



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

# A Level History A

**Y309/01** The Ascendancy of the Ottoman Empire 1453–1606

**Wednesday 6 June 2018 – Afternoon**

**Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes**



**You must have:**

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet (OCR12 sent with general stationery)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and any **two** questions in Section B.
- Write your answers in the Answer Booklet. The question number(s) must be clearly shown.
- Do **not** write in the barcodes.

## INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [ ].
- Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (\*).
- This document consists of **4** pages.

## SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of why Suleiman decided to attack Hungary in 1526. [30]

**Passage A**

Suleiman's first move in 1521 was to offer to suspend Turkish raids against Hungary in return for tribute. The Hungarians clipped the ears and nose of his envoy and sent him back. An envoy of their own was sent to Worms, where so many princes of the Holy Roman Empire had assembled in diet, to seek allies in the coming war. 'Who prevented the unbridled madness of the Turks from raging further?' the envoy demanded, with magnificent flourish. 'The Hungarians!' The princes had not come to hear him, though; just the day before, Charles V had condemned Luther as a heretic, and the Holy Roman Empire was about to fall apart.

So while the cream of Hungarian society attended a wedding in Pressburg, the gentle lamb [Suleiman] took Belgrade. The loss of Belgrade punctured the southern Hungarian defence line: Busbecq was thinking of this when he described the Turks as 'mighty rivers, swollen with rain, which, if they can trickle through at any point in the banks, spread the breach and cause infinite destruction'. This, and Suleiman's attack on Rhodes, brilliantly marshalled and so relentlessly pursued that he had his war tent rebuilt in stone to represent his unbreakable determination, signalled the return of the Ottomans to Europe.

In Hungary the collapse of the southern defences coincided with the shattering of the country's political strength. A young Polish king had been elected. Louis was ten when they crowned him: born too soon, married too soon, king too soon, died too soon, they quipped afterwards. Four years later, in 1526, when the magnates\* were at last driven to make common cause with the Crown [King], they moaned that the royal policy of going forward to meet the enemy was an expense better avoided and insisted on camping at Mohacs between a marsh and a river.

\* *magnates* – powerful nobles

Adapted from J. Goodwin, *Lords of the Horizons: A History of the Ottoman Empire*, published in 1998.

**Passage B**

The empire that Suleiman inherited in 1520 was as potent as any European power that had existed since Rome. It encompassed the Balkans, Anatolia, much of the Fertile Crescent, and Egypt, and stretched from the Danube River to the Red Sea and from the Caspian Sea to the Morean peninsula. Nor, unusually, did the new Sultan have brothers to battle for the throne, but enjoyed the luxury of assuming the sultanate unopposed.

Consequently, Suleiman was well placed to continue the expansion of his empire, and did so with the capture in 1521 of the Hungarian city of Belgrade, which controlled access to the Habsburg capital of Vienna, and with the taking in 1522 of the island of Rhodes which had been the base for the Knights of St. John, a crusading fraternity that preyed especially upon Ottoman ships carrying provisions and monies between Egypt and Istanbul. Through these two conquests, Suleiman not only rounded out his realm in Europe and the Mediterranean, but also legitimised his reign and asserted himself as conqueror.

Nevertheless, the international scene had changed. Whereas Mehmed II had faced little more than an enfeebled Byzantine city state and Selim had conquered an unstable Mamluk realm, Suleiman confronted two young aggressive foes: in the Mediterranean world there was the Habsburg Empire, which under Charles V included almost all of Catholic Europe, and in the Indian Ocean was the sea-borne Portuguese Empire which was busy striving to establish presences throughout the region, particularly in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea. The Ottoman Empire may have been stronger and better placed than either of these realms. But Suleiman had the prospect of having simultaneously to confront both. He did so with great vigour, if not always with success. In 1526 he defeated the Hungarians in the Battle of Mohacs and briefly took Buda.

Adapted from D. Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, published in 2002.

**SECTION B**

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2\*** How far was the success of the Sultans in governing the Ottoman Empire from 1453 to 1606 due to their army recruitment policies? **[25]**
- 3\*** 'The Ottoman rulers consolidated power in vassal states mainly through taxation policy.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 4\*** 'Ottoman expansion in the period 1453 to 1606 affected the Austrian Habsburgs more than any other power in Europe.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

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