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Gunpowder Empires: Who was and Who wasn't?

During the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century, the greatest gunpowder states, whether one is talking about population, area, or sheer military power, were not European states, but Islamic ones: the Ottoman Empire based in Constantinople (Istanbul); the Safavid Empire based in Iran; and the Mughal Empire based in India. In fact some historians of Asia and Islam call these “the gunpowder empires.”

These empires were unique, but they have some important things in common, which should be outlined first.

Each of the gunpowder empires lasted a fairly long time. The Safavid empire in Iran, the shortest lived, was founded about 1500, and lasted till 1722. The Mughal empire of India began in the 1500s and lasted effectively until the mid-1700s and in name until the 1850s; the champion, the Ottoman empire began in the late 1300s, became a major empire in the 1400s, and lasted until 1918.

Each of the empires had fairly stable boundaries and became identified with a particular region. This is clearest in the case of the Safavid empire. Its boundaries are not identical with those of present-day Iran, but they are close enough to fool most of us. In general, it is important that these were not nomad empires (though the Ottoman and Timurid ruling classes had a nomadic heritage), with a ruling class equally at home or not at home anywhere in the Islamic world. Also, you can now make fairly direct connections between things that happened in these empires in the gunpowder era with things that are happening now in some of the same places.

Finally each of the empires had an important impact on the religious composition of society. The impacts were different.

Based on the above reading, list the ways Russia and China were and were not gunpowder empires.

	Russia	China
Ways it was a gunpowder empire		
Ways it was not a gunpowder empire		