

Suggested Answer

(a) According to Source A, what impact did the Bosnian Crisis bring to the relationships between the European powers? (4 marks)

- L1 Without clear explanation or effective reference to the Source. [max. 2]
 L2 With clear explanation or effective reference to the Source. [max. 4]
 e.g. - Deterioration of Austria-Russia relations ('From this political rivalry in the Balkans sprang a never ending feeling of hatred between Vienna and St. Petersburg')
 - Further strengthening of Germany-Austria relations ('received the support and protection of Germany's Imperial power')
 - Further deterioration of the relationship between the two major alliances ('Europe was confronted with a fait accompli, and was forced either to accept it as such, or to engage in an armed struggle with Austria-Hungary, and possibly with the whole of the Triple Alliance.')

Suggested Answer

Firstly, the Bosnian Crisis led to the deterioration of Austria-Russia relations. The crisis caused 'a never ending feeling of hatred between Vienna and St. Petersburg, fated to lead, sooner or later, to open war'. Austria-Hungary and Russia became hostile towards each other due to conflicts in the Balkans, and such irreconcilable hostility paved the way for the world war and aggravated their relations.

Secondly, the crisis further strengthened Germany-Austria relations. In the past, Germany 'refrained from openly avowing here full solidarity with Austria-Hungary's policy'; however, during the Bosnian Crisis, Austria-Hungary 'actually received the support and protection of Germany's Imperial power'. It was clear that this crisis brought the two countries even closer and Germany showed solid support for Austria-Hungary.

Thirdly, the crisis aggravated the relationship between the two major alliances. From the Source, Germany's all-out support for Austria-Hungary and the latter's unreasonable decisions forced other countries 'either to accept it as such, or to engage in an armed struggle with Austria-Hungary, and possibly with the whole of the Triple Alliance'. Apparently, this crisis gave rise to the confrontation between the alliance of Russia and Serbia and the coalition of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The subsequent hostility and conflicts worsened their relationship.

- The deterioration of Austria-Serbia relations is not a reasonable answer since the question asks about 'the European powers' and Serbia was not one of them.

(b) Suggest a title for Source B. Explain your answer with reference to Source B.

(3 marks)

Marking Scheme

L1 Attempts to suggest a title with weak support from the Source. [max. 1]

L2 Able to suggest a suitable title with good support from the Source. [max. 3]

Title:

e.g. - The Boiling Point

Explanation:

e.g. - From the cartoon, the water in the pot, after heated by strong fire for a long time, reached the boiling point and belched out thick smoke.

Suggested Answer

The title could be ‘The Boiling Point’.

From the Source, the ‘Balkan Troubles’ in the cartoon was symbolized by an exploding pot that was heated by strong fire. The water in the pot evaporated with steam and bubbles coming out of it continuously. Therefore, the title could be ‘The Boiling Point’ to describe the extremely serious situation in the Balkans.

In the cartoon, the five powers attempted to press the lid of the pot but the condition did not change much. The water inside had reached its boiling point and would spill out soon. Clearly, the situation in the Balkans was so serious that it reached the boiling point and could no longer be brought under control, even by the powers. The title could therefore be ‘The Boiling Point’.

- (c) **‘Conflicts in the Balkans made the First World War inevitable.’ Do you agree? Explain your answer with reference to Sources A and B, and using your own knowledge of European history before the year 1914. (8 marks)**

Marking Scheme

- L1 Vague answer, ineffective in using both Sources and own knowledge. [max. 2]
L2 Lack in balance, effective in using Sources or own knowledge only. [max. 4]
L3 Sound and balanced answer, effective in using both Sources and own knowledge. [max. 8]

Agree:

- e.g. - Conflicts in the Balkans provoked hostility between Austria-Hungary and Russia. (Source A)
- The Balkan issue was not confined to the two countries in direct conflict and would inevitably involve other powers. (Source A)
 - The powers failed to keep the pot representing conflicts in the Balkans under control. (Source B)
 - The Greater Serbia ideology caused several conflicts and wars, including the Bosnian Crisis (1908), the two Balkan Wars (1912-14) and the Sarajevo Incident (1914) (Own knowledge)
 - The fact that the Austrian throne came to Sarajevo for a military parade would undoubtedly rattle the nerves of the Serbians and give rise to a crisis. (Own knowledge)

Disagree:

- e.g. - Germany's support for Austria-Hungary was temperate before 1909. (Source A)
- The powers attempted to reach a consensus on the Balkan issue. For example, Russia and Austria-Hungary both made concessions to each other at the London Conference of 1913. (Own knowledge)

Suggested Answer

I agree with the statement.

From Source A, conflicts in the Balkans led to ‘a never ending feeling of hatred between Vienna and St. Petersburg’ that was ‘fated to lead, sooner or later, to open war’. The relationship between Austria-Hungary and Russia was also concluded as ‘irreconcilable antipathy’. Apparently, the complex and insurmountable problems in the Balkans would eventually lead to a war between the two countries, with the world war as an inevitable result.

From Source A, ‘it was always improbable’ that Russia and Austria-Hungary would settle the Balkan issue ‘without drawing the other Powers into the struggle’. As a matter of fact, as early as 1879, Austria-Hungary already formed an alliance with Germany, which hinted that the Balkan issue between the two countries would no longer be confined to a bilateral conflict. Instead, it would escalate into a multilateral conflict with the world war as an inevitable consequence.

Moreover, from Source A, in the face of the Bosnian Crisis, Russia and Serbia could either accept Austria-Hungary’s ‘unscrupulous conduct’ as such or start ‘an armed struggle with Austria-Hungary, and possibly with the whole of the Triple Alliance’. No matter what Russia and Serbia chose, this crisis already provoked bitter hostility between the two major alliances, and the momentum towards a world war became more irresistible.

From Source B, the five powers attempted to stop the water in the pot of ‘Balkan Troubles’ from overflowing but they failed. The pot emitted dense smoke and the water was so hot that it reached the boiling point. The cartoon showed that the Balkan problem was so critical that it already became a burning issue and nothing could prevent the outbreak of war.

From my own knowledge, Serbia proposed the Greater Serbia ideology that aimed at expanding its territory. Not only did it start the Bosnian Crisis (1908) out of discontent with the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but it also waged war against Turkey and caused the First Balkan War. It was clear that Serbia’s expansionist policy would certainly lead to its conflicts with other countries, especially Austria-Hungary. In the end, the outbreak of the world war would become inevitable.

In addition, there were many small nations in the Balkans and they always had territorial disputes. After the First Balkan War of 1912-13, the powers attempted to make territorial arrangements for them, but it was almost impossible to settle territorial disputes between countries such as Serbia and Bulgaria. These countries resorted to war and caused the Second Balkan War. Therefore, the outbreak of the world war was only an inevitable result of the complex and critical Balkan problem.

Moreover, the Austrian throne visited Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for a military parade, greatly upsetting the Serbians. A Serbian extreme nationalist assassinated the Austrian throne and the incident has been known as the Sarajevo Incident. Enraged by the assassination, Austria-Hungary found it necessary to impose severe punishments for Serbia. It was certain that the Sarajevo Incident would lead to the world war and the whole process was unstoppable.

Furthermore, it was necessary for Russia, as the big Slavic brother, to support Serbia with an ethnically similar population in the Sarajevo Incident of 1914. Therefore, Russia became the first country to announce general mobilization to support Serbia, making it confident enough to reject part of the ultimatum from Austria-Hungary. When the war between these two countries broke out, Russia was also involved in the conflict. Apparently, the racial identity of Russia complicated and aggravated conflicts in the Balkans, making the world war inevitable.

Last but not least, Russia was eager to expand its influence to the Balkans and always wanted a warm-water port there as naval base. However, if Serbia was at a disadvantage in the Sarajevo Incident, Russia would lose an important ally in the Balkans and no longer be able to gain a footing in the region. Therefore, it was necessary for Russia to show solid support for Serbia during the crisis, and the world war was inevitable for this reason.

Therefore, I agree with what the question suggests.