

"Conquest of Sindh in 712 opened the corridor of both Islam and trade". Discuss.

(CSS-2017)

The conquest of Sindh in 712 AD by Muhammad Bin Qasim is a key event in the history of subcontinent. This military achievement not only brought ^{this} region under the control of Umayyad Caliphate but also initiated long lasting changes in religious and economic landscape of Sindh.

1. Historical Background:

Sindh is part of the northwest of the Indian subcontinent. On the west, it is exposed to the deserts of Balochistan, and on the east to the lower Indus Basin. Its boundary to the north is imprecise as it blends into the Punjab plains. The southern boundary is the Arabian Sea coast. It is a natural east-west corridor for people, trade and ideas.

Under the Umayyad Caliphate, there was a strong push for territorial expansion to spread

Islam and expand trade to secure economic resources. Sindh's geographical position made it a key target.

2. Events leading to conquest of Sindh:

Before arrival of Muhammad bin Qasim, Hajaj bin Yousuf appointed two expeditions in 711 to conquer this land. Both these expeditions failed and were badly defeated by Raja Dahir.

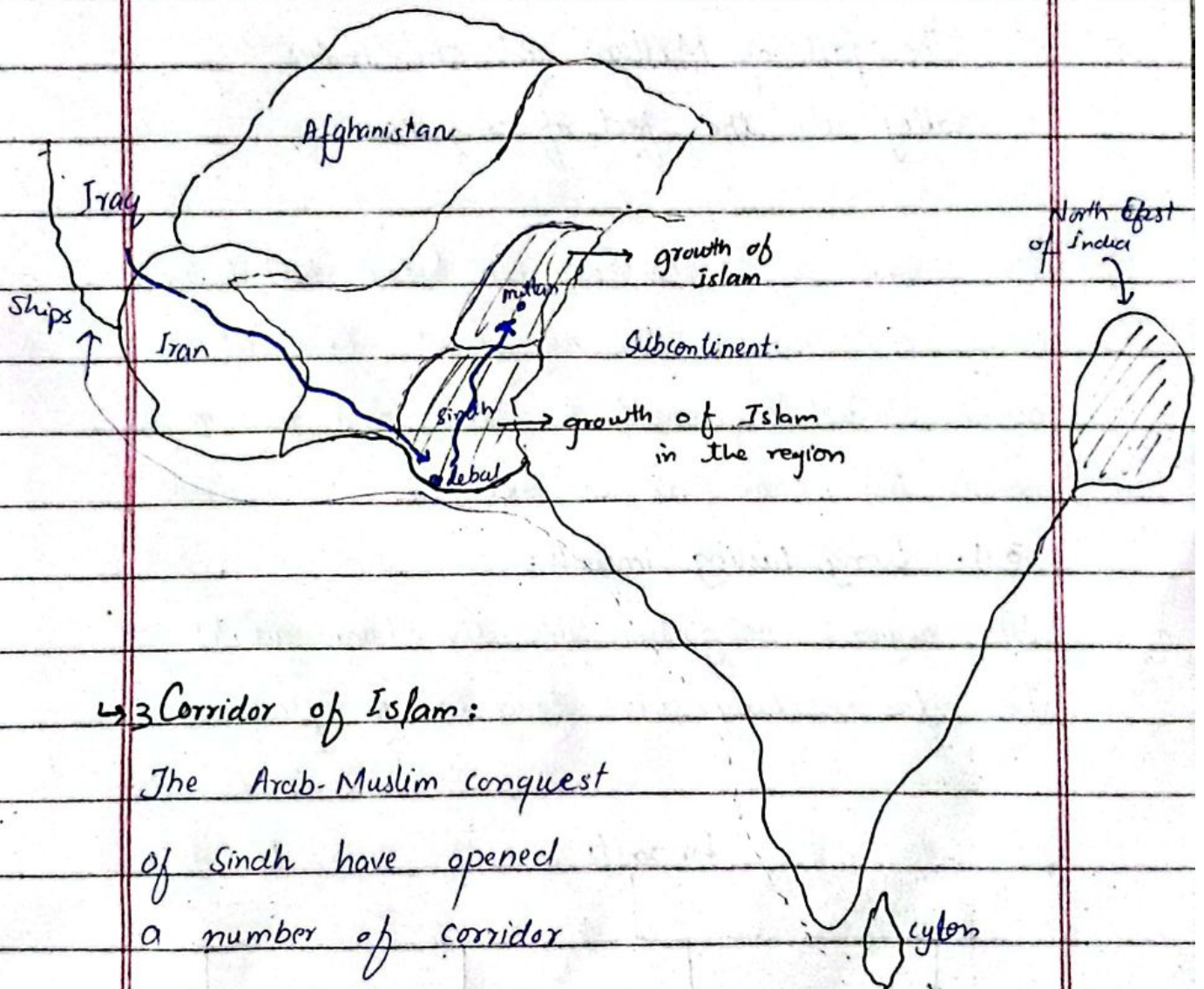
Initial attempts failed due to strong resistance, but political instability and internal divisions eventually facilitated the conquest.

"The work of conquest, as often happened in India, was thus aided by the disunion of the inhabitants, & jealousy of race & creed conspired to help the Muslims."

(Lane-Poole - 1903)

The atrocities of Raja Dahir proved to be the main catalyst for back to back attack by Arabs. Beside helping the oppressed, the

Umayyad Caliphate aimed to establish control over this region to facilitate trade and extend its influence further into the Indian Subcontinent.



↳ Corridor of Islam:

The Arab-Muslim conquest of Sindh have opened a number of corridor and windows for growth and expansion of Islam over the period of time Muhammad bin Qasim captured Debal and defeated Raja Dahir. He then conquered the

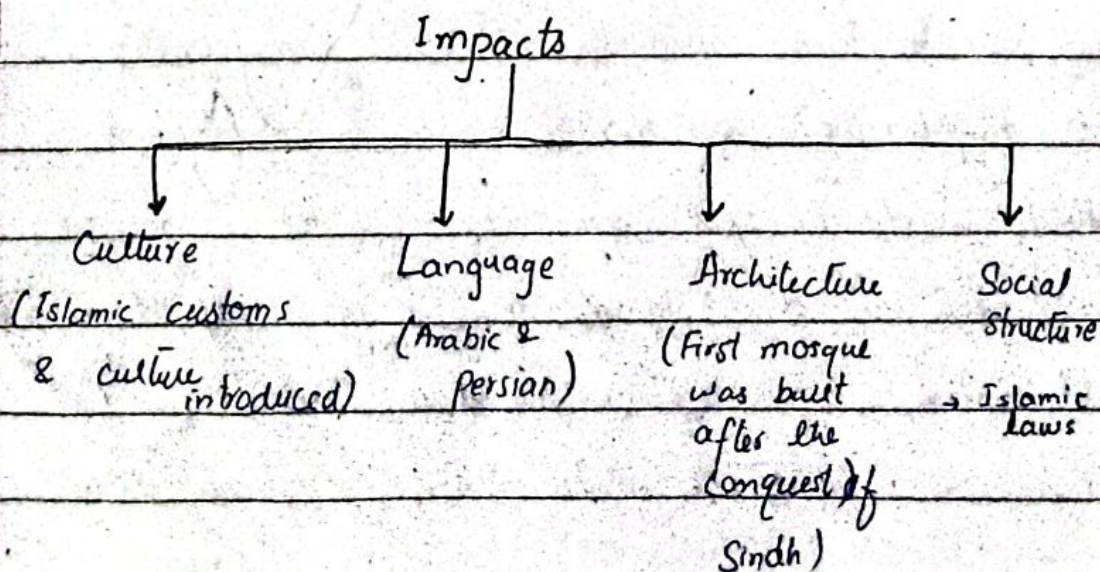
chief city of upper Indus; Multan. And according to Stanley Lane-Poole in his book "Medieval India Under Mohammadan Rule 712-1764";

"The fall of Multan laid the Indus valley at the feet of conqueror"

The conquest of Muhammad bin Qasim lead to the spread of Islam in the region. The locals of this region started to convert to Islam and muslim communities came into existence.

3.1. Long lasting impacts:

The region's integration into the Islam world has far-reaching and long lasting effects.



3.2. Foundation for future Muslim Empires:-

The Islamic foothold in Sindh paved the way for the subsequent Muslim empires in India.

Sabuktigin and Sultan Mahmood Ghaznavi entered North-west of present day Pakistan. Later laid the foundation Ghaznavid Dynasty, followed by the rule of Ghorids. Qutab-ud-din Aibak took the Islam to the North-Eastern part of subcontinent. Eventually, Islam kept growing in the region during Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526). The Mughal rule furthered the spread of Islam till mid 19th century.

↳ 4. Corridor of Trade:-

Conquest of Sindh not only has religious significance but also an event that marks as it made Sindh a significant hub of trade.

The event opened new trade routes between subcontinent and Islamic world.

4.1 Prosperity in the region:-

The increased trade brought wealth and prosperity to the region. Sindh was significant

for trade due to its sea ports. As a result of conquest Debal and other seaports of Sindh became the main center of trade and commerce. Goods like spices, textile and other items were traded freely and safely

→ Eradication of Piracy; Safe trade:

One of most fruitful outcomes of this conquest was the eradication of piracy along the Sindh coast. This provided safer trade routes enabling the merchants to trade more extensively and freely.

5. Conclusion:

The Conquest of Sindh in 712 AD was a key event that not only marked the start of new era of rule but also laid the foundation for Islamic culture and boosted trade. This is a foundation on which the successive muslim empires were built.

"Sindh was the gateway to India,

and Muhammad Bin Qasim unlocked

it for spread of knowledge, culture,

and trade."

(Al-Baladhuri)