Songhai activity

Question 1 The Songhai Kingdom

Use Sources 1A, 1B, and 1C to answer the following questions.

1.1 Study Source 1A

1.1.1 What can you learn about the role of women in the Songhai Empire from the source? 2x1 (2)

1.1.2 How did the women improve on praising their husbands? 2x1 (2)

1.2 Use Source 1B

1.2.1 List any two imports of the Songhai Empire. 2x1 (2)

1.2.2 List any two exports of the Songhai Empire. 2x1 (2)

1.2.3 How were soldiers rewarded for good service? 1x1 (1)

1.2.4 What evidence is there from the source that Songhai experienced a golden age during the rule of Mohammed Ture’? 2x2 (4)

1.3 Refer to Source 1C

1.3.1 What mode of transport was used by the king? 1x1 (1)

1.3.2 “The king was respected and held in high esteem by his subjects”. Do you agree? Explain your answer. 1x2 (2)

1.3.3 Use your own knowledge and evidence from the source to explain whether you think the king had an effective army. 2x2 (4)

1.3.4 What evidence from the source indicates that Timbuktu’s citizens were peaceful? 3x1 (3)

1.3.6 Which human right was violated by Timbuktu’s citizens through slavery? 1x2 (2)

 (25)

SOURCE1 A

*An oral account adapted from an article published by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC).*

In the early days of the Songhai Empire there were no praise singers. When the men returned from war, their wives used to sing their praises. They used to massage the bodies of their husbands saying "My husband, you are brave and tired. You must rest. I am your wife ... "

One day the wives had the idea of accompanying their praises with a musical instrument. One wife went to get a small calabash and goat skin. She covered the calabash with skin and started to play this instrument. Little by little she learned to play the drum. From then on, the woman would sing their husbands' praises making music on their drums. (*New Generation, p.13)*

SOURCE1 B

During the reign of Sunni Ali, promotion in the military ranks was based on merit. This meant that men of the lowest social rank could rise to the top on the basis of talent and achievement. That situation led to the rise of Sunni Ali's successor, Muhammad Turé who ruled from 1493 to 1528. He was a former governor of one of Sunni Ali's provinces to the west and had the backing of a large part of the army. Because has was a devout Muslim, the clerics and intellectuals of Timbuktu and other cities also favoured him. The ulama found in Muhammad Turé the ideal person to assist in bringing about the end of religious tolerance.

Trade improved under Muhammad Turé, with gold, kola nuts and slaves being the main export. Textiles, horses, salt and luxury goods were the main imports. Songhai was involved in trade with North· Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe. During Turé's reign, Timbuktu experienced a golden age, attracting scholars from all over the world to attend the excellent University of Sankore. *(History for All)*

Source 1C

*Source: Leo Africanus, a visitor to Timbuktu; quoted in: K Shillington, History of Africa, Macmillan, Oxford, 1995, pp. 104 -106*

The royal court is magnificent and very organized. When the king goes from one city to another with the people of his court, he rides a camel and the horses are led by hand by servants. If fighting becomes necessary the servants mount the camels and all the soldiers mount horses. When someone wishes to speak to the king, he must kneel before him and bow down. The king has about 3000 horsemen and a large number of foot-soldiers armed with bows ....which they use to shoot poisoned arrows. This king makes war only upon neighbouring enemies and upon those who do not want to pay him tribute\*.When he has gained a victory; he has all the captives-even the children-sold in the market at Timbuktu.

There are in Timbuktu numerous judges, teachers and priests, all properly appointed by the king. He greatly honours learning. Many hand-written books imported from Barbary are also sold. There is more profit made from this commerce than from all other merchandise. The people of Timbuktu are of the peaceful nature. They have a custom of almost continuously walking about the city in the evening between 10pm and 1 am, playing musical Instruments and dancing. The citizens have at their service many slaves; both man and women. There are no gardens or orchards in the area surrounding Timbuktu.

*The Jingerebir mosque at Timbuktu is thought to have been founded in 1325 by Mansa Musa, the emperor of Mali. (In Search of History)*

