

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY**9489/31**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question

May/June 2026**1 hour 15 minutes**

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 **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Section A: Topic 1**The origins of the First World War**

- 1** Read the extract and then answer the question.

The great powers plunged into war for the sake of a quick victory.

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A deterrent may work ninety-nine times out of a hundred, but on the hundredth occasion it produces catastrophe.

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.

The purpose of National Socialism was to impose a new political, economic and social order on the German Reich, and ultimately on the entire European continent – and all within a very short space of time.

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The size and composition of the population were to be continuously monitored and regulated through programmes of birth control, resettlement and extermination.

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.

Section C: Topic 3**The origins and development of the Cold War**

- 3** Read the extract and then answer the question.

The confrontation in Berlin was not simply an episode in the early Cold War, it was when the conflict assumed its final shape.

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‘Not necessarily’, responded Acheson, but the task would be ‘to see who develops the most strength’.

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.

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