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History

Paper 2D (A-level) Specimen Question Paper

Question 04 Student 1

Specimen Answer and Commentary

V1.1 10/09/15

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## 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 (A-level): Specimen question paper

#### 04 'A compromise which suited neither the clergy nor the laity.'

**Assess the validity of this view of the Elizabethan Church Settlement in the years 1559 to 1570.**

(25 marks)

#### Student Response

This question should be addressed in two parts. Firstly whether the Elizabethan religious settlement was actually a compromise between Protestantism and Catholicism and secondly the extent to which there was opposition to the settlement, in order to judge whether it suited the laity and clergy.

The fact that the religious policy contains elements of both Catholicism and Protestantism, suggests that it was a compromise to please both groups. For example statements about the communion in the 1559 Prayer Book appeal to the ritual of Catholicism and belief in transubstantiation, and also the focus on faith of Protestantism: '...eat this in remembrance...and feed on him...'. The Advertisements is another example when the religious settlement can be seen as compromising, because it was not originally what the Queen had intended, but was modified as it was suggested that this was all the extreme Protestant clergy would tolerate.

The concessions made on the application of the religious laws passed suggested a compromise on Elizabeth's part. Application of the law was lenient and compliance depended on the willingness of the local authorities to carry out the religious policy. Catholicism survived in areas of the North such as in the diocese of Hereford, where Justices of the Peace were sympathetic to the old religion. Although refusal to swear the Oath of Supremacy for a second time was punishable by death, no one suffered this fate because Archbishop Parker was ordered by the Queen not to offer a second opportunity to swear the oath.

However, the fact that the religious settlement remained in operation for the entirety of Elizabeth's reign suggests it was not a short term compromise to ensure religious stability, but that the policy was instead Elizabeth's own set of coherent views. She issued proclamations in 1559 that stated all religious books should be in English not Latin, and she called herself the 'Supreme Governor' instead of 'Supreme Head' of the Church; consciously changing her title shows that she was asserting her own authority and following the policy she wanted to follow. She was unprepared to compromise when Marian Bishops would not agree to the Act of Uniformity, and the Act was successfully passed after some Marian Bishops had been arrested on a charge of disobedience, and two had inexplicably not shown up to the House of Lords.

It can be argued that Elizabeth intended her policy to be one of moderation, inclusion and also conformity; it was exactly what she wanted, not a compromise. The reason the policy was sometimes lenient was because Elizabeth wanted a broader Church, and although there was a fine for non-attendance of Church of England services, in some areas you could practice Mass in addition normal services. Another reason for the leniency was because Elizabeth did not have the resources to deal with non-compliance in the far North and was reluctant to carry out brutal executions which could lead to

political instability and challenges from key conservative members of the aristocracy. There was a shift in the toleration of Catholics after visitations had been carried out during the 1560s, and priests who were unwilling to accept the settlement resigned or were deprived of their position. Becoming increasingly aware of the non-compliance, in 1565 the Queen wrote to the Archbishop demanding that clergy do not deviate from her religious settlement, which seems an obvious statement of her intention to follow a religious policy that Elizabeth herself wanted.

It can be said that the settlement suited the laity on the whole, because of the 'inclination of the bulk' to conform to the religion as stated by the legitimate reigning monarch. The traditions of Catholicism were still engrained and comforting to the laity, and some such as singing in Church services, were allowed to survive. For example, the participation of laymen in the 1569 Northern Rebellion, and in particular in attending Mass in places such as Durham, can be seen as people taking the opportunity to experience the familiarity of the old religion, and had they not been given the opportunity, would continue to conform to the Elizabethan settlement.

However both Catholic and Protestant clergy believed the settlement to be temporary, and was therefore ideal for neither group. There was opposition from Marian Bishops in Parliament to the Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy, and protest from extreme Protestant clergy over the issue of wearing the biretta, but this opposition was suppressed successfully. In the 1560s, local authorities could interpret the settlement differently where it didn't suit them to an extent. But this began to change as Catholic Bishops were gradually replaced by moderate Protestants, and Elizabeth took a stronger stance for compliance and against Catholicism, when she refused to name Mary Queen of Scots as her successor, for example.

Elizabeth's religious settlement was not a compromise because it was enforced for her entire reign, and was created under her authority as she desired. There was opposition to it, and it didn't suit everyone, and though it was a policy of moderation with motivation to solve religious instability and follow Elizabeth's own views, it increasingly became a policy focused on compliance.

#### **Commentary – Level 4**

The answer is consistently relevant, seeks to respond directly to the question and has sufficient supporting information to substantiate the judgements made, although the information is not always developed and is not always accurate. It is particularly effective in assessing the extent to which the settlement was a compromise and offers an argument as to whether it met the needs of the laity and clergy. It lacks some appreciation of changes and challenges in the 1560s and some specific detail would have strengthened the response (such as the Vestarian Controversy). Nevertheless, the consistent, balanced and analytical response places the answer well within Level 4.