

HISTORY: WORLD AFFAIRS 1917-1991

Paper 2158/01

Paper 1

General comment

There were very few attempts at **Questions 3, 6, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26, 30, 31**. Apart from those limitations there was a broad spread of work across the remaining questions, with as ever somewhat less attention given to **Section E**.

There was some excellent work offered by many candidates in this examination. Such work displayed broad and accurate knowledge, purposefully angled to the requirements of the question and displaying thereby in many cases the qualities expected of a Grade A candidate. It is worth pausing on those whose achievement was less impressive in order to detect means by which their performance in the examination might have been improved.

It is a common place in reports of this kind for the complaint to be heard that some candidates had not read the question closely enough and had hence produced answers with varying degrees of irrelevance. It is thus vital to detect the direction of the question from such indicative words as 'outline', 'describe', 'why', 'explain' and to ensure that any quotation in the question (such as in the popular **Questions 8 and 18** in this paper) is given due emphasis. But in this examination a number of candidates did not observe two other features in the questions: the number of sub-answers that are required and the time frame of questions. Thus, in the first of these, **Question 1** required candidates to give attention to three of the five agencies offered, but a surprising number gave attention to all five. In such cases, all are marked and the best permitted to the required number; no marks are therefore specifically lost, but such practice is a waste of the candidate's time. In the second case, it is vital to detect the period of time which is the focus of the question. **Question 7** was concerned with the years before Hitler acquired power, but a number of candidates dwelt on his time after securing power. **Question 8** terminated in 1925, but some candidates continued up to the Second World War, while others misplaced the March on Rome in the second part. There are other less salient instances referred to in the more specific comments below. Attention to the points referred to in this paragraph could well have assisted a number of candidates towards a better result.

The report on the previous examination, June 2012, commented on the good use of time in balancing five answers within the two-and-a-half hours and on the absence of rushed or incomplete work. That trend was also to be found in this examination. The use of distinguishing letters for sub-questions and of a line gap or some other indication before the last part of the question is attempted were also generally evident this time and assist candidates in making their presentation orderly and clear.

Question 1

Reference has been made above to those candidates who wrote on all five of the League agencies rather than on the three that were requested. This proved to be a popular question and most candidates were able to write about the essential work of the ones they selected, though at times the content was shallow and bordering on little more than elaboration of the names of the agencies. The link of the Permanent Court to the work of the League was not always apparent and there was a lack of specific references, especially in the last part.

Question 2

Here also was a case where the question gave a specific context to each of **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)**, i.e. how the issues 'troubled the peace of Europe'. Not all candidates dwelt on that aspect of the question, though many did and the answers of such candidates were often well contextualised in the Europe of the late 1930s. The last part often received well-structured responses dwelling both on Hitler's ambitions and on the perceived shortfall found in the appeasement approaches of Britain and France.

Question 4

This question opened with a specific request to focus on the events of 1950 that led to UN involvement. A number of candidates missed this specific request and went at once to **(a)** followed by **(b)**. In most cases therefore 1950 required more attention than it got, with reference to UNO, USA and the Korean context. In dealing with **(a)** and **(b)** the various movements of forces in the Korean peninsula could have been more accurately and at times more fully outlined. The last part was often more successfully attempted than the earlier parts, with many commenting both on the alien nature of warfare in Vietnam for US troops and the increasing lack of commitment to it in the USA itself.

Question 5

This was not a markedly popular question and there were significant shortcomings in many answers. While many recognised **(a)**, a number confused it with Yalta, while others thought Yalta followed. **(b)** and **(c)** were even less well attempted, **(b)** sometimes containing material on the U2 incident or on the 1955 meeting, while **(c)** was generally not well known. The last part tended to get rather sketchy and uncertain answers, a feature also apparent in answers to the later **Question 21** which covers the same period and some similar concerns.

Question 7

Reference has been made earlier to the tendency of quite a number of candidates to anticipate Hitler's time in power in their answers to this question, rather than to see how the four early sections 'assisted' him in securing power. This was a fundamental flaw in the work of quite a number of candidates. But there was a degree of uncertainty about each of **(a)** - **(d)**. Some in **(a)** interpreted 'criminals' in this context too literally, the effects of inflation and unemployment were not very clearly rendered in **(b)** and **(c)**, while **(d)** was limited often to the Reichstag fire. In the last part the Enabling Act was often quite well known, but other aspects of Hitler's increasing power in 1933-34 less so. This popular question related to salient aspects of Hitler's increasing power, but suggested some factual insecurity and faulty approach.

Question 8

As commented earlier, the time frame for this question proved troublesome for some candidates. 1919 as a starting point presented no problem, but there was uncertainty on the part of many quite where (if at all) the March on Rome fitted, while the last part sometimes developed into a general survey of Fascist Italy. Most who attempted this question did make a purposeful attempt at the question's quotation, but while some furnished precise evidence of instability and disappointment, too often this was only loosely rendered. In the last part, few focused sharply enough on Mussolini's response to the Matteotti crisis or his further securing of power in 1925. The Lateran treaty was not relevant in this question, but made a contribution in quite a number of answers.

Question 9

Questions on Spain in the interwar years have become more popular in recent examinations, though the take-up is much less strong than, for example, in the cases of questions such as **Questions 7** and **8**. This question was not specifically about the Civil War, but about the background to it in the early and mid-1930s. This time frame was neglected by almost all candidates who attempted the question. Only a minority of such candidates gave, earlier, a precisely rendered account of 1931-36 and, later, an explanation of a divisive society in Spain.

Question 12

This relatively popular question was generally done rather poorly. A number of problems were apparent in most scripts. In particular, the time sequence of 1917-38 was very poorly balanced, with material in most answers focused on the years 1917-19 to the virtual neglect of the next two decades; in short, the first part was taken as a question solely on the entry of the USA into the First World War and its role in the peace conference. Some did manage to get into the 1920s, but hardly any into the 1930s. Those who related the last part to the correct World War sometimes did quite well in balancing Allied/Axis sympathies, but a number confused the last part with the First World War.

Question 13

This question was more popular than **Question 12** and generally received better focused and better informed responses. Weaker candidates betrayed a looseness of knowledge about the four specified features of the New Deal. Thus many alluded to **(a)** as significant for unemployment, but failed to set it in a sharper context by reference to its importance for youth. **(c)** was perhaps the best attempted, while **(b)** and **(d)** were sometimes muddled together. The last part was in most cases well done, with usefully focused responses dwelling on a variety of reasons why some in the USA opposed the New Deal.

Question 17

Here also was an instance where the question had not always been read with sufficient care. Each of **(a)** - **(d)** needed a focus in the February Revolution. While many observed that request and developed an appropriate and informed answer, there was a tendency on the part of many to write outside the question's constraints. Thus **(a)** sometimes alluded to the 1905 war or earlier in the 1914-18 war. **(b)** was often linked to the Revolution's outbreak. There was confusion in **(c)** about the Tsarina, some alluding to her as a man and overplaying the role of Rasputin, who by this time was dead. Of all four early parts, **(d)** was usually the most astray, many writing generally about the Duma and not linking it to its vital work in 1917. The last part was generally rather better attempted, based on helpful indications of its inadequacies and the increasing strength of its opponents.

Question 18

Few had difficulty here in linking Stalin's rule to the description in the quote, but there was again imbalance in the time sequence, with most candidates ignoring the period from the end of the Second World War to 1953. At time also the earlier description of Stalin's rule had only weak reference to its ruthlessness. The last part was sometimes overly dominated by a revisiting of the first, without pinpointing the benefits as such of his rule, though a number did also balance such favourable observations with the basic ruthlessness of life in the USSR in the Stalin years.

Question 22

While this was not a markedly popular question, those who attempted it did get to the essential features of Turkey in these troubled years. The terms of the two treaties were quite well known. What was needed to lift rather shallow answers was fuller attention to the treaties and to the 1921-22 war. Turkish nationalism in **(c)** was only thinly treated; there was room for it to continue into the early years of Mustafa Kemal's rule, permitted by the early time reference.

Question 23

Attempts were somewhat similar here to those of the previous question. Answers emerged and showed knowledge, but lacked real strength. There was a tendency also to run together the time sequences in **(a)** and **(b)**. The former was concerned with the situation as it stood at the eve of 1956 and the latter on how things developed during 1956. All of this relates to an action packed story that did not come over as effectively as it might have done due to rather general and unspecific references. The last part was usually argued from both sides, but again could have had sharper references in support.

Question 25

Apartheid's development and practice was seen in general terms and needed here also rather sharper references, for example to legislative detail and events, if it were to be shown as the all-pervading regime that it was. The last part also, while balancing internal and external opposition, could have gone further in its references.

Question 27

Rather sketchy material only was offered in answer to **(a)** in this question, sometimes diverting to earlier military prowess rather than the military nature of the Japanese government per se. **(b)** was better attempted, though with a tendency to dwell on 1931 rather than more widely in the 1919-37 period. The last part was perhaps rather more securely and more fully answered, with focus on earlier Japanese humiliation and the seeking of needed raw materials.

Question 28

The time balance in the first part was usually quite well held and the development of a communist-based society usefully contextualised in the two decades of the question. The content was quite competent, even though at times it could have developed further. The malaise of the party in the years around Mao's death was also usefully indicated with helpful references.

Question 29

None of the people listed proved to be markedly more popular than others and all received choices. The answers to **(a) - (e)** were in almost all cases informed and well contextualised in the history of the sub-continent, with useful references throughout, Nor was there significant shortfall in the last part, with the various factors leading to independence with partition well adduced.