

The spanish and ottoman empire

[History](#), [Empires](#)



The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries marked key points in the development of both the Spanish and the Ottoman empires. The building of the Spanish and the Ottoman Empires are both similar and different in many ways. With the discovery of the Americas and the conquering of Constantinople, both empires were emerging as world powers. Furthermore, both empires developed into strong religious empires. One major difference was the reasons for conquest between the two vast empires. The Spanish sought to improve trade whereas the Ottoman Empire sought military control.

There were also many similarities and differences in how the Spanish and the Ottoman Empires developed politically. The Spanish used the Encomienda System as a base for economic and political order in the Americas. Using this system, the men who served the crown, or the encomenderos, were awarded part of the labor and produce of the natives. The Spanish king ruled through the Council of the Indies, allowing the king to appoint viceroys. Furthermore, the Spanish king could oversee the treasury office and the royal court of appeals, or *audiencia*. In contrast, the Ottoman Empire developed a bureaucracy, and because of religious tolerance allowed Christians and Jews to participate in the government.

The Spanish and the Ottoman Empires can be compared and contrasted economically. One difference between the two empires was taxing in the Ottoman Empire. Although the Ottoman Empire was tolerant of other religions, they imposed a special tax on non Muslims called the *jizya*. One similarity was the establishment of trade routes in both empires. The Spanish Empire established trade routes to the Americas and the Ottoman Empire, under the rule of Suleyman, expanded populations, roads, and trade

routes. Suleyman led the Ottoman Empire to the Pax Ottomanica , resulting in the golden age that allowed the empire to flourish. Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire controlled half of the Danube River, allowing them to control trade.

Socially, both the Spanish and the Ottoman Empires were very strict religious empires. The Spanish were strict Catholics (maybe tolerant). Similarly, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire was a devout Muslim. The Spanish spread Christianity throughout the Americas, converting Natives similar to how the Ottomans converted boys in poor villages top ranking janissaries. However, the two empires did differ in that the Ottoman Empire was tolerant of other religions. The Ottoman Empire tolerated other religions because by allowing the Christians and Jews to practice their religions freely, the Ottoman Turks could defend themselves against revolts and rebellions. One major difference between the two empires was their reasons for expansion and conquest. The Spanish Empire expanded to further promote trade, whereas the Ottoman Empire expanded for military control. Under a system known as devshirme the Ottoman Sultan rounded up boys between the ages of 12 and 20 from villages and trained the best 10 percent to be civil servants or military men known as janissaries. However a similarity can be found in the decline of these two empires, where both empires ended because of the implications of the systems they sought to improve in expansion. The Spanish, in attempts to improve trade started to decline because of a weak financial base, unable to reap the benefits of trade. Similarly, when the expansion of the Ottoman Empire stopped, the empire lacked the influx of manpower to feed its system of maintaining an efficient

population of civil servants and military men. A serial military defeat followed afterwards.

During the periods of 1450 to 1800, the building of the Spanish and the Ottoman Empire developed in similar and different ways. Politically, the Spanish used an encomienda system whereas the Ottomans developed a bureaucratic government. Economically, the Spanish and the Ottoman developed trade routes, but the Spanish did not impose the jizya as the Ottomans did. Socially, both empires were strictly religious but the Ottomans were more tolerant of other religions. Despite their emergence as world powers, both empires declined as a result of the Spanish's inability to develop a strong financial base and the Ottoman's failure to continue maintaining a constant manpower.

Whereas the Spanish easily conquered the New World, the Ottomans constantly fought against different people from Africa, Asia, and Europe. Ottoman society was divided politically into wealth producers, soldiers, Muslims, and non-Muslims. Under a system known as devshirme the Sultan rounded up boys between the ages of 12 and 20 from villages and trained the best 10 percent to be civil servants or military men known as janissaries.

After the relatively easier early conquest, Spanish legislation prohibited exploration and enslavement of Indians in its New Laws of 1542. In Mexico and Peru the decree was ignored and lead to a debate about how the colonies should be run, with some prominent ruling class arguing that Indians should be treated with protection and care, while others argued for a slavery system. The Ottoman Empire was less enlightened in ideology, but

ruled with brute penalties for criminal acts, and efficient administration and legal procedures. The Sultan considered himself supreme as compared against other monarchs.

Indians died because of disease, dislocation, and the rigors of mine work following the European conquest. When the Spanish monarch ended the encomienda system the colonists increasingly sought grant of lands creating rural estates that produced cultural products. Gradually, the Americas evolved into an economic base that supports Spain. As for the Ottoman Empire, its decline was drastic. When the expansion stopped, the empire lacked the influx of manpower to feed its system of maintaining an efficient population of civil servants and military men. A serial military defeat followed afterwards.