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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY **9489/32**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question **May/June 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 [ ].

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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.

Amongst people in Britain who thought about the implications of a possible Austrian response to the murder of Franz Ferdinand, the general view was that the Serbs were a bloodthirsty and dangerous bunch. Even on 31 July, the British Prime Minister, Asquith, gave his opinion that the Serbs 'deserved a thorough thrashing'. By then, Austria-Hungary and Serbia were at war. On 23 July, the Austrian ambassador to Serbia delivered an ultimatum, demanding that the Serb government take steps to crush terrorist organisations operating within its frontiers, that it suppress anti-Austrian propaganda, and that it accept Austrian representation on its internal enquiry into the assassination. A deadline of 48 hours was set for Serbia's reply, but the ambassador had packed his bags before this expired.

Germany's role on 24 July was to work to contain the effects of the ultimatum. Given the widespread perception that Serbia was in the wrong and Austria in the right, that should not have been too difficult. But it rested on a fundamental miscalculation. Nobody in the Triple Entente was inclined to see Austria-Hungary as an independent actor. Vienna had taken a firm line because it was anxious to capitalise on Germany's backing while it had it. Those on the other side took account of the weakness of Austria and assumed Austro-German solidarity was stronger than Vienna itself believed. But if Austria wanted Germany to cover its back, it could not easily escape the suspicion that it was acting as Germany's agent. The conflict with Serbia would not be localised because by July 1914 the experience of earlier crises had conditioned statesmen to put events in the broader context of European international relations.

Serbia, moreover, acted with considerable skill. It disarmed criticism by proclaiming its readiness to go as far in its compliance with Austria's demands as was compatible with its status as an independent country. By accepting all Austria's terms but one, Pašić, Serbia's Prime Minister, swung international opinion his way. He needed all the help he could get. Militarily Serbia had been weakened by two Balkan Wars, which had depleted the army's munitions stocks and inflicted 91000 casualties. But Pašić had to act. He was clear in his own mind that Austria was squaring up for a fight. On the afternoon of 25 July, he ordered the army to mobilise. Serbia had therefore moved to a military response before the diplomatic tools had been exhausted. But it was not the first power in the July crisis to do so. On receipt of the ultimatum, Prince Alexander of Serbia had immediately appealed to the Tsar of Russia. The Russian council of ministers met the next day, 24 July. Sazonov, Russia's Foreign Minister, said that Germany was using the crisis as an excuse for a preventive war. The Minister of the Interior proved wrong those in Berlin and Vienna who believed Russia would be deterred from responding by the fear of revolution: he said he believed war would rally the nation. And the ministers for the army and navy, who had received so much funding over the five previous years, could hardly confess the truth – that their forces were not yet ready. The council approved orders for four military districts to prepare for mobilisation. Mobilisation was not the same as war. It had been used in previous crises to back up diplomacy, rather than as a step in an inevitable escalation. But in those earlier confrontations, developments had been spread over months. In 1914 the pace of events was such that there was no time to clarify the difference between a warning and intent.

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.

There is an increasing readiness amongst scholars to accept that no single decision brought about the 'Final Solution'.

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However falteringly at first, decisive steps were taken at the centre to coordinate measures for total extermination.

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.

An imaginative observer could reasonably have predicted the Second World War, its outcome and a Soviet-American rivalry, but it would have taken a very fertile imagination to have foreseen the extent to which post-war America broadened its security interests and demonstrated a willingness actively to pursue those interests. Until 1945 US governments prided themselves on avoiding European political affairs. The change was as surprising to many Americans as to the rest of the world. Part of the Cold War tension came from the US government's novel willingness to involve itself. Additional sources of tension can be traced to the difficulties other nations had in learning to recognise and adapt to America's changed character. The transformation was not total. The United States did not intervene everywhere, and other governments found it unsettling that they could never predict how it would respond in any given situation. It did little to stop what it saw as the imposition of a communist government on Czechoslovakia, even though it had already agreed to immerse itself in the task of preserving a conservative regime in Greece during what was clearly a civil war. Then, having advocated capitalistic free enterprise, it financed with billions of dollars a planned, collective recovery programme for Europe.

The United States itself had difficulty in adjusting to this new role. Limited by the pressures of frequent elections, budget debates, scepticism about foreign involvements, and their own lack of information, US policymakers, much less the general public, could not possibly master all the information demanded by a sophisticated global role. Their response was to oversimplify, to define each new issue as a crisis, and to see in that crisis the superhuman hand of an evil, paranoid, perhaps even insane Soviet dictator, wreaking havoc on the world. For an American public uncomfortable with a complex world, and unfamiliar with many of the issues it involved, aggression was an easier response than coping with the complicated reality. In its new role the United States made little distinction between its ideological and its national security interests, but gave both global dimensions, and was willing actively to pursue both.

The post-war Soviet Union did not experience so drastic a psychological change as the United States, even though it also found itself more involved internationally, and also assumed that a hostile relationship existed. The country had a tradition of acting to protect its own national security and ideology. It had, however, defined its national self-interests more narrowly. Most of the territorial early Cold War crises occurred very close to the Soviet Union. Soviet policymakers also tended to see in events the more impersonal historical forces of capitalism and communism, which meant that international disagreements were less likely to be perceived as crises. Seeing the Cold War as the continuing interplay of historical forces, the Russians spent 1945–49 in an anxious coexistence with the West. Initially they were more worried about a rearmed Germany than they were by the United States. Russians thought that capitalism was struggling to save itself and believed that the balance was shifting in socialism's favour.

Yet both sides resorted to rhetoric. The Soviet Union did not explain that it could never feel secure until it controlled Poland. Instead, it talked of liberating Poland from imperialist oppression. The United States did not say it had decided to play a much larger role in order to spread its influence. Instead, it talked about defending freedom and democracy. In both cases the statements were self-deluding, automatically hostile, and needlessly exaggerated. Many on each side even came to believe their own words.

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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