



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Wednesday 07 October 2020 – Morning

A Level History A

Y311/01 The Origins and Growth of the British Empire 1558–1783

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 consequences of privateering during the reign of Elizabeth I. [30]

Passage A

Vitally important for the growth of English sea power was the contribution of privateering. English activities threatened the Spanish monopoly in the Caribbean and the Americas. The three voyages made by John Hawkins in 1563, 1565 and 1567 were seen by Spain as a direct threat, especially as Elizabeth was one of the main shareholders in the third. It has been estimated that, altogether, Spain and Portugal lost something like a thousand ships to English privateers during the 1590s, which inflicted a major blow on the Spanish economy. This proved to be of greater significance than English contributions to the land war against Spain. A partnership was quickly established between the Crown and groups of merchants, so that eventually the Tudor state built up an effective administrative system to combine official naval policy with mercantile private enterprise. Privateering had a further bonus. The profits acquired from this activity were eventually to finance the development of the East India Company, founded in 1600, as well as those set up during the reign of James I. Another positive achievement was the reforms of John Hawkins as Treasurer of the Navy, which ensured that those warships which England did possess were fully operational and equipped. Drake also managed to persuade the Queen of the importance of an offensive strike to weaken the impact of the Armada. The combination of these factors meant that England was self-consciously emerging as a naval power.

Adapted from: S. Lee, *The Reign of Elizabeth I: 1558–1603*, published in 2007.

Passage B

English seamen could not, and would not, be confined to the narrow seas and coastal waters of Europe. For them England was no longer an insignificant island lying to the north-west of the European continent, on the perimeter of the main currents of trade. For them England was the hinge of the door as it swung open from the old world to the new. John Hawkins was the pioneer of the new outlook; and the Queen backed him. The Spanish colonists of the New World were crying out for labour. Labour they had been getting in the shape of African slaves, bought or captured on the African coast and transported by traders across the Atlantic. But the Spaniards had not so far had African slaves from the English; and it was the particular mission of Hawkins to add an English link to this chain. By intervening, he infringed Portuguese rights in Africa and Spanish rights in America; but he delivered the goods and was welcome. The business was also profitable. So, when he came again, he was backed by the Queen and her ministers, who sank money in his project; and this too showed a profit. So he came a third time. But now the politicians had to be reckoned with. Hawkins was no innocent seaman engaged in friendly commerce. To get his African slaves he had to fight for some of them. To persuade some Spaniards in America to purchase his precious cargo he had burnt down part of a town and looted its treasure. He was no pirate, but it was becoming impossible to engage in peaceful trading with the Spanish possessions overseas. So English seamen were forced to turn to a kind of political piracy against Spain whether they liked it or not.

Adapted from: J. Hurstfield, *Elizabeth I and the Unity of England*, published in 1971.

SECTION B

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

- 2*** 'The nature of British colonial exploitation remained the same throughout the period from 1558 to 1783.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3*** 'The impact of British rule on its colonies was largely negative throughout the period from 1558 to 1783.' How far do you agree with this view? **[25]**
- 4*** To what extent did the causes of European imperial rivalry change during the period from 1558 to 1783? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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