

**History route 1**  
**Higher level and standard level**  
**Paper 1**

Thursday 14 May 2015 (morning)

1 hour

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**Instructions to candidates**

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer all the questions from either section A or section B.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

## Section A

### Prescribed subject 1      The origins and rise of Islam c500–661

Read all the sources carefully and answer all the questions that follow.

Sources in this paper have been edited: word additions or explanations are shown in square brackets [ ]; substantive deletions of text are indicated by ellipses ... ; minor changes are not indicated.

These sources and questions relate to the direct and indirect impact of the Byzantine and Sassanian Empires on the Arabian peninsula and the beginnings of the Islamic Empire during the period of the “Rightly Guided Caliphs”.

**Source A**                      Albert Hourani, a lecturer of History, writing in a general introductory book, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (1991).

Both Byzantine and Sassanian Empires had been weakened by epidemics of plague and long wars; the hold of the Byzantines over Syria had been restored only after defeat of the Sassanians in 629, and was still tenuous [insecure]. The Arabs who invaded the two Empires were not a tribal horde but an organized force, some of whose members had acquired military skill and experience in the service of the empires or in the fighting after the death of the Prophet. The use of the camel gave them an advantage in campaigns fought over wide areas; the prospect of land and wealth created a coalition of interests among them; while religious conviction gave some of them a different kind of strength.

**Source B**                      J J Saunders, a lecturer of History, writing in an introductory study, *A History of Medieval Islam* (1965).

Of the two Empires of Byzantium [Byzantine] and Persia [Sassanian], the latter was by far the more vulnerable. Shaken by its defeat at the hands of Heraclius (the Byzantine emperor), challenged by a dozen powers, its army and administration disorganized, the Sassanid [Sassanian] State was in no condition to cope with a violent assault from the Arabian deserts. The Zoroastrian State Church was disliked by the non-Persian minorities. The peasants were oppressed by heavy taxation and the exactions of their landlords. The long war with Rome, which had dragged on from 603 to 628 had exhausted the nation. Social discontent was widespread ... [Although] the Byzantine or East Roman Empire was a much stronger structure ... the Persian War had stretched its resources to their utmost limit; it was faced by the aggressions of the Slavs and Avars in the Balkans and the Lombards in Italy, and its authority over the provinces of Syria and Egypt had been undermined by the temporary Persian occupation and persistent religious strife. Never was the imperial government more unpopular with its Syrian and Egyptian subjects than it was on the eve of the Arab invasions.

**Source C** Philip Hitti, a professor of Semitic Literature, writing in a general history book, *History of the Arabs* (1937).

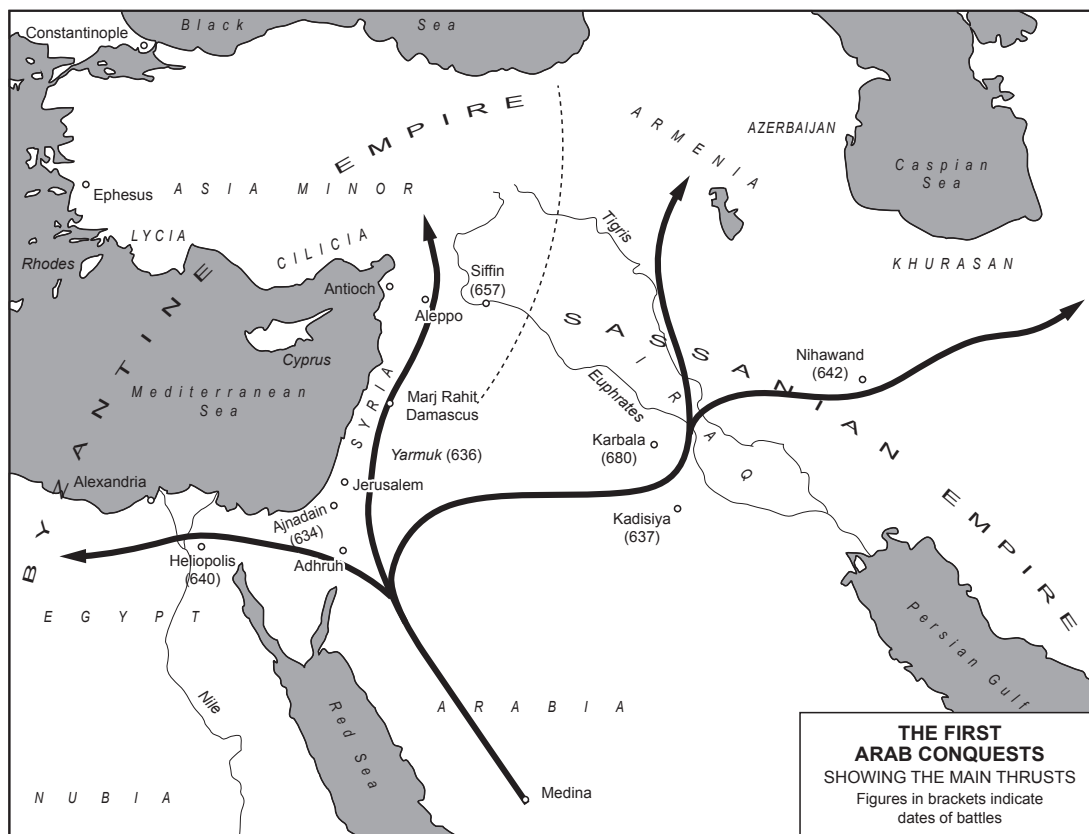
Islam did provide a new battle-cry, a convenient rallying point and a party watchword. It undoubtedly acted as a factor to unify a diversity of peoples never before united and was a large part of the driving force. But it is hardly in itself enough to explain the conquests. Not fanaticism but economic necessity drove the Bedouin hordes, and most of the armies of conquest were recruited from the Bedouins, beyond the confines of their desert home to the lands of the north. The passion to go to heaven in the next life may have been a factor with some, but the desire for the comforts and luxuries of the civilized regions of the Fertile Crescent [the areas surrounding the rivers Nile, Euphrates and Tigris] was just as strong in the case of many.

**Source D** John Bagot Glubb, a retired British Lieutenant-General who had served in the Middle East, writing in a popular non-specialist history book, *A Short History of the Arab Peoples* (1978).

The key to Arab operations was also the fact that, riding on camels, they could move freely in the desert, which was impassable to the regular armies of Persia [Sassanian] or Byzantium [Byzantine]. Arab strategy, therefore, was to edge along the border of the desert, raiding towns and villages and defeating local forces sent to push them back. If, however, the troops sent against them appeared to be too strong, the Arabs could always vanish into the desert, where they could not be overtaken.

## Source E

A map of the early expansion of the Islamic Empire.



[Source: *A History of Medieval Islam*, J. J. Saunders.  
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reproduced by permission of Taylor & Francis Books UK.  
<http://jalbritton.huntingdon.edu> (accessed 5 November 2014)]

1. (a) What, according to Source C, were the ways in which Islam helped in the early Arab conquests? [3]
- (b) What is the message conveyed by Source E? [2]
2. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources A and B about the reasons for the early success of the Arab conquests. [6]
3. With reference to their origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Source C and Source D for historians studying the early growth of the Islamic Empire. [6]
4. Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree that it was the weakness of the Byzantine and Sassanian Empires that allowed the early Muslim conquests? [8]

**Section B****Prescribed subject 2      The kingdom of Sicily 1130–1302**

Read all the sources carefully and answer all the questions that follow.

Sources in this paper have been edited: word additions or explanations are shown in square brackets [ ]; substantive deletions of text are indicated by ellipses ... ; minor changes are not indicated.

These sources and questions relate to the rule of William I (1154–1166) in Sicily.

**Source A**                      Hugo Falcandus (probably the pseudonym [false name] of a royal official in Sicily), in the eyewitness account *The History of the Tyrants of Sicily* (late 12th century).

For King William, the heir only to his father's power and not his character, went wild with such a degree of lunacy that he ignored the decisions of his excellent father, and allowed the organization of the court to deteriorate, and either sent into exile the advisers his father had looked to, or locked them in prisons. And he appointed as great admiral Maio of Bari, a man of humble origins who had first been a notary [clerk] at court and then step by step reached the post of chancellor. This man was a beast and no more repellent pest could be found, none more effective in achieving the destruction and overthrow of the realm.

**Source B**                      John Julius Norwich, an author of popular academic histories, describes the events following William's defeat of rebel forces in battle on 28 May 1156 in the book *The Kingdom in the Sun, 1130–1194* (1970).

William treated his Greek prisoners according to the recognized canons [principles] of war; but to his own rebellious subjects he was pitiless. This was another lesson he had learnt from his father. Treason, particularly in Apulia where it was endemic [widespread], remained the one crime that could not be forgiven. Of those erstwhile [former] insurgents who fell into his hands only the luckiest were imprisoned. The rest were hanged, blinded or tied about with heavy weights and cast into the sea. It was the first time since his accession that the King had shown himself in Apulia, and he was resolved that the Apulians should not forget it.

One of the captives, Count Geoffrey of Montescaglioso, who had played a prominent part in both the Sicilian and the Apulian revolts, was blinded; many more were imprisoned, including the King's two young nephews William and Tancred, sons of Duke Roger of Apulia; others, if we are to believe Falcandus, were cast into pits of vipers, while wives and daughters were sent to harems or forced into prostitution.

**Source C** Pope Adrian IV, in a letter to William, accepts the conditions that William has offered to him in the Treaty of Benevento (1156). This treaty ended the revolt, during which the pope had been besieged in the town of Benevento.

William, glorious King of Sicily and dearest son in Christ, most brilliant in wealth and achievement among all the Kings and eminent men of the age, the glory of whose name is borne to the uttermost limits of the Earth by the firmness of your justice, the peace which you have restored to your subjects, and the fear which your great deeds have instilled into the hearts of all the enemies of Christ's name.

**Source D** Malcolm Barber, a professor of History, writing in an academic book, *The Two Cities: Medieval Europe 1050–1320* (2004).

Although the revolts of 1155 had been put down, the reasons for internal discontent remained. George of Antioch had been replaced as chief minister by Maio of Bari and the revolts had in part been a rejection of Maio's increasingly centralized and exclusive rule ... Maio is believed to have excluded everyone else from the governmental decision-making process, and would confer with the king alone each day. He alone dealt with the affairs of the realm and turned the king's mind in whichever direction he pleased. According to Hugo Falcandus, Maio was a "beast" and "repellent pest" and he was widely resented. Maio was assassinated in November 1160.

**Source E**

The Palace of Zisa, built by William I near Palermo. When the palace was built it was highly regarded by contemporaries. It was known for being an impressive and highly decorated building set in grounds that included fruit trees, gardens and fish ponds.



[Source: <http://bloggandob.blogspot.co.uk/2012/11/palermo-city.html> (accessed 11 September 2014)]

5. (a) What, according to Source A, were the qualities of William I as king? [3]
- (b) What is the message conveyed by Source E? [2]
6. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources B and C about the nature of William I's rule. [6]
7. With reference to their origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source C and Source D for historians studying the government of William I. [6]
8. Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree with the view in Source C that William's rule brought a period of peace to his kingdom's people? [8]