Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Thursday 23 May 2024 – Morning

A Level History A

Y317/01 China and its Rulers 1839–1989

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

You must have:
- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

INSTRUCTIONS
- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer the question in Section A and **any two** questions in Section B.

INFORMATION
- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets **[ ]**.
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document has **4** pages.

ADVICE
- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

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SECTION A

Read the **two** passages and answer Question 1.

1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages.

Explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the consequences of the Boxer Uprising. **[30]**

Passage A

Once the international force had reached Beijing it had little difficulty in breaking the siege of the legations and crushing the Boxers. Cixi and the Emperor fled south to Xian.

The Western occupiers imposed severe penalties. China had to pay reparations. Arsenals and fortifications were destroyed, and foreign troops were permanently stationed on the approaches to Beijing. The Manchu dynasty was allowed to continue, but events had destroyed what little power it had held.

The failure of the Boxer Uprising was a profound humiliation for the imperial court. When the Emperor and Cixi were allowed to return to Beijing it was an inglorious affair. There was little popular sympathy for the Manchus. Those Chinese who believed in the right of their nation to be free of foreign control found it increasingly difficult to perceive of the royal government as the source of liberation.

In an attempt to sustain the dynasty's flagging fortunes, Cixi was prepared to countenance the reintroduction of the reforms which she had previously so vehemently opposed. Constitutional and administrative changes were introduced. The intention behind the reforms was clear - to rally support for the imperial government - but the results were not always as intended. The belated attempt of the Manchus to present themselves as reformers was unconvincing. Chinese progressives saw the reforms as grudgingly granted by a conservative government.

M. Lynch, China: From Empire to Peoples Republic 1900–49, published in 2010.

Passage B

Eighteen thousand foreign troops were making their way from Tianjin to the capital, battling imperial troops and Boxers as they advanced. Towns and villages were torched and tens of thousands of civilians killed. The allied troops entered Beijing on 14 August with a vengeance. Cixi and the Court fled to Xian, and so it was the ordinary people of Beijing who felt the fury of the invasion. Russian and French soldiers massacred Chinese civilians. There are things that I must not write and that may not be printed in England, which would seem to show that this Western civilisation of ours is merely a veneer over savagery, noted the British journalist, George Lynch, who witnessed the occupation. In spite of the criticism of foreign behaviour in China, it was the Boxers and the Qing Court that almost all outsiders (and a fair number of urban Chinese) blamed for the disasters of the summer of 1900. More fully than any event before it, the Boxer war had placed China outside the Western-led international system, a rogue state, the centre of a 1900 axis of evil that incorporated resistance against colonial domination everywhere. The foreign diktat imposed on China, the so-called Boxer Protocols, signed in September 1901, in effect made China a ward of the allied powers that had intervened against her. The Qing had become hostage to the political and economic interests of the West and Japan.

Odd Arne Westad, Restless Empire, published in 2013.

SECTION B

Answer any **two** questions.

2* ‘Chinese government rule under the Communist Party, from 1949, was unlike anything that had gone before.’

How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1839 to 1989? **[25]**

3* ‘Chinese rural society changed very little during the period from 1839 to 1989.’

How far do you agree? **[25]**

4* ‘Chinese foreign policy in the period from 1839 to 1989 was largely successful.’

How far do you agree? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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