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EDUCATION

SAMPLE QUESTIONS
One question from each section of this exam, with its marking scheme, so teachers can see what the full paper is like. Full exam and solutions: captivateeducation.com.au/trial-exams

History: Ancient History

Question and Answer Book

Practice examination 1 – 2027

- Reading time is 15 minutes
- Writing time is 2 hours

Materials supplied

- Question and Answer Book
- Sources Book

Instructions

- Use the additional space at the end of this book if you need extra space to complete an answer.

Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

Contents

Section A (2 of 3 questions, 50 marks)

Section B (1 of 3 questions, 20 marks)

Assessment criteria for Section B

SAMPLE

Practice material in the layout of the 2025 VCAA paper – generated 2027. Not a VCAA examination.

Section A

Instructions

- Answer two of the following questions in the spaces provided.

SAMPLE

- Write your responses in English.

Sample – Question 1 of the 3 questions in this section; Question 1 is shown to part c of its 5 parts.

Question 1 (12 marks)

Egypt

Refer to Sources 1–4 in the Sources Book when responding to this question.

a. Using Source 1, outline how Rameses III presented the invasion of the Sea Peoples. 3 marks

b. Using Source 2 and your own knowledge, describe the contributions of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III to commerce, trade and tribute. 4 marks

SAMPLE

c. Using Source 3 and your own knowledge, explain why the priesthood of Amen-Ra at Karnak grew in power before the Amarna Period. 5 marks

SAMPLE

Section B

Instructions

- Write an essay on one of the following questions in the space provided.
- Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out at the end of this book.
- Write your response in English.

Sample – Question 1 of the 3 questions in this section.

Question 1 (20 marks)

Egypt

'Military success, rather than religion, was the foundation of royal power in New Kingdom Egypt.'

To what extent do you agree? Justify your response. 20 marks

Write your essay on the ruled pages that follow the last essay question.

OR

End of sample questions

SAMPLE

Assessment criteria for Section B

The essay in Section B will be assessed against the following criteria:

- construction of a coherent and relevant historical argument that addresses the specific demands of the essay question
- demonstration of historical knowledge that is accurate and appropriate for the essay question
- application of historical thinking concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change, and/or historical significance
- use of sources as evidence to support a historical argument, including a range of primary sources, perspectives and historical interpretations

SAMPLE

Refer to the sources in this book for each question in Section A, as indicated in the Question and Answer Book. You may keep this Sources Book.

Egypt – Sources 1–4

Greece – Sources 5–8

Rome – Sources 9–12

Egypt

Sources 1–4 relate to Question 1.

Source 1

This extract is from an inscription of Rameses III carved on the walls of his mortuary temple at Medinet Habu, Thebes. It describes the invasion of the Sea Peoples in the eighth year of his reign.

> The countries — —, the [Northerners] in their isles were disturbed, taken away in the [fray] — at one time. Not one stood before their hands, from Kheta[1], Kode, Carchemish, Arvad, Alasa[2], they were wasted. … They desolated his[3] people and his land like that which is not. They came with fire prepared before them, forward to Egypt. Their main support [was] Peleset, Thekel, Shekelesh, Denyen, and Weshesh. (These) lands were united, and they laid their hands upon the land as far as the Circle of the Earth[4]. Their hearts were confident, full of their plans. …
>
> Those who reached my boundary, their seed is not; their heart and their soul are finished forever and ever. As for those who had assembled before them on the sea, the full flame[5] was in their front, before the harbor-mouths, and a wall of metal[5] upon the shore surrounded them. They were dragged, overturned, and laid low upon the beach …

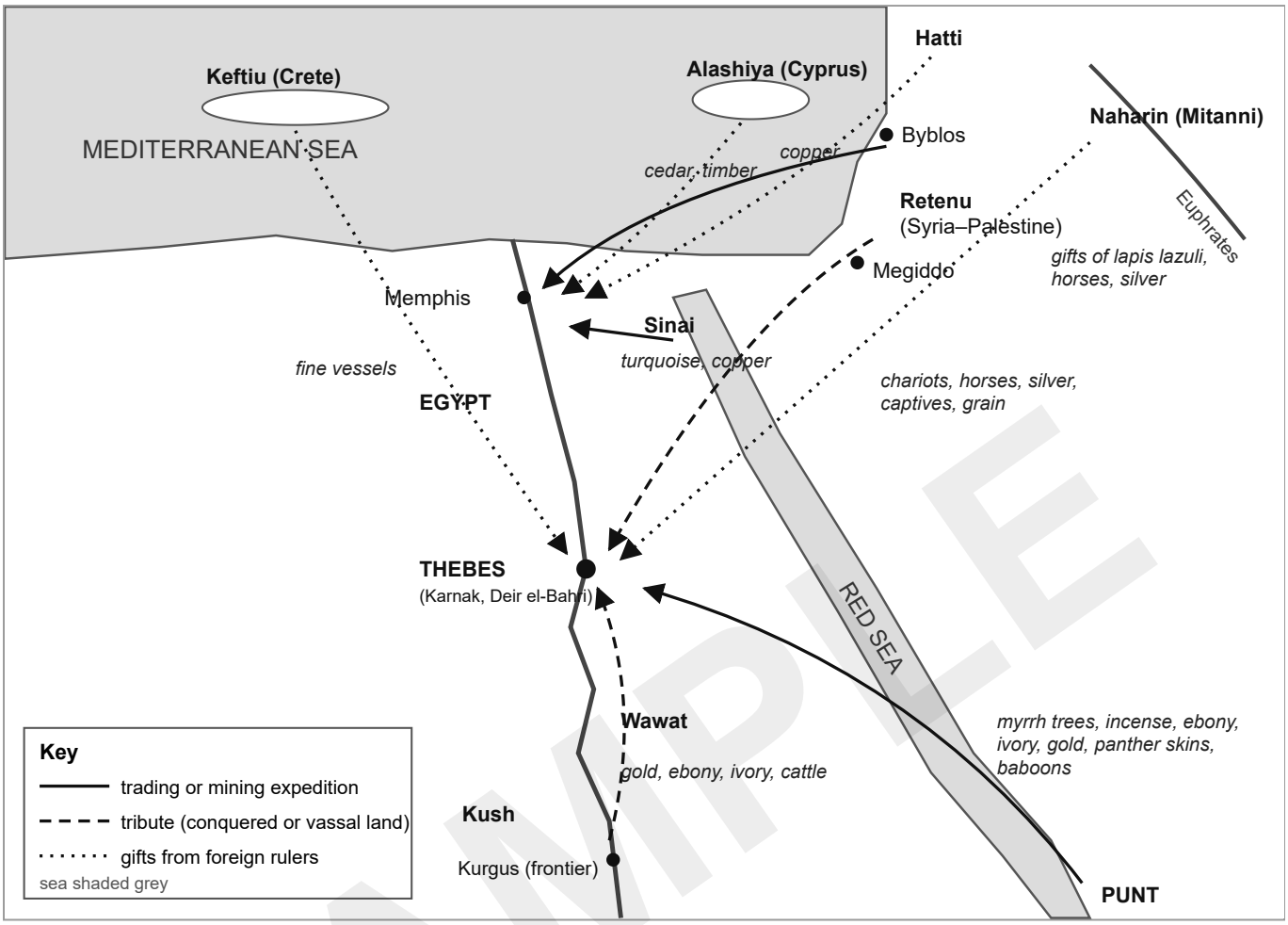
Source: Inscription of Rameses III, Year 8, Medinet Habu, in JH Breasted (trans.), *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. IV, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1906, §§ 64 and 66 (transliterations of names omitted; [ ] mark the translator's uncertain readings)

1. Kheta – the Hittites
2. Kode, Carchemish, Arvad, Alasa – lands and cities of Cilicia, Syria and Cyprus
3. his – the ruler of Amor (Amurru) in Syria, where the invaders made camp
4. the Circle of the Earth – the edge of the known world
5. full flame … wall of metal – the Egyptian fleet in the river-mouths and the Egyptian infantry on the shore

SAMPLE

Source 2

This map drawn for this practice examination shows the main sources of the trade goods and tribute that reached New Kingdom Egypt during the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III (1479–1425 BCE).



Map drawn for this practice examination; coastlines and distances are schematic, not to scale.

Key: solid arrows – trading and mining expeditions sent out by the king; dashed arrows – tribute from conquered and vassal lands; dotted arrows – gifts carried by envoys of foreign rulers. Goods are printed in italics beside each route.

SAMPLE

Source 3

This is a historical interpretation written for this practice examination, which describes the relationship between the kings of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the god Amen-Ra before the Amarna Period.

When Ahmose drove the Hyksos[1] out of Egypt, the kings of Thebes credited their victory to their city's god, Amun, now joined with the sun god as Amen-Ra[2], 'king of the gods'. Every campaign that followed repaid the debt. Thutmosis III had the plunder of Megiddo and Syria recorded on the walls of Karnak and gave the temple fields, herds, captives and gold; Hatshepsut raised her obelisks there and announced in the reliefs of her temple at Deir el-Bahri that Amun himself had fathered her. The partnership suited both sides: the god made the king legitimate, and the king made the god rich … By the time Amenhotep III came to the throne, the estates, workshops, granaries and officials of the House of Amun[3] made Karnak a second centre of wealth in the kingdom. The question for the kings was no longer whether to honour Amun, but how to stop his servants becoming their equals.

Written for this practice examination in the register of a published historical interpretation; it is not the work of a published historian and carries no attribution.

1. Hyksos – rulers of foreign origin who controlled northern Egypt before the New Kingdom
2. Amen-Ra – Amun of Thebes combined with Ra, the sun god
3. House of Amun – the temple of Amun at Karnak and everything it owned

Source 4

This is a historical interpretation written for this practice examination, which discusses the role of Tutankhamun in the restoration of traditional religious practices after the reign of Akhenaten.

Tutankhaten came to the throne as a boy of perhaps eight or nine, probably a son of Akhenaten, and was married to Akhenaten's daughter Ankhesenpaaten[1]. Within a few years both had exchanged the Aten in their names for Amun, the court had left Akhetaten for Memphis, and the young king's officials were reopening the temples of the old gods. A stela[2] set up at Karnak announced that the temples had fallen into ruin, that the gods had turned their backs on Egypt, and that the king had given back their images, their priests and their property … Such a programme was hardly the work of a child. It bears the mark of the experienced men around him — the God's Father Ay and the general Horemheb — who needed the restoration as much as the priests did. Tutankhamun was the face of the return to tradition; whether he was its author is another matter.

Written for this practice examination in the register of a published historical interpretation; it is not the work of a published historian and carries no attribution.

1. Ankhesenpaaten – later renamed Ankhesenamun
2. stela – an inscribed stone slab

SAMPLE

… the sources for the other questions are in the full exam.

SAMPLE

Marking scheme for the sample questions

Section A

Question 1a. (3 marks)

Using Source 1, outline how Rameses III presented the invasion of the Sea Peoples.

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

This question required students to outline, from Source 1 alone, how Rameses III presented the invasion of the Sea Peoples in the eighth year of his reign.

Limitations that prevented responses from achieving the highest marks included: adding own knowledge about the land battle in Djahy, the Medinet Habu reliefs or the identity of the Peleset (not required and not rewarded); discussing whether the inscription is reliable rather than outlining what it says; three quotations supporting the single point that the invaders were destructive.

Mark allocation: 3 marks: 1 mark for each distinct point drawn from the source, up to 3, presented as an overview in full sentences (a bullet list of isolated quotations is treated as *identify* and capped at 2).

Responses could have included:

- the invaders are presented as an overwhelming northern coalition — “Northerners” from “their isles”, the Peleset, Thekel, Shekelesh, Denyen and Weshesh, whose “lands were united”
- their advance is presented as unstoppable destruction elsewhere: “Not one stood before their hands”; Kheta, Carchemish, Arvad and Alasa “were wasted”; they “came with fire” and “laid their hands upon the land as far as the Circle of the Earth”
- their arrogance — “Their hearts were confident, full of their plans” — sets up their fall
- Rameses presents his victory as total: those who reached his boundary have no “seed”, their “heart and their soul are finished forever”
- the defence is presented as a single trap on water and land — the “full flame” before the harbour-mouths and a “wall of metal upon the shore”; the enemy “dragged, overturned, and laid low upon the beach”.

Sample full-mark response

> **Sample response.** Rameses III presents the Sea Peoples as a vast coalition of “Northerners” from “their isles” — the Peleset, Thekel, Shekelesh, Denyen and Weshesh — whose “lands were united”. He stresses that nothing could resist them: the Hittites, Carchemish, Arvad and Cyprus “were wasted” and they “came with fire” towards Egypt, “confident” in their plans. Against this threat he presents his own victory as complete: those who reached his boundary “their seed is not”, and the fleet trapped by the “full flame” and the “wall of metal upon the shore” was “dragged, overturned, and laid low upon the beach”.

SAMPLE

Question 1b. (4 marks)

Using Source 2 and your own knowledge, describe the contributions of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III to commerce, trade and tribute.

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

This question required students to describe, using the map in Source 2 and their own knowledge, the contributions of Hatshepsut and Thutmosis III to commerce, trade and tribute.

Limitations: reading "tribute" as gifts Egypt paid to others (in this period tribute is what Egypt received); narrating the Battle of Megiddo with no reference to commerce or tribute; attributing the Punt expedition to Thutmosis III; listing goods without saying which ruler or route they belong to.

Mark allocation: 4 marks: 1–3 marks for accurate characteristics of the contributions of *both* rulers with specific detail (named expeditions, campaigns, lands, goods, dates); 1 mark for explicit use of the map (a named route, land or commodity). A response on one ruler only is capped at 3. **Descriptors:** High (4): accurate, specific features of both rulers' contributions — Hatshepsut's trade and expeditions, Thutmosis III's tribute and diplomacy — with names, goods and dates, and the map used by naming routes or commodities. Mid (2–3): accurate but general ("Hatshepsut traded with Punt, Thutmosis III conquered Syria") with one specific example, or one ruler only. Low (1): a description of the map alone or a single vague statement.

Responses could have included:

- solid expedition routes from Punt (myrrh trees, incense, ebony, ivory, gold, panther skins, baboons), Sinai (turquoise, copper) and Byblos (cedar, timber)
- dashed tribute routes from Retenu (chariots, horses, silver, captives, grain) and from Wawat and Kush (gold, ebony, ivory, cattle), with the frontier at Kurgus
- dotted gift routes from Keftiu, Alashiya, Hatti and Naharin — goods arriving through diplomacy rather than conquest
- all routes converging on Thebes (Karnak, Deir el-Bahri).
- Hatshepsut's expedition to Punt (Year 9, c. 1463 BCE), recorded in the reliefs of Deir el-Bahri, brought back living incense trees planted at the temple, as well as ebony, ivory, gold and animals; the expedition was presented as a gift to Amun
- her reign was largely peaceful; she reopened the Sinai turquoise mines and quarried and shipped the Aswan granite obelisks for Karnak — commerce in the service of building and the cult
- Thutmosis III fought some seventeen campaigns in Syria–Palestine from Year 22 (Megiddo, c. 1457 BCE) to Year 42; his Annals on the walls of Karnak list the booty and the annual "tribute" (*inu*) of Retenu — horses, chariots, silver, grain, timber
- he crossed the Euphrates into Naharin in Year 33 and received gifts from Babylon, Assyria and Hatti; Syrian princes' sons were taken to Egypt as hostages, binding vassals to the king
- Nubia (Wawat and Kush) supplied gold as yearly dues; the frontier was marked by Thutmosis I's and Thutmosis III's inscriptions at Kurgus; Napata (Gebel Barkal) became the southern administrative centre
- cedar from Byblos supplied ships and temple flagstaffs; envoys of the Keftiu (Crete) appear in the tombs of Theban officials of the period.

SAMPLE

Sample full-mark response

> **Sample plan.** (1) Hatshepsut — the Punt expedition of Year 9 (c. 1463 BCE) on Source 2's solid route: myrrh trees, incense, ebony, ivory, recorded at Deir el-Bahri; Sinai turquoise; Byblos cedar. Commerce as royal expedition, dedicated to Amun. (2) Thutmosis III — conquest turned into regular income: the dashed Retenu route after Megiddo (c. 1457 BCE), the Annals at Karnak listing annual *inu*; Nubian gold from Wawat and Kush to Kurgus. (3) Diplomacy — the dotted gift routes from Naharin, Hatti and Keftiu after the Euphrates campaign (Year 33): Egypt as the centre of a Near Eastern exchange network.

Question 1c. (5 marks)

Using Source 3 and your own knowledge, explain why the priesthood of Amen-Ra at Karnak grew in power before the Amarna Period.

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

This question required students to explain, using Source 3 and their own knowledge, why the priesthood of Amen-Ra at Karnak grew in power before the Amarna Period (that is, from the start of the Eighteenth Dynasty c. 1550 BCE to the accession of Amenhotep III in 1391 BCE).

Limitations: drifting into Akhenaten's break with Amun, which lies outside "before the Amarna Period"; describing Karnak's buildings without linking them to the priesthood's power; no explicit reference to Source 3; treating the High Priest as a rival king in this period.

Mark allocation: 5 marks: 1–2 marks for explicit use of the source (quoted or clearly paraphrased); 2 marks for specific own knowledge beyond the source; 1–2 marks for explaining *why* — the causes or mechanisms of the priesthood's growth — kept before the Amarna Period. **Descriptors:** High (5): a clear assertion of why the priesthood grew (royal dependence on Amun for victory and legitimacy, repaid in wealth and office), the source quoted and developed, dated own knowledge (Megiddo c. 1457 BCE, Hatshepsut's divine birth, Thutmosis III's oracle, the Annals), and the mechanism made explicit. Mid (3–4): the source summarised with one or two additional facts; the "why" implicit. Low (1–2): the source reworded; generic claims that "priests were powerful"; events of the Amarna Period itself.

Responses could have included:

- the Theban kings "credited their victory" over the Hyksos to Amun, "king of the gods", and "every campaign that followed repaid the debt"
- Thutmosis III recorded "the plunder of Megiddo and Syria" at Karnak and gave "fields, herds, captives and gold"
- Hatshepsut raised obelisks and claimed at Deir el-Bahri that "Amun himself had fathered her"
- the stance: a partnership — "the god made the king legitimate, and the king made the god rich" — that left the House of Amun "a second centre of wealth" by the time of Amenhotep III.
- Amun was the god of Thebes, the home of the dynasty; his fusion with Ra made him a national and royal god; the king was the "son of Ra" and Amun's chief priest in theory, with the High Priest acting for him

SAMPLE

- successive kings enlarged Karnak — Thutmosis I's pylons and obelisks, Hatshepsut's pair of obelisks and her Red Chapel, Thutmosis III's Festival Hall (Akh-menu) and the Hall of Annals
- Thutmosis III claimed that Amun had chosen him by oracle during a procession at Karnak; Hatshepsut's divine-birth reliefs and her oracle for the Punt expedition made the god the source of legitimacy for an irregular succession
- the office of God's Wife of Amun, held by royal women from Ahmose-Nefertari, tied the royal family to the cult; Opet and Beautiful Festival of the Valley processions displayed the partnership publicly
- booty, captives and Nubian gold were assigned to the temple's estates and workshops; High Priests such as Hapuseneb under Hatshepsut also held major state offices
- by the reign of Thutmosis IV (1401–1391 BCE) a new emphasis on the sun god (the Sphinx stela at Giza) suggests the kings were already looking beyond Amun.

Sample full-mark response

> **Sample plan.** Assertion: the priesthood grew because the Eighteenth Dynasty kings built their legitimacy and their wars on Amun and paid for that support in land, labour and gold. (1) Victory — the Hyksos expulsion credited to Amun (Source 3); Thutmosis III's Annals and gifts of "fields, herds, captives and gold" after Megiddo. (2) Legitimacy — Hatshepsut's divine birth at Deir el-Bahri; Thutmosis III's oracle; the God's Wife of Amun. (3) Wealth and office — temple estates, Nubian gold, High Priests holding state offices (Hapuseneb), so that Karnak became "a second centre of wealth"; Thutmosis IV's solar emphasis hints at royal unease before 1391 BCE.

Section B

Question 1. (20 marks)

Egypt
'Military success, rather than religion, was the foundation of royal power in New Kingdom Egypt.'
To what extent do you agree? Justify your response.

To be awarded full marks, students were required to:

This question required students to judge the proposition that military success, rather than religion, was the foundation of royal power in New Kingdom Egypt, and to justify the judgement with evidence. The topic sits in Area of Study 1 (political features: the presentation of the king as warrior, expressions of power; social features: the role of the god-king and the priesthoods).

Point bank — military success:

- Ahmose's expulsion of the Hyksos (c. 1550 BCE) founded the dynasty; Thutmosis I to the Euphrates; Thutmosis III's campaigns from Megiddo (c. 1457 BCE) and the empire in Syria and Nubia;
- the king as warrior in art: the smiting scene on pylons, the blue khepresh crown, chariot scenes (the painted chest of Tutankhamun), the Kadesh reliefs of Rameses II (1274 BCE) at Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum;

SAMPLE

- Merenptah's Libyan war (the "Israel" stela, c. 1208 BCE); Rameses III against the Libyans and the Sea Peoples (Medinet Habu);
- booty and tribute funded the state and the temples; a professional army and chariotry created a new elite loyal to the king.

Point bank — religion:

- the god-king: son of Ra, the living Horus, upholder of ma'at (cosmic order) — every war was fought in Amun's name and its victory credited to him;
- Hatshepsut's largely peaceful reign rested on divine birth and oracles; Amenhotep III's long peace on solar kingship and his divine-birth reliefs at Luxor;
- Akhenaten's reign shows royal power exercised through religion — and its limits; the restoration under Tutankhamun shows the need to return to the traditional gods;
- by the late Twentieth Dynasty, as the empire was lost, the High Priest of Amun Herihor (c. 1080 BCE) took royal titles at Thebes — religious institutions outlasting military power.

Historical thinking and interpretations: continuity (the warrior image survives even under kings who fought little) and change (the Ramesside emphasis on war propaganda after Kadesh); cause and consequence (victory produced wealth for Amun, which produced priestly power). Historians' positions in the student's own words — for example, Barry Kemp on kingship as an ideology expressed in monuments, or Donald Redford on Thutmosis III's empire.

Limitations: a chronological survey of pharaohs; ignoring "rather than"; drawing evidence only from one reign; Egyptian terms (ma'at, khepresh) without explanation; treating propaganda such as the Kadesh poem as a straightforward account.

Mark allocation: High (17–20): defines "royal power" and "foundation"; a contention that tests "rather than" (usually that the two were interdependent, with religion the more fundamental); thematic paragraphs across the period (1550–1069 BCE) with dated detail; cause and consequence and continuity and change (for example, how the loss of empire after Rameses III coincided with priestly power); primary evidence (Annals of Thutmosis III, the Kadesh inscriptions, Medinet Habu, Hatshepsut's divine-birth reliefs) and historians' positions. Mid (9–16): a clear contention and accurate examples, but the comparison asserted, or the period covered unevenly; evidence of one kind. Low (1–8): a list of pharaohs and battles; no judgement; no sources.
Band guide:17–20 all four criteria met at a high level · 13–16 a persuasive argument with specific knowledge but one criterion weaker (usually sources) · 9–12 relevant and accurate but descriptive, sources thin · 5–8 partly relevant, general, few dates · 1–4 fragmentary · 0 no relevant content.

Responses could have included:

- Ahmose's expulsion of the Hyksos (c. 1550 BCE) founded the dynasty; Thutmosis I to the Euphrates; Thutmosis III's campaigns from Megiddo (c. 1457 BCE) and the empire in Syria and Nubia
- the king as warrior in art: the smiting scene on pylons, the blue khepresh crown, chariot scenes (the painted chest of Tutankhamun), the Kadesh reliefs of Rameses II (1274 BCE) at Abu Simbel and the Ramesseum
- Merenptah's Libyan war (the "Israel" stela, c. 1208 BCE); Rameses III against the Libyans and the Sea Peoples (Medinet Habu)

SAMPLE

- booty and tribute funded the state and the temples; a professional army and chariotry created a new elite loyal to the king.
- the god-king: son of Ra, the living Horus, upholder of ma'at (cosmic order) — every war was fought in Amun's name and its victory credited to him
- Hatshepsut's largely peaceful reign rested on divine birth and oracles; Amenhotep III's long peace on solar kingship and his divine-birth reliefs at Luxor
- Akhenaten's reign shows royal power exercised through religion — and its limits; the restoration under Tutankhamun shows the need to return to the traditional gods
- by the late Twentieth Dynasty, as the empire was lost, the High Priest of Amun Herihor (c. 1080 BCE) took royal titles at Thebes — religious institutions outlasting military power.

Sample full-mark response

> **Sample plan.** Contention: military success was a major expression and support of royal power, but religion was its foundation — the proposition is largely rejected. (1) War as royal duty and wealth — Ahmose, Thutmosis III, booty to Karnak. (2) The warrior image as propaganda — Kadesh 1274 BCE, Medinet Habu; image exceeding reality. (3) Religion as legitimacy — divine birth (Hatshepsut, Amenhotep III), ma'at, oracles; Akhenaten and the restoration. (4) Change by the end of the period — loss of empire and Herihor: religion outlasting military power. Conclusion restating the extent.

SAMPLE