

Land-Based Empires

AP World History ■ Unit 3

AP World History



What we will cover

- 1 How the Land Empires Expanded
- 2 Administration
- 3 Legitimacy and Belief
- 4 Comparison in Land-Based Empires

How the Land Empires Expanded

Unit 3 covers the great **land-based empires** 陆基帝国 of roughly 1450 to 1750. Four questions organise it: how they expanded, how they governed, how they paid for themselves, and how they used religion.

- The **Manchu (Qing)** 满清 in Central and East Asia.
- The **Mughal** 莫卧儿 in South Asia.
- The **Ottoman** 奥斯曼 in the eastern Mediterranean and beyond.
- The **Safavid** 萨法维 in Persia.

How the Land Empires Expanded, continued

Expansion relied on the **increased use of gunpowder, cannons, and armed trade** 火药、火炮与武装贸易 – which is why these are often called the **gunpowder empires** 火药帝国.

Access to gunpowder weapons let a central ruler overpower regional rivals and fortified nobles, so military technology and political centralisation grew together.

Administration

	Ottoman	Safavid	Mughal	Manchu (Qing)
Who staffs the state?	devshirme recruits officials and janissaries	ghulams - an enslaved-elite corps	mansabdars ranked in imperial service	the examination system continues
Where does the revenue come from?	tax farming - the right to collect is sold	land revenue and silk trade	zamindars - hereditary local landholders	direct taxation, hard currency
What makes rule legitimate?	caliphal claim; mosque complexes	Shi'ism as the state religion	monumental building; tolerance under Akbar	Mandate of Heaven; imperial portraits

all four expanded with gunpowder - they DIFFER in how they then governed

the distinction this unit turns on

Administration

Rulers faced the same problem: how to control territory far from the capital.
The CED names the tools they used.

Legitimacy and Belief

Rulers continued to use **religious ideas, art, and monumental architecture** 宗教观念、艺术与纪念性建筑 to legitimise their rule – Mughal mosques and mausolea, Ottoman mosque complexes, Qing imperial portraits, and European palaces such as Versailles all do the same work.

- The **Protestant Reformation** 新教改革 marked a break with existing Christian traditions and led to sustained religious and political conflict in Europe.
- Political rivalry between the **Ottoman and Safavid** empires intensified the **Sunni-Shia split** 逊尼派与什叶派分裂, showing how state rivalry can deepen a religious division.
- **Sikhism** 锡克教 developed in South Asia in a context of interaction between Hinduism and Islam.

Comparison in Land-Based Empires

The unit's reasoning skill is **comparison**, and the productive comparisons are about **method**, not size:

- Recruiting officials by **examination** (Qing) against by **enslaved-elite systems** (Ottoman devshirme, Safavid ghulams).
- **Tax farming** (Ottoman) against **land-revenue intermediaries** (Mughal zamindars) against **direct taxation** (Ming hard currency).
- Legitimacy through **religious identity** (Safavid Shi'ism as state religion) against through **tolerance of diversity** (Mughal policy under Akbar).

Exam tips

- Say **why** gunpowder mattered: it let central rulers overpower regional rivals, so military change and centralisation go together.
- Learn the four empires by their **administrative method**, not their territory – devshirme, examinations, zamindars, ghulams.
- **Tax farming** sells the right to collect; a **zamindar** is a hereditary landholder. Questions turn on that difference.
- Monumental architecture is **evidence of legitimation**, not decoration. Say what it was doing.
- The **Ottoman-Safavid** rivalry is the example of political conflict deepening a religious divide.
- Comparisons should be one **function** performed two ways, with the consequence stated.