

HISTORY: WORLD AFFAIRS 1917-1991

Paper 2158/11

Paper 1

General comments

There were too few answers to **Questions 5, 8 to 10, 13 to 15, 18, 19, 21 to 24, 27, 29 and 30** to make appropriate general comment.

Question 1

In part **(a)** knowledge of the German colonies was often competent (though rarely complete) but there was general uncertainty as to which countries took them on as mandates. Part **(b)** was better attempted, with more extensive and more precise knowledge displayed in the majority of responses. In part **(c)** a surprisingly large proportion of candidates failed to distinguish what 'western' meant in a European context and instead gave a general list of frontier changes. Often there was impressive analysis in response to the last part of the question.

Question 2

Although many candidates recognised that the wording of the question required a focus on the 1920s in the first part and the early and mid-1930s in the second, the time sequences presented a problem for some. A number of responses also introduced an element of irrelevance by developing a discussion of social issues, while the focus was clearly 'international disputes'. Responses often lacked sufficient range to be highly rewarded. Only a minority indicated that the Corfu episode of 1923, while initially referred to the League, was in practice resolved by the Conference of Ambassadors. The most effective responses focused on Manchuria and Abyssinia in the second part, though a notable minority drifted into irrelevance on League structure and organisation.

Question 3

The majority of responses were effectively balanced between the three countries, with appropriate focus on the effects of German foreign policy, which in all cases was that of conquest. The process of acquisition was generally less effectively developed with few specific indications of what policies were beyond mere conquest. Much the same applied to the last part of the question, although a number of candidates usefully introduced appeasement in this context.

Question 4

Responses to this three-part question were equally balanced in their treatment of the events listed. Better responses often attempted to link material on those events to the early history of the Cold War. In a number of instances material could have ranged more widely and been more sharply focused on the question. The timeframe given for the last part caused problems for some and a number of answers completely ignored the 1950s in favour of events before and after that decade.

Question 6

The Corporate State (sometimes presented as the cooperative state) and the *dopolavoro* were known only by a distinct minority of candidates, yet both are of profound significance for a study of Fascist Italy. Nevertheless, the first three options were generally recognised and attracted competent and, in some cases, excellent responses. This was particularly so for the March on Rome. Responses to the last part of the question were well-argued in many cases, but there was a tendency to over-emphasise the punitive aspects of the regime.

Question 7

The focus of the first part of this question was on the increasing power of the Nazis in the course of the 1930s. A number of candidates chose instead to focus on the 1920s, leading to considerable irrelevance in their answers. Some responses would have been improved if there had been greater emphasis on events during the 1930s that illustrated increasing power, rather than offering vague references to propaganda, education and social issues. Most began their answer on the last part of the question by reference to the tyranny of the regime which made opposition difficult but, as with the Mussolini question, some would have benefitted from considering the aspects of the Nazi regime that were popular with many Germans.

Question 11

Every candidate who attempted this popular question was clear that the 1920s represented a time of social liberation and commercial success for the USA. Other relevant themes were introduced in many responses. However, a number of these points were only generally, and at times uncertainly, developed, with few getting to such contrary features as racial issues and the problems facing agriculture. A question such as this demands as much precision of treatment in its development as other more precisely focused questions do. Responses to the last part of the question were generally more sharply developed, with few doubting that Hoover was responsible for his own failure in 1932.

Question 12

The four options in the first part of the question attracted very varied responses, though most displayed some knowledge of these generally crucial features of the New Deal. In almost all answers the degree of support and illustration needed to be stronger. This would have enabled responses to take on the nature of a supported analysis rather than simply offering a basic legislative list. The last part of the question actually covered four elections but most focused on the first (1932). While this was undoubtedly the most significant, only a few answers made considered reference to the others.

Question 16

The wording of this question was designed to encourage balanced coverage of the whole of 1917. The majority of candidates were inclined to give most attention to each of the two revolutions rather than a balanced view of the year itself. Where responses were more widely focused it was possible to make effective links between developments in February and October. The best responses contained relevant and precise information and were rewarded accordingly. Answers to the last part of the question were sometimes weakly sustained, with little consideration of events other than the Civil War.

Question 17

Almost all of the options available in the first part of the question were recognised by candidates. But, as elsewhere, the degree of development in some responses lacked strength and support. In the last part there was usually rather firmer development and a stronger focus on the terms of the question.

Question 20

In the first part most candidates made their choice of Khrushchev and Gorbachev rather than Brezhnev, although there were sometimes useful comparative comments on his rule. There was also a clear distinction made between Khrushchev and Gorbachev, with perceptive comment on the different objectives of each, although the latter often received more attention. There were mixed views on the last part of the question, a number of candidates opting for a balanced coverage of domestic and foreign policies but also showing the links between both areas. This was generally an effective approach.

Question 25

There was a degree of uncertainty about the five items specified in the first part of the question. The essential significance of 1948 for apartheid appeared not to be generally known. The 'Congress' was not recognised as a force for opposition to apartheid. The independent nature of Bantustans was missed by many. While UN sanctions were more effectively discussed, the Soweto disturbances were not as well presented. The last part of the question was usually more strongly supported.

Question 26

The first part, balanced across ten years, was usually addressed by a solid narrative answer, often well supported. The Shanghai massacres and the Long March figured prominently as central themes in most responses. The last part of the question received rather less effective answers. The reference to 'Chinese form of communism' suggested that some reference to changed ideology was required, even if expressed in simple terms, but this was generally missing. Some, however, did make helpful reference to Yan'an.

Question 28

The options in the first part of the question were recognised quite readily by most candidates though, as in similar questions elsewhere, more detailed knowledge to support points would have improved a number of answers. The last part had a similarly ideological focus as that found in **Question 26**, but few explored its potential in this respect.

HISTORY: WORLD AFFAIRS 1917-1991

Paper 2158/12

Paper 1

General comments

There were too few responses to **Questions 5, 9, 10, 13 to 15, 18, 20, 22 to 26, 28 and 30** to make appropriate general comments.

Question 1

Responses to this question on the Paris Peace Conferences of 1919-20 were generally well informed, but sometimes less well focused. The focus was on 'frontiers' which were 'in Europe'. A fair proportion of candidates wrote generally about the peace conference decisions, with minimal reference to 'frontiers', while others neglected the European focus of the question altogether. In the last part the weakness felt by Germany and Austria could have been more strongly emphasised.

Question 2

The focus on foreign policy was generally well maintained in answers to this question. Most responses to the first part were balanced across the immediate pre-war years, but some gave excessive pre-1936 background. The majority of answers to the second part of the question realized that it related to appeasement and there were some competent analyses of this in its appropriate context.

Question 3

Good knowledge was displayed throughout and between responses there were effective attempts at all of the listed features apart from **(b)**. The last part was generally competently analysed, with responsibility assigned largely to Hitler's obstinacy. There were also some spirited references to discordant approaches by the Western allies.

Question 4

This was possibly the most popular question in **Section A**, yet it cannot be said to have been particularly well attempted by many candidates. Some struggled to develop answers in the specified timeframe. There were irrelevant references to the 1950s and early 1960s rather than the given time sequence for the question. A significant number of responses confused the 17th and 38th parallels, while even Vietnam and Korea were confused by some. There were, nevertheless, some competent and focused answers to this question.

Question 6

Lack of attention to the terms of the question was apparent in some responses. The first part required consideration of 'domestic' history and this was often neglected. Some of those who attempted relevant discussion here were vague in the domestic references made. Foreign affairs were developed with more purpose by some in the second part but the reference to 'Germany's prestige' could have been better focused in a number of responses.

Question 7

There is a wealth of material that might be used in this question and the majority of candidates employed it well. Too many wasted time with pre-1925 references and then had less to say on the longer and fruitful 1925-40 period. The punitive measures introduced in Italy were over-emphasised by a small minority although there was scope for this theme in the latter part of the period. Some failed to observe that the last part related to Mussolini and Hitler and not to Italian foreign affairs in general.

Question 8

There were a number of well informed and focused attempts at this question on the Spanish Civil War. Many wrote well on the various 'divisions' in Spain in the early 1930s, and also on the events leading to civil war. Most responses to the last part of the question were detailed and analytical.

Question 11

In many cases, responses lacked coherence of presentation within the confines of the question. While there were informed references throughout, the focus and development lacked strength. Nor was there a clear focus on Wilson and the First World War, the key feature of the question. There was surprising confusion in the last part over the identity of the Republican candidate, let alone why he was successful, a number asserting a role here for Wilson himself and for FDR.

Question 12

There was a fair response to part (a), but material often lacked a specific reference to the USA and might, in some instances, have applied to any twentieth-century country in a state of distress. In part (b) knowledge of the New Deal was generally sound and while some answers were a little thin on its legislation, many candidates responded well. If the New Deal was known well, foreign policy generally was not, with some resorting to the argument that it was less popular than domestic policy because it was less evident to most people: a fair point, but limited nonetheless.

Question 16

The two revolutions were reasonably well known by most candidates. Some appeared to have difficulty in viewing them separately and struggled to avoid a general narrative of 1917. This was not required and denied candidates the time to develop a better focused response on the events of the two revolutions themselves. Answers to the last part were usually well informed, usefully balancing the 'triumph' and the 'failure', although some continued (unnecessarily) into the early 1920s.

Question 17

The three narrative parts in this question received very mixed responses. Candidates had no difficulty in identifying their subject matter in part (a) but tended not to penetrate the nature and aims of the five-year plans. While some knew the relevant content for (b) and identified sensible reasons why it ought not to have been taken too seriously, some clearly had little knowledge of the 1936 constitution. Part (c) was possibly the best attempted of the three elements, though even here factual references could have been more precise. There was some skilful development of arguments on 'ruthless' in the last part.

Question 19

Responses generally observed the domestic/foreign division of the question but the material presented was often rather shallow. While the main policies were indicated in the first part of the response, they were only rarely supported by detailed knowledge. The last part was often dominated entirely by the Cuban crisis; fair enough to an extent, but foreign policies did go further than that in Khrushchev's time.

Question 21

All the items listed in the first part of the question were addressed by some responses and factual references were often accurate and detailed. There was often a spirited attempt at the last part, with purposeful assertion of the importance of the 1948-49 war in shaping the role of Israel in the Middle East in decades to come.

Question 27

This proved a popular and well attempted question. Answers were informed throughout and were well balanced across the designated timeframe, with only a few trespassing beyond the 'domestic history' confines of the question. Candidates were perhaps less confident in answering the last part, although most agreed with the proposition that advances were made at great cost to personal freedom.

Question 29

Candidates were generally well informed on this wide-ranging question on the Indian sub-continent. Between responses, all of the five options in the first part of the question were addressed. Knowledge was generally well displayed, although there was some uncertainty on the legislative features of **(a)** and **(b)**. Many answers to the last part were less effective, with some showing uncertainty on what 'non-aligned' actually meant in terms of diplomacy.