



培文书系·人文科学系列



A GLOBAL HISTORY

FROM PREHISTORY TO THE 21ST CENTURY

全球通史

第7版·下



L. S. STAVRIANOS



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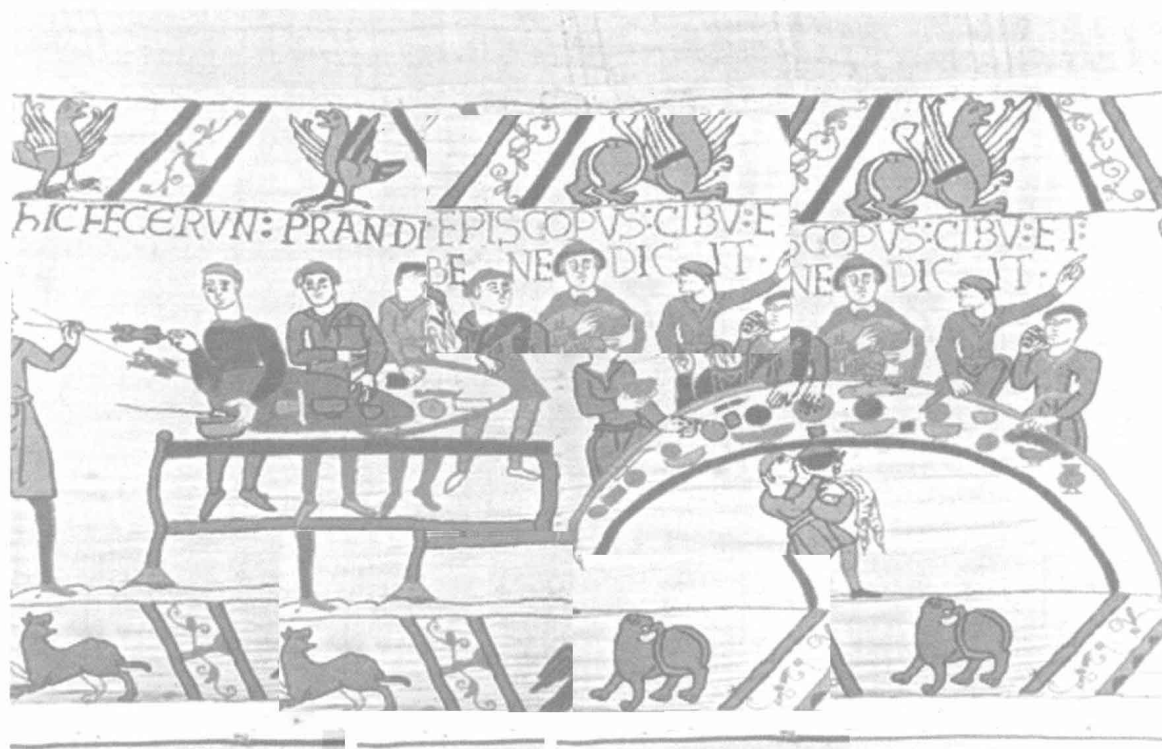
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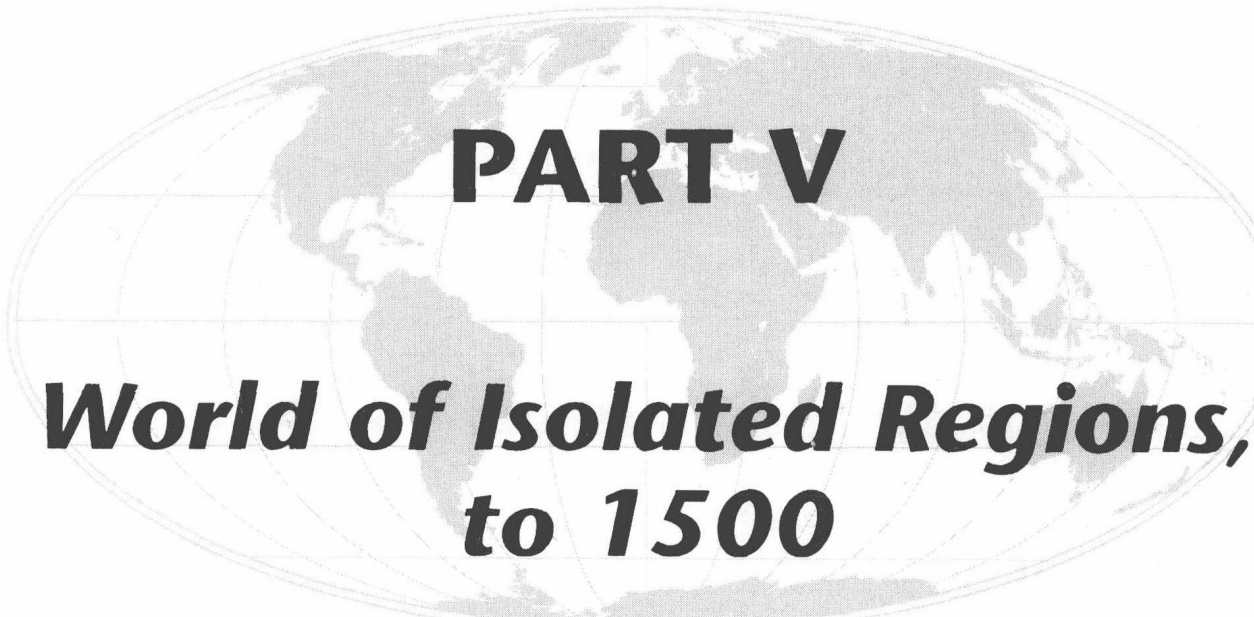
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PART V

World of Isolated Regions, to 1500

Part V is concerned with two basic questions: Why should a study of world history begin with the year 1500, and why was it that Westerners took a primary role in carrying out the fantastic discoveries and explorations of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries? The first question will be answered in Chapter 18; the second will be the subject of the remaining chapters of Part V.

We usually take it for granted that early Westerners could have made the historic discoveries that would change the course of humanity and begin a new era in world history. This assumption is quite unjustified, particularly in view of the great seafaring traditions of the Moslems in the Middle East and the Chinese in east Asia. Why then did the West take the initiative in overseas enterprise with repercussions that are still felt today? Chapters 18 and 19 will analyze the traditional societies in the Moslem and Confucian worlds, and Chapters 20 and 21 will offer an examination of the contrasting dynamism of Western society.



CHAPTER

18

Moslem World at the Time of the West's Expansion

He who would behold these times, the greatest glory, could not find a better scene than in Turkey.



H. Blount, 1634

To answer the question of why Columbus was not Chinese or Arabic, it is necessary to see what was going on in the Confucian and Moslem worlds at that time. In this chapter, and the following one, we shall analyze why China and the Middle East lacked the expansionism of western Europe, even though they were highly developed and wealthy regions. We shall see that paradoxically, it was their wealth and high level of development that left them smug and self-satisfied, and therefore unable to adapt to their changing world.

I. RISE OF MODERN MOSLEM EMPIRES

An observer on the moon looking at this globe about 1500 would have been more impressed by the Moslem than by the Christian world. The

mythical observer would have been impressed first by the extent of the Moslem world and then by its unceasing expansion. The earliest Moslems were the Arabs of the Arabian peninsula who were united for the first time under their religious leader, Mohammed. Believing that he had received a divine call, Mohammed warned his people of the Day of Judgment and told them of the rewards for the faithful in Paradise and the punishment of the wicked in Hell. He called on his followers to perform certain rituals known as the Five Pillars of Islam (including daily prayers, alms giving, fasting, and a pilgrimage to Mecca). These rituals, together with the precepts in the Koran, provided not only a religion but also a social code and a political system. The converts felt a sense of brotherhood and common mission, which served to unite the hitherto scattered Arab peoples.

After the death of Mohammed in 632 C.E., the Arabs burst out of their peninsula and quickly overran the Byzantine and Sassanian empires in the Middle East. Then they expanded eastward toward China and westward across North Africa and into Spain. By 750, the end of this first phase of Islamic expansion, there existed a huge Moslem Empire that stretched from the Pyrenees to India and from Morocco to China (see map of Expansion of Islam to 1500, p. 287). The Moslems carried out the second phase of their expansion between 750 and 1500, during which time they penetrated westward to central Europe, northward to central Asia, eastward to India and Southeast Asia, and southward into the interior of Africa. Thus, the Moslem world doubled in size. It far surpassed in area both the Christian world on the western tip of Eurasia and the Confucian world on the eastern tip.

Not only was the Moslem world the most extensive about 1500, but it also continued to expand vigorously after that date. Contrary to common assumption, western Europe was not the only part of the world that was extending its frontiers at that time. The Moslem world was still expanding, but by overland routes, whereas the Christian world was reaching out overseas. The Portuguese in the early sixteenth century were gaining footholds in India and the East Indies, and the Spaniards were conquering an empire in the New World. But at the same time, the Ottoman Turks, a central Asian people who had converted to Islam, were pushing into central Europe. They overran Hungary, and in 1529 they besieged Vienna, the Hapsburg capital in the heart of Europe. Likewise, in India the great Mogul emperors were steadily extending their empire southward until they became the masters of almost the entire peninsula. Elsewhere the Moslem faith continued to spread into Africa, central Asia, and Southeast Asia.

The steady expansion of Islam was due partly to the forceful conversion of nonbelievers, though compulsion was not employed so commonly by Moslems as by Christians. But much more effective than these measures was the quiet missionary work of Moslem traders and preachers, who were particularly successful among the less civilized peoples. Frequently, the trader appeared first, combing proselytism with the sale of merchandise. His profession gave the

trader close and constant contact with the people he wanted to convert. Also, there was no color bar, for if the trader were not of the same race as the villagers, he probably would marry a native woman. Such a marriage often led to the adoption of Islam by members of the woman's family. Soon religious instruction was needed for the children, so schools were established and frequented by pagan as well as Moslem children. The children were taught to read the Koran and were instructed in the doctrines and ceremonies of Islam. This explains why Islam, from the time of its appearance, was far more successful in gaining converts than any other religion. Even today, Islam is more than holding its own against Christianity in Africa, thanks to its unique adaptability to indigenous cultures as well as to the popular identification of Christianity with the foreign white master.

Apart from this ceaseless extension of frontiers, the Moslem world about 1500 was distinguished by its three great empires: the Ottoman in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Balkans; the Safavid in Persia; and the Mogul in India. These empires had all risen to prominence at this time and now dominated the heartland of Islam.

Their appearance was due in part to the invention of gunpowder and its use in firearms and cannon. The new weapons strengthened central power in the Moslem world, as they did at the same time in Christian Europe. Firearms, however, were by no means the only factor explaining the rise of the three Moslem empires. Equally significant were the appearance of capable leaders who founded dynasties and the existence of especially advantageous circumstances that enabled these leaders to conquer their empires. Let us consider now the particular combination of factors that made possible the growth of each of the three Moslem empires.

Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Turks, who founded the empire named after them, were a branch of widely scattered Turkish people who came originally from central Asia (in contrast to the Semitic Arabs, who came originally from the Arabian peninsula). Over the centuries, successive waves of Turkish tribespeople had penetrated into the rich lands of the Middle East. They had appeared as



Expansion of Islam to 1500

early as the eighth century and infiltrated into the Islamic Empire, where they were employed first as mercenaries. In the tenth century, Mongol pressure from the rear forced more Turkish tribes, including a group known as the Seljuk Turks, to move into the Middle East. These newcomers broke the traditional frontier of Asia Minor along the Taurus Mountains—the frontier that had sheltered Rome and Byzantium for

1,400 years—by defeating the Byzantine army in the fateful battle of Manzikert in 1071. The victory made most of Asia Minor a part of the Seljuk Empire, leaving only the northwest corner to the Byzantines.

The Seljuk Empire, however, experienced a decline, disintegrating into a patchwork of independent principalities, or sultanates. In the late thirteenth century, the disorder was heightened

by new bands of Turkish immigrants. One of these bands settled down on the extreme northwestern fringe of Seljuk territory, fewer than fifty miles from the strategic straits separating Asia from Europe. In 1299 the leader of this band, a certain Uthman, declared his independence from his Seljuk overlord. From these humble beginnings grew the great Ottoman Empire, named after the obscure Uthman.

The Süleiman mosque, named after its founder, Süleiman the Lawgiver, is one of the finest mosques in Istanbul. Completed in 1557 by the architect Sinan, who is buried in the mosque, it rises above the Golden Horn on Istanbul's third hill. Sinan was a slave-soldier recruit who rose through the ranks to his high position.



The first step in this dazzling success story was the conquest of the remaining Byzantine portion of Asia minor. By 1340 all of Asia Minor had fallen to the star and crescent. In 1354 the Turks crossed the straits and won their first foothold in Europe by building a fortress at Gallipoli. They hardly could have selected a more advantageous moment for their assault on Europe. The whole of Christendom in that century was weakened and divided. The terrible plague, the Black Death, had carried off whole sections of the populations of many Christian nations. The ruinous Hundred Years' War immobilized England and France. (The dates of this conflict are significant. It began in 1338, when the Turks were rounding out their conquest of Asia Minor, and it ended in 1453, when they captured Constantinople.) The Italian states also could do little against the Turks because of the long feud between Venice and Genoa. And the Balkan peninsula was hopelessly divided by the religious strife of Catholic and Orthodox Christians and heretic Bogomils, as well as by the rivalries of the Byzantine, Serbian, and Bulgarian empires, all long past their prime. And in the Balkans, as in Asia Minor, the Christian peasants frequently were so discontented that they offered little or no resistance to the Turkish onslaught.

These circumstances explain the extraordinary success of the Ottomans as they spread out from their base in Asia Minor. In 1384 they captured Sofia, and soon after they had control of all Bulgaria. Five years later they destroyed a south Slav army at the historic battle of Kossovo, which spelled the end of the Serbian Empire. These victories left Constantinople surrounded on all sides by Turkish territory. In 1453 the beleaguered capital was taken by assault, ending a thousand years of imperial history.

The Turks next turned southward against the rich Moslem states of Syria and Egypt. In a whirlwind campaign, they overran Syria in 1516 and Egypt the following year. The final phase of Ottoman conquest took place in central Europe. Under their famous Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, the Turks crossed the Danube River and in one stroke crushed the Hungarian state in the Mohacs Battle in 1526. Three years later, Suleiman laid siege to Vienna but was repulsed, partly because of torrential rains that prevented him from bringing up his heavy artillery. Despite

this setback, the Turks continued to make minor gains: Cyprus in 1570, Crete in 1669, and the Polish Ukraine in the following decade.

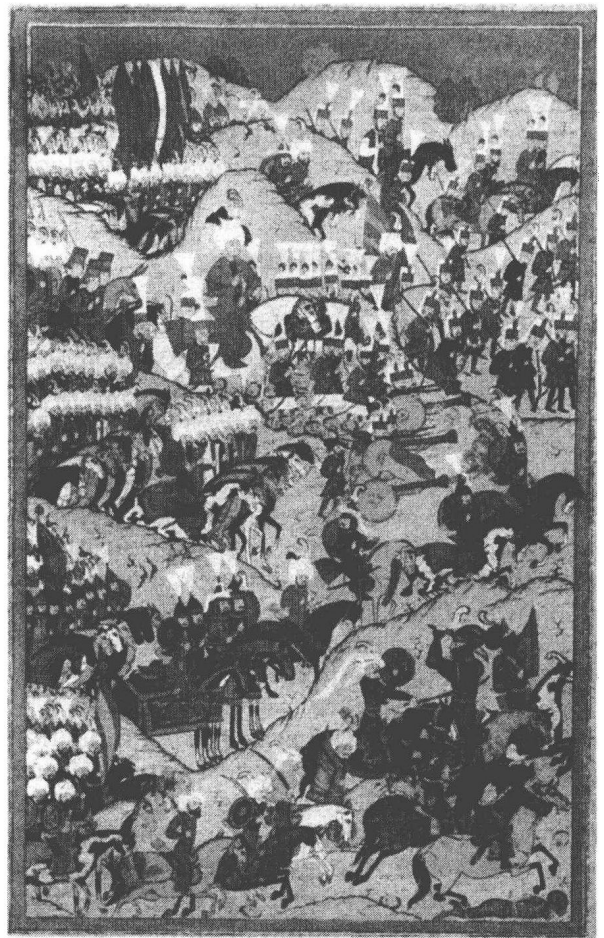
At its height, the Ottoman Empire was indeed a great imperial structure. Its heartland was Turkish Asia Minor, but the majority of the population consisted of Moslem Arabs to the south and Balkan Christians to the west. The empire sprawled over three continents and comprised some 50 million people, compared to the 5 million of contemporary England. Little wonder that Christians of the time looked on the ever-expanding Ottoman Empire with awe and described it as "a daily increasing flame, catching hold of whatsoever comes next, still to proceed further."¹

Safavid Empire

The second great Moslem empire of this period was the Safavid in Persia. That country had fallen under the Seljuk Turks, as had Asia Minor. But whereas Asia Minor had become Turkified, Persia remained Persian—or Iranian—in race and culture. Probably the explanation for this different outcome is that Persia had already become Moslem during the first stage of Islamic expansion in the seventh century, in contrast to Asia Minor, which had formerly been a part of the Christian Byzantine Empire. For this reason, Persia was not swamped by Moslem warriors as Asia Minor had been, and Persian society was left basically unchanged by the comparatively small ruling class of Turkish administrators and soldiers.

Persia remained under the Seljuk Turks from approximately 1000 C.E. to the Mongol invasion in 1258. The new Mongol rulers, known as the Il-Khans, were at first Buddhists or Christians, but about 1300 they became Moslems. Persia suffered considerable permanent damage from the Mongols, who destroyed many cities and irrigation systems, but this setback was overcome when the Il-Khan dynasty was replaced by the Safavid in 1500.

Shah Ismail I founded the new dynasty of Safavid monarchs, the first native Persian rulers in several centuries. In the twenty-four years of Ismail's reign, his military abilities and religious policy enabled him to unite the country. By his proclamation, the Shiite sect of Islam became the state religion, and through his ruthlessness,



The Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, battling the Hungarians.

the rival Sunnite sect was crushed. Persians identified themselves with Shiism, differentiating them from the Turks and other surrounding Moslem peoples who were mostly Sunnites.

The greatest of the Safavid rulers was Abbas I, the shah from 1587 to 1629. It was he who modernized the Persian army by building up its artillery units. Under his rule, Persia became an internationally recognized great power, as seen by the constant stream of envoys from European countries who sought an alliance with Persia against the Ottoman Empire. In fact, both these Moslem states figured prominently in European diplomacy during these years. Francis I of France, for example, cooperated with Suleiman the Magnificent in fighting against the Hapsburg Emperor Charles V. And the Hapsburgs, in turn, cooperated with the Persians

against their two common foes. These relationships between Christian and Moslem states were denounced at the time as "impious" and "sacrilegious," but the fact was that the Ottoman and Safavid empires had become world powers that no European diplomat could afford to overlook.

Mogul Empire

Just as two outstanding Safavid rulers founded a "national" dynasty in Persia, so two outstanding Mogul rulers—Babur and Akbar—founded a "national" dynasty in India, a very remarkable achievement for Moslem rulers in a predominantly Hindu country.

The Moslems came to India in three waves, widely separated in time. The first consisted of Arab Moslems who invaded the Sind region near the mouth of the Indus in 712 C.E. These Arabs were unable to push far inland, so their influence on India was limited.

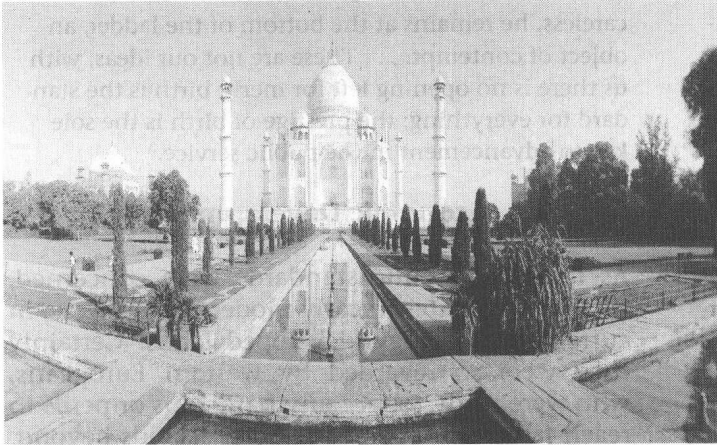
The second wave came in about 1000, when Turkish Moslems began raiding India from bases in Afghanistan. These raids continued intermittently for four centuries, with much loss of life and property. The net result was that numerous Moslem kingdoms were established in northern India, whereas southern India remained a conglomeration of Hindu states. But even in northern India the mass of the people continued to be Indians in race and Hindu in religion. They did not become Islamicized and Turkified, as did the people of Asia Minor. The explanation again is that Turks who came down from the north were an insignificant minority compared to India's teeming millions. They could fill only the top positions in the government and the armed forces. Their Hindu subjects were the ones who tilled the land, worked in the bazaars, and comprised most of the bureaucracy. In certain regions, it is true, large sections of the population did turn to Islam, especially some depressed castes who sought relief from their exploitation in the new religion. Yet the fact remains that India was an overwhelmingly Hindu country when the third Moslem wave struck in 1500 with the appearance of the Moguls.

The newcomers again were Turks, their leader being the colorful Babur, a direct descen-

dent of the great Turkish conqueror Timur, or Tamerlane. In 1524 Babur, with a small force of 12,000 men armed with matchlock muskets and artillery, defeated an Indian army of 100,000. After his victory, Babur occupied Delhi, his new capital. Four years later he died, but his sons followed his path, and the empire grew rapidly. It reached its height during the reign of Babur's grandson, the famous Akbar, who ruled from 1556 to 1605.

Akbar was by far the most outstanding of the Mogul emperors. He rounded out his Indian possessions by conquering Rajputana and Gujarat in the west, Bengal in the east, and several small states in the Deccan peninsula in the south. Mogul rule now extended from Kabul and Kashmir to the Deccan, and later under Aurangzeb (1658–1707) it extended still further—almost to the southern tip of the peninsula. In addition to his military exploits, Akbar was a remarkable personality of great versatility and a wide range of interests. Although illiterate, he had a keen and inquiring mind that won the grudging admiration of Jesuits who knew him well. The astonishing range of his activities is reminiscent of Peter the Great. Like his Russian counterpart, Akbar had a strong mechanical bent, as evidenced in his metallurgical work and in his designs for a gun with increased firepower. He learned to draw, loved music, was an expert polo player, and played various instruments, the kettledrum being his favorite. Akbar even evolved an entirely new religion of his own, the Din Ilahi, or "Divine Faith." It was eclectic, with borrowings from many sources, especially from the Parsees, the Jains, and the Hindus. Akbar hoped that a common faith would unite his Hindu and Moslem subjects. But in practice, it had little impact on the country. It was too intellectual to appeal to the masses, and even at court there were few converts.

What Akbar failed to achieve by his synthetic faith, he did by ending discriminatory practices against Hindus and establishing their equality with Moslems. He abolished the pilgrim tax that Hindus had been required to pay when traveling to their sacred shrines. He ended the poll tax on Hindus, a standard levy on nonbelievers in all Moslem countries. Akbar also opened the top state positions to Hindus, who now ceased to look on the Mogul Empire as an



The Taj Mahal. Probably the most beautiful tomb in the world, the Taj was built from 1631 to 1653 by Shah Jahan for his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Located on the south bank of the Yamuna River at Agra, the Mughal capital, the Taj Mahal remains the jewel of Mughal architecture.

enemy organization. A new India was beginning to emerge, as Akbar had dreamed—a national state rather than a divided land of Moslem masters and a Hindu subject majority.

II. SPLENDOR OF MOSLEM EMPIRES

Military Strength

All three of the Moslem empires were first-class military powers. Eloquent proof is to be found in the appeal sent in December 1525 by the king of France, Francis I, to the Ottoman sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent. The appeal was for a Turkish attack on the Holy Roman emperor and head of the House of Hapsburg, Charles V. Suleiman responded in 1526 by crossing the Danube, overrunning Hungary, and easing the pressure on Francis. This was only one of many Ottoman expeditions that not only aided the French—and incidentally provided the Turks with additional territories and booty—but also saved the Lutheran heretics by distracting Hapsburg attention from Germany to the threatened Danubian frontiers. It is paradoxical that Moslem military power should have contributed substantially to the cause of Protestantism in its critical formative stage.

Moslem military forces generally lagged behind those of Europe in artillery equipment. They depended on the Europeans for the most advanced weapons and for the most experienced gunners. The discrepancy, however, was one of degree only. It was not a case of the Moslem

empires being defenseless because of lack of artillery. Plenty of equipment was available, though it was not as efficient and as well-manned as were the best contemporary European armies. The Moslems, and especially the Turks, were shrewd enough to pay for both Western artillery and artillerymen, but they lacked the technology and the industries to keep up with the rapid progress of Western armaments.

On the other hand, European observers were impressed by the vast military manpower of the Moslem world. It is estimated that the permanent regular forces of the whole of India at the time of Akbar totaled well over 1 million men, or more than double the size of the Indian armies in 1914. Furthermore, these huge military establishments were well trained and disciplined when the Moslem empires were at their height. For obvious geographic reasons, Europeans were most familiar with the Ottoman armed forces, with whom they had a good deal of firsthand experience. After this experience the Europeans were very impressed and respectful. Typical were the reports of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, Hapsburg ambassador to Constantinople during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent. After Busbecq inspected an Ottoman army camp in 1555, he wrote home as follows:

It makes me shudder to think of what the result of a struggle between such different systems [as the Hapsburg and the Ottoman] must be. . . . On their side is the vast wealth of their empire, unimpaired resources, experience and practice in arms, a veteran soldiery, an uninterrupted series of victories, readiness to endure

hardships, union, order, discipline, thrift, and watchfulness. On ours are found an empty exchequer, luxurious habits, exhausted resources, broken spirits, a raw and insubordinate soldiery, and greedy generals; there is no regard for discipline, license runs riot, the men indulge in drunkenness and debauchery, and, worst of all, the enemy are accustomed to victory, we, to defeat. Can we doubt what the result must be? The only obstacle is Persia, whose position on his rear forces the invader to take precautions. The fear of Persia gives a respite, but it is only for a time.²

Administrative Efficiency

All heads of Moslem states had absolute power over their subjects. Accordingly, the quality of the administration depended on the quality of the imperial heads. In the sixteenth century, they were men of extraordinary abilities. Certainly Suleiman and Abbas and Akbar were the equals of any monarchs anywhere in the world. Akbar had a well-organized bureaucracy whose ranks were expressed in terms of cavalry commands. Excellent pay and the promise of rapid advance in the Mogul service attracted the best men in India and from abroad. It is estimated that 70 percent of the bureaucracy consisted of foreigners such as Persians and Afghans. The rest were Indian Moslems and Hindus. Upon the death of an official, his wealth was inherited by the emperor, and his rank became vacant. This practice lessened the evils of corruption and hereditary tenure that plagued Western countries at the time.

Since Akbar opened his bureaucracy to all his subjects, ability rather than religion became the criterion for appointment and advancement. Busbecq in Constantinople made precisely the same point about the Ottoman administrative system:

In making his appointments the Sultan pays no regard to any pretensions on the score of wealth or rank. . . . He considers each case on its own merits, and examines carefully into the character, ability, and disposition of the man whose promotion is in question. It is by merit that men rise in the service, a system which ensures that posts should only be assigned to the competent. . . . Among the Turks, therefore, honours, high posts, and judgeships are the rewards of great ability and good service. If a man be dishonest, or lazy, or

careless, he remains at the bottom of the ladder, an object of contempt. . . . These are not our ideas, with us there is no opening left for merit; birth is the standard for everything; the prestige of birth is the sole key to advancement in the public service.³

Economic Development

As far as economic standards were concerned, the Moslem states in early modern times were, in current phraseology, developed lands. Certainly they were so regarded by western Europeans, who were ready to face any hardships or perils to reach fabled India and the Spice Islands beyond. Closer to home, the Ottoman Empire was an impressive economic unit. Its vast extent assured it of virtual self-sufficiency. For most Europeans, more dazzling than the Ottoman Empire was far-off, exotic India, the weaver of fabulous textiles, especially fine cotton fabrics unequaled anywhere in the world. India was the country that, since the early days of the Roman Empire, had drained gold and silver away from Europe.

As significant as the wealth of the Moslem empires was the control of south Asian commerce by Moslem merchants. Particularly important was the trade in spices, which were eagerly sought after in a world that knew so little of the art of conserving foodstuffs apart from salting. For centuries the spices, together with many other goods such as silk from China and cotton fabrics from India, were transported back and forth along two sets of trade routes. The northern land routes extended from the Far East through central Asia to ports on the Black Sea and Asia Minor; the southern sea routes, from the East Indies and India along the Indian Ocean and up the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea to ports in Syria and Egypt. With the collapse of the Mongol Empire, conditions in central Asia became so anarchical that the northern routes were virtually closed after 1340. Henceforth, most of the products were funneled along the southern sea routes, which by that time were dominated by Moslem merchants.

This commerce contributed substantially to the prosperity of the Moslem world. It provided not only government revenue in the form of customs duties but also a source of livelihood for thousands of merchants, clerks, sailors, shipbuilders, camel drivers, and stevedores, who

were connected directly or indirectly with the trade. The extent of the profits is indicated by the fact that articles from India were sold to Italian middlemen in Alexandria at a markup of over 2,000 percent.

When the Portuguese broke into the Indian Ocean in 1498, they quickly gained control of much of this lucrative commerce. But they did so because their ships and guns, rather than their goods or business techniques, were superior. In fact, we shall find that the Portuguese at first were embarrassed because they had little to offer in return for the commodities they coveted. They were rescued from this predicament only by the flood of bullion that soon was to pour in from the mines of Mexico and Peru.

III. DECLINE OF MOSLEM EMPIRES

The Moslem world of the sixteenth century was most impressive. Suleiman, Akbar, and Abbas ruled empires that were at least the equals of those in other parts of the globe, and yet these empires began to go downhill during the seventeenth century. By the following century they

were far behind western Europe, and they have remained behind to the present day.

One explanation is the deterioration of the ruling dynasties. Suleiman the Magnificent was succeeded in 1566 by Selim II, who was lazy, fat, dissipated, and so addicted to wine that he was known to his subjects as Selim the Sot. The same thing happened in Persia after Abbas, and in India after Akbar. Dynastic decline, however, was not the only factor responsible for the blight of the Moslem lands. All the European royal families had their share of incapable and irresponsible rulers, yet their countries did not go down with them.

A more basic explanation for the misfortunes of the Moslem world was that it lacked the dynamism of Europe. It did not have those far-reaching changes that were revolutionizing European society during these centuries (as we shall see in Chapters 22 and 23). In the Moslem economic field, for example, there were no basic changes in agriculture, in industry, in financial methods, or in commercial organization. A traveler in the Moslem lands in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries would have observed essentially the same economic practices and institu-

The battle of Lepanto occurred off the coast of Greece on October 7, 1571. In the largest naval engagement of the sixteenth century, the Spanish and their Italian allies under Don John of Austria smashed the Turkish fleet and ended the Ottoman threat in the western Mediterranean.



OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN DECLINE

*The British consul and merchant William Eton lived in the Ottoman Empire for many years at the end of the eighteenth century. His colorful report on Ottoman conditions and institutions reflects how far the empire had declined since its days of glory.**

General knowledge is, from these causes, little if at all cultivated; every man is supposed to know his own business or profession, with which it is esteemed foolish and improper for any other person to interfere. The man of general science, a character so frequent and so useful in Christian Europe, is unknown; and any one, but a mere artificer, who should concern himself with the founding of cannon, the building of ships, or the like, would be esteemed little better than a madman. The natural consequence of these narrow views is, that the professors of any art or science are themselves profoundly ignorant, and that the greatest absurdities are mixed with all their speculations. . . .

From the mufti to the peasant it is generally believed, that there are seven heavens, from which the earth is immovably suspended by a large chain; that the sun is an immense ball of fire, at least as big as the whole Ottoman province, formed for the sole purpose of giving light and heat to the earth; that eclipses of the moon are occasioned by a great dragon attempting to devour that luminary; that the fixed stars hang by chains from the highest heaven &c. &c. . . .

They distinguish different Christian states by different appellations of contempt. Epithets which the Turks apply to those who are not Osmanlis, and which they often use to denominate their nation:

Albanians	gut-sellers
Armenians	t-rd-eaters, dirt-eaters, also pack-carriers

Bosniaks and Bulgarians	vagabonds
Christians	idolaters
Dutch	cheese-mongers
English	atheists
Flemmings	panders
French	faithless
Georgians	louse-eaters
Germans	infidel blasphemers
Greeks of the islands	hares
Italians or Franks	many-coloured
Jews	mangy dogs
Moldavians	drones
Poles	insolent infidels
Russians	mad infidels
Spaniards	lazy
Tatars	carrion-eaters
Walachians	gypsies

It is a certain fact, that a few years ago a learned man of the law having lost an eye, and being informed that there was then at Constantinople an European who made false eyes, not to be distinguished from the natural, he immediately procured one; but when it was placed in the socket, he flew into a violent passion with the eye-maker, abusing him as an impostor, because he could not see with it. The man, fearing he should lose his pay, assured him that in time he would see as well with that eye as with the other. The effendi was appeased, and the artist liberally rewarded, who having soon disposed of the remainder of his eyes, left the Turks in expectation of seeing with them. . . .

*W. Eton, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*, 4th ed. (London, 1809), pp. 190-93.

tions as the Crusaders had seen five hundred years earlier. As long as the rulers were strong and enlightened, the autocratic empires functioned smoothly and effectively, as Busbecq reported. But when central authority weakened, the courtiers, bureaucratic officials, and army

officers all combined to fleece the productive classes of society, whether peasants or artisans or merchants. Their uncontrollable extortions stifled private enterprise and incentive. Any subject who showed signs of wealth was fair game for arbitrary confiscation. Consequently, mer-

chants hid their wealth rather than openly invest it to expand their operations.

Another cause and symptom of decline was the blind superiority complex of the Moslems, with their attitude of invincibility vis-à-vis the West. It never occurred to them at this time that they might conceivably learn anything from *giaours*, or nonbelievers. Their attitude stemmed partly from religious prejudice and partly from the spectacular successes of Islam in the past. Islam had grown from an obscure sect to the world's largest and most rapidly growing religion. Consequently, Moslem officials and scholars looked down with arrogance on anything relating to Christian Europe. As late as 1756, when the French ambassador in Constantinople announced the alliance between France and Austria that marked a turning point in the diplomatic history of Europe, he was curtly informed that the Ottoman government did not concern itself "about the union of one hog with another."⁴ This attitude was perhaps understandable in the sixteenth century; in the eighteenth it was suicidal.

One of the most damaging results of this self-centeredness was that it let down an intellectual iron curtain between the Moslem world and the West, especially in the increasingly important field of science. Moslem scholars knew virtually nothing of the epoch-making achievements of Paracelsus in medicine; Vesalius and Harvey in anatomy; and Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo in astronomy. Not only were they ignorant of these scientific advances, but also Moslem science itself had stagnated, with little impetus for new discoveries in the future.

A final factor explaining Moslem decline is that the three great Moslem empires were all land empires. They were built by the Turks, the Persians, and the Moguls, all peoples with no seafaring traditions. Their empires faced inward toward central Asia rather than outward toward the oceans. The rulers of these empires were not vitally interested in overseas trade. Therefore they responded feebly, if at all, when Portugal seized control of the Indian Ocean trade routes.

This situation was significant, because it allowed the Europeans to become the masters of the world trade routes with little opposition from the Moslems, who hitherto had controlled most of the trade between Asia and Europe. The repercussions were far-reaching. The control of

world trade enriched the Europeans tremendously and further stimulated their economic, social, and political development. Thus a vicious circle developed, with worldwide trade making western Europe increasingly wealthy, productive, dynamic, and expansionist, while the once-formidable Moslem empires, taking little part in the new world economy, remained static and fell further and further behind.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Directly relevant to this chapter is the excellent collection of sources by J. J. Saunders, ed., *The Moslem World on the Eve of Europe's Expansion* (Prentice Hall, 1966). The spread of Islam from the time of Mohammed to the end of the nineteenth century is well described by T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, rev. ed. (Constable, 1913).

For the various Islam empires, see H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Parts 1 and 2 (Oxford University, 1950, 1957); H. Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972); the multivolume *Cambridge History of Iran* (Cambridge, 1968ff.); N. Itkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (University of Chicago, 1980); the sprightly written S. Wolpert, *A New History of India* (Oxford University, 1977); and R. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveller of the Fourteenth Century* (University of California, 1986), which presents a revealing overview of the Moslem world.

Finally, on the decline of the Moslem Empires, see J. J. Saunders, "The Problem of Islamic Decadence," *Journal of World History*, 7 (1963), 701-720; T. Stoianovich, "Factors in the Decline of Ottoman Society in the Balkans," *Slavic Review*, 21 (December 1962), 623-632; and B. Lewis, "Some Reflections on the Decline of the Ottoman Empire," in C. M. Cipolla, ed., *The Economic Decline of Empires* (Methuen, 1970), pp. 215-234.

NOTES

1. Mehmed Pasha, *Ottoman Statecraft: The Book of Counsel for Vezirs and Governors*, W. L. Wright, ed. and trans. (Princeton University, 1935), p. 21.
2. C. T. Foster and F. H. B. Daniell, eds., *The Life and Letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq* (London, 1881), pp. 221, 222.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 154, 155.
4. Cited by W. Eton, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire* (London, 1809), p. 10.



CHAPTER

19

Confucian World at the Time of the West's Expansion

One need not be obsessed with the merits of the Chinese to recognize that the organization of their empire is in truth the best that the world has ever seen.

Voltaire, 1764

Corresponding to the Moslem world in the Middle East and south Asia was the Confucian world in east Asia. Just as the Moslem world was dominated by the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mogul empires, so the Confucian world was dominated by China, with Korea and Japan on the periphery. The two worlds were similar in one fundamental respect: They were both agrarian-based and inward-looking societies. Their tempo of change was slow and within the framework inherited from earlier times. On the other hand, the Confucian world differed substantially from the Moslem because of its much greater unity. China had no indigestible minority blocs comparable to the various Balkan Christians in the Ottoman Empire, and no religious divisions comparable to the Hindus and Moslems in the Mogul Empire. This cohesiveness of China was not a recent phe-

nomenon. It dated back for millennia to the beginnings of Chinese civilization and has persisted to the present day. Indeed, the Chinese civilization is the oldest continuous civilization in the world.

I. CONTINUITY OF CHINESE CIVILIZATION

One reason for the longevity of the Chinese civilization is geographic, for China is isolated from the world's other great civilizations to an unprecedented degree. China has nothing comparable to the Mediterranean, which linked Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, or the Indian Ocean, which allowed India to interact with the Middle East, Africa, and south Asia. Instead, during most of its history, China was effectively cut off on all sides by mountains,