



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Tuesday 19 May 2020 – Afternoon

A Level History A

Y302/01 The Viking Age c.790–1066

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes



You must have:

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer the question in Section A and **any two** questions in Section B.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document has **4** pages.

ADVICE

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

Section A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the impact of Viking raids on England. [30]

Passage A

Modern views of the Vikings tend to play down the size and ferocity of Viking attacks. Medieval chroniclers were always prone to exaggerate numbers and the extent of any disaster. Ocean-going Viking ships could not carry much more than 30 men, and fewer if horses, camp followers and prisoners were also on board (as we know they were in the 890s). The numerous Scandinavian place-names of the Danelaw, and the considerable impact of Scandinavian languages on English, give an impression of dense settlement, but such effects could be achieved by a relatively small number of Danish landlords and governors. The consequences of the Viking invasions for the English Church, and English culture, look serious, but the Vikings were not fanatical pagans, out to kill priests and destroy churches for the sake of it, but raiders looking for loot where it was conveniently available, and Church and learning were already in decline. In other words, Vikings remained raiding bands of aristocratic warriors, rather than hordes of heathen savages. Their adverse effects were largely incidental, or else further contributions to pre-existent political and cultural crises. What is more, Vikings had beneficial effects too, notably on commercial and urban growth.

Adapted from: J. Campbell, *The Anglo-Saxons*, published in 1982.

Passage B

The annals state that some Viking armies were large, numbering thousands of men and sometimes hundreds of ships. They paralysed and overran wealthy and long-established kingdoms. They defeated the 'national' armies of kingdoms like the West Saxons. They virtually destroyed learning in England. They were numerous enough to transform the racial and linguistic characteristics of places like Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Cumbria. To deny this and to concentrate on the cultural achievements of this vigorous but barbaric race is to deny the achievements of Alfred the Great and his son and grandson.

The first Viking raids, in the 790s, were merely for plunder, but the later Danish armies of the ninth century were out for more lasting gain. The Viking descent on England was a *blitzkrieg** of a permanent kind. After it there would be no return to the old ways, only change and accommodation. With their traditional ways of raising armies and methods of fighting, the old kingdoms found it impossible to resist the Vikings with their longships and their fast mobile armies. One by one they suffered military defeat. Large-scale, permanent Danish settlements began to appear in Northumbria, East Anglia, and in Mercia north of Watling Street. To educated men in Wessex it must have seemed that the very survival of Anglo-Saxon civilisation was now in the balance.

**blitzkrieg* – literally, 'lightning war', a fast-moving, highly effective attack.

Adapted from: M. Wood, *In Search of the Dark Ages*, published in 1987.

Section B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2*** 'There was limited political development in Denmark, Norway and Sweden throughout the period from c.790 to 1066.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3*** 'Vikings abroad were more concerned with trading than raiding.' How far do you agree with this statement for the period from c.790 to 1066? **[25]**
- 4*** To what extent was entertainment the purpose of Viking poetry and sagas between c.790 and 1066? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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