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Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY **9489/32**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question **October/November 2024**

1 hour 15 minutes

0813541834

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: Topic 1

The origins of the First World War

1 Read the extract and then answer the question.

Leaders in Berlin faced a hard choice in the summer of 1914.

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A week later, he expressed his delight to the Crown Prince that Germany could take part in the approaching crisis as Austria's supporter, rather than as the primary cause of conflict.

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: Topic 2

The Holocaust

2 Read the extract and then answer the question.

How could it have happened? The motivation was ideological. The racist anti-Semitic ideology was a variation of the Christian anti-Semitic ideology that had affected Christian–Jewish relations through their two thousand years of coexistence. Nazi anti-Semitism was pure ideology, with a minimal relation to reality: the Jews were accused of a worldwide conspiracy, an idea stemming from the Jew-hatred of the Middle Ages, whereas in reality Jews were not capable of achieving any kind of political unity, not even on a partial basis. The Jews were accused of being revolutionary agitators as well as capitalists, which means that all the different fears about them were brought into one single, racial focus. Naturally, most Jews belonged to neither of these categories but were in the lower or middle class. They did not possess territories, nor did they command military might, nor did they control any national economy. They did not exist as a single grouping, but observed their Jewish tradition within the framework of small religious–ethnic communities.

So how can the Nazi regime be explained? I think that a self-styled intellectual elite took over power in Germany, and it did so not because the masses supported their potentially genocidal ideology, but because there was a grave economic and political crisis to which a potentially genocidal group of leaders offered a way out, in the dream of a new German paradise. The determining factor was that the layer of intellectuals – the academics, the teachers, the students, the bureaucrats, the doctors, the lawyers, the churchmen, the engineers – joined the Nazi party because it promised them a future and a status. Through the fast-growing identification of these intellectuals with the regime, it became possible to have the genocide easily presented as an unavoidable step toward the achievement of the future paradise. When the doctor, the professor, the director, the priest, the engineer, became collaborators with genocide, when a consensus evolved, led by the god-like figure of the dictator, it became easy to convince the masses of the necessity of the murders and to recruit the masses to carry them out.

Something similar could have happened elsewhere, but in Germany, where at least some of the elite had absorbed a radical anti-Semitism in the course of the nineteenth century, it proved easy for the genocidal Nazi leaders to turn the majority of German citizens into accomplices. And what about the churches? The Holocaust brought to light a profound crisis in Christianity. Nineteen hundred years after Jesus spread the gospel of love, his own people, the Jews, were murdered by Christian barbarians. The churches, although they did not actively collaborate, kept their silence. On the other hand, one definitely cannot say that within German society a radical anti-Semitic norm had prevailed. There was, however, a general uneasiness regarding the Jews, even among the non-anti-Semitic or even anti-anti-Semitic mass movements of the Social Democrats, the Communists and the Catholic Centre that constituted the majority of the German voting population up to the end of 1932. This uneasiness made it practically impossible for a general protest against the murder of Jews to develop. It was not as though the dictatorship was so fully totalitarian as to make protest movements completely impossible. This was demonstrated by the opposition to the murder of handicapped Germans that brought about the partial stoppage, in August 1941, of the so-called euthanasia programme. But any mass movement for the protection of the unpopular Jewish minority was totally outside the sphere of possibilities.

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: Topic 3

The origins and development of the Cold War

3 Read the extract and then answer the question.

Truman's attitude towards the Polish issue was a mixture of many elements. In terms of domestic politics, there were millions of Americans of east European heritage, along with countless Catholic voters, who were enraged by Soviet actions, and Truman had to take their views into account. Churchill, for whom Truman had great respect, was bombarding the President with hard-line telegrams. Harriman, the US Ambassador based in Moscow, who presumably understood the Soviets best, had persuaded Truman that no matter how tough the United States got, the Russians would have to take it, for without American aid they could never carry out reconstruction. Truman had recently been briefed on the atomic bomb which was now nearing completion, adding to his sense of power. Ideology, too, cannot be ignored. Men like Truman, Harriman, and Kennan were horrified by Russian brutality and Communist denial of basic Western freedoms.

Marxist historians have seen the origin of Truman's policy in the general American fear of another depression. They point out that it was widely assumed in America that a major depression would follow the war, and the only solution American leaders could suggest was to expand foreign markets. East Europe was crucial, therefore, because of its economic importance. Fear of depression did influence Truman's anti-Soviet stance. Equally important, however, was his belief, encouraged by Harriman and others, in the United States as the defender of western civilisation against the barbarians who threatened to overrun all of Europe. Of all the ingredients in the policy mix, the element that gave substance to it all was an awesome sense of power. By every measure available, except that of numbers of men in the armed forces, the United States was the strongest nation in the world. Many Americans, including leading figures in the government, believed that they could use their power to order the world in the direction of democratic capitalism on the American model. There was also a will to use the power, for Americans in general shared the strange belief that everyone in the world wanted to be just like them. Most nations believe in the moral goodness of their ideals, but few have had the arrogance to imagine that their particular ideals are universal. Americans did not hesitate to do so, and since they felt they had the power to carry out their wishes, a general policy of intervention resulted.

But American influence would never be as great as American power. Truman adopted the get-tough policy of Harriman because he accepted an analysis of the Soviet Union that saw it as a barbaric nation determined on world conquest. The United States' government insisted on making an issue out of Poland while ignoring what the British were doing in Greece, but did not feel that Poland was important enough to risk war. Truman never threatened to use force to impose his views because he still thought he could make Stalin behave by using economic means. The world was weary of war, the American people were demanding demobilisation, and the Red Army in Europe was too powerful for Truman to even consider war. He was, therefore, following a policy of trying to force Stalin to cooperate on American terms that was doomed to failure. But Stalin would not give way, and the Grand Alliance broke up. Resources that might have been used to reconstruct a war-torn world went instead into new armaments.

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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