



AET1

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IB

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Thursday 1 June 2017 9 to 12.00 pm

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### **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 Ishāq, and al-Buṣṭī.
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 2<sup>nd</sup>-century BCE Alexandria to its Latin translation in 12<sup>th</sup>-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**