

CHAPTER 18 Section 3 (pages 516–521)

The Mughal Empire in India

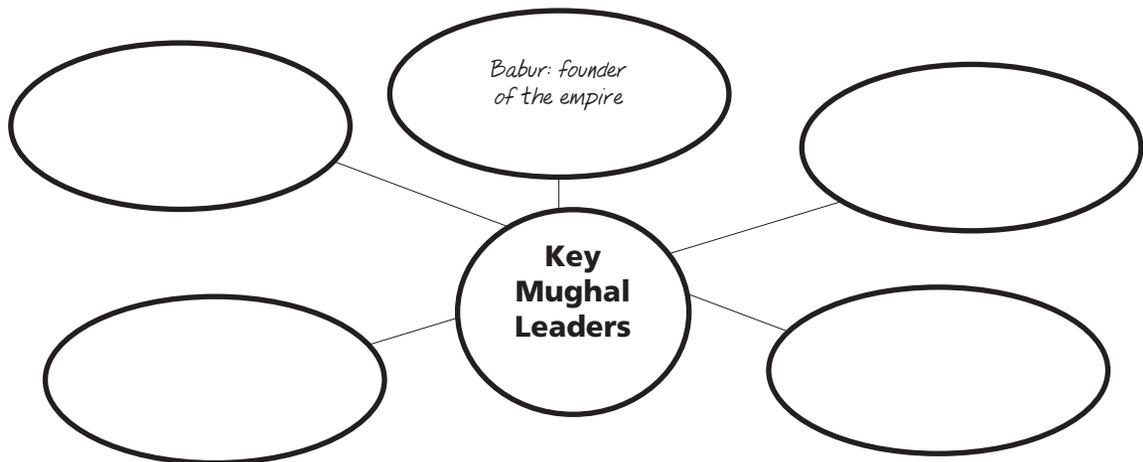
BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you learn about how the Safavids established an empire in what is present-day Iran.

In this section, you will learn about the establishment of the Mughal Empire in what is now India.

AS YOU READ

Use the web diagram below to take notes. In each circle, write the name of one important Mughal ruler. Also write two or three words that identify each person or name a major accomplishment or problem of his rule.



TERMS AND NAMES

Babur Founder of the Mughal Empire

Mughal One of the nomads who invaded the Indian subcontinent and established a powerful empire there

Akbar Mughal ruler with a genius for cultural blending, military conquest, and art

Sikh Nonviolent religious group that became the enemy of the Mughals

Shah Jahan Mughal ruler who built Taj Mahal

Taj Mahal Tomb built by Shah Jahan for his wife

Aurangzeb Last important Mughal ruler

Early History of the Mughal Empire (page 516)

How did the Mughal Empire begin?

Starting in the 600s, India went through a long, unsettled period. Nomads from central Asia invaded the area and created many small kingdoms. In the 700s, Muslims arrived on the scene. This began a long history of fighting with the *Hindus* who had lived in India for centuries.

After about 300 years, a group of Muslim Turks conquered a region around the city of Delhi. They

set up a new empire there. They treated the Hindus in their area as conquered peoples. Their rule was brought to an end in 1398.

A little over a hundred years later, a new leader named **Babur** raised an army and began to win large parts of India. He had many talents. He was a lover of poetry and gardens. He was also an excellent general. His empire was called the **Mughal** Empire because he and his families were related to the Mongols.

1. Who was Babur?

The Golden Age of Akbar

(pages 517–518)

Who was Akbar?

Babur's grandson was **Akbar**. His name means “Greatest One.” He ruled with great wisdom and fairness for almost 40 years.

Akbar was a Muslim. However, he believed strongly that people should be allowed to follow the religion they choose. Both Hindus and Muslims worked in the government. He hired people in his government based on their ability and not their religion.

Akbar ruled fairly. He ended the tax that Hindu pilgrims had to pay. He also ended the tax that all non-Muslims had to pay. To raise money, he taxed people on a percentage of the food they grew. This made it easier for peasants to pay the tax. His land policy was less wise. He gave much land to government officials. However, when they died he took it back. As a result, workers did not see any point in caring for the land.

He had a strong, well-equipped army that helped him win and keep control of more lands. His empire held about 100 million people—more than lived in all of Europe at the time.

During Akbar's reign, his policy of blending different cultures produced two new languages. The languages were blends of several languages. One was *Hindi*, which is widely spoken in India today. The other was *Urdu*. It is now the official language of Pakistan. The empire became famous for its art, literature, and architecture. The best example of this art was small, highly detailed, colorful pictures called miniatures. He also sponsored the building of a new capital city.

2. What are some examples of Akbar's policy of fair rule?

Akbar's Successors (pages 518–521)

Who ruled after Akbar?

After Akbar's death in 1605, his son Jahangir, took control of the empire. During his reign, the real

power was his wife, Nur Jahan. She plotted with one son to overthrow another son. She had a bitter political battle with the **Sikhs**, members of a separate, nonviolent religion. That group became the target of attacks by the government.

The next ruler was **Shah Jahan**. He too chose not to follow Akbar's policy of religious toleration. Shah Jahan was a great *patron* of the arts and built many beautiful buildings. One was the famous **Taj Mahal**, a tomb for his wife. His ambitious building plans required high taxes, though. People suffered under his rule.

His son **Aurangzeb** ruled for almost 50 years. He made the empire grow once again with new conquests. His rule also brought new problems. He was a *devout* Muslim, and he punished Hindus and destroyed their temples. This led to a rebellion that took part of his empire. At the same time, the Sikhs won control of another part of the empire.

3. How did Aurangzeb deal with Hindus?

The Empire's Decline and Decay (page 521)

How did the Mughal Empire lose its power?

Aurangzeb used up the empire's resources. People did not feel loyalty to him. As the power of the state weakened, the power of local lords grew. Soon there was only a patchwork of independent states. There continued to be a Mughal emperor, but he was only a *figurehead*, not a ruler with any real power. As the Mughal empire was rising and falling, Western traders were building power. They arrived in India just before Babur did. Shah Jahan let the English build a trading fort in Madras. Aurangzeb handed them the port of Bombay. This gave India's next conquerors a foothold in India.

4. How did the Mughal Empire change after Akbar?
