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Oxford Cambridge and RSA

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A2 GCE HISTORY B

F985/01 Historical Controversies – British History

Candidates answer on the Answer Booklet.

OCR supplied materials:

- 12 page Answer Booklet (OCR 12)
(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** subquestions 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 barcodes.

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 four Study Topics:
 - The Debate over the Impact of the Norman Conquest, 1066–1216 (pages 2–3)
 - The Debate over Britain's 17th Century Crises, 1629–1689 (pages 4–5)
 - Different Interpretations of British Imperialism, c.1850–c.1950 (page 6)
 - The Debate over British Appeasement in the 1930s (page 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.

Answer **both** sub-questions from **one** Study Topic.

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.

The Normans had come to exploit the peasantry, not replace them. The overwhelming bulk of the English population thus remained in place after the Conquest, if battered down by more exacting lords. The latter, often absentees, strove to get their income in cash rather than in kind, a desire for money which accelerated the end of slavery. Reorganisation of manors also led to a substantial decline in the number of sokemen and free peasants. In towns there was some immigration. At York, 145 properties once held by Anglo-Scandinavians were taken over by Frenchmen. There were French quarters too at Norwich and Northampton. But probably the great bulk of the town population remained English.

If peasants and townsmen remained in place, a huge swathe of English landowners was dispossessed, including virtually all the aristocracy. It was that, more than anything else, which secured the Conquest so absolutely. This disappropriation had begun after Hastings and increased in pace with every rebellion. The result can be seen in the Domesday Book which surveyed England both in 1066 and 1086. Only four Englishmen remained as major landholders. Gone were Harold's family and those of the other English earls, gone were all ninety or so of the lords who had possessed land worth £40 a year or more.

The Conquest was, therefore, devastating, but large numbers of Englishmen did survive at levels above the peasantry. When a great Norman baron, a Henry de Ferrers or Ilbert de Lacy, swept into an area to take possession of the estates granted him by the Conqueror, he was met by dozens of Englishmen promising faithful service and seeking to obtain or retain land. Thaxted, the most valuable Essex manor of Richard de Clare, was leased to an Englishman. He may well have been one of many. For running the hundred, the basic unit of local administration, the English remained vitally important. Indeed, they provided nearly half the jurors drawn from the Cambridgeshire hundreds who gave evidence to the Domesday commissioners. Much later history – the bid made by Norman kings for English support, the survival of the English language – becomes understandable against that background. At the level of the county and the hundred, unless there was to be constant disturbance, Normans and English had to work together. Gradually a new nationality and local society formed to replace the old.

In that formation a significant role was played by women. After the Conquest the Normans had no place for the male kin of the killed and dispossessed. Women, or at least women of a certain status and place in the life cycle, were a different matter. Marriage to the widow or daughter of a thegn might help secure possession of his lands. It was to escape such a fate or worse, that Englishwomen after the Conquest fled to monasteries. But many such marriages did take place, like that between Robert d'Oilly and Ealdgyth, daughter of Wigod of Wallingford. Of course, the whole purpose of such matches was to divert property away from English kin. But Ealdgyth and the rest cannot have suddenly disowned their Englishness. They passed it on to their children and thus took a first step in bridging the divide of the Conquest.

- (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) Historians in the nineteenth century studied the impact of the Norman Conquest. Explain how their work and approaches have contributed to our understanding of the impact of the Norman Conquest. Have their work and approaches any disadvantages or shortcomings? **[30]**

2 The Debate over Britain's 17th Century Crises, 1629–1689

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

By combining the results of an analysis of royalist recruitment (in other words, the behaviour of the poor), with the evidence from other sources (illustrating mainly the behaviour of the propertied), we may reach some general conclusions about the pattern of allegiance in the counties of Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire. It indicates strong parliamentarianism in the northern textile region, more muted roundhead strength in the pasture country of central Somerset, west Dorset and north-east Wiltshire; royalism in the chalk and chalk-edge regions, especially in the market towns, in the mixed farming country of south-east Somerset and Blackmore Vale, and in the thinly settled western hills. The textile towns and villages need not detain us. The connection between Puritanism and the clothing districts is familiar. It is enough to conclude that industrial development and the kind of society it produced can be associated with parliamentarian loyalties.

Close-knit downland communities, we might easily suppose, would exhibit strong attachments to the traditional order in church, state and everything else. But might not royalism, in the downlands or in Blackmore Vale, simply reflect the outlook of the squires and parsons who were the natural leaders of their communities? Certainly people depended on their landlords for protection: 'Unless Sir Edward Nicolas stand for the hundred, we are all undone,' a tenant told Nicolas's steward in 1644. But it is possible to exaggerate the magnates' ability to control their inferiors. Wartime conditions made it more difficult for landlords to exert control. In 1644 the parliamentarian Earl of Denbigh complained that plundering roundheads had made even his own tenants unwilling to enlist. The ties of deference were much strained in all regions.

So while the authority of the downland squires, or landlords like the Digbys and Berkeleys in the Blackmore Vale region, is a partial explanation of the royalism we find there, it may not be the only one. It is possible that some of the differences in regional behaviour that we have observed came from below, from differences in the cultures of the regions. Politics is part of culture, and unless we assume that an entire culture is imposed by the elite, it is plausible to suppose that cultural variations might be reflected in differences in political outlook. The historian John Oldmixon regarded cultural attitudes as central to civil war allegiance. In 1642, he asserted, Somerset was 'Protestant and sober', thus hostile to the Cavaliers, 'excepting those Gentry and Peasantry who had opposed the putting down Revels and Riots'. Hatred of popular festivals was certainly one of the distinctive marks of the Puritans, so the subject is therefore worth pursuing. If in one place we find a more tenacious survival of traditional rituals, in another a different set of symbols being more commonly employed, it may be easier to explain contrasts in political behaviour. Were there in fact significant differences between the cultures of the regions under discussion? John Aubrey certainly thought so. The people of the Wiltshire cheese country, he tells us, were 'melancholy, contemplative, and malicious', addicted to Puritan fanaticism and witchcraft beliefs; their downland counterparts had none of these attributes and were little inclined 'to read or contemplate religion'.

These regional contrasts suggest that variations in popular political behaviour may be related to plebeian culture as well as patrician leadership. They also compel us to look more closely at the ways in which political and cultural attitudes reinforced each other. Correspondingly, people encountering officious interference with their small pleasures easily translated resentment into political terms; hence all the seditious words in taverns. Some of these cases reveal how the civil war was perceived by ordinary people. At Stoke St. Mary in 1650, William Mansfield was refused a drink by William Helyar's wife, she 'knowing him to be an immoral fellow'. He forced his way into the house, smashed a pot with a billhook and said 'that in like manner he hoped to cut down the Roundheaded Rogues'.

- (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 taken a Whig 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.

Adapted from © J Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians: the dynamic of territorial expansion', p614, 617, 619-620, 627, English Historical Review, Vol. 122.447, 1997.
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- (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 nationalist 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.

One aspect of the case against appeasement is the assumption that there was available another policy, simple to devise and straightforward to apply, which could have saved the world from war and from the curse of Hitler. The favourite occasion has been the German occupation of the Rhineland in March 1936. Looking back, it was widely assumed that an immediate French intervention would have resulted in an immediate German retreat from the Rhineland in March 1936. Hitler later encouraged the idea of a lost opportunity in the Rhineland by saying that if the French had marched the Germans would have had to withdraw with their tails between their legs. But at the time his instructions were that troops must withdraw fighting step by step, and it is likely that they would have stood firm on the Rhine itself. The 'lost opportunity', if there was one, was not to stop Hitler without war but by war; by serious military operations, not a promenade.

Another much-canvassed 'lost opportunity' has been the Czechoslovakian crisis in 1938. The scenario is for a war against Germany, waged by Czechoslovakia, France, Britain and perhaps the Soviet Union, and resulting in a much easier and less costly victory than that achieved in 1945 after nearly six years of struggle. Battles fought on paper can produce whatever results their manipulators require. There could, of course, have been no certainty of an Allied victory, and one shrewd and well-informed study estimates that the Czech resistance would have lasted no longer than that of Poland in 1939.

Another strong candidate for a lost opportunity to stop Germany is found in the negotiations for a three-power alliance between France, Britain and the Soviet Union in the summer of 1939. The argument is that such a coalition would have been so powerful that even Hitler would have been deterred from further territorial expansion, and contented himself with consolidating the gains which he had made in 1938 and March 1939. There has been a strong consensus in historical writing that the British wrecked these negotiations by a combination of tardiness, incompetence and anti-Soviet prejudice. But it is by no means certain that a three-power agreement was there for the taking if the British had only shown reasonable determination and competence. The question is whether an alliance was available at a price which the British government was willing or able to pay. Stalin wished to strengthen his borders by securing a large sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, notably in eastern Poland and the Baltic states. The British were in no position to deliver such a sphere of influence, even if they had wanted to do so. Hitler, was and did. The case, like the others, must remain hypothetical; but it is at any rate highly questionable whether the great three-power anti-German coalition was in fact within reach.

In general, the idea of lost opportunities which has played a large part in the case against appeasement looks a good deal weaker than it once did. Certainly in 1936 and 1938 it appears that the true choice was between immediate war now and the likelihood of a worse war later. Yet a war postponed might be a war averted; and the choice might be well rephrased as one between war now and a chance of peace later. It was Churchill himself who was to say, several years later and in a different context, that 'jaw-jaw is better than war-war.'

- (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 used an intentionalist approach. Explain how this approach has contributed to our understanding of British appeasement. Has this approach any disadvantages or shortcomings? **[30]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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