



History

Paper 2D (AS) Specimen Question Paper

Question 02 Student 1

Specimen Answer and Commentary

V1.1 10/09/15

Specimen Answer plus commentary

The following student response is intended to illustrate approaches to assessment. This response has not been completed under timed examination conditions. It is not intended to be viewed as a 'model' answer and the marking has not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

Paper 2D (AS): Specimen question paper

02 'The most important cause of the Pilgrimage of Grace was the dissolution of the monasteries.'

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

(25 marks)

Student Response

The Pilgrimage of Grace was the biggest popular rebellion during the reign of Henry VIII and was triggered by the dissolution of the smaller monasteries; however support for the rebellion was caused by the build-up of a number of different short term and long term factors. These factors can be categorised into religious, economic and political reasons.

The biggest religious factor was indeed the dissolution, as not only were the monasteries a holy place; they also contributed to society, culture and identity. Monastic hospitals were lost, which had a devastating impact on local communities. Monasteries also used to distribute free food to the poor. Another issue was the sale of monastic lands; the previous landowners had a good relationship with the tenant farmers and allowed many of their families to live on monastic land. A lot of the land was sold to members of established families and thus led to a breakdown in working structure in some places. Another religious factor was the break with Rome, most of England was Catholic and believed in the power of papal authority as they had lived under it for many generations, one of the demands in the Pontefract Articles is, "to have the Pope as the Supreme Head of the Church of England", this shows the protestors clear discontent with England's shift away from Catholicism and the Pope. Another issue was that of heretics, such as William Tyndale who challenged the teaching of transubstantiation which was a firm Catholic belief. This is shown in the demands in the Pontefract Articles, "to end the heresies within this realm...to have the heretics punished by fire". Another religious reason was the role of the Church within communities. Numerous events within the liturgical year brought a source of celebration and joy among the laity, with the traditional elements of Catholicism being slowly removed; the people may have feared that more radical changes were to follow.

An economic factor was the poor harvests during 1535 and 1536, on a basic level people protest against the government when there is a shortage of food and when they struggle to provide for their families and this may have been the reason to support the rebellion for some of the commons. A more likely factor was the issue of enclosure; this is likely to be a factor as it affected many of the poor. Their access to the benefits of the common land was denied which made it more difficult for them to find land on which to grow crops and therefore most probably reduced their income. The fact that enclosure is mentioned in the Pontefract Articles shows that it was a reason for many of the commons to rebel. Increases in rent and entry fines, also affected the majority of the population, and both of these issues are also mentioned in the Pontefract articles. There was also opposition from landowners against the Statute of Uses, which Henry VIII used to try and introduce taxation for when land changed hand through wills.

A political factor was that of Cromwell. This was made clear by the fact that the fact that the pilgrims stated that they had no opposition to the King, but believed that he was being badly advised by Cromwell on a number of different issues such as the break with Rome and the dissolution of the monasteries. Cromwell was also low-born which made him unpopular among certain members of the nobility, and could also have led you the commons to dispute that he had any power over them.

Overall, it is a very convincing theory that the rebellion was engineered by the Aragonese faction as the majority of the points in the Pontefract articles are concerning religion and displaying opposition to the changes during the reformation, the key demand being that "Lady Mary be made legitimate". The Aragonese faction would have supported these ideas as they wanted a return to papal authority and Catholicism, also the fact that in the demands it lists that "Lord Cromwell receive punishment" which shows that this could have been a demand from the Aragonese faction as Cromwell was a leading member of the rival reformist faction. Most likely, the Aragonese faction engineered the rebellion with their motive being religion, but the social and economic problems amongst the commons added an extra motive for more people to join the rebellion.

Commentary – Level 5

Clearly sets out the range of issues which produced the Pilgrimage and then examines each one in turn with good supporting detail which is generally accurate. The answer is consistently relevant, analytical and offers judgements. The one weakness is the lack of an overall conclusion providing a judgement as to which of the causes examined was the most significant and the absence limits the overall effectiveness of the response. Nevertheless, the answer has the clear qualities of a Level 5 response at AS.