Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY **9489/32**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question **February/March 2021**

1 hour 15 minutes

9485647817

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.

© UCLES 2021

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.

The options available to Grey were limited. No British government could ignore the German challenge. In so far as this situation was due to internal conflicts within Germany, the British were relatively helpless. If the German leaders were determined to alter the European balance, it was difficult to believe that without a coalition of powers against them, the bid would fail. If Germany controlled the continent, British security would be menaced. It was never clear what Germany would see as its proper place in Europe, something reflected in Wilhelm II's own unpredictable nature. It was never apparent where German ambitions would find their proper outlets. Who knew what the Germans wanted? An African empire? A controlling position in the Balkans and in Turkey? A Central European Customs Union? Control of the sea? As the Germans themselves were divided, no foreign secretary, however perceptive, could have understood the German mind. Moreover, even if Grey had made it perfectly clear where Britain stood, the Germans would still have moved. Germany was too strong to accept a final check on its ambitions without at least trying to break out of its enclosed position unless that check was powerful enough to make all hope of success futile. Britain, even in alliance with France and Russia, could not pose that kind of threat.

What alternative policies, if any, existed that might have proved superior to the one that Grey followed? Had Grey committed Britain, as his professional advisers advocated, to France and Russia, would this have prevented Berlin and Vienna going to war in 1914? Further, it might, as Grey contended, have made Paris and St Petersburg adopt an assertive policy that would have increased German fears of encirclement, and, in any case, such a policy was not a domestic political possibility for Grey. What of neutrality? Here we are bound by the iron logic that Grey himself presented to Parliament on the eve of war. If Britain were to remain above the conflict, no result would have been satisfactory. If Germany and Austria-Hungary were triumphant, then Germany, master of the Channel coast and with the resources of the continent at its disposal, would have destroyed the balance of power and have been even more dangerous to Britain than before. Britain would have had no allies against this more powerful Reich. If France and Russia emerged victorious, they would have had no use for a Britain that had abandoned them in their time of need. Russia, freed of its concerns about Germany, would have been able to move against Britain's imperial interests, and France could have resumed the policies that were in place before Fashoda. A policy of neutrality in war was equivalent to a policy of isolation in peace, and, to Grey and the group who determined British policy, such a role was instinctively unsuitable.

Grey has been criticised by historians on a variety of levels. Some have considered that he was ill-suited intellectually to being foreign secretary. Others have argued that he was so fixated on the German threat that he lost touch with the realities of power on the continent and therefore pursued an anti-German policy to the detriment of Britain's position. In fact, Grey has been accused of the invention of a German menace in order to provide a rationale for the creation of the entente with Russia, all to protect Britain's imperial interests in Asia. But, while Grey may have given Germany more attention than the other powers, this was not due to him inventing an aggressive Germany: that was created in Berlin.

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]**

Section B: Topic 2

The Holocaust

2 Read the extract and then answer the question.

In his speech to the Reichstag on 30 January 1939, Hitler had already pointed in the direction of the future Nazi policy of mass murder. Historians have interpreted his remarks as everything from a clear announcement of the forthcoming Final Solution to a typical outburst of anti-Semitic rhetoric without substantive meaning. Actually, the speech, planned in advance, fitted into the context of Hitler's foreign policy. It was too calculated to be without importance. He wanted to issue a strong warning to his enemies in the West, whom of course he associated with the Jews. He accused his critics in the West as being supporters of a war sought by international Jewry. He urged the Western nations to take Germany's Jews off his hands. Europe would not find rest, he proclaimed, until the Jewish question was resolved. When Hitler warned international Jewry against forcing another world war, he was warning the Western powers not to obstruct his own objectives in the East. He knew there was going to be a war—the question was whether the West would jump in. If they committed all their resources to war, not only would they regret it militarily, but the Jews would suffer the results of genocide. Or so he said.

One way to test the seriousness of Hitler's threats on 30 January is to look for other evidence of the coordination of his racial and foreign policy goals. On 10 February he gave a private speech to high-ranking officers in the three armed services. He predicted that the next war would be an ideological and racial war that would determine the fate of the German race. According to one witness, Hitler made it clear that he intended to establish German domination of Europe and the world for centuries. Another supporter of a wartime programme to kill Jews was Goebbels. On one occasion in March 1939, he pressed for a total elimination of the Jews: 'We cannot allow Jewry to exist any longer.' Goebbels said this elimination might be done in more humane fashion in time of peace, and in more inhumane fashion if there was war.

With mass murder or even genocide, however, there is a huge gulf between talk and action. For the historian to take Hitler's threat as something that, even in 1939, was likely to happen, there need to be some signs—if not hard evidence—of a general strategy or preliminary plan. It need not have been Hitler who provided the evidence; he was not in the habit of drawing up detailed plans personally anyway. But those who would have to respond to Hitler's desire and carry it out required some advance preparation. As far as is known, neither Himmler nor Heydrich wrote or talked much in 1939 about plans for the Jews.

A programme for the complete destruction of the Jewish people depended on many unrealised preconditions—military conquest of most of the European continent, availability of a suitable technique for mass murder and sufficient numbers of executioners, commitment of resources and the ability to keep the whole process secret. Given this it is hard to see that anyone, even Hitler, could have made any kind of commitment, privately to himself or confidentially to others. Hitler was a fanatical anti-Semite, but he was also an opportunistic politician. He would undoubtedly seek to unleash his rage against the Jews; how and when he did so depended upon the circumstances, opportunities and plans presented to him. Anyone planning a campaign of mass murder had to start by thinking on a smaller scale than the whole continent.

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 2021

Section C: Topic 3

The origins and development of the Cold War

3 Read the extract and then answer the question.

Hitler's unprovoked aggression in June 1941 opened the door through which the Soviet Union eventually stepped out to become the world's mightiest imperial power. It also provided a dubious justification for Stalin's imperialism. The memory of Barbarossa instilled in Stalin an extraordinary drive to justify the expansionist policies he had initiated during his association with the German dictator. The experience, therefore, perpetuated rather than discredited the cynical opportunism, and ruthless power politics, disregarding the interests of other nations, that was central to the Nazi-Soviet pact. Further, the enduring memory of a narrow escape from catastrophic defeat in 1941 encouraged a cult of military strength in the Soviet Union.

In bringing the war against Nazi Germany to a victorious end, Stalin created a Soviet empire as a by-product. He had not originally sought a military conquest of the whole area he won. He would have preferred to advance his power and influence there by less risky and more subtle means, although he never ruled out resorting to force if the conditions were right. But Stalin was unable (contrary to his hopes) to satisfactorily extend his power abroad except by force of arms, and to maintain it except by putting in charge dependent Communist regimes. As a result, he burdened his country with a cluster of sullen dependencies whose possession proved a mixed blessing. Far from providing the ultimate protective shield, the empire enlarged the area the Russians had to uphold.

In masterminding Russia's ascent during the Second World War and its aftermath, Stalin proved an accomplished practitioner of the strategy of minimum and maximum aims. Skilled at both exploiting the existing opportunities and creating new ones, he let his aspirations grow until he realised that he had misjudged the complacency of his Anglo-American partners—as they had misjudged his moderation. So, he plunged his country into a confrontation with the West that he had neither desired nor thought inevitable. True, Stalin's coalition partners contributed their share to bringing about developments that they soon judged harmful to their own interests. If the Soviet leader did not rate nearly as high as a diplomat as his reputation suggested, his American and British opposite numbers surely rated even lower. The great war leaders, Roosevelt and Churchill, failed not so much in their understanding of the situation as in their negligence to prepare themselves and their peoples for the disheartening likelihood of a breakdown of the wartime alliance. By their reluctance (however understandable) to anticipate worse things to come, the Western leaders let matters deteriorate until the hour of reckoning was at hand. The undistinguished performance of Britain's Second World War diplomacy was perhaps a symptom of adjusting to the eclipse of its power. Nor, to be sure, did the American diplomacy of those days shine, though its shortcomings were largely those of innocence and inexperience.

It has been generally accepted that nothing could have been done to prevent the Russians overrunning the countries they did, and installing in them regimes of their choice. Indeed, compelling reasons can be put forward why this development was inevitable. But this 'realistic' argument, which overlooks the difference between Soviet capability and Soviet aims, is a poor guide to understanding history. Admittedly, the growth of Soviet power and influence did not always infringe on Western interests. Yet once the proposition was accepted that Moscow possessed the military leverage to achieve particular political goals, its temptation to actually seek such goals became irresistible.

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]**

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 the Cambridge Assessment Group. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which itself is a department of the University of Cambridge.