

General Certificate of Education
June 2006
Advanced Level Examination



HISTORY
Unit 6W

HS6N

**Alternative N: The Problem of Poverty in Tudor England,
1525–1603**

Friday 23 June 2006 9.00 am to 10.30 am

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is HS6N.
- In answering the questions you must use your own knowledge and understanding of the period.
- Answer **all** questions.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 40.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in all answers.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on part (c).

Answer **all** questions.

1 Study the following source material and then answer the questions which follow.

Source A Tudor England faced a massive poverty problem which posed a real threat to public order. Although the poor appear largely to have lacked class consciousness, governments faced a number of popular rebellions in which the poor participated. Official opinion was under no illusion that poverty and vagrancy were real menaces. Possibly a good half of the population were unable to support themselves at the beginning of the period, and matters worsened until at least the end of the century. In reality, there was no solution to the Tudor poverty problem, short of a social revolution. Just the same, officials intervened precisely to ensure that this revolution did not happen.

Adapted from AL BEIER, *The Problem of the Poor in Tudor and Early Stuart England*, 1983

Source B The larger towns, particularly London and Norwich, were ahead of government legislation in almost every respect and provided visible evidence of the success of more humane methods of poor relief. Successive Tudor governments were almost entirely concerned with the suppression of sturdy beggars. Local legislation went far ahead of this and, while equally concerned that vagabonds should be under control, made far greater provision for the deserving poor and the unemployed. Almost without exception, the laws passed by the central government in the second half of the century were based on experiments carried out in London and the larger provincial towns, especially those in the eastern half of the country.

Adapted from J POUND, *Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England*, 1971

Source C The importance of the 1572 Act is partly reflected in the parliamentary opposition it aroused. The clauses concerning vagabonds proved controversial. According to the Act, they were to be whipped and bored through the ear for a first offence; for a second offence they should be hanged as felons unless a master could be found to take them into service for two years. These punishments seemed to one MP, Miles Sandys, to be 'oversharp and bloody'. His experience of the situation in Worcestershire showed that local action by justices of the peace could indeed 'relieve the poor in their own houses and save them from wandering', if the justices made the effort.

Adapted from P SLACK, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*, 1999

- (a) Use **Source A** and your own knowledge.

Assess the validity of the view in **Source A** about the problems of poverty and vagrancy in the later sixteenth century. *(10 marks)*

- (b) Use **Source C** and your own knowledge.

How useful is **Source C** as evidence about local initiatives to deal with the problems of poverty in the later sixteenth century? *(10 marks)*

- (c) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

‘The actions of local government were invariably more generous and more effective than any interventions by the state.’
How convincing is this view of actions taken to deal with the problems of poverty during the reign of Elizabeth I? *(20 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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