



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

**Tuesday 21 May 2019 – Afternoon**

**A Level History A**

**Y302/01 The Viking Age c.790–1066**

**Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes**



**You must have:**

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet  
(OCR12 sent with general stationery)

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- Use black ink.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and any **two** questions in Section B.
- Write your answers in the Answer Booklet. The question number(s) must be clearly shown.

**INFORMATION**

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [ ].
- Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (\*).
- This document consists of **4** pages.

**Section A**

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is a more convincing explanation of the extent of Viking settlement in Ireland. [30]

**Passage A**

By the 830s, the Vikings were putting down Irish roots and had found a way to remain for as long as they wanted. Far from home, they had to develop ways of making themselves secure against retaliation by hostile locals. Chroniclers describe the appearance of Viking fortifications and the recently excavated Dúnrally Fort is on a breathtaking scale. Irish annals record the Vikings constructing many long ports in Ireland – at both coastal and inland locations. These have proved resistant to archaeological discovery and any traces of the Dublin long port have long since been erased, but the Viking DNA of Dublin is all around and it became the capital of a Viking sea kingdom, though the Vikings retained its Irish name rather than renaming it as was their usual practice.

Firmly rooted, the place attracted more adventurers and traders from Norway, and they gradually became part of the political scenery. Warlike Irish kings were quick to see the potential of these warriors and, even after periodic quarrels, the Vikings always returned. Viking Dublin was impressively populous and there is a huge volume of identifiably Viking burials. The apparently industrial scale of the Irish slave trade is another indication of the substantial nature of the Dublin long port. Ireland was a focus for Viking attention and provided a fertile fallback position when life was difficult in other parts of Europe. Irish wealth was ample and Vikings, though under the authority of Irish kings, ran Dublin as a hub of Viking trade. Ireland was part of a Viking sea kingdom for over two centuries, but it was only one island in a sea of opportunities.

Adapted from: N. Oliver, *Vikings*, published in 2012.

**Passage B**

The chain of Norse settlements led naturally to Ireland with its indented coastline and navigable rivers and Ireland was often attacked by Viking bands. These did not settle very extensively but were for the most part content to establish coastal bases, like Dublin, from which raids were directed against the Irish or centres across the Irish Sea. Church treasures were stolen in these raids, there was cattle rustling and plunder of gold and silver.

The Irish faced more difficult problems than their English neighbours as the many Irish kings did not always cooperate and sometimes allied with the Norsemen to further their separate interests. More importantly, the Vikings never settled widely in Ireland as farmers; they were content to establish themselves in strongholds from which they could launch plundering raids on the Irish countryside. The Norse were able to call for help from their friends across the sea, but, even with these advantages, they suffered many defeats at the hands of the Irish and, by the end of the tenth century, the Dublin Norse had been forced to submit to King Brian.

Adapted from: P. H. Sawyer, *The Age of the Vikings*, published in 1971.

**Section B**

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2\*** 'The successful defence of Wessex and Mercia by Alfred was the most important turning point in Viking raiding on England during the period c.790–1066.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3\*** 'Viking settlements in Europe had more in common with the lands in which they settled than they did with Scandinavian settlements.' How far do you agree with this view of Viking settlements in the period c.790–1066? **[25]**
- 4\*** 'The most significant turning point in Viking Christianisation c.790–1066 was the conversion of Harald Bluetooth and Denmark in c.965.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

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