AP World History: Modern

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary
Set 1

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Long Essay Question 3

- ☑ Scoring Guidelines

Question 3: Long Essay Question, Land-based Empires Expanding Power

6 points

General Scoring Notes

- Except where otherwise noted, each point of these rubrics is earned independently; for example, a student could earn a point for evidence without earning a point for thesis/claim.
- Accuracy: The components of these rubrics require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- **Clarity:** Exam essays should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and practices described below.

In the period circa 1450 to 1750, rulers of land-based empires, such as the Mughal, the Ottoman, and the Safavid empires, used a variety of religious, political, and economic methods to legitimize and consolidate their power.

Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which a land-based empire successfully consolidated or expanded its power during this period.

Reporting	Scoring Criteria		
Row A Thesis/Claim (0-1 points)	O points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.	
	Responses that do not earn this point: Are not historically defensible. Only restate or rephrase the prompt. Do not respond to the prompt. Do not establish a line of reasoning. Are overgeneralized.	Responses that earn this point: Provide a historically defensible thesis or claim about the extent to which a land-based empire successfully consolidated or expanded its power during the period circa 1450 to 1750. The thesis must suggest at least one main line of argument development or establish the analytic categories of the argument.	
	Examples that do not earn this point: Do not focus on the topic of the prompt "The Spanish expanded their empire by building colonies in the Americas." Provide a historically defensible claim, but do not establish a line of reasoning "The rulers of these empires were extremely powerful." Provide a claim that is not historically defensible "The Mughals established a large group of khanates extending from China to Russia and the Middle East."	 Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt "The Safavids, Ottomans, and Mughals used monumental architecture and religious ideas to maintain and increase their power." Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt with analytic categories "Tax farming was used by Muslim states as a way to finance territorial expansion, build elaborate government and religious buildings, and promote state power." Establish a line of reasoning "The Ottoman Empire used gunpowder weapons to expand." (Minimally acceptable thesis/claim) 	
	 Additional Notes: The thesis or claim must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion (which may not be limited to the first or last paragraphs). The thesis or claim must identify a relevant development(s) in the period, although it is not required to encompass the entire period.		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row B	0 points	1 point		
Contextualization	Does not meet the criteria for one point.	Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.		
(0-1 points)	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Responses that do not earn this point: Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. Provide a passing phase or reference.	Responses that earn this point: Accurately describe a context relevant to land-based empires consolidating or expanding power.		
	Examples that do not earn this point: "The period from 1450 to 1750 was the golden age of Islamic land-based empires." "The great Muslim empires declined in importance and tried to modernize themselves through reforms."	 Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided: The spread and improvement of gunpowder weapons Existing important trade routes, such as the Silk Roads Earlier expansion of Islam in Africa and Asia The rise or collapse of Mongol successor states, such as the Uzbeks or the Timurids The collapse of the Byzantine Empire Ottoman expansion in Southern Europe and Anatolia prior to 1450 Continued military and political dominance of nomadic Turkic groups in the Middle East and Central Asia The development of other gunpowder empires, such as the Qing The Black Death Example of acceptable contextualization: "The centralization of power within the Ottoman Empire can be understood as part of the broader practice of developing bureaucratic institutions in modernizing states across Eurasia during this period." "Islam had spread to India long before the Mughal dynasty began expanding." (Minimally acceptable contextualization) 		
	Additional Notes: The response must relate 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. To earn this point, the context provided must be more than a phrase or reference.			

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Row C ividence -2 points)	O points Does not meet the criteria for one point. Responses that do not earn points:	1 point Provides specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt. Decision Rules and Scoring Notes Responses that earn 1 point:	2 points Supports an argument in response to the prompt usin specific and relevant examples of evidence. Responses that earn 2 points:	
	 Identify a single piece of evidence. Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic of prompt. Provide evidence that is outside the 	Identify at least two specific historical examples relevant to land-based empires consolidating or expanding power.	Use at least two specific historical examples to support an argument regarding the extent to which a land-based empire successfully consolidated or expanded it power during the period circa 1450 to 1750.	
	time period or region specified in the prompt. Repeat information that is specified in the prompt. Examples that do not earn points: Portuguese entrance into the Indian Ocean and the establishment of their trading post Empire. Mongols' allowance of religious tolerance and control of the trade routes.	 Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required): Training professionals, such as government officials Standing armies and new military tactics Specific information about new military technology, such as cannons Imperial policies tolerating religious or ethnic minorities Sunni Shi'a rivalry, including the Safavid-Ottoman rivalries Imperial policies limiting the power of the nobility Use of art and architecture to glorify imperial rule, such as Taj Mahal Ottoman tax farming Mughal zamindar tax collection Ottoman devshirme Janissaries Ottoman Suleymaniye Mosque Theory of divine right Discriminatory tax collection against minorities Aztec tribute systems and monumental architecture Example of a statement that earns 1 point for evidence: "Mughal emperors used the zamindar tax collection system and built royal tombs such as the Taj Mahal." 	 Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence: "The Ottomans developed the practice of using professionalized troops within standing armies as well as new gunpowder weapons in order to help them conquer new territories." (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argume that the Ottoman Empire expanded and consolidated their territories.) "Some Mughal rulers practiced religious tolerance for example by allowing Hindus to continue using their temples and exempting them from paying certain taxes. Such policies helped the Mughals establish their legitimacy." (Uses multiple, specific pieces of evidence to support the argument that Mughal emperors used religious toleration to consolidate their power.) 	

	Scoring Criteria			
Reporting Category Row D Analysis and Reasoning (0-2 points)	O points Does not meet the criteria for one point. Responses that do not earn points: • May include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to an argument. • May assert the use of historical reasoning but does not use it to frame or structure an argument. Examples that do not earn	1 point Uses historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity, and change) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt. Decision Rules and Scoon	2 points Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt, using evidence to corroborate, qualify, modify an argument that addresses the question. Oring Notes Responses that earn 2 points: May demonstrate a complex understanding in a variety of ways, such a Explaining the nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables. Explaining both similarity and difference, or explaining both continu and change, or explaining multiple causes, or explaining both cause and effects. Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods. Confirming the validity of an argument by corroborating multiple perspectives across themes. Qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence. Demonstrating complex understanding might include any of the	
	points: Provide evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to an argument: • "Ottoman armies used cannons."	 argument could include: Explaining the effects of centralizing administrative practices that increased the stability and wealth of a land-based empire. Explaining how changes in military organization or military equipment led to large territorial expansion in a land-based empire. Example of acceptable use of historical reasoning: "Even though it preserved the power of the traditional Manchu nobility, the Qing dynasty also added elements of Chinese political culture based on Confucianism, which helped it achieve legitimacy and stability." (Uses causation to support an argument about Qing imperial administrative consolidation) 	 Following, if appropriate elaboration is provided: Explaining the nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables, su as explaining how the early Mughal emperors expanded their territor and centralized their administration, but the later Mughal emperors rapidly lost territory to a variety of indigenous elites as well as invaders. (Explains nuance and qualifies an argument) Explaining relevant and insightful connections across time and space such as explaining how Turkish Muslim conquerors established massive land-based empires in the Middle East, Persia, and India through similar processes of combining cavalry and gunpowder in their armies, as well as establishing centralized administrations. (Explains relevant and insightful connections) Explaining both similarities and differences by explaining that the Ottoman and Mughal Empires tolerated religious diversity in their populations, but the Safavid Empire supported only Shi'a Islamic practices in Persia. (Explaining both similarities and differences) Corroborating an argument by demonstrating how the Ottoman Empire successfully centralized its administration and competed against expanding European maritime empires but failed to modernize and eventually fell far behind European industrial economies. (Corroborates multiple perspectives) 	

1 of 1 3A

After the downfall of the Byzantine empire around 1200, the Ottoman Empire rose to power. It started off as a small Islamic country but grew dramatically very quickly. This is because of the ruler Suleyman the Magnificent II. He expanded the empire and strengthened his authority under his rule. The Ottoman Empire was extremely successful in consolidating its' power by legitimizing the ruler's, strengthening the government, and by increasing its' military in both size and strength.

The Ottomans were successful in consolidating power because they legitimized their ruler. The rulers within their Islamic country were seen as the entirety of the religion themselves. They specifically legitimized them through the use of religion and how the god chose them personally. This caused for the people to have a lot of faith in both the religion and their leader. It allowed the country to be unified both politically and religiously. The second way that the rulers legitimized their rule is through monumental architecture. The Ottomans did this by building Mosques, or giant prayer halls where they can go worship. Suleyman the Magnificent did this by creating the Mosque of Selin II and multiple others. This demonstrated to the people that he had the power and that he was capable of doing major things like this for the sake of his empire.

The Ottomans were successful in consolidating power because they strengthen their government. They created a bureaucracy where multiple people can have a say in what is happening, but it is still ultimately run by a single person. The way that the Ottomans (specifically Suleyman the Magnificent) did this efficiently is by creating the Janissaries. These were boys that were taken from their families at a very young age to learn how to fight, study, and rule. These boys had undying loyalty to the ruler, were extremely trustworthy, and grew up to have important places in society. Suleyman was raised as one of these boys and he specifically changed the government to allow these men to work directly under him. They had undying loyalty to the one that raised them and because of this, Suleyman the Magnificent II did not need to worry about a revolution happening within the government.

Finally the Ottomans were successful in consolidating power because of the increased military strength. Suleyman the Magnificent spent a lot of time expanding the territory of the Ottomans and conquering new peoples. He raised the Janissaries to become warriors as well so that his military had complete loyalty to him and his government. This allowed for a more direct rule over the citizens and allowed for any revolutions or fights to be swiftly ended. It also allowed for more area to be covered when he was expanding his territory which allowed for more money to be made by taxes. This ultimately strengthened the country.

To conclude, the Ottoman Empire was extremely successful in consolidating its power especially through Suleyman the Magnificent II because they legitimized their rulers, strengthened the government, and increased the military strength. All of this allowed for the Ottomans to become one of the largest empires in history and one of the ones that lasted the longest.

1 of 1 3B

The ottomans legitamized their power in 1450 to 1750 through the use of janisaries, religious tolerance and tax farming. The ottomans are muslim country in the middle east they are the second longest empire in the world behind the roman empire and they legitimized their power through many different means.

The Ottomans legitimized their power through the use of janisaries in 1450-1750. Janisaries are soldiers who were converted to islam when they were very young and since than been trained into elite soldiers of the ottomans. Since the janisaries are so well trained and disciplined it lead to the ottomans using them to capture lots of land which solidifed their power.

The ottomans legitamized their power through the use religious tolerance. The ottomans believed that if we forced people to become a different religion it would cause instability so instead they encouraged switching to islam because if they didn't they would be taxed. This lead to the Ottoman empire to be more stable than countries who forced religion upon its subjects.

Another way the ottomans kept power is through the use of tax farming. The ottomans gained money through a system called tax farming. Tax farming is when they would put an auction up for a certain region of taxes and they would sell the tax money to the highest bidder this allowed for the ottomans to be econimacally stable.

In conclusion the ottomans used different and unique economic, religious and military tatcics to stay in power for such a long time.

1 of 1 3C

The Mughal, the Ottoman, and the Safavid empires used multiple techniques to legitimize and consolidate their power. These include the use of religious, political, and economical.

The Ottoman empire used a lot the method of religion to legitimize their power as an empire. As such, posting as many pictures involving their religion, being a Muslim. These being past leaders reading the Quran, doing prayers, fasting, and the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The Ottoman also used political methods to establish their power as an empire. These being political reforms being put in place by the Ottoman leaders/emperors. One being of taking children under 10 to the military camp forcing them to become soldiers at a young age and being there and ready for either conquering or defending.

The Ottoman also used its economic ways to legitimize the empire and power. Such as having much higher tax rates on the Jews that lived in the empire while having a smaller tax rate on the Muslims.

Long Essay Question 3

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

The question asked students to develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which a land-based empire successfully consolidated or expanded its power between 1450–1750. The question primarily addressed content from Unit 3 in the course framework, while also providing students with opportunities to bring up content knowledge from Units 1, 2, and 4 to earn the contextualization point.

The question was mainly focused on the reasoning process of continuity and change, requiring students to evaluate the success of a land-based empire of their choice in consolidating or expanding its power.

Students were expected to present a historically defensible thesis, describe a historical context relevant to the prompt, use at least two specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt, use that evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt, use historical reasoning skills to frame or structure their argument, and demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt.

The introductory sentence of the prompt mentioned the Mughal, Ottoman, and Safavid empires as examples of land-based empires, but the prompt left the door open for students to focus on another empire/other empires.

The introductory sentence of the prompt referred to religious, political, and economic methods of consolidation or expansion of state power, but students were free to choose the type of method or methods that they wanted to explore in their responses.

The question tested content primarily from Topics 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 of the course framework.

Sample: 3A Thesis/Claim: 1 Contextualization: 1

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 2

Total Score: 6

A. Thesis/Claim (0-1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim. The response has a historically defensible claim in the first paragraph, "The Ottoman Empire was extremely successful in consolidating its' power by legitimizing the ruler's, strengthening the government, and by increasing its' military in both size and strength."

Long Essay Question 3 (continued)

B. Contextualization (0-1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization in the first paragraph by showing how the Ottoman empire rose to power after the downfall of the empire and the subsequent expansion under the authority of Suleyman the Magnificent's rule.

C. Evidence (0-2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points in the body paragraphs by using multiple specific pieces of evidence (mosques, prayer halls, Mosque of Sein II, Janissaries) in support of the argument that "[t]he Ottomans were successful in consolidating power because they legitimized their ruler," and "[t]he Ottomans were successful in consolidating power because they strengthen their government. They created a bureaucracy where multiple people can have a say in what is happening, but it is still ultimately run by a single person." Also in the third paragraph in support of the argument that "[f]inally the Ottomans were successful in consolidating power because of the increased military strength. Suleyman the Magnificent spent a lot of time expanding the territory of the Ottomans and conquering new peoples."

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0-2 points): 2

The response earned 1 point for historical reasoning (causation). The response explains how the Ottomans were able to successfully consolidate their power throughout the body of the essay.

The second paragraph reasons the causal elements that allowed "rulers legitimize their rule ... through monumental architecture" and then supports it with evidence including mosques.

In the third paragraph the response analyzes the causal relationship between the utilization of the Janissaries and their undying loyalty to Suleyman the Magnificent ... "did not need to worry about a revolution happening within the government."

The fourth paragraph analyzes the increased military strength and the result of the country becoming stronger.

The response earned 1 point for complexity because it provides multiple explanations regarding the causes and effects of the Ottomans effects of consolidating power through the legitimation of their ruler, strengthening of government, as well as the conquering of new peoples and supporting these claims with nuanced evidence.

Long Essay Question 3 (continued)

Sample: 3B Thesis/Claim: 1 Contextualization: 0

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 1

Total Score: 4

A. Thesis/Claim (0-1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis/claim. The response has a historically defensible claim in the first paragraph: "The Ottomans legitimized their power in 1450 to 1750 through the use of janisaries, religious tolerance and tax farming."

B. Contextualization (0-1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for contextualization. The response attempts to provide contextualization when it describes the location of the Ottoman empire, but the response does not describe a broader historical context relevant to land-based empires or consolidating power.

C. Evidence (0-2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points in the body paragraphs by using multiple specific pieces of evidence (janissaries, religious tolerance and taxing, tax farming) in support of the argument in the second paragraph that "[t]he Ottomans legitimized their power through the use of janisaries in 1450–1750," and in the third paragraph that "[t]he ottomans legitamized their power through the use religious tolerance," and in the fourth paragraph that "[a]nother way the ottomans kept power is through the use of tax farming."

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0-2 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for historical reasoning. The response uses causation to explain the impact of the janissaries, the stabilization of the Ottoman empire through religious tolerance and tax farming.

The response did not earn the point for complexity. There is no attempt to demonstrate a complex understanding of how land-based empires successfully consolidated or expanded power during the period circa 1450–1750.

Long Essay Question 3 (continued)

Sample: 3C Thesis/Claim: 0 Contextualization: 0

Evidence: 2

Analysis and Reasoning: 0

Total Score: 2

A. Thesis/Claim (0-1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for thesis/claim. The response attempts a thesis statement in the first paragraph when it states, "The Mughal, the Ottoman, and the Safavid empires used multiple techniques to legitimize and consolidate their power." These include the use of the "religious, political, and economical" categories provided in the prompt, but the response does not establish a line of reasoning regarding the multiple techniques used to legitimize and consolidate their power.

B. Contextualization (0-1 points): 0

The response did not earn the point for contextualization. The response does not describe a broader historical context relevant to land-based empires or consolidating power.

C. Evidence (0-2 points): 2

The response earned 2 points in the body paragraphs by using multiple specific pieces of evidence (use of pictures with leaders, children under 10 to military camp, and tax rates) in the second paragraph in support of the argument that "[t]he Ottoman empire used a lot the method of religion to legitimize their power as an empire," and in the third paragraph, that "[t]he Ottoman also used political methods to establish their power as an empire," as well as in the fourth paragraph, that "[t]he Ottoman also used its economic ways to legitimize the empire and power."

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0-2 points): 0

The response did not attempt to use historical reasoning to frame or structure their argument to explain the extent to which a land-based empire successfully consolidated or expanded power during the period circa 1450–1750.

The response did not earn the point for complexity. There is no attempt to demonstrate a complex understanding of how land-based empires successfully consolidated or expanded power during the period circa 1450–1750.