Comparison Between Indian Great Rulers Essay, Research Paper

Comparison and Difference Between Great Indian Rulers

The three great rulers from the three great empire (Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal) that I focused on are Suleyman the Magnificent, Shah Abbas, and Akbar. The similarity between these three rulers is vast. They all were contributed somehow to there empire and were praised for this by the people. They all either tried to expand the empire or did so in a tremendous way. Finally, they all enriched their empires by making them known and feared throughout India.

Both Muslims and Europeans regarded Suleyman in his time as the most significant ruler in the world. His military empire expanded greatly both to the east and west, and he threatened to overrun Europe itself. In Constantinople (Istanbul), he embarked on immense cultural and architectural projects. While he was a brilliant military strategist and clever politician, he was also a grower of the arts. Suleyman’s poetry is among the best poetry in Islam, and he sponsored an army of artists, religious thinkers, and philosophers that surpassed the most educated courts of Europe. In Islamic history, Suleyman is regarded as the perfect Islamic ruler in history. He is acknowledged as symbolizing all the necessary characteristics of an Islamic ruler, the most important of which is justice (adale). The reign of Suleyman in Ottoman and Islamic history is generally regarded as the period of greatest justice and harmony in any Islamic state,

During the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman Empire experienced its golden age and ranked foremost among world powers in cultural and social fields as well

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as militarily and politically (T lay Kavalcio/lu. n. pag.). The Europeans called him Suleyman The Magnificent, but the Ottomans called him Kanuni, or the lawgiver,

Known to Europeans as the Magnificent and to his subjects as the “Lawgiver”, he was a brilliant military strategist and an acclaimed legislator. It is said that the laws made by him form the basis for many western ones (T lay Kavalcio/lu. n. pag.). This shows what impact he even had on the Europeans. Since most of the Europeans were very ethnocentric and thought that a majority of the Indians were dumb. Suleyman started to make Istanbul the center of Islamic civilization. Suleyman tolerated an amount of independence and religious freedom from the people that he conquered, Muslim, Christian and Jewish families lived together in the Ottoman capital of Istanbul, and Christians and Jews freely practiced their religion, customs, and laws (T lay Kavalcio/lu. n. pag.). He began a series of building projects, including bridges, mosques, and palaces, that challenged the greatest building projects of the world in that century. The greatest and most brilliant architect of human history was his employ Sinan. Under Suleyman, Istanbul became the center of visual art, music, writing, and philosophy in the Islamic world. This cultural flowering during the reign of Suleyman represents the most creative period in Ottoman history. Leading to Suleyman’s end, the gradual decline of the Ottoman Empire began.

Shah Abbas was the most important Safavid ruler of Persia. Under him the Safavids reached the high point of their glory. He created a system that was very similar to the Ottomans that used Janissaries. This system was created in order to train administrators to run the kingdom. He regained the territories that he once had lost to the

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Uzbeks and the Ottomans and therefore strengthened his empire. Shah Abbas was known as the Great to his generation. He spent much of his time talking to simple peasant folk and walking the streets. This led many people in the lower classes to like him. Persia witnessed an extraordinary flowering of the arts during the reign of Shah Abbas, Persia reached a high point in terms of painting and architecture during his reign

(n. p., n. pag.). He made a new capital, Isfahan, which was an ostentatious planned city with wide spaces and a sense of order, Isfahan became one of the most beautiful cities in the world, with spacious boulevards and a grandiose square (n. p., n. pag.). He ordered his architects to place his palaces, mosques, and bazaars around a massive polo ground. After the death of Shah Abbas, the Safavid Dynasty gradually lost its strength.

Muslim, Indian, and Western historians all see Akbar as the greatest ruler of Indian history. Akbar’s bureaucracy was among the most efficient in the world. He put military governors (Mansabars) in charge of each region. Each governor was responsible for the local military and was directly responsible for all abuses. Abuses of power and mistreatment of the poor or weak resulted in severe punishments and death, just as in the Ottoman Empire. Each military governor was put in charge by the padshah himself, so he could be dismissed at will. The most important part of the bureaucracy was tax collection. Akbar made several modernizations. His tax was a land tax that amounted to one-third of the value of the crops produced on it each year. He also eliminated the tax charged onto non-Muslims. From the beginning of the Islamic expansion, a special tax was charged onto non-believers. This special tax, called the jizya, was bitterly resented all during the history of Muslim rule in India. Akbar allowed the Hindus to remain under

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their own law, called the Dharmashastra , and to retain their own courts. From a religious position, Akbar’s state was built on the principle sulahkul, or universal tolerance. All religons were to be equally tolerated in the administration of the state. In Akbar’s theory of government, the ruler’s duty is to ensure justice ( adale) for all the people in his care no matter what their religion. Akbar was the most movable of the Mughals, every decade he moved the capital of the empire from one city to another.

The numerous comparisons that I found between these three great rulers revealed to me that they all were not much different from each other. They all had a good cause that they tried to have their empire achieve. All three of the rulers tried to solve problems that they had inherited from the past rulers. The comparison that struck me the most between these rulers was that once they had died, their empire sunk to a low point. The theme that I based my paper about reveals that each Empire, could be large or small, cannot stand for long if they do not have a great ruler. This has been proven many times, and it has been proven again by these three rulers.