

Islamic Empires & Caliphates within SCA time period

By THL Majda Anwar
Prepared for the Barony
of South Downs

Disclaimer! I am not an expert in Middle Eastern studies, just an avid hobbyist. I strive to present information as best as I can. If you see a mistake or would like to speak about a particular opinion in depth, let's talk after the class. I welcome your feedback and discourse.

—THL Majda Anwar



What are we going to talk about?

1. A few terms to help you with the class...
2. Caliphates at Glance
3. The Start of Islamic Caliphates/ *Rashidun*
4. Ummayyads
5. Abbasids
6. Ottomans
7. Safavids
8. Mughals



Glossary of Terms Used in Class



Sunni

Majority branch of Islam that believed Mohammed did not name a successor and recognized the first four caliphs.



Caliph

The chief Muslim civil and religious ruler, regarded as the successor of Muhammad. (Emirs and Sultans are rulers with no religious authority-ish.)



Arab

A person who identifies lineage from an Arab country. (In period, identifies from Arabian gulf.)



Shia

Minority brand of Islam that believe Mohammed's cousin to have been divinely appointed as the successor and the first Imam.



Caliphate

The area ruled by a caliph. Emirate is ruled by an Emir. Sultanate is wider and is ruled by a Sultan.



Arabic

Relating to the literature or language of Arab people.

Caliphates at Glance

Empire/ Caliphate	Timeline	Court Language	Major Capitals in Period
Umayyad	661–750	Arabic / Andalusian Arabic	Damascus/Cordoba
Abbasid	750–1258 1261–1517	Arabic	Baghdad, Cairo
Ottoman	1299–1922	Turkish	Söğüt, Istanbul
Safavid	1501–1736	Persian	Tabriz, Isfahan
Mughal	1526–1857	Persian, Urdu	Agra, Lahore



Caliphate/Empires Honorable Mentions

Fatimid

Egyptian

Mamluk

Egyptian

Ayyubid

Egyptian

Seljuk

Turkish

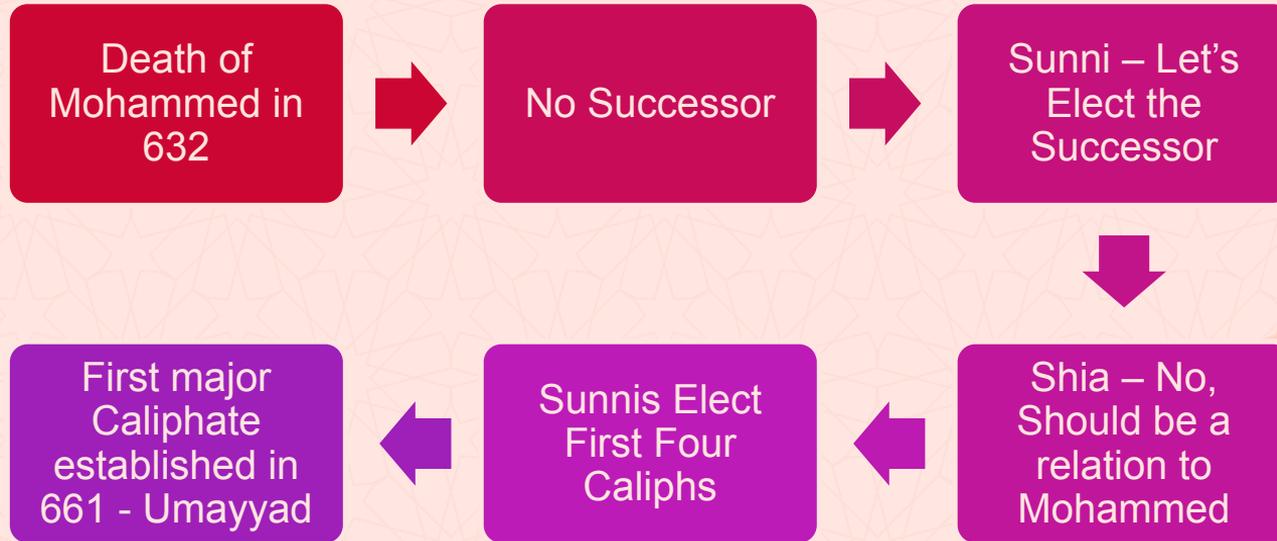
Emirate of Sicily

Italian via Fatimids

Timurid

Persian/
Turo-Mongol

Start of the Caliphates*



**This is a GROSSLY simplified summary. There is a lot of information out there including books, articles, podcasts, etc. Google for the basics.*



Medieval Period

Umayyad Court 661-750

Historical Highlights:

- Dynastic Court
- Sunni Muslim
- 6th largest geographical expansion in history
- Defeated in Battle of the Zab, 750 to Abbasids
- Lone surviving prince, fled to southern Spain and founded Caliphate of Cordoba

Art & Cultural Highlights

- Formative years of Islamic art - places of worship, religious texts were focus
- Motif pulled from Art of the period
 - a. Byzantine - animals and plants.
 - b. Coptic - scrolling vines and geometric motifs
 - c. Sasanian - More abstract
- Built Dome of the Rock in 691



Dome of the Rock 691 (Jerusalem)



Great Mosque 706-715 (Damascus)



Qusayr Amra 711 (Jordan) al Wadil I-II

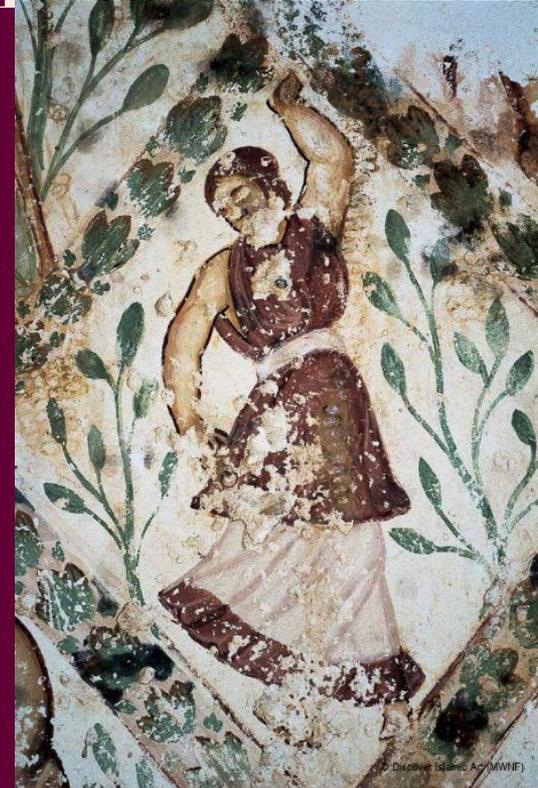


Examples of Umayyad Dress/Fabric

Woven Tapestry, 744-49



Malaysian Lampas Mid 8th century



Dancing Girl Fresco, Qusayr Amra

Abbasid 750–1258; 1261–1517

Historical Highlights:

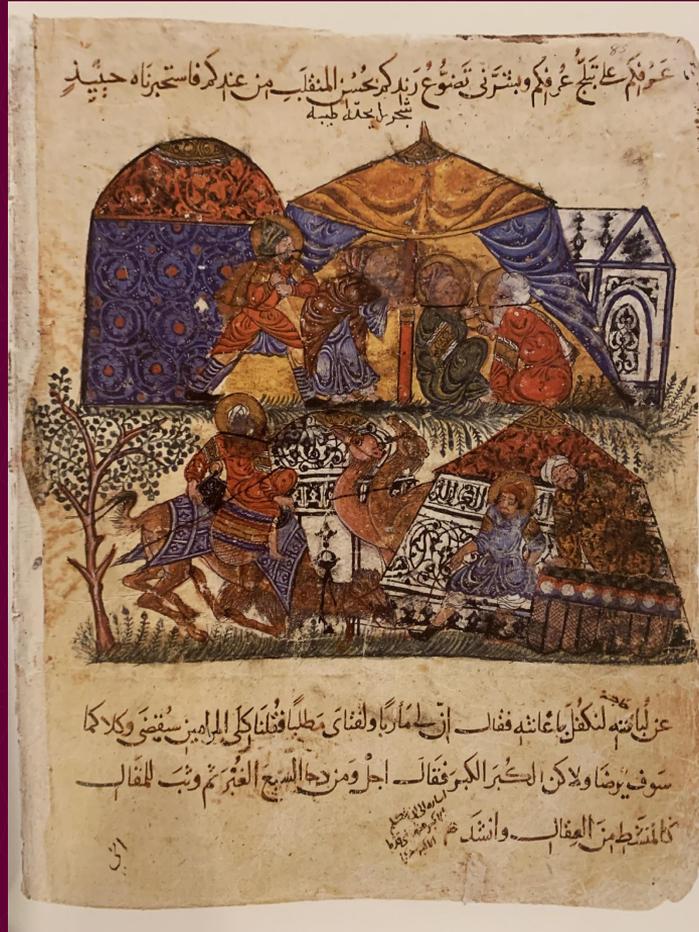
- Dynastic Court
- Shi'ite Muslim
- Attributed to establishing and spreading Islam at a wider scale
- Destroyed by Mongol invasion in 1258
- Fled to Cairo and set up a weaker caliphate from 1261-1517
- Mamluks ruled Cairo politically and with military power during same time

Art & Cultural Highlights

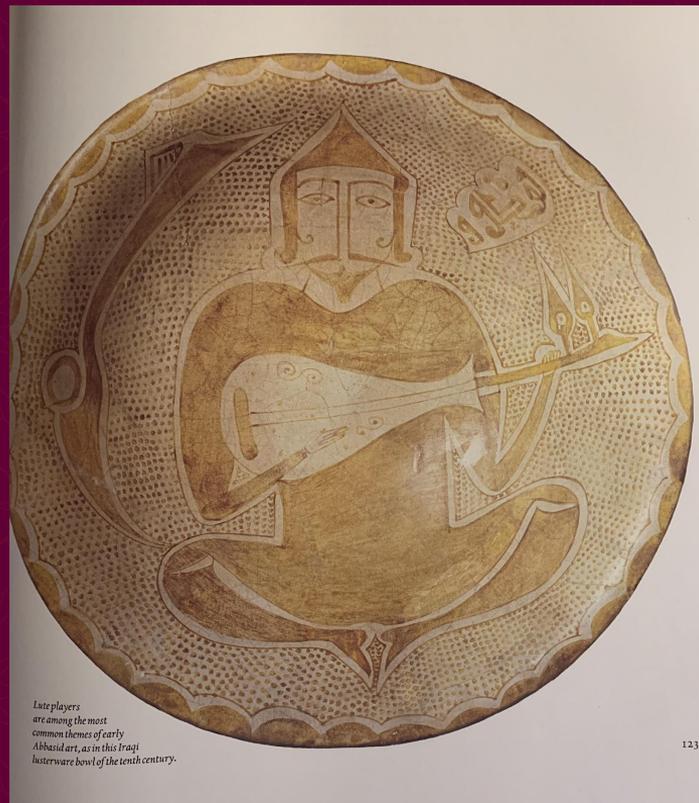
- Considered the Islamic Golden Age
- Scholarship – Medicine, philosophy, literature, art,
- Umayyad – spread land, Abbasid – spread Islam



Assemblies of Hariri 969 - 1008



Ceramics and Frescos



Lute players are among the most common themes of early Abbasid art, as in this Iraqi lusterware bowl of the tenth century.



Early Modern

Early Modern Period



Ottoman

The military power.
Ottomans and Safavids
constantly in conflict.



Safavid

The cultural power.
Mughals and Safavids
were much more
peaceful.



Mughal

The economic power.
Mughals and
Ottomans too far apart
to interact too much.

Ottoman 1299–1922

Historical Highlights:

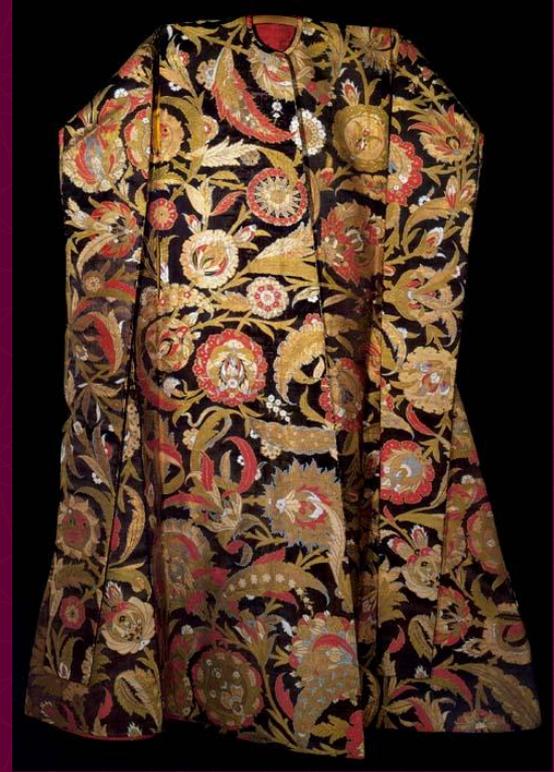
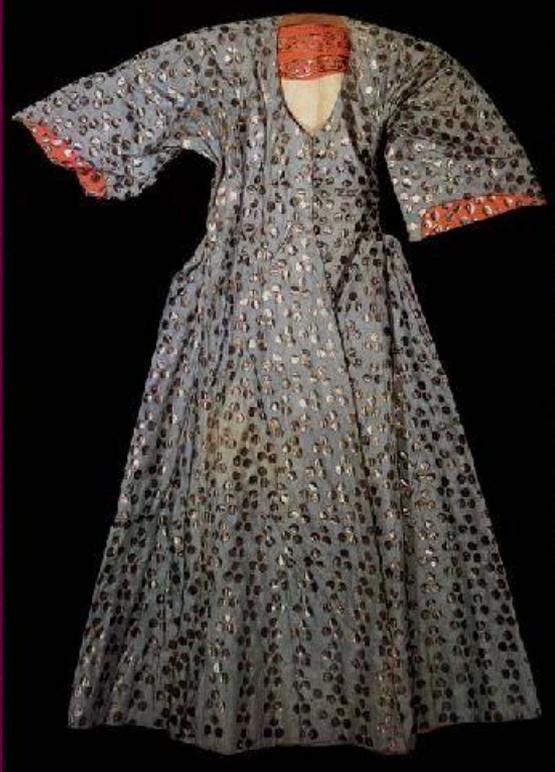
- Peak under Suleiman the Magnificent
- Capture of Constantinople in 1453 (renamed Istanbul)
- Expansion due to the military prowess of the Janissaries
- Sultan was supreme ruler politically and religiously
- Non-Muslims mostly free to practice their religions without persecution

Art & Cultural Highlights:

- Lots of beautiful pretty shiniest that are documentable
- Ornate architecture, calligraphy, textiles and ceramics
- Contributions to medicine include forceps, catheters, scalpels
- Baklava parade



Kaftans/Entari Fit for Royalty



Ottoman Architecture

Selimiye Mosque



Haga Sophia





1526 -
Battle of
Mohács

Ottoman Janissaries

Sultan
Murad III's
expedition
to Revan



Safavid 1501–1736

Historical Highlights:

- Shi'ite (Twelver Shiism)
- Constant conflicts between Ottomans and Safavids, resulting in deeper split between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims
- The enemy of my enemy is my friend...Safavids and Europeans against the Ottomans

Art & Cultural Highlights:

- Leading artistry in the Muslim world
- Exquisite manuscripts such as the Shahnameh of Shah Tahmasp
- Detailed miniatures – collected together into *muraqqa*
- *The most coveted silks and textiles of it's time , ex: Ardabil carpet*
- Ornate palaces



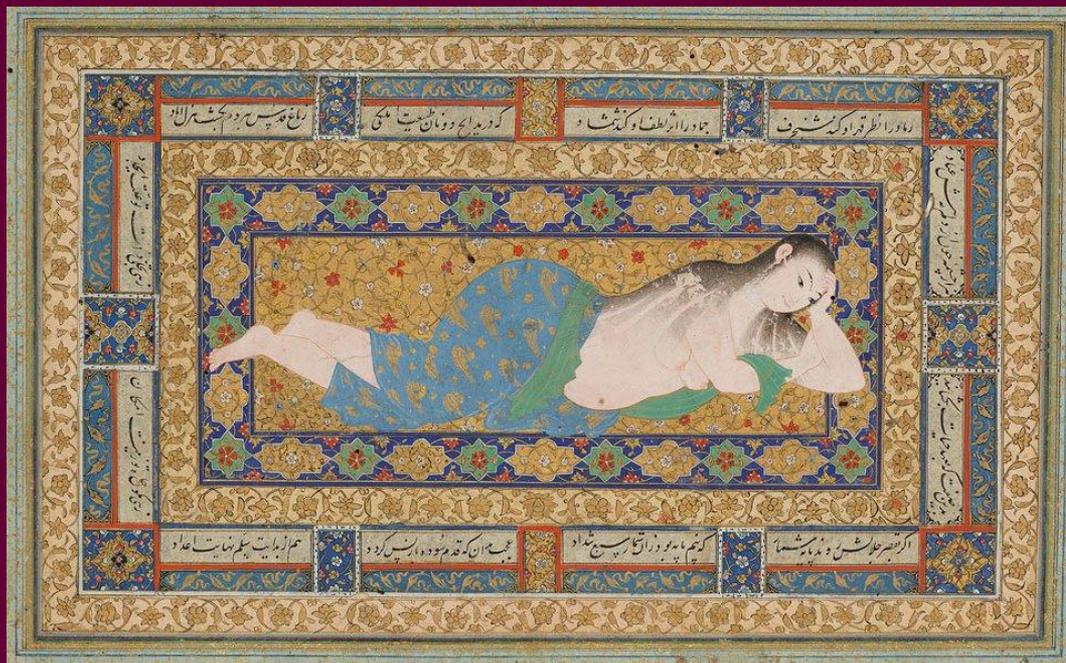


Safavid Manuscripts

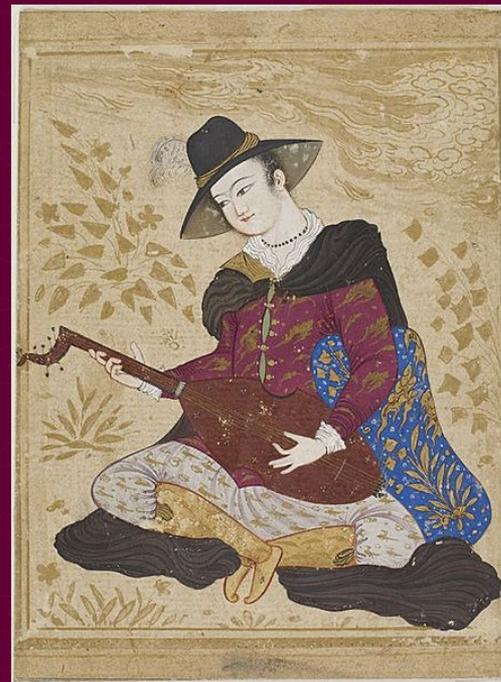
Shahnameh of Shah
Tahmasp ~1520-1568

The Court of
Gayumars

Safavid Muraqqa

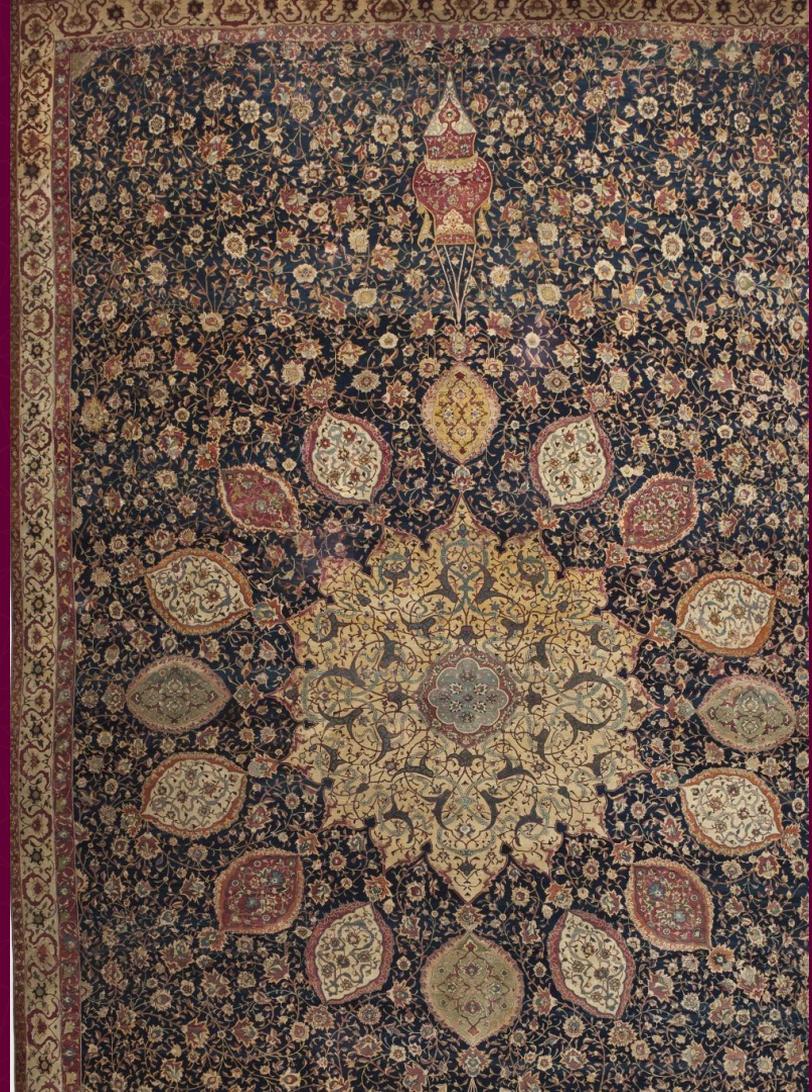
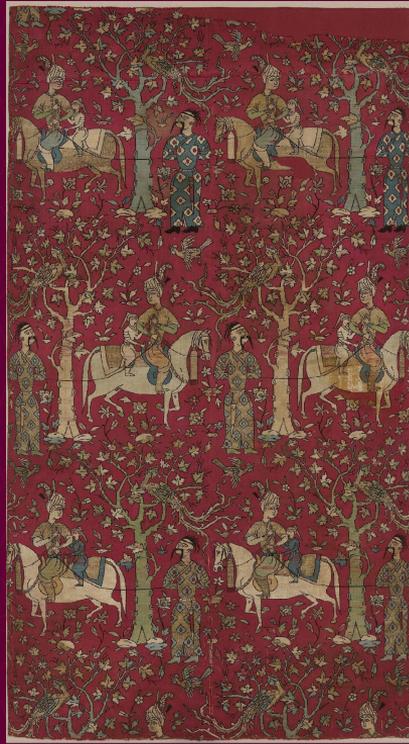


A Young Lady Reclining After a Bath,
Herat 1590s, a single miniature for the muraqqa market



Reza Abbasi painting of
Dutch musician with viol

Safavid Silks and Textiles



Safavid Architecture



Ala Qapu Gatehouse (1597 phase 1 development)



Shah Mosque (1629 completion)

Mughal 1501–1736

Historical Highlights:

- Conquered entire Indian sub-continent to be ruled under one domain
- Made the Indian sub-continent into an economic superpower
- 2nd highest GDP in the world behind Ming dynasty of China
- Rulers religiously tolerant to support trade and business.

Art & Cultural Highlights

- Welcomed Persian artisans to court, emphasis on patronage of the arts
- Artbooks - Akbarnama & Bāburnāma
- Poetic form of the Ghazal

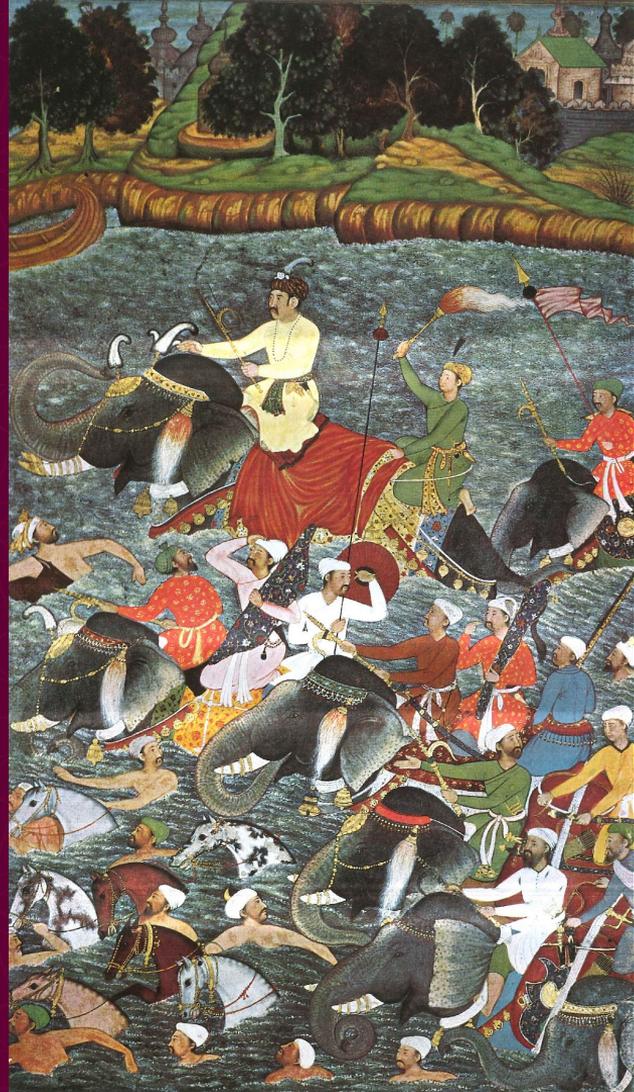




Babur
receives a
courtier

Mughal Miniatures

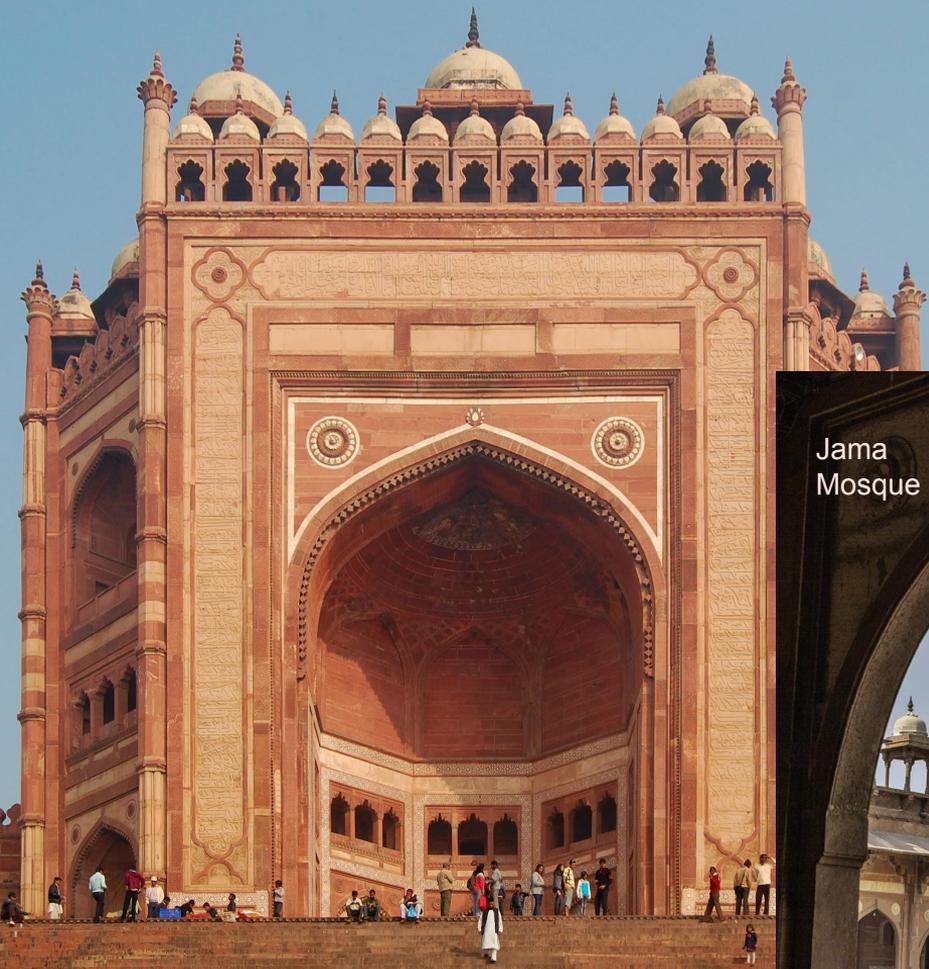
Mughal
Emperor
Akbar
crossing
the river at
night.
Akbarnama



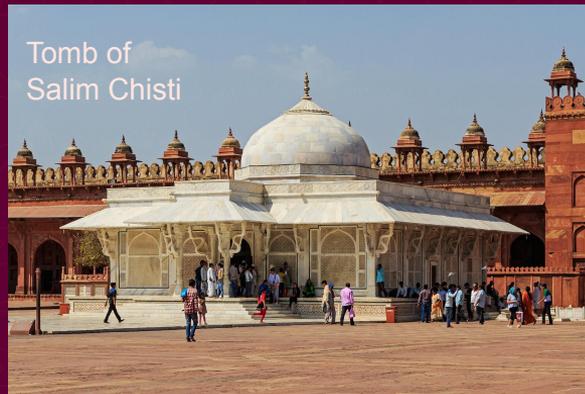


Talismanic Tunic

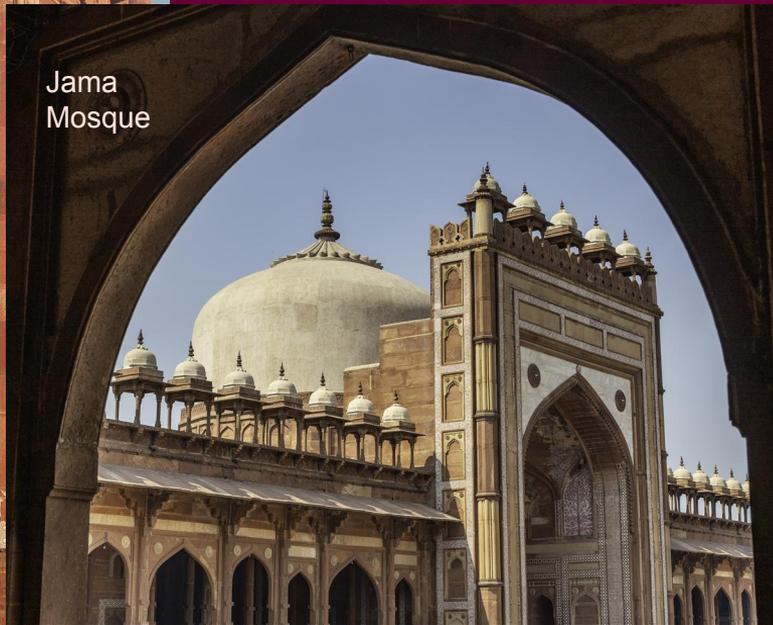
Fatehpur
Sikri



Tomb of
Salim Chisti



Jama
Mosque



Agra, India | Akbar Reign

Thanks!

Do you have any questions?
Majida.anwar@gmail.com

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