Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY **9489/31**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question **October/November 2021**

1 hour 15 minutes

4398170777

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.

By the late nineteenth century, numerous procedures and norms had been well established which could have prevented the outbreak of the First World War, such as mediation by an international court, by a friendly neutral power, or from pressure by the Great Powers sitting in conference. It was the decline of the 'culture of peace', that is the reluctance to follow normal procedures and rules of international conduct, which paved the way for world war. This decline took place to a differing extent in each nation. While the British and French political elite remained relatively attached to the culture of peace, among the German and Austrian political and military elite, the notion of international law and propriety of conduct had declined sharply for some time. On a general level, this points to the choices faced by the leaders of some of the most powerful nations. While these leaders were in theory best placed to enforce international norms, they were often precisely the ones who despised or disregarded them when they were inconvenient or in conflict with national ambitions. Instead they believed they could regulate everything by means of power. Furthermore, these leaders were preoccupied with prestige, and incapable of seeing things in proportion.

Although it did not automatically trigger war, the Serbian government's support of terrorism was without doubt outside the norms of nineteenth-century politics. The Serbian elite, apparently, had never accepted the international legal norms. Instead they had accepted the nationalism that destabilised the society of states throughout the nineteenth century. Austria's preference for resolving its conflict with Serbia by a bilateral war was, in theory, compatible with the culture of war as practised in the mid-nineteenth century. But this practice of waging war to preserve one's honour, like a duel, had fallen into disuse since the Franco-Prussian War and since then considerable efforts had been deployed to prevent the recurrence of war, through international mediation.

Nonetheless, by any standards, Germany's choice to turn the limited war into a world war—by rushing to declare war on Russia, almost a week before Austria had done so, and invading Belgium—was clearly outside any international norms and practices, and lacked any legitimacy. Accordingly, from this viewpoint, Germany was the main culprit, because its violation of the culture of peace was much more severe than Austria's or Serbia's. Austria was to blame as well, because it ran high risks in opting for a bilateral war with Serbia without knowing exactly whether the Serbian government had been involved in the assassination or not. Austria should have known that any war could turn out as a calamity. Russia's general mobilisation, though clearly a trigger for the expansion of the war, was not by any standard a violation of norms. It was essentially a precaution intended to warn Austria and put pressure on Germany to restrain its ally. Contrary to Bethmann's allegations, there was no necessity for Germany to declare war; there was only a defensive necessity to mobilise in response. By suggesting that a conference be held to preserve peace, the Austrian government might have had an opportunity to achieve a diplomatic victory without risking a catastrophe. It would have been legitimate to demand the establishment of an international commission to supervise the Serbs' search for those involved in the assassination. If the Serbs had produced no results, back-tracked, or hindered such a commission, the majority of the powers might have given Austria diplomatic support. At least this procedure would have been an appropriate response in line with the 'culture of peace'.

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.

We do not know for sure when Hitler finally made up his mind to exterminate the Jews in order to 'solve' the Jewish problem. It may be assumed that he considered such a prospect from the beginning of his political career, as suggested by many of his speeches and by his well known comments in *Mein Kampf* that during the First World War thousands of Jews should have been gassed. But at that time, and for many years thereafter, this aspiration was certainly no more than a vision for the distant future. Nor do we know of any statement by Hitler at the time of the conquest of Poland that indicates he viewed the concentration of the Jews in ghettos as a preparatory stage for systematic mass extermination, although he and his henchmen apparently hoped to reduce the Jewish population through poor and hazardous living conditions. However, Hitler did think it essential and possible to link up the military campaign against Russia with the liquidation of the Jews. The directives issued to the heads of the army and the SS in March 1941 were probably accompanied by verbal orders to include the Jewish population in the planned extermination operations. It was obvious that the task would be entrusted to Himmler's men. Since the very beginning of the Polish campaign, Himmler had been in charge of implementing the racist plans, and it was he who had masterminded the exchanges of populations and deportations. That same month, at a meeting with several senior SS officers, Himmler explained that the decision had been taken: they were about to attack Russia. He informed these officers of the 'special tasks' that would be entrusted to the SS units, the SD and the police. 'Without remorse, cruel war will develop between nations; in its course, twenty to thirty million Slavs and Jews will perish because of war activities and food shortages.'

It is well known that Hitler apparently did not issue written orders on the 'Final Solution'. Heydrich, however, received his from Göring on 31 July 1941: 'I herewith charge you with making all necessary preparations with regard to the organisational, practical and financial aspects for an overall solution of the Jewish question in the German sphere of influence in Europe. I further charge you with submitting to me an overall plan for the execution of the intended final solution of the Jewish question.'

As in numerous other National Socialist procedures, Göring's directive did not launch a completely new process but rather gave approval to an operation that was already under way and had to be officially implemented by various government agencies. We may, then, assume that by the end of July 1941 a clear-cut decision had been taken to exploit the conquered territories in order to solve the Jewish problem throughout Europe in the spirit proclaimed by Hitler again and again. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that Heydrich would require the cooperation of other administrative bodies in the operation, for example, the Foreign Ministry or the Ministry of Transport, and because of this he would require explicit authorisation. For the first time, we encounter here, in an official document, the phrase 'the final solution of the Jewish problem'. As we know, this phrase served to disguise the intention to wipe out the Jewish population of Europe and, if possible, throughout the world. Not by chance, the two aspects emphasised in the directive were totality and finality.

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.

What did the Soviets want? The State Department had no clear idea of what Stalin was really up to in Europe, particularly in Germany. The Soviets were too suspicious to deal with the West. Stalin acted unilaterally, and it was probably not clear in his own mind how far he would probe in his quest to find 'security' for his empire. Germany was the great unanswered question, the potential flash-point. Throughout the first half of 1948, the Americans were puzzled: did the Soviets want a united communist Germany? A ruined powerless Germany? To punish Germany and milk it with reparations? Soviet behaviour was contradictory. The Russians were still looting factories and sending equipment back to the USSR (where it sat and rusted in the snow) – yet they permitted former Nazis to hold high positions in the Eastern zone.

Whatever the Soviets wanted, the United States did not want a united Germany under Soviet domination. Such a development would constitute 'the greatest threat to the security of all Western nations', General Marshall asserted in February 1948. A weak Germany, on the other hand, would frustrate European recovery. Many in the US government were determined to rebuild Germany as a stronghold of the West, even if that meant partition. This could not be done without currency reform. The German Mark was worthless; real currency was measured in American cigarettes sold on the black market. Back in August 1947, Secretary of Commerce Harriman had flatly told Truman, 'Monetary reform is overdue. It is hard to understand how business is being transacted with a worthless currency.' Harriman added, however, that he had grave doubts that currency reform could include the Soviets 'as Soviet methods are so different from ours'. Currency reform may sound like a technical exercise, but it meant the end of any semblance of US–Soviet cooperation in Germany. It signalled the great divide between East and West.

The Soviets were not as mystified about Western intentions as the West was about theirs. Their spies in the West had been providing regular progress reports. They knew all about the printing presses in the Western zones churning out new currency to rebuild a capitalist Germany. By early 1948, the Four-Power Council nominally governing Germany had become a farce. The Soviet representative, who normally took detailed notes, no longer bothered. On 20 March he walked out. To the Soviets, it must have seemed like their worst fears realised. A powerful capitalist Germany rebuilt on their border. Capitalist countries allying to encircle them. Stalin may well have been a cornered animal, but he was also a predator. In June 1948, he lunged for Berlin.

The Berlin blockade began slowly. In mid-June, the Soviets started turning away freight trains carrying coal from the Western zones to West Berlin, 110 miles inside Soviet-controlled territory. The explanation given was 'defective wagons'. Next came the passenger trains: Red Army guards along the border began sending back every other one because of 'crowded stations'. Finally, the autobahn was closed for 'urgent repairs'. On 23 June, the West announced new Deutsche Marks for its sector of Berlin and West Germany. By then, a carton of cigarettes had reached an all-time high of $2 300 at the official exchange rate. Within twenty-four hours, the Soviets had cut all overland routes between West Germany and West Berlin and shut off electricity in the city. The two million citizens of West Berlin only had enough food to last thirty-six days. The squeeze was on.

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.