

History

Answers and commentaries A-level (7042)

1J The British Empire, c1857 — 1957

Marked answers from students for questions from the June 2022 exams. Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the student.

This resource is to be used alongside the A-level History Component 1J The British Empire, c1857-1967 June 2022 Question paper and inserts.

Question 1

Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to the economic importance of the Empire to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914.

[30 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of the interpretations put forward in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. The evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported, and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Provides some supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts and comments on the strength of these arguments in relation to their historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** Provides some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis, but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strength of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**

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L1: **Either** shows an accurate understanding of the interpretation given in one extract only **or** addresses two/three extracts, but in a generalist way, showing limited accurate understanding of the arguments they contain, although there may be some general awareness of the historical context. Any comments on the strength of the arguments are likely to be generalist and contain some inaccuracy and/or irrelevance. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1-6**

Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Student responses

Response A

Overall, extract 1 argues that the empire was not economically beneficial to Britain in general, as it only benefitted an elite few. In the extract it is argued that it is not 'immediately obvious' that the empire was economically beneficial in 'the last years of the nineteenth century and in the years before WWI.' In many ways, this statement could be convincing as during this time period, Britain saw an increase in trade with foreign countries, where as trade with empire remained static. Moreover, the defense of Empire was a massive economic burden, paid for by British tax payers and in many cases there were little economic benefits, such as some African colonies in addition to this, some argued that empire was limiting the development of Britain and slowing their industrialisation. Other European countries, including Russia and Germany had moved Rubber production to their own countries, where as Britain was still dependent on Rubber from Africa and Asia, therefore demonstrating how a focus on empire had limited development back home. Despite this, Empire was still a key supplier of many raw materials to Britain, therefore making it unconvincing to argue it was entirely unbeneficial, despite some obvious negative consequences. In addition to this, the extract also argues that 'most British overseas investment was in countries outside of empire'. This argument can also be seen as convincing, as Britain had substantial investments in many south American countries, despite it only being a part of the informal empire. Furthermore, although British overseas investment doubled during this time period, from £2 billion to £4 billion, the majority of this was not with Empire, with a far greater proportion of the investment being with the USA. Therefore it is convincing to argue that in terms of investment Empire was not Britains main recipient, which could therefore show it was not overall beneficial.

Similarly, the extract also makes the argument that 'most of the countries exports went to non-empire countries'. Although this could be seen as convincing in relation to African countries, who only received 1% of Britains total exports, this was not uniform across the entire Empire. India received 20% of Britains total exports, worth £150 million, therefore making the statement unconvincing, as many Empires countries were significant markets for British exports. Moreover, whilst it may be accurate to argue that Africa was not a large reciever of British exports, it is inaccurate to say that they were not beneficial to Britain as they were a large provider of imports of raw materials including cotton and cocoa. So overall, I find the arguments in this extract partly convincing. Although it must be considered that in many ways Empire provided economic burdens for Britain, during their time period it was still an increasingly significant trading partner and of great economic importance, large amounts of raw materials came from Empire, and it helped Britain to be one of the most economically powerful countries in the world. Moreover, it provided stable trading partners so therefore it is unconvincing to argue that Empire was entirely unbeneficial.

Overall, extract B argues that in general the Empire still generated wealth for Britain, despite the significant cost to run. One argument made in the extract is that the colonies provided 'Britain with valuable free trade.' Stating how it gave them access to 'key raw materials'. This argument would be seen as convincing in many ways as during this time period Empire was

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an incredibly significant contributor of raw materials to Britain. They imported tea from India, wheat from Canada, rubber from Malaya and many more. A primary reason for British involvement in many colonies was the economic benefits their raw materials could provide. However, it must also be considered that in some cases, Empire was not the only, more the most substantial contributor of raw materials. Although Britain imported wheat from Canada, it was only around 1 million tonnes, a insignificant amount compared to the over 100 million that they imported from the USA. Moreover, this access to key raw materials was often not entirely beneficial to Britain, as in some cases it prevented them from developing themselves for example, imports of Rubber from Malaya, meant that Britain had no rubber plants of its own, where as Russia and Germany had developed them in their own countries. So overall, it is partly convincing to argue colonies were valuable for their raw materials as they were also incredibly important suppliers. Extract B also argues that in the later decades of 1800s British investment is largely unconvincing, as, although Empire remained incredibly economically significant to Britain during this time, trade remained relatively static, not experiencing a large increase or decrease, on the contrary, trade with non-empire countries did see an increase in particular with the USA. In addition to this, British overseas investment also saw a large increase, doubling in this time, however most of this increase was with the USA and South America as opposed to Empire. Therefore it is unconvincing to argue that there was a shift in investment and interest towards the colonies. A final argument presented in this extract is that despite the empire 'never being cheap to run', the majority of this cost lay disproportionately with those colonised rather than the colonisers', It is accurate to argue that Britain faced a serious economic burden in the running of Empire.

They had to finance a body of troops that was able to maintain control of their many colonies. Moreover, this was made even more difficult when the local population opposed British rule, such as in Southern Africa, as they had to finance reinforcements. It could also be accurate to state that some of the burden lay with the colonies themselves, as often their taxes were used to pay for colonial defense. However, it is also inaccurate to state that this burden was 'disproportional' as UK tax payers also felt the impacts of maintaining the Empire. So, overall I find the extract partly convincing. It is accurate in arguing that empire was economically beneficial due to the large amounts of raw materials it provided. However, it in many ways over estimates the importance of empire during this time, as Britain still had a policy of free trade, and non-empire counties were equally economicly important.

Extract C argues that overall empire was economically beneficial as it was not only an important source if imports, but also provided livelihoods for many British people. One argument made in this extract is that Britain was 'dependent on the colonies for certain things'. It is convincing in many ways to argue that Britain was dependent on the colonies for raw materials, as it states many colonies were key providers, including Malaya for rubber, India for tea, Egypt for cotton and west Africa for cocoa. However, it must also be considered that in some ways this dependence on Empire was not always economically beneficial for Britain. The development of agriculture for raw materials in the colonies meant that agriculture at home was often neglected, and many lost their livelihoods as they struggled to compete with all of the colonies goods on the market. Moreover dependence on countries like Malaya, put Britain at a disadvantage to countries like Russia and Germany who had developed their own rubber production. So it is convincing to state that Britain was

dependent on Empire for raw materials although it must be considered in some cases non empire countries were the largest provider of raw materials, such as the USA for wheat. In addition to this, this dependence often negatively impacted Britain as it made them very vulnerable. Furthermore, the extract argues that the Empire was significant as it gave people in Britain jobs, as well as new opportunities leading to 'migration there'. It is accurate to state that there were many job opportunities across empire. There were British forces stationed across the globe, more over a plethora of colonial administrative positions. However, it must also be considered that the majority of these jobs were only available to the well-educated upper-class. Therefore these employment opportunities did not benefit Britain as a whole, only the upper-class minority. So overall, I feel this extract is convincing in arguing the economic importance of empire during this time period. However, in many ways it fails to consider how this economic dependence could be more of a burden to Britain than a benefit.

This is a Level 5 response

The response clearly establishes the theme or overall argument of each extract and supports this with short and directed quotation. The judgement about how convincing the argument may be is clearly expressed – especially in Extract A. Good, specific knowledge is used, for example trade statistics, to support judgement. The balance is apparent for each extract with a clear move away from a balanced description to a balanced argument focused on the degree of convincingness for each extract in turn. A very effective approach.

Response B

Extract A is very convincing in arguing that the Empire was not of economic significance to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914. Extract A argues that the Empire was not economically beneficial to 'the mass of British voters'. This tells us that in retrospect, looking back on the British Empire it was 'not immediately obvious that it was' of benefit to Britain economically. The Extract portrays this by stating that the 'benefits of overseas investment were not enjoyed by the majority of people' but instead 'a tiny elite of British society'. Some of whom 'emigrated to the Dominions'. Britain was not benefitting from the empire but those who were British living in dominions were 'the principal beneficiaries'. Between 1890 to 1914, 1 million people emigrated from Britain to their dominions, this allowed to Britain to maintain informal control and continue to benefit from the Empire. This supports the argument that the Empire was not of economic importance as it was not Britain who largely benefited but instead a select few British people within the dominions. Extract A also argues that this is due to the British investment overseas to countries outside of the Empire. There is evidence of this as from 1890 to 1919, of all British imports 75% were from countries that were not in the British Empire and 25% were from within the Empire. This shows Britains lack of reliance of the Empire. Despite this, Extract A fails to consider the British Empires aid to creating dollar reserves for Britain, allowing them to continue to trade with America, and Britains reliance of the Empire throughout the World Wars. This can limit the amount in which the extract is convincing in arguing that the Empire was of little economic significance to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914. Despite this, Extract A is still very convincing in arguing that the Empire was not of economic importance to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914.

Extract B is extremely convincing in arguing that the Empire was of high economic importance to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914. Extract B argues, that 'territories controlled by Britain (...) could and did provide Britain with valuable trade' and 'created tremendous wealth for Britain and provided export opportunities.' Extract B states that the Empire provided 'an ability of access key raw materials' for Britain which allowed for production and more trade. This can be seen in West Griqualand, when diamonds were discovered and Britain instantly annexed it to make a profit, and initially left East Griqualand for the native people but once diamonds were discovered there too, Britain annexed it as well. This shows the impact of the discovery of raw materials within the Empire and the benefit that Britain gain. This is evidence supporting the argument that the Empire economically important to Britain. That can also be seen as the Extract states that in the 1800s other European nations 'undermined the principle of free trade (...) which provided less restrictive exploit and import markers'. This was not beneficial for Britain as 'in practice most were dominated by Britain as supplier and as buyer'. This is a challenge to the argument that the Empire was economically beneficial to Britain as Britain were the ones who were limited the most by the 'Prohibitive tariffs imposed'. Despite this the Extract does argue that in '1914, in most colonies, the encouragement to produce goods for the British market helped the British economy more than it did the producers.' This shows that the Empire sacrificed its own economic gain to support Britain, an example of this is the production of cotton in Egypt after being picked it was sent to Britain and manufactured there, creating products sold back to the Empire. This largely limited economic growth within the Empire but did benefit Britain. Extract B argues that the Empire did provide valuable trade and was of economic importance to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914.

Extract C is somewhat convincing in arguing that the Empire was of economic importance to Britain in the years 1890 to 1914. This can be seen in extract C as it argues that ‘the British people had needed the Empire not only for trade and investment but also for product to purchase (...) their livelihoods depended on it.’ This shows that Britain and its people needed the Empire. Extract C states that one of the Empire economically benefitted Britain is that ‘the Empire provided new opportunities, and many migrated there’, Many Brits moved into the Empire, as it provided them with jobs or a better quality of life which benefitted the view of the Empire from Britain as people saw the benefits it was having of others lives. The Empire also did this for indigenous people as it ‘employed directly as colonial administrators, clerks, soldiers and many other (...) indirectly in supporting them from Britain.’ This would have created a better view of Britain from within the Empire allowing people to work harder for it. Despite this argument the extract does challenge this view as it states that ‘bonds grew stronger and tighter’ and that ‘many would have welcomed even closer economic and social ties’. This is undermined as there is evidence of nationalism and a want for independence from the British Empire, showing that indigenous people did not want a close tie with Britain. This shows that although Britain did need the Empire and that it was of economic importance to Britain, indigenous people did not want a strong tie with Britain. Extract C is somewhat convincing in arguing that the Empire was of economic importance as although it states that ‘British people had needed the Empire’ it also could support indigenous individuals within the Empire by providing jobs.

This is a Level 3 response

There is an attempt to prove that each extract has been understood, although the identification of the overall argument, or of any argument, is not always clearly expressed. In addition balance, for example in Extract A, includes a great deal about what the extract does not mention. This type of argument by omission does not really provide an assessment of how convincing the arguments in the extract are. In this example, both Extract B and C have been slightly misunderstood and this further weakens the quality of the response which is compounded by the use of generalised supporting information. However, there is an attempt to evaluate each extract in turn, and a judgement, although not firmly supported by quotation or by specific subject knowledge, is present as demanded by L3.

Question 2

In the years 1858 to 1890, to what extent did British rule change India both economically and socially?

[25 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Student responses

Response A

In the years 1858 to 1890, following the mutiny, Britain's rule certainly changed India economically and socially. However, while the benefits of the economy and production may have increased, and the social opportunities for Indians seemingly improved, this was arguably superficial, only the wealthy sector of society reaping the benefits, the poorer classes of the country suffering similarly to how they had beforehand.

In terms of economic change, following the mutiny, India definitely saw certain aspects improving, however this was for Britain's strategic position over benefits for the people. The growing economy can perhaps be witnessed in the fact that tea plantations increased from 1 to 195 between 1951 to 1971, suggesting a change in production within the country to facilitate trade. What's more, railways increased dramatically, from 2182 miles in 1958, to 3000 miles built following the mutiny, displaying more effort being put into India for transporting goods and again facilitating trade. In this way it seems that Britain was changing India for the better, yet it can also be argued that these measures were strategic, the railways providing quick routes of passage for troops and the tea plantation increasing exports to Britain and allowing for more cheap labour and low pay for Indians. What's more, the subsistence farming prevailed in India, specialisation of high value crops over low value grain leading to Indian dependence on food imports, and then the consumption per head declining. This displayed that Britain had made little change to the economic situation positively, instead the increasing trade leading to devastating effects. This was reinforced by the famine rates that remained extremely high, and in the 1870s, over 6 million Indians, died.

Furthermore, land irrigation and investment schemes only impacted 6% of land in India, the British rule again showing little change to the internal state of India. It is therefore that, while certain improvements were made to India in the form of railways and tea plantations, the people of India suffered dramatically, famine rates high, irrigation doing little and food imports from Britain blunting their own viable market development, suggesting that economically, Britain changed India for the worse.

Socially, following 1858, the British made several changes in their treatment to India people, the Indian mutiny opening their eyes to the need of new change. For example, the doctrine of lapse was removed, ensuring the loyalty of princely states whom that previously had the land stripped from them unfairly, the tradition of adoption insensitively mocked by Dalhousie. Furthermore, Mary Carpenter, a moral reformer, went to India and created girls school in Mombasa and Ahmedabad and a college to train female teachers, also created the National Indian association in 1870 to promote further reforms, displaying active efforts to improve educational opportunities. Similarly, of the 1712 Calcutta University Students to graduate in 1882, 1/3 entered government service and more went into the legal profession, displaying the British being more open to enhanced political voices of the people.

Furthermore, socially, there were attempts to win support of the people, This was seen in Canning's exhaustive tour of India from 1859-6, trying to win back those alienated by British

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rule. Furthermore, Indians were given out star of India medals to reward help during the mutiny and the British promised to rule more sensitively. Overall therefore, socially British rule in India seemed to change for the better, India provided with more opportunities education and sensitivity as before 1858.

On the other hand, the social changes made arguably only benefited those of the upper classes, suggesting that the measures imposed were primarily superficial. For instance while many more Indians were given educational opportunities, it was only really accessible by the wealthy part of society, evidence being the widespread illiteracy rates that were maintained. Furthermore, the vernacular press act imposed by Lord Lytton in 1878 was intended to gag criticism in non-English newspaper, implying an attempt to silence opinion. The creation of the Indian national association (INA) suggest a greater growing distaste for British rule, perhaps as a result of the limited accessibility to reforms, the INA the coordinating a sense of nationalism. What's more, a two-tiered government system was created, believing that races should be kept apart, Indians disallowed from reaching the higher levels of the legislative assembly. This displayed that while a change had been made in including Indians more in government service, the change was ineffectual and limited. As they had no real say over any policies, the race divisions also going back on the British promising to rule more sensitively, their stereotypes and racism preventing true inclusion. Therefore, while overall social changes were made and some were for the better, such as Mary Carpenter, on a countrywide scale, they were extremely limited, the change only beneficial for the wealthy who would enter educational jobs.

Social change was also made in the army, the reform as a result of the mutiny changing India into a country that could be more easily controlled. For instance, 62 out of the 74 Bengali regiments were disbanded due to their disloyalty during the mutiny. Additionally, the army was made in a ratio of 1:2 of British to Indian troops in an attempt to maintain control. Whats more, ammunition was put into British hands and regiments were made to live a separate area to prevent disunity. The officers were also requested to treat the people more sensitively following the outcry that resulted enfield rifles covered in pig fat which had offended Hindu and Muslim beliefs. While this measure was positive and demonstrated more sensitive actions towards the troops, the rest of the army reforms were made to maintain ultimate British control, comparable to that of the economic improvements like the railways. The mutiny had shown the British that they had to rule more carefully and restrict unity among Indian troops. It is therefore that the army reforms provided a social change of before the mutiny, but only to accommodate British power.

To conclude, Britain's rule in India did change from 1859 to 1890 due to the mutiny's impact showing them they were out of control. However, the changes that were made only benefited the elite and the poor continued to suffer. The changes only aided Britain's strategic position at the expense of the internal state of India.

This is a Level 5 response

The introduction offers a clear judgement, although the identification of some specific knowledge in support would have been welcome. The separation into economic and social paragraphs, whilst logical may have resulted in a narrative approach, but the candidate does produce a balanced and well-substantiated argument for each factor using carefully selected knowledge in support. It is impressive that this knowledge is also effectively deployed for social change which can offer an opportunity for a more generalised support. The evaluation of change in the army is linked by the student to the broader theme of social change and is therefore creditable. The occasional deviation from precise focus weakens the quality of the response slightly.

Response B

Britain's rule over India between 1858 to 1890 led to massive social and economic change with the British government trying to take full control over India. With India changing massively due to the British government. Social change in India can be seen through how the British government taking over India, with the government dissolving the East India Company in 1858 and taking responsibility out of the hands of individuals and charter companies into the government's hand. Social change can be seen with India's purpose being to help Britain with its needs with India becoming Britain's 'crown in the jewel'. This can be seen through India becoming a crown colony in 1858 with Indian needs of poverty, famine and poor infrastructure being put to the side with infrastructure only being built when Britain needed it with poverty and famine still being high. Social change could also be seen with the army as the ratio of British and Indian troops becoming around 1:2 a largely smaller ratio as Britain tried to establish control with Britain having 70,000 troops to 125,000 native troops. A final place social change is shown is through education with it being in English and only being for a privilege few, Mary Carpenter who lived from 1807-77 tried to have greater change through the establishment of the Indian National Association with her aim to improve education. This proves British rule between 1858 and 1890 had massive social change with Britain and its government fully taking over to establish control leaving India in a place of low employment, low education rates, high famine with high poverty and poor infrastructure. Britain's rule led to massive change as they continued to assert their power while arguably making India's problems worse.

Economic change in India can also be seen with massive change occurring, through the amount of goods imported and exported that arrived in Britain as a result of their rule with India's goal being to help Britain over its own interests with Britain, a goal set by Britain itself. India's economic status became much worse due to British involvement and the Government of India Act in 1858 with India's gold and raw natural materials being taken by Britain, one of the richest countries through its resources between one of the weakest thanks to British involvement, with the Indian public suffering death due to their lack of employment and lack of food both a result of Britain taking Indian goods for themselves, selling to Britain without choice for a far lower price than their goods were actually worth. Economic change did dramatically change under British rule with the economy getting worse for India so Britain could make theirs far greater.

However it could be argued that change in India, both social change as well as economic change was not changed to a massive extent through it did still change. This can be seen through the Indian issues of poverty, famine, employment and education while Britain did make these economic and social problems worse they were already awful before British rule came into effect by 1858 to 1890, while Britain did make many changes to India with Queen Victoria even being named empress in 1877 and the army changing in its recruits of Bengali troops and the numbers of British to Indian soldiers becoming stronger in Britain's favour, the British didn't have a massive effect on those Indian issues, they merely neglected them for their own interest and while that does change India in an economic and social sense it does not have this massive extent that totally shifted how India was before 1858-1890.

I conclude that Britain did largely effect India in both an economic and social way, with Britain taking advantage of their control for their economic benefit making India's weaker as well as socially putting the Indian people in a horrific state were many innocent Indian civilians would have lost their lives.

This is a Level 3 response

The opening of this essay comes rather close to providing a descriptive list of changes which indicates good knowledge but provides much less evidence that the period or the question has been understood. The knowledge is however quite detailed and is plainly linked to the focus of the question. It is only towards the end of the opening paragraph that evaluation as demanded by L3 is in evidence. There is an attempt to offer balance, but again this tends to be presented as a list of largely relevant material. It is really only in the conclusion that a clear opinion is presented but even here there is a tendency towards overly generalised statement and unsupported judgement.

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