



**28 April 2014 – 11 May 2014**

**A2 GCE HISTORY B**

**F985/01** Historical Controversies – British History

Candidates answer on the Answer Booklet.

**OCR supplied materials:**

- 12 page Answer Booklet  
(sent with general stationery)

**Other materials required:**

None

**Duration: 3 hours**



**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the spaces provided on the Answer Booklet. Please write clearly and in capital letters.
- Use black ink.
- Answer **both sub-questions** from **one** Study Topic.
- Read each question carefully. Make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.
- Do **not** write in the bar codes.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

- The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.
- The total number of marks for this paper is **60**.
- This paper contains questions on the following 4 Study Topics:
  - The Debate over the Impact of the Norman Conquest, 1066–1216 (page 2)
  - The Debate over Britain's 17th Century Crises, 1629–89 (page 3–4)
  - Different Interpretations of British Imperialism c.1850–c.1950 (page 5)
  - The Debate over British Appeasement in the 1930s (page 6–7)
- You should write in continuous prose and are reminded of the need for clear and accurate writing, including structure of argument, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- The time permitted allows for reading the Extract in the one Study Topic you have studied.
- In answering these questions, you are expected to use your knowledge of the topic to help you understand and interpret the Extract as well as to inform your answers.
- **You may refer to your class notes and textbooks during the examination.**
- This document consists of **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

## 1 The Debate over the Impact of the Norman Conquest, 1066-1216

Read the following extract about the impact of the Norman Conquest and then answer the questions that follow.

In the course of Stephen's reign the Church had established a real ascendancy. At Stephen's accession it had demanded and obtained its liberty. When he had violated that liberty by arresting the three bishops, it had put him on trial and forced him to appeal to Rome. In the latter part of the reign, the Pope had deposed one Archbishop of York and established another in the teeth of royal opposition. There can be no doubt that the doctrines of high papalism had taken root in England, and the authority of the Church was greater than it had ever been.

To a certain extent, this ascendancy of the Church was a natural consequence of the weakness of the Crown, but it also reflected a personal inequality. King Stephen's brother, Henry of Blois, had carried out the greatest extension of papal power. Henry displayed the very qualities which Stephen most noticeably lacked. He had vision, personality, and determination to the point of ruthlessness. Everything he did was on a grand scale; even his failings as a bishop – his military activities, the magnificence of his castles, and the promotion of his relatives – were positively regal. He was a man of infinite capacity, and if his mother Adela had lived to see his full development, she must surely have repented of her decision to make him a monk. He was the real grandson of the Conqueror.

Stephen, on the other hand, was cast in the image of his father, a man of great activity but little judgement. He had come to the throne at a time when civil war was almost inevitable, and the need was for a king of heroic proportions. Stephen was no hero. Although he was an excellent warrior and showed enterprise and speed in the beginning of campaigns and sieges, he too often failed to complete them; and although he seemed cheerful and gay, beneath the surface he was mistrustful and sly. He was basically small-minded, and as a result he did not inspire the devotion which his grandfather, William the Conqueror, inspired; even his biographer, the author of the *Gesta Stephani*, found him colourless. On the other hand, like his father before him, he was easily pleased with the appearance of success and because he had no rival in England for the last seven months of his reign, he went on a solemn progress through the northern parts of his kingdom 'encircling the bounds of England with regal pomp, and showing himself off as if he were a new king'. One might almost have thought that he was ruling by the grace of God instead of by the favour of Duke Henry.

He died on 25 October 1154 and was buried beside his wife and son in the choir of the Cluniac abbey which he had founded at Faversham. Duke Henry did not attend the funeral, and did not even hurry to leave Normandy. He knew that there was no further danger of a disputed succession. Henry was not crowned in Westminster until 19 December. It was the longest interval between the death of an English king and the coronation of his successor for more than a hundred years. In 1135 Stephen, like Henry I before him, had won the throne only because he had acted with speed. For Henry II, delay was possible because a strict hereditary system was now accepted for the crown as well as for the nobles. The aim was no longer to choose the most eligible royal candidate but to accept the man who was the lawful heir, that is to say the one with the best hereditary claim. In the twentieth century a system which places such emphasis on the accident of birth may seem archaic and irrelevant, but in the twelfth century it was welcomed as a practical and progressive reform; and the fact which made it attractive was that to an age of turmoil it brought stability and peace.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation, approaches and methods of the historian? Refer to the extract and your knowledge to explain your answer. [30]
- (b) In their work on the impact of the Norman Conquest some historians have focused on the extent of continuity with Anglo-Saxon England. Explain how this approach has added to our understanding of the Norman Conquest. Has this approach any disadvantages or shortcomings? [30]

## 2 The debate over Britain's 17th Century Crises, 1629-89

*Read the following extract about Britain's 17th century crises and then answer the questions that follow.*

Great events do not necessarily have great causes. It is now plain there was no high road to civil war. There was not bound to be a struggle between king and parliament. Nor, it has been established, can the war be explained in terms of social revolution. The ultimate split was quite clearly a split within the governing class.

A detailed step-by-step account of the outbreak of civil war reveals the linking together of circumstances necessary to produce something so completely at odds with all men's assumptions about social and political relationships. But the English civil war was in no sense merely accidental. Chance and coincidence played their part; things might have been very different, for example, if the Irish rebellion had not happened at the precise time it did. But the story is also full of personal idealism, collective emotion and ideological passion.

Most of those who rode up to Westminster in November 1640 had no concept of a parliamentary cause in their minds. Reconciliation and settlement were seen as the purposes of parliaments. Only Pym and a few close friends saw the matter in totally different terms; for them the parliamentary cause was the destruction of a conspiracy that struck at the core of the nation's life. Their fundamental misconception of the political situation must be the starting point for an explanation of how war came about.

Pym had no desire to distinguish between truth and rumour. Suspicion festered, trust was gradually broken and step-by-step the chances of restoring confidence in the king disappeared. External events contributed to this process, bringing home to MPs the apparent substance of Pym's story. The army plots, the Irish Rebellion and the king's attempts to arrest the five members all played into Pym's hands. Pym's triumph was that by imposing his own fears of popery so sweepingly on the population he had many really believe that the papists were kindling a civil war. 'All the papists and Jesuits in England conspire together,' the Earl of Stafford told MPs. Sir Bevil Grenville, so the story went, visited most of the papist gentry of Cornwall and Devon in disguise to raise men and money for the king. A sense of identification with parliament became a defensive reaction for MPs and, as petitions to Parliament show, around the country. These petitions began to pile up since petitioning from the counties exemplified the complex relationship between parliaments and the gentry communities of the shires.

Charles' strength of character was based on his sense that he was answerable only to God. 'Parliament,' he said, would put him 'into the hands of a few malignant persons who have entered into a combination to destroy us.' His misunderstanding of his opponents' aims and motives would have been less serious if his character had been different. What men saw was the king's aloofness and his deep affection for his French wife who meant nothing to them.

For all this, any account of the origins of the civil war which fails to give due weight to its ideological content must be incomplete. If fear and distrust at the centre of the nation's affairs finally made war unavoidable, there was surely something more positive which drove men to take up arms against their own countrymen. There was a coincidence of hopeless misunderstanding and irreconcilable distrust with fierce ideological conflict. The heart of parliamentary ideology was the connection in men's minds between the struggle against popery and the preservation of true religion. Protestants, as Holles put it in a speech in Parliament, had seen the 'truth and substance' of religion 'eaten up with vain pomp, unnecessary ceremonies and the gross errors of popery imposed on us as the doctrine of our Church'.

So war and bloodshed came to England, as no one could have predicted two years previously. A curious mixture of folly and idealism lies behind the events. The political crisis has to be investigated at two levels, since misunderstanding is of its essence. Men's actual intentions must be distinguished from their assumed and alleged intentions. Gossip and rumour fanned the flames of crisis. This was a war that nobody wanted.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation, approaches and methods of the historian? Refer to the extract and your knowledge to explain your answer. **[30]**
- (b) In their work on Britain's seventeenth-century crises some historians have used a Marxist approach. Explain how this approach has contributed to our understanding of Britain's seventeenth-century crises. Has this approach any disadvantages or shortcomings? **[30]**

### 3 Different Interpretations of British Imperialism c. 1850-c.1950

*Read the following extract about British imperialism and then answer the questions that follow.*

Strategic explanations of imperialism have tried to account for the British expansion in Africa in terms of the need to defend the routes to India. It is important to recall that, speaking globally, India was the core of British strategy and that this strategy required control not only over the short sea-routes to Egypt, the Middle East, the Red Sea, Persian Gulf and South Arabia and the long sea-routes (the Cape of Good Hope and Singapore), but over the entire Indian Ocean, including crucial sectors of the African coast and its hinterland. British governments were keenly aware of this. It is also true that the disintegration of local power in some areas crucial for this purpose, such as Egypt, drew the British into establishing a much greater direct political presence than originally intended, and even into actual rule.

Yet these arguments do not invalidate an economic analysis of imperialism. In the first place, they underestimate the directly economic incentive to acquire some African territories, of which Southern Africa is the most obvious. In any case the scramble for West Africa and the Congo was primarily economic. In the second place they overlook the fact that India was the 'brightest jewel in the imperial crown' and the core of British global strategic thinking precisely because of her very real importance to the British economy. This was never greater than in the latter part of the nineteenth century when anything up to 60 per cent of British cotton exports went to India and the Far East. India was the key - 40-45 per cent went to India alone, and the international balance of payments of Britain hinged on the payments surplus which India provided. In the third place, the disintegration of indigenous local governments, which sometimes made necessary the establishment of European rule over areas Europeans had not previously bothered to administer, was itself due to the undermining of local structures by economic penetration. And, finally, the attempt to prove that nothing in the internal development of western capitalism in the 1880s explains the territorial redivision of the world fails. Western capitalism consisted of rival national economies protecting themselves against each other. Politics and economics cannot be separated in a capitalist society. The attempt to devise a purely non-economic explanation of the 'new imperialism' is unrealistic.

In fact, the rise of democratic politics had a distinct bearing on the rise of the 'new imperialism'. Ever since the great imperialist Cecil Rhodes observed in 1895 that if one wanted to avoid civil war one must become imperialist, most observers have been aware of the attempt to use imperial expansion to diminish domestic discontent. However, there is no good evidence that colonial conquest had much bearing on the employment or real incomes of most workers in Britain. Much more relevant was the familiar practice of offering voters glory rather than more costly reforms: and what was more glorious than conquests of exotic territories and dusky races?

To preserve its privileged access to the non-European world was a matter of life and death for the British economy. In the late nineteenth century Britain expanded the area officially under the British monarchy to a quarter of the surface of the globe. However, not a great deal of Britain's successful defence of its global economic dominance had much to do with the 'new' imperialist expansion. Most of Britain's overseas success was due to a more systematic exploitation of Britain's already existing possessions or of the country's special position as the major importer from, and investor in, areas which were virtually independent like Latin America. In fact, British capitalists did rather well out of their informal empire. Of course Britain took her share of the newly colonised regions of the world. Yet the British aim was not expansion, but defence against others encroaching upon territories dominated by British trade and British capital.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation, approaches and methods of the historian? Refer to the extract and your knowledge to explain your answer. **[30]**
- (b) In their work on British imperialism some historians have used a cultural approach. Explain how this approach has contributed to our understanding of British imperialism. Has this approach any disadvantages or shortcomings? **[30]**

#### 4 The debate over British Appeasement in the 1930s

*Read the following extract about appeasement and then answer the questions that follow.*

The nub of the debate lies in the evaluation both of Hitler's intentions – whether he determined on war, or whether he took the opportunities offered by Western leaders – and of the intentions behind policy formation in Britain and France. The popular image of appeasement is rooted in popular mythology. With a few exceptions, the limits of British power, the constrictions imposed by military weakness, overseas commitments, the policy of the Dominions and the isolationism of the United States have not been fully taken into account. The opening of the British archives to 1939 under the thirty-year rule now makes possible a fuller analysis of how the Chamberlain Government understood the international situation.

A coherent policy towards Germany had emerged by 1936, which can be best described as the search for an Anglo-German detente backed by the use of an efficient bomber air force as a deterrent. Neville Chamberlain's foreign policy, after he became Prime Minister in 1937, appears from a study of the Cabinet archives to have been a much more radical departure from this earlier tradition than has usually been described. Treasury criteria and a system of rationing were imposed on the rearmament programme. The deterrent was abandoned in favour of a defensive strategy intended only to repel a direct German attack.

The logical consequence was a curious blend of withdrawal from Europe and heightened sensitivity to possible causes of European war. Thereafter the Government hoped to be free to make more positive overtures to Germany to appease her grievances and reach a settlement on the basis not of fear by deterrence but of mutual interests and separate spheres of influence. A much fuller explanation of this transformation is needed to understand how, after only fourteen months of Chamberlain's premiership, the British found themselves at Munich, and to explain the bizarre circumstances in which Britain sought first to undermine the security of Czechoslovakia and then to prop up the ramshackle territory of Poland.

British policy did not change as a result of Munich. Chamberlain's government reflected his single-mindedness. In his failure to come to terms with the ideological motivation of German foreign policy, Chamberlain was no more culpable than Baldwin or Eden but Chamberlain's single-minded assurance comes nearer to the sin of pride. There is no lack of evidence: witness his estimate of the work of others, as well as his disparagement of the French and Czechoslovak leaders. His wholly admirable horror of war cannot outweigh the fact that in the last resort Chamberlain avoided the full responsibility of choice by referring to personal standards of morality, which were not universal qualities. To exclude as unthinkable the deliberate launching of war creates strategic blindness.

Chamberlain's Government may be commended for its realistic acceptance of Britain's diminished state in relation to the rest of the world. Nevertheless, if the Chamberlain Government regarded the security of France as an essential interest then their high-handed treatment of their ally was unwise and probably deeply harmful. Secondly, the British deliberately refused to envisage Russia as an ally. Thirdly, the extreme degree of isolationism ceased to make sense. The building-up of a fighter and radar defence screen indicated a policy of withdrawal from Europe. Finally, the Government may be condemned for the way in which the Foreign Office and military experts were overridden or sidetracked. The Eden-Baldwin policy, if it had been continued after 1936, might have advanced through deterrence a sort of stalemate. But the six months after Munich are the real test. Until then a better case can be made for Chamberlain than is usually done. To say this, however, is not to excuse the failure to take stock after Munich.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation, approaches and methods of the historian? Refer to the extract and your knowledge to explain your answer. **[30]**
- (b) In their work on British appeasement some historians have focused on possible alternatives to appeasement. Explain how this approach has contributed to our understanding of appeasement. Has this approach any disadvantages or shortcomings? **[30]**

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