

AS LEVEL
Candidate Style Answers

HISTORY A

H105
For first teaching in 2015

Unit 2 Interpretations

Version 1



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Introduction

OCR has produced these candidate style answers to support teachers in interpreting the assessment criteria for the new GCE History A specification and to bridge the gap between new specification release and availability of exemplar candidate work.

This content has been produced by senior OCR examiners, with the support of the Subject Specialist, to illustrate how the sample assessment questions might be answered and provide some commentary on what factors contribute to an overall grading. The candidate style answers are not written in a way that is intended to replicate student work but to demonstrate what a **'HIGH LEVEL'** or **'MEDIUM LEVEL'** response might include, supported by examiner commentary and conclusions.

As these responses have not been through full moderation and do not replicate student work, they have not been graded and are instead, banded to give an indication of the level of each response.

Please note that this resource is provided for advice and guidance only and does not in any way constitute an indication of grade boundaries or endorsed answers.

Question 1

Y245 Italy and Unification 1789–1896

'The military superiority of Austria was the single most important factor in the failure of the revolutions [of 1848].'

From: A. Stiles, *The Unification of Italy 1815–70*, 1986

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation is arguing that Austrian military superiority, while not the only factor, was nonetheless the divisive one in the failure of the revolutions. This interpretation presupposes a single overarching important cause, and that it was Austria with its large and effective military that overwhelmed the Italians. Other factors though should be considered, such as the actions of France, and the internal weaknesses within the Italian states such as the lack of popular support.

This interpretation can be seen to be valid to some extent because the leadership and skill of General Radetsky was key to the failure of the revolt in Lombardy. In retreating to the Quadrilateral, he created a secure, strategic position from which his best men could fight. Events inside Austria also helped, as internal rivalries and the weakness of the revolutionaries inside Austria allowed the Habsburgs to regain control, and present a strong challenge in Italy, which led to the pope withdrawing his troops from the fight. Although the battle of Goito was lost by Radetsky, he quickly recovered, and the overwhelming strength and superiority of the Austrian army meant that the conditions for the revolution to spread never materialised, and Radetsky very cleverly chose to fight himself for Lombardy, rather than leaving it up to Charles Albert. The decisive Battle of Novara in March 1849 thus crushed any revolutionary hopes, certainly in northern Italy, and left Charles Albert to abdicate. So the interpretation has the strength of locating Austrian military superiority as a major factor in the defeat of the revolutions, although it could be modified to Lombardy, Piedmont and the surrounding areas rather than the whole of the region.

However, this interpretation misses the point that it was the divisions within the nationalist movement itself, and the role of the French, that contributed significantly to the failure of the revolutions. The nationalist movement in Italy had failed to convince large swathes of the population of its point by 1848, and therefore to some extent was doomed to fail. The peasants often saw the revolutionaries as more of a threat than the old regime itself, and the Mazzinian ideals they held did not match up with peasants' demands for land reform; in Sicily, for instance, the peasants were soon subdued and thrown off the 'common land' they had occupied. Elsewhere, the revolutions failed because the revolutionary nationalist movement was drawn from a very narrow class of urban artisans, and outside cities like Milan and Turin, never really got going.

Furthermore, the interpretation ignores the role played by the French. French military force, and their decision to crush the Roman Republic, were crucial factors further south in Italy, and therefore the interpretation is limited in its assertion that Austria was the 'single most important' factor. Louis Napoleon's decision to oppose the Roman Republic with force led to its collapse, and with it any real chance of revolutionary sentiment spreading throughout Italy, but even then, the narrow appeal of the revolutionaries in 1848-9 in Italy would probably have prevented their victory, even without the Austrian military superiority given in the interpretation.

Examiner commentary

The response is consistently analytical and is well focused on the issue raised by the Interpretation. The Interpretation is placed in the context of the debate about the reasons for the failure of the 1849 revolutions in Italy. Detailed own knowledge is directly applied to the Interpretation to test both the strengths and

weaknesses of the view. Other interpretations are evaluated to produce a strong answer which would certainly reach the top level. The depth of knowledge shown is of a high very high level, but it is not there in isolation, but is linked directly to the Interpretation.

Medium level answer

Stiles writing in 1986 is saying that it was Austria's military superiority that was the most important reason for the failure of the revolutions in Italy in 1848-49. Other interpretations are that the revolutionaries themselves were to blame, or that other countries such as France also helped defeat the revolutionaries.

In 1848 revolutions broke out all over Italy. In the north, the Piedmontese king Charles Albert wanted to expel the Austrians from Italy, and won some key battles such as at Goito in 1848. However, the Austrians quickly recovered, and after initially retreating, they were able to use their superior military forces and technology to inflict defeats on the Piedmontese and retake control. Radetsky was the leader of the Austrian military forces and he was a very capable commander. Because the revolution had been crushed earlier in Austria, it allowed them to recover and focus their attention on crushing the revolutions in Italy.

The revolutionaries themselves were weak and disunited, and they had very different aims. Some of them were moderate democrats who wanted parliaments and elections, and they struggled to get the peasants and the urban poor on their side because they cared more about economic problems than political power. In Sicily the revolution failed because the peasants saw the revolutionaries as just as much a threat as the regime they had replaced. Even in the northern states the revolutionaries struggled for support outside the main cities and therefore there was nobody to fight for them when they needed it against the Austrians.

The French military helped to crush the revolution in Rome and end the Roman Republic. They also stationed about 30,000 troops on the Piedmontese border and made it clear that they were not going to support any of the revolutions in Italy. The rulers of most of the Italian states did not support the revolutions, especially the king of Naples and the Pope, so the revolutionaries had to fight on all sides. In the end they were unable to convince many people either inside or outside Italy that they had a good cause and they failed. They were defeated easily all over Italy by lots of different forces and reasons.

Examiner commentary

The response understands the Interpretation and is able to explain the view it offers. It is also aware that there are other possible reasons why the Revolutions failed in 1848. However, the material is not directly linked to the Interpretation and therefore the strengths and weaknesses of the Interpretation are evaluated only by implication and not directly.

Question 2

Y246 The USA in the 19th Century: Westward expansion and Civil War 1803–c.1890

'To explain the sectional conflict, we must come back to the central issue of slavery. For [without slavery] there would have been no sections.'

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation is arguing that slavery was the ultimate cause of sectional tension, arguing that it was the 'central issue'. It argues that without the institution of slavery there would have been no sections and thus slavery must be seen at the heart of the developing conflict between the north and south. However, although the interpretation argues that it was the central cause it does not suggest that there were not other secondary causes. Other interpretations have argued that slavery was not the cause but rather a symptom of the tensions that there were between the north and south over issues such as state rights and the economic differences, whilst other interpretations have stressed the importance and influence of radicals in causing sectional tensions and conflict.

This interpretation can be seen to be valid because the south was dependent upon slavery and the plantation agriculture which was sustained by it. Without slavery the cotton and tobacco plantations would not have been sustainable or competitive and therefore slavery was central to the South's way of life. There were growing concerns in the South that abolitionism would triumph and therefore their economic structure would collapse and therefore the interpretation is right to stress that it was this issue that caused the tensions. This view is given further credence by developments in the 1850s which had seen a rise in both cotton and slave prices, which had encouraged further investment, making the threat of abolition an even greater concern and causing further tension. The tensions were further fuelled by concerns in the North that the 1820 Compromise would be eroded and the Fugitive Slave Act, which most northerners ignored, was a grievance among southern states.

However, although slavery was a major issue in dividing the Sections, the interpretation ignores other causes of division. The interpretation does not consider the broader economic divisions between the Sections with the North more industrialised and urbanized. Moreover there were disagreements between the sections over tariffs, with southerners arguing that it benefited the northern industrialists at the expense of the southern agriculturalists. These divisions were also reinforced by a cultural gap between the industrial north and agrarian south which reinforced the differences. Linked to this was the south's belief that there was a lack of concern in the north for the question of slavery and an unwillingness to acknowledge its importance. The interpretation also ignores the political divisions between the sections with the north more receptive to reformist ideas, whilst the south condemned any form of radicalism. The interpretation also fails to take account of the divisions between the older states in the west and the newer states in the east and their attitudes, which also added to the tensions.

Examiner commentary

There is a very good understanding of the debate and how the given interpretation fits into the wider debate about the sectional conflict.

The interpretation is clearly evaluated and detailed own knowledge is applied to the interpretation, particularly in support of it. The response does evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation.

Medium level answer

Cunliffe puts forward the view that sectional tensions in America were caused by slavery. He argues that this was the most important cause of conflict between the sections, arguing that without it there would not have been conflict. Historians have disagreed over the causes of sectional conflict and Cunliffe is putting forward one possible cause; namely slavery. Other historians have put forward the argument that other economic problems were the cause and that there were also political problems between the north and the south.

Cunliffes says that slavery was the cause of the conflict. Slavery was used in the south to run the plantations that were very important to the southern economy and without the plantations the economy would collapse. In the south a few plantation owners owned the best farmland and most of the slaves and they wanted to keep this system by which they grew tobacco and cotton on their plantations. Agriculture in the south was very important and the southerners wanted to protect the system, they had invested a lot of money in it as prices rose and did not want to lose it. In the north the situation was different as it was more industrial, seen as they had many more miles of railways. There were many larger urban centres in the north, but in the south there was only New Orleans. These differences caused the conflict, which is what Cunliffe says in his interpretation.

There were other causes of tension between the two sections. There were cultural differences and political differences. The south did not want political change whereas the north was more willing to see reform. The south thought that if there was any political reform it would lead to the end of slavery, which they did not want. The north and south also had different values and id not want to change, the south thought that their way of life was better. There were also other economic issues which caused tension, the most important was over the issue of tariffs. The south believed that tariffs were to the advantage of the northerners and helped with their industrial goods but did not help with their agricultural goods and so disliked them. The north was also concerned about the future and whether slavery would spread into some of the new territories in the east, which they did not want and they worried that the Compromise would be challenged. There were many reasons for divisions between the north and south sections.

Examiner commentary

There is some explanation of the Interpretation, although in places it is little more than a summary.

There is some own knowledge linked to the Interpretation to show the strength and weaknesses, but the knowledge is often described and the link to the Interpretation is quite weak.

Question 3

Y247 Japan 1853–1937

'By the 1930s Japan's military commanders were able to pursue foreign wars and contemplate ambitious enterprises only because their country's domestic economy had grown rapidly.'

C. Totman, *A History of Japan*, 2005

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation is arguing that the growth of Japan's domestic economy was the overwhelming reason for the ability of Japan's military commanders to carry out their policies. It argues that other factors were not important and that the military had grown in influence and confidence by the 1930s so that it appeared to be driving Japanese foreign policy itself. Other interpretations have focused on cultural factors, such as the growth of ultra-nationalism the revival of Shintoism, or the economic problems and strategic opportunities Japan uniquely faced at the beginning of the 1930s.

The interpretation certainly has the strength of emphasising the rapid growth of the domestic economy of Japan in the early 20th century. Rapid industrialisation meant that Japan could now compete with other countries for their latest technology, such as in the automobile industry, which meant Japan had more money to spend on foreign wars. Also, the government stepped in to build factories and shipyards, and boost the domestic economy, and the private sector as a whole. Despite the Great Depression affected the rest of the world, Japan's economy continued to grow apace, and industries such as manufacturing and mining, which accounted for up to 30% of GDP, contributed effectively to the military might of Japan, and thus led to the commanders being able to wage vast imperial wars.

However one important limitation of this interpretation is that the opposite could be true, and that it was economic problems, and the lack of natural resources and raw materials, that forced the Japanese to look to expand their empire in east Asia in the 1930s as they realised the limits of their domestic economic expansion.

Other interpretations highlight the complicated picture of Japanese motives in the 1930s, and therefore further reject the notion that only the domestic economy can explain Japanese military adventurism. Such as the cultural shifts occurring. The growth of ultra-nationalism was striking, and many historians have said Japan underwent a period of 'government by assassination'. Military commanders thus went to war either to divert attention away from Japan's problems, or as part of a nationalistic wave of feeling. Certainly many military commanders such as Colonel Kanji wanted a war in Manchuria as part of a belief in a 'final war'. Linked to this was the revival of Shintoism, and the growth of interest in both Buddhism and communism shows Japanese society in a crisis of capitalism stage, where a war in Manchuria was part of a wider nationalist and anti-capitalist cultural awakening. Thus, the domestic economy is only one of a number of factors, and the changeable economic picture in the late 1920s and 1930s further relegated this factor in importance.

Examiner commentary

The answer has a good analysis of the Interpretation and detailed knowledge is applied to both support and challenge the view offered in the Interpretation. The response is able to place the Interpretation in the wider context of the debate about Japanese expansion in the 1930s to produce a response that is well balanced. The answer evaluates both the strengths and the weaknesses of the Interpretation and, with its use and application of detailed knowledge to the Interpretation, would be placed in Level 5.

Medium level answer

Totman is saying that the domestic economy grew and that allowed Japan's military commanders to start wars and be more aggressive. He says this was the only factor. However there are other interpretations such as cultural, political and military reasons for Japan's military commanders' actions in the 1930s.

Japan's economy grew very rapidly at the beginning of the 20th century. Japan produced more manufactured goods such as automobiles and had an improved banking system and more private industry. This meant that Japan was able to spend a lot of money on improving its armed forces, and they grew as a result. Japan's economy continued growing throughout the 1920s, and they did not suffer as much as other countries from the Great Depression. This meant that they could continue to afford to spend money on wars and the armed forces in general. The government also helped to build lots of factories and shipyards which made Japan richer and allowed them to build more of a military presence in east Asia by the 1930s.

Another interpretation is that the military themselves acted alone and did not interact much with the economy or society. The growth of the military in the 1920s and 1930s meant that they were very powerful. Some commanders wanted to test out their weapons and armies and so invaded Manchuria in 1931. They believed that the only way to get out of the depression was to expand their territory and they saw the Chinese as weak, so they attacked.

The growth of nationalism in this period was also a factor in explaining why Japan started more wars and became more aggressive in the 1930s. Many people in Japan in the 1920s and 1930s became interested in building an empire, and Shintoism became more important. People believed that Japan should start wars and take over territory so that Japan could be more self-sufficient. There was an earthquake in 1923 that deeply affected Japanese society and led to the growth of more nationalist feeling and against westernisation. People also saw that there were not a lot of raw materials or agricultural land in Japan, and therefore needed more territory in order to help feed the expanding population.

Examiner commentary

There is some understanding of the Interpretation and awareness about the reasons for Japanese expansion in the 1930s. The knowledge is not always clearly and directly linked to the actual Interpretation. There is an awareness of other Interpretations, but this is not used directly to challenge the view offered in the given Interpretation. The level of knowledge is sound, but it does need to be linked more directly to the Interpretation to score more highly and to show how it either supports or challenges the view offered. There is some analysis of the Interpretation and therefore the response would reach Level 3.

Question 4

Y248 International Relations 1890–1941

'Germany willed a war with other European powers and during the War Council of 1912 agreed to engineer its outbreak in 18 months' time.'

Wilmot, *Great Powers, 1814-1914*, 1992

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation is arguing that the entire blame for the First World War lies with Germany, and that it deliberately brought it about. It also argues that the Germans wanted a complete European war, and planned it almost two years before its outbreak. Other interpretations take a more rounded view that growing nationalism and militarism across Europe led to the outbreak of war, while still others suggest that nobody really deserves blame and that Europe 'sleepwalked' into the crisis of 1914.

This interpretation can be seen to be valid to some extent since Germany had pursued an aggressive expansionist policy in Europe and elsewhere since the beginning of the century, and had deliberately increased tensions in many areas. Over Morocco, for instance, in 1911 the Kaiser sent a gunboat to threaten the French, which led to an increase in the arms race, and a strengthening of the Triple Entente. After the War Council, the Kaiser's ministers took steps such as the navy preparing for war with Britain, and gold reserves being moved back to Germany, which would seem to indicate that they were preparing for war. The War Council of 1912 was therefore the natural result of this deliberate policy of aggression, and the failure to beat Britain in the naval race led military commanders to turn their attention to a land war in Europe.

Further support for the view can be seen in Germany's actions across the whole period. Several historians have pointed out that Germany used very strong language to back Austria-Hungary after the First Balkan War, increasing tensions, but that this was just one of a series of actions by Germany – such as the Kaiser landing at Tangier in 1905, the massive increase in naval spending designed to put Germany on a collision course with Britain, their unconditional support for Austria's dangerous annexation of Bosnia – that showed that Germany was preparing for a major European war all along.

However, there is much that challenges this view, not least the argument that nobody was to blame. Events escalated very quickly in the summer of 1914, and once the Austrians had been humiliated by Serbia and the Russians announced their entry into the war Germany was bound to act. Germany fought very hard to make the Austrians less aggressive in the Balkans and back down, but to no avail. The Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, sought to reduce the increases in armaments that the military demanded, and by 1914 was in the position of reacting to what he saw as Russian aggression, rather than engineering the crisis.

Furthermore, the alliance system that had existed for years before the War Council of 1912 gave a sort of inevitability to the outbreak of a major European war. Germany was forced into a position where it had to support Austria against Russia, given the mobilisation of the Russian army in 1914. Most importantly, many of the issues discussed at the War Council of 1912 were subsequently watered down by Bethmann-Hollweg or not implemented; the European powers, entangled up in a web of militarism and alliances, sleepwalked into a major crisis sparked by one incident in Sarajevo.

Examiner commentary

There is a very good understanding of the debate and how the given interpretation fits into the wider debate about the First World War. The interpretation is clearly evaluated and detailed own knowledge is applied to the interpretation, particularly in support of it. The response does evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation.

Medium level answer

This interpretation is saying that the First World War was all Germany's fault and they had wanted the war for a couple of years. Other historians blame a range of factors for the war, or say it was more the Russians or Austrians who were to blame.

The idea that Germany was to blame is a popular one with some historians. Germany under the Kaiser wanted to be a world power and so from the 1890s onwards it built a large navy, got more colonies, and intervened in conflicts. The Germans annoyed the French twice in Morocco and nearly caused a big crisis over Agadir in 1911. In 1912 there were wars in Balkans where Austria and Russia were involved, and many Germans felt that they should fight a war with Austria. Germany had a big rivalry with Britain and built battleships to compete with them. It also built up its armies and had the Schlieffen Plan, which would lead to war with Russia and France at the same time. Many top German military commanders like Tirpitz openly wanted a war too.

Austria had annexed Bosnia in 1908 and was also fighting Serbia for control of territory. When Franz Ferdinand was assassinated, Germany had to come and help Austria because they were at war with Serbia, and the Russians were going to attack Austria. Germany was dragged into the war by its commitment to Austria. Not only Germany but Russia and France were building up their armies, and Britain too built lots of dreadnoughts, suggesting to some historians that all sides were to blame for increased tensions, and that Austria and Russia were most to blame in 1914.

Another view is that everybody was to blame to some extent. All countries had large amounts of public opinion that was nationalist and wanted a war, such as the French demanding Alsace-Lorraine back, or the Russians wanting to stand up for Slavs in the Balkans. Each country was also willingly involved in an alliance that made it had to come to the aid of its allies, which meant any small crisis could turn into a major war. All countries also built up their armies and navies, not just the Germans, and therefore the interpretation is not that valid.

Examiner commentary

There is some explanation of the Interpretation, although in places it is little more than a summary.

There is some own knowledge linked to the Interpretation to show the strength and weaknesses, but the knowledge is often described and the link to the Interpretation is quite weak.

Question 5

Y249 Russia 1894–1941

'Despite efforts at political reform, urban Russia on the brink of the First World War arguably found itself on the brink of a new revolution.'

From: O. Figes, *Revolutionary Russia 1891–1991*, 2014

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation is arguing that in the towns and cities, revolution was likely in Russia in 1914. It argues that although the government had made some attempts to calm the population through political reform, these had not worked, and that the people seemed ready to rise up. However, this interpretation emphasises that urban Russia was on the brink, and that the government had made attempts at reform. Other interpretations stress the continuity and stability in this period, that on the brink of the First World War Russians were ready to unite and fight for the Tsar, while another interpretation is that different localities in Russia were more susceptible to revolutionary feeling than others in 1914.

This interpretation can be seen to be valid to some extent because by 1914, there had been growing tensions in urban Russia for several years, and demands for reform were growing everyday. The number of days lost to strikes in the towns and cities grew significantly in the period to 1914, and there was growing violence accompanying these strikes. The terror tactics used by the regime after the death of Stolypin in 1911 only furthered the cause of the revolutionaries. Indeed, even the moderate and liberal leaders acknowledged that peaceful attempts at reform had failed and revolution might be the only answer.

This view is given further credence by the failure of attempts at political reform, since the *duma* became a mere talking shop, with members pleading with the Tsar to give them more control over their own affairs. Tensions reached a head in the summer of 1914 when a general strike was called, which members of the *duma* openly supported. The interpretation correctly acknowledges there were efforts at political reform, but that these were heavily controlled by the Tsar's own advisers, to the extent that election results were doctored.

However, this interpretation misses the point about the fundamental stability of the Tsarist regime in 1914, and its resilience in the face of adversity. Most importantly, the troops remained loyal to the Tsar and the revolutionary groups were either still in exile or on the fringe of the political scene. This meant that the cities were relatively safe, and despite the violence of 1914, the revolutionary threat did not really exist.

Furthermore, the interpretation ignores the improved economic outlook in the urban centres in 1914, and the lack of real efforts at political reform. Economic growth in the years to 1914 was six percent per year, and Russia became a major textile manufacturer. Political reform beyond the creation of the *dumas* did not exist, and the October Manifesto had not weakened the authority of the Tsar at all. Finally, the interpretation ignores the fact that the withering away of opposition to the Tsar when war was declared, the open support for his regime and the army, and the silence of opposition in the *duma* and ending of strikes, all showed that Russia was far from on the brink of revolution at that time.

Examiner commentary

There is a very good understanding of the debate and how the given interpretation fits into the wider debate about the motives for the cultural developments. The interpretation is clearly evaluate and detailed own knowledge is applied to the interpretation, particularly in support of it. The response does evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation.

Medium level answer

Figes is saying that political reform did not go far enough and that Russia was on the verge of revolution in 1914 and was very unstable. Some historians do not agree and say that Russia was stable.

Nicholas II was very reactionary and believed in absolutist rule so did not reform the very bad state of the peasants who were often backward. He was responsible for unrest and his reforms did not go far enough. Urban Russia was revolutionary because of 1995 and growing industry which meant that workers had bad conditions, thus the Tsar did not understand the workers and he had fired on them in 1905 and again in the Lena strike in 1912. He was advised by Rasputin and Alexandra who did not believe in reform so he did not pass enough changes. He introduced a new Duma but did not like it criticising him so he dissolved it and there were other Dumas but he broke his promises and did not allow them power, though they did pass thousands of new laws. Stolypin tried to help the peasants by ending the old system of the mir and giving them land and thus showed that political reform was successful. The revolutionaries did not get power until the war and Lenin was divided with some wanting revolution now and some later which showed that Russia might not have been in danger. Figes says that the Tsar did not do enough despite some changes like the Dumas and the October revolution, Figes is not a Russian and would not have first-hand knowledge so his view might be weak.

Another view is that is that political reforms did mean that that the tsar was not weak. He introduced new Dumas and he tried to help the peasants. He had a minister called Witte who built a new trans-Siberian railway which united Russia and the peasants got a land bank and could set up their own farms. This showed the Tsar was not all bad. Lenin had led the communists and they were very divided, in 1903 they had a meeting but could not agree, Lenin failed in 1905. The biggest other parties were the SRs and the Kadets so not everyone had the same views so there was not a revolution. Another interpretation is that the war brought the Tsar down as he took charge of his forces and was blamed for the war, thus there are different ways of looking at this issue and a debate about how stable Russia was in 1914 with Marxists saying that Lenin was the key figure. However Figes is right because after the Soviet archives opened there was a lot of information about how the Tsar had not reformed enough when he could and then the war made his position worse. However it was his fault revolution broke out and so Figes was right to blame him for not doing enough and that strikes, unrest, bad Dumas all made for more discontent.

Examiner commentary

There is some explanation of the Interpretation, although in places it is little more than a summary.

There is some own knowledge linked to the Interpretation to show the strength and weaknesses, but the knowledge is often described and the link to the Interpretation is quite weak.

Question 6

Y250 Italy 1896–1943

'[Mussolini's] pursuit of personal power took priority over the desire to 'Fascisticise' Italy and the Italian institutions.'

From: M. Robson, *Italy: Liberalism and Fascism 1870–1945*

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation suggests a top-down view of Italian history in which Mussolini's own personal aims and desire for power was more important than any fascist ideological desires about Italian institutions and the state. Other interpretations point to Mussolini's deep interest in political ideology, the increasing role of the Fascist Party in the 1930s, and the non-mutually exclusive nature of fascism and Mussolini's personal aims. It could also be argued that events in Italy were not solely directed from the top, and other 'bottom-up' influences were just as important.

The interpretation can be supported by looking at the way in which Mussolini used the Fascist Party to get into power, and then developed his own 'cult of personality' at the expense of fascisticising Italian institutions. His education and youth policies, for instance, focused less on ideology than on personal enslavement and obedience to 'Il Duce'. Corporativism, supposedly the central plank of the Fascists' changes to institutions, was a mere smokescreen for centralising power in Mussolini's hands. Indeed, even the Grand Council of Fascists, lacking the political and journalistic flair of Mussolini, were often brushed aside in state decision making. Furthermore, the interpretation seems correct in seeing Mussolini as the central actor; for instance, the Lateran Treaty and the concordat with the church improved Mussolini's own personal relationship with the church, and further legitimised his own, rather than the party's, rule and popularity. He was prepared to back down over eliminating Catholic Action groups despite requests from his own party members to do so. By 1943, fascism collapsed very quickly in Italy, and the continuing roles of the monarchy of the church, and their continued popularity, point to the fact that Mussolini had created a personal dictatorship that crumbled as soon as he left; the 'Fascist' institutions did not really exist.

However, there are limitations in this interpretation, as it ignores the very crucial role of the Fascist movement throughout this period in helping to maintain Mussolini's own position, and indeed probably goes too far in splitting up personal and political aims. The young were taught obedience, nationalism, and physical strength, as well as to love the Duce. The battles for land and grain, and the move to autarky, had clear ideological origins, and were driven through by Mussolini despite lack of apparent success. Policies towards women also had the twin aims of increasing personal devotion to the Duce while at the same time reducing their role to one of a traditional wife and mother, something that was also ideological. The radicalisation of the regime in the 1930s, after his power was already consolidated, took risks in upsetting the monarchical and religious interests, and therefore also was ideologically driven. The interpretation is also weakened by its insistence on the top-down view of Italian history. It could be argued, rather, that passivity and obedience amongst the population, and the weakness of the opposition after 1925, made the pursuit of power far easier for Mussolini, and therefore he had little need to fascisticise institutions. Also, the broad support enjoyed by Fascism in the country, particularly in its foreign policy successes, further questions whether the actions of Mussolini and his government contributed any more to the consolidation and extension of power and ideology and more than did the ordinary population.

Examiner commentary

There is a very good understanding of the debate and how the given interpretation fits into the wider debate about Mussolini. The interpretation is clearly evaluated and detailed own knowledge is applied to the interpretation, particularly in

support of it. The response does evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation.

Medium level answer

Robson writing in his textbook outlines the interpretation that Mussolini wanted power more for its own sake than really being a Fascist. It says he did not really want to make Italy a Fascist country. Other interpretations are that he was motivated by ideology, or that his aims changed over time.

The interpretation can be supported by evidence to suggest Mussolini wanted power for his own ends. He had been a Socialist before he was a Fascist, and all his propaganda was about him and what he could do, rather than Fascism itself. In the schools, he made children swear allegiance to him, and local areas remained under his control rather than the local party leaders. The church and the monarchy also remained very popular and after 1943 when Mussolini fell from power people did not seem to be too bothered.

However there were a lot of Fascist institutions in Italy. The OND was very popular and involved thousands of people and gave them holidays and entertainment. The corporative state from the 1920s became very well established and controlled most aspects of the Italian economy, and even the parliament was replaced in 1939 by the Chamber of Fasces and Corporations. In the 1930s fascist ideology was very important, and Mussolini became more racist and anti-Semitic. He looked to Nazi Germany as a model, and undermined church institutions, trying to close down Catholic Action.

Many people were not enthusiastic about fascism, or didn't care so long as they had a job. People seemed to like the foreign policy successes such as Abyssinia, and Mussolini was very popular personally, but people still went to church and had their own beliefs. Therefore Mussolini did not really create a totalitarian or a Fascist state, but he did keep power for 22 years. Sometimes he used ideology but at other times he wanted to be liked and respected so the interpretation is right in some ways but not in others.

Examiner commentary

There is some explanation of the Interpretation, although in places it is little more than a summary.

There is some own knowledge linked to the Interpretation to show the strength and weaknesses, but the knowledge is often described and the link to the Interpretation is quite weak.

Question 7

Y251 Democracy and Dictatorships in Germany 1919–1963

'The outbreak of war and its subsequent escalation into total war seriously weakened the Jews' chances of survival. Any 'resettlement plans' had now become a major logistical and bureaucratic operation, the size of which helped to tip the scales in favour of physical annihilation.'

Volker Berghahn, Modern Germany, 1987

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

The Interpretation puts forward the view that the Final Solution of the Jewish question was largely the result of the outbreak of the Second World War and its subsequent escalation, arguing that 'seriously weakened the Jews' chances of survival.' The Interpretation suggests that resettlement became much more difficult because of the war and therefore it 'tipped the scales in favour of physical annihilation.' This contrasts with other views that have suggested that Hitler had a long term aim to destroy and annihilate the Jews and this can be traced back to *Mein Kampf* and was therefore not dependent upon the outbreak and escalation of war. This view sees Hitler's policies towards the Jews gradually becoming more severe and suggests that they led logically from the limited persecution of 1933 to the death camps of places such as Auschwitz.

It is true that with the outbreak of war in September 1939 the nature of the Jewish problem changed dramatically for the Nazi government. War increased the number of Jews under Nazi control and this did weaken their chances of survival as there were so many of them that resettlement became much harder, particularly after the invasion of Russia in 1941. The Interpretation is correct that war undermined resettlement plans as plans to settle Jews in occupied Poland were abandoned by Goring in March 1940 and then plans to use Madagascar, a French colony and island in the Indian Ocean, had to be abandoned as it was impossible because Britain was unwilling to make peace and the Royal Navy controlled the ocean. The plans for the invasion of Russia and the build up of troops also made the idea of reverting to resettlement in Poland very difficult and once the invasion of Russia took place and the war became a racial and ideological war designed to destroy Jewish bolshevism annihilation became even more likely. Moreover, during a war, the interpretation is correct to stress that it would be a bureaucratic nightmare to resettle people as they would need to be fed and housed, whereas the main concern of Germany would have been to fight the war and this became even more important when victory was not quick and all resources were required for that. The interpretation stresses that annihilation may have been an unforeseen consequence of the war and given the absence of any similar policies before the war this view has its strengths. The role of the war in determining the policy would also fit with the number of Nazi plans that were being issued for the extermination of the Jews by 1941, whereas they had been absent before.

However, the interpretation ignores the fact that policies towards the Jews had been gradually increasing in severity and that with events, such as *Kristallnacht* in 1938, the regime was already becoming more severe before the outbreak of war. This escalation can also be seen with the passing of the Nuremberg Laws which helped to enforce the hatred of Jews. Ensuring there was support for his policies would be a slow process and the interpretation ignores this and the fact that Hitler would have needed time to win people over to such a policy, although it could be argued that war would make speed it up and make such a policy more acceptable. Therefore the interpretation ignores the idea that pressure was already increasing on the Jews in Germany and that even in 1938 Hitler informed Goring that the Jewish question should be solved. He also made a speech to the Reichstag in January 1939 in which he stated that if war broke out it would lead to the annihilation of the Jews. The problem with these statements is whether they should be believed, although it could be that he was warning that they might be murdered if necessary if war broke out.

Examiner commentary

The Interpretation is placed in the wider context of the debate about the extermination of the Jews. The strengths and weaknesses of the Interpretation are considered. The supporting knowledge is detailed and accurate. The Interpretation is evaluated and there are clear examples of linking own knowledge to the actual Interpretation to do this.

Medium level answer

The Interpretation is written by Volker Berghahn in 1987. He describes how it was the outbreak of war and then total war that led to the position of the Jews in Europe being weakened. He suggests that resettlement now became much more difficult and this is why the Jews were destroyed. Historians have disagreed about the Holocaust and whether Hitler's plans to destroy the Jews were the result of the war, which is what this interpretation suggests. Other historians have argued that Hitler had always hated the Jews and wanted to destroy them and this can be seen in his book *Mein Kampf* or in the events of Kristallnacht, when in November 1938, following the shooting and death of the German ambassador (sic) in Paris, an attack was launched on synagogues and Jewish businesses and homes. This attack caused a lot of damage to Jewish property and became known as the Night of Broken Glass because so many shop windows were broken.

Berghahn in his interpretation mentions plans to resettle Jews being abandoned because of the war. There had been plans to resettle Jews in Poland and also in Madagascar but they were abandoned, which might mean that his view is right. During the war a number of extermination camps, such as Auschwitz and Treblinka were developed where gas chambers ensured that large numbers could be killed quickly and efficiently. As a result of these developments it is believed that somewhere around six million Jews were put to death. It therefore appears that it was the war that resulted in the change of policy.

However, there is another view which says that before Hitler came to power and during the period before the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 he was already attacking the Jews and persecuting them, therefore it was not the war that led to their deaths. Hitler had written about the Jews in *Mein Kampf* and attacked them in that. When he first came to power he did little to attack them, but there was an attempted boycott of shops in 1933 and Jews lost some of their jobs. There was further violence against them in the following years, although this eased when the 1936 Olympics were held in Berlin. However, the Nuremberg Laws showed that the Nazis disliked the Jews and did not want pure Germans to have anything to do with them. Kristallnacht, which was described in the opening paragraph, suggests that the policy towards the Jews was already becoming harsher before the war broke out. Harsh policies continued up to the outbreak of war and therefore he might be wrong to ignore these developments as it was obvious that the government was already taking harsh policies and they would probably have continued to become harsher without the war. The Interpretation's view is that it was the war which brought about the deaths of large numbers of Jews, but the other view is that harsh policies towards the Jews were already starting before the war.

Examiner commentary

There is some explanation of the Interpretation, although in places it is little more than a summary.

There is some own knowledge linked to the Interpretation to show the strength and weaknesses, but the knowledge is often described and the link to the Interpretation is quite weak.

In places the answer tends to describe the policies of the Nazis towards the Jews, rather than use that knowledge to evaluate the Interpretation. The evaluation is not developed, but there is some basic attempt.

Question 8

Y252 Cold War in Asia interpretation

'[The Korean War], which the West interpreted as blatant Soviet made aggression was not Stalin's brainchild.'

From: V. Zubok and C. Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, 1996

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation is arguing that the Korean War was not the result of aggression on the part of Stalin and the Soviet Union, and furthermore that the west took this erroneous view. It argues that the view that the Korean War was masterminded by Stalin, and that he openly 'made' the crisis and the war because he wanted to was only conclusion the western powers could come to about the reason for the outbreak of the war, but that they were wrong to do so. Other interpretations stress the important role that Stalin and the Soviet Union played, and their aggressive actions in the run up to the outbreak of hostilities. Still more interpretations outline the view that the 'west' did not have a uniform view of the outbreak of the war.

This interpretation can be seen to be valid to some extent since extensive evidence suggests that either the Americans or the Koreans were most to blame for starting the war. Indeed, some historians have suggested that NSC-68, in which the Americans saw communists as a 'fanatic faith' led them to directly intervene in Korea. American government and military officials were increasingly concerned about Asia in the years after 1945, and were keen to ensure Communism did not spread. The victory of the Chinese Communists in 1949 put increasing pressure on Truman to stop the advance of Communism, and so just two days after the North Korean invasion, Truman ordered the troops in. The 'Red Scare' in the United States, combined with the successes of the Communists in Asia, and the fact that many Americans believed their own country's credibility was at stake, led to American involvement in Korea.

Further support for the interpretation is given in the view that the war itself was really a 'Korean civil war'. The North Korean leader, a determined nationalist as well as communist, wanted to unite the country from the start, and despite opposition from Stalin, who told him the 38th parallel was an agreed border, pressed ahead with the invasion of the south. Only through the persistence of Kim Il-Sung was Stalin persuaded that a war would be a good idea.

However, some evidence suggests that by the spring of 1950, Stalin was warming to the idea of a Korean conflict, and gave support to Kim in his ambitions. The fact that Kim consulted with Stalin, and delayed his attack until he had his approval, suggests that the Soviet role should not be underplayed. Stalin's determination to bring about conflict with the west had seen a blockade in Berlin in 1948, and the division of Germany a year later; however these had not been unmitigated successes for Stalin, and the acquisition of the bomb and the creation of NATO in 1949, convinced him that the time was right for a new conflict between communism and the west. Fearful of a renewed, democratic Japan, and buoyed by the belief that the Americans would not defend South Korea, Stalin gave his blessings to the war.

The interpretation is also weakened by its insistence that the 'west' had a singular view of the origins of the conflict. While there was some agreement amongst American military and government officials, particularly Truman, that Stalin was most to blame, others at the time, such as those in the House of Representatives that voted against giving aid to South Korea, saw the war as more of Truman's own making. Even Dean Acheson admitted that concerns over Japan led the Americans to intervene more than fear of Stalin.

Examiner commentary

There is a very good understanding of the debate and how the given interpretation fits into the wider debate about the Korean War. The interpretation is clearly evaluated and detailed own knowledge is applied to the interpretation, particularly in support of it. The response does evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation.

Medium level answer

Zubok and Pleshakov were writing after the collapse of the Soviet Union and here they are saying that the west thought the Korean War was Stalin's fault, but that the west was wrong to take this view. Other interpretations are that the Americans or the Koreans really started the war, but some people do still say it was all Stalin's fault.

The Americans were responsible for starting the war in some ways because they were fearful that Communism was spreading. The Chinese went Communist in 1949, and the American President Harry Truman did not want any more countries to become communist. So when the North Koreans invaded in 1950, he immediately sent in troops to help the south. Also, the Americans had a document, NSC 68, in which they said they were going to prevent the communists achieving world domination.

Other historians, particularly revisionists, have also seen the Korean War as a civil war, which agrees with the interpretation. The South Koreans wanted democracy and western values, but North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung was a communist. Both sides wanted to unite the country, but because they had such opposing views, they had to go to war to solve the problem.

But some people still think that it was Stalin's brainchild. Zubok and Pleshakov are Russians and so may want to play down how much their own country was to blame. He wanted war with the west as he had blockaded Berlin in 1948 and split up Germany. Now he wanted the North Koreans to invade the south and make the whole country communist. He told the North Koreans in 1950 that he would support their invasion and gave them help, as did the Chinese Communists.

However, by 1996 when Zubok and Pleshakov were writing we were able to see all the different reasons and it seems they are mostly right. The Americans were always going to try and stop the spread of Communism in Asia, but their actions and statements in 1949 and 1950 were confusing because some of them said they might not help the South Koreans and therefore the North Koreans attacked. The Americans supported an unpopular ruler in South Korea, and Kim always wanted to attack South Korea anyway. Stalin only really came in at the end to say he would support the North Koreans.

Examiner commentary

There is some explanation of the Interpretation, although in places it is little more than a summary

There is some own knowledge linked to the Interpretation to show the strength and weaknesses, but the knowledge is often described and the link to the Interpretation is quite weak.

Question 9

Y253 Cold War in Europe interpretation

'The Cold War was not inevitable; yet it became a reality because of the innate needs of the Soviet Union and the United States.'

From: M. McCauley *The Origins of the Cold War* 1983

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation is arguing the Cold War evolved out of the different needs and desires of the two superpowers after the Second World War. It rejects the notion that it was inevitable, but does emphasise that the needs of the powers after the Second World War meant that it was very likely, but that it developed over time and only 'became a reality' later on. Other interpretations have rejected this idea, and place the origins of the Cold War firmly in actions and thoughts during and before the Second World War, or even, just on one side. Another alternative view is that events in Europe, Asia and elsewhere after 1945 drew in the superpowers, and that their innate needs were not as important as their responses to problems in the post-war world.

This interpretation can be seen to be valid to some extent since the needs of the Soviet Union and the USA were diametrically opposed. After the Second World War, the needs of both countries to grow their spheres of influence and create buffer zones or economic opportunities meant that a clash was likely. For instance, Stalin's desire to see Eastern European countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia become Soviet satellite states clashed with the Americans' desire for free trade and democracy. At the Yalta and Potsdam conferences, it became apparent that the needs of the superpowers would contradict each other over Germany, where Stalin favoured a dismantling and dismemberment of its industrial might, whereas the Americans wanted to rebuild Germany and avoid the mistakes made in the Treaty of Versailles. The death of Roosevelt brought Truman to the presidency, and he took a much harsher line with the Soviet Union. The fear in the United States that communism would spread grew in the years after the war, and the contributions that both the USA and the USSR made to saving Europe from fascism meant that neither was likely to back down or give up territory after 1945.

However, there is much to support the view that the clash of the superpowers after the war was inevitable, and that this had indeed been building up since 1917. The hostility towards capitalism from within the Soviet Union was not just based on buffer zones and central Europe, but was a fundamental difference over how the world should be run. The Americans sent troops to fight the Reds in the Russian Civil War, and the Soviet Union had a long held belief that the 'imperialist tendencies' within the United States wanted their own world domination. Thus the interpretation fails to consider that the actions of the Soviet Union and the USA after 1945 merely followed the policies and ideas that each side had had for decades; only the severity of the problems, and the amount of conflicts, was different after 1945.

Further limitations of the view given in the interpretation emphasise the importance of events after 1945, and that there were missed opportunities for reducing tensions. Here, either the Soviet Union or the USA miscalculated their approach to events, and led to the Cold War. So George Kennan's Telegram of 1946, in which he railed against the Soviet Union as a 'parasite' was seized upon by American officials and used as the pretext for ramping up tensions, leading to the development of the Marshall Plan, which aimed to confirm Europe in the capitalist, democratic, free trade bloc. Similarly, the misjudgement of Roosevelt in underestimating Stalin's expansionist foreign policy, and Stalin's subsequent attempt to blockade Berlin, can be seen as unnecessary escalations due to events overtaking the actors, rather than any pre-meditated plans.

Examiner commentary

The answer is aware of the debate surrounding the origins of the Cold War in Europe and is able to explain the view offered in the Interpretation, placing it in context of the debate. Knowledge is directly linked to the Interpretation in order to evaluate it. The response has detailed knowledge and this is used to test both the strengths and weaknesses of the view. Other interpretations are considered and evaluated in order to produce a balanced answer which would be placed in the top level.

Medium level answer

McCauley was writing at the height of the Cold War in 1983 and his post-revisionist interpretation was saying that although the Cold War was not always inevitable, it was probably going to happen because the needs of the Soviet Union and the Americans were very different. Other interpretations blame only the Soviet Union or the USA. The traditionalist view says that Stalin started the Cold War, whereas the revisionist said it was the actions of Truman and his government in the USA.

The idea that both sides had needs that meant they were going to come into conflict can be supported. Both sides wanted Europe to be in their own sphere of influence. Both sides fought against Nazism and lost a lot during the war, and therefore neither wanted to give up what they had fought for. Both sides were also very suspicious of one another, and when Truman became President, he wanted to stop the spread of communism. Stalin too did not trust the USA and wanted to create buffer zones in Eastern Europe and satellite states that were communist, such as Poland and Hungary.

But for a long time many historians thought that only one side was to blame for starting the Cold War. American historians used to say that Stalin was to blame for starting the war, since at Yalta he said he was going to co-operate in Europe. But then over the course of the next four years he systematically took over every country in Eastern Europe, and tried to blockade Berlin and drive the Americans out. Therefore, the actions of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe led the Americans to increase their involvement and introduce the Marshall Plan and create NATO. However revisionist historians also challenged the interpretation by saying it was America's fault that the Cold War started. Truman hated communism and did not want to co-operate with the Soviet Union, and he wanted to make sure the American economy could continue to grow by trading with Europe, therefore he used Kennan's Telegram saying that the Soviets wanted world domination as an excuse to intervene more in Europe. His policy of containment was directly confrontational with the Soviet Union, and he offered aid to Yugoslavia and to Greece.

Since the Soviet archives were opened up some historians have now come back around to the idea that the Soviet Union was most to blame, because Stalin was deliberately trying to stir up tension in Europe and drive the Americans back. It seems likely that both sides, because one was capitalist and the other communist, were going to clash, because they were fighting over the same territory. Truman and Stalin helped to escalate the crises which led to the Cold War, but the needs of each country were opposed to each other and therefore some conflict was probably inevitable, which the interpretation argues against.

Examiner commentary

The answer is aware of the debate about the origins of the Cold war in Europe, however it is sidetracked into a discussion about the historiography and revisionist and post revisionist views, which are not needed and distract from what should be the actual focus of the answer. There is some explanation of the view in the Interpretation, but this would benefit from further development. The answer does link some material, showing the strength of the view to the Interpretation, but again this could be both developed and clearer. However, after that it becomes a more general survey about the views on the origins of the Cold war and needs a closer link back to the actual view given. There is only limited direct consideration of the weaknesses so is Level 3.

Question 10

Y254 South African Politics 1948-1999

'The role that the international community played on the sidelines was of crucial importance in determining the outcome [the end of Apartheid]'

From: A. Guelke, *Rethinking the Fall of Apartheid*, 2005

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of this interpretation, making reference to other interpretations that you have studied.

High level answer

This interpretation puts forward the view that the role of the international community helped to bring about the end of Apartheid in South Africa. It argues that it was a 'crucial' factor in the overall outcome whilst at the same time showing an understanding that it was on the side-lines, so not at the forefront, of the drive towards ending apartheid. Other interpretations would argue the international community played only a minor role in the ending of apartheid, focusing instead of the role of internal factors and how the role of the international community was largely ignored by the National Party.

There is much to support this viewpoint. Nelson Mandela himself believed the use of sanctions from the international community was an effective factor in bringing about the end of apartheid. The support from the international community was significant for the ANC. They provided financial aid to the group and gave them the confidence to see they were not alone in their struggle, a factor that should not be understated. The economic impact of international action on South Africa was also crucial. The UN placed heavy sanction, disrupting trade and the decline in external investment led to significant economic issues. A process of disinvestment (withdrawing capital and investment) and divestment (refusing to deal with companies who profit from business in South Africa) led many South Africans to turn against the Nationalist government, creating significant tension with South African society. The passing of resolution 418, an arms embargo, and the oil embargo introduced in 1987 created significant financial difficulties for the ruling apartheid government, weakening their stranglehold on the population. Unemployment amongst the white population, coupled with an upturn in employment within the black population, goes to highlight this further. It was not direct action within South Africa, but was crucial in ending apartheid. Sanctions applied also had a significant impact both socially and politically. From a political viewpoint, South Africa became a pariah state, with no international support from any of the major global players. Socially, boycotts in sport and cultural boycotts in the arts, for example, impacted upon the national character and the white population in particular. Whilst this might not have had the same negative effect on the economy, it did show the white population precisely what the international view was of apartheid, disrupting everyday life and becoming an embarrassment for many. This is also evidenced by the significance of the Anti-apartheid movement; a worldwide movement that helped exert pressure on the ruling government and the population through protests and divestment.

It can be argued, though, that this interpretation has many limitations and, indeed, other interpretations are better suited in explaining the end of apartheid. Many white South Africans were ardent Nationalist supporter and were unfazed by external pressures. There was a great deal of support within the white community for the National Party, and the impact of sanctions had only a minor impact on this. F. W. De Klerk himself stated that conflict and violence within South Africa was his main reason for the ending of Apartheid, a point he reiterated in his Nobel peace prize acceptance speech and the role of the international community played no part in it. He further clarified this by arguing that despite sanctions seriously damaging the country, most of the white population was willing to endure through fear of a Society-backed ANC running the country as fear of communism was deeply ingrained in white South Africans. Fear of communism, though, had all but disappeared by 1990, with the fall of the Soviet Union, international circumstances were changing, the threat of a Soviet backed ANC was disappearing, so the interest of the international community in stemming the tide of communism was also dissipating. Sanctions themselves, it could be argued, were also less effective than this

interpretation suggests. Sanctions are the most effective against countries that are less developed and less able to respond, South Africa was, despite all its economic and social issues, a well-developed country that could and did support itself through these times. The apartheid state was, in addition, challenged significantly by the role of key individuals, like Mandela and de Klerk, but also the people itself were standing up to the government, inspired by those who fought and it was becoming increasingly difficult for the National Party to govern effectively, a state of emergency, for example, was instigated due to overwhelming opposition. Change needed to be made, and eventually it occurred, and the role of the international community was marginal in these aspects.

Examiner commentary

The answer shows a clear understanding of the Interpretation and is able to analyse the view offered. It shows a good understanding of the debate about the reasons for the end of Apartheid. It considers other views and both supports and challenges the given Interpretation with reference to specific examples and knowledge, resulting in a well-supported evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the Interpretation and would therefore be placed in Level 5.

Medium level answer

The interpretation was written in 2005 by A.Guelke . it claims that the international community played a crucial role from the side-lines in bringing about the end of apartheid. Historians have disagreed over the importance of the role of the international community in bringing about apartheid. Some interpretation claim it was the role of the individuals, people like Mandela and de Klerk, that was crucial, other claims that the apartheid state was unsustainable as a model of government. Furthermore, the argument against the significance of the international community has been stated, arguing that it had little impact at all on everyday life in South Africa.

In supporting the interpretation, the international community played a key role by bringing about sanctions which had a significant impact on society, both economically and socially. The impact of arms embargos, oil sanctions and the process of boycotting South African exports, coupled with the withdrawal of international investment, seriously hindered progress in South Africa. Unemployment, particularly amongst the white population, rose steadily during the period which was combined with a reduction in wages, leaving many in or near the poverty line. Socially, boycotts in sport left many South Africans feeling isolated, so too, did the anti-apartheid movement, a world-wide movement that showed many white South Africans that internationally they were scorned. This had a significant impact on morale and led to many examples of protests within South Africa against the National Party and the Apartheid regime.

The interpretation, however, makes no mention of the role of internal factors in bringing about the end of apartheid, nor does it recognise the lack of impact many felt international sanctions had.

Despite unemployment levels and lower wages, many white South Africans were supporters of the National Party, de Klerk himself claimed that they were prepared to endure these hardships to keep a Communist backed ANC out of power. The role of key individuals, like Mandela or de Klerk, is also not mentioned in this interpretation. The strength of will and the symbolism of Mandela united many of the population together to oppose the Apartheid regime. It has also been argued that the apartheid state was unsustainable, that the rule of a minority over the majority could never hope to last forever, and this was proven in the case of south Africa.

Examiner commentary

The answer shows some understanding of the debate about the collapse of Apartheid. The knowledge used to test the Interpretation is rather general, with the result that the evaluation is limited. Similarly, the understanding of the

historical debate is not fully developed, although there is some awareness of other Interpretations. There is just enough understanding to take this to Level 3.



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