Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Thursday 23 May 2024 – Morning

A Level History A

Y320/01 From Colonialism to Independence: The British Empire 1857–1965

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 reasons for the failure of the Indian rebellion of 1857. **[30]**

Passage A

A large number of people had thrown off British rule, even if they had not worked with the mutineers. It is hard to say whether this was a matter of Hindi-speaking nationalism, or a return by local chiefs to the local anarchy of the period between Moghul rule and British rule. Undoubtedly, they could see the British as foreigners and resist them accordingly, and undoubtedly the area around the ancient capital of Delhi had suffered from the transfer of power to Calcutta and the shift of wealth to the coastal regions like those round Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, but the lack of unity in the resistance, and the readiness of the rebel leaders to disagree with one another, shows how little of a common cause they had. If this had not been the case, resistance might have been more successful, for the British were outnumbered in most of the battles they fought. But none of the Indian troops had held any military rank high enough to give them experience in command, and the Indian princes whom they brought in to lead them were not much better. By May 1858, the sepoys had been defeated, and what remained was a matter of ending local rebellions that had broken out with the ending of British authority. The Governor-General was given the nickname of 'Clemency' because he did his best to stop the rush for revenge, though his proclamations declaring forfeit the estates of semi-independent chiefs in Oudh probably stiffened their resistance, but by the summer of 1859 the rebellion was over.

T. O. Lloyd, The British Empire 1558–1983, published in 1984.

Passage B

The mutineers were never able to transform the uprising into a war of independence. They lacked unified command, a coherent strategy and (for the most part) Enfield rifles. They were distracted by the sieges of Cawnpore, Lucknow and Agra. Their support was always confined to the north and even here it was patchy. Few princes or educated people joined them. Many of their countrymen fought against them, notably thirty thousand sepoys. They had to face formidable contingents of Sikhs, Punjab cavalry dressed in red turbans spangled with gold, dark-blue tunics, scarlet cummerbunds, light yellow trousers and large top boots. They were also opposed by Gurkhas, valiant Himalayan infantry in green woollen overcoats (which they refused to discard in temperatures sometimes over 140 degrees) and black worsted headgear. Using steam power and the electric telegraph, the British were able to call in fresh British troops, some from abroad, others with Crimean experience. They included Scottish highlanders, bag-piped and red-coated, bonneted, plumed and kilted, who were variously thought to be women, eunuchs and demons with a keen appetite for 'eating babies'. Certainly they were a terrifying array, once complimented for holding their fire until 'you saw the colour of your enemy's mustachios'.

The mutineers got no assistance from Dost Mahomed in Afghanistan, while Herbert Edwardes recruited a North-West Frontier militia.

Piers Brendon, The Decline and Fall of the British Empire 1781–1997, published in 2008.

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SECTION B

Answer any **two** questions.

2* ‘Economic factors were the most important reason for the growth of the British Empire in the period from 1857 to 1965.’

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

3* ‘Nationalism in India had a greater impact than nationalism in any other part of the British Empire in the period from 1857 to 1965.’

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

4* ‘The British Empire had a greater impact on Britain’s relationship with Europe than with the USA in the period from 1857 to 1965.’

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

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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