GradeMax

Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY **9489/32**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question **October/November 2025**

1 hour 15 minutes

6650795819

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 **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

DC (EV) 345541/2
© UCLES 2025

[Turn over

GradeMax

Section A: Topic 1

The origins of the First World War

1 Read the extract and then answer the question.

While there were certainly dangerous forces at work inside Germany in 1914, the Kaiser and Bethmann Hollweg were not ruthless militarists eager to assert Germany's claim to world power.

Content removed due to copyright restrictions.

The urgent need of both France and Germany for rapid mobilisation and early offensive action by their eastern allies accelerated the whole pace of the crisis of July 1914.

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]

© UCLES 2025

GradeMax

Section B: Topic 2

The Holocaust

2 Read the extract and then answer the question.

Once the Nazis were in power, the rest followed from the logic of their ideology and their victories in the east. There is no need to look for a specific time of decision for the Holocaust, nor to write as if it depended on Hitler. Until 1938 the officially stated policy of the Nazis was forced emigration without property, but the regime knew that no nation would accept hundreds of thousands of impoverished Jews, let alone millions of eastern Jews. The regime did not want the West to know of its ultimate plans for the resolution of the Jewish problem any more than it wished to discuss publicly the true goals of its foreign policy. The German Foreign Office, not the Nazis, first proposed shipping the Jews to Madagascar, then a French colony off the coast of Africa. Madagascar was to be turned over to Himmler and the SS for this purpose after the defeat of France. But first Britain would have to be defeated because during wartime the British fleet would likely prevent any huge resettlement by stopping German ships. Hence the plan was forgotten when the invasion of England was postponed and the east was available. Some assume the Madagascar proposal indicates the Nazis did not at first plan mass murder, but there is no reason to assume the SS would have behaved any differently in Madagascar than in the death camps. In a news conference in February 1939, Alfred Rosenberg, the prominent Nazi racial theorist, suggested the Jews be sent there and said that in the 'wild island with its deadly climate, the obnoxious Jewish race will find itself isolated in a reservation from which there is only one exit – death'.

Too much has been made of the Nazi encouragement of Zionists during the pre-war years. Hitler never desired an independent Israel – he did not want international Jewry to have a national base. The Nazis held that in Palestine the Jews would exploit the Arabs, and, incapable of building a nation, would continue their international commercial domination and subversion. Eichmann worked with Zionists for a brief time, but, as he said, 'The policy of the Reich is to hinder the development of a Jewish state in Palestine.' In 1937 Eichmann declared it wrong to place Jews in nations abroad, although until 1940 German and Austrian Jews were pressured to emigrate. But as Hitler said to a Palestinian Arab leader in November 1941, 'The objectives of my fight are clear. Primarily I am in a constant fight against the Jews, and the fight includes the fight against the so-called Jewish home in Palestine.'

Hitler's moves towards war and his Jewish policies were closely connected. By 1939 there were some 300 000 Jews left in Germany, unemployed and destitute. Millions more waited in the east. In the midst of a savage war for a racial empire, how could those believed to be the most dangerous racial enemy be allowed to survive? On 30 January 1939, Hitler made his famous, public, internationally publicised and glaringly clear prophecy: 'If international finance Jewry inside and outside of Europe should succeed once more in plunging nations into another world war, the consequence will not be the Bolshevisation of the earth and thereby the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.' Almost every book and film on the Nazis repeats these words, yet many still do not believe the decision to destroy the Jews was made long before the summer of 1941.

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]

© UCLES 2025

[Turn over

GradeMax

Section C: Topic 3

The origins and development of the Cold War

3 Read the extract and then answer the question.

The failure of the 1945 London Foreign Ministers' Conference proved that US possession of the atom bomb would not make the Soviets more manageable. Molotov was as difficult as ever. At the first opportunity the Soviet Union proposed draft treaties on Finland and the Balkan states. Against the advice of most of the US delegation, Secretary of State Byrnes resolved to continue the policy of withholding formal recognition and peace treaties from the Balkan countries until the Russians agreed to the formation of 'representative' regimes pledged to holding truly free elections. He was determined to push for some solution that would satisfy unrealistic public expectations in the United States for the establishment of democracy. But by signing the armistice agreements, it could be argued that the United States had already implicitly agreed to Soviet domination over the Balkans, and that Byrnes was therefore breaking an understanding with the Soviet Union. Yet by the second day of the conference, Byrnes was complaining that 'the Russians were dodging out of all the agreements made at Yalta and Potsdam.'

Byrnes arranged a private meeting with Molotov where he could talk man-to-man with him. Adopting a pleading tone, Byrnes appealed to Molotov to relax his position in the Balkans for the peace of the world. He explained that he had asked for this meeting so that he would not have to say certain things around the table that he would be forced to say if the Russians did not shift their demands. He assured Molotov that he wanted to see 'friendly' governments in countries neighbouring the Soviet Union. He said he was pleading for some arrangement whereby the Romanian government could be both 'friendly' and 'representative of democratic elements'. He suggested that they could reorganise the government as in Poland – clearly a hint that the United States would be satisfied with a solution that would merely appear to comply with the Yalta accords.

But Molotov was unmoved by personal appeals to consider American public opinion. He pointed out that if the United States refused to consider the Balkan peace treaties, it would be the Soviet public that was offended. It was a question of friendly governments. If the United States had been invaded by Mexico, and the Mexicans had occupied part of it, as the Soviets had suffered at the hands of Romania, the American government would not tolerate a hostile government in Mexico. When, over several subsequent meetings, it became clear that Byrnes would not change his position, Molotov angrily charged that Byrnes had abandoned Roosevelt's policy of friendship towards the Soviet Union.

Truman was greatly disturbed by the evidence of the Bomb's ineffectiveness as a weapon of influence. On 5 October, he told his Budget Director that he had begun to wonder whether the United States was demobilising too fast. 'There are some people in the world who do not seem to understand anything except the size of your armies,' Truman complained. Yet in public, Truman maintained his usual optimism about US–Soviet relations. In a news conference he remarked that difficulties between the two countries were caused by misunderstandings. 'Russia's interests and ours do not clash,' he said firmly, 'and never have. We have always been friends and I hope we always will be.' But the same day Truman received word of substantial Soviet troop reinforcements along the Turkish border. The Soviets were increasing the pressure in their 'war of nerves' against Turkey. The American embassy in Moscow reported that Communist agitators amongst the Soviet people were spreading rumours that the USSR would soon go to war against Turkey.

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]

© UCLES 2025

GradeMax

BLANK PAGE

© UCLES 2025

GradeMax

BLANK PAGE

© UCLES 2025

GradeMax

BLANK PAGE

© UCLES 2025

GradeMax

BLANK PAGE

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced online in the Cambridge Assessment International Education Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download at www.cambridgeinternational.org after the live examination series.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is part of Cambridge Assessment. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is a department of the University of Cambridge.

© UCLES 2025