



A-LEVEL HISTORY

7042/2D Religious conflict and the Church in England, c1529 - 1570
Report on the Examination

7042/2D
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Q1

The source question set the task of assessing three sources' value in relation to the Elizabethan Church in the years 1566-70. Source A provided insight into radical Protestant criticisms of the Elizabethan Settlement, focusing on objections in a London parish to clerical vestments.

Source B, the proclamation made by the Northern Earls at the outset of their rising in 1569, gave students the opportunity to show their understanding of Catholic opposition to the Protestant changes introduced by Elizabeth's government.

Source C, a letter written by the Bishop of Llandaff to the Secretary of State, William Cecil, demonstrated the emphasis the government placed on conformity to the Settlement. That the letter was written in 1570 made it particularly valuable, given the challenges posed to the Elizabethan Church by the Vestiarian Controversy and the Northern Rebellion.

The three sources were generally found to be accessible. Each source dealt with a particular aspect of the Elizabethan Church, allowing students to show the range and depth of their contextual knowledge without the danger of repeating themselves. Most students remembered to analyse the sources' content and provenance, both of which need to be discussed to access Level 3 or above.

However, the question also exposed flaws in some students' answering technique. To achieve high marks, it is necessary to put forward a balanced argument. A fairly large number of answers focused entirely on the ways in which the sources were valuable, ignoring the sources' limitations for the purpose given in the question.

In some cases, students spent too long describing the sources instead of homing in on the sources' value. Another feature of weaker answers was the use of inaccurate language. Numerous students referred to the 'validity' of sources, which is something quite different from 'value'. Finally, students should be reminded that 'invaluable' is not the opposite of value.

Q2

This question required students to evaluate the influence of Lutherans' criticisms of the pre-Reformation Church in England. Followers of Luther, among them William Tyndale, Simon Fish and John Frith, attacked the Church's power, privileges and principles. Most students were able to show knowledge of English Lutherans' activities, including the publication of such tracts as *The Supplication of the Beggars* and, in particular, the smuggling of the 'Tyndale Bible' into England. Lower-scoring answers did not go beyond this.

In order to meet the question's full demands, it was necessary to assess how influential these critics were. Some answers included evidence of the proliferation (or lack thereof) of Lutheran views among the clergy and laity. A more popular, and effective, approach was to focus on the attitude of Henry VIII to Lutheranism. A strong advocate of papal supremacy for the first half of his reign, Henry supported Leo X in his condemnation of Luther. The senior clergy followed the lead of the 'Defender of the Faith' in investigating, and persecuting, Lutherans.

As a result, most students concluded that Lutherans were not able to exert much influence in England in c.1529. A few disagreed, arguing that Henry's confrontation with Pope Clement VII and his calling of the Reformation Parliament signalled his conversion to caesaropapism and the primacy of scripture over tradition – and thus the triumph of Lutheran ideas. This argument has

merit, even if some of the evidence on which it rests (such as Henry's supposed praise for Tyndale's *Obedience of a Christian Man*) is flimsy.

Having analysed Lutherans' criticisms of the English Church, students compared their importance with those made by others. These included Lollards, Humanists, MPs and ordinary people. One differentiating factor between answers was the amount of precise detail provided. Another, as mentioned above, was whether the answer was merely descriptive of the criticisms levelled at the pre-Reformation Church or, as is necessary for marks in Level 3 and above, evaluation was provided of their influence.

Good knowledge of Lollardy's impressive staying power was shown, with references made to their popularity in Buckinghamshire and (of course) the Richard Hunne case, as well as to the persecution that Lollards endured in the early decades of Henry's rule. Humanism was also generally well understood, although many students wrote only about Erasmus and not about the influence his (and others') Humanist ideas had in England.

Some excellent answers contrasted the failure of MPs in the 1510s, when their outcry over the treatment of Hunne was silenced, with the success enjoyed by their counterparts in the parliament of 1529. The Reformation Parliament gave anticlerical MPs the chance to reduce mortuary fees, restrict the benefit of clergy and, most dramatically, to bring down Cardinal Wolsey. The increasing influence of parliamentary criticisms of the Church by this point was convincingly explained as the result of the 'Great Matter'. The change in Henry's relations with the papacy meant that, by 1529, he was prepared to listen to critics of the Church whom he had previously reviled.

Q3

This question, on the extent to which the Church changed in the years 1529-40, was answered less well than the others.

Most students were able to identify important changes, such as the establishment of the royal supremacy and the Dissolution of the Monasteries, but these were often described as one-off events rather than as processes. The transferral of power over the English Church from the pope to the king did not occur solely in 1532, 1533 or 1534, but in all those years.

Better answers demonstrated precisely detailed knowledge of this. The charging of the English clergy with praemunire forced them to recognise Henry's supreme headship in 1531. By 1532, via the Submission of the Clergy, Henry was given authority over canon law. The Act of Supremacy 1534, which confirmed the King's status as Supreme Head, was well known. Most impressive were those answers which displayed wide-ranging awareness of the Reformation statutes, such as the Acts in Restraint of Appeals and the Absolute Restraint of Annates, the Dispensations Act and the See of Rome Act.

Some students appeared to think that, as a result of the break with Rome in the early 1530s, religion in England was transformed from Catholicism to Protestantism. Higher-scoring answers were more nuanced, recognising that the Church of England in 1540 blended elements of the old and the new. An example of this is the change in the Church's attitude to the English language. Before the Reformation, reading the Bible in English was a criminal offence. The Suppression of Heresy Act 1414 identified the possession of English Scriptures as evidence of heresy, and this was enforced by Henry VIII's Lord Chancellors right up until the early 1530s.

The change that occurred later in the same decade was dramatic. Thomas Cromwell, as Vicegerent in Spirituals, used the Royal Injunctions to promote the distribution and the reading of the Bible in English. The 1538 Injunctions even mandated that an English Bible be publicly displayed in every parish church. That this was done with royal approval is without doubt – the title page of the Great Bible, first published in 1539, depicted the King making the Word of God available to the people of England. However, Henry did not allow any further erosion of Latin's status. Mass was conducted in Latin until two years after his death. By 1540, therefore, the Church of England encouraged private prayer in English, but Latin remained its liturgical language.

The best answers showed awareness of the central role played by the King in the changes made to the Church. Henry was simultaneously a reformer, as shown by the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the destruction of shrines, and a conservative, as he proved at the trial of John Lambert and through the enshrinement of the Six Articles in law. He was open to the theological experimentation in evidence in the Injunctions, the Ten Articles and the Bishops' Book, but he would not allow this to go too far. The fall of Cromwell in 1540, brought about in part by Henry's anger at the spread of 'sacramentarianism', is perhaps the most striking illustration of the King's aversion to radical change.

Q4

The final optional essay concerned the rebellions of 1549. Although a few students wrote about other rebellions, such as the Pilgrimage of Grace and the Rising of the Northern Earls, the vast majority of answers focused precisely on the 'Commotion year'. By far the best known rebellions were the Western (Prayer Book) Rebellion and Kett's Rebellion. This is understandable: they were the largest uprisings and the most threatening to the Edwardian government. Nevertheless, it is a shame that so many students claimed confidently (and inaccurately) that 1549 saw only two rebellions. In fact, 'the year of the many-headed monster' saw rebellions spring up throughout the South and Midlands of England, as well as in East Yorkshire.

The question required students to evaluate the rebellions' causes. Somewhat surprisingly, better knowledge of socio-economic grievances was shown than of the rebels' religious motivations. Many students were able to support their analysis with specific and precise information about enclosure, rack-renting, taxation and inflation, linking the latter to the ongoing war with Scotland and the debasement of the coinage. Evidence of the significance of these issues to the rebels can be seen in their manifestos, most prominently in the twenty-nine demands drawn up by Robert Kett on Mousehold Heath.

As regards the part played by religion in the rebellions, the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer featured in most answers, as did the dissolution of the chantries. These examples were used to explain the Western Rebellion as a conservative reaction to the government's movement towards Protestantism. However, some answers were limited in the range of evidence they provided. Those who scored highly showed their understanding of the cumulative effect of religious change, including the Injunctions, the Sacrament Act 1547, the repeal of the Six Articles and the heresy laws, and Somerset's proclamation banning traditional celebrations of holy days.

Particular emphasis was placed on the iconoclasm that the regime allowed (even if it did not yet openly encourage it); this was the most visible, and provocative, sign of the introduction of Reformed Protestantism. Breadth and depth of knowledge helps answers to achieve marks in Levels 4 and 5. The mark scheme's description of these levels also refers to conceptual understanding. Such understanding was lacking in the many answers that focused their analysis of religious causes of the rebellions of 1549 solely on the Western Rebellion. While it is true that the

majority of rebels in East Anglia supported the Edwardian Reformation, the interpretation of Kett's Rebellion as entirely secular in its origins is unconvincing.

Pleasingly, some answers also included analysis of opposition to the Duke of Somerset and the effect of the suppression of people's cultural lives. An example of the latter was William Body's closure of Glasney College in Cornwall in 1548, which heightened fears that the unique identity of the Cornish, on the periphery of the kingdom, was under threat from the centre.

However, while it is true that opposition to the use of English in the Church of England manifested itself in one of the Demands of the Western Rebels, it is incorrect – as claimed by more than a few students – that the Western rebels were not English-speakers. Even among the Cornish rebels, it was only a minority who could be described as 'Cornyshe men [who] understande no Englysh'.

As is true for all three essay questions, the best responses were those which put forward a coherent and convincing argument. Having weighed up the evidence, these answers reached a clear judgement on the relative significance of religious beliefs, economic problems, political and cultural factors in provoking the rebellions of 1549.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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