AET1/MES17/The formation of Islam/1/v1

AET1
Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IB

Thursday 1 June 2017  9 to 12.00 pm

Paper MES17

The formation of Islam

Answer three questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Write your number not your name on the cover sheet of each answer booklet.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

8-page answer booklet x 3
Rough Work Pad

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

None

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed to do so.
1. How did Arabian society change from the so-called Jāhiliyya to early Islam? Give specific examples of religious and cultural phenomena.

2. Based on Consorts of the Caliphs and the Ring of the Dove, contrast urban and court culture in Cordoba and Baghdad.

3. Discuss the development of the image of the Prophet in the Quran, the biography of Ibn Isḥāq, and al-Buṣīrī.

4. What is the literary and historical significance of the Battle of Karbala (680 CE)?

5. “Remember, my coreligionists, that on account of the vast number of our sins God had hurled us into the midst of this people, the Arabs, who have persecuted us severely, and passed baneful and discriminatory legislation against us.” (Maimonides, The Epistle to Yemen, written 1172 CE). What kind of laws did Maimonides have in mind? How might a Muslim legal scholar have responded to Maimonides’ statement?

6. Discuss the probable stages of Ptolemy’s astronomical treatise the Almagest, from its composition in 2nd-century BCE Alexandria to its Latin translation in 12th-century CE Toledo.

7. With specific reference to the Quran and at least two historical periods, discuss the relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims. In addition to Christians and Jews, include discussion of Zoroastrians and Hindus.

8. Explain the relationship of Sufism to other forms of Islamic devotional and political practice.

END OF PAPER