

Unit 2: Trade Networks  
Long-essay Question

**Directions:** Write an essay answering on the following prompt. This is a closed-notes, closed-books writing test; do not consult outside sources. Submit your own work, on your honor.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence.
- Use historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity or change) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

**PROMPT:**

A. Compare and contrast the cultural OR political characteristics of two of the following trade networks:

The Indian Ocean Maritime Trade Network  
The Silk Roads  
The Trans-Saharan Trade Network

**OR**

B. **Compare and Contrast the role of belief systems in the rule of two of the following states:**

Ottoman Empire  
**Ming China**  
Delhi Sultanate  
Yuan (Mongol) China  
**Western European Christendom**

## **ESSAY:**

During the period of 1200 to 1450, prominent states such as Western Christendom and Ming China frequently employed schools of thought or religions in their rule. As this was a period of conflict and unrest, the goal of using beliefs was to stabilize the state and its people. In Christendom, after the black plague, Christianity played a major part in reforming the state and social structure. And in Ming China, after the Mongol invasions, rulers implemented Confucianism and ancient Chinese traditions to rebuild administration. Although Christianity and Chinese schools of thought were both used as claims to the throne and dealt with similar aspects of life, they differed in their intended audiences and their implementation into rule.

Both Christianity and Chinese beliefs were used for a rise to power in their respective states. After the black death in Western Christendom, states were divided, and ruler could not reform their states. Even though the church had lost some of its power, the abundance of Christians in the state allowed for it to remain prominent. In the 14th to 15th centuries, the church used the claim that it had “divine approval” to rally behind secular rulers and reunify Western Christendom. Similarly, when the Yuan dynasty collapsed after rebellions in China, rulers formed the Ming dynasty. To prevent any opposition to their rule, emperors of the Ming dynasty claimed the Mandate of Heaven, also known as the divine right to rule. The implementation of the ancient belief in China into the Ming dynasty allowed for a reduced number of revolts, as the commoners believed that god granted the emperors the right to rule because they were worthy.

Additionally, Christianity and Confucianism both dealt with aspects of personal and administrative life. The state of Western Christendom had Christianity deeply rooted in its government through the treaties between church and state. This allowed the church to make major political decisions

such as the Crusades. Additionally, Christianity was also deeply influential in private life. As the church gained more power through tax exemption and other benefits, the clergy delved deeper into the private lives of the citizens of Christendom. It began overseeing and advising on marriages, family life, and business relations. Through such practices, Christianity expanded itself to dictate both the political and personal lives of those in Western Christendom. Similarly, Confucianism also dealt with both political and personal aspects of the state. Through the use of Confucian civil service tests, Confucian ideals and practices were ensured in the administration as to be a bureaucratic official, one had to pass a civil service exam, which consisted of ideas on how a ruler should rule and a political hierarchy. Furthermore, Confucianism also emphasized the importance of personal relationships and respect. For example, a son should always be respectful to his parents. With the duality of Confucian ideals, it dealt with private and administrative life, just as Christianity did.

However, during the 1300s to 1450s, Christianity and Confucianism were influential on different target audiences. The state of Western Christendom was not religiously tolerant, meaning that only Christians would be safe living there. The church heavily enforced this rule with death or harassment, as a Christian church would gain power from converting more people to Christianity. Through this practice of the church, Christianity forced itself upon everyone: commoners and rulers. Unlike Christianity, Confucian ideals were not forced upon everyone. While some commoners did practice the morals, only administrative officials and rulers were forced to study Confucianism through the civil service exams. Unlike Christianity, Confucianism did not push itself on commoners and nonadministrative officials.

Moreover, the implementation of Christianity and Confucianism into rule was severely different. In Western Christendom, the ruler and church were separate in that they both had their own jurisdiction. Through alliances, both parties gained more power, however, they did not fully merge. After the results of the black death in the 1300s, the church and pope became an overarching entity in the state of Christendom that would help secular rulers of fragmented states in their attempts to gain power. However,

the states of Western Christendom remained fragmented throughout the next centuries in that the Church remained above the rulers as an all-powerful ruler. Unlike Christianity, Confucianism was blended right into the governing system of Ming China. The use of civil service exams ensured that all ruling officials would have Confucian ideals, and the strict rules that Ming emperors imposed on any governors ensured that the school of thought was unanimous across all political systems. This meant that the state of Ming China was directly integrated with Confucianism, unlike Christianity.

Time to write a conclusion

As states grew in ancient and modern history, the theme of religion being a founding stone has always been essential to success and prosperity. However, the methods and uses of such religions differ. Although both Christianity and Chinese schools of thought allowed for a ruler's rise to power and the ability to deal with both political and private life, the two belief systems differed in their affected audiences and relationship with the government.

Remember to change the filename with your info and SAVE: "Last name, First name\_P#\_Unit 6 LEQ"

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<b>A THESIS / CLAIM</b>		<b>0 - 1 pt</b>
Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.		To earn this point, the thesis must <u>make a claim</u> that responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt. The thesis must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion.
<b>B CONTEXTUALIZATION</b>		<b>0 - 1 pt</b>
Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.		To earn this point, the response must <u>relate</u> the topic of the prompt to broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question. This point is <u>not</u> awarded for merely a phrase or reference.
<b>C EVIDENCE</b>		<b>0 - 2 pts</b>
Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. 1 pt		To earn one point, the response must <u>identify</u> specific historical examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.
Supports an <u>argument</u> in response to the prompt using specific and relevant examples of evidence. 2 pts		To earn two points the response must <u>use</u> specific historical evidence <u>to support an argument</u> in response to the prompt.
<b>D ANALYSIS AND REASONING</b>		<b>0 - 2 pts</b>
<b>Reasoning</b> 1 pt Uses historical reasoning (e.g. comparison, causation, CCOT) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.		To earn the 1 <sup>st</sup> point, the response must <u>demonstrate</u> the use of <u>historical reasoning</u> to frame or structure an argument, although the reasoning might be uneven or imbalanced.
<b>Complex Analysis</b> 1 pt Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an <u>argument</u> that addresses the question.		To earn the 2 <sup>nd</sup> point, the response must demonstrate a complex understanding. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining <u>nuance</u> of an issue by <u>analyzing multiple variables</u></li> <li>• Explaining both similarity &amp; difference, or both continuity &amp; change, or multiple causes, or both cause &amp; effect</li> <li>• Explaining relevant and insightful <u>connections</u> within and across periods</li> <li>• Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes</li> <li>• Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence</li> </ul> This understanding <u>must be part of the argument</u> , not merely a phrase or reference.