

**ISLAMIC HISTORY
HIGHER LEVEL AND STANDARD LEVEL
PAPER 1**

Wednesday 12 May 2004 (afternoon)

1 hour

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer Section A or Section B.

SECTION A

PRESCRIBED SUBJECT 1 Pre-Islamic Arabia

DOCUMENT A *Extract from: Robert Irwin **Night and Horses; An Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature**. “For Her Brother”, Tuetey **Classical Arabic Poetry**.*

For to him we looked for protection and strength,
who in winter’s blast would see none want,
nor keep to his tent to husband stores
but set his board at the bite of cold,
ready his welcome, with open hand,
a heart so quick to command in need.
No woman, alone saw him ever set foot
in any but honourable guest.
Straight as a lance, his youth still whole,
like a casting of god in the folds of his clothes,
for ever held he lies in a grave
unmarked but for stone and staring rock.
To those who would lead he pointed the way
like a towering height, the head aflame,
when travellers lost in confusion turn
searching the sky, in shrouds, unstarred.

DOCUMENT B *Extract from: Carl Brockelmann **History of the Islamic Peoples** (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London), p. 4*

The great tribal federations still trace their descent through an apparent blood relationship, grouping the whole people together into a genealogical system like that of the ancient Hebrews. But this community feeling does not comprise the whole of the people; it extends from the clan of the most closely related families, who always set up their tents together, to take in the single tribe, a few thousand strong, which wanders and grazes together. Anyone venturing into the territory of a strange tribe does so at the risk of being killed and robbed by these strangers, who merely as such are his enemies. He is protected against this only if he succeeds in touching the clothing or the tent of an enemy, or in entering his dwelling place. This protection is also given to a traveller voluntarily; a member of the tribe may even adopt a stranger into his clan for good. In this way the tribe may assimilate whole communities, which at first are only tolerated as squatters, but after a few generations are granted all the rights of blood relationship.

DOCUMENT C *Extract from: G E von Grunebaum **Classical Islam: A History 600-1258**, p. 15*

The tribes were independent, not to say sovereign, in their relations with each other; alliances were formed as easily as they were dissolved. The aristocracy of the great families' cut across these divisions; the north and central Arab world was in a certain sense, despite all its divisions and differences of custom, a unity whose members felt themselves bound together in a hierarchical order; they might even marry outside the tribal group, although the woman in these cases never joined her husband's kin entirely and the children might be exposed to the problems and dangers of divided loyalties. Hard coalitions led to hard customs; in disputes the arbiter (*hakam*) had no more to support him than his prestige and the pressure of opinion.

DOCUMENT D *Extract from: Bernard Lewis **The Arabs in History (London 1977)**, p. 29*

The dominant feature of the population of central and northern Arabia in this crucial period immediately preceding the rise of Islam is Bedouin tribalism. In Bedouin society the social unit is the group, not the individual. The latter has rights and duties only as a member of his group. The group is held together externally by the need for self-defence against the hardships and dangers of desert life, internally by the blood-tie of descent in the male line which is the basic social bond. The livelihood of the tribe depends on their flocks and herds and on raiding the neighbouring settled countries and such caravans as still venture to cross Arabia. The tribe does not usually own private landed property, but exercises collective rights over pastures, water sources, etc.

1. From the evidence of Documents A and D and your own knowledge, compare and contrast the role of the individual and the tribe in pre-Islamic Arabia. [6 marks]
2. From the evidence of Documents B and C and your own knowledge, how were tribal alliances formed in pre-Islamic Arabia? [6 marks]
3. From the evidence of Documents B and C and your own knowledge, what internal elements and external forces held the tribes together in pre-Islamic Arabia? [6 marks]
4. Using all the documents and your own knowledge, what were the strengths and weaknesses of the tribal system in pre-Islamic Arabian society? [7 marks]

SECTION B

PRESCRIBED SUBJECT 2 Islamic Dynasties AH 41-247 / AD 661-861

DOCUMENT A *Extract from: al-Suyuti **History of the Caliphs** (translated by H S Jarrett), pp. 264-5*

Al-Mansur Abu Ja'far was born in the year 95/713. In the year 148/765 the whole empire was firmly established under his authority and his awe was great in the minds of men. The provinces submitted to him and Spain alone was excluded from his sway.

He was the foremost among the Banu Abbas in majesty, demeanour, bravery, prudence, judgment and haughtiness – a hoarder of wealth, averse to pastime and frivolity, of cultivated mind, of excellent converse in science and literature and with a natural taste for law.

DOCUMENT B *Extract from: Mas'udi **The Meadows of God: The Abbasids** (translated and edited by P Lunde and C Stone) p. 33*

Al-Mansur's prudence, the rectitude of his judgment and the excellence of his policies are beyond all description. He did not avoid the most extravagant generosity when there was something to be had in exchange, but he would refuse the smallest favour if granting it entailed loss.

Al-Mansur was the first ruler to distribute public offices among his freedmen and supporters. He employed them in matters of importance and advanced them over the Arabs. This practice was followed after his time by the Caliphs who were his heirs and it was thus that the Arabs lost the high command, the supremacy and the honours which they had enjoyed until then.

DOCUMENT C *Extract from: Hugh Kennedy **The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates** (London, 1991) p. 58*

Al-Mansur had a clear political programme which he was determined to push through. His political education had been in the Umayyad world and it was on the great Umayyad rulers, Muawiyah, Abd al-Malik and Hisham, that he modelled himself. He wanted to establish a family – dominated by government, similar to the old regime, and based on the secure foundation of a strong and well-paid army. "He who lacks money", he is reported to have said, "lacks men and he who lacks men sees his enemies grow powerful". These ideas were bound to bring him into conflict with many who had hitherto supported the Abbasids but felt that al-Mansur's policies were a betrayal of the revolution. They found that, instead of a new society, based on the Qur'an, justice and the equality of all Muslims, led by a divinely elected *imam*, they had simply replaced one ruling elite with another and that a substantial section of the old elite had actually been incorporated in the new.

DOCUMENT D *Extract from: M A Shaban Islamic History: A New Interpretation, (Cambridge, 1979) p. 9*

The focal point of the new structure of government was al-Mansur himself. Although he gathered all secular powers in his own hands he had no delusions about the restricted functions of his office. He was not much different from an Umayyad ruler, and being a realist he laid claim to religious authority to strengthen his position. However, by bestowing titles with religious connotations upon himself and his successor he was clearly indicating his thinking about the future. To make sure that he was well informed about affairs in all corners of the empire and to ensure that the representatives of the central government were behaving properly, he appointed his own independent agents who reported directly to him every day, even on such mundane matters as food prices in their respective areas.

5. From the evidence of Documents A and B and your own knowledge, what was the role of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur in establishing the Abbasid Caliphate? [6 marks]
 6. From the evidence of Documents C and D and your own knowledge, how did al-Mansur resemble the Umayyad rulers? [6 marks]
 7. From the evidence of Documents B and D and your own knowledge, compare and contrast the ways in which al-Mansur maintained his authority in Abbasid lands. [6 marks]
 8. From the evidence of Documents C and D and your own knowledge, why did al-Mansur make religious claims to authority? [7 marks]
-