

93403A



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# TOP SCHOLAR



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY  
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

## Scholarship 2013 History

9.30 am Saturday 16 November 2013  
Time allowed: Three hours  
Total marks: 40

### ANSWER BOOKLET

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Choose ONE question to answer from Question Booklet 93403Q, using the sources provided and your own knowledge.

Write your answer in this answer booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–23 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

**YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.**

## PLANNING

Question number:

1

Topic(s) I have studied that I might use in my article:

- Platist view
- Is it possible to objectively show what happened in post WWI revisionism?
    - Neville Chamberlain
    - Clark Gable
    - The Monkeys
    - Niall Ferguson vs. poets - what happened in WWI?
  - WWI revisionism
    - John Maynard Keynes
    - Blackadder
    - 30s 60s 90s
    - postmodernist den.
  - Trots
    - intent/propaganda/bias.
    - difficult to prove - all versions equally acceptable.
  - what is this 'truth' - objectivity.
    - may be different 'truths'
    - postmodernist issue with truth difficult to prove.
  - what type of history because different types of history
    - how is something acceptable - when there is evidence, when it hasn't been falsified etc.
    - falsification of history
    - blurring of facts e.g. to fit a trend
    - historian is product of their time and space.
    - is it even important to have 'one objective truth'?
  - (is different times different order out comes out → disproves stuff.)

**PLANNING**

① ~~C, D, J, I~~

② A, B, E, G, I

③ A, E, F, ~~G~~, T, K, L

④ E, H, I, J, I

(@) There can be many 'objective truths' for different people, depending on what we wish to find out about an event (Arts-based view of history)

A question which in the past has been overlooked, is whether it is acceptable to have different interpretations of the past which all have the same weight, historical authority, about them. The idea that 'truth is difficult to prove in history', and thus the ~~idea~~ idea that ~~all~~ all versions of the past cannot possibly be accurate as they cannot possibly reflect the 'one objective historical truth' is very much a postmodernist concern. Today, we generally hold the view that ~~all~~ <sup>(@) and thus that</sup> versions of the past ~~can~~ can tell us something either about the past; ~~what~~ 'what actually happened', or about the historians who wrote about it. Certainly it can tell us about the thoughts of individuals who viewed the 'past' ~~at~~ some time after the event in consideration. However, ~~it is~~ we must still be wary of proclaiming that, 'all versions are equally acceptable', because it is not necessarily always 'whether or not we have ~~found~~ found the 'truth'', so to speak. ~~The~~ The role of the historian and the social climate also determine how the past has been written about and thus, how 'acceptable' (i.e. how much historical 'weight' lies behind the argument) it is.

Historian E.H. Carr once claimed that "history is an ~~ended~~ unending dialogue", namely between the historian and the ~~past~~<sup>past</sup>.  
 Indeed, history is the end product of the historian taking artefacts from the past and making inferences about what it tells us about the particular aspect of history we are concerned with. Therefore, the three main ~~fact~~ points which need to be.

These interpretations can be subject to the personal thoughts or beliefs of the historian and thus, can be either consciously or subconsciously affected by them. It follows that in judging whether or not two or more versions of an historical event or a historical assumption, we need to look at the extent to which the historian has had an influence over the interpretation, the body of historical 'fact' or artefacts that ~~have~~ provide evidence for the interpretation (appropriately put into context, of course) and the reasons why we have these differing versions of the past.

An understanding of ~~the main~~ historiography is thus essential, in order for us to begin to decide, to 'judge' whether the interpretations of the past are reflecting of what the historical 'truths' may have been.

First to consider the role of the historian, we

must consider the question: what view, what historical 'lens' is the historian seeing the event from? A considerable body of historical fact, prior to the 18th century, was written to glorify the conquests of the Catholic Church. The historian is very much a product of their society; as ~~Gaddis~~ notes in Source B, "history happens to historians, as well as to everyone else". The 'lens' through which they view the historical artefacts and thus the 'facts of history' which come to us refracted through the mind of the recorder, impact greatly on determining whether or not the historian's (or anyone else's) version, for that matter), is acceptable. Certain 'lenses' can give weight to certain ideals, thoughts and beliefs; for example, Marxist history in the 20th century, as well as, <sup>the</sup> Whig interpretation of history in the 18th century, are both quite deterministic accounts of what actually happened! Marxist history <sup>tends to</sup> views history ~~from the~~ as the story of the working (proletariat) class eventually rising up out of their positions and overthrowing, in some respects, the societal restrictions and conditions that previously determined their class. It views all history and all societies as ~~eventually~~ going through 'stages' of progress <sup>towards communism</sup> culminating in the formation of a

✓ ~~Communism~~ Marxist state and a society which accepts that ~~Communism~~ is the 'end state' of society. ~~The taking~~ ~~interpretation~~ Marxist interpretations focus on economic theory and less on the importance of great 'individuals' in history, unlike other interpretations like the 'Great Man theory' which suggest that the ~~is~~ result of historical events are sometimes underpinned by the decisions of influential people such as Winston Churchill, Stalin or Hitler. The latter suggests the importance of ~~is~~ historical contingency, in contrast to the ~~is~~ former two which suggest arguments of historical inevitability. An historian that is sympathetic of certain ideals and views history through certain 'lenses', may subconsciously or consciously write in a manner that reflects their ideals; Giaddis in source A notes that "we know the future by the past we project on it". If this is true, then, the projections of the historians that write about an event may blur the facts, ~~so that the~~ to the extent that they fit the facts to the theory instead of the theory to the facts.

Another famous example of the <sup>type of</sup> issues surrounding the role of the historian in presenting a view of the past, is ~~the~~ the debate over whether historians should remain "unemotional and undramatic" or whether we should try to

Use our emotions to develop historical empathy so as to better comprehend an event, a person or a historical force. Gaddis, in source B, argues against the use of for the "responsible use" of moral judgement in history, because he considers it significant that we "fit the 'representation' of the past to reality. A counterargument posed by the postmodernists could be: how much "fitting" are we doing when we project our ~~current~~ present-day societal values onto the past? If we projected our current-day interpretations of ~~the~~ First World War General Haig's <sup>then public</sup> stance ~~on~~ onto the discussion over whether he was a brutal 'butcherer' or instead a man committed to his ~~personal~~ troops but anxious to ~~not~~ act in a manner which would give his Victorian-era society confidence in his ~~leading~~ leadership, then we come up with a different interpretation compared ~~to whether or not we contextualise~~ it. Thus, is our ~~the~~ account of what General Haig was really like, historically accurate ~~from this, the point~~ After the efforts of revisionist military historians such as Gary Sheffield, we have perhaps, a more accurate interpretation of the past because we have contextualised it. It reflects the 'truth' ~~that~~ of 'what happened' in the past. That is not to say, however, that the 'poets' view' spearheaded

✓ by individuals such as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Graves, is inaccurate. What they wrote is what they experienced (subjectively) and it is their version of the 'truth'. The problem is that the way 1950s historian Alan Clark, as well as Haig's rival Lloyd George, published, after Haig's death ~~in~~ <sup>the Donkeys'</sup> damning books ~~and~~ did not contextualise the descriptions of Haig. They left out ~~the~~ how it was generally seen in the ~~1900s~~ 1900s that a leader had to appear strict, serious and controlling, in line with the Victorian ideal. Consequently, those ~~of us who~~ who ~~were~~ read their books ~~at~~ ~~now~~ today, are unaware of this and form 'inaccurate' or unrepresentative views of ~~Haig~~ Haig's personality and motives.

We can see clearly through this, that the ~~motives~~ of the historian affects the way in which they write about historical events and persons, as is also exemplified in a study of WWI historiography -

Lloyd George's war memoirs were intended to criticise Haig's military leadership; thus it was beneficial for him to exaggerate his depiction of Haig as a bold hearted leader. The two, during the Great War, ~~had~~ had constantly been at loggerheads ~~and~~ and it has been noted by other military

Historians that Haig did not appreciate what he saw as "backstabbing" behaviour from Lloyd George (Professor Peter <sup>(historian)</sup> Simkins).

We must therefore look at the connection between the historical event/persona and by historian, if we wish to eliminate some of the effects of purposeful misrepresentation on events.

Carr notes in source E that "the facts are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ~~water~~ ocean" ie. that they are ~~too~~ difficult to grasp, that their nature is fluid and that what we choose to ~~catch~~ catch is what we put on the plate (represent). By purposefully ~~choosing~~ choosing evidence to indict or glorify historians like Lloyd George can twist the ~~facts~~ 'facts' to suit their purpose, so that we must be wary of when attempting to conclude that 'all versions of history are equally acceptable'; clearly, they may not be.

Surrounding this argument is also the debate over whether ~~if~~ 'if the tree falls in the forest and no one is there to hear it fall, has it really made a sound?' The argument posed by Mortimer in source C is that "historians have the authority to write about the past because society as

✓ a whole is anxious about P? He goes on to state that "unemotive and undramatic language alienates ... readers and pushes them towards historical fiction ... traditional scholarship has lost out on the popular front". He is making reference to 'sensous' historical fact and the 'sensationalisation' of history. Such sensationalisation leads to ignore microhistories and the complexities of what happened in the past and if ~~the~~ ~~believe~~ ~~what~~ appears that Mortimer is suggesting that this is the precise reason of why most readers are drawn to read it. For example, historical narrative is evident in Daniel Okrent's book 'The Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition', in which he lists out the main causes & consequences of Prohibition. The PBS documentary 'Prohibition', ~~which follows the book~~, tries to integrate the facts in Okrent's book and represents ~~as~~ the view that the Anti-Saloon League were the main reason that the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution was passed. Yet if we look at other books ~~and accounts of~~ <sup>(initial implementation)</sup> the past, some suggest that the ~~success~~ of Prohibition ~~hunged~~ hinged on the efforts of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Okrent's story is reflective of their contribution but the PBS documentary appears to 'gloss' over this somewhat and focuses much more on the ASL's efforts. Thus, historical scholarship may be telling us ~~a~~

✓ story which 'popular history' may not be - also exemplified in the popularity of the 'futility of war' view ('the Blackadder' view) which came to prominence upon the airing of the series in the 1990s. Though revisionists ~~have~~ (Simkins, Sheffield) have worked to illuminate the facts, the vast majority of the population ~~is more~~ tends to see World War One through the eyes of Blackadder, which begs the question: do different interpretations of events even matter if the more factually 'accurate' one isn't well known? Should we be looking at blurring the apparent distinctions between historical scholarship and popular history, so that people are exposed to a range of views? As noted by Mantel in Society, people are interested in "what went on in royal bedrooms by dignifying it as history? If so, is this what we should be focusing on, if we hold the view that historians have the authority to write about the past because society is anxious about it?"

The sensationalisation of 'popular history' may be a worry - but almost always, the counterargument is that it is backed up by the evidence (even though as we have discussed, this may have been purposefully)

distorted). Niall Ferguson's "The Pity of War" argues that soldiers in the First World War enjoyed killing, <sup>an argument</sup> which was the poet & went in its head - but he justifies this using evidence (letters, diaries) which appears to support his argument. With the increasingly distinct divide between scholarship and historical 'sensationalization', where readers ~~do not~~ rarely <sup>comborate</sup> the facts to make sure they are representative ~~of~~ of the general situation, we must be careful because 'acceptable' versions may have an impact on the way the general populace sees an event.

This leads into the importance of using evidence ~~to~~ when establishing the 'accuracy' of a version of history. One of the primary reasons why versions become obsolete or unrepresentative over time, is that new evidence emerges, which appears to show a story which is different to the 'existing view'. Instead of 'presentism' (source ~~is~~ <sup>factual</sup>), we can ~~not~~ use these newly discovered artefacts to contextualise the knowledge we already have. For example, revisionist efforts at ~~shaming~~ painting the 'Donkeys' in World War I as reasonable leaders who were not 'buffoons', have

~~been~~ - founded because new evidence (Haig's diaries and other previously classified information) has ~~been~~ been released. However, we must again be careful not to use these new sources extensively but to balance them with what ~~we~~ have seen in the past. ~~The~~ Schmidt's article (source J) cites Anne Boleyn: Fatal Attraction as having relied "heavily" on a document written by Lancelot de Cante about Anne's life. We do not know how representative the poem is about Anne's life; Schmidt says that "he does not name his sources, address the truth of his information or correct a number of factual errors". If so, then the evidence upon which the "version" of Anne Boleyn that the book puts out, can be ~~be~~ questioned. In turn, the "version" that Bernard himself has formulated, may also be in question.

A more 'acceptable' version will generally be one with more historical evidence to support it; ~~one~~ one which has corroborated its facts against ~~other~~ other such articles, books or evidence.

However, it is not to say that the emergence of a new view ~~renders~~ makes the old one obsolete; contrasting perspectives and very

throws light the importance and relevance of arguments about historical contingency and helps us to question "historical assumptions" (source C). In addition, it prompts us to ask why the other evidence was interpreted in the way that it was; in this, this helps us to understand ~~the~~ the influence of society on the interpretation. In doing so, while we agree that the version is less acceptable, it tells us about the society in which the "version" of history was constructed - it is still useful. Though Clarke's <sup>newer</sup> 'The Donkeys' was widely ~~not~~ accepted in the 1960s and has since been disproven, it gives us insight into the influence of postmodernism and the belief that the horror of the ~~two~~ World Wars had 'shattered' humanity in such a way that history <sup>and the future</sup> would no longer be, for want of a better phrase, predictable. Source D's last lines: "few people can come to terms with humanity in another age and not see themselves in a new and sometimes quite disturbing - light", is applicable ~~not~~ in this scenario. Indeed, the pessimism in the accounts given by professional historians during the 1960s is reflective of Mortimer's sentiment. In this way, all versions of history may not be acceptable, but may still be useful.

In fact, having different interpretations, versions of history, can be how we get closer to the historical truths. Elaborating on the idea of contingency, while Hobsbawm in Source G states that ~~it is~~ "the historian's world is what happened and not what might have happened if things had not been different, we need not consider the possibility of other scenarios". Hobsbawm's view is very different to that of most professional historians that recognise the importance of having various versions, ~~because~~ By ~~establishing~~ disproving a version we can rule it out and eventually by the process of elimination, come to the general consensus of what is likely to have been the "historical truth(s)". Contingency is important because history is not a "succession of facts" marching towards a predetermined outcome; it moulds, as Carr notices in E, over time depending on the questions asked by the historian. Different versions also help to build up a richer picture of the past, so that we are able to see different things that may previously have been ignored. These interpretations may actually have been 'accurate', as demonstrated by the findings which emerged when the

'feminist' branch of history was formed.

A richer picture has been built through the work of feminist historians, because they have asked "questions of history" that are appropriate to women (source 15). It is important to ask questions to build on the history of individuals that have traditionally been left out of the books. This has been a trend in recent years, with microhistories emerging as a field which has satisfied both scholars & general population interest. Books such as "The People's History of the United States" have given us insight into the story of migrants and minority groups in America, showing that history isn't the 'grand narrative' that has often been written on the past - it is tentative and is subjective because "the purpose of history is to reveal human nature and behaviour". Thus, provided that facts have been corroborated, it is possible to have versions of history which are all equally acceptable.

This is usually not the case, however, as history has been used as a tool on the past. "The Uses and Abuses of History" is one such exploration of how history

Has been bent, twisted so that the versions in it are purposeful misrepresentations of the past conjured up to satisfy a purpose. Source 11 alludes to the Japanese atrocities that ~~had been~~ were committed during WW2 (which is an aspect that ~~the~~ "The Uses and Abuses of History" focuses on as well). It tells us of "The Sino-Japanese War," the "comfort women". Traditionally, this has been left out of Japanese textbooks. Similarly, we observe how historical narratives have been kept under strict control in China, in the past.

A group of Shanghai professors wrote textbook history (for schools) which showed that traditional history emphasised the Chinese civilisation as "superior" and foreigners to be wary of. The Beijing historian authorizer, honed in on how Mao's ~~conquests~~ conquests were not glorified and banned the books, claiming that it was a step in the wrong "political and theological direction" as it was a departure from traditional "Marxist history" (which explained history?).

~~Propaganda~~ has often been used as a form of propaganda; once again this concerns who reads it; the future generations which have to be

'subdued' or have to be trained to think in a particular way. If historians are brought up in regimes such as this then their writing, their versions<sup>1</sup>, limited by the knowledge they have access to, will not be ~~as~~ accurate in reflecting historical truths<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, we must use interpretations with caution as all versions may not be equally acceptable. However, all can give us insight into the life of the historian, the values of society and the nature of history as a whole.