



History 7042
Specimen Question Paper 1A (A-level)
Question 1 Student 3
Specimen Answer and Commentary

V1.0

Specimen Answer plus commentary

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a 'model' answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Paper 1A (A-level): Specimen question paper

01 Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the reasons why the Kingdom of Jerusalem collapsed.

[30 marks]

Student response

Extract C presents the overall interpretation that the most significant reason for the collapse of the kingdom of Jerusalem was the collapse in Byzantine power. Runciman, who was particularly interested in and enthusiastic about the Byzantine Empire, therefore presents an argument that the defeat at Myrioccephalum in 1176, spelt the long-term doom of Christian power in the east in general and that this included the Kingdom of Jerusalem. He claims that 'the existence of the mighty Empire was an ultimate safeguard against the triumph of Islam.' and that the Franks knew this and knew of the significance of the military defeat. He contends that 'for the Franks the disaster at Myrioccephalum was almost as fateful as for Byzantium.' The military defeat was, undoubtedly, significant. The Byzantine army, led by Manuel I in person was defeated at Phrygia in central Anatolia by the forces of the Seljuk sultan of Rum, Kilij Arslan II. Manuel I himself compared his defeat to that of Manzikert a hundred years earlier. The argument follows that the Byzantines were now too weak to be taken seriously by the resurgent forces of the jihad, as Runciman asserts 'nevermore would the Emperor be able to march into Syria' and that there was not 'anything left of the great prestige which had in the past deterred Nur ad-Din'. In the period between 1149 and 1176 Western aid to Outremer had been extremely limited and the alliance had achieved some benefits. Most notably by acting as a shield around Antioch it allowed Jerusalem under the leadership of Amalric I to focus on Egypt to the south.

However, this interpretation is far from convincing in explaining the fall of the kingdom of Jerusalem. Firstly, the consequences of the defeat have been greatly exaggerated and secondly its impact on the Kingdom of Jerusalem is highly questionable. Although the army had been defeated it was able to withdraw in reasonably good order and in the Battle of Hielion and Leimocheir the following year the Byzantines secured a decisive victory over the Seljuks which Runciman has, rather dismissively brushed aside as one of the 'few petty victories'. This says more about the historian's view with hindsight about the future permanent loss of Anatolia and it certainly would not have been apparent at the time. In any case the Byzantine fleet remained undamaged and it was usually of more use to the Kingdom of Jerusalem in its attacks on Egypt, which was the centre of Saladin's power than the army in any case. The alliance was not something that any of the Frankish rulers of Outremer could rely on in any case. It was a mixed blessing as Runciman reveals when he talks of the Emperor being able to 'dictate his will at Antioch'. In 1169 rancour between the Kingdom of Jerusalem and Byzantines had meant that their joint campaign had achieved little, even Runciman acknowledges the 'mutual mistrust and misunderstanding'. It is therefore unlikely that Myrioccephalum had any significant relationship to the collapse of the kingdom in 1187. The death of Manuel I in 1180 and the rise to power of his usurping anti-Western successor, Andronicus I in 1183 and then the house of Angelus under Isaac II had made Byzantine assistance to the kingdom of Jerusalem a remote possibility in the 1180s even if they had had the power to do so, regardless of the outcome at Myrioccephalum.

Extract B suggests a much wider range of reasons for the collapse of the kingdom including perceptions of it and failure of leadership. There is a long-term and persuasive argument as to why the Kingdom of Jerusalem collapsed, one that explains Runciman's observation in extract A, that despite rumours of a new crusade in the west in the 1170s 'only Philip of Flanders appeared in Palestine'. This is that, as Tyerman cogently contends, the Kingdom of Jerusalem was 'in western eyes prosperous, extravagant,

self-absorbed, fractious and corrupt'. There is much to this. The wealth of the trade of the east gave the Franks of Outremer much higher living standards than many great nobles in Western Europe. This led to resentment and jealousy and a lack of sympathy in Western Europe for their plight. The danger seemed, to many, to have been exaggerated and the victory of Baldwin IV over Saladin at Montgisard in 1177 seemed to demonstrate this. As Tyerman notes there were 'appearances of wealth and power'. The kingdom was undoubtedly wealthy and as noted whilst the kingdom continued to hold the ports on the coastal cities, most notably Acre, the 'revenues of commerce were buoyant'. However it is surely pertinent to note, as Tyerman does, that the revenues, great though they were, were not up to the vast scale of the growing military threat from Saladin. There was also, as noted in extract B, a great deal of 'self-indulgent factional politicking.' This most notably concerned the succession to the leper king Baldwin IV. The role of this factor in causing the collapse of the kingdom of Jerusalem is very compelling. Two factions sprang up around the king's two sisters. One was dedicated to the succession of Princess Sibylla and has come to be known as the 'court party', the other, headed by Raymond III of Tripoli, was seeking the succession of Princess Isabella and is often referred to as the 'pullani'. Members of the court party such as Joscelin III of Courtney and Guy of Lusignan were as Tyerman hints at 'constantly jockeying for control of the regency' with Raymond of Tripoli and his supporters, most notably the Ibelins. Tyerman argues that there were 'intractable problems of defence' and this is a convincing comment given that not only did Saladin increasingly encircle the kingdom of Jerusalem but they could not decide what to do about it. The court party, influenced by militaristic figures like Reynald of Chatillon and Gerard de Ridefort, Grand master of the Templars, were eager to confront Saladin in open battle. However, many other barons including Raymond of Tripoli, Reginald of Sidon and Roger of Moulins, Grand master of the Hospitallers, were afraid of the Saladin's military might and counseled caution. They believed that truces with Saladin were essential to the kingdom's survival and that disunity within the Muslim world would eventually reassert itself.

However, although the kingdom was divided in the reign of Baldwin IV the connection between the division and the fall of Jerusalem has been slightly overplayed. The extract hints at Amalric I's alleged bigamy but rather than being a problem Amalric I's divorce and second marriage to Maria arguably strengthened the kingdom by renewing the Byzantine alliance, which gave it a hope of continued existence at a time when Western support was negligible. Many attempts were made to bolster the defences of the kingdom and the construction of a new castle at Jacob's Ford in 1179, though ultimately unsuccessful, show this. Saladin's army was successfully dealt with in 1183 at the pools of Goliath without engaging him in battle, although this did have significant political consequences for Guy of Lusignan which does, perhaps, support Tyerman's contention that the politics of the kingdom had begun to dominate all other aspects of Frankish society.

Extracts A and B are in agreement, to a certain extent, in that they both acknowledge that the Kingdom of Jerusalem was the victim of events that were not really within its control. Philips argues in extract A that they suffered from 'the most wretched and unpredictable ill-luck' and Tyerman also notes that it was under pressure from the succession of 'a leper (Baldwin IV), a child (Baldwin V) and a woman (Sibylla)'. There is very little that they could do about this and the dynastic failures were very substantial. Baldwin III had died young, unexpectedly and without children. His brother Amalric I also died suddenly at a very critical moment when Nur ad-Din also died and he might have been able to exploit the chaos in the Muslim world. Baldwin IV was both young and a leper and the ideal successor, William of Montferrat had died suddenly shortly after marrying Sibylla. Sibylla's resulting pregnancy and male heir had made her a less desirable match for the strong European princes the kingdom needed and Baldwin V's death a year after his uncle's left the kingdom in chaos.

Extract A is correct to note that the impact of the politicking within the Kingdom in explaining its collapse has been grossly exaggerated. The overall interpretation is that there was nothing inevitable about its fall. As Philips notes 'this is an attractive and easily assimilated picture, but on closer inspection, a false one.' His contention that the Franks of Jerusalem were capable of effective military action is supported by Baldwin IV's triumph at Montgisard in 1177, a battle at which Saladin was lucky to escape alive. Philip's is right to when he observes that 'on Saladin's side, it should be remembered that he required

thirteen years of hard struggle to establish his power'. Saladin faced considerable problems within the Muslim world, especially from the Zengids but also from the Assassins, who had been a longstanding threat to unity. His own achievement in overcoming this opposition so that he could 'create the conditions necessary to confront and defeat the Franks in battle'. should not be downplayed and undervalued by playing up the divisions within the kingdom.

If there is a flaw in the argument presented in extract A it is surely that there are plenty of examples of situations that were not caused by ill-luck, especially in the short but crucial time after the death of Baldwin V. The coup of Sibylla and Guy was a choice that they made in search of power and it was not a consequence of bad luck. Sibylla knew Guy's unpopularity and the divisions it would cause and still chose him to be king. This led to the divisions with Raymond III of Tripoli which Saladin exploited. Guy demonstrated his weakness in his inability to restrain Reynald of Chatillon that led to the truce with Saladin being broken. Finally, of course, the kingdom collapsed as a consequence of the calamitous defeat at the battle of Hattin on 4 July 1187. It was Guy who rushed to battle against the advice of many of his barons. He led his army away from water and into Saladin's trap, and although the divisive politics of 1183 may have inspired his desire not to be seen as a coward a second time it was a fatal error.

Commentary – Level 5

This is an excellent response, controlled, balanced and consistently analytical. Deployment of the knowledge of context to challenge and corroborate the interpretations is full and persuasive. It is clearly deserving of the top mark.

It is worth noting that the answer contains neither an introduction nor conclusion. Introductions are unnecessary and could be misleading and whilst a conclusion might add to the response, this is not a comparative evaluation and a top mark can be awarded without a conclusion being present.