lands not integrated well into imperial structure

more and more of empire taken over by Hindu rulers

Afghans establish independent kingdom

reversing Akbar's religious tolerance (?)

poll tax on Hindu

desecrated Hindu statues and shrines

fomented resentment among Hindus

but: also built Hindu statues and shrines

much stricter about Muslim law

Expansion of West (1500s on) and rise of trading companies

Portugal takes Goa (1510)

rise of Dutch East India Company (VOC)

controlled European spice trade from Batavia (Jakarta)

Mughal decline and rise of British East India Company (1600)

trading rights at Surat (1619)

control of Bombay (1668)

Calcutta (1690)

Seven Years' War/French Indian War (1756-1763)

"great war for empire" and beginning of British India

important British victories against various Indian rulers

British provoke provincial ruler into attacking EIC settlement (1756)

Robert Clive take Calcutta after Battle of Plassey (1757)

big victory at Wandiwash (1760)

strong political influence on SE coast (1783)

control over most of India (1850s)

Britain's advanced military technology and India's internal political problems

ability to infiltrate and take over new Indian states

"Company Rule": Early British India

"Oriental despotism": Warren Hastings (r. 1772-85) in Bengal

huge revenues from taxation

large *sepoys* ("native") army, smaller number of British soldiers

the imperial ideal: self-sufficiency through taxation

impact of company rule

taxes

conscription
land clearing
complexities of company rule
condescension vs. interest in Indian culture
the Indian Renaissance
 Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833)
 reform of *sati/suttee* and caste system

India: The Jewel in the British Crown

Causes of the Great Mutiny/Sepoy Mutiny/Great Rebellion (1857-58)

 ritual pollution: greased rifle cartridges
 addition of Gurkhas, Sikhs, and lower-caste recruits
 economic conditions and taxes
 British expansion and interference in local customs

Significance of the mutiny/rebellion for Indian and British history

 end of Mughal Empire
 shifting British views of Indians
 end of East India Company control of India
 reorganization of Indian army
 Queen Victoria becomes Empress of India (1876)

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