Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge O Level

HISTORY **2147/21**

Paper 2 **October/November 2020**

2 hours

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** the questions on **one** option only.
  - Option A: Nineteenth century topic
  - Option B: Twentieth century topic
- 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 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **12** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

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Option A: Nineteenth century topic

WAS JOHN BROWN A HERO OR A VILLAIN?

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer **all** the questions.

Background Information

John Brown learned his abolitionist views from his father. In 1855 he went to Kansas to oppose pro-slavery forces and in 1856 led an attack on the pro-slavery settlement at Pottawatomie Creek where five men were hacked to death.

In 1859 Brown turned his attention to Virginia, a slave-owning state. He rented a farmhouse and started to gather rifles, gunpowder and swords. On 16 October he led a group of armed men in an attack on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry. He planned to use the twenty thousand weapons in the arsenal to equip slaves who, he hoped, would rise up in rebellion against slavery. Brown managed to gain control of the armoury but on 18 October ninety US Marines arrived and Brown and his men were soon either captured or killed. Brown was charged with treason against the state of Virginia, tried and hanged.

Reactions to Brown's actions and execution have often been extreme, both at the time and since. He has been represented as both a hero and a villain.

SOURCE A

John Brown, a mad visionary, hit on a deadly plan. The slaves, he thought, might be persuaded to rebel against their masters if Northern sympathisers would provide them with weapons. He therefore proposed to descend on a suitable spot in the South, launch a revolt and, as the slaves flocked to join him, organise them into an army. It was a ridiculous fantasy, well illustrating Brown's insanity, the abolitionists' ignorance of the South and their growing tolerance of bloodshed and treason. Brown easily raised money in the North and he and eighteen followers descended on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry. He was dealt with without difficulty by the US army. Brown's handful of men was soon forced to surrender, and Brown himself was taken to Richmond, tried and hanged.

Brown thrilled New England. Abolitionist clergy welcomed the slave rebellion which, they thought, Brown's actions would stimulate. Their ravings drowned the numerous Northern voices which condemned Brown as a criminal. The impressions made on the South were deep. Here at last was the nightmare come true: the abolitionist appeal to the slaves to rebel. John Brown's raid thus marks the point of no return: it began the uncoiling of a terrible chain of events leading to rebellion and war.

From a history book published in 1985.

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SOURCE B

John Brown left a permanent mark on American history. His raid at Harpers Ferry resulted in both reverence and revulsion. It was a turning point in American history, away from compromise and towards war. When Brown and his small army of twenty-one men took over the federal arsenal and rifle factory, it was the fulfilment of a pledge to God to increase hostility toward slavery. Brown was a religious man who with every drop of his honest blood hated slavery and dedicated himself to eradicating it by any means necessary. To his mind his duty was clear and he never faltered.

Expecting slaves to join them, Brown and his men waited in the armoury while the townspeople surrounded the building. Gunfire was exchanged and eight of Brown's men were killed or captured. Brown was wounded in the attack and taken to jail at Charlestown. The bravest man and most self-sacrificing soul in American history was hanged at Charlestown in December 1859. He set an example of moral courage, and of single-hearted devotion to an ideal, for all men and for all ages.

From a recent account of the raid at Harpers Ferry.

SOURCE C

Did John Brown draw his sword against slavery and thereby lose his life in vain? To this I answer ten thousand times, No! No man fails who so grandly gives himself to a righteous cause. No man could possibly fail who, when on his way to be executed, could so forget himself as to stop and kiss a little child, one of the hated race for whom he was to die.

Did John Brown fail? John Brown began the war that ended slavery. If we look over places for which this honour is claimed, we shall find not Carolina, but Virginia, not Fort Sumter, but Harpers Ferry, and the arsenal began the war that ended American slavery and made this free Republic. Until this blow was struck, the prospect for freedom was dim, shadowy and uncertain.

From a speech in Harpers Ferry by Frederick Douglass, 30 May 1881.
Douglass was an ex-slave and leading abolitionist.

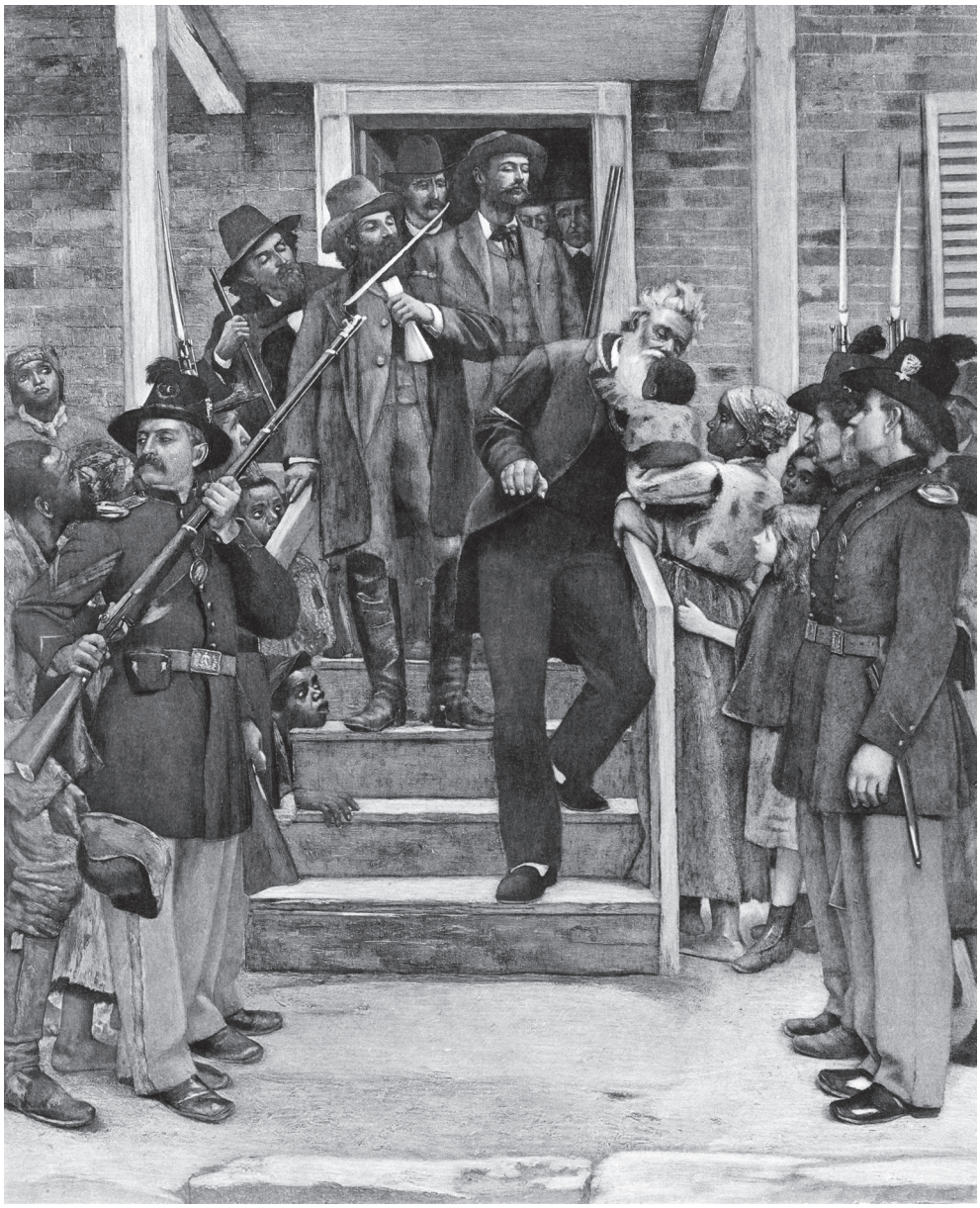
SOURCE D

Brown and his bandits made a desperate onslaught on the persons and property of the people of Virginia. It is a matter of great regret that the cowardly villains who sent them on their desperate venture cannot grace the same gallows from which they will swing. We feel angry at the tone of the Northern newspapers. Are treason, murder and robbery less hateful, would insurrection and house burning have been less dreadful, because, according to the New York Times, Brown was courageous and convinced of the rightfulness of his acts? This would mean that because Brown glories in what he has done, his life should be spared. Is not the New York Times ashamed of itself for pandering to the depraved sympathy of the city in which it is located?

Brown denies that he planned a slave insurrection. What then were the swords for? Did he not intend the swords and other weapons to be used by the slaves in resistance to the masters? We have come to the conclusion that if the South is to maintain her rights, her property, and the lives of her citizens, she must rely upon herself, and not look North for aid or sympathy.

From a newspaper, published in Richmond, Virginia, November 1859.

SOURCE E



An illustration called 'The Last Moments of John Brown', published in Philadelphia in 1885. It shows Brown leaving jail on his way to his execution. The artist has shown Brown kissing a black child as described at the time in a Northern newspaper. However, most accounts say that only soldiers were present when Brown left the jail.

SOURCE F

A mural entitled 'Tragic Prelude', from the late 1930s. It shows John Brown in Kansas during the 1850s. The book in his hand is the Bible. A prelude is an event that is an introduction to something more important.

SOURCE G

I deny everything except what I have always admitted, the plan to free the slaves. I intended to act as I did last winter when I went into Missouri, took slaves without the firing of a gun and took them to Canada. I never did intend murder or treason, or the destruction of property or to excite slaves to rebellion or to make insurrection.

Had I acted on behalf of the rich and powerful, every man in this court would have deemed it an act worthy of reward rather than punishment. The Bible teaches me to 'Remember them that are in bonds.' I endeavoured to act up to that instruction and on behalf of God's despised poor. If it is deemed necessary that I should lose my life for justice and mingle my blood with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by the wicked, cruel and unjust laws, I submit.

John Brown's speech to the court after he had been told his sentence, 2 November 1859.

SOURCE H

John Brown dies to-day! As Republicans, maintaining as we do, that no one in the North has a right to interfere with slavery, we cannot say that he suffers unlawfully. The man's heroism which is as great as a martyr and his constancy to his convictions have led to sympathy on his behalf throughout the North, but nowhere is the opinion supported that he should not be answerable for his act. As long as we are part of the Union we cannot join the opposition to the punishment which the infatuated old man will suffer. When the right of a Sovereign State to inflict a punishment for breaking its laws is questioned, disunion is being advocated. For that we are not prepared.

To our more radical readers these views will be unacceptable. When the fanatical action of the South dissolves the ties that hold North and South together, then we may have reason to support any means, including force, to emancipate every human being on American soil. Until then, we have a firm belief that the execution of Brown will hasten the downfall of the accursed system against which he waged war.

From a Republican newspaper published in Chicago, Illinois, 2 December 1859.

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Now answer **all** the following questions. You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which you are told to use. In answering the questions you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

1 Study Sources A and B.

How far do these two sources agree? Explain your answer using details of the sources. [7]

2 Study Sources C and D.

Does Source D prove that Douglass (Source C) was wrong? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

3 Study Sources E and F.

How similar are these two illustrations? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

4 Study Source G.

How useful would this source be to a historian studying John Brown and the raid on Harpers Ferry? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [7]

5 Study Source H.

Are you surprised by this source? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

6 Study **all** the sources.

How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that John Brown was a hero? Use the sources to explain your answer. [12]

Option B: Twentieth century topic

HOW FAR WAS KHRUSHCHEV SUCCESSFUL IN THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS?

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer **all** the questions.

Background Information

On 14 October 1962 an American U-2 reconnaissance plane obtained photographic evidence of Soviet missile sites in Cuba. This led to the Cuban Missile Crisis. The crisis was resolved at the end of October when Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles and Kennedy agreed not to invade Cuba. Kennedy also secretly agreed to remove American missiles from Turkey.

Did Khrushchev achieve what he wanted by placing missiles in Cuba? Any answer to this question needs to take into account his motives in putting the missiles there in the first place. Was he merely trying to protect Cuba from the USA, or was he planning to attack the USA? Was it an attempt to strengthen the Soviet Union's overall military position in relation to the West? Some have suggested the Soviet Union was trying to defend its position as world leader of Communism against its rival China.

By the end of the crisis it appeared to many people that Khrushchev had backed down and been humiliated. But was this really the case?

SOURCE A

Khrushchev was able to claim a victory over the missile crisis. He argued that Kennedy had now promised not to invade Cuba, so the continued existence of a socialist Cuba in the Soviet sphere of influence was guaranteed. This is clearly significant, especially if you accept the view that this was the main reason that Khrushchev put missiles on Cuba in the first place. Khrushchev must also be given credit for being prepared to back down in the face of nuclear war, especially when so many saw his handling of the crisis as a humiliation for the Soviet Union. However, the Soviet military were particularly angry. They had to accept a hasty withdrawal from Cuba, as well as the ultimate humiliation of having US officials count the missiles as they were removed.

Castro was also furious with Khrushchev. He was not consulted on the final deal about the missiles or the withdrawal of Soviet bomber planes and troops which had been sent to help the Cuban army. In the following months Khrushchev had to rebuild his relations with Castro and prevent a Chinese-Cuban alliance developing.

From a history book published in 2008.

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SOURCE B

Khrushchev backed down because he had information that US bombing of Cuba could begin in three to four days. On 28 October, as US officials prepared to strike on 30 October, Khrushchev accepted Kennedy's offer. Khrushchev made the decision to withdraw the missiles without consulting Castro. He knew that if he did, the Cuban leader would not agree. A furious Castro therefore refused to allow UN inspectors into his country to observe the missiles' dismantling, and then at first refused to return Soviet long-range bombers.

Contrary to what was believed, Kennedy did not give absolute assurances that the United States would not invade Cuba. In a letter to Khrushchev his no-invasion pledge depended on Cuba committing no aggressive acts against any nations in the West. This was a huge loophole.

These events angered the Chinese and widened the Chinese-Russian split to the edge of a complete breakdown. The Chinese called Khrushchev foolish for putting the missiles into Cuba and cowardly for removing them. The crisis had not enhanced the Soviet leader's personal power within the communist bloc. His decline opened new opportunities for the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe to regain more autonomy.

From a history book published in 1997.

SOURCE C

A cartoon published in an American newspaper, 29 October 1962. The figure on the right represents Khrushchev.

SOURCE D

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The speech should point out that our success in Cuba does not prove that force can solve everything. Significant steps have been taken to lift the threat of war. This has been made possible by the unity of the American people and by the belated recognition by Khrushchev that his adventure was a dangerous miscalculation which was bringing the world close to war. The events of the last weeks have fully exposed Castro, and we are confident that the forces of change will take care of his regime more effectively than invasion could.

If we had not acted, we would have allowed a drastic revision of the world balance of power. Our use of force was effective because the Communists knew that they were in the wrong and could not justify their actions to the world.

From a report written by Arthur Schlesinger, 29 October 1962. He is advising Kennedy on a speech he was due to make to the American people. Schlesinger was a senior adviser to the President.

SOURCE E

The United States' reactionary forces have been doing everything to overthrow Cuba's revolutionary government and restore their domination there. Revolutionary Cuba was compelled to take all measures to strengthen her defence and agreement was reached to station Soviet missiles in Cuba. Our only aim was to defend Cuba. All talk that Cuba was being converted into a base for an attack on the USA was a vicious lie.

The President of the United States declared that if we agreed to remove these weapons, the United States would not invade Cuba. We had shipped weapons to Cuba precisely to prevent such aggression against Cuba. Which side won? One may say that it was sanity and the cause of peace that won. The Soviet Union has not only exposed the US imperialist intrigues against Cuba but when Cuba was threatened we sent weapons and people ready to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Cuban people.

From a speech by Khrushchev to the Supreme Soviet (the Parliament of the USSR), 12 December 1962.

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SOURCE F

A cartoon published in an American newspaper, 30 October 1962.

SOURCE G

The main point about the crisis is that it has guaranteed the existence of a Socialist Cuba. If Cuba had not undergone this ordeal it is very likely that the Americans would have organised an invasion. Now that the climax of the tension has passed and we have exchanged commitments with the American government, it will be very difficult for them to interfere. If the United States should invade now, the Soviet Union will have the right to attack. We have secured the existence of a Socialist Cuba for at least another two years while Kennedy is President, and he may be in office for another six years. To make it through six years in this day and age is no small thing. And six years from now the balance of power in the world will have probably shifted – and shifted in our favour, in favour of Socialism!

A letter from Khrushchev to Castro, sent immediately after the crisis.

Now answer **all** the following questions. You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which you are told to use. In answering the questions you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

1 Study Sources A and B.

How far do these two sources agree? Explain your answer using details of the sources. [7]

2 Study Source C.

Why was this cartoon published on 29 October 1962? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

3 Study Sources D and E.

How far does Source D make Source E surprising? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

4 Study Source F.

What is the cartoonist's message? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

5 Study Source G.

How far does this source prove that Khrushchev's motive in the Missile Crisis was to protect Cuba? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [7]

6 Study **all** the sources.

How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that the Cuban Missile Crisis was a success for Khrushchev? Use the sources to explain your answer. [12]

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