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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY **9489/32**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question **February/March 2023**

1 hour 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question from **one** section only.
  - Section A: The origins of the First World War
  - Section B: The Holocaust
  - Section C: The origins and development of the Cold War
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 40.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **4** pages.

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Answer **one** question from **one** section only.

Section A: The origins of the First World War

1 Read the extract and then answer the question.

When we examine the key moral question of 1914, blame for the outbreak of the war, it is important to keep degrees of responsibility in mind. Evil acts are greater sins than failures to act; likewise, actions are more telling than the reactions they cause. Princip and his fellow assassination plotters bear ultimate responsibility for provoking the July Crisis. True, there was no intention on Princip's part, or that of the Black Hand organisers in Belgrade, to cause a world war. Nevertheless, some of them clearly sought to cause a confrontation with Austria. Historians continue to argue about the different motivations of the Serbian leaders. Pašić, the Prime Minister, almost certainly did not approve of the plot when he learned of it, but he made only a half-hearted, ineffectual attempt to stop it. The only things we know for certain are that high-ranking Serbian officials were complicit in the crime and that Pašić neither prevented it nor gave the Austrians any genuine help in investigating it.

The Austrians bear their share of blame. It was clearly the intention of every imperial minister except Tisza to use the Sarajevo outrage as a pretext for war against Serbia. Berchtold and Conrad did not know, at the beginning of July, what Russia's reaction would be, but by the end of the month they did, and they proceeded against Serbia anyway. The Austrian sin was therefore in taking action, although the goal in Vienna was a local war with Serbia, not a European war involving Russia, much less France, Britain and all the other eventual participants. This was made dramatically clear when, having caused the July Crisis in the first place, Austria refused to declare war on Russia till 6 August – two days after even Britain had joined in.

The German sin was more serious. By giving Austria-Hungary a blank cheque against Serbia, Wilhelm II and Bethmann Hollweg made a broader escalation of the Balkan Crisis possible. Given Tisza's opposition, Conrad probably would not have got his Serbian war at all without German intervention. Austria's diplomatic isolation and military weakness meant that German backing was indispensable. Still, although it is undoubtedly true that many military chiefs in Berlin were keen on the idea of a 'preventive war', it is equally clear that Wilhelm and Bethmann Hollweg did not expect Russia to fight. While they recognised the risks and were willing to take them, they did not intend to provoke a European war. Yet the blank cheque was foolish and self-defeating. It encouraged Berchtold to behave as recklessly as possible, under the mistaken impression that this was what the Germans wanted him to do.

Berchtold himself must shoulder the greatest blame for bringing the crisis to the danger point on 23 July, detonating his ultimatum bombshell without even clearing the wording first with his German ally. Jagow, the German Foreign Minister, did request to see it. He also asked that Berchtold do his 'homework' and finalise a dossier on Serbia's guilt before dispatching the ultimatum, and make sure of Italy's support. Berchtold did nothing of the kind. After sending the ultimatum to Belgrade, he even lied to Germany's ambassador that it was not yet finished. Here was conscious intention to deceive not only a hostile power such as Russia, but even Austria's closest ally. If Berchtold had done as the Germans asked and convinced Europe of Serbia's guilt, the diplomatic burden would have been placed on Russia to defend its guilty client. It seems astonishing that Austrian officials were unable to marshal a convincing case against Serbia even a month after the crime in Sarajevo.

What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation and approach of the historian who wrote it? Use the extract and your knowledge of the origins of the First World War to explain your answer. [40]

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Section B: The Holocaust

2 Read the extract and then answer the question.

Once war began in September 1939, genocide soon made its way from theory to practice. First and foremost, Hitler saw far more possibilities for radical solutions to all kinds of problems, chief amongst them from his point of view being the 'Jewish question'. He had repeatedly uttered threats about what would happen to the Jews should 'they' cause another world war. These threats were first made in the days following 'Kristallnacht' and were repeated in public in his 'prophecy' of 30 January 1939. Over the next several years he and other Nazi leaders repeated the threat on more than a dozen occasions, so much so that any thinking person would have had to conclude that the Jews were being done away with. German authorities in Poland reported as early as September 1939 the murder of 'tens of thousands' of civilians (Jews and non-Jews). By early 1940 in one area after another in Poland, there were mass shootings of Jews.

However, a decision for the total elimination of the Jews was taken (if at all) only in the autumn of 1941. In the period from autumn 1939 into the first months of 1941, the Nazis considered a territorial solution to the 'Jewish question', by which they meant finding a place to which the Jews could be deported. Hitler and other Nazi leaders evidently continued to think in terms of some kind of reservation in the newly conquered east. Heydrich was one of the first to use the ominous phrase 'the final solution to the Jewish question' in December 1939, but it still meant finding a reservation in Eastern Europe. It still seems unlikely that Hitler had decided in his own mind to murder all the European Jews, not least because of the absence of the most important single precondition for the annihilation to begin, as given in his own 'prophecy' – namely world war, which was still months away.

The scope of the 'Jewish question', from the Nazi point of view, grew in difficulty as, beginning with the attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941, the German armies captured enormous areas of land with Jewish populations. Murder of Jews soon reached monumental proportions during the first successes of the attack on the Soviet Union. Disruption of food supplies and shortages that came with the war soon provided an additional justification for the murder both of Soviet prisoners and of the Jews. However, we have neither a direct Hitler order for the systematic annihilation of all European Jews, nor anything but circumstantial evidence that he ever issued one. As best we can reconstruct, it would seem likely that he stated some kind of verbal wish or merely agreed to proposals put to him some time in the autumn of 1941. Hitler took the fateful step of declaring war on the United States on 11 December, and for the first time since 1918, the world was at war. Any thoughts Hitler had about holding the Jews as hostages to keep the United States in line now vanished. In meetings Hitler held with top officials on 12 December, he repeated his prophecy that the Jews would pay for causing world war. Merely repeating this just hours after world war had finally come about may have been all that was needed to accelerate the process into a determination to kill all the European Jews.

What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation and approach of the historian who wrote it? Use the extract and your knowledge of the Holocaust to explain your answer. [40]

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Section C: The origins and development of the Cold War

3 Read the extract and then answer the question.

A close-up view of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin is critical to understanding how they interacted to create and sustain Allied unity. Similarly, investigating the inner qualities of Truman, Kennan and Harriman (the US Ambassador in Moscow) helps in realising why they opposed the compromises and ambiguity that were essential in sustaining the Grand Alliance. The concept of 'emotional belief' is useful in explaining how each of these six figures made the leap away from logic – from what they knew to what they wanted to believe. Emotional beliefs entail arranging the evidence to support a conclusion that goes beyond the evidence. Roosevelt's personal background predisposed him to an emotional belief that post-war cooperation was necessary and worth the risk. He held enormous belief in America's power and future, and in himself as a man of destiny. But he would die before he could make use of his two greatest advantages: control over the atom bomb and post-war economic aid. Churchill's background, very different from Roosevelt's, gave the British leader an emotional belief that the interests he cared about would be better served by an alliance with Washington against Moscow.

The most significant emotional belief of Truman's first year as president developed out of his unquestioning faith in American exceptionalism. He believed the atomic bomb was born out of the country's unique engineering and scientific talent, industrial workmanship and American 'know-how'. This was a combination the Russians could not match, concluded the president. His thinking ignored the explicit advice of atomic scientists and a majority of his own Cabinet. He also ignored those voices in deciding that the safest bet was not in a possible Big Three deal with the Kremlin, but rather in staying ahead in an atomic arms race. Not knowing much about foreign affairs and prone to hasty, emotional judgements, Truman as president proved susceptible to manipulation. Harriman and others exploited his insecurities and his impulse to play the tough guy with Stalin and other rivals. Harriman's emotional belief, which he pressed on Truman with success and ultimately dire consequences, was that Stalin would back down if pressed hard. Though the dictator gave in on some matters, on most he pushed back even harder. The shoving match would develop into the Cold War.

In 1946–47 Kennan was determined to shake the United States out of what he saw as dangerous complacency, and struggled hard to create an emotional belief about the Soviet challenge. He went beyond the evidence of Moscow's behaviour and ambition, and indeed distorted the picture, so as to depict the Kremlin as a monstrous threat to the United States and to democracy itself. He warned that the Soviets, while not planning war, aimed in every other way to penetrate and disrupt a US-led international order. When based in Moscow, nothing about the Kremlin's repression had frustrated Kennan more than the isolation of foreigners from Soviet citizens. Being deprived of contact with Russians led him to conclude that the Soviet government should likewise be contained and isolated. In 1946–47 Kennan helped reframe the issue from whether the United States and the Soviet Union could reach a practical compromise to whether it was realistic and justifiable to negotiate with a regime driven by what he saw as an abhorrent ideology. Ideology reduced the complex global crisis to easily understandable slogans and images, to a contest of good versus evil. Roosevelt had nearly always downplayed ideology, yet Kennan now found in Truman a more receptive audience.

What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation and approach of the historian who wrote it? Use the extract and your knowledge of the Cold War to explain your answer. [40]

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