

Source:

1 | Here we go again.

Prompt

“Essay option 1: In the early modern period, three of the four major power centers of the world unified under multi-ethnic, multi-religious empires (the Qing in East Asia, the Mughals in South Asia, and the Ottomans in the Middle East), while Europe remained politically fragmented into multiple, competitive independent states. Why was no European power able to unify their local state system the way the Asian land empires did? In a well-organized essay, answer this question by comparing Europe to any two of the above empires. Your essay should cite evidence from a variety of secondary sources from the unit pdf. A strong essay will use the sources as evidence for both specific historical events that demonstrate your thesis as well as for broader concepts and trends. All sources from the Unit 1 reader are fair game, including what we read before the last essay.

Essay option 2: According to Charles Tilly’s “bellicist” theory of state formation, states form to protect a territory from external threats. In the process of doing this (war-making), they develop the tools to eliminate internal rivals as well (state-making), and in order to fund these endeavours, they develop institutions like taxation to raise revenue from their territory (extraction). In order to maximize the wealth available for extraction and prevent property owners from needing private armies to protect themselves, the state establishes rule of law to protect property rights (protection). Using this theory as a starting point, compare state formation in two or three of the four regions we have studied (Europe, India, China, and the Middle East/North Africa): your goal should be to highlight an interesting contrast and pose a causal explanation for this contrast. Your essay should cite evidence from a broad variety of secondary sources from the unit pdf. A strong essay will use the sources as evidence for both specific historical events that demonstrate your thesis as well as for broader concepts and trends. All sources from the Unit 1 reader are fair game, including what we read before the last essay. “

Possible topics

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