

**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

**3 May 2011 – 16 May 2011**

**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 and 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.*

With the reign of Henry I, the youngest son of William the Bastard, Norman kingship reached its splendid peak in England. With the reign of Stephen, a grandson of King William, it fell to its lowest level. The first William had been famed as a conqueror; the second William shone as a magnificent and eccentric knight; but Henry I impressed contemporaries by his learning. The impression developed into a myth, so that by the fourteenth century Henry was called 'Beauclerk'. But although we know that Henry was illiterate and had little if any Latin; although to us, looking back, he seems as tyrannical as his brother and much crueller; and although, like his father and his brother, he spent his life in warfare and hunting, his reputation is proof that there was a new spirit in the court. If Henry could not write, he had many clerks who could; and the experiments towards an orderly bureaucratic administration, which under Rufus had been detested, under Henry for the first time aroused admiration. It may well be that Henry's true greatness lies in causing this revolution in attitude. Of his successor, his nephew Stephen, Walter Map wrote, 'A fine knight, but in other respects almost a fool', and under Stephen the imposing facade of a coherent kingdom disconcertingly crumbled. The failure and the success were not entirely disconnected. The sons of the Conqueror had pushed the royal powers too hard and had strained the capacities and loyalties of their servants far too severely. The succession of a weak man – an accident that no dynasty can avoid forever – not only caused the pressure to slacken but allowed the inevitable reaction to destroy much that had been achieved.

Nevertheless, if proof were required of the basic soundness of the political structure which the Normans had developed in England, the quick recovery of the kingdom under Henry II after the nineteen long winters of Stephen's reign is surely evidence enough.

The coronation charter of Henry I is especially famous because it was confirmed by the next two kings on their accession and because it had a direct influence on the Magna Carta of 1215. But in essentials Henry's charter differed in no way from William Rufus's. It was a bid for the support of law-abiding men who could be expected to rally to the crowned king once they saw that he was prepared to rule in the traditional way. Henry promised that the church should be 'free' and that church revenues should be protected. He renounced the 'unjust repressions' of his brother and undertook to maintain firm peace and to re-establish the good old laws – the laws of King Edward as amended by the Conqueror. Various abuses of feudal custom and the remedies offered were listed in detail. These concessions Henry made to his own earls, barons and tenants and he ordered that they should do the same to their barons and men. In the charter was something for all free classes and something also for the king, for even at this moment of crisis Henry reserved to himself his forests.

Henry I, no more than his brother William or his nephew Stephen, entirely kept his promises. Yet each undertaking to recall the good laws recognised that there was a body of custom to which all were bound, and each promise of remedy for specific abuses acknowledged that the just interest of all parties should be taken into account. The constant assertion of these principles was, in the long run, more important than the repeated failure of kings to honour them completely.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretations, 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 used the approach of studying it 'from below'. Explain how this approach has contributed 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 the debate over Britain's 17th-century crises, then answer the questions that follow.*

Any attempt to analyse the causes of this war must take account of the way it began. Hypotheses which attempt to explain why people might have wanted to fight a civil war are valueless for explaining a situation in which they did not want to fight one. Attempts to explain a deliberate revolution are inappropriate to a situation in which no deliberate revolution took place. It is also important to distinguish between leaders and followers. Far-reaching social explanations may be appropriate to the careers of radicals like John Lilburne. But these were not the men who made the revolution: they were the men who, later, would raise a revolution against the men who made the revolution. For the political leaders who made the war, there seems to be only one explanation; sheer fear of the intentions of the other side. Behind this fear is a profound depth of misunderstanding of the other side: the misunderstanding is an appropriate matter for deep explanations, but they will not be explanations of a war: they will be explanations of personal and ideological distrust, and of the breakdown of a system of government which the parliamentarians desperately wanted to preserve, but which could not keep up with inflation or with division in religion. The argument of 1641 was not about how to replace this system of government: it was about whom to blame for its failure to work efficiently and to the general satisfaction. That the system itself might have become inoperable was a prospect which only a few temperamental extremists, Haselrig and Marten on one side, and perhaps a few of the queen's circle on the other, could face. When the wheel came full circle, in 1660, the same men started the same scheme for the king to fill the great offices with men Parliament trusted. Once again the scheme misfired, though once again Saye and Sele got high office.

Those who made the war were a small number of people in Parliament. Those who took sides in it were a large number of people all over the country. This distinction should be remembered in attempts to make social analyses of the allegiance of the public. The motives which might impel a man to choose between sides which already existed were very different from those which might impel a man to make a side. Only two consistent divisions emerge from analyses of allegiance. One is religious: Puritans were on one side, and Catholics and Arminians on the other. The other is of age: both in Parliament and in the Civil Service, royalists were on average ten years younger than parliamentarians. One possible explanation of this mystifying fact is suggested by the discovery that a large majority of the members who were conspicuous opponents of Arminianism in the 1620s had completed their education before 1600. In religion, at least, it is the parliamentarians who were the conservatives, defending the doctrines they had learned when young. On both sides, the Civil War was a last desperate attempt to ensure that there should be only one religion in England. It was also the failure of a system of taxation. The two failures were closely connected.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretations, approaches and methods of this historian? Refer to the extract and your knowledge to explain your answer. [30]
- (b) Some historians have focused on Britain's seventeenth century crises as part of a wider European 'general crisis'. 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.*

To focus solely on colonial possessions in examining Britain's expansion overseas in the nineteenth century is to ignore the multi-faceted nature of Britain's international position. The increases in foreign trade, in the balance of credit abroad, and in the numbers of emigrants settling overseas in these years, were but part of a wide-ranging expansion of British society that also took military, naval, religious and cultural forms and spread far beyond the territorial holdings of Britain's Empire. The naval officer in the Atlantic, the missionary in Africa, and the trader in China were as much agents of potential British influence as the colonial administrator in India.

Free trade, defined in the broadest sense of allowing the free play of the market, was seen as central to this process of expansion. Free trade was the vehicle for 'world bettering' as well as for the expansion of British economic interests overseas. It was the means whereby Britain's role in the wider world could be best shaped. The centrality of free trade ideas in British ambitions for the wider world can be seen in several regions that were particularly the focus of British economic interest: Latin America, China, the Ottoman Empire, and parts of Africa. In Latin America the aim was not to seize colonies but rather to secure the institutional framework to keep markets open. Numerous free trade treaties with Latin American governments were signed by Britain to achieve this. British policy-makers intervened frequently in these four regions to support British political and economic interests. In all of them ideas of 'world bettering' and British economic benefits were tightly intertwined in the shape of free trade. The seizure of colonies was largely rejected. However, the qualified impact of British economic influence can be seen in Latin America. Looked at from Britain, the results of intervention in the region did not match ambitions, at least before the 1880s. Rival merchants and financiers had begun to move into British Latin American markets with remarkable ease by the end of the century.

In the mid-nineteenth century such linkages with these regions as successive British governments did achieve through the promotion of free trade are less impressive than they might initially appear. There are limitations in using such terms as 'informal empire' to understand Britain's relationship with these areas. These terms distort what should be seen as a more ambiguous and fluid relationship. They are also unhelpful in implying that influence simply reached one way, from Britain into the world outside. It is far better to approach these regions in terms of the fluctuating degrees of British influence that were established in them. In a country such as Egypt, for instance, British expansion and intervention led to inescapable territorial expansion rather than informal control. Elsewhere the fact that Britain established a commercial presence in a region did not mean, necessarily, that she gained either economic or political paramountcy over it.

After 1880 any continuing wish by policy makers to create an informal empire was overshadowed by greater vulnerabilities in Britain's position, the heightened willingness of other powers to challenge Britain's interests, and a far greater readiness on the part of all great powers to assume direct control. Changing circumstances led the British government to recognise that the ambitions of the mid-nineteenth century were based on over-optimistic views of the willingness of the wider world to respond to the British economy.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretations, 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 focused on issues of gender. 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.*

The past is different. It can only be visited through its remnants. The mentalities of bygone ages have to be grasped through what the past has bequeathed to us. It seems strange today that anyone in Britain would actively have wanted to make friends with Hitler. But in the 1930s such a mentality was anything but strange. Many looked to Hitler with admiration, and pressed for a policy of friendship with Nazi Germany.

Pro-German views were not identical with those that came to accept the need, arising from Britain's military weakness, to comply with German demands. But they were related. Appeasement became, once its failure was evident, a dirty word. But it was not like that for much of the 1930s. For a variety of reasons it enjoyed wide support. Through the focus on Lord Londonderry, who was in the British government during the first half of the 1930s, this book tries to recapture the attitudes that underpinned, and made possible, policies of appeasement.

Could making friends with Hitler and intensive rearmament have prevented war? Here we enter the realms of conjecture and counterfactual scenarios. But unless history is presumed to be a one-way street, these have to be faced. Was the six-year conflict with Nazi Germany 'the unnecessary war'? Once the war had been won, at great sacrifice and huge cost, and especially since Winston Churchill's war memoirs had defined the historical record for public memory, the notion that a deal might have been contemplated with Hitler's horrific Nazi regime seemed completely unacceptable.

Londonderry took the view that Britain had had three inter-linked duties since the advent of Hitler: to arm, to seek friendship with Germany and to stop Germany becoming strong. However, the three strands were not concurrent but had by implication to follow on each other. Only if Germany could not be made 'helpful partners' would Britain 'immobilise their hostile activities', and only if they proved 'totally aggressive' would they be 'revealed in their true colours before the world'. We have already encountered some of the problems with this thinking. At what point was it to be concluded that the Germans could not be turned into 'helpful partners'? Londonderry was enthusiastic about a pact with Germany as late as 1936, when he welcomed the remilitarisation of the Rhineland. He had repeatedly urged 'getting hold of Germany' while she was weak. But he himself had on every occasion been prepared to defend German breaches of international treaties. The two occasions when, it is commonly thought, international armed intervention could and should have been taken against Hitler were the remilitarisation of the Rhineland and the German threat to Czechoslovakia. Londonderry, of course, supported and defended German action on both occasions.

Londonderry's own formula for handling Germany was misconceived, misguided and mistaken on practically all counts. He was certainly well intentioned and sincere. But it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that he was extremely naive in his political views and gullible in his readiness (shared by others) for so long to place his trust in Hitler. The case of Lord Londonderry casts a light on the mentalities and political structures that shaped appeasement. A focus on his keenness for friendship with Germany highlights what was not possible for the British government; or at least what would have been an exceedingly dangerous line of policy.

Londonderry's failing reflected those of his social class. That so many notables flirted with the extreme right, finding appeal in Fascism and sympathising with so much in Nazism, was not simply a reflection of personal accident or taste. His sympathy with many of the values of the Fascist as well as Conservative Right was nevertheless instinctive and a product of his social background.

- (a) What can you learn from this extract about the interpretations, 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 Hitler's actions and ideology. Explain how this has contributed to our understanding of appeasement. Has this approach any disadvantages or shortcomings? **[30]**





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