

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y312/01 Summer 2023 series

Contents

Introduction	3
Paper Y312/01 series overview	4
Section A overview	5
Question 1	5
Section B overview	11
Question 2*	11
Question 3*	18
Question 4*	19

Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

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Paper Y312/01 series overview

Y312/01 is one of twenty-one units for Paper 3 of the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of at least one hundred years through an interpretation option on a named in-depth topic and two essays.

The paper is divided into two sections. In Section A candidates are required to use contextual knowledge to test the views of two historians about one of the three named in-depth topics or an aspect of one. The question does not require them to comment on the style of writing or the provenance of the interpretation.

In Section B candidates are required to answer two essay questions from a choice of three.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed a clear understanding of the views of the two interpretations in relation to the question • were able to use contextual knowledge to test the interpretations, linking that knowledge directly to the interpretation through evaluative words • were able to consider both the strengths and limitations of both Interpretations using contextual knowledge • covered the whole period in a balanced way • adopted a thematic approach • made links and comparisons between aspects of the topic • explained the links and comparisons • supported their arguments with precise and relevant examples • reach a supported judgement about the issue in the question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed a limited understanding of one or both of the interpretations • did not go beyond a basic explanation of part of the interpretation • did not link any contextual knowledge directly to the interpretation and therefore did not evaluate the interpretation • in answering the essay, adopted a chronological rather than thematic approach • did not make links or comparisons even if events from different parts of the period were discussed in the same paragraph • did not cover the whole period • did not focus on the precise wording of the question • made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.

Section A overview

To do well on Section A, candidates need to explain the view of each interpretation in relation to the question and then evaluate the interpretation by the application of contextual knowledge. Responses should show an understanding of the wider debate connected to the issue.

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 witchcraft prosecutions in East Anglia in the period from 1645 to 1647. [30]

The two interpretations offered contrasting views as an explanation of the witchcraft prosecutions in East Anglia in the period from 1645 to 1647. Interpretation A focused on the personal roles of Hopkins and Stearne, while Interpretation B considered the impact of the civil war. Candidates were able to explain the views of the two interpretations and most were able to support their explanations with some contextual knowledge. However, in order to access the higher levels in the mark scheme, responses must evaluate the interpretations. Candidates needed to consider whether the interpretations offer valid views and support that with contextual knowledge which is clearly linked to the interpretations to show whether the view is valid or not.

In discussing Interpretation A, the majority of candidates did not read the passage carefully and, using the second sentence, suggested that it put forward the view that greed motivated Hopkins and Stearne. Candidates then went on to argue this was valid because of how much they were paid, often providing examples of taxes or the amount towns spent on hiring them. These candidates did not read the last sentence of the argument which argued this view has no factual basis. Their responses could then have used the aforementioned knowledge to challenge this view, a clear reminder for candidates of the need to read the passages carefully. The majority of candidates were able to comment on the various issues raised in the interpretation, such as a public duty, surprise and horror, linking this to events in Manningtree. Many candidates also commented on them going only to places to which they were invited, with some arguing that they followed the route of Dowsing which meant they went to areas of strong Puritan belief, which could then be linked to the idea of public duty and the need to cleanse the area of the devil.

In evaluating Interpretation B, knowledge was not always as detailed, although most were able to make some valid points about East Anglia being a parliamentary stronghold. Where responses were strong was in discussing the breakdown in normal authority, with comments about the local assizes and the role of Warwick in a number of trials. Responses also made reference to the godly nature of East Anglia and the impact of the Civil War on the region, with some candidates showing detailed knowledge of tax rates and the numbers recruited. In discussing the regions puritanism reference was often made to the struggle between good and evil and the removal of clergymen who were not ideologically suited to the demands of some.

Assessment for learning



Develop a working vocabulary of evaluative words and phrases that candidates can use.

Misconception



Passage A did not argue that greed was a motive of Hopkins and Stearne.

Exemplar 1

1	<p>Source A argues that the East Anglian witch hunts were largely the result of Stearne and Hopkins' activities, though they acted out of genuine concern for the community and a desire to restore order. Source A also acknowledges that the populace was not entirely 'innocent'. Source B, however, argues that the hunts resulted from the breakdown of traditional structures of authority, popular Puritanism and the strains of the civil war. Source B is <u>more convincing</u> in its argument as it explains why there was popular demand for hunts to occur within the accusatorial structure of East Anglia's legal system.</p> <p>Source B, ^{more convincingly} argues that the 'strains of warfare', both 'material' and 'ideological', precipitated a climate of general paranoia. That there was a substantial economic crisis in East Anglia is evidenced by the fact that 20% of military men had left to join the fighting while inflation meant that livestock prices rose 15% and grain prices rose to 12%. This undoubtedly created a climate prone to scapegoating with women, such as Margaret Moore, accused of causing the death of cattle and livestock by maleficia, blaming that the economic turmoil faced as a result of the war was indeed a powerful</p>
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catalyst'. The moral 'struggle between good and evil' that emerged from the war is also demonstrated by the way in which witchcraft was weaponised as an accusation against the enemy. Charles' own nephew was accused by the Parliamentarians of

being a witch and nearly 30 pamphlets made ~~reference~~ mention of witchcraft as allied to the war. Not only though were Parliament's royalist opponents' demonised but the proximity of the fighting to the East Anglian hunts explains why the 'struggle' was felt to be particularly pressing. With a victory at Naseby in 1646, the strength of the New Model Army had been established and thus the war between 'godliness' and 'iniquity' was indeed at the forefront of people's minds. Source B also goes on to argue that East Anglia was distinct in its 'radical' and 'militant' Puritanism. That Puritanism was indeed important to the hunts is convincingly demonstrated by the accusations of deveson, an unpopular Anglian preacher, and Elizabeth Clarke (who rarely attended church). Both these cases speak to a community attempting to purge itself of wickedness. Equally, the argument that the war led to the dilution of normal authority helps to explain why the number of executions in East Anglia specifically was so high. With a conviction rate of 42% and 108 executed cases (1/5 of all those executed in England generally) ~~these~~ the East Anglian hunts claimed a significantly large number of lives. It is the preoccupation of 'moral justices of the peace' and the disruption of the assize courts that thus led to the trials being delegated to less qualified individuals. For instance, the Earl of Warwick presided over the Chelmsford trials and was

		<p>quick to buy into the popular hysteria and the charges spun by Hopkins and Stearne, sentencing 8 individuals to death. Source B thus convincingly explains why popular accusations and scapegoating flourished within the 'distinctive context' of East Anglia. Secondly source B also uniquely explains why numerous and accusations were given such credibility by the authorities, due to the disruption of normal authority', thus accounting for the high execution rate.</p> <p>Source A less convincingly argues that the hunts were instigated by Hopkins and Stearne, acting out of genuine 'anxiety' and 'concern', although the community itself was somewhat complicit. That the hunts were claimed to be 'a useful public duty' is indeed corroborated by Hopkins' defence of witch hunting published in 1643 1643 and Stearne's 'pamphlet' in which he claimed to be motivated by his devout Puritanism. There is also evidence that Hopkins and Stearne generally visited communities where there was already 'demand' and merely helped to initiate the legal process of accusation. In Ipswich in 1645 1645 and in Aldborough in 1646 the witch finders received ^{requests} from the community to investigate witchcraft. However, it is impossible to explain the hunts by 'surprise' or 'concern' alone. For one, to carry out activities Hopkins and Stearne required permits and the approval of the local authorities. For instance, in Manningtree, Stearne was</p>
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		<p> ^{case of Elizabeth Clarke} gave a power ^{power} to concentrate ^{concentrate} the hunts ^{hunts} by Harbottle Grimstone. Such delegation of authority occurred not because of the 'spurs' of Hopkins and Stearne, as source A suggests, but rather because normal legal structures had been bypassed leading to more inexperienced JPs facilitating the hunts (as is suggested by source B). Equally, it is not enough to argue that Hopkins and Stearne themselves believed they were performing a 'public duty'. The accusatorial structure of the legal system in England, in contrast to the inquisitorial structure on the continent, required accusations to be brought by victims themselves. Thus the real reason for the 'public demand' for these hunts is provided by source B in its exploration of the paranoia and preoccupation with 'godliness' experienced by the community. Moreover, although Hopkins and Stearne certainly popularised the concept they had discovered in Essex this was in fact a pre-existing phenomenon within the community. Witches in East Anglia were alleged ^{alleged} to have participated in radical sects at West Thrope ^{for several years} and many of the evidence provided by witnesses at the trials was several decades old. For instance 8 people testified against Anne West bringing up rumours and accusations that were well-established within the community. Thus although Hopkins and Stearne might have provided some impetus due to the impression of personal danger, their personal involvement in the trials does not explain why old rumours were ^{were} suddenly </p>
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		admitted as incriminating charges. Thus it is
		Source B that is more convincing in supplying the
		reasons for this hysteria and fragmentation of
		due legal process.
		Overall, with although Source A explains
		perhaps even the anxiety within communities
		by dedicated witchfinders, it is ultimately Source
		B that is <u>more convincing</u> as an explanation for the
		prosecutions. First, in analysing the breakdown in
		authority it provides an explanation for why
		innocents actually became prosecutable and convictions
		as less experienced men took over the role. Secondly,
		it explains convincingly why tensions and community
		anxiety exploded specifically during the Civil War
		period, leading to a chain-reaction hunt.

Exemplar 1 is a good example of a response that showed a high level of evaluation throughout and was well supported by detailed contextual knowledge. It was therefore placed in Level 6. Contextual knowledge was clearly linked to the interpretations and the response showed a wide range of evaluative techniques. This was given Level 6: 27 marks.

Section B overview

To do well on Section B, candidates need to make connections and links across the whole period, explaining similarities and differences between the events they are discussing in order to show an awareness of continuity and change across the whole period, unless instructed otherwise. The comparisons made may be either between periods within the topic or between regions. The strongest responses will test a hypothesis and reach a supported judgement.

Question 2*

2* 'The withdrawal of the elite posed the greatest challenge to popular culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.' How far do you agree? [25]

Candidates had a range of precise knowledge and demonstrated the ability to compare developments both across the period and between regions, allowing them to access the higher levels. The majority of candidates were able to write in some detail about the impact of the withdrawal of the elite, with some breaking the elite down into different groups, such as the nobility or clergy and explaining the different reasons for their withdrawal. There was often discussion of the changing attitudes of the elites towards some of the events, such as the Feast of Fools, and how instead of it being seen as a 'safety valve', it was now considered a threat to public order. Similarly, there was discussion of the impact of the Reformation on the role of the clergy and how it led to their withdrawal. This was often linked to the desire to create a godly society. However, some less successful responses then got drawn into discussions about magic and witchcraft which were not linked to the actual question. A good range of other issues were discussed, such as growing urbanisation and its impact, the importance of printing and the spread of literature, growing leisure facilities and the impact of the Enlightenment.

The depth of knowledge and range of precise examples used by some candidates allowed comparisons to be made between different regions and across the period. This is illustrated in the exemplar response below, which was given full marks.

Assessment for learning



Synthesis is crucial for reaching Levels 5 and 6. This does not simply involve a thematic approach, nor stating that issues are similar/different. Candidates need to explain how the issues being discussed are either similar or different. Perhaps thinking in terms of comparing point by point might help.

Exemplar 2

2.	Plan
	Withdrawal
	↳ Modifications - songs, poems, dances
	↳ Royals still participated
	All changes - not
	↳ Duke of Bavaria, Koenigsberg, Puritan songs
	↳ Places where - eg. Spain, Italy etc - for no suppression. Elite still participated. Habs
	Wesp Barcelona, Feast our Lady in Toledo.

	Social
	↳ Urbanisation - reading groups by 1741, by 1/3 by 1700, Wurttemberg 1709 by 1887 but so at start.
	↳ BUT some continuation eg. shepherds + feet instr combined.

The withdrawal of the elite took place broadly from 1500 - 1800, (although it occurred at different rates in different places), and can be defined as the stratification of popular culture to make it more dignified for noble courts. Popular culture Challenges to popular culture - defined here as the suppression or abolition of raucous events such as festivals and pageants - were not mostly intense caused by the withdrawal of the elite, who modified rather than suppressed culture, but by religious authorities.

who remained the raucous elements of festivals. Religious changes therefore posed the greatest threat to popular culture. While some changes were seen as a result of the social changes eg. urbanisation seen throughout the 16th and 17th C, the learned middle class most to modified rather than suppressed pop culture, meaning social change was less of a challenge to pop culture than the withdrawal of the elite, but religious change posed the greatest challenge to pop culture.

2. The withdrawal of the elite did not pose a major challenge to popular culture. The elite courts mainly modified popular events rather than abolishing them, posing only a minor threat to the to popular culture. For example, folk dances were modified for court dancing, with the ~~the~~ ~~viva~~ the dances of the HRE becoming the Viennese waltz in 1607, the Moorish Zambra becoming the Spanish fandango danced at Queen Isabella's court in 1498 and the Provençal nobility dancing the volte instead of more traditional folk dances. Similarly, folk music and poetry was adapted rather than abolished - the Strambotti of the Lombardy region and the Stornelli of the Tuscan region were adapted

for the harpsichord by Costiglione in 1504, while traditional ballads were still sung in Russia and Poland as late as 1803. This suggests that the withdrawal of the elite modified rather than suppressed popular culture, posing only a minor threat by removing raucous elements. Similarly, the royal court continued to. Perhaps this is complicated by the fact that the Duke of Bavaria outlawed dancing at festivals and at court ~~in~~ after the German elite withdrew in the late 15th C - however, the Duke of Bavaria was closely aligned with the Catholic Church and saw himself as a defender of the Catholic faith, making him a religious authority. Religious authorities therefore posed the greatest threat to pop culture. Similarly, even after the withdrawal of the elite royal courts continued to participate in popular culture, showing the withdrawal did not majorly challenge pop culture. Eg. Henry VIII and Charles V continued to enjoy bear baiting in 1556 while Queen Sophie of Denmark compiled a book of folk ballads and Henri III was dancing in the streets in the Parisian parade. This suggests that the elite continued to enjoy pop culture even after they had withdrawn, showing

	<p>the withdrawal of the elite to pose only a minor challenge to the pop culture.</p>
	<p>Religious changes posed the greatest challenge to popular culture in the 16th and 17th C. After the Reformation, Protestant authorities suppressed various elements of pop culture in an attempt to purify their society, which Catholics posing a far greater challenge than the elite's modifications to culture. For example, the Puritans had abolished all plays in England by 1600, with Christmas and Yule processions abolished 1541; in Mecklenberg, no chapbook depicting St. George was allowed to be read, while in Scotland 1570 Calvinist authorities attacked Christmas and Easter festivals. This consistent oppression by Protestant authorities after the Reformation is far more damaging than the modifications to pop culture advanced by the withdrawal of the elite, suggesting that religious change posed the greatest threat to pop culture. This is also proved by the fact that places without religious change saw limited suppression even after the withdrawal of the elite. Eg. in Italy, where the Reformation was not carried out, the noble Lorenzo de Medici participated in the pageantry of Easter,</p>

While a horse ^{was} ~~shall~~ to be carried the Duke of Naples allowed through the streets in ~~the~~ a 1664 procession. Similarly, ~~the~~ religiously homogenous Spain saw crowds of 10,000 appear for the Feast of Our Lady in Prato 1647 and Barcelona's Holy Week 1550 where half were nobles. These are all after the nobility had withdrawn, suggesting that the withdrawal of the elite did not pose as great a threat as religious change to pop culture.

Social change did pose some threat to pop culture but was ultimately of least threat. Urbanisation created a sub culture of learned intellectuals but they still participated in pop culture; showing social change to pose limited threat. Eg. Workshops 270⁺ schools by 1580, while had in England. % of the craftsmen were literate by 1700; in Lyons, 74% of tailors were literate by 1650. How this led to the creation of a ^{artificial} middle class which enjoyed reading eg. reading groups were prevalent in London and Paris. However, ~~the~~ learned tailors still participated in the pop culture by wearing wicker in their pinholes, while half the crowd at Paris' Easter pageant in 1605 were

		learned elite middle class, suggesting social change was less of a challenge than the withdrawal of the elite.
		Overall the withdrawal of the elite did not pose the greatest challenge to pop culture; rather, religious change posed the greatest threat. Areas with religious division saw great suppression after the Reformation eg. Scotland and England while areas without religious division saw a limited suppression; by contrast, the elite only modified pop culture and in some royal courts still participated, making religious change a more serious challenge to pop culture. While social change caused was ultimately least damaging as learned middle classes still participated in pop culture, making it overall, withdrawal of the elite was a greater threat to pop culture than social change, but not as great as religious change.

In Exemplar 2 the candidate has used a very good range of examples and comparisons, for example the developments in music and dancing. There are judgements made and they have been well supported. This was given Level 6, 25 marks.

Question 3*

3* 'Changes and divisions within society were the most important reasons for the persecution of witches in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.' How far do you agree? [25]

Question 3 was the most popular question in the unit and attracted a wide range of responses. There were a number of ways in which 'changes and divisions within society' could be interpreted. Some candidates considered religious divisions, others focused on economic divisions and the growth in poverty and in some responses, this was linked to a discussion about the transition from feudalism to capitalism. There was certainly plenty for candidates to discuss. Less successful responses simply went through a range of examples as to why witches were persecuted with a paragraph on a different witch trial and then an attempt to link it back to the question. These responses did not score highly, and while examples were needed to score well, candidates should be reminded that comparisons over the period and between regions are also needed and this type of approach makes it very difficult. Discussions about issues such as growing poverty and the decline in communal solidarity did allow comparisons. Many candidates focused on religious divisions and here comparisons were much easier, with regions that had religious conformity, such as Ireland, Spain and Italy showing lower levels of persecutions. The most successful responses then noted that the Dutch republic which had religious divisions saw low levels of persecution. This then often led to an examination of the growth of the power of the state and centralisation as an explanation, again leading to contrasts between parts of the Holy Roman Empire and France. There were also discussions of both war and the mini-ice age, which again facilitated comparisons and challenges. There was much a candidate could consider and it was not expected that all issues would be discussed in order to achieve a high level.

Question 4*

4* 'Regional variations in the persecution of witches suggests that there was not a European Witchcraze in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.' How far do you agree?

[25]

Question 4 produced the greatest variety of responses. There were many candidates who did not fully understand the demands of the question and saw the question as no more than a virtual repeat of the previous question, explaining why there were hunts in various regions and not in others. The question required candidates to focus on the geographical and time differences of the hunts in order to assess whether there was a general witchcraze. The most successful responses usually began by explaining what they understood to be a witchcraze. Candidates who understood the demands of the question were often able to access the higher levels as the question made it straightforward for comparisons to be made. In agreeing with the statement many candidates noted that the vast majority of persecutions occurred within the Holy Roman Empire and then took this further to show it was within a small area of the Empire, contrasting not only other areas of Europe with the Empire, but states such as Bamberg with Bavaria. Some candidates then took this further and argued that over time the geographical focus changed from west of the Elbe to the East, so that in the earlier period it was the Empire, but later it was places such as Poland that saw the concentration of hunts. Comparisons were also made between those areas of high persecutions, such as the Empire with Spain, Italy and France and explanations were offered as to why this occurred, but the focus was on arguing that because the hunts were not across the whole of Europe and at the same time it was difficult to argue there was a craze. Some also argued that in some regions, hunts were often isolated, irregular occurrences over a short period, as in England with either Pendle or East Anglia, unlike sustained hunts in the Empire. The Empire provided a particularly useful point of comparison for responses. The clear message from this question was the need to focus on the precise demands of the question and not respond to a slightly different question on why there were hunts.

Misconception



Candidates answered a question on why there were witch hunts not whether the persecution of witches could be described as a witchcraze.

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