

Document A: Battle of the Yarmuk (Modified)

Muslim forces took control of Syria in 636 CE when they fought the Eastern Roman Empire (which included Greece) at the Battle of Yarmuk. This account, written by Muslim historian Ahmad al-Biladuri in the 800s CE, describes the battle.

The Muslims gathered together, and the Greek army marched against them. The Greeks and their followers in this battle tied themselves to each other by chains, so that none of them would run away. The battle they fought at al-Yarmuk was of the fiercest and bloodiest kind. In this battle 24,000 Muslims took part. By Allah's help, some 70,000 of them [the Greeks] were put to death, and their **remnants** took to flight, reaching as far as Palestine, Antioch, Aleppo, Mesopotamia and Armenia. In the battle of al-Yarmuk certain Muslim women took part and fought violently. Among them was Hind, daughter of 'Utbah and mother of Mu'awivah ibn-abi-Sufyan, who repeatedly exclaimed, "Cut the arms of these non-Muslims with your swords!"

Source: Al-Biladuri, "The Battle of the Yarmuk (636) and After," written in the 800s CE.

Vocabulary

remnants: rest of the army

Document B: Treaty of Tudmir (Modified)

This treaty was signed in 713 CE between ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, the commander of the Muslim forces invading Spain, and Theodemir, the Christian King of a region in southern Spain.

In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate. We [Abd al-Aziz’s forces] will not harass him [Theodemir], nor remove him from power. His followers will not be killed or taken prisoner, nor will they be separated from their women and children. They will not be **coerced** in matters of religion, their churches will not be burned, nor will **sacred** objects be taken from the realm, as long as he remains sincere and fulfills these conditions that we have set for him: He will not give shelter to **fugitives**, nor to our enemies, nor encourage any **protected person** to fear us, nor **conceal** news of our enemies. He and [each of] his men shall [also] pay one **dinar** every year, together with four measures of wheat, four measures of barley, four liquid measures of concentrated fruit juice, four liquid measures of vinegar, four of honey, and four of olive oil. Slaves must each pay half of this amount.

Source: *The Treaty of Tudmir, 713 CE.*

Vocabulary

coerced: forced

sacred: religious

fugitives: people running from the law

dinar: Muslim coins made of gold or silver

protected person: person under the rule of the empire

conceal: hide

Document C: Fred Donner

Fred Donner is a historian at the University of Chicago who specializes in early Islam and early Islamic expansion. Below is an excerpt from his book where he challenges some of the common knowledge about early Islamic conquests.

During the conquest period the granting of gifts, which had been practiced by Muhammad, became more regularized and eventually **institutionalized**. In the first place, there was established a system of **stipends** or direct salary payments ('ata-') to warriors serving in the Islamic armies. . . . Tribesmen in the Islamic armies who rebelled against the **regime** now did so at the cost of losing the stipends that the regime provided. Similarly, stipends were granted to some Persian or Aramean **nobles** (dihqans) who cooperated with the Muslims in Iraq. In most cases, it appears that these individuals were required to embrace Islam in order to receive their stipend.

Source: *Excerpt from Fred Donner, The Early Islamic Conquests, 1981.*

Vocabulary

institutionalized: established as part of the government

stipends: payment

regime: government in power

nobles: ruling class

Graphic Organizer

Central Historical Question:
How did the early Islamic empire expand?

After examining the map on Islamic expansion make a hypothesis for the following question: How did the early Islamic empire expand?

Document A: The Battle of the Yarmuk

1. (Sourcing) Who was al-Biladuri? Why do you think he wrote this document?

2. (Close Reading) List 3 reasons why this battle was the “fiercest and bloodiest kind.”

1.

2.

3.

3. Do you think this document is a reliable source for determining how the caliphates expanded in the 7th and 8th centuries? Why or Why not?

Hypothesis #2: How did the early Islamic empire expand?

Document B: The Treaty of Tudmir

1. (Sourcing) What type of document is this? What is its purpose?

2. (Close Reading) According to this document, how will Muslims treat the people that they conquer?

3. (Corroboration) How is the account of Muslim expansion in Document B similar or different from the account in Document A?

4. Do you think this document is a reliable source for determining how the caliphates expanded in the 7th and 8th centuries? Why or Why not?

Hypothesis #3: How did the early Islamic empire expand?

Document C: Fred Donner

1. (Sourcing) What type of document is this? What is its purpose?

2. (Close Reading) What was the purpose of the gift-giving that the author describes?

3. (Corroboration): How is the account of Muslim expansion in Document C different from the accounts in Document A and Document B?

4. Do you think this document is a reliable source for determining how the caliphates expanded in the 7th and 8th centuries? Why or Why not?

Hypothesis #4: How did the early Islamic empire expand?

Final Claim/Summary:

Based on the three documents you looked at, write a paragraph to answer the following question: How did the early Islamic empire expand? Make sure to include evidence from at least two different documents.
