



General Certificate of Education

History 1041

Specification

Unit HIS2M

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – January series

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Dr Michael Cresswell Director General.

Unit HIS2M

Unit 2M: Life in Nazi Germany, 1933–1945

General Comments

As in January 2009, this paper used the full timescale and this clearly had an impact on choice for some candidates. The question on the impact of war on the loyalty of the German people was less popular than Question 2 and overall the answers were thin on evidence and analysis. In some cases candidates simply invented another question as their evidence often had nothing to do with the question set. Overall Question 1 was quite well done and many candidates received decent marks on the compulsory question.

Time management overall seemed quite good but a minority of candidates still write too much irrelevant own knowledge on 1(a) and this can affect their later questions. However, the good news is that candidates are now answering Question 1(a) with a good deal of confidence as many candidates get into Level 3.

Whilst there were some good Grade A and B scripts, which were characterised by succinct, well supported evidence, too many answers lacked knowledge. It is pleasing to see focus in candidates' essay structure but often the comments which followed lacked any factual evidence and hence appeared as assertion. Some candidates still approach the premise to the question without any form of balance in their answer and believe that a three or four line comment at the end will suffice as a conclusion.

Question 1

- (a) As stated above, it is very pleasing to note that many candidates found Question 1(a) accessible and finally candidates are recognising what they have to do when faced by a question asking them to show their skills of comparison using two sources. The majority of candidates used a mixture of differences, similarities, provenance and own knowledge in their answers. A few candidates still insist on simply paraphrasing Sources A and B but most actually explained 'how far' they differed.

Most candidates found the language the sources accessible and at times were able to bring in own knowledge to support their comparison. Own knowledge needs to be used appropriately in this question and there are still candidates who simply write everything they know about the period. Hence, there was a mass of information about the Berlin Games and how Hitler resented Jesse Owens but at no time linked the comments to a discussion of the views in Source B and Source A.

Provenance of the two sources for some students remains an issue and they often make wild assertions and assumptions about the authors involved. It appears odd that just because Wolfe is an American, he should automatically be anti-German and that, because he came from a democratic country, he would be biased against Germany. Bias is quoted *ad nauseam* but never linked to the actual source and how it might affect the credibility of a source. The question as such is not about reliability and candidates waste time discussing how the sources are adapted. The sources are adapted purely to make them more accessible to the candidate. Language has been modified to allow candidates to see what the source is trying to say.

Whilst the question asks 'how far do the views differ', most candidates now realise that in order to answer this effectively they should also highlight similarities in their answers. Good answers showed that Sources A and B were praiseworthy of the power coming out of the games. Both also highlighted a certain degree of propaganda surrounding the sources. Clearly most candidates recognised the caveat to success in Source A and that overall Source B was positive and Source A was negative. Some answers recognised the contextual point that women were involved in both sources-in A the feeling was of 'oppression'; in B it was of 'enthusiasm'.

- (b) There were some decent answers to this question and most candidates used a mixture of source and own knowledge in their responses. The three sources all included material which helped their answers but some candidates are a little too reliant on the sources. They often simply accept what is said in the source and don't utilise it fully. For example, in a question which is asking 'How successful', candidates should not assume that just because Source C states that 'mass rallies... showed their mastery of propaganda', that they should agree with the assertion. The weakest answers simply said all propaganda was effective and then proceeded to list a variety of forms of propaganda. The Nazis may well have produced cheap radios and dominated the airwaves but people could choose not to listen and often did as propaganda perhaps eventually became irrelevant for many Germans. The best answers concluded that it is perhaps impossible to assess how successful or effective propaganda was in Germany at this point as genuine opinion polls were not a feature of Nazi Germany. Candidates should feel confident enough to state that there is no simple answer to this as quantifying success is difficult. However, there was a good range of evidence demonstrated. Some candidates highlighted the fact that there was a lot of influence observed, the Hitler Myth did have some effect and that many people after the war commented on how emotionally touched they were by public spectacles etc. On the other hand good candidates showed that if terror was required on such a wide scale, then surely propaganda wasn't really effective. They challenged the view that the Hitler Youth was constantly exciting and queried why compulsion was used later on. Promisingly, there were quite a lot of candidates who stated that bad propaganda didn't work and cited 'The Eternal Jew' as an example.

Candidates have to be aware of the dates offered in questions. Many candidates went beyond 1939 and as such their work became irrelevant.

Question 2

- (a) Overall this part of the paper was answered quite well. Candidates often were able to suggest reasons why the Nazi Government made a Concordat with the Catholic Church. Some candidates still drift a little towards 'how' instead of 'why' but the majority focus on trying to offer at least 3 reasons. Some sophisticated answers write their answer in one piece, giving reasons and prioritising them at the same time.

Good answers suggested some of the following:

- that the Catholic Church was a formidable opponent, international in dimension, and the Nazis need to neutralise their support
- the Centre Party was important and the Catholic vote would be needed in the passing of the Enabling Act
- the Nazis managed to get the Catholics to accept the destruction of their political parties
- it gave the Nazis temporary legitimacy and respectability

- it was a pact of convenience for both sides and averted the possibility of constant conflict.

Candidates need to offer at least three reasons why the Nazis made the Concordat and in doing so, they must show some linkage between them.

Weaker candidates tended to drift from the focus of the question, by describing what happened after it was signed or writing from the Catholic viewpoint, when the question clearly wanted it to be from the Nazi perspective.

- (b) The majority of candidates attempting this question did refer to both Catholic and Protestant Churches and some attempt was made to deal with the word 'willingly', However, a minority seemed confused by the term 'German Churches' and they never discriminated between the two. Although there were some purely narrative answers, overall candidates did try to focus on the premise of the question, even if the chronology used was somewhat faulty.

The main criticism was that some answers were either generalised and repetitive or quite direct but lacking in any real range or depth. There was a certain amount of confusion over the position of the churches under the umbrella 'Protestant' and in some cases a degree of inaccuracy.

Many answers rarely had sufficient and/or well selected evidence to develop an argument; few showed a good understanding of historical interpretation.

A good amount of candidates were aware of change over time and were able to show that by 1941 a very different picture of the relationship between the Nazi regime and the churches had emerged. There were several very well balanced answers which were able to demonstrate that both Catholic and Protestant Churches held certain values common to the regime and themselves and in fact certain groups clearly did show a degree of willingness. Good candidates highlighted the problems for the churches posed by the rise of the Nazis. Their conclusions tended to suggest that self-preservation was the order of the day for the churches and that collusion rather than willing support was observed. There was some very interesting context to some essays. Anti-communism, anti-Weimar and anti-Semitism were all introduced to highlight the 'appeal' of the Nazis and that it wasn't until it became self-evident what the Nazis really intended that the churches' position became problematic.

Question 3

- (a) Overall, many fewer chose Question 3 and it was apparent from many answers that specific knowledge was almost totally lacking. For some reason, several students simply wrote about the 1930s with no reference to the question. Most students did not refer to the impact of Stalingrad and simply gave a mass of generalisation about how the war was developing. Some claimed that the reason why 'Total War' was declared was because Germany was winning the war in 1943. A few answers talked about military issues, with little or no reference to the decision to declare 'Total War'.

Candidates needed to show some of the following:

- the speech was designed to recapture the war initiative
- Goebbels needed to try and galvanise the population after the defeat at Stalingrad
- fear of the reaction to the news of the defeat at Stalingrad within Germany

- to get the Germans to accept greater controls and more sacrifice
- fear of Soviet reprisals was now a major concern to the Nazi regime – hence, little option but to continue the war effort
- to boost the efforts to produce more materials.

Few candidates were able to produce 3 reasons why 'Total War' was made and rarely did candidates link Goebbels' speech in trying to dispel the mood surrounding the news coming from Stalingrad with the need to avoid a hostile public reaction to war.

- (b) This question received many disappointing answers. Candidates seemed ill prepared both in terms of essay structure and actual knowledge. There was a great deal of inaccuracy, irrelevance and unfocused comment and most essays had a great deal of vague generalisation. Many essays were little more than unbalanced narratives and it was surprising that these answers often included a lot of pre-1939 material.

The question wanted candidates to make an assessment of the Nazi regime's ability to retain the loyalty of the German people. The specification clearly refers to the impact of allied bombing on the morale of the people but very few essays made reference to this, although better essays tended to demonstrate that 1942–1943 was the turning point in the regime's relationship with the people.

The best answers had some balance and stated that, after an initial wariness, the first two years of war received a positive public reaction. Furthermore, there was no revolution in Germany in 1945 and no collapse in morale. Sophisticated answers were able to demonstrate that the allied bombing campaign in fact strengthened German resolve.

On the other hand, evidence was given showing the regime's obsession with public opinion and that as the war went on support became more passive than active. Furthermore, there was opposition to the regime and good answers were able to list several of them and suggest that 20 concentration camps and 165 labour camps in Germany would indicate that over one million Germans were not displaying their loyalty.

The few excellent essays concluded that with the absence of opinion polls, and a great deal of propaganda, it was difficult to gauge how loyal the Germans were towards the regime. Interestingly, a few were able to differentiate between support for the regime as opposed to support for the Führer.

What was missing overall was a coherent essay based on balance and supported by a good range of material. Few essays were able to sustain an argument over more than three quarters of a page.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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