

2009 Comparative Question - Thesis or Not?

Question: For the period from 1500 to 1830, compare North American racial ideologies and their effects on society with Latin American/Caribbean racial ideologies and their effects on society.

Thesis:

- Must have “value added,” not merely restate the question
- Identifies a valid similarity or difference
- Includes both North America and Latin America/Caribbean
- Addresses both ideology and effects of ideology (although not necessarily defined)
- Is relevant to the time period.

Ideology “Cue” Words: feelings, attitudes, beliefs, decide, deemed, considered, thinking, principle, any *idea*
Effects “Cue” Words: discrimination, consequences, results, blending, institutions, hierarchies

Is acceptable thesis? Yes or no *
WHY?

1. The racial ideologies created by European colonizers in the Americas served to quell the indigenous populations of the area and put pure-blooded Europeans in power. The niches created by these ideologies created a social separation that still exists today. (Essay O, Pack #1)
2. All throughout history, various regions of the world encountered a crossroads between race and social hierarchy based on race. Regions such as North America have influenced other regions such as Latin America and the Caribbean. These racial ideologies have impacted various societies. (Essay U, Pack #1)
3. The time period 1500 to 1830 was a very important one in the history of the Americas. It was during this time period that the Europeans came to dominate the previous societies and civilizations of the Americas. The racial ideologies and their effects on the society of North American and Latin America were similar because the native European were the most dominant, but different because in Latin American an entirely new ethnicity was born. (Essay DD, Pack #1)
4. European racial superiority was always looked at as the prominent (white race). This so called pure race imposed its powers in Africa and the rest of the world. The racial superiority ideologies in Africa led to slavery. Those slaves were shipped to the New World, but they stopped first in Brazil and the Caribbean. (Essay ZZZ, Pack #2)
5. Between 1500-1830 both North Americans and Latin Americans had distinct racial ideologies. They differed from region to region but were rooted in Europeans overseeing the black and Native American population. The racial ideologies differed in their treatment of Native Americans, Africans, and mixed races. (Essay BB, Pack #2)
6. North American and Latin American/Caribbean peoples both subjected people of different ethnicities to their own racial superiority. (Essay H, Pack #2)

2007 Comparative Question Where's the Bar for Thesis?

Example

Though both Spain and the Ottoman Empire began to develop economically, political, and socially, their underlying strategies for this process differed greatly.¹

The Russian Empire and the Spanish Empire were politically and socially different but economically both needed to expand to get the materials they needed.²

Commentary

Yes. Both empires are included. Statement is relevant to the process of empire building, and both the similarity and difference are qualified/categorized.

Yes. Minimally acceptable thesis qualifies similarities & differences.

Thesis? Explain!

1. In the 350 years after 1450, Spain and Russia built their empires, each with different locations, political structures, and goals.³

2. The very few similarities between the two empires would be that they were both monarchies that didn't have a huge problem with succession. They both had a majority Christian population and had governments that would sponsor works projects. Like the building of St. Petersburg in Russia.⁴

3. The Russian and Spanish empires had a lot of differences in the way they came about and had very few similarities. But both had impacts none the less.⁵

4. Both the Spanish and the Russians participated in this empire-building, however there were many differences. Spanish expansionism occurred across the globe and had deep implications for the indigenous people subjected to foreign rule and the Europeans back home while the Russian expansion was confined to the Eurasian landmass.⁶

5. In the Spanish Empire during the 16th century they had a very good economy because of all their silver. The Ottomans also had a good economy because of their big empire they had many trade routes and contact with many other Empires.

1. Essay M, Training packet #1
2. Essay JJ, Training Packet #2
3. Essay EE, Training Packet #1
4. Essay P, Training Packet #1
5. Essay P, Training Packet #1
6. Essay A, Training Packet #1

2007 Comparative Question

Thesis or Not?

Question: Within the period from 1450 to 1800, compare the process (e.g. political, social, economic) of empire building in the Spanish Empire with the empire-building processes in ONE of the following: the Ottoman Empire OR the Russian Empire.

1. The Russian and Spanish empires had a lot of differences in the way they came about and had very few similarities. But both had impacts none the less.
2. In the 350 years after 1450, Spain and Russia built their empires, each with different locations, political structures, and goals.
3. The very few similarities between the two empires would be that they were both monarchies that didn't have a huge problem with succession. They both had a majority Christian population and had governments that would sponsor works projects. Like the building of St. Petersburg in Russia.
4. Both the Spanish and the Russians participated in this empire-building, however there were many differences. Spanish expansionism occurred across the globe and had deep implications for the indigenous people subjected to foreign rule and the Europeans back home while the Russian expansion was confined to the Eurasian landmass.
5. In the Spanish Empire during the 16th century they had a very good economy because of all their silver. The Ottomans also had a good economy because of their big empire they had many trade routes and contact with many other Empires.
6. The Russian Empire and the Spanish Empire were politically and socially different but economically both needed to expand to get the materials they needed.
7. Though both Spain and the Ottoman Empire began to develop economically, political, and socially, their underlying strategies for this process differed greatly.

Thesis? Yes/No & why?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Examples for you to review: the good, the bad, & the ugly...

Thesis or Not? 1

Question: Compare the process of state-building in TWO of the following in the period 600-1450 CE.

Islamic states City-states Mongol Khanates

General Advice: Begin thesis with: While, Although, Despite, In spite of

Thesis Killer Words: very many things lots stuff ways really

Draft	Comment
1 Although Islamic states and Mongol Khanates both had centralized rule, Islamic states were built on religion and theology and Mongol Khanates were built on military rule.	verb "had" = bad, static, passive. Change to "active" verb. The "what" of the question = "process of state building." How is "were [built] a type of a "process?"
2 While both City-States and Islamic States in Eurasia from 600 CE to 1450 CE used trade to build and grow their civilizations, each built their states out of different building materials and brainstormed different ideas of how their civilization would run.	Is "building material" meant literally, or metaphorically? (e.g. brick vs. mud vs. stone? or "religiously vs. militarily")? sim = "used trade" diff = "building materials" & "ideas" = too vague. NAME the "material" and "ideas"
3 Although Mongol Khanates and Islamic states had similar Taxation and both Allowed the free movement of religion throughout there regions, Islamic states were theologically based while the Khanates tended to be more Military based	verb = "had" = BAD verb = "were" = BAD there their they're sim = "allowed free religious movement" diff = "theologically based" How was the "theological base" related to the "process of state building." "Process" involves ACTION, "were" is a static/passive verb. HOW does theology enable/allow a state to grow/build? I don't see a connection.
4 Although the process of state-building in the Mongol Khanates and city states from 600-1450 had many differences, such as the fact that mongols used extreme force to build their state and other city states did not, they also had many similarities in the way that they built thier states	many = VETO (TWICE!) way = VETO "TRIFECTA" The Mongols "used extreme force" Good. I know that city states didn't, but I don't know what city states DID use. Be More Specific. (BMS) NAME/DESCRIBE what city states DID use, just like you did w/ the Mongols.

Thesis or Not?

	Draft	Comment
5	Although Islamic states and Mongol Khanates both had tax systems to connect their state, the Mongols did not have the state-building ideas like connections through the same religion that the Islamic states had.	<p>verb = “had” = BAD</p> <p>Islamic states “had” religion. I know the Mongols did NOT “have religion” but reader cannot tell what the Mongols DID ‘have.’ BMS. Explicitly NAME/DESCRIBE what the Mongols DID have analogous to what the Islamic states ‘had.’</p>
6	Despite differences in size, location rulers and some others traits, City-states and Islamic states are very similar.	<p>Diff #1 = “size” not relevant to the PROCESS of state-building. Relevant to comparing the states AFTER they were ‘built’ but not DURING the PROCESS.</p> <p>Diff #2 = location. Ibid.</p> <p>Diff #3 = rulers, ‘duh’ Haven’t ALL states ALWAYS had ‘different rulers.’ (e.g. name any two empires that had the SAME ruler)</p> <p>Diff #4 = “other traits.” Vague. NAME those “other” traits HERE, NOW.</p> <p>Sim = “very” Thesis Killer word, Vague. Tells reader the AMOUNT of similarity, rather than naming the KIND of similarity.</p>
7	Despite Islamic State’s establishment by religion and Mongol Khanates establishment by military power, both were based on trade.	<p>Diff = Islamic states “established” (active, “process” verb) = religion, Mongol = military. However, didn’t both Islamic & Mongols use a “military” means? The Islamic states’ military was MOTIVATED BY religion, whereas the Mongols’ ‘religion’/motivation was more of just a zealous devotion to Chinggis Khan. (one might even equate such devotion as a ‘religion’?)</p> <p>Sim = trade. “were based” OK, though a more active verb would help. (not just ‘borrowing’ the “established by” from the previous clause)</p> <p>This WOULD qualify as an “Acceptable Thesis” as is. I’m just trying to ‘raise the bar’ incrementally. Good Job! :)</p>
8	Despite different strategies of ruling in Islamic states and the Mongol Khanates, the states and the Khanates both had a central leader that ruled.	<p>Diff = “strategies of ruling” = vague. NAME the strategy each used HERE NOW.</p> <p>Sim = “had a central leader” = vague & passive. Avoid “passive/static” verbs like “had,” “was,” “were,” etc. The WHAT in the question is “PROCESS of state building,” so the VERB in the Thesis should be an ACTIVE verb. What are synonyms for “building?”</p> <p>Use those verbs.</p>

Thesis or Not?

3

Draft	Comment
9 While the Islamic states and Mongol Khanates both were formed through taxes, allowing all religions to be practiced, and trade, only the Islamic states were led by a religious ruler, Muhammad. The mongol Khanates were led by Genghis Khan.	<p>Sim #1 = “formed through taxes.” I’m not sure that’s factually true. Taxation certainly helped finance/strengthen the states AFTER they were first CREATED, but I’m not sure what evidence of the states being “formed through taxes” there IS. (e.g. before the taxes those states didn’t exist? Could you ‘name’ the taxes each state used?)</p> <p>Sim #2 = “allow[ed] all religions to the practiced.” = TRUE, but how did “allowing all religions” HELP BUILD the states? Is “allowing religions” relevant to the PROCESS of state building? This could be a perfectly valid point, but would require focus/attention on each state’s religious policy during their period of growth/expansion.</p> <p>Diff = “led by a religious ruler.” Vague. In direct comparison. The reader knows what 1/2 of the question WAS, but only knows what the other half was NOT. Be explicit. “Islamic states led by a religious ruler, while the Mongols were led by a ____ ruler.”</p> <p>NAME/DESCRIBE both “halves” of the difference.</p> <p>In class I think we used the example of having 2 students stand in front of the class, and I asked you all to compare their clothing. “Jane is wearing a sweater, while John isn’t,” isn’t a clear comparison. It makes it sound like John isn’t wearing ANYthing. Say what Jane IS wearing, AND what John IS wearing in the SAME SENTENCE.</p>
10 The mongol khanates and the Islamic states both shared similarities like both being a wide spread peoples. They were different because they had varied governments in Islamic states while The mongols had very similar laws.	<p>Sim = “being wide spread peoples.” Irrelevant to the question. The verb “being” describes what the states WERE, not the PROCESS of HOW they BUILT their states.</p> <p>Use an ‘ACTIVE’ verb (a synonym of ‘build’)</p> <p>Diff = Islam=varied gov’ts, Mongols=similar laws. Vague. I can’t tell what a “varied gov’t” IS, what “similar laws” the Mongols had were similar TO, (similar to OTHER Mongols? similar to Islamic states? WHOSE laws were the Mongols’ laws similar TO?) and I doubt you know, either.</p>

Thesis or Not?

Draft	Comment
11 While Islamic states ruled with caliphs who were leaders of separate caliphates and City-states ruled with centralized government, both were similarly built based on their religion and trade techniques between 600 and 1450 C.E.	<p>Diff = form of rule. (Islamic = caliphs, City-states=centralized gov't) A bit vague, and not clearly relevant to the question. What example/characteristics of city-states', gov't BEING "centralized" will you mention as factual examples later in the essay? Also, the VERB is "ruling." That seems to describe the states AFTER they were "built." The question asks about the PROCESS of state BUILDING, which is DURING the "building" phase, not AFTER the states were already 'built'.</p> <p>Sim #1 = based on religion Sim #2 = trade techniques</p> <p>Sounds good, true & relevant. I'm a little unsure how "active" the verb in this clause is, though. I would prefer a more 'active' verb focusing on the PROCESS of building, rather than after-the-fact 'built.' The later body paragraphs that dealt with this part of the question could be quite good, or could be a dud depending on the verb(s) in that paragraph.</p>
12 Although Islamic States and Mongol Khanates differed in state building by how the Islamic States were unified by religion but still different countries and the Mongols were considered one group, the similarities shared were the control of one central leader and they accepted the variety of religions.	<p>Several vaguenesses here.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) There were no such things as "countries" at this time in history. ANYwhere. So, the statement of "unified by religion but still different countries" is either meaningless or just plain false. 2) All the verbs are passive/static verbs, all after-the-fact. The question asks about the PROCESS of state-building. HOW did each state evolve from 'small' to 'big'? 3) Mongols were "considered one group." "Considered" BY WHO? 4) Sim #1 = control of (by?) one leader. Isn't that true of virtually EVERY state, ever? It's kind of a 'duh' statement. Can you think of any state that did NOT have 'one central leader'? ('leadership' is an incredibly complex subject, and there are certainly many categories/elements of leadership, with infinite 'degrees' of centralization, but is that really what you're going to discuss in the later body paragraph?) 5) Sim #2 = accepted a variety of religions <p>OK, true, but HOW is that relevant to the question? The 'What' of the question is the PROCESS of state building. But the verb "accepted" is past tense, which seems to imply a passive/static "being" characteristic. What did these states 'DO' rather than just what they 'WERE'?</p>

Thesis or Not?

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Draft	Comment
13 While Islamic states and Mongol Khanates in 600-1450 both used vast taxation systems to support their empires, they expanded their empires through different means. Islamic States spread their empires along trade routes using their religion while the Mongol Khanates spread their empire through violent conquests and raids of cities.	<p>Sim = “used vast taxation sys” Good. Diff = “Means” Islamic = “along trade routes” (a ‘where’) = “using religion” (a ‘how’) Mongols = “violent conquests” (a ‘how’) and “raids of cities” (a ‘how’)</p> <p>Did Islamic states NOT use “violent conquests”? Did Mongols NOT conquer “along trade routes”?</p> <p>With two diff categories (how vs. where) this is a false comparison. I’m not sure it’s even factually accurate. Didn’t Mongols conquer along the Silk Roads? (a trade route, which you said ONLY the Islamic states did) Likewise, didn’t Islamic states use “violent conquests”? (This gets into some controversial historiography. Islamic states have often been characterized as excessively violent, while in fact they were often much more tolerant of other religions, so there IS room for difference of historical interpretation here.) I’m just not sure that “degree of violence” is truly what your later body paragraph would argue.</p>
14 Although the process of state-building by the Mongols was dissimilar to the process that was used by the Islamic states it also had a few parallels, those being their influence and use of trade to further their empire, and their use of a single ruler to control their empire. In difference the Islamic states used a theocratic system of rule, while the Mongols used a single elected non-religious figure.	<p>“those being ...” Does that clause describe the SIMILARITIES or DIFFERENCES? I can’t tell = vague = No Thesis. Shorten/eliminate the 1st half of the sentence. e.g. “Although Mongols & Islamic states both used trade to further their empire,...”</p> <p>Sim #2 = “use of a single ruler.” See my other comments re: this similarity. Doesn’t EVERY empire “use a single ruler?” Too vague/obvious to count for AP credit.</p> <p>Diff = System of rule. Religious vs. non-religious. OK. Just make sure to relate this to the PROCESS of state building, not just the STATUS of the states (AFTER they were already ‘built.’) otherwise it might all be irrelevant to the question.</p>
15 Although both Islamic city-states and Mongolian Khanates spread culture and technological advances throughout Eurasia, Islamic city-states were connected through common religion while Mongolian Khanates where connected through their militaristic rule.	<p>Sim = “spread culture & tech advances” = an EFFECT OF the states. How is that relevant to the PROCESS of BUILDING the states?</p> <p>Diff = means of connection. Islamic = common religion, Mongol = militaristic rule.</p> <p>Both true re: “the states,” but not the PROCESS of BUILDING the states.</p>

Thesis or Not?

	Draft	Comment
16	Although the Mongols and dar al-Islam during the time period between 600 C.E. to 1450 C.E. spread their territory through conquest and accepted other religions in Eurasia, the Mongols ... and dar al-Islam ... the end.	<p>Sim #1 = Spread through conquest Sim #2 = Accepted other religions (true, though how is this relevant to the PROCESS of state building?) Diff = ?</p> <p>Good start, now just “keep going.”</p>
17	Although both Mongol khanates and Islamic states prospered and grew through trade and taxation, the Mongols taxed by military force and intimidation while Islamic states were taxed through the government and laws.	<p>Good start, but I get the impression you’re trying to use fancy words to hide the fact that you don’t know what to write.</p> <p>Sim = grew through trade & taxation. Good enough, clear.</p> <p>Diff = method of taxation. I’m not sure how you’ll argue taxes were collected by “force & intimidation” vs. “gov’t and laws.” What would a tax “BY” either of these look like? How would you consider your own, current taxes to “be?” Do you pay taxes because ... you’re intimidated by the threat of force (being thrown in jail if you don’t pay) or because “it’s the law?” What exactly is the difference between these? Diff words does not automatically mean the substance of those words are different.</p>
18	Although both Mongol Khanates and Islamic States both employed centralized rule and trade, Mongol Khanates thrived with their military forces while Islamic states revolved around theology.	<p>Sim = “employed centralized rule & trade.” Good verb “employed” though I suppose I could nitpick and ask you to explicitly state “employed ... to build their empire.” (very minor nitpick)</p> <p>Diff = source of thriving. Mongols=military, Islamic = theology.</p> <p>Good, concise, clear, and TRUE. :) Nicely done.</p>
19	Although Islamic states and city-states were built on different religions, trade resulted in the expansion of the states and economies in both parts of Eurasia.	<p>Diff = built on diff religions. Passive, after-the-fact. The question asks about the PROCESS of building. Now, to be fair, if the body paragraph(s) focused on how each state used religion then it could be perfectly admissible. BUT if the focus turns out to be how each state “was” a different religion, without any active ‘doing,’ or ‘building,’ then I fear it might be irrelevant to the question.</p> <p>Sim = trade. The verb “resulted in the expansion” has nice “verb” implied. (expanded) also a nice cause-effect analysis that the rest of the essay will hopefully develop. (‘result’ is an ‘Analysis cue word’) :</p>

Thesis or Not?

7

	Draft	Comment
20	Although both Islamic States and city-states had different religions between 600-1450, both Islamic States and City-States used trade to benefit the economics and help the growth of their civilization.	<p>Logical conundrum here. Both empires had different ... ???</p> <p>Any sentence that begins “both” implies a similarity. How can a sim be a diff? I suspect the word “both” is just a ‘slip of the pen’ and should be deleted completely. Assuming that’s the correct interpretation...</p> <p>Diff = religions. True, but how is that relevant to the PROCESS of state building? The verb is just “passive” or “static.” It just “is.” It doesn’t ‘DO’ anything. Rather than describing what the states WERE, describe what they DID.</p> <p>Sim = “used trade .. help grow.” Good.</p>
21	although trade benifited both islamic states and city states in state building, what was traded shaped the way that the cities were built	<p>WAY = VETO.</p> <p>Sim = trade benefited both states. Good.</p> <p>Diff = “what” was traded, and ‘what was traded’ is important because it “shaped the way that the cities were built.”</p> <p>Hmmm, I’m curious (skeptical) what examples you’ll find/use in “what” was traded and “how” it affected the “way” cities were built. This is why ‘way’ is a Thesis Veto word. :)</p>
22	Although there were similarities, like centralized rule, in the process of state building Mongol Khanates and Islamic States from 600 to 1450, they differed in the way that Mongols used their extreme force and strong military to build their states and Islamic states did not.	<p>Way = VETO.</p> <p>Diff = Only describe 1/2 of the difference.</p> <p>Mongols = used extreme force.</p> <p>Islamic states = NOT, but the reader doesn’t know what the Islamic states DID use. Be explicit. Name/describe what Islamic states DID use here/now.</p> <p>Sim = centralized rule. Vague. What examples of “centralized-ness” will you cite in later body paragraphs? I fear this is just an attempt to hide lack of concrete factual knowledge.</p>
23	Although mongol khanates and city-states from 600 c.e to 1450 c.e differed on how they expanded there empires, there values dealing with there trade systems were parallel.	<p>There, Their, They’re.</p> <p>Learn ‘em. Not a scoreable point per the rubric, but a major pet peeve among teachers and AP Readers. “Bad form” to annoy your reader after the 1st sentence.</p> <p>Diff = method (“how”) of expanding empires. What’s the “how” of expanding empires will you expand on later in the body paragraphs? Seems perilously vague.</p> <p>Sim = “values dealing with trade systems” Seems even vaguer. What’s the NAME of the Mongol “value” vs. the City-states’ “value?” NAME/DESCRIBE that “value” here/now.</p>

Thesis or Not?

Draft	Comment
24 Although Mongol Khanates and Islamic states shared analogous taxation methods and allowed the free movement of trade, Islamic states grew with theological roots while Mongol Khanates unified themselves through military means.	<p>Sim #1 = tax method Sim #2 = allowed free movement of trade</p> <p>Diff = theology vs. military. Didn't Islamic states use their military AS they spread their religion? Perhaps refocus to how Islamic militaries were motivated by religion, whereas Mongol militaries were motivated by ??? (complete this, do NOT just write "whereas Mongols weren't." explicitly complete 'both halves' of the difference.)</p>
25 Although completely geographically different, both Islamic states and City-states were viciously involved in trade and the diffusion of cultures to different regions to help strengthen and build their civilization, but they weren't similar in all categories, for there were differences in religion and economy that set apart their processes of state-building.	<p>"Geography" not relevant to "state building" Sim #1 = "involved in trade" (viciously!)</p> <p>Sim #2 = diffusion of cultures Diff #1 = "in" religion. BMS WHAT "difference in religion" was there? Diff #2 = "in" economy. BMS WHAT "difference in religion" was there? Don't "tell the reader 'where to look to find the difference' DESCRIBE the difference itself. (not a long, detailed description, but at least give it a NAME, not just a CATEGORY)</p>
26 While Islamic states and their culture within had a longer lasting effect on Eurasia, both mongol khanates and islamic states rapidly increased in popularity and dominated large areas of land during 600 c.e. to 1450 c.e.	<p>Diff = "longer lasting effect" Vague. Be explicit. "longER ... than what/who?" DESCRIBE the effect, not just "how long it lasted."</p> <p>Sim #1 = "rapid increase in popularity", Sim #2 = "dominated large land areas"</p>
27 In spite of the similarities in the process of building Islamic States and City-States from 600 C.E. through 1450 C.E., such as a central focus on trade and religion to build the cities around, they shared differences in their geographic location, which caused a difference in the type of religion they built their cities around.	<p>reword "such as" clause into the "In spite of ..." clause. e.g. "In spite of the shared central focus on trade ..." Sim = "central focus on trade & religion" Diff #1 = "geog location" not relevant to question. Diff #2 = "type of religion" = an EFFECT, not a "process of" state building.</p>
28 Although certain Islamic-states and City-states within 600 CE-1450 CE differed in geographic location causing the process of state-building to differ, their processes were similar in the sense that both Islamic and City-states were prominent in trade and had strong religious influences.	<p>Sim #1 = prominent in trade Sim #2 = religious influences (CAUSED relig influences, or caused BY religious influences?) Diff = geog location = not relevant/specific enough ("caused the process to differ" = differ how? either describe that diff here/now. I suspect the lack of detail due to "geog location" being vague/irrelevant to begin with.</p>

	Draft	Comment
29	Despite a large geographical distance between the lands of the Mongol Khanates and the east African lands of many important city-states such as Kilwa, they had similarities in states infrastructure such as a common uniting religion, Islam, and large trade routes for economic prosperity. They also had differences in the origins of these states and the processes used to create them such as the city-state method of growing around trade and the Mongol technique of building on already present empires by overthrowing the government.	MANY = VETO Diff = geopol distance, how is geographic location a type OF “state building process”? Isn’t that irrelevant to the question? Diff = “origin of these states.” Eliminate sentence before “such as” clause. Just state, “E African city-states grew around trade while the Mongols built on already present empires by overthrowing the gov’t.”
30	Although Islamic states and City-states both built their civilizations through interaction with trade and sought new technological and political advances through Islamic influence, they differed in which religion they practice, likely due to their obvious geographical difference.	Sim #1 = “interaction through trade” Sim #2 = sought new tech/pol advances Diff = religion, “caused by geopol” = weak, perhaps how the Islamic states FIRST converted to Islam THEN built states/empires, while the Mongols FIRST built states THEN converted from local/shaman TO Islam?
31	While Mongol khanates were more centered on expanding their reign of their empire, Islamic states were trying to convert people to their religion. Both tried to expand the area of their trade though.	Diff = both examples are true, but “too late.” They describe what the states did AFTER they were “built.” They need to be tied explicitly to the “process of state building.” HOW did “trying to convert” help BUILD Islamic states? “Expanding their reign” = vague. Is this a literal, geographic statement (e.g. sq miles under control) or a metaphoric “expanded from political, to economic, to ... ?” Sim = “expand area of trade” Isn’t that 1/2 of the difference in the previous sentence? Isn’t “area of trade” a TYPE OF “reign of empire”?
32	Although Islamic city states and the Mongol Khanates worshiped different religions and economic structure, they both freely allowed the mixing of cultures and commercialized trade in their processes of state building.	Diff #1 = “worshipped diff religions” Diff #2 = “[worshipped] diff economic structure[s]” How does one “worship” an “economic structure”? Sim = “allowed ...” HOW did the “allowing” help BUILD [process] state? The reader knows you think the “allowing” happened DURING the process of state building, but it would help to have a more explicitly CAUSAL rather than just a COINCIDENTAL link.

Thesis or Not?

	Draft	Comment
33	Despite the fact that both Islamic City-States and Islamic States (Mongol Khanates) used the guise of Qur'anic law to build their states, the two differed in that Islamic Mongol Khanates stressed the importance of expansion of territory, while City-States stressed the importance of improving the economic and technological value of the relatively small territory they already held.	<p>"Islamic city states" is NOT clearly one of the choices. "Islamic state": choices include: 1) Umayyad Caliphate; 2) Abbasid Caliphate; 3) Al Andulus (Iberia/Spain); I suppose you could argue that the Swahili coastal states were "Islamic city states," but then just call them the same title that the question uses. Are there others you're thinking of?</p> <p>2nd: How was "using Qur'anic law" a "guise?" I'm just not sure what evidence of a different "real" motive OTHER than religious devotion you'll argue later in the essay.</p>
34	Although both Mongol Khanates and Islamic states that existed between 600 AD and 1450 AD levied strong taxes to support their empire and had great technological advances, they differed in their ruling styles and importance and tolerance of varying religions.	<p>sim #1 = levied strong taxes sim #2 = tech advances. The "had" verb doesn't show HOW "tech advances" CAUSED ("built") their state. Make the verb "active," not a passive "had." Diff #1 = "ruling style" = vague. What IS a "style" of ruling? Diff #2 = "religious tolerance" Good. True. Now, HOW did "tolerating religious diff" HELP BUILD their respective state(s)? Make the verb "active."</p>

OK, everyone. Look over all the submissions above. Note the frequent mistakes.

- 1: Must be RELEVANT to "process of state building." Emphasis on the PROCESS of state BUILDING, not just THE state.
- 2: The VERB in your thesis should (must?) be an ACTIVE verb. No "had," "was," "were" etc.
- 3: Vagueness. Several examples of writers trying to disguise their lack of factual knowledge with fancy words that mean little, if anything.
- 4: Thesis Killer Verbs: still showing up a few times

“Thesis Killer” Words



very
many
things



lots / a lot

stuff

ways
really