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History

Paper 1A (AS) Specimen Question Paper

Question 01 Student 1

Specimen Answer and Commentary

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## Specimen Answer plus commentary

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a 'model' answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

### Paper 1A (AS): Specimen question paper

**01 With reference to these extracts and your understanding of the historical context which of these two extracts provides the more convincing interpretation of why the crusader states survived between 1099 and 1124?**

(25 marks)

#### Student Response

Extract A's principal interpretation as to why the crusader states survived between 1099 and 1124 is that it's Muslim enemies, and the Seljuk Turks in particular, were divided. It argues that there was a 'lack of undisputed leadership' and that this 'paralysed military action'. There is much that is convincing in this view. The death of Malik Shah in 1092 had been followed by the splintering of the so-called 'Great Seljuk Empire' so that by 1099 there were many competing Seljuk rulers across Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia. In Syria the conflict between the brothers Duqaq of Damascus and his brother Ridwan of Aleppo was legendary and appears to more than justify Smail's observation that the 'emirs could never successfully co-operate and were always rivals to each other'. Their division and opposition to other Turkish leaders such as Kerbogha of Mosul had played a large part in explaining the success of the First Crusade by 1099 and it is therefore plausible that as this division continued it was likely to be prominent in aiding the survival crusader states between 1099 and 1124. Ridwan of Aleppo also tried to persuade the Assassins to murder a successor of Duqaq, Tughtegin of Damascus. Smail also argues that the principal cause of this weakness was the lack of leadership of the Seljuk sultan who 'never came in person to lead his armies'. Barkiyaruq, who was sultan from 1092 to 1105, was embroiled in disputes with rival claimants to his throne such as his half-brother, Muhammad. Barkiyaruq's immediate successor, Malik Shah II was killed in the same year that he became sultan and the next sultan, Muhammad I, who ruled from 1105 until 1118 was distracted by a war against the Nizari Ismailis, Shia Muslims. Therefore there is much to this interpretation. Smail also notes that any intrusions into Syria by forces loyal to the sultan intended 'not only the expulsion of the Franks, but the reduction to obedience of the Muslim emirs'. This explains why on several occasions the emirs of Syria acted against the agents of the sultan. In 1114 Tughtegin of Damascus and Il-Ghazi allied with Roger of Antioch to fight off the mutual threat of Bursuq, commander of the sultan of Baghdad's army. Finally extract A argues that 'the four Latin states were prepared to combine in the interests of self-preservation'. This can be most clearly seen Baldwin II's decision to march to the rescue Antioch in 1119 which was on the brink of surrender after the Frankish defeat at the Field of Blood.

Although extract A's interpretation appears, at first glance, to be convincing there are some clear flaws within it. Firstly, there were examples of co-operation between Muslim emirs in Syria. Mawdud and Toghtekin co-operated in 1113 and defeated the Franks at al-Sannabra. Most famously In 1119 Il-Ghazi was able to gather a large enough Muslim force to decisively defeat and kill Roger of Antioch. The Battle of the Field of Blood almost resulted in the destruction of Antioch. Furthermore even without mass unity Syrian Seljuk emirs were able and willing to inflict significant military defeats upon the Franks of the crusader states, a good example of this would be the Battle of Harran, in 1104, where Baldwin of Edessa was captured. The interpretation provided by the extract, whilst valid, is therefore not as cogent

as it first appears to be. It is also rather narrow in scope and its argument does not take into account wider Muslim divisions such as those between Sunni and Shia Muslims except indirectly through the absence of the Seljuk sultan from Syria.

Both extracts note that Muslim disunity played an important role in explaining why the crusader states survived between 1099 and 1134. Extract B contends that 'between 1100 and 1118 the real significance of Muslim disunity become clear, for in these years of foundation western European settlement of Syria and Palestine could probably been halted by committed and concerted Muslim attack'. Therefore much that has been highlighted in assessing the validity of the interpretation in extract A applies here too. The Seljuk rulers of Syria were divided and they were reluctant to work with the Sultan who was unable to assert his leadership due to other domestic problems. Both extracts also acknowledge that the leadership of the Frankish rulers played a role, although this is much more explicitly developed in extract B than in extract A. The 'diplomacy' in extract B was, of course, key to the ability of the crusader states to 'combine in the interests of self-preservation' noted in extract A.

Extract B significantly differs from extract A's in its much wider scope and is, ultimately, more convincing. It encompasses a range of different actions taken by key Frankish leaders in order to explain why the crusader states between 1099 and 1124. Particular emphasis in this interpretation is placed upon the leadership of Baldwin I of Jerusalem and Tancred of Antioch who Asbridge argues 'steered the Latin East through a period of extreme fragility'. There is much to this in that Baldwin I captured most of the coastal cities of Palestine, especially Acre in 1104, which was critical to the survival of the Kingdom of Jerusalem as it gave them vital access to the sea. Baldwin I also achieved many key military victories, most notably the first and third battles of Ramla. Tancred was also prominent in achieving the 'direct military conquest' that Asbridge refers to. Between 1101 and 1103 he gained control of Cilicia and in 1103 conquered the vital port of Lattakia. His victory at the Battle of Artah in 1105 allowed the principality to recover much of its territory lost at Harran the previous year. The interpretation also claims that the work of consolidation involved the 'incorporation of the indigenous non-Latin population' and it indeed worth noting the use of Armenian forces in the defence of Edessa in particular and the use of Turcoples more widely. Baldwin II's marriage to Morphia, an Armenian princess, is another example of this. The population of Antioch was largely Greek and the Frankish rulers there, including Tancred, were careful to incorporate Greek iconography and language into their coinage in this period. In the kingdom of Jerusalem Muslims were allowed to, largely, self-police their own communities through the Rais (or headman) and the Franks were successful at raising taxes from them. These actions demonstrate the 'pragmatism' that Asbridge refers to as the Franks were a tiny minority and the crusader states could not have survived between 1099 and 1124 without this approach.

However, there are limitations to the usefulness of the interpretation in extract B. Firstly the leadership and ability of Frankish leaders to work together was not always as in evidence as Asbridge contends. When Baldwin of Edessa (later King Baldwin II) was captured at the battle of Harran in 1104 Tancred became regent in Edessa and was reluctant to hand it back later when Baldwin was released. Indeed he had made no effort to secure Baldwin's release because he was more interested in attempting to secure Antioch's over lordship. Likewise both Baldwin I and Tancred suffered significant defeats such as the Second Battle of Ramla and the battle of al-sannabra in Baldwin's case and the Battle of Harran in Tancred's. Diplomacy was also not always such a triumph for the Frankish leaders. Baldwin I's abandonment of his marriage to Adelaide of Sicily in 1117 resulted in the lack of support to the kingdom from that Norman country for a long time afterwards.

In conclusion it is clear that while the areas that both interpretations agree on regarding the Muslim disunity and Frankish unity were both important to the survival of the crusader states between 1099 and 1124 that extract B is, overall, the more convincing one. It provides a much larger scope that incorporates some of the arguments made by Smail but goes much further and acknowledges that state-building required much more than divided enemies if the crusader states were to have any long term viability between 1099 and 1124.

#### **Commentary – Level 5**

This is an exemplary response at AS. The arguments advanced in each extract are appropriately identified and, in both cases, deployment of knowledge of context is effective; both to corroborate and challenge the arguments. The conclusion is adequate, given the material that has preceded it. This is a top Level 5 response.