

Unit 1 Progress Check: MCQ

“The adoption of the *mamluk** institutions by the Abbasids was followed almost immediately by [the] . . . disintegration of the state. . . . The disintegration of the Abbasid state was an intensely painful process in which it seemed at times as if the very venture of Islam was coming to an end, like that of Alexander the Great before it. . . . Indeed, that Islam was soon to disappear was the very premise upon which the [Shi‘ite] revolutionaries held out their promise of a moral and material recovery: nothing less . . . could now save the marriage between religion and power to which the Islamic [state] owed its existence.”

*an Arabic term designating a slave, in this case, a slave soldier of Turkic origin

Patricia Crone, Danish-American historian of Islamic history, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, 1980

1. The disintegration of the Abbasid Caliphate most directly led to which of the following political developments in the Islamic world in the thirteenth century?
 - (A) The Russian conquest of Central Asia
 - (B) The rise of Turkic states ✓
 - (C) The conversion of most of the Islamic world to Shi‘a Islam
 - (D) The collapse of trade along the Silk Road networks
2. Despite the disintegration of the Abbasid Caliphate, Islam continued to spread across Afro-Eurasia in the period 1200–1450 primarily because of which of the following?
 - (A) The conquest of the Christian Crusader States in the Levant
 - (B) The activities of Sufi missionaries ✓
 - (C) The voyages of the Muslim eunuch Zheng He
 - (D) The translation activities of Muslim scholars
3. The combination between religious and political aspects in the Abbasid state’s concept of rulership is best reflected in which of the following?
 - (A) The Abbasid state had an influential Sunni religious class that often came into conflict with the state.
 - (B) The Abbasid state often allowed local rulers considerable autonomy.
 - (C) The Abbasid state patronized the construction of religious buildings such as mosques.
 - (D) The Abbasid state was headed by a caliph who was theoretically the state’s supreme religious and political leader. ✓

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“I, the reverend Buddhist teacher Dharmasekhara, dedicated this statue of the bodhisattva Amoghapasa* on the orders of His Majesty King Adityawarman, for the benefit and salvation and happiness of all creatures.

Hail to the King—experienced in the arts of war, well versed in the sciences, he is an ocean of all virtues practiced by the followers of the Buddha! He is free from all physical desire. Hail to the King—he who supports the entire world. He has collected jewels by the millions, taken them from the hands of his enemies among the other rulers of this world. He who is like God among kings, crowned, protected by heavenly beings, King of kings! He orders what should be known to all!”

Sanskrit inscription on a statue of a bodhisattva produced in the Malayapura kingdom, Sumatra, Indonesia, circa 1350 C.E.

*a major figure worshipped in Mahayana Buddhism

4. Which of the following best describes a claim made in the first paragraph of the inscription?
- (A) King Adityawarman was a bodhisattva.
 - (B) King Adityawarman was a Buddhist teacher.
 - (C) Statues of Buddhist divine figures could spiritually benefit everyone. ✓
 - (D) Statues of Buddhist teachers were revered by rulers and common people.
5. The claim in the second paragraph that the king has become “free from all physical desire” can best be understood to mean that
- (A) Southeast Asian states’ ruling elites were very wealthy.
 - (B) in Vedic religions, rejecting worldly concerns in order to attain spiritual perfection was considered a virtue. ✓
 - (C) Buddhist monks and nuns in Southeast Asian societies were required to maintain an ascetic lifestyle.
 - (D) Hindus believed that members of each caste had different rights and responsibilities.
6. Which of the following is an argument in the second paragraph of the inscription regarding King Adityawarman?
- (A) His spiritual attributes and worldly achievements made him a powerful and legitimate ruler. ✓
 - (B) His attention to the welfare of all of his subjects made him a caring and legitimate ruler.
 - (C) His conquest of all of the surrounding kingdoms in Indonesia made him a legitimate ruler.
 - (D) His knowledge of science and ships in an island kingdom made him an effective and legitimate ruler.

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“One of the most important aspects of the Maya economy was the exchange of exotic goods. Maya rulers and elites needed such goods to maintain and reinforce their social status and power. Many of these goods were used in the formal dress of kings, nobles, and priests. Without them, the elites could not carry out the rituals that were their principal duties in the eyes of the people. Jaguar pelts, fine textiles, feathers, and other such products were exchanged over long distances within the Maya lowlands. . . .

Such items were probably exchanged as dowry, gifts at royal marriages, coronations, funerals, or at religious pilgrimages. Exotic goods were also probably given as tribute to rulers by their vassals.

These high-status goods held together the Maya world and unified patterns of behavior in religion, science, and warfare. Their exchange surely went hand in hand with exchanges of information, including scientific knowledge, early writing, and, most importantly, models of political organization.”

Arthur Demarest, United States anthropologist, *Ancient Maya: The Rise and Fall of a Rainforest Civilization*, 2004

7. Which of the following pieces of evidence most strongly supports the author’s conclusion about the importance of exotic goods to the Maya region’s economy?
- (A) Exotic goods were exchanged over long distances within the Maya lowlands. ✓
 - (B) Exotic goods were traded between the Maya city-states and neighboring states.
 - (C) The exchange of exotic goods went hand in hand with the exchange of information.
 - (D) The Maya region depended on the trade in exotic goods because of relatively low levels of agricultural production.
8. The author directly uses all of the following pieces of evidence to support his argument about the relationship between exotic goods and the power of Maya rulers EXCEPT that Maya rulers
- (A) used exotic goods to carry out rituals that their subjects expected them to perform
 - (B) prohibited nobles and priests from wearing certain types of exotic goods reserved for rulers ✓
 - (C) used exotic goods in royal coronations
 - (D) received exotic goods as tribute payments from vassals
9. Which of the following does the author cite most directly to support his argument in the third paragraph about the importance of exotic goods in the Maya region?
- (A) The existence of sophisticated astronomical tables
 - (B) The emergence of a unified Maya kingdom based on new political models
 - (C) The emergence of new systems of writing based on earlier Mesoamerican systems
 - (D) The existence of unified patterns of behavior in warfare, science, and religion ✓

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“In that year [1450 C.E.] there came to Naples a three-man embassy from the King of Ethiopia to His Highness, our King Alfonso. Among the ambassadors was a certain Pietro Rombulo, an Italian, native of the city of Messina. This Pietro claimed that he had lived among the Ethiopians for over 40 years. And he described to me how in Ethiopia there are innumerable Christians—since both the people and the king there worship Christ—among whom he had been able to live a good Christian life safely and honorably. The ruler of Ethiopia, King David, whom they call Zara Yacob, was said by the ambassadors to be the most civilized, the most just, and the most pious of princes.”

Pietro Ranzano, Catholic Church official in Naples and Sicily, universal history written circa 1480

10. Which of the following was a continuity in the development of African states in the period circa 1200–1450 ?
- (A) African states such as Ethiopia maintained close contacts with South and East Asian states across the Indian Ocean but rarely had contacts with Europe.
 - (B) Despite geographical barriers, some African states were able to maintain diplomatic and cultural contacts with the broader Afro-Eurasian world. ✓
 - (C) Most African states rejected traditional forms of international diplomacy, such as dynastic marriages and tribute payments.
 - (D) African states needed to maintain friendly diplomatic relations with Europe in order to expand their empires.
11. Which of the following continuities in the development of African states in the period circa 1200–1450 most likely explains the prevalence of Christianity in Ethiopia?
- (A) Some African states’ religious traditions continued to be influenced by cultural transfers dating back to earlier centuries. ✓
 - (B) Some African states were famous for their religious toleration and for allowing multiple religious traditions to coexist in their territories.
 - (C) African states’ official religions were typically syncretic mixtures of several different religious traditions.
 - (D) While African populations mostly continued to adhere to indigenous polytheistic religions, African political elites often adopted monotheistic religions such as Christianity and Islam.
12. Which of the following was a key similarity in the policies of the rulers of African states such as Ethiopia in the period circa 1200–1450 ?
- (A) They granted their subjects unrestricted freedom of speech.
 - (B) They used religion and laws to bolster their legitimacy. ✓
 - (C) They faced challenges to their power from powerful merchant elites.
 - (D) They sought to achieve economic self-sufficiency by restricting trade contacts with other societies.

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“I, Edward, by the grace of God king of England, sent this decree to the reverend father in Christ William, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, supreme Church leader of all England:

Know that, because of the great number of people who died in the recent pestilence, those who survive see that masters need servants, which have become scarce, and so they now refuse to serve as workmen unless they receive excessive wages.

That is why, I, considering the grave inconveniences that might come from the lack of such workmen, especially plowmen, and after consultations with the nobles and clergy of the realm, have decided that every man and woman of our realm of England shall be required to serve his or her lord at the wages that were provided five years ago, in the year 1346.

The lords are entitled to keep their serfs. If any such serf, man or woman, who is required to serve their lord will not do so, they shall be immediately committed to jail.”

King Edward III of England, the Statute of Laborers, royal decree, 1351

13. The terminology used in the opening sentence of the decree was most directly influenced by which of the following?
- (A) The notion that the Pope is the supreme leader of the Church
 - (B) The medieval rules of chivalry and courtly etiquette
 - (C) The deep influence of Christianity on medieval society and culture ✓
 - (D) The slow and uncertain nature of communications in medieval Europe
14. The process of “consultations with the nobles and clergy of the realm” in the making of Edward III’s decree best reflects which of the following?
- (A) The emergence of the concept that parliaments, rather than kings, had ultimate political authority in European states
 - (B) The fragmented, decentralized nature of European feudal monarchies ✓
 - (C) The legacy of Roman imperial political traditions on medieval European states
 - (D) European rulers’ practice of making harsh legislation more palatable by claiming it was part of God’s will
15. The need for legal action to address the “grave inconveniences” that might result from the labor shortages described in the passage most likely resulted from
- (A) the agrarian nature of medieval European economies and their reliance on coerced labor ✓
 - (B) the inability of members of the nobility and other feudal lords to take direct legal action against their workers and serfs
 - (C) the high social rank and economic standing of plowmen in medieval English society
 - (D) the presence of guild regulations prohibiting agricultural laborers from working more than a certain number of hours each week