Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Thursday 23 May 2024 – Morning

A Level History A

Y308/01 The Catholic Reformation 1492–1610

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.

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SECTION A

Read the **two** passages and answer Question 1.

1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages.

Explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of Catherine de Medici's role in the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre. **[30]**

Passage A

Catherine grew fearful that it would soon be too late to spring her trap. Perhaps Coligny had plotted to kidnap the king and have her sent into exile. Maybe she really would end up being forced to live on her estates in the Auvergne, far from Paris, after all. It is impossible today to know exactly when and how the plan for the murder of Admiral Coligny was arranged, but as the Guise family were in Paris for the wedding they provided the accomplices Catherine needed.

Catherine's use of the Guises was calculated and brilliant. Despite the certainty that the Huguenots would clamour for vengeance after the death of the Admiral, she and the king would be above suspicion. The Protestants would blame the Guises, assuming the murder to be only a continuation of the blood feud between the Chatillons and the Lorrainers. The Guises for their part were entirely fired up by the thought of finally seeing vengeance done, and counted on Catherine's royal protection. The queen mother's aims were thus probably twofold: her first consideration was to kill Coligny, but if the Guises fell prey to the vengeance of the Protestants she might also achieve her ultimate goal, the downfall of both of the Houses that had menaced the state by their imperious attempts to control the monarchy since the death of Henry II.

Yet before Coligny's execution – for such was it seen by Catherine – the wedding arranged to symbolise religious and national harmony must take place.

Leonie Frieda, Catherine de Medici, published in 2003.

Passage B

Those observers who believed in a premeditated strike naturally believed Catherine de Medici was the only one capable of launching the attack on Coligny. However, this contradicts everything that we know about her role in the search for peace, of which the marriage of her daughter with the king of Navarre was to be the culmination. Attacking Coligny would have been a denial of the aim of reconciliation of the king's subjects pursued since the Peace of St Germain: it would have destroyed the policy pursued up to then. On the eve of the ambush Catherine de Medici was thinking only of the negotiations for the marriage of her son to the queen of England; she wrote on that day to Elizabeth to propose a rendezvous in the English Channel, half way between the two realms. The calm with which she discusses the interview reveals a peaceful intent that corresponds to her persistent wish to harmonise and pacify the opposed forces within France, rather than to thoughts of blood-letting and murder.

Another motive has often been put forward to support the theory of the queen mother's involvement in the attack on Coligny – her jealousy towards him because he seemed to dominate the king. But we should be careful not to overestimate the role of Coligny in the king' decisions. After the council meeting of 9 August, and its clear decision to reject the policy proposed by Coligny, it was plain that the king would not enter the war that his mother feared so much. There is no evidence for the theory of the queen mother's supposed guilt.

Arlette Jouanna, The St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, published in 2007.

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SECTION B

Answer any **two** questions.

2* ‘The revival of the Catholic Church in the period from 1492 to 1610, owed little to the impact of Protestantism.’

How far do you agree? **[25]**

3* ‘The key institutions of the Catholic Church were radically changed by the Catholic Reformation.’

How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1492 to 1610? **[25]**

4* ‘The contributions of reformers, such as Erasmus and Loyola, were more important in shaping the Catholic Reformation than the actions of the popes during the period from 1492 to 1610.’

How far do you agree? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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