



AET2 and MLT2

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part II, and Modern and
Medieval Languages Tripos, Part II

Wednesday 29 May 2019 9.00am to 12.00noon

Paper MES39 (AET2) and Paper 162 (MLT2)

**Special subject in the pre-modern Middle East: Islamic Cities and
Muslim Kings? Monarchy, Legitimacy and Urbanism in the Medieval and
Early Modern Islamic World**

***All candidates MUST answer Question 1 and two questions chosen from
Questions 2-9. All questions carry equal marks.***

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

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

20 page answer booklet

Rough Work Pad

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

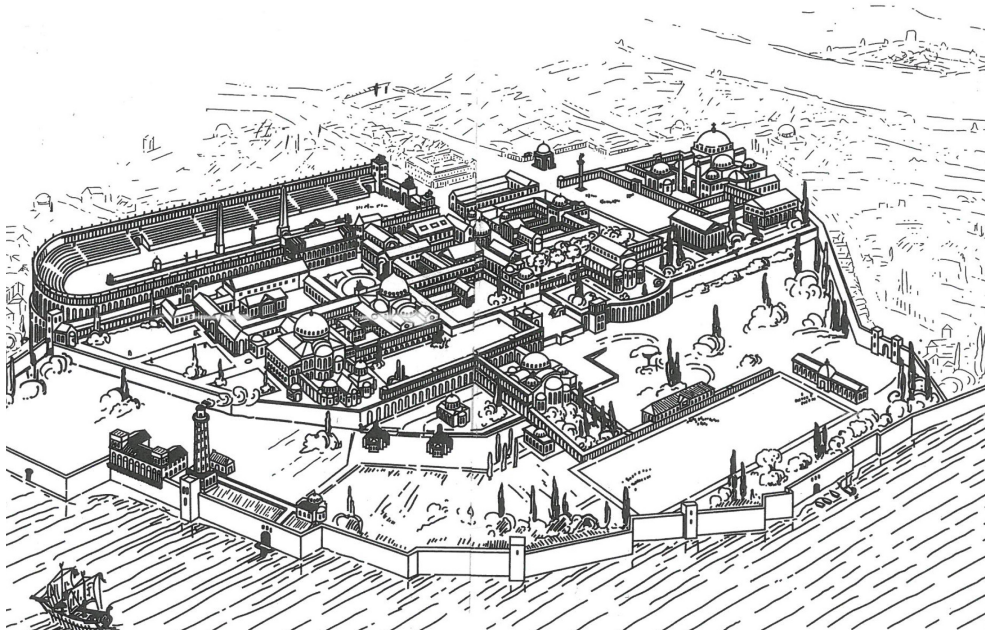
Image Booklet

**You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent
pages of this question paper until instructed to do so.**

All candidates MUST answer Question 1 and two questions chosen from Questions 2-9. All questions carry equal marks.

1. (All candidates must answer this question). Choose **three** from the following eight text extracts and images and write a historical commentary on **each** of the three. (Higher resolution versions of the images are available in the image booklet.)

a. (Artist's reconstruction)



b. Muḥammad b. Saʿd said Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Wāqidī reported to us from ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Jaʿfar and others that: ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb wrote to Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ ordering him to adopt for the Muslims a place to which they could emigrate (*dār al-hijra*), and which they could use as a garrison camp (*qayrawān*), provided that between him [ʿUmar] and the Muslims, no sea should intervene. Accordingly, Saʿd came to al-Anbār with the idea of occupying it. Here, however, flies were so numerous, that Saʿd had to move to another place, which proved unsatisfactory, and therefore he moved to al-Kūfa which he divided into lots (*ikhtaṭṭahā*), giving the houses as grants

(*aqṭaʿa*) and settling the different tribes in their quarters. He also erected its mosque. All this took place in the year 17.

al-Balādhurī (d. c. 900 CE), *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. ʿA. Q. M. ʿAlī. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub, 2000, 167; tr. after P. K. Hitti.

- c. The next morning al-Muʿtaṣim sat in state to receive Bābak, this being either Monday or Thursday. The troops were drawn up in lines [along the road] from the Bāb al-ʿĀmma to al-Maṭīra, and al-Muʿtaṣim wished to display Bābak publicly and show him to the populace at large. He therefore asked, “On what sort of mount should this fellow be placed, and how can he best be shown off?” Hizām [the head of the stables] told him, “O Commander of the Faithful, there is nothing better for displaying [someone] than an elephant!” Al-Muʿtaṣim commented, “You have spoken truly,” and ordered the elephant to be gotten ready. He gave further orders concerning Bābak, and he was dressed in a short coat (*qabāʾ*) of satin brocade and a round cap (*qalansūwa*) of sable fur; he was completely alone...

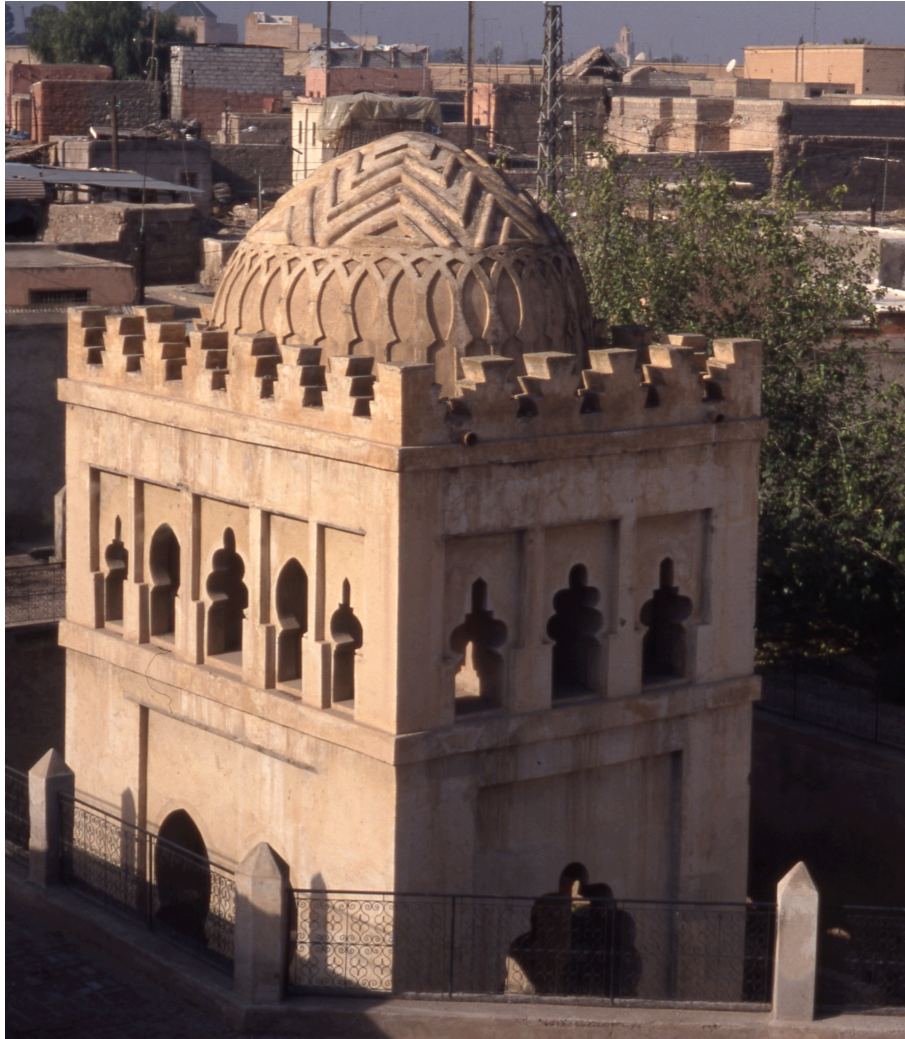
al-Ṭabarī (d. 923 CE), *Taʾrīkh*, ed. M. J. de Geoe et al. Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901, III.1229; tr. Bosworth.

d.



TURN OVER

e.



- f. [Ya‘qūb al-Manṣūr] built a hospital in Marrakesh which I don’t think has an equal anywhere in the world. That is because he selected a spacious area in the most appropriate place in the town and he ordered the builders to embellish it in the most beautiful way, so they carried out more fine carving (*nuqūsh*) and geometric decoration (*zakhārif*) than could be desired. He commanded that scent-giving and fruit-bearing trees be planted within and made copious water flow to all the chambers in addition to four pools

(*birak*) in the centre of [the hospital], one [made of] white marble. He then ordered for it rich furnishings of wool, cotton, silk, and skins/leather (*adīm*) and more other material than can be described or distinguished. He granted it 30 *dīnārs* per day for food and other direct expenses ... [The hospital] was not restricted to the rich rather than the poor ... Every Friday after performing the prayer [Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb) mounted [his horse] and visited it to meet the patients again and ask after the people in each chamber, saying, “How are you? How are the staff treating you?” and other similar questions. Then he would leave.

al-Marrākushī, *al-Mu‘jib fī talkhīṣ akhbār al-Maghrib*. Casablanca: Dār al-Kitāb 1978 edition, 411-12.

- g. Round and about the pavilion on the ground outside is erected a wall of cloth, as might be otherwise the wall of a town or castle, and the cloth is of many coloured silks in diverse patterns. Along the wall top are battlements, and it is stayed without and within by ropes stretching up from the ground, and on the inner side stand poles which support the same. This encircling canvas wall goes round a space of ground measuring across, maybe, some 300 paces, and the wall itself is as high as a man on horseback may reach up to. There is an arched gateway to it, with double doors without and within, all made of canvas as above described.

This entrance gate is very high, and it is capable of being barred and locked. Above the gateway rises a square tower of canvas with battlements, and as forsooth the encircling wall makes grand display of patterns and ornamentation in the stuff of which it is made, so too the gateway-arch and tower just described have even more ornamented work on them than is the case of the walls. This forms the great Enclosure surrounding and shutting in the pavilion. It is known by the name of the Sarapardeh and within its circuit stand many other tents and awnings pitched diversely and at intervals.

Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403-1406*, trans. Le Strange (1928).

TURN OVER

h.



Answer **two** of the following questions (2-9)

2. "Umayyad Damascus and early Abbasid Baghdad are best understood with reference to Roman and Sasanian political culture respectively."

Discuss.

3. **EITHER** (a) Account for the form and function of the 9th-century CE foundations at Samarra **OR** (b) In what ways did the caliphal dynasties of the Islamic West interact with the eastern Islamic caliphal "language of power"?

4. Explain how the Almoravids **OR** Almohads interacted with the art and architecture of their predecessors and their own environment to express their own religio-political identity.

5. Why did the Marinids adopt the *madrassa* as a form of monumental urban patronage?

6. Why did some medieval Muslim monarchs create dynastic shrines and how successful were they in cultivating pilgrimage to them?

7. In what ways can we infer the characteristics of early modern Islamic kingship from Ottoman and Safavid palace structures?

8. Discuss the ways in which peripatetic artists, artisans, and architects affected forms of royal patronage.

9. Account for the changing ways that scholars have conceptualised the pre-modern 'Islamic city' during the 20th and 21st centuries.

END OF PAPER