

History Extension Case Study

Appeasement – Peace or War?

Dr Michael Molkentin

Shellharbour Anglican College &
The University of New South Wales Canberra

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COIF

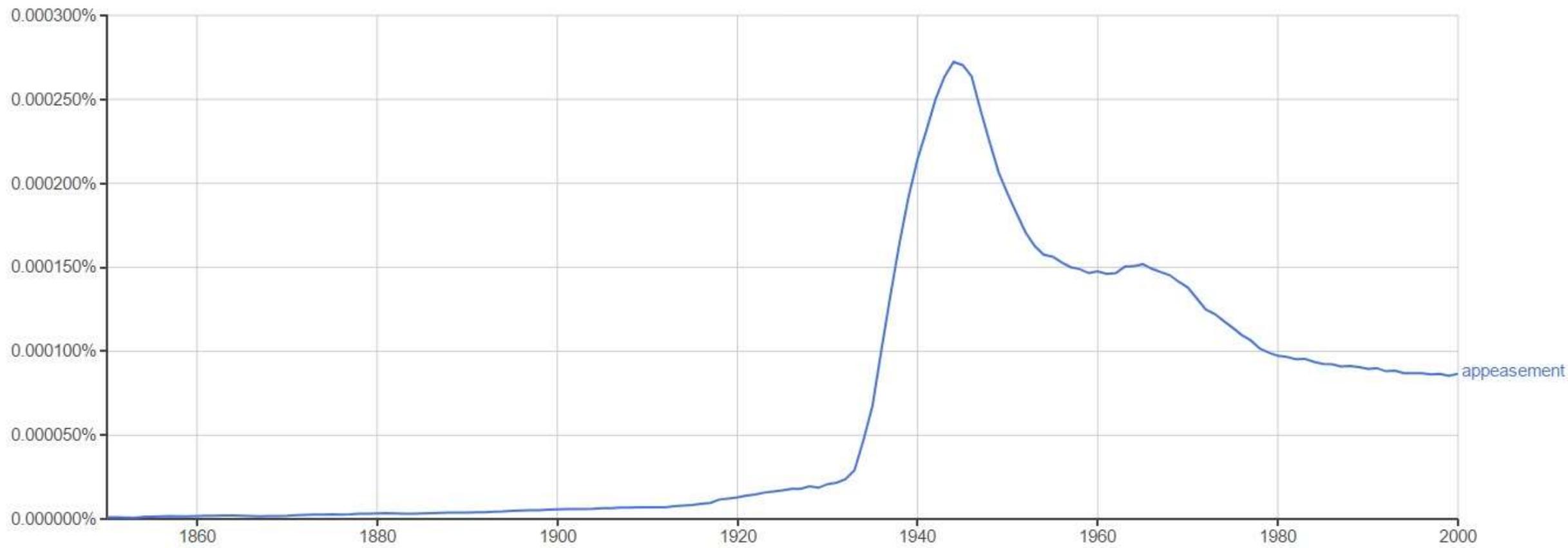
**ONE MAN SAVED
US FROM THE
GREATEST WAR
OF ALL**

30 September 1938

Google Books Ngram Viewer

Graph these comma-separated phrases: case-insensitive

between and from the corpus with smoothing of [Search lots of books](#)



(click on line/label for focus)

I remembered how each time that the democracies failed to act, it had encouraged the aggressors to keep going ahead. Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese had acted ten, fifteen and twenty years earlier.... If this was allowed to go unchallenged it would mean a third world war, just as similar incidents had brought on a second world war.

- President Harry Truman

Read more: <http://www.americanforeignrelations.com/E-N/The-Munich-Analogy-The-korean-war.html#ixzz4jrUZWQyQ>



<http://chinaconfidential.blogspot.com.au/2010/09/iran-pays-taliban-to-kill-us-troops-in.html>



Donald J. Trump ✓

@realDonaldTrump

45th President of the United States of



Donald J. Trump ✓

@realDonaldTrump

Follow

An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last.

-- Winston Churchill

RETWEETS

459

LIKES

473



1:26 PM - 14 Apr 2014

52

459

473



Harold Fields @Hungry_Turkey · 14 Apr 2014

Replying to @realDonaldTrump

@realDonaldTrump An idiot is one who would get us in many wars if president (ha!), hoping to satisfy his delusionally, self-aggrandizing ego

4

2



Lisa Binns @DocuLease · 14 Apr 2014

@Hungry_Turkey @realDonaldTrump Yes you are right. Obama is an idiot.

1

7



Harold Fields @Hungry_Turkey · 14 Apr 2014



Overview

- The exam
- The debates
- The 'content' of appeasement
- The historiography of appeasement
 - Phases
 - Influences
 - Selecting and using sources
 - An example
- The essay

Question 2 (25 marks)

Source B

Even when people have no motive to bend history in a particular direction, they have difficulty getting it straight.

JOYCE APPLEBY, LYNN HUNT and MARGARET JACOB
Telling the Truth About History, 1994

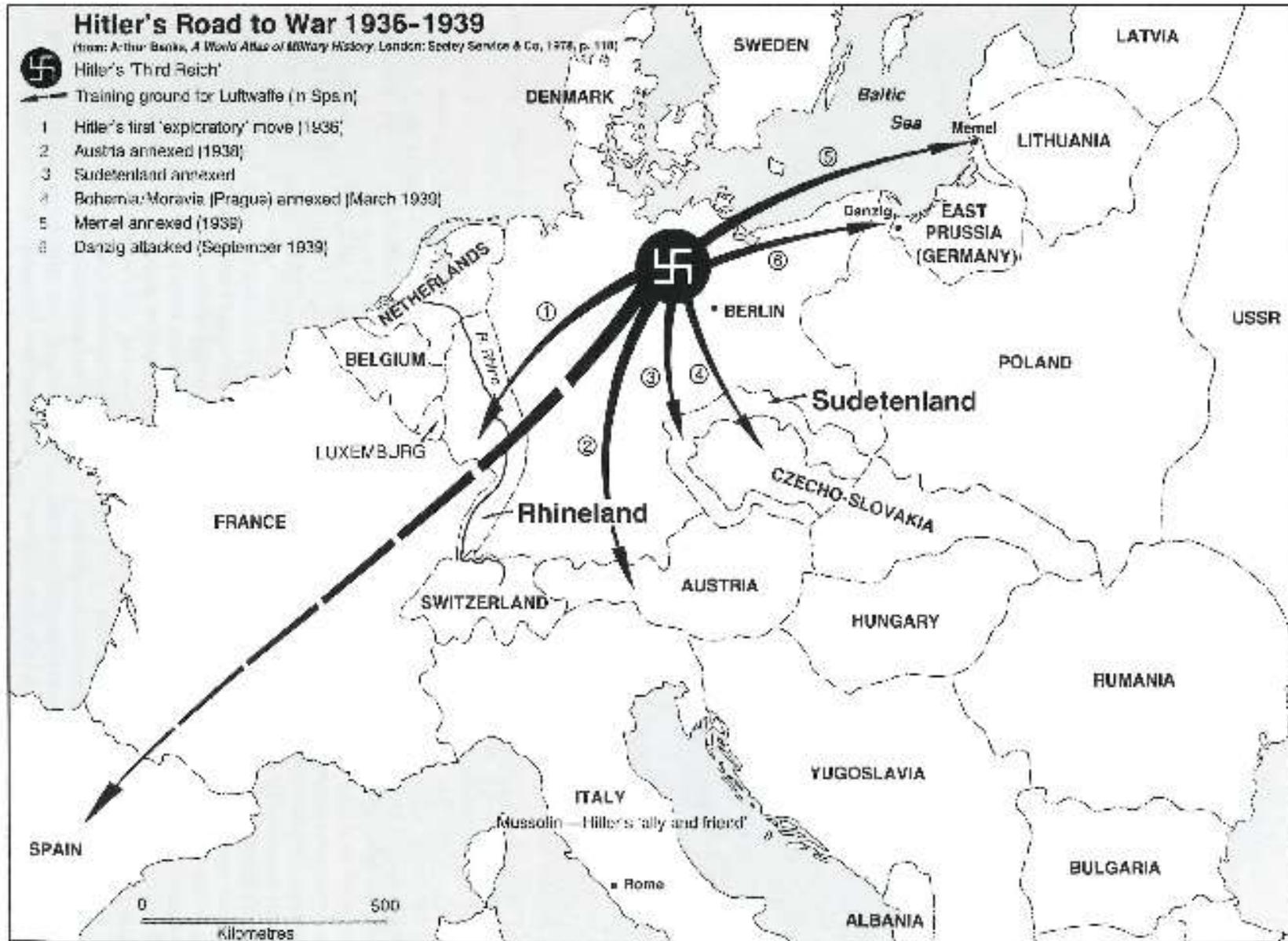
How relevant is the view expressed in this statement to the historical debates in your case study?

In your response, make explicit references to Source B and at least ONE area of debate in your case study. Identify your case study at the beginning of your answer.

The debates

1. The origins of appeasement and relationship to earlier policies
2. British and French approaches to appeasement in the 1930s
3. International reactions to appeasement in the 1930s
4. Appeasement and the origins of the Second World War
5. The extent of the successes and/or failures of appeasement

People	Events	Geography
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanley Baldwin • Edvard Benes • Neville Chamberlain • Winston Churchill • Edouard Daladier • Antony Eden • The Viscount Halifax • Adolph Hitler • Benito Mussolini 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treaty of Versailles (1919) • Locarno Agreement (1925) • Hitler made Chancellor (1930) • German rearmament (1930s) • Abyssinian Crisis (1935-36) • Reoccupation of Rhine (1936) • Spanish Civil War (1936-38) • Anschluss (1938) • Sudeten Crisis (1938) • Nazi-Soviet Pact (1939) • Invasion of Poland (1939) 	<p>A map of Nazi expansion in 1930s</p>



Douglas Newton, *Germany 1918-1945: from days of hope to years of horror*, Addison Wesley Longman, 1990.

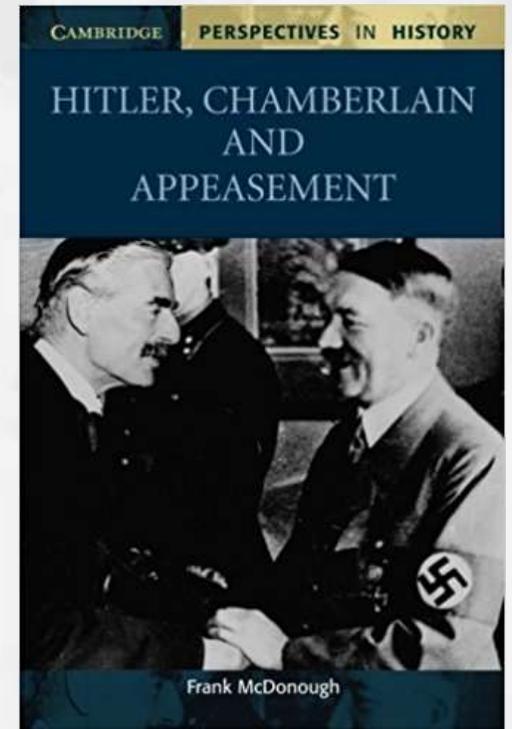
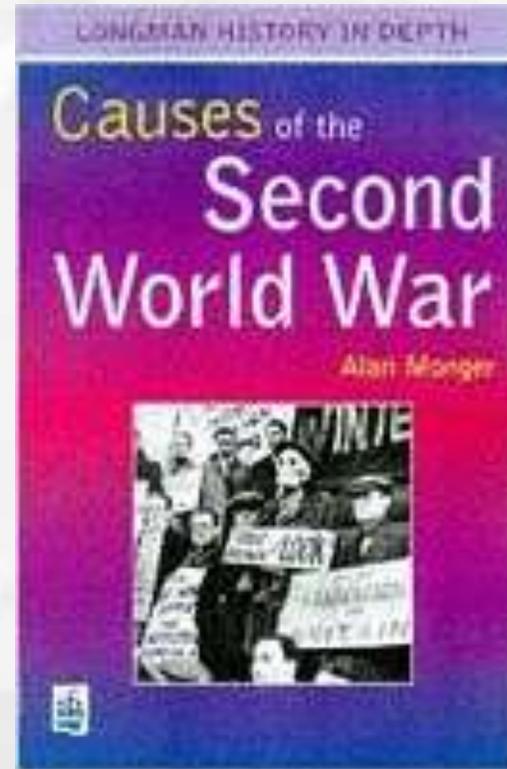
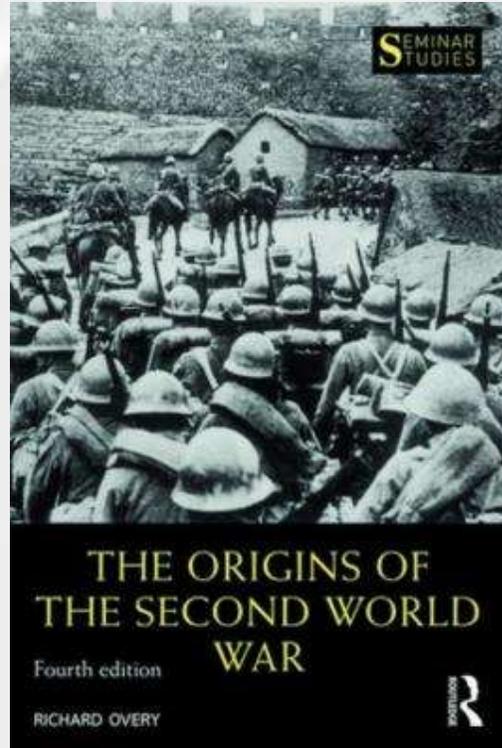
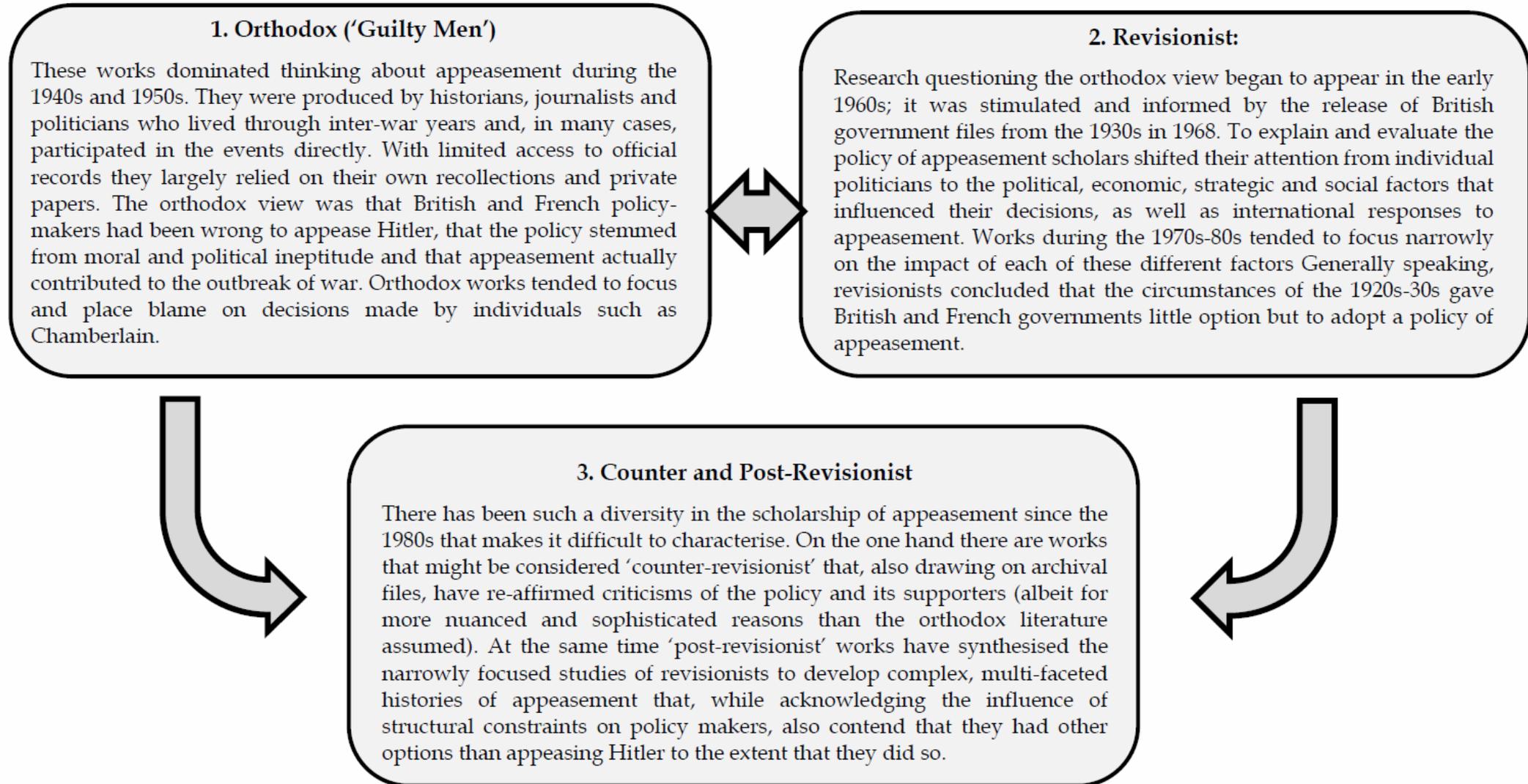


Diagram 4.1 Phases of appeasement historiography



1. The evidence

The evidence available to scholars of appeasement has grown over time. Milestones include the British parliament's *Public Records Act 1967* which changed the closure on government records from 50 to 30 years; the release of Neville Chamberlain's private papers in 1975 and the opening of British intelligence service files in 1997. The end of the Cold War also made archives in Eastern Europe and Russia available to western scholars.

2. The historians

The personalities and professional backgrounds of authors are indelibly stamped on the historiography of appeasement. Those who have been influential voices in the debates have included academic and popular historians, journalists, political scientists and politicians – all bring different methodologies and questions to the subject and all have written with contrasting purposes and for various audiences.

Diagram 4.2

What factors have influenced the debates about appeasement?

3. The social and political context

The social and political context in which appeasement studies have occurred has also influenced the way in which scholars have approached the topic. Contemporary events influence the questions asked and conclusions drawn about the 1930s. The disasters Britain faced in the early part of the Second World War, for example, encouraged a critical and emotive view of 'the appeasers'. The events of the Cold War had a more complex influence, encouraging some to cite appeasement as a 'lesson' against negotiating with aggressors while prompting others to see appeasement as a legitimate and indeed necessary policy for avoiding nuclear war.

Historian Patrick Finney also highlights the influence that changing ideas about British national identity have had on appeasement. Critics of the policy have tended to assume that British leaders *should* have confronted Hitler because they *could* have done so given Britain's dominant place in the world of the 1930s. Revisionists, working in the context of British decolonisation (1945-90s), came to realise that Britain was already in decline as a global power during the 1930s and, thus, had a limited capacity to alter the course of events in Europe.

Selecting and using sources

- How many?
- Do I have to read entire books?
 - Sidney Aster, 'Appeasement: before and after revisionism', *Diplomacy and statecraft*, vol. 19, 2008, 443-480.
 - Andrew Boxer, 'French appeasement', *History today*, vol. 59, December 2007.
 - Patrick Finney, 'The romance of decline: the historiography of appeasement and British national identity', *Electronic journal of international history*, 2000.
 - Frank McDonough, 'The historical debate', in *Hitler, Chamberlain and appeasement*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, 77-85.

Selecting and using sources

- What types?
- The big names
 - Cato (1940s)
 - Churchill (1940s)
 - AJP Taylor (1960s)
 - RAC Parker (1990s)
 - Frank McDonough (1990s)
 - Richard Overby (1970s-present)

Selecting and using sources

- Less well-known
 - Williamson Murray (1980s)
 - Williamson Murray *Munich at Fifty* (1988) and/or *The Change in the European Balance of Power 1938-39* (1984)
 - Patrick Finney (2000s)
 - Patrick Finney, 'The romance of decline: the historiography of appeasement and British national identity', *Electronic journal of international history*, 2000.
 - Jack Levy (2000s)
 - Norrin Ripsman and Jack Levy 'Wishful thinking or buying time? The logic of appeasement in the 1930s' (2008)
 - Christopher Waters (2000s)
 - Christopher Waters, *Australia and Appeasement: Imperial Foreign Policy and the Origins of World War II* (2011)

Bibliographic details of the source (author, title, publisher, year)

Summary of the source's main points relating to one of the debates

Summarise the main points of the author's thesis. Remember to identify how the author contributes to a specific debate in the Appeasement – Peace or War? case study.

Note some illustrative quotations. Select pithy, telling quotes rather than long, discursive ones that will be difficult to remember in an examination.

Biographical details of the author

Do some research to determine some details about the author's personal context: their professional qualifications, other work they have done, their political views and so on.

Factors that shaped the author's perspective and interpretation

What has influenced this author's approach to the topic of appeasement?

- Aspects of their personal background and agenda (noted above)
- Other works they might be writing in response to
- Historiographical theories and trends
- Contemporary events
- The evidence they used (or did not use)
- The purpose and readership for which they were writing

Critical evaluation of the source

- What are this source's merits as a piece of historical interpretation? What valuable contributions does it make to your chosen area of debate?
- What are this source's limitations? What are its weaknesses?
- How does this source reflect or challenge historiographical approaches such as empiricism, modernism or post-modernism?
- How does this source compliment or contest the views in your other chosen sources?

Williamson Murray



Munich at Fifty

Williamson Murray

IT is now fifty years since Adolf Hitler, Neville Chamberlain, Edouard Daladier, and Benito Mussolini met at Munich in September 1938 to strip Czechoslovakia of its territory and its defenses. The rationales for British and French policy ran the gamut from strategic *raison d'état*, to a basic rejection of the use of force in the international arena, to abject fear. The results were catastrophic. The British and the French came close to losing everything to a Nazi tyranny that would, in Winston Churchill's memorable phrase, have brought "a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science." But as is often the case, historians have obscured such moments when the world has turned in new and darker directions. Perhaps it is unavoidable; we all turn our faces from darkness.

To the people who taught me history in the 1960's Munich represented one of those hinges on which history had turned; Munich, of course, had determined their lives over the seven years that followed, and considerably for the worse. Current historiography, however, suggests that Munich was only a symptom of larger trends in the world, presaging the collapse of British and French empires and the rise of American and Soviet hegemony (at least for a short period). Munich, so the argument runs, came out of a desperate effort by the British to prevent a world war that, whether won or lost, would mean the end of empire. If so, the British failed to grasp that there is a difference between winning a war and losing one's empire and losing a war and losing one's national existence. The alternatives in 1938 were that stark. Nevertheless, whatever revisionists may write, Munich today still best symbolizes the blighted fruit of a decade of appeasement and surrender.

What most surprises me, as a military and diplomatic historian, about the wreckage of those years is the speed with which the Germans in the 1920's convinced themselves and the Anglo-American world that poor little Germany, pummeled

by its neighbors and everyone else, had made peace in November 1918 on the basis of Wilson's Fourteen Points and then, tricked by sanctimonious Americans and vicious Frenchmen, awoke to find itself accused by the Treaty of Versailles of having started the war. In fact, given what we now know of their behavior before the war and their actions during it—not to mention their plans for the postwar world—the Germans got off lightly indeed in 1919.

But that was not how the Germans saw it, and they persuaded a remarkably gullible Anglo-American public and academic world that "war guilt" might be strewn generously among any number of actors: wicked merchants of death, misguided statesmen overwhelmed by events, idiotic general staffs, corrupt big businessmen. All became fashionable culprits for the war's origin, and together they gave powerful reinforcement to the tenets of modern pacifism: that anything was preferable to war, and that in any case military force and strategic issues no longer counted in international affairs. To British appeasers, whose hearts and minds were laden with the suffering and losses of World War I, it was clear that reasonable men must conclude that there had been no winners in the Great War, only losers.

The Germans, unfortunately, were neither so "reasonable" nor so averse to war. Even before Hitler came to power, they were busily engaged in kicking over the traces; after January 30, 1933 things went to hell in a hand-basket. Rearmament began in February 1933, full-scale conscription and creation of an air force followed in 1935, remilitarization of the Rhineland the year after that. But after all, said European liberals, were not the Germans only playing in their own back yard?

Then in March 1938 came the *Anschluss*, the union with Austria. In Vienna's streets tens of thousands of Waldheims cheered themselves hoarse at being absorbed into the German state. The response of the Western powers was silence. At a Cabinet meeting held as German tanks rolled across the Austro-German frontier, Prime Minister Chamberlain admitted that such unsavory activity shocked and distressed the world as "a typical illustration" of the kind of "power politics" that unfortunately made international appeasement

WILLIAMSON MURRAY, a new contributor, teaches European, military, and diplomatic history at Ohio State, and is the author of *The Change in the European Balance of Power 1938-1939* and *Luftwaffe*. Mr. Murray wishes to thank MacGregor Knox for help in the preparation of this article.

The Examination

“[The HIX course]... enable[s] students to develop an understanding of **how and why the sources they have accessed have constructed their versions of history**. Students will be rewarded for constructing **their own coherent argument** based on this understanding, not on how much they know and can retell about the specific case study topic.”

The Examination

Issues identified in 2016 marking centre notes

- Identify the ideas presented in the source and engage with them in a sustained manner
- Avoid describing the sources – *use them to support an argument*
- Addressing the specifics of a debate – don't just discuss your case study generally

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