

Belief and Power

Analyze how ideas and populations shaped two early modern empires.

9.7b “The dominant belief systems and the ethnic and religious compositions of the Ottoman Empire and the Ming Dynasty affected their social, political, and economic structures and organizations.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline six links between beliefs or population groups and institutions. Label their effects S (social), P (political), or E (economic). A detail may fit more than one category.

Organizing Diverse Empires

- ① Islam shaped Ottoman law, but the empire included many faiths and languages. Subjects' legal status differed. Many non-Muslim adult men paid the jizya tax, with varying exemptions. Religious communities managed some worship, education, marriage, and legal affairs under imperial authority. Arrangements varied by time and place. They helped govern diversity without giving all subjects equal rights.
- ② Through the devshirme levy, Ottoman officials forcibly took selected Christian boys, often from Balkan communities, for service. They were converted to Islam and trained; some became Janissary soldiers and others served in government. Their direct ties to the sultan strengthened central power. This was coercive even though some later gained high office. Merchants from Greek, Armenian, Jewish, Arab, Turkish, and other communities connected markets. Their languages and networks supported trade, while officials collected customs duties and regulated commerce.
- ③ In Ming China, Neo-Confucian learning shaped imperial government. Many officials qualified through exams on Confucian texts. Most people were Han Chinese, but other ethnic groups and religions, including Buddhism, Daoism, and Islam, were present. Confucian ideals stressed hierarchy, family duties, and proper conduct. Farmers paid taxes supporting the state. Scholars often ranked merchants below farmers, although successful merchants could be wealthy and influential. Economic reality did not always match ideal social rank.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did religious communities help Ottoman leaders govern people of different faiths?

2 How did the devshirme system strengthen the sultan's political power?

3 How did Neo-Confucianism shape the Ming political system?

4 How did diversity support Ottoman economic activity, and how were merchants viewed in Ming social ranking?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write three sentences comparing how the Ottoman Empire and Ming China used belief systems or population composition to organize their societies. Include one social or economic effect and explain one difference between the empires.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline six links between beliefs or population groups and institutions. Label their effects S (social), P (political), or E (economic). A detail may fit more than one category. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did religious communities help Ottoman leaders govern people of different faiths?	They managed matters such as schools, worship, marriage, and some legal issues, allowing the empire to govern diverse groups without requiring identical customs.
2	How did the devshirme system strengthen the sultan's political power?	Some boys taken through the levy became soldiers or officials with direct ties to the sultan, strengthening central authority.
3	How did Neo-Confucianism shape the Ming political system?	It supported a hierarchy centered on the emperor and civil officials chosen through examinations based on Confucian texts.
4	How did diversity support Ottoman economic activity, and how were merchants viewed in Ming social ranking?	Merchants from many ethnic and religious groups connected Ottoman cities to regional trade. In Ming China, merchants were often ranked below farmers, even though commerce remained important.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Ottoman religious communities managed some local affairs under imperial authority, helping rulers govern different faiths. Ming officials qualified through Confucian examinations, and social ideals ranked farmers above merchants. The examples show different institutions linking belief to government and social rank, while both empires remained diverse.

Accept equivalent evidence-based explanations from the passage. For the open response, look for an accurate comparison, a specific social or economic effect, and a stated difference.