

4.7 Changing Social Hierarchies from 1450 to 1750

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Total: 11 marks

KEY WORDS social hierarchies 社会等级

Objective

Build the skills to explain **social hierarchies** 社会等级 in an imperial age.

You must be able to:

- state the two opposite policies empires adopted towards diversity
- name the two examples of new elites the CED gives
- state what happened to existing elites
- explain why accommodation can be a strategy rather than tolerance

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Two policies

Many states, such as the Mughal and Ottoman empires, **adopted practices to accommodate the ethnic and religious diversity of their subjects or to utilise the economic, political and military contributions of different groups. In other cases, states suppressed diversity or limited certain groups’ roles in society, politics or the economy.**

■ New elites

Imperial conquests and widening global economic opportunities contributed to the formation of new political and economic elites, **including in China with the transition to the Qing Dynasty and in the Americas with the rise of the Casta system.**

■ Existing elites

Their power **fluctuated** as they confronted new challenges to their ability to affect the policies of increasingly powerful monarchs and leaders. Fluctuated, not simply declined.

■ Accommodation as strategy

The CED’s own phrasing puts accommodation beside **utilising contributions**. A state may accept diversity because the groups concerned are useful, which is a policy rather than a value.

2 Practice

2.1 State the two opposite policies empires adopted. [2]

2.2 Name the two examples of new elites. [2]

2.3 Accommodation appears beside “utilise contributions”.

(a) State what this suggests about the motive. [1]

(b) State the CED’s verb for what happened to existing elites. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The Casta system arose in [1]

- A the Americas
- B China
- C the Ottoman Empire
- D West Africa

3.2 Existing elites' power is described as

[1]

- **A** steadily rising
 - **B** fluctuating
 - **C** unchanged
 - **D** abolished
-

3.3 An empire recruits officials from a religious minority.

(a) State which of the two policies this is.

[1]

(b) Explain why this need not indicate tolerance.

[2]

Solutions

2.1 accommodating diversity or utilising different groups' contributions; suppressing diversity or limiting certain groups' roles.

2.2 the transition to the Qing Dynasty in China; the rise of the Casta system in the Americas.

2.3 (a) that the state may accept diversity because the groups are useful. (b) fluctuated.

3.1 A. the CED locates it there.

3.2 B. fluctuated is the CED's word.

3.3 (a) accommodation. (b) the CED pairs accommodation with utilising contributions, so the policy may follow from the group's usefulness rather than from a principle.