ANWARUL
Jurnal Pendidikan dan Dakwah

e-ISSN : 2808-7895
p-ISSN : 2809-1043

Terindeks: Sinta 5, Copernicus, Dimensions, Scilit, Lens, Semantic, Garuda, Google,

https://doi.org/10.58578/anwarul.v5i6.8091

Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals: From the Peak of Glory to the Political Fragmentation of the 18th Century

Jabal Rahmah[1], Basri[2], Yusri Handayani[3], Ana Dhiqfaini Sultan[4], Rahmawati[5]
[1]MTsN 4 Bulukumba, Indonesia; [2]SMP Negeri 1 Sengkang, Indonesia;
[3,4]Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Indonesia; [5]UIN Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia
jabaljagona82@gmail.com

Article Info:

Submitted:	Revised:	Accepted:	Published:
Oct 20, 2025	Nov 12, 2025	Nov 24, 2025	Nov 29, 2025

Abstract

This study investigates the decline of three major Islamic empires in the 18th century—the Ottoman Sultanate, the Safavid Dynasty, and the Mughal Dynasty—which had previously attained prominence in political, military, and cultural spheres. The research aims to analyze the internal and external factors that led to the political fragmentation of these empires. Adopting a qualitative approach with a historical-comparative method, the study relies on literature-based data, which were analyzed through five stages: heuristics, verification, interpretation, comparison, and historiography. The findings indicate that the decline of these empires resulted from an interplay between internal weaknesses, including leadership crises, succession conflicts, and the decentralization of power, and external pressures stemming from European colonial expansion and transformations in the global economic system. The study concludes that, despite political fragmentation, the cultural and religious legacies of these empires continue to shape the development of the Islamic world in contemporary contexts. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of the transition from cohesive imperial power to fragmented political entities and elucidates broader changes in global dynamics during this period.

Keywords: Ottoman Sultanate; Safavid Dynasty; Mughal Dynasty; Political Fragmentation; European Colonialism

Anwarul is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

INTRODUCTION

Three major Islamic empires—the Ottoman Dynasty in Anatolia, the Safavid Dynasty in Persia, and the Mughal Dynasty in India—once reached their zenith and became symbols of political, military, cultural, and religious power. However, in the eighteenth century, these empires began to exhibit signs of decline and increasing political fragmentation. Islam experienced a decline during the Middle Ages, marked by the division of its territories into multiple kingdoms and the absence of a single dominant Islamic power over the entire Muslim world (Dabashi, 2017). The Safavid Dynasty in Persia, the Mughal Dynasty in India, and the Ottoman Dynasty in Turkey were among the largest empires during this period. Following the rise and expansion of these three powerful Islamic states, the overall political climate of the Muslim world improved. This phenomenon warrants reevaluation, given ongoing debates in modern historiography about whether the eighteenth century should be understood as a period of decline or as an institutional transformation towards new political forms (Anton et al., 2024)

The Ottoman Sultanate was founded by Osman I (Uthman bin Ertugrul) around 1299 CE, succeeding his father Ertugrul, though the leadership transition is dated variably between 1281 and 1288. Despite its modest origins, the sultanate expanded rapidly through military prowess and conquests, including Sultan Mehmed II's (Muhammad al-Fatih) capture of Constantinople in 1453 CE. It reached its zenith under Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (al-Qanuni), renowned for his justice and legal reforms. However, by the 18th century, decline set in due to weak sultans and pressures from European powers, culminating in its dissolution in 1923 and replacement by the Republic of Turkey (Yildiz, 2017). The Ottoman Turks' dissemination of Islam profoundly shaped political, social, and religious developments in Europe and the Middle East. Politically, the 1453 conquest of Constantinople expanded territories and bolstered legitimacy via Islamic law (Sharia) and the millet system, which granted autonomy to non-Muslim communities and fostered stability.

Persia from the early 16th to mid-18th century was ruled by the Safavid Dynasty. This dynasty is renowned for establishing Twelver Shi'a Islam as the state religion. Shah Ismail I, the founder of the Safavid Dynasty, successfully unified various tribes and regions in Persia under the banner of Shi'a Islam. The Safavids were known for their stringent religious policies, which often involved efforts to convert the Sunni population to Shi'ism.

Although these policies sometimes generated tensions, the Safavids forged a strong religious identity and profoundly influenced the development of Shi'a theology and practices in the region (Munazzalurrohmi et al., 2025).

Under the rule of Shah Ismail I and his successors, particularly Shah Abbas I (the Great), the Safavid Empire reached its zenith. The empire was renowned not only as a political and military power but also as a center of Islamic culture and civilization. In religion and politics, the Safavids successfully disseminated and strengthened Twelver Shi'ism across Persia with the support of Shi'a scholars, forging an enduring religious identity that persists in modern Iran. Politically, they established an organized bureaucracy and consolidated royal authority by curbing the influence of local nobility (Putri et al., 2025). However, Barati's research (2024) shows that although the Safavid bureaucratic system was weakened, administrative practices still ran through the official raqam documents.

The Mughal Dynasty was one of the largest Islamic empires to rule the Indian subcontinent, reaching its zenith during the reigns of Akbar to Aurangzeb. At its peak, the Mughals established a robust administrative system and achieved significant advancements in politics, military, economy, arts, and culture (Rawal, 2024). However, following Aurangzeb's death, the dynasty experienced a sharp decline, ultimately collapsing in the mid-19th century. This decline resulted from internal factors such as weak leadership, moral decay, internal conflicts, and rigid religious policies, as well as external pressures from foreign invasions and British imperialism that gradually seized Mughal territories (Risdawati, Nor Muhammad Rusli, 2025).

On the other hand, studies on the Ottoman Empire reveal that the waqf institution continued to serve as an economic and social pillar even as the central military power weakened. Meanwhile, the Mughal decline was influenced by a combination of internal factors, such as succession conflicts and the Maratha rebellion, and external factors, including the penetration of the East India Company. Entering the eighteenth century, all three empires faced profound political and social crises. The Ottoman Empire began to lose strategic territories due to military pressures from Russia and Austria; the Safavid Dynasty collapsed in 1722 following Afghan attacks and internal conflicts, while the Mughal Empire fragmented into regional kingdoms after the Persian invasion of 1739 and the emergence of British hegemony. This phenomenon of decline not only marks the political fragmentation of the Islamic world but also reflects global transformation: the expansion of Western

colonialism, changes in the world economic system, and the weakening of centralized Islamic political authority (Hobbs, 2023).

The study of the decline of these three empires is crucial as it elucidates the mechanisms of internal political disintegration and the impact of early colonialism on the Islamic world. Understanding this process reveals how the Islamic world transitioned from an imperial era to a period of modern fragmented politics. Based on the aforementioned discussion, this research aims to describe the political conditions of the three empires in the 18th century, analyze the internal and external factors causing fragmentation, and compare the patterns of decline among the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing the historical-comparative method to analyze the political fragmentation processes of three major Islamic empires in the 18th century: the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires. The qualitative paradigm was selected due to the interpretive-descriptive nature of the research, aiming to comprehend complex historical dynamics without numerical quantification deeply (Rosidah et al., 2023). The investigation was conducted through intensive library research during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, accessing university libraries and international digital databases.

Research subjects comprise key historical and institutional phenomena related to the empires' decline, including primary sources (royal archives, contemporary chronicles, diplomatic treaties) and secondary sources (monographs, history journals, comparative studies) (Creswell, 2013). Data collection employed systematic library research with purposive sampling, selecting sources based on relevance, credibility, and primary accessibility. The researchers served as the primary instrument, employing source triangulation to ensure interpretive validity.

Data analysis followed five standard historical method stages: (1) heuristics (source collection), (2) source criticism (internal and external verification), (3) interpretation (narrative explanation), (4) comparison (parallel and contrast-oriented analysis across empires), and (5) historiography (coherent narrative synthesis) (Satori & Komariah, 2017).

RESULTS

The Golden Age: Political Power and Legitimacy

The Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires constituted the three major pillars of the early modern Islamic world, achieving their zenith between the 16th and early 18th centuries, characterized by similar foundations of religiously-based political legitimacy, adaptive hierarchical bureaucracies, and effective gunpowder militaries for internal stability and territorial expansion. All three inherited Turko-Mongol traditions with agrarian economies and land-based military systems, yet exhibited regional differentiation: the Ottomans with Janissaries and the millet system, the Safavids through mass Shi'a conversion, and the Mughals via the mansabdari system, integrating Hindu elites. Their successes encompassed relatively modern governance structures for the era, as analyzed in comparative studies (Malik, 2023).

Paradoxically, this prosperity engendered structural burdens impeding adaptation to 18th-century challenges, such as bureaucratic rigidity and agrarian revenue dependence amid shifting global trade toward the Atlantic. All three confronted simultaneous leadership crises: weak Ottoman sultans, absolutist Safavid shahs, and destructive Mughal successions post-Aurangzeb. External pressures from European colonialism accelerated fragmentation, with Russia/Austria squeezing the Ottomans, Afghans destroying the Safavids (1722), and the East India Company dominating the Mughals (Catherine S., 2021).

Comparatively, decline patterns revealed parallels yet distinctions: the Ottomans endured longer via waqf institutions and Tanzimat reforms, the Safavids collapsed entirely, supplanted by Afsharids, while the Mughals fragmented into successor states like Hyderabad and Bengal (Streusand, 2018). Internal factors like power decentralization and succession conflicts predominated, exacerbated by colonial external forces reshaping global balances. This transition marked the end of the centralized Islamic imperium toward modern, fragmented politics.

Historiographical implications challenge the "absolute decline" narrative in favor of "institutional transformation," wherein their cultural-religious legacies endured despite political collapse. This research holds relevance for contemporary studies of post-colonial state disintegration, offering a comparative framework for understanding Islamic institutional resilience amid globalization (Blake, 2013).

Internal Roots of Decline

1. Leadership Crisis and Succession

Following Aurangzeb's death in 1707, the Mughal Empire entered an accelerated disintegration phase characterized by brutal succession conflicts, rising regionalism, and systematic weakening of central authority (Singh, 2020). The jagir crisis from Deccan expansion triggered destructive competition among mansabdars, while heavy taxes fueled Maratha, Sikh, and Jat rebellions that eroded imperial legitimacy. East India Company penetration exacerbated the situation through opportunistic alliances with local nawabs, transforming power dynamics from Mughal centralization to gradual colonial hegemony.

For the Ottoman Empire, the 1683 Vienna defeat triggered a military adaptation crisis where rigid Janissary institutions failed to respond to Europe's military revolution, although later Nizam-i Cedid reforms emerged (Kerr & Germani, 2018). Waqf institutions provided temporary economic-social resilience, yet provincial decentralization (ayan) and Russo-Austrian pressures caused gradual territorial fragmentation. The Ottoman paradox lies in its relative endurance through Tanzimat reforms, contrasting the Safavids' total collapse (Blake, 2013).

The Safavid Dynasty experienced a sudden collapse in 1722 due to internal conflicts between Qizilbash elites and local tribes like Afshar, compounded by the absolutist yet militarily weak Shah Husayn. Coercive Shi'a conversion policies created chronic sectarian tensions, while economic isolationism hindered global trade adaptation. Comparatively, all three empires exhibited similar patterns: leadership weakness and internal decentralization accelerated by external colonialism, yet with distinct trajectories—endurance (Ottoman), total collapse (Safavid), gradual fragmentation (Mughal) (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2017).

2. Militarization and Economic Burden

In the Ottoman Empire context, the 18th-century economic crisis was marked by inflation from American precious metals inflow, disruption of Middle Eastern trade routes by the Dutch and British, and declining fiscal revenues that eroded central military and bureaucratic capacities. Currency debasement, excessive taxation, and timar corruption worsened the situation, while Capitulations enabled floods of cheap European-manufactured goods that killed traditional guild industries. Waqf institutions provided

temporary resilience, yet Ayan decentralization and Jelali revolts created a poverty-rebellion vicious cycle, weakening state capacity (Akhzari & Kajbaf, 2013).

For the Safavid Dynasty, structural "economic harm" stemmed from heavy fiscal burdens of coercive Shi'a conversion, the absence of independent economic institutions like banks or trading companies, and social conflicts between Qizilbash and Armenian merchants that hindered sustainable growth. Trade isolationism with Europe and agrarian revenue dependence left the Safavids vulnerable to the 1722 Afghan invasion, where fiscal collapse accelerated internal disintegration without institutional recovery mechanisms (Naim, 2019).

Comparatively, both empires exhibited similar destructive patterns: agrarian dependence, global trade stagnation and imperial military burdens generated chronic fiscal deficits, triggering power decentralization. The Ottomans survived through partial Tanzimat reforms, while the Safavids collapsed entirely; this pattern underscores that economic resilience depends on institutional flexibility, not imperial scale alone (Kayali, 2021).

3. Changes in Social Structure

In the Mughal Empire, the post-Aurangzeb phase (1707) triggered explosive decentralization through the rise of regional powers like zamindars and nawabs, consolidating fiscal-military autonomy, driven by jagir crises and Jat/Sikh peasant rebellions eroding Delhi's central control. Nawabs of Bengal (Murshid Quli Khan) and Awadh built local administrations retaining symbolic Mughal suzerainty, while Maratha chieftains developed cavalry-based confederacies effectively challenging imperial hegemony. This process created "successor states" maintaining Mughal structures but operating with independent power, transforming the transcontinental imperium into a regional mosaic.

For the Ottoman Empire, decentralization manifested through ayan (local notables) controlling provinces via tax monopolies and private militias, particularly in the Balkans and eastern Anatolia, where the timar system collapsed, and waqfs became alternative economic bases. Though less explicit in primary literature, comparative studies reveal similar patterns: local elites in Yanina and Şam exploited sultanic weakness to form quasi-autonomous states, creating dual authority between Istanbul and provincial centers, weakening imperial coordination.

The Safavid Dynasty experienced the most acute decentralization through Qizilbash conflicts vs Afshar/Kurd tribes, fragmenting military loyalties, plus the empowerment of

governors in the Caucasus and Khorasan, acting independently. Comparatively, Malik (2023), all three empires exhibited identical destructive dynamics: central weakness and local elite empowerment became structural political fragmentation, with the Mughals most successfully creating sustainable successor states, the Ottomans surviving through reforms, and the Safavids collapsing entirely.

External Pressures and Global Transformation

1. Colonialism and Global Trade

A comparative study indicates that the penetration of European powers into Asia and the shift of major trade routes toward the sea were critical factors that diminished the role of Islamic empires in the global economy. Colonial policies and European maritime dominance led to the decline of overland trade and traditional routes previously controlled by Islamic empires. It directly impacted the economic and political strength of these empires (Malik, 2023).

Specifically, the Safavid Empire experienced a decrease in revenue from overland trade due to these shifts. Additionally, escalating external threats, especially the Afghan invasion, further destabilized the kingdom. These conflicts and pressures accelerated the Safavids' decline and eventual collapse as a regional power (Ibrahimi, 2023).

The combination of external factors like European commercial dominance and Afghan invasions, coupled with internal weaknesses, increasingly compromised the Safavid Empire's position (Rustamzadeh, 2025). This situation illustrates how the significant geopolitical and economic changes during the late 17th and early 18th centuries dramatically shaped the fate of Islamic empires in the region.

2. Technological and Military Revolution

Research on the Ottoman Empire notes that after 1683, the Ottoman army faced significant challenges in adapting to the modern military structures developing in Europe. The major defeat at the Battle of Vienna in 1683 marked a turning point that exposed the technological and strategic lag of the Ottomans compared to the advancing European powers. Adapting to these changes became crucial for the Ottoman forces to remain relevant and effective against new threats (Kerr & Germani, 2018).

In the subsequent period, military reform efforts were undertaken, but modernization proceeded slowly and encountered internal resistance from traditional

factions preserving old methods. The command structure, training, and weapon technology were not yet able to compete effectively with the better-organized and better-equipped European forces. It worsened the situation, leading to the decline of Ottoman military strength on various battlefronts (Molano, 2013).

The combination of technological lag, socio-political obstacles to military reform, and external pressure from advancing European powers created a complex dynamic challenging the continuity of Ottoman military power. This study emphasizes the importance of structural transformation to cope with global military developments of the era in order to survive and maintain territorial control.

3. Religious Legitimacy Crisis

In the journal on the Safavid dynasty, the literature shows how the perception framing the "Safavid reign as an era of literary decline" significantly influenced the dynasty's legitimacy narrative. This view not only limited the understanding of cultural and intellectual contributions that persisted during that period but also shaped a historical interpretation that tends to be negative towards the late Safavid era. Hence, this literary decline narrative served as a political tool to discredit the regime and weaken the dynasty's historical standing (Kumar, 2024).

Meanwhile, in the context of the Mughal Empire, modern historiography attempts to reassess the old narrative that attributes decline solely to Aurangzeb's rule. This renewed historical inquiry explores much more complex social and cultural changes, including economic factors, ethnic dynamics, and internal political shifts. Emphasizing these multifaceted aspects provides a clearer and deeper insight into the causes of the Mughal decline (Khairanis et al., 2025).

The study also highlights how modern historiography revises dominant narratives by showing the interaction of various elements within Mughal society that contributed to the empire's transformation. Thus, this approach moves beyond blaming a single ruler and views the broader picture involving multiple factors in this significant historical change. The comparison between perceptions of the Safavid and Mughal in literature and historiography reveals a shift from a simplistic single narrative to a more complex and critical understanding. This study emphasizes the importance of reevaluating historical narratives to understand the legitimacy of power and socio-political dynamics within the context of dynamic changes in South and West Asia.

DISCUSSION

Patterns of Political Fragmentation in the 18th Century

The collapse of three major Islamic empires in the 18th century—the Ottoman Sultanate, the Safavid Dynasty, and the Mughal Dynasty—reveals a similar pattern of political fragmentation occurring within different socio-political and cultural contexts. This fragmentation resulted from a combination of internal conflicts and external pressures that posed serious challenges to the stability and unity of these empires (Khan et al., 2024).

Internal conflicts included elite rivalries, succession disputes, and escalating tensions among ethnic and religious groups. Rivalries among ruling elites often led to political instability and weakened the empires' ability to confront external threats. Meanwhile, tensions between ethnic and religious communities sparked rebellions and social divisions, worsening the overall situation. External pressures, such as wars and foreign interventions, also played a significant role in the process of collapse. For instance, the Ottoman Sultanate faced a series of military defeats and interventions from European powers that gradually led to the loss of key territories (Gingeras, 2016). This situation accelerated political fragmentation and weakened their dominance in the region.

Moreover, each empire experienced unique social and cultural complexities that influenced its path to decline. In the Safavid and Mughal contexts, shifts in social values, public dissatisfaction, and cultural dynamics intensified internal pressures, hastening their decline. These factors suggest that the collapse was not merely a direct result of military conflicts but also a consequence of changing times and deep social dynamics (Matthee, 2015). The similar pattern of political fragmentation among these three empires reinforces the understanding that their decline was multidimensional, involving a complex interaction of internal and external factors within changing socio-political and cultural contexts.

The Ottoman Empire: Bureaucratic and Military Decline

In the context of the Ottoman Sultanate, 18th-century decline was fundamentally driven by profound internal instability, particularly succession conflicts and the erosion of central authority due to increasingly complex bureaucracy and rampant corruption among high officials. Following the golden age of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, subsequent sultans were often under the influence of the harem and ambitious viziers, failing to centralize

power and manage governance effectively. It triggered protracted internal conflicts, including rebellions by the Janissary corps demanding higher pay and resisting reforms, exacerbating political fragmentation in core regions like Anatolia (Putra & Rahmi, 2025).

The decline in military strength was a direct consequence of this instability, as the Ottoman army and navy lost discipline and competitiveness against European innovations after defeats at the Battle of Vienna in 1683 and the Battle of Lepanto. Consecutive losses to Russia, Austria, and Venice in the 18th century resulted in the surrender of strategic territories like the Balkans and Crimea, weakening control over Anatolia and vital trade routes. Corruption in arms procurement and military technological stagnation further aggravated the situation, turning elite forces into a financial burden on the empire (Odabasi Tasci, 2024).

This political fragmentation not only diminished Ottoman regional influence but also opened avenues for foreign interventions by powers like Russia and France, exploiting ethnic uprisings and nationalism in peripheral areas. Early reform attempts, such as Sultan Mahmud II's dissolution of the Janissaries in 1826, instead created temporary military vacuums, accelerating the erosion of central authority. Consequently, the once-dominant empire became vulnerable to European colonial expansion, marking a transition from global power to a fragmented state (Bhattarai & Yousef, 2025).

The dynamic interplay between internal factors like bureaucratic corruption and succession disputes with external pressures from military defeats created an inevitable cycle of decline for the Ottoman Sultanate. This pattern illustrates that the collapse was not merely individual leadership failure but a systemic inability to adapt to 18th-century geopolitical shifts, ultimately paving the way for forced modernization via the Tanzimat and the fall of the Islamic monarchy (Çolak, 2024).

The Safavid Dynasty: Integration of Religion and Politics with Temporary Stability

The Safavid dynasty, centered in Persia, experienced a significant period of stability during the reign of Shah Abbas I (1588-1629). During this time, there was a strong consolidation of power and the development of Twelver Shi'a Islam as a core aspect of Persian national identity. Shah Abbas I managed to unify his territories by reorganizing political and military systems, using Shi'ism as an ideological foundation to strengthen the

dynasty's legitimacy (Shepard, 2025). The construction of Isfahan as a cultural center marked the peak of artistic and architectural achievements that reflected the grandeur of the dynasty.

One of Shah Abbas I's main achievements was reducing the dominance of the traditional Qizilbash military faction, which had significant influence but also caused instability. He replaced them with the Ghulam troops, loyal directly to him and recruited from minority ethnic groups such as Georgians and Armenians. It increased military effectiveness and strengthened central control over vast territories. His policy of religious tolerance also created relative stability, enabling economic and cultural growth during his reign.

However, after Shah Abbas I's golden era, the Safavid dynasty began to experience political fragmentation due to internal problems, especially tensions among the ruling elite and succession conflicts that weakened the government structure. In addition, external military pressures grew steadily, particularly from the Ottoman Empire and Russia, which became continuous threats. These internal struggles and external forces contributed to the dynasty's decline and eventual collapse in 1722 following the Afghan invasion (Sicker, 2001).

Nevertheless, the legacy of Shah Abbas I's policies and cultural advancements continues to influence Persian national identity and regional politics to this day. His success in centralizing power, building an effective military, and promoting arts and architecture made the Safavid era a symbol of Persian revival and enduring glory in Middle Eastern history.

The Mughal Dynasty: Religious Conflict and Territorial Fragmentation

The Mughal Empire in India experienced significant political fragmentation due to aggressive expansion policies and excessive centralization under the reign of Aurangzeb. His strict approach in enforcing Islamic puritanism, especially the rigorous implementation of Sharia law and the harsh treatment of Hindus, triggered widespread social tensions. These policies led to resistance from regions that had been traditional power bases, eroding local support and sparking rebellions.

Moreover, succession conflicts and divisions among the ruling elite at the central government further weakened political stability. Intense rivalries among royal family members and high officials created uncertainty and chaos within the palace, resulting in poor

governance coordination and control. This situation enabled smaller kingdoms and autonomous regions to assert independence increasingly.

As central control declined, autonomous states emerged, and inter-state conflicts in India intensified. This power fragmentation reduced the Mughal administration's effectiveness in maintaining its vast territories. Over time, the decline was gradual, marking a transition from a strong empire to a series of smaller states with regional leadership. External factors also accelerated the Mughal decline, particularly the rising influence of British colonial powers that exploited internal weaknesses and political instability (Wilson, 2016). British intervention in local politics and gradual territorial control further weakened Mughal authority until its eventual gradual collapse in the 18th century.

CONCLUSION

The Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires reached their zenith in the 16th to early 18th centuries through shared Turko-Mongol foundations of religiously infused legitimacy, adaptive bureaucracies, and gunpowder militaries, yet succumbed to parallel patterns of 18th-century political fragmentation driven by internal leadership crises, succession disputes, economic rigidities tied to agrarian systems, and social decentralization empowering local elites. These endogenous weaknesses—exemplified by Mughal jagir crises, Ottoman Janissary stagnation, and Safavid Qizilbash rivalries—intersected with exogenous pressures from European colonial trade shifts, military-technological revolutions, and invasions, yielding divergent trajectories: Ottoman endurance via Tanzimat reforms, Safavid total collapse in 1722, and Mughal devolution into successor states. This comparative analysis challenges monolithic "decline" narratives, reframing the era as an institutional transformation where cultural-religious legacies persisted amid geopolitical reconfiguration, with enduring implications for understanding resilience in post-imperial Islamic polities under globalization.

REFERENCES

Akhzari, A., & Kajbaf, A. (2013). A Glance at Iran's Economic Harm During the Safavid Dynasty. *Journal of Historical Researches*, *5*(1), 35–48. https://jhr.ui.ac.ir/article_16592_en.html

Anton, Setiawan, Y., Nurulhanifah, H., Rahayu, F., & Sona, D. (2024). Sejarah Perkembangan Bani Umayah dan Peradaban Tiga Kerajaan Islam. *Jurnal Intelek Dan*

Cendikiawan Nusantara, *1*(1). https://jicnusantara.com/index.php/jicn/article/view/79

Barati, A. (2024). Change and Continuity: Safauid Administration in Eighteenth-century Iran. *Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, *62*(1), 120–129. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/05786967.2021.1936594

Bhattarai, K., & Yousef, M. (2025). The Empires. In *The Middle East. World Regional Geography Book Series*. Springer.

Blake, S. P. (2013). Safavid, Mughal, and Ottoman Empires. In *Time in Early Modern Islam*. Cambridge University Press.

Catherine S. (2021). Decline of the Muslim Empires: Ottomans, Safavids & Mughals. *Study.Com*. https://study.com/academy/lesson/decline-of-the-muslim-empires-ottomans-safavids-mughals.html

Çolak, Z. (2024). Pathways to Modernity: Ottoman Reforms Before and During the Tanzimat. *Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi*, *24*(2). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32449/egetdid.1522647

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Mixed*. Pustaka Pelajar.

Dabashi, H. (2017). *Authority in Islam: From the Rise of Mohammad to the Establishment of the Umayyads*. Routledge.

Gingeras, R. (2016). *Fall of the Sultanate: the Great War and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1922*. Oxford University Press.

Hobbs, J. (2023). The Decline of the Great Empires: Safavid, Ottoman, and Mughal. *Www.Appgecet.Co.In*. https://www.appgecet.co.in/the-decline-of-the-great-empires-safavid-ottoman-and-mughal/

Ibrahimi, S. Y. (2023). State Fragility Trap and Conflict in Afghanistan (2001-2021). In *Handbook of Fragile States*. Political Science and Public Policy 2023. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800883475

Kayali, H. (2021). *Imperial Resilience: The Great War's End, Ottoman Longevity, and Incidental Nations*. California University Press.

Kerr, S., & Germani, I. (2018). Ottoman Decline: Military Adaptation in the Ottoman Empire, 1683-1699. *Journal of Student Research*, *7*(2), 4–13. https://doi.org/10.47611/jsr.v7i2.503

Khairanis, R., Kholil, A., & Wargadinata, W. (2025). Political Dynamics of the Mughal Empire: An Integrated Historical Analysis. *J-CEKI : Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah*, *4*(2). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.56799/jceki.v4i2.7168

Khan, A. A., Zaman, K., & Nazir, J. (2024). Seeds of Separation in the Subcontinent: Evaluating the Historical Roots of Pakistan and the Debate on Muslim Invasions. *GUMAN*, *7*(1). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.63075/guman.v7i1.720

Kumar, N. (2024). Deciphering the Twilight: A Critical Analysis of the Mughal Empire's Decline and the Eighteenth Century Historiographical Discourse in India. *Siddhanta's International Journal of Advanced Research in Arts & Humanities*, *1*(3). https://sijarah.com/index.php/sijarah/article/download/31/39

Malik, A. (2023). Analysis of The Progress and Setback of Islamic Civilization of The Mughal, Safawi and Ottoman Türkiye. *Tajdid*, *30*(2), 135–165. https://doi.org/10.36667/tajdid.v30i1.1489 Analysis

Matthee, R. (2015). The Decline of Safavid Iran in Comparative Perspective. *Journal of Persianate Studies*, *8*(2). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/18747167-12341286

Molano, W. T. (2013). *In the Land of Silver: 200 Years of Argentine Economic and Political Development*. South Carolina.

Munazzalurrohmi, M., Al Ghatnini, R. A. S., & Fathoni, A. R. (2025). Islam pada Masa Tiga Kerajaan Besar. *Pelita: Jurnal Studi Islam Mahasiswa UII Dalwa*, *2*(2), 130–144. https://doi.org/10.38073/pelita.v2i2.2580

Naim, H. (2019). *Collateral Modernity: State Formation and Islam in Afghanistan and the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1919*. University of California.

Odabasi Tasci, P. (2024). *Ottoman Edirne in the early 20th Century: War, Diplomacy and Violence in the Western Borderlands of the Empire on the Eve of the Nation-State* [University of Akron]. https://doi.org/http://orcid.org/0009-0007-3862-2795

Putra, J. S., & Rahmi, Z. (2025). The Economic Progress of the Ottoman Empire: An Analysis of Advancement During the Reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. *Journal of Philology and Historical Review*, *2*(2). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61540/jphr.v2i2.97

Putri, G. O., Yuliana, Y., Ananza, Y., Azizi, M. R., & Ramli, S. (2025). Peradaban Islam pada Masa Kerajaan Safawi. *Jurnal Integrasi Pengetahuan Disiplin*, *6*(1), 270–278. https://ijurnal.com/1/index.php/jipd/article/view/408

Rawal, S. (2024). The Study of the Social and Cultural Transformations During the Mughal Empire. *Nternational Journal of Advanced Research and Multidisciplinary Trends (IJARMT)*, *1*(2). https://ijarmt.com/index.php/j/article/view/96

Risdawati, Nor Muhammad Rusli, A. F. N. (2025). The Islamic Kingdom of India: The Mughal Dynasty and the End of Its Power. *The 3rd ICONITIES International Conference on Islamic Civilization and Humanities*. https://proceedings.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/iconfahum/article/view/3319

Rosidah, G. R., Syamil, A., Hurit, R. U., Asman, A., Lestariningsih, Radjawane, L. E., Bagenda, C., Amane, N. F. P. O., Saloom, C. P. T., S, S., Fadhilatunisa, N. B. G., & Fakhri, M. M. (2023). *Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan Kombinasi* (S. Bahri (ed.)). CV Media Sains Indonesia.

Rustamzadeh, F. (2025). Safavid-Ottoman Relations: A Historical Analysis. *Anatolian Journal of Social Sciences and Education*, *1*(1). https://anatolianjournal.com/index.php/pub/article/view/40

Satori, D., & Komariah, A. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Alfabeta.

Shepard, A. M. (2025). *The Consolidation of Power in Shi 'a Islam: Struggles for Political Legitimacy*. Indiana University.

Sicker, M. (2001). *The Islamic world in decline: from the Treaty of Karlowitz to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Singh, D. K. (2020). An Analysis of the Decline of the Mugal Empire and Muslim Rule in India. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Studies*, *3*(12), 1–13. https://live.ijmras.com/index.php/ijmras/article/view/166

Streusand, D. E. (2018). *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*. Routledge.

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2017). Decline of the Mughal Dynasty. *Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/summary/Decline-of-the-Mughal-Dynasty

Wilson, J. (2016). *India Conquered: Britain's Raj and the Chaos of Empire*. British historian Jon E. Wilson.

Yildiz, A. (2017). *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire: the Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolution*. I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd.