

ADVANCED GCE

HISTORY B

Historical Controversies – British History

F985

Candidates answer on the answer booklet.

OCR supplied materials:

- 16 page answer booklet
(sent with general stationery)

Other materials required:

None

30 November 2010 – 11 December 2010

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.
- Read each question carefully. Make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.
- Answer **both sub-questions** from **one** Study Topic.
- 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
 - The debate over Britain's 17th-century crises, 1629–89
 - Different interpretations of British imperialism c.1850–c.1950
 - The debate over British Appeasement in the 1930s
- 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.

One view about the deterioration of women's status which the Norman conquest was alleged to have brought was stated concisely by Doris Stenton in 1956. 'The evidence which has survived from Anglo-Saxon England indicates that women were then more nearly the equal companions of their husbands and brothers than at any period before the modern age. In the higher ranks of society this rough and ready partnership was ended by the Norman Conquest which relegated women to a position honourable but essentially unimportant.'

All such accounts offer to a greater or lesser extent a view of a Golden Age for women pre-1066. These accounts call for more consideration of Golden Ages in general and this Golden Age in particular. Golden Ages are interpretations of the past which always do violence to it. They are simplifications. It is in their nature to be defined in relation to our concerns, not those of the past. Anglo-Saxon England has been a Golden Age variously of women's domestication, legal emancipation, education and sexual liberation.

A cursory view of a range of evidence from either side of the 1066 divide casts an immediate doubt on the idea of a brutal Norman ending of a Golden Age. The raw statistics of the Domesday Book, for example, show that no more than five per cent of the total hidage of land was in female hands in 1066. Of that five per cent, 80–85% was in the hands of only eight women, almost all of them members of the families of the great earls, particularly of Earl Godwine. Women other than the queen by this date are virtually absent from the witness lists of royal charters, and thus apparently from political significance. By contrast Norman and Anglo-Norman women are regularly recorded consenting to land grants and signing charters. Women experienced 1066 variously as wives, daughters, mothers, widows; as nobles; as Norman or English; as members of particular families; as individuals – not as some collective group 'women'. Some English and Norman women benefited from a Conquest which posed as a legitimate takeover. Many widows survived 1066 with some of their lands intact. Women shared the fate of their families, but had the special protection of widows, a kind of freedom from family and its ties. All the problems of generalising the status of women appear in the diversity of female experience in 1066.

We should abandon the idea of 1066 as a turning point of great significance in the history of English women and of an Anglo-Saxon Golden Age. Both ideas are more a product of the political concerns of past historians than of the experience of the eleventh century. A wider framework would allow for continuities and, within it, changes between the tenth and twelfth centuries may well be discovered. The powers of women within this fuller and broader context will look more complex. Women's history is now too complex for simple stories of advance or retreat. It is time to restore the lives of tenth, eleventh and twelfth century women to them.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation, approaches and methods of the historian? Refer to the extract and your own knowledge to explain your answer. **[30]**
- (b) Some historians have suggested that the character and actions of individual kings had the greatest influence on the periods which they ruled. Explain how this has added to our understanding of the impact 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:

I am not going to argue that provincialism excluded concern for general or national political and constitutional issues, but rather that such issues took on local colours and were articulated within local contexts. The gentry did not consider dispassionately such problems as those arising from the Books of Orders, ship money or the Nineteen Propositions. They did not attempt to weigh their legality or necessity in the light of abstruse general constitutional principles. Rather, they evaluated the effect such measures would have on the peace and security of their local communities.

Provincial opposition to ship money mounted from 1636 onwards. Yet the crisis seems to have come not when the judgement in Hampden's case became known, but when the King compounded his folly by demanding coat and conduct money for the army he intended to use against Scotland. Some historians believe that the judgements of the two judges who found for Hampden on constitutional grounds were widely circulated, but their views seem to have made less impact than we might have expected. The case aroused intense interest, and the court was packed to hear the cut and thrust of the legal argument. Yet the King's right to levy the rate was rarely questioned in the provinces. Ship money was hated for its costliness and its disruptive effects on the social and political calm of the communities, but remarkably few references to Hampden's case can be found in the records. Many, reasonably enough, delayed making payment in the hope of a favourable opinion for Hampden which would absolve them from paying. Yet once the King had won, the majority did pay. The efficiency of the tax in the year of the Hampden case (October 1637–September 1638) was still over 90%. Thus in Yorkshire, where a sheriff had earlier reported that the Hampden case 'did much retard the service in respect of the greate expectation men had thereof', almost eleven of the twelve thousand pounds assessed were eventually collected. Sir Francis Thornagh, Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, was the only one to report that the outcome had actually stiffened resistance.

The pattern of opposition to ship money is certainly curious; many of the men who were later to become prominent in the opposition within the Long Parliament were diligent ship money sheriffs, while many future royalists appear to be among its strongest opponents. There is a further point; in many places such opposition as existed in 1634–8 came not from the county leadership but from the yeomanry and tenant farmers. In Lancashire, only three gentlemen can be found who were actively opposed to ship money, and popular resistance was confined to the backward and largely recusant Lonsdale and Amounderness hundreds. The heavily puritan area around Manchester paid up apparently without trouble.

Some reports do mention gentry leadership, but they were a minority until 1639. Hampden, then, represented the articulate, official opposition position, but it is not clear that the provinces as a whole were behind them on this issue. What produced the collapse of co-operation in 1639–40 was not a growing awareness of the great constitutional issues raised by Hampden's lawyers, but a growing fear of the consequences of ship money for the economic and social stability of each county community.

The earliest complaints about ship money were made not on constitutional but on administrative grounds; the instructions of the Privy Council were contradictory and confusing. Sheriffs were instructed to proceed on the basis that ship money should be assessed like any other county rate, but they were given discretionary powers to make adjustments. This allowed endless disputes to develop within each county with the possibility of an appeal over the sheriff's head to the Privy Council. Delays, disputes and violence were the natural outcome and almost all the opposition in the years 1635–8 can be said to have arisen from this confusion.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation, approaches and methods of this historian? Refer to the extract and your own knowledge to explain your answer. **[30]**
- (b) Whig historians have focused on issues of political and religious liberty in their study of the seventeenth century. Explain how this has added to our understanding of the 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.

The practices of building settler societies in Australia or New Zealand, or operating a system of slavery or indentured labour in the Caribbean, or constructing colonial rule as legitimate in India, all depended in part on particular ideas of the family, of sexuality and reproduction, of manliness and femininity.

Colonial discourses constructed India as a degraded place in need of civilization and used the figure of the Indian woman, and particularly the Hindu woman, as a measure of Indian society's desperate need for help. The idea that the British were saving Indian women from the barbarities of their archaic world became a critical tool in the justification of Britain's right to rule. The degradation of Hindu women was symbolized for the British by their seclusion and a life of idleness associated with over-sexualized bodies. By rescuing them, the British could both reinforce their own masculinity and justify their rule.

The figure of the abject Hindu woman travelled across the circuits of the Empire. In the mapping of differences, not only between metropole and colony, but also travelling from one 'periphery' to another, she was ranked in a complex hierarchy, which marked off the different subject peoples of the Empire. The 'Hindoo' woman was the degraded symbol of the weakness and passivity of her own culture, but her abjection was less extreme than that of the Aboriginal or 'Hottentot' women, people seen as without culture. In defining 'Hindoo' women as degraded, colonial officials, planters and missionaries, were in part demarcating themselves from those whom they saw as inferior.

The rebellion of 1857 was a traumatic experience for the British in India. The outrage of what was done to them was translated into the building of a protective racial barrier, aiming to ensure the separation of the colonizing society from that which it had colonized. Food became more British, tableware was sent from the metropole, children were sent 'home' to school, hookahs and Indian mistresses went underground, there was an increase in the numbers of European women. Fears of pollution and contagion were widespread. Homes were public places for the white community, with ever-ready hospitality and incorporated wives who saw their work, alongside their husbands, as ruling India. Imperial men needed wives who enjoyed the outdoor life, who could ride and hunt, who were practised in self-sufficiency, who could cope with running the home when their husbands were away on business, and could stand in, when necessary, for official purposes. These women focused their lives on their husbands and the Empire and derived considerable influence through this. These were partnerships which cast women in a masculine mould. Domesticated feminine women could not survive in this world and a growing approximation of femininity to masculinity allowed these women a broader scope for public activity in the empire.

The hill stations were havens of safety for the British and reached the zenith of their popularity in the late nineteenth century. 'A part of England and apart from India', they were thought to be safe places for the reproduction of race. They felt like England, with their cool evenings, more equal balance between the sexes, children at home and at school, tennis parties, village greens, English-style churches and cottages. Here the standards of home could be maintained in what was experienced as a physically and morally corrupting land.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation, approaches and methods of the historian? Refer to the extract and your own knowledge to explain your answer. **[30]**
- (b) In their work on British imperialism some historians have focused on the idea of 'gentlemanly capitalism'. Explain how this 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.

This book is an experiment. Its chief purpose is to provide a brief analysis of the various forces which have influenced the external policy of Great Britain over the past century. It is not intended as a rival to the standard narrative works; if anything, it should be viewed as complementary to them, analysing the background influences to which they make reference but, understandably in a chronological treatment, have little space to dwell on.

The Czech crisis of 1938 was not only the high point of appeasement but also the most long lasting. It therefore offers the largest store of evidence about the motives behind British policy. To those studying background influences upon Whitehall's diplomacy, the events of May to October 1938 offer not one or two but a large number of motives and pressures to explain the decisions taken by Chamberlain and his colleagues.

(i) Defence weaknesses. This is a motive much seized on by historians and especially Conservative apologists for Chamberlain eager to demonstrate the Prime Minister's wisdom in postponing a showdown until Britain's armed forces had been further strengthened. There is, to be sure, an enormous amount of documentary evidence for this, if only because the Chiefs of Staff had been cataloguing the nation's deficiencies for some time

(ii) Extra-European obligations. The Chiefs of Staff feared a war over Czechoslovakia was quite likely to bring in Italy, and also tempt Japan to make further moves in the Far East. Yet, as they noted, 'War against Japan, Germany and Italy simultaneously in 1938 is a commitment which neither the present nor the projected strength of our defence forces is designed to meet.'

(iii) Tradition of isolationism. Chamberlain himself put this most clearly – and notoriously – on 27 September 1938. But was this not a common prejudice? A Daily Mail article insisted 'Czechoslovakia is not of the remotest concern to us.' For two decades the government and the greater part of public opinion had sought to avoid a repetition of the fatal intervention of August 1914.

(iv) Dominion pressures. For at least a generation, the urgings of the self-governing Dominions had formed an important counter to the pleas of the French and other Europeans for a greater British commitment to the continent.

(v) Economic constraints. As one scholar has pointed out 'the appeasement of Germany in 1938 was not devised in the heat of the moment. Both the defence budget and appeasement were the result of the government's carefully calculated assessment of the economic, social, political and strategic realities that Britain faced.' Near the end of 1937 there occurred a commercial down-swing. The unemployment figures rose, the balance of payments was worsening. The early stages of the Czech crisis had seen a large-scale withdrawal of currency reserves from Britain. Yet all this would be but a preliminary to the economic losses which an all-out war against Germany would bring.

Appeasement is probably best understood in general terms as a 'natural' policy for a small island-state gradually losing its place in world affairs, shouldering military and economic burdens which were increasingly too great for it.

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

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