

Muslim Empires

*The Emergence of the First
Global Age (1450–1750)*



The Ottoman Empire

The Safavid Empire

The Mughal Empire

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Religion and thought



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will have learned about the Safavid Empire, and be able to answer the following key questions:

- What was the origin of the Safavid Empire and how did it expand?
- Who were the great Safavid leaders?
- Why did the Safavid Empire end?





The **Safavids** began as a Shi'ite Muslim brotherhood living in the region between the Ottoman and Mughal empires.

In order to protect themselves from these two great powers, the Safavids created a strong military. Between 1499 and 1501, a 12-year-old named **Isma'il** used this army to conquer the area of Persia that is now Iran.

Isma'il declared himself **shah** of the empire and made **Shi'a Islam** the state religion. Those who did not convert were executed.



What might be some advantages and disadvantages of having a single state religion?



Isma'il clashed with the Ottoman sultan Selim the Grim, who executed all Shi'a Muslims living in his empire.

The two met in the Battle of Chaldiran (1514), where an Ottoman victory determined the western border of the Safavid Empire.



However, with the use of new artillery technology, Isma'il's son Tahmasp expanded the Empire north to the Caucasus Mountains.





Abbas the Great



Abbas the Great presided over the Golden Age of the Safavid Empire. Watch this animation to learn about his policies.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Decline of the Safavid Empire



Like Suleiman of the Ottoman Empire, Abbas killed his most able sons, leaving the dynasty in the hands of weak and incompetent shahs.

These rulers were unable to meet the challenges of declining trade and new attacks from the Mughals and Russian tsars.

Many Safavid shahs ignored these problems in favor of continuing their expensive lifestyles. The last independent Safavid shah died in 1722, and the dynasty officially ended in 1760.





This map shows the extent of the Safavid Empire in 1683, as well as the lines of modern-day countries. Drag the name of each modern country to the correct place on the map.

Press **start** to begin.

start





True or false?

Read the following statements
about the Safavid Empire and
decide whether each one is
true or false.

Press **start** to begin.

start

