

IB DP History HL / SL

Paper 1 Complete Study Guide

The Move to Global War. Prescribed Subject 3

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IB DP History

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IB DP History HL/SL – Paper 1 Complete Study Guide (revision textbook)

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IB DP History HL / SL — Paper 1 Complete Study Guide

The Move to Global War. Prescribed Subject 3 of the IB History course.

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How to use this book

This textbook is the third in the series after the Paper 3 and Paper 2 study guides, and it is built on the same revision-first principles. Paper 1 is fundamentally different from the other two examinations because it is a source-based paper rather than an essay paper. The candidate has one hour to read four sources and answer four questions of mounting difficulty, and the technique of reading sources analytically matters as much as the historical knowledge underneath. Part I of this book therefore opens with a detailed discussion of the examination format and the source skills that the four questions require, before the substantive case studies begin in Part II.

This book covers Prescribed Subject 3, The Move to Global War, with both case studies that the IB syllabus specifies. The first case study is Japanese expansion in East Asia between 1931 and 1941. The second case study is German and Italian expansion between 1933 and 1940. Each examination session focuses on only one of the two case studies, but the candidate does not know which until the paper opens. A candidate should therefore prepare both equally, and this book covers both equally.

The practical advice for revision is consistent with the previous volumes. Start a chapter with its Summary of events and Timeline. Then read the numbered sections slowly. At the end of each chapter, work through the Source-based exercise that gives you a sample of all four question types in miniature. Do this at least once per week in the run-up to the examination, because Paper 1 rewards practice with the four question formats more than any other paper in the course.

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PART I: PAPER 1 — THE EXAM ITSELF AND SOURCE SKILLS

Chapter 1: What Paper 1 is and how it differs from Paper 2 and Paper 3

Summary of events

Paper 1 is the source-based examination of the IB Diploma Programme in History. It lasts one hour, contains four sources and four questions, and is taken by all candidates regardless of standard or higher level. The maximum mark is twenty-four, and the paper contributes thirty per cent of the final grade for standard level candidates and twenty per cent for higher level candidates. The examination tests the ability to read primary and secondary sources critically, to compare them, to evaluate their value and limitations, and to integrate them with the candidate's own knowledge in a short evaluative essay. Unlike Paper 2 and Paper 3, where the candidate writes essays from memory, Paper 1 requires the candidate to engage with materials in front of them, and the technique of source handling is at least as important as the historical knowledge.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How does the format of Paper 1 differ structurally from Paper 2 and Paper 3?
2. What does a source-based examination test that an essay-based examination does not?
3. How does the choice of Prescribed Subject shape what the candidate must prepare?
4. How is the time of one hour realistically distributed across the four questions?

Quick reference for Chapter 1

Reference point	Detail
Paper 1 duration	1 hour
Number of sources	4 sources for the chosen prescribed subject
Number of questions	4, all required
Marks per paper	24
Weighting at HL	20 per cent of the final grade
Weighting at SL	30 per cent of the final grade
Question 1 part a	3 marks. Comprehension of one source
Question 1 part b	2 marks. Comprehension of a visual source
Question 2	4 marks. OPCVL of one source
Question 3	6 marks. Compare and contrast two sources
Question 4	9 marks. Mini-essay using all sources and own knowledge
Prescribed subjects	5 options. Class has prepared Prescribed Subject 3, The Move to Global War
Case studies in PS3	Japanese expansion 1931 to 1941, German and Italian expansion 1933 to 1940

1.1 Paper 1 in the architecture of the IB History examination

The IB History course is assessed externally through three papers and internally through a Historical Investigation. Paper 1 is the first of the three, and it tests skills that the other two do not test directly. Paper 2 is an essay paper based on twelve world history topics, and the candidate writes two essays from memory. Paper 3 is the higher level extension paper that tests deep regional knowledge through three essays from a single regional option. Both Paper 2 and Paper 3 ask the candidate to construct historical arguments from their own knowledge, with no source materials provided in the examination booklet.

Paper 1 inverts this pattern. The booklet provides four sources for the chosen prescribed subject. Two or three of the sources are written, primary or secondary, and one is typically visual, often a cartoon, photograph or map. The four questions test how well the candidate can read these specific sources analytically, compare them, evaluate them and integrate them with prior knowledge. The skills tested are therefore the skills of the working historian rather than the skills of the academic essayist.

1.2 Why Paper 1 demands a different kind of preparation

A candidate cannot prepare for Paper 1 by memorising answers in the way that some prepare for Paper 2. The four sources in the actual examination will be ones that no candidate has seen before, and the questions will be paper-specific. What the candidate can prepare is the technique of source handling and the historical knowledge of the prescribed subject. Technique is what allows you to read an unfamiliar source quickly and accurately. Knowledge is what allows you to put the source in context and to write the ninth-mark mini-essay that synthesises sources with prior understanding.

This division of labour shapes the architecture of this book. Part I covers technique, with one chapter for each of the four questions and additional chapters on source skills in general. Parts II and III cover knowledge, with full chapters on every aspect of the two case studies. Part IV brings the two together through worked answers and practice question banks. The candidate who works systematically through the book in the months before the examination will arrive on the day with both halves of what Paper 1 demands.

1.3 The choice of Prescribed Subject and what it commits the candidate to

The IB syllabus offers five prescribed subjects, and each school chooses one. The five are Military leaders, focusing on Genghis Khan and Richard the Lionheart, Conquest and its impact, focusing on the Mongols and the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs, The move to global war, focusing on Japanese and German-Italian expansion, Rights and protest, focusing on the American civil rights movement and South African apartheid, and Conflict and intervention, focusing on Rwanda and Kosovo.

This book is written for Prescribed Subject 3, The Move to Global War. This is by far the most popular prescribed subject in the IB world because it dovetails with material that students often encounter elsewhere in the curriculum, in Paper 2 Topic 11 on causes and effects of twentieth-century wars and in Paper 3 European or Asian options. The choice commits the candidate to learning two case studies in roughly equal depth, because the examination paper draws all four sources and all four questions from one or the other case study, and the candidate cannot know in advance which case study will be set.

1.4 Time management in a one-hour paper

The arithmetic of Paper 1 is unforgiving. Sixty minutes divided by four questions gives fifteen minutes per question on average, but the questions are weighted very differently. Question 1 is worth five marks, Question 2 is worth four, Question 3 is worth six and Question 4 is worth nine. A reasonable distribution of time matches the marks and looks something like this. Five minutes for Question 1 part a and part b combined. Five minutes for Question 2. Twelve minutes for Question 3. Twenty-five minutes for Question 4. Five minutes to read all four sources at the beginning. Eight minutes in reserve for any question that runs over.

The single most common time-management error is spending too long on Question 4 and rushing the earlier questions, which usually produces the worst possible distribution because the early questions are easier to score full marks on. A candidate who runs out of time on Question 4 and writes a hurried conclusion can still score in the upper band if Questions 1 to 3 are confidently complete. A candidate who overthinks Question 1 and runs out of time on Question 4 sacrifices the highest-value question of the paper.

Chapter summary

Paper 1 is the source-based examination of the IB History course. It lasts one hour, contains four sources for one prescribed subject, asks four questions for a total of twenty-four marks, and contributes between twenty and thirty per cent of the final grade depending on level. The examination tests source-handling skills that Paper 2 and Paper 3 do not test directly, namely comprehension, OPCVL evaluation, comparative analysis and the synthesis of sources with prior knowledge. This book prepares the candidate for Prescribed Subject 3, The Move to Global War, with both case studies that the IB syllabus prescribes. Time management across the four questions is itself a skill, and a candidate who learns to weight time to marks will be in the upper band before they have written a single sentence.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Prescribed Subject	One of five thematic topics from which the candidate's class chooses for Paper 1
Case study	One of two specified historical episodes within a prescribed subject
Source	A primary or secondary historical document, image, cartoon or map provided in the booklet
Provenance	The information about who created the source, when and for what purpose, given at the start of each source
OPCVL	The framework of Origin, Purpose, Content, Value, Limitations used to evaluate a source
Running comparison	The structural principle of comparing two sources thematically rather than separately
Mini-essay	The Question 4 nine-mark response that integrates sources with own knowledge

Questions

1. List the four questions on Paper 1 and the marks attached to each.
2. Explain the rationale behind preparing both case studies of the chosen prescribed subject.
3. Propose a time allocation for the four questions and justify your choice.

Chapter 2: The four-question architecture

Summary of events

The four questions on Paper 1 are not interchangeable. Each tests a different skill, and each has a different mark allocation that signals what the examiner expects in the answer. Question 1 tests historical comprehension, Question 2 tests source evaluation through the OPCVL framework, Question 3 tests comparative analysis through running comparison, and Question 4 tests the integration of sources with the candidate's own knowledge in a short evaluative essay. The candidate who understands the architecture of the four questions can plan an answer in seconds rather than minutes, because the structural shape of each answer is determined by the question type.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What specifically does each of the four questions test?
2. What is the structural shape of a high-scoring answer to each question?
3. Where does the examiner draw the line between the lower and upper mark bands for each question?

Reference table for Chapter 2

Question	Marks	Skill	Typical structural shape
Q1 part a	3	Comprehension of one written source	Three separate points, signalled by firstly, secondly, finally
Q1 part b	2	Comprehension of one visual source	Two separate points, each tied to a specific element of the source
Q2	4	Value and limitations of one source via OPCVL	Origin then Purpose then Content, then Value paragraph, then Limitations paragraph
Q3	6	Compare and contrast two sources	One paragraph similarities, one paragraph differences
Q4	9	Mini-essay synthesising sources with own knowledge	Brief introduction with thesis, three or four PEEL paragraphs each using sources, brief conclusion

2.1 Question 1 in outline

Question 1 has two parts, a and b. Part a tests comprehension of one written source and is worth three marks. The candidate must extract or infer three separate points from the source, each one a distinct contribution rather than a rephrasing of the same idea. Part b tests comprehension of a visual source and is worth two marks. The candidate must identify two separate messages or pieces of information from the image, each tied to a specific visible element. The skill being tested at both parts is reading, not analysis. The candidate is asked what the source says, not why it says it.

2.2 Question 2 in outline

Question 2 asks the candidate to evaluate the value and limitations of one specific source for a historian studying a particular issue. The source will be one of the four already provided. The framework expected is OPCVL, where the candidate examines the origin, the purpose and the content of the source and then explains what those features make the source valuable for and what they make it limited for. The mark allocation of four marks is the smallest of the four questions, which means that a tight, well-organised answer of about a page is appropriate. Examiners report that the most common error here is mechanical listing of OPCVL elements without drawing the value-and-limitations argument from them.

2.3 Question 3 in outline

Question 3 asks the candidate to compare and contrast two specified sources in their treatment of a particular issue. The mark allocation of six marks is the second largest of the questions in the lower part of the paper, which signals that real comparative work is expected. The structural rule is the running comparison. A high-scoring answer organises one paragraph around similarities between the two sources, treating both sources together within each point of similarity, and one paragraph around differences, again treating both sources together. The structural error that most reliably caps a candidate at the lower band is to write two separate descriptions, one for each source, without ever bringing them into dialogue.

2.4 Question 4 in outline

Question 4 is worth nine marks, more than a third of the paper, and it is a mini-essay. The candidate addresses an evaluative question by drawing on all four sources and on their own knowledge of the prescribed subject. The structural shape is a brief introduction with a clear thesis, three or four body paragraphs that each make a point with reference to specific sources and specific own-knowledge evidence, and a brief conclusion that returns to the thesis. The single most common error is treating Question 4 either as a pure essay from memory, ignoring the sources, or as a pure source summary, ignoring own knowledge. The examiner explicitly rewards synthesis, the woven combination of source evidence and prior understanding.

2.5 The hidden architecture of marks

The four questions add up to twenty-four marks. Questions 1 and 2 together are worth nine marks, the same as Question 4. Question 3 is worth six. The mark distribution rewards the candidate who can do simple things confidently as much as the candidate who can do complex things impressively. A well-prepared candidate who scores three out of three on Question 1a, two out of two on Question 1b, three out of four on Question 2 and four out of six on Question 3 has already secured twelve marks before opening Question 4. With the same proportional success on Question 4 they reach eighteen, comfortably in the upper band. The lesson is that no question is dispensable and that confident execution of the easier questions is just as valuable as ambitious attempts at the harder ones.

2.6 Anatomy of a real Paper 1 paper

The candidate who walks into the examination already knowing what the paper looks like is at an immediate advantage. The paper is a single booklet of typically eight to ten pages. The first page contains the rubric and the four questions. The next four to six pages contain the four sources, each printed on its own page or sharing a page with another short source. The remaining pages are blank space for rough notes. The four sources themselves follow a fairly stable convention.

Source A is almost always a written primary source from the period under examination, such as a diplomatic note, a speech extract, a memoir paragraph or a treaty article. The length is typically between forty and a hundred and fifty words. Source B is usually a second written primary source from a contrasting perspective, often from the opposing side of the same event. Source C is most often a visual source, in practice almost always a political cartoon or a propaganda poster, occasionally a photograph. Source D is typically a written secondary source, an extract from a historian's monograph or article that takes a particular interpretive position. The four sources together give the candidate one cartoon for visual analysis, two contrasting primary documents for comparison, and one historian's interpretation that can be set against the primary sources or used as a frame for own-knowledge.

The four questions then map onto the sources in a fixed pattern. Question 1a is comprehension of one written source, almost always Source A. Question 1b is comprehension of the visual source, almost always Source C. Question 2 is OPCVL evaluation of one specified source, which can be any of the four but is most often the cartoon (Source C) or the historian (Source D). Question 3 is comparison of two specified sources, almost always Sources A and B or Sources B and D. Question 4 is the mini-essay drawing on all four sources and own knowledge to evaluate a specific claim about the historical issue.

A worked example will make the architecture concrete. Imagine a paper on the Manchurian Crisis. Source A is a paragraph from Stimson's diary entry of November 1931 describing the Japanese cabinet's loss of control over the Kwantung Army. Source B is a paragraph from a Japanese army officer's memoir defending the army's action as a response to Chinese provocations. Source C is a 1932 British cartoon by David Low showing a small dove labelled League of Nations being stalked by a tiger labelled Japan. Source D is a paragraph from Christopher Thorne's monograph The Limits of Foreign Policy arguing that the League had no realistic enforcement option. The four questions might then be: Q1a, what does Source A reveal about the Japanese government's relationship with the army; Q1b, what is the message of Source C; Q2, evaluate the value and limitations of Source D for a historian studying the international response to Manchuria; Q3, compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources A and B about responsibility for the Manchurian Incident; Q4, with reference to all four sources and your own knowledge, examine the reasons for the failure of the international response to the Manchurian Crisis.

The candidate who has internalised this architecture can plan time before reading. Reading the four sources should take about ten minutes. Question 1 should take about ten minutes for both parts together. Question 2 should take about ten minutes. Question 3 should take about fifteen minutes. Question 4 should take about twenty to twenty-five minutes. That leaves five minutes for checking. The candidate who has not internalised the architecture often spends thirty minutes on Question 4 and discovers, with five minutes left, that Question 1 has not been started.

2.7 What examiners say in their reports

The IB publishes a subject report after each examination session that summarises examiner observations. Reading several years of these reports reveals a stable set of complaints. The first is that candidates frequently fail to use the question stem when answering Question 4. The stem typically asks about a specific issue, and the four sources are chosen to illuminate that issue. Candidates who write generic essays about the prescribed subject without anchoring their argument to the stem lose marks even when their factual content is strong. The second complaint is that Question 2 answers are mechanical, listing OPCVL elements without drawing the value-and-limitations argument from them. The candidate who writes Origin, Purpose, Content, Value, Limitations as five separate paragraphs without showing how the origin and purpose generate the values and limitations is repeating the framework rather than using it. The third complaint is that Question 3 is treated as two separate descriptions rather than a comparison. The candidate who writes Source A says X and then Source B says Y and stops there has produced two summaries rather than a comparison. The high-scoring answer produces statements such as both sources agree that X but differ on Y, where Source A emphasises Z while Source B emphasises W. The fourth complaint is that Question 1 is mishandled by candidates who treat it as analysis rather than comprehension. The marker for Q1 is looking for three distinct points from the source, not for an analysis of the source.

The candidate who reads two or three subject reports before the examination has effectively been trained by the examiners themselves on what to do and what not to do. The reports are publicly available on the IB site for teachers, and the time investment is small relative to the benefit.

Chapter summary

The four questions of Paper 1 test four distinct skills, namely comprehension, source evaluation, comparative analysis and the synthesis of sources with own knowledge. Each question has a structural shape that the high-scoring answer follows. Question 1 is two-part comprehension. Question 2 is OPCVL with a value-and-limitations argument. Question 3 is running comparison organised around similarities and differences. Question 4 is a short evaluative essay that integrates sources with prior knowledge. The mark distribution makes early questions as valuable as later ones in proportional terms, so candidates should not neglect Question 1 in favour of Question 4.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Comprehension	The reading skill tested by Question 1, namely identifying what the source says
OPCVL	The evaluation framework for Question 2, covering Origin, Purpose, Content, Value, Limitations
Running comparison	The Question 3 structural principle of treating two sources together within each thematic point
Synthesis	The Question 4 skill of weaving source evidence with own knowledge in a single argument

Questions

1. State in one sentence what each of the four questions tests.

2. Explain why a tight, well-organised Question 2 answer of about a page is more effective than a longer answer.
3. Describe the structural error that most often keeps candidates in the lower band on Question 3.

Chapter 3: Source analysis fundamentals

Summary of events

Source analysis is the foundational skill of Paper 1 and underlies every one of the four questions. A historian working with a source asks not only what it says but also who said it, when, why, to whom, and with what reliability. The IB framework formalises these questions through OPCVL, but the deeper skills go beyond mechanical application of that acronym. The candidate has to develop a feel for tone, for what is left unsaid, for the difference between a private memo and a public speech, for the rhetorical conventions of cartoon and photograph. This chapter sets out the foundational concepts before the next four chapters dig into the specific question types.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What is the difference between a primary and a secondary source, and why does the distinction matter less than candidates often think?
2. What does provenance reveal, and what does it not reveal?
3. How does the candidate move from describing a source to analysing it?
4. Why is the question "value and limitations for a historian studying X" different from the question "is this source reliable"?

Reference table for Chapter 3

Concept	What it is	What candidates often miss
Primary source	A source produced at the time of the event by someone involved	Primary does not mean reliable; eyewitnesses can lie or err
Secondary source	A source produced later, often by a historian	Secondary sources can be more reliable than primary if better-researched
Provenance	The information about origin, date, author and audience given at the start of the source	The provenance is given to you precisely so you can analyse the source
Tone	The register, attitude or emotional posture of the source	A propaganda tone does not make a source useless, only contextually informative
Perspective	The position from which the author writes	Perspective is always present, even in supposedly neutral sources
Value for historian	What the source can teach a historian about a specific issue	Value is always relative to the question being asked
Limitations for historian	What the source cannot teach or what may distort its testimony	Limitations are not the same as faults; every source has limitations

3.1 Primary versus secondary, and why the distinction is overrated

The textbook distinction between primary and secondary sources is between sources produced at the time of the events under study and sources produced later. A diary entry by a Japanese officer in Manchuria in October 1931 is primary. A 1985 historian's article about the Manchurian Incident is secondary. This distinction has an important place in the historian's toolkit, but it can mislead candidates who treat primary as a synonym for reliable and secondary as a synonym for derivative.

Primary sources can be deeply unreliable. An eyewitness can lie deliberately, can misperceive what they saw, can write down only what serves their interest, can be writing for a hostile audience that constrains what they can say. Secondary sources, particularly those by professional historians with archival access, can be far more reliable than the primary sources they are summarising, because the historian has cross-checked accounts and corrected errors. Hugh Trevor-Roper writing in 1985 about Hitler's table talk is more reliable as a guide to what Hitler thought than the Hitler aide who scribbled down the table talk in 1942 under wartime conditions.

The IB markschemes do not reward candidates who treat primary as automatically valuable and secondary as automatically limited. They reward candidates who reason about specific sources in light of specific questions. The next four chapters demonstrate how that reasoning works.

3.2 What provenance reveals

The provenance is the short note above each source giving its author, date, type and sometimes audience. The provenance is the candidate's most powerful tool because it provides the raw material for the OPCVL analysis that Question 2 demands. A source labelled as "From a speech by Adolf Hitler to the Reichstag, 30 January 1939" carries a great deal of analytical weight before the source itself has been read. The author is the head of the Nazi state. The date is six months before the invasion of Poland. The type is a public political speech. The audience is the rubber-stamp German parliament and, through it, the German public and the international diplomatic community. From these four data points the candidate can already anticipate that the source will be propagandistic in tone, intended to project both confidence and threat, written with multiple audiences in mind, and useful to a historian of Nazi foreign policy as evidence of Hitler's public posture rather than of his private intentions.

3.3 From description to analysis

The candidate moves from description to analysis when they stop saying what the source contains and start saying what the source means. Description says, the source describes German troops marching into the Rhineland. Analysis says, the source is a French press report from March 1936, and its emphasis on troop numbers and military bearing serves to alarm the French public and to pressure the government for a decisive response. Both statements are true, but only the second has analytical content.

The mental move from description to analysis is the single most important skill development a Paper 1 candidate undertakes. In each of the four questions, examiners look for evidence that the candidate is doing analytical work rather than merely describing. The chapter summaries of every chapter in Parts II and III of this book identify analytical points specifically, so that when the candidate uses content from those chapters in Question 4, they are already working at the analytical level.

3.4 Value and limitations for a specific question

The single most important conceptual point about Question 2 is that value and limitations are always relative to a specific historical question. The IB question always specifies the issue the historian is studying. A source might be highly valuable for a historian studying the British public reaction to Munich and only modestly valuable for a historian studying Hitler's intentions before Munich. The candidate must answer the specific question asked, not produce a generic appraisal of the source.

This principle has a corollary that candidates often miss. A source can be valuable precisely because it is biased. A piece of fascist propaganda is highly valuable to a historian studying fascist ideology and propaganda technique, even though it is unreliable as a guide to what was actually happening. The bias is itself the evidence. Candidates who reflexively dismiss biased sources as limited miss this point and lose marks.

Chapter summary

Source analysis is the foundational skill of Paper 1. The primary-secondary distinction is real but overrated, since primary sources can be unreliable and secondary sources can be excellent. The provenance is the candidate's most valuable starting point, providing the raw material for OPCVL analysis. The candidate must move from description, what the source says, to analysis, what the source means. Value and limitations are always relative to the specific historical question being asked, and a biased source can be highly valuable as evidence of the bias itself.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Primary source	A source produced at the time of the event by someone involved
Secondary source	A source produced later, often by a historian or analyst
Provenance	The information about author, date and type given at the source's head
Tone	The emotional or rhetorical register of the source
Perspective	The position or viewpoint from which the source is written
Description	Stating what the source says
Analysis	Stating what the source means and why it matters
Bias	The directional slant of a source; not necessarily a flaw

Questions

1. Explain why the primary-secondary distinction does not by itself determine the value of a source.
2. Take the provenance "From the diary of an American journalist in Berlin, August 1939" and list four analytical observations the candidate could make from this provenance alone.
3. Give an example of a biased source that would be highly valuable to a historian and explain why.

Chapter 4: Question 1 in depth, comprehension

Summary of events

Question 1 has two parts, both of which test comprehension. Part a addresses one of the written sources, awarding three marks for three separate points that the candidate extracts or infers from the source. Part b addresses one of the visual sources, usually a cartoon, photograph or map, awarding two marks for two separate messages that the candidate identifies. The two parts together are worth five marks, twenty per cent of the paper. They are the easiest five marks to score in the entire examination if the candidate follows the technique reliably, and they are also among the most commonly under-performed because candidates rush them or overthink them.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What does the examiner mean by three separate points and how does a candidate ensure they make them?
2. How does the candidate read a visual source for examination purposes?
3. What role do quotations from the source play, and how long should they be?
4. What are the standard errors at this question and how are they corrected?

Reference table for Chapter 4

Question	Marks	Source type	Required points	Signposting
Question 1 part a	3	One written source	Three separate points	Firstly, secondly, finally
Question 1 part b	2	One visual source	Two separate messages	The first message, the second message

4.1 The technique for Part a

Part a asks what the source suggests, indicates or reveals about a particular issue. Three marks means three separate points. The signposting words firstly, secondly and finally serve a double function. They make the structure of the answer obvious to the examiner, who can then mark the three points without having to hunt for them, and they discipline the candidate to make sure all three points are genuinely separate rather than three rephrasings of the same idea.

Each point should be supported by a brief reference to the source, ideally a short quotation of two or three words. The quotation is not the point. The point is a claim about what the source says. The quotation is supporting evidence for the claim. A standard sentence shape looks like, "Firstly, the source suggests that the British government had reservations about the Munich settlement, as shown by the phrase 'with profound misgivings'."

The most common error at Part a is making three points that are really one point in slightly different words. A candidate who writes that the source suggests Britain was unhappy, that the government had concerns, and that the Cabinet was uneasy, has made one point three times and will score one mark out of three. The remedy is to ask, before writing each point, whether it adds something genuinely new to what has already been said. A point about the British public is different from a point about the British government. A point about

contemporary opinion is different from a point about historical context.

4.2 The technique for Part b

Part b asks what message a visual source conveys. Two marks means two separate messages. The signposting words, the first message and the second message, again make the structure obvious and discipline the candidate to identify two distinct messages.

Each message should be tied to a specific visible element of the source. The visible element is the equivalent of the quotation in Part a. A standard sentence shape looks like, "The first message of the cartoon is that the League of Nations was paralysed in the face of Japanese aggression, as shown by the figure of the dove with broken wings looking helplessly at the rising sun."

The most common error at Part b is identifying messages that are not visible in the source. A candidate who writes that the cartoon's message is that Japan should be stopped, without pointing to anything in the cartoon that argues for stopping Japan, is making a point that comes from their own knowledge rather than from the source. The remedy is to ensure that every message is anchored to a specific element. Captions, labels, postures, juxtapositions and symbolism are all permissible elements. Generic context is not.

4.3 Reading a cartoon, photograph or map for examination

A political cartoon almost always carries a message. The cartoonist has chosen the figures, their postures, their relative sizes, their captions and the symbolic objects in the scene to argue a position. Reading a cartoon analytically means asking who the figures represent, what action they are performing, what the artist's evident attitude is toward each figure, and what conclusion the cartoon presses on the viewer.

A photograph is more ambiguous. Photographs can be selected for propaganda purposes, framed deliberately, captioned to direct interpretation, or published in contexts that shape their reception. A photograph of Italian troops in Addis Ababa is different in meaning if published in an Italian propaganda magazine in 1936 than if published in a French anti-fascist newspaper in the same year. The candidate should attend to what the photograph shows and to the visible context of its publication.

A map is the most analytically demanding visual source. Maps embed claims about borders, names of regions, projections and what is highlighted versus what is faded. A map labelled "the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" published in Tokyo in 1942 is making a claim about the territories that ought to be under Japanese leadership, regardless of who actually controls them. A candidate analysing such a map should comment on the labels, the boundaries and the geographical scope of the claim.

4.4 Question stems you can expect

Past papers are remarkably consistent in the way Question 1 part a is phrased. Three formulations recur. What, according to Source X, were the reasons for tension between Japan and the United States? Why, according to Source X, did a court ruling on school desegregation please some white southerners but disappoint black leaders? How, according to Source X, did Serbian propaganda present the Albanian population? Notice the qualifier according to Source X. That phrase is the marker's way of telling you to stay inside the source and not bring in the outside world. Once the words what, why, how are followed by according to, the answer lives entirely on the page in front of you.

Part b stems are even more standardised. What does Source X suggest about Japanese expansion? What does Source X suggest about the Supreme Court decision in Plessy v. Ferguson? What does Source X suggest about the perceptions some Serbian high school students had of Albanians in 1986? The verb suggest is doing the work. The cartoonist or photographer rarely states a position outright. The candidate's job is to read what the

picture implies and to point at the visible features that carry the implication.

The marking logic for both parts is identical in structure. For Part a, the examiner gives one mark for each relevant point, up to three marks. For Part b, the examiner gives one mark for each relevant point, up to two marks. Two practical consequences flow from this logic. First, the marker is counting discrete points, so structural separation matters at least as much as analytical depth. Second, the maximum is fixed, so a fourth point on Part a or a third point on Part b cannot earn an extra mark, but it can serve as a buffer if one of your earlier points turns out to be a duplicate of another. Aim for one buffer point in every Question 1 answer. Three becomes four for Part a, two becomes three for Part b. The extra thirty seconds of writing is the cheapest insurance the paper offers.

4.5 Time allocation and the danger of the cartoon trap

Five minutes for both parts is the experienced candidate's allocation. The clock should look something like three minutes on Part a, two on Part b, with the second minute on Part b reserved as the moment of decision: if the cartoon has not yielded a clear meaning, leave it and move on. Get stuck on Part b for eight minutes and the rest of the paper will pay for it.

Examiner reports flag the same pattern year after year. Candidates lock onto the cartoon, lose confidence, and the confidence loss bleeds into Question 2 and Question 3. The remedy is the discipline of moving on. If you have written one tentative message but the second one will not come, write a brief one-line guess, leave a small space and continue. You can return to the cartoon at the end of Question 4 with five minutes to spare and a calmer mind.

4.6 Worked model answer for Part a

The example that follows responds to the question, "According to Source X, what were the factors contributing to rising tension between the United States and Japan?" The source is a Japanese academic article from 1968. Notice how each point is genuinely distinct, how the buffer fourth point provides insurance, and how the brief reference at the end of each clause anchors the claim to the source rather than to outside knowledge.

> According to Source X, the factors that contributed to rising tension between the United States and Japan were four. First, the Tripartite Pact of September 1940 worsened relations because the United States read it as evidence of Japanese commitment to the Axis. Second, Japan demanded permission to move troops into Indochina, which Washington treated as a hostile move against British and Dutch interests. Third, the United States imposed an oil embargo and froze Japanese assets, which created further pressure on Japanese fuel reserves. Finally, in response to the embargo, Japanese officers within the army and navy resolved that war was preferable to gradual strangulation.

Four points, four distinct claims, each anchored to a specific element from the source. That is a 3 out of 3 answer with the fourth point as a safety net.

4.7 Worked model answer for Part b

The example that follows responds to the question, "What does Source X suggest about Japanese intentions in Southeast Asia?" The source is a 1941 American political cartoon showing Japanese figures dressed as gangsters at an oil filling station labelled Dutch East Indies, with a caption reading "Enough in the tank to get to that filling station?"

> Source X suggests three things about Japanese intentions in Southeast Asia. The cartoon depicts Japan as motivated by declining oil reserves, as the caption asks whether there is "enough in the tank" to reach a fresh source. The cartoon further indicates that Japan had identified the Dutch East Indies specifically as the target for fresh oil supplies, since the filling station in the background carries that label. Finally, the cartoon implies that Japan was prepared to use force to obtain the oil, since the Japanese figures are drawn as gangsters carrying machine guns.

Three messages, three visible anchors. That is a 2 out of 2 answer with the third message providing the buffer.

4.8 Common errors and corrections

The errors at Question 1 cluster around three patterns. The first is repetition, three points that are really one point in three forms. The remedy is the discipline of asking whether each point adds something new. The second is over-quotation, where the candidate copies long stretches of the source text rather than making points. The remedy is to keep quotations to two or three words. The third is bringing in own knowledge that goes beyond what the source can be said to suggest. The remedy is to anchor every claim to specific source content, since Question 1 tests source comprehension only, not contextual recall.

Chapter summary

Question 1 tests comprehension. Part a awards three marks for three separate points from one written source. Part b awards two marks for two separate messages from one visual source. The technique is to use signposting words, to make each point genuinely distinct, to support each point with a specific source reference, and to keep quotations brief. The most common errors are repetition of the same point, over-quotation, and importing material that comes from outside the source. The remedies are simple disciplines that the candidate can practise on every past paper they encounter.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Comprehension	The skill of stating what the source says
Separate points	Three or two genuinely distinct contributions, not rephrasings
Signposting	The use of firstly, secondly, finally to make structure obvious
Visual source	A cartoon, photograph or map provided in the booklet
Visible element	A specific feature of the visual source that supports a claim

Questions

1. Take the source "From a speech by Joachim von Ribbentrop, 30 March 1939" and produce three separate points that could be made about it without seeing the actual text.
2. Explain why over-quotation harms a Question 1 part a answer.
3. Describe what the candidate should look for when reading a political cartoon for Question 1 part b.

Chapter 5: Question 2 in depth, OPCVL

Summary of events

Question 2 evaluates the value and limitations of one specified source for a historian studying a particular issue. The framework is OPCVL, where the candidate works through the Origin, Purpose and Content of the source and then draws an argument about Value and Limitations from those three. The mark allocation is four. A high-scoring answer is tight, well-organised and fits comfortably on one page. The single most consistent error reported by examiners is mechanical listing of OPCVL elements without drawing the value-and-limitations argument from them. The remedy is to organise the answer around the value-and-limitations argument and to bring in origin, purpose and content as evidence for that argument.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What exactly does each letter of OPCVL mean?
2. How does the candidate move from origin, purpose and content to value and limitations?
3. What is the structural shape of a four-mark answer that scores three or four out of four?
4. What are the standard errors and how are they corrected?

Reference table for Chapter 5

Letter	Stands for	Question to ask	What it contributes to the argument
O	Origin	Who created this, when, where?	Sets up value through proximity and limitations through bias
P	Purpose	Why was it created, for what audience?	Sets up value through revealed intent and limitations through propaganda risk
C	Content	What does the source say and in what tone?	Sets up value through specific claims and limitations through omissions
V	Value	What can a historian use this source to study?	Drawn from O, P and C
L	Limitations	What can a historian not use this source to study?	Drawn from O, P and C

5.1 The OPCVL framework letter by letter

Origin asks who created the source, when, where and in what circumstances. The provenance gives most of this information directly. The candidate's job is to read it carefully and to extract the implications. A diary written in 1935 by a German officer in the Wehrmacht is different in origin from a memoir written in 1955 by the same officer. The first is contemporaneous, written without knowledge of the war's outcome, possibly under official supervision. The second is retrospective, written after defeat, possibly with self-justification in mind.

Purpose asks why the source was created and for what audience. A speech made in private to military commanders has a different purpose from a speech made publicly to the Reichstag. The first is intended to communicate operational intentions to colleagues. The second is intended to project political messages to the public, to opponents and to foreign governments. Purpose is often inferred rather than stated, but it can usually be inferred reliably from origin.

Content asks what the source says and how it says it. Tone, register and rhetorical posture are all part of content. A diplomatic note may say roughly the same thing as a speech, but in cooler language and with different emphasis. The candidate should read the content not only for its claims but for what those claims, taken together, suggest about the author's perspective.

Value is what the source can teach a historian about the specific issue named in the question. Value is always relative to that question. A historian studying public German opinion of Munich learns something different from the same source than a historian studying the British government's negotiating position.

Limitations is what the source cannot teach the historian, or what may distort its testimony. Limitations are not faults. Every source has limitations, and identifying them is part of the historian's craft. A speech is limited as evidence of private thought because its purpose is public communication. A diary is limited as evidence of public action because its content is private reflection.

5.2 The structural shape of a high-scoring answer

A four-mark Question 2 answer that scores three or four out of four typically has the following shape. A first short paragraph or set of sentences moves through Origin, Purpose and Content, identifying each in turn. A second paragraph develops the Value of the source for the named historical issue, drawing on the OPC observations as evidence. A third paragraph develops the Limitations, again drawing on the OPC observations. The total length is usually about three quarters of a page in standard handwriting.

The structural alternative, in which the candidate works through Value and Limitations together for each of Origin, Purpose and Content, also works and is favoured by some teachers. The risk with this structure is that the answer becomes a list rather than an argument. The single-paragraph-per-element structure recommended above keeps the argument clearer.

5.3 The decisive move from OPC to V and L

The mark allocation rewards the move from OPC to V and L, not the recitation of OPC. A candidate who writes that the source's origin is a 1937 speech by Mussolini, that its purpose is to justify the Ethiopian invasion, and that its content is a justification of the invasion in terms of imperial destiny, has done preliminary work but has not yet earned high marks. The decisive move is to say what these features make the source valuable for and what they make it limited for.

The Mussolini speech is highly valuable to a historian studying the Italian fascist justification for empire, because it directly articulates that justification at the highest level of the regime. The same speech is limited as evidence of the Italian public response to the invasion, because its purpose is to project a position rather than

to record a reception. Two separate value-and-limitations claims, each anchored in the OPC observations, give the answer the analytical content the four marks require.

5.4 Question stems, marks and time

Question 2 has the longest stem on Paper 1 and the same shape every year. With reference to its origin, purpose and content, analyse the value and limitations of Source X for a historian studying the tensions between the United States and Japan. The wording rotates only the historical issue. The framework, the source and the formulation for a historian studying are constants, and you should rehearse the answer pattern until it can be reproduced under stress in ten minutes.

The marking logic matters here because it contains a structural rule. In essence, an answer that discusses only value or only limitations is capped at two marks, origin, purpose and content are to be used as supporting evidence for comments on value and limitations, and a mark of four requires at least one reference to each of the three, placed in either the value or the limitations. The requirement of one reference to each of origin, purpose and content is not aspirational. It is a hard ceiling. An answer that addresses only origin and content but neglects purpose, however well written, cannot reach four marks. The remedy is mechanical. Before you finish writing, run a quick check: have I touched origin in either the value paragraph or the limitations paragraph? Have I touched purpose? Have I touched content? If any of the three is missing, insert one sentence before time runs out.

Time allocation is ten minutes including planning. The IB community's accumulated wisdom recommends underlining the key elements of the provenance before writing, for instance "Japanese professor of history," "Journal of Peace Research," "1968," "US-Japanese relations 1938–1941," and treating those underlined phrases as the raw material from which Origin, Purpose and Content claims will be drawn. Two minutes of marking up the provenance saves five minutes of confused writing later.

5.5 The structure that maximises the four-mark return

A well-tested skeleton for this answer is two paragraphs. The first treats values, organised by origin, purpose, then content. The second treats limitations in the same order. Splitting the answer this way makes life easy for the examiner, who can mark each paragraph separately and tick off the references to origin, purpose and content as they occur. It also disciplines the candidate, since gaps become visible to the writer as well as the reader. If you are pressed for time, do not chase a sixth value or limitation. Develop one of your existing points more fully, by tightening the link to the named historical issue or by adding a specific evidential clause from the content of the source.

Two pieces of advice deserve particular emphasis. The first is to focus on the source's identification rather than on the excerpt text. "Chihiro Hosoya, a Japanese professor of history, writing in 'Miscalculations in Deterrent Policy: US-Japanese Relations, 1938–1941,' for the Journal of Peace Research, 1968" gives you almost everything you need for Origin and Purpose before the excerpt itself has been read. The second is to remember that the source is the whole article, the whole speech, the whole memoir, not the paragraph reproduced in the booklet. Purpose is a property of the publication, not of the excerpt.

5.6 Worked model answer

The example that follows responds to the question, "With reference to its origin, purpose and content, analyse the value and limitations of Source X for a historian studying the tensions between the United States and Japan." The source is the Hosoya article identified above.

> One of the values of Source X for a historian studying tensions between the United States and Japan can be found in its origin. Written in 1968, the article offers a retrospective view within a generation of the events themselves, which means that the author had access to declassified diplomatic correspondence and to the early wave of academic monographs without losing the immediacy of memory. The purpose of the source also strengthens its value, since Hosoya wrote it as an academic article for a peer-reviewed journal in order to analyse the growth of tensions between the two states, which means that the argument has been disciplined by the conventions of historical evidence rather than by political advocacy. Because the author is a Japanese academic, the source is also likely to offer a well-informed Japanese perspective, drawing on Japanese-language scholarship that anglophone historians often struggle to access. Finally, the content offers detailed analysis of US-Japanese relations between 1938 and 1941, with a focus on the escalation of tensions, which is precisely the issue the historian is researching.
>
> The same source carries limitations. The title alone signals that the chronological range of the content is narrow, running from 1938, and the article will therefore not consider the longer fuse from the Manchurian Incident of 1931 onward. The purpose, namely the analysis of deterrent policy, suggests that the article will frame the relationship in policy-strategic terms and may not place tensions in the broader context of imperial competition or domestic Japanese politics. The author's Japanese nationality, while a value when it grants access to Japanese sources, can also be a limitation if the author's upbringing, education and access to wartime materials shape his interpretation of who bears responsibility for escalation.

The answer separates values from limitations, addresses origin, purpose and content in each paragraph, and ties every claim back to the historical issue named in the question. That is a 4 out of 4 response.

5.7 Common errors and corrections

The errors at Question 2 cluster around four patterns. The first is mechanical OPCVL listing without an argument. The remedy is to organise the answer around value and limitations as the principal claims. The second is generic value claims, where the candidate writes that the source is valuable because it is primary, without specifying for what historical question. The remedy is to read the question carefully and to make claims relative to the specific historical issue. The third is treating limitations as faults, where the candidate writes that the source is biased and therefore worthless. The remedy is to recognise that bias is informative and that all sources have limitations. The fourth is omitting either Value or Limitations entirely. The remedy is to include both, even if one is shorter than the other.

Chapter summary

Question 2 evaluates one source for value and limitations using the OPCVL framework. The four letters stand for Origin, Purpose, Content, Value and Limitations. The high-scoring answer organises itself around the value-and-limitations argument and uses origin, purpose and content as evidence for that argument. Value is always relative to the specific historical question named in the prompt. Limitations are not faults but features of every source. The candidate who masters Question 2 typically scores three or four out of four reliably and contributes the same proportion of marks as Question 1 in less time per mark.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
OPCVL	Origin, Purpose, Content, Value, Limitations
Origin	Who created the source, when and where

Term	Meaning
Purpose	Why the source was created and for what audience
Content	What the source says and in what tone
Value	What a historian can use the source to study, relative to a specific question
Limitations	What the source cannot teach the historian, given OPC features

Questions

1. Take the source "From an article in Pravda, 24 August 1939" and produce a one-paragraph OPC analysis.
2. Continue from your answer to Question 1 by deriving one Value claim and one Limitations claim, each anchored in the OPC observations.
3. Explain why bias is informative rather than disqualifying.

Chapter 6: Question 3 in depth, compare and contrast

Summary of events

Question 3 asks the candidate to compare and contrast two specified sources in their treatment of a particular issue. The mark allocation of six marks is the second largest in the lower part of the paper and signals that real comparative work is expected. The structural rule is the running comparison, in which one paragraph addresses similarities between the two sources and a second paragraph addresses differences. The most reliable way to lose marks here is to write two separate descriptions of the two sources without ever putting them in dialogue. The candidate who masters running comparison can typically score four or five out of six on this question with reasonable preparation.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What does running comparison mean and how does it differ from sequential description?
2. What kinds of similarity and difference does the examiner reward?
3. What is the structural shape of a high-scoring answer?
4. What are the standard errors and how are they corrected?

Reference table for Chapter 6

Element	Description
Running comparison	The structural principle of treating both sources together within each thematic point
Similarities paragraph	One paragraph identifying points of agreement, with both sources cited together
Differences paragraph	One paragraph identifying points of disagreement, with both sources cited together
Linkage	The vocabulary of comparison, including similarly, in contrast, both sources, while Source A says, Source B suggests
Comparative depth	Both content-level similarities and origin-level similarities, beyond surface description

6.1 What running comparison means

Running comparison is the structural opposite of sequential description. In sequential description, the candidate writes a first half about Source A, then a second half about Source B, then perhaps a brief linking sentence at the end. The result is two descriptions side by side rather than a comparison. The IB markschemes consistently penalise this structure regardless of how accurately the descriptions are done, because the candidate has not actually compared the sources.

In running comparison, the candidate identifies a thematic point first, such as the cause of an event or the attitude of an author, and then shows what each source says about that point in close textual juxtaposition. A running comparison sentence might read, "Both Source A and Source C agree that the Manchurian Incident was orchestrated by Japanese officers without Tokyo's prior approval, with Source A describing it as a 'plan worked out by junior officers' and Source C calling it 'a conspiracy by the Kwantung Army'." The two sources appear together, the agreement is named, and specific evidence from each source supports the agreement.

6.2 The standard structure

A high-scoring Question 3 answer has the following structure. The first paragraph identifies similarities between the two sources, typically two or three substantive points of agreement, each one developed in two or three sentences with specific source evidence. The second paragraph identifies differences, again two or three substantive points, each developed similarly. There is no introduction and no conclusion. The total length is about a page of standard handwriting.

The generally accepted guidance on Paper 1 is that there is no need for an introduction or a conclusion at Question 3 (verify against the current subject guide). Candidates who add either are simply taking time away from the substance of the comparison. The two paragraphs are the answer.

6.3 What kinds of point earn marks

The examiner rewards comparison both at the level of content and at the level of provenance. Content-level comparison addresses what the sources say. Provenance-level comparison addresses why they say it differently, drawing on OPC features. A candidate who notices that two sources disagree about who started the Sino-Japanese War and connects that disagreement to the fact that one source is Japanese and the other Chinese is making a richer comparison than a candidate who simply notes the disagreement.

The richest comparisons identify both. They name a content disagreement and explain it in terms of provenance differences. The Question 3 markscheme rewards this combined approach.

6.4 Question stems, marks and the TASTE shortcut

Question 3 stems are short and direct. Compare and contrast what Sources I and J reveal about the increasing tensions between the United States and Japan. Compare and contrast what Sources M and O reveal about attitudes to the desegregation of US schools. Compare and contrast what Sources S and T reveal about relations between Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda. The named sources change, the historical issue changes, but the verb pair compare and contrast and the formula what Sources X and Y reveal never do. Internalise the skeleton and you will not waste seconds parsing the prompt on examination day.

The question is worth six marks and a sensible allocation is fifteen minutes, including roughly three minutes of T-chart drafting. The T-chart is the single most useful preparation tool for this question. Re-read the two sources, underline the claims relevant to the historical issue, and split a strip of rough paper into two columns. Left column for similarities, right column for differences. Three minutes of this and you have the structural backbone of a 5/6 or 6/6 answer.

When similarities or differences fail to surface naturally, the TASTE acronym keeps the candidate moving. Tone, is one source optimistic and the other pessimistic, or is one realistic and the other sarcastic? Actors, which individuals or organisations are named, and in what roles? Scope, what dates does each source cover, what geography, what level of generality? Themes, does each source emphasise the political, cultural, social, military or economic dimension of the issue? Events, which specific events are named, mentioned in passing or omitted? Running through TASTE for a minute is usually enough to surface three substantive differences and three substantive similarities. A 3+3 structure is the gold standard. A 3+2 or 2+3 structure can still reach the upper band if each point is well developed. A 1+1 or unbalanced structure caps the answer at the lower band, even when the surviving points are good.

The Question 3 markscheme uses level descriptors rather than counts of points. In its own wording, which is paraphrased here, the 5–6 band expects clear and valid points of comparison and also of contrast. That phrasing has two implications. The candidate must produce both kinds of point, and the points must be both

clear and valid. Clarity is structural, running comparison rather than two sequential descriptions. Validity is content-based, comparisons that genuinely capture what each source argues, not surface coincidences such as both sources mentioning Japan.

6.5 Worked model answer

The example responds to the question, "Compare and contrast what Sources X and Y reveal about the increasing tensions between the United States and Japan." The two sources are paired primary documents, one Japanese and one American, both from the months before Pearl Harbor.

> With regard to the increasing tensions between the United States and Japan, both Sources X and Y agree on certain aspects. Both indicate that Japan was dependent on foreign oil supplies and that this dependence shaped the diplomatic and military pressure of 1941. Both also indicate that the Japanese military was prepared for war against the United States rather than continued accommodation. Both, finally, suggest that a diplomatic solution was unlikely, given forceful American responses such as the oil embargo and asset freeze that pushed the dispute past the point where compromise could feasibly be reached.
> The two sources also differ. Source X claims that in 1941 the Japanese leadership was still genuinely deciding between accepting the American conditions in China and resorting to force, whereas Source Y treats war as already difficult to avoid by the same date. Source X portrays Japan as acting aggressively to obtain resources, whereas Source Y describes Japanese moves as a response to British and American military preparations and the strengthening of Far Eastern defences. Finally, Source X states that Japanese diplomats and Japanese military officers held opposing views about how to handle relations with the United States, while Source Y presents the Japanese authorities as more unified.

Three points of comparison, three points of contrast, both sources cited in every point, and the linkage vocabulary, namely both, whereas, while, finally, makes the running structure unmistakable. That is a 6 out of 6 answer.

6.6 The standard errors

The dominant error at Question 3 is sequential description rather than running comparison. The remedy is the discipline of writing each thematic paragraph with both sources in it, named and cited specifically.

A second error is choosing thematic points that are too superficial. A point about both sources mentioning Japan is not a comparison. A point about both sources blaming China for Japanese aggression, however, is a comparison with analytical content. The remedy is to ask, before writing each point, what specific feature of each source one is comparing.

A third error is unbalanced treatment, where one source receives detailed analysis and the other only a passing mention. The remedy is to ensure that each thematic point cites both sources with comparable evidence.

Chapter summary

Question 3 tests compare and contrast skills through the running comparison structure. One paragraph addresses similarities, one addresses differences, and both treat the two sources together rather than sequentially. There is no introduction or conclusion. The candidate earns marks for substantive content-level comparisons and for provenance-level explanations of differences. The standard error is sequential description, which can be corrected by the simple discipline of putting both sources into every thematic paragraph.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Compare and contrast	The Question 3 instruction to identify both similarities and differences
Running comparison	The structural principle of treating both sources within each thematic point
Sequential description	The error of describing one source then the other without comparison
Linkage	The comparison vocabulary that signals running comparison
Provenance-level comparison	Comparison that draws on origin, purpose or audience features

Questions

1. Take a hypothetical pair of sources, one Japanese and one Chinese, on the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, and produce a similarities paragraph in running comparison.
2. Continue with a differences paragraph for the same pair.
3. Identify the most common error at Question 3 and explain how the candidate can avoid it.

Chapter 7: Question 4 in depth, the mini-essay

Summary of events

Question 4 is worth nine marks, more than a third of the paper, and it is a short evaluative essay that integrates evidence from all four sources with the candidate's own knowledge of the prescribed subject. The structural shape is a brief introduction with a clear thesis, three or four PEEL paragraphs each combining source evidence and own knowledge, and a brief conclusion. The single most common error is to treat the question as a pure essay from memory or as a pure summary of the sources, rather than as a synthesis. The mark band descriptors explicitly reward synthesis as the upper-band feature.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What does the examiner mean by synthesis of source material and own knowledge?
2. What is the structural shape of a high-scoring Question 4 answer?
3. How is each PEEL paragraph adapted to incorporate source references?
4. What are the standard errors and how are they corrected?

Reference table for Chapter 7

Mark band	Marks	Core feature
Top	7 to 9	Focused on question. Sources used as evidence. Accurate and relevant own knowledge. Effective synthesis
Upper-middle	4 to 6	Generally focused. Sources referenced as evidence. Some own knowledge but lacking relevance or accuracy
Lower	1 to 3	Lacks focus. Sources described rather than used. No own knowledge or inaccurate own knowledge

7.1 What synthesis means

The examiner uses synthesis to describe an argument that genuinely combines source evidence and own knowledge. Synthesis is more than juxtaposition. A candidate who writes a paragraph from memory and then adds a sentence at the end saying "as Source B suggests" is not synthesising. A candidate who builds a paragraph in which each step is supported by either a source or an item of own knowledge, and in which the two kinds of evidence reinforce each other, is synthesising.

A synthetic sentence might read, "The Manchurian Incident was conceived by junior Kwantung Army officers acting without Tokyo's authorisation, as Source C indicates by calling it 'a conspiracy by the Kwantung Army', and as the broader pattern of zealous independent military action by Japanese officers from the early 1930s confirms." The source claim and the own-knowledge claim support a single argumentative point, and each kind of evidence makes the argument stronger than it would be on its own.

7.2 The structural shape of a high-scoring Question 4 answer

A nine-mark Question 4 answer has the following shape. A brief introduction of two or three sentences sets out the historical context, names the question and offers a clear thesis. Three or four body paragraphs each make one substantive point about the question, each citing at least one source by letter and each contributing at least one item of own knowledge that goes beyond the sources. A brief conclusion of two or three sentences returns to the thesis with a final judgement. The total length is about two pages in standard handwriting, which at twenty-five minutes of writing time is a comfortable pace.

The body paragraphs use the PEEL structure familiar from Paper 2. Point states the argument of the paragraph. Evidence delivers specific evidence, drawn either from a source or from own knowledge or from both. Explanation analyses the evidence and links it to the point. Link returns to the question. The Paper 1 variant of PEEL is that Evidence and Explanation must always include source references. A paragraph that does not cite any source is not a Paper 1 paragraph.

7.3 Working with sources in the body paragraphs

The candidate uses sources in the body paragraphs in three ways. They quote briefly, they paraphrase, and they reference. A direct quotation should be two to four words, just enough to support a claim with the source's exact language. A paraphrase summarises the source's claim in the candidate's words, attributing it to the source by letter. A reference simply names a source as relevant, useful for the introduction or conclusion when more developed engagement is not warranted.

A typical body paragraph cites two sources, one as direct support and one as additional or contrasting evidence. It also cites one or two items of own knowledge that the sources do not provide, such as specific dates, named individuals or quantitative data. The combination produces synthesis in the technical sense and earns the upper band.

7.4 Question stems, marks and the official markbands

Question 4 stems are evaluative or examining. Three typical stems. "Fear on both sides drove the United States and Japan towards confrontation." Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree with this statement? Using the sources and your own knowledge, evaluate the effect of the Brown v. Board of Education ruling on school desegregation in the United States by the end of 1957. Using the sources and your own knowledge, examine why ethnic nationalism grew in Kosovo in the early 1990s. The phrase Using the sources and your own knowledge is non-negotiable. The marker is required to look for both kinds of evidence, and an answer drawing only on memory or only on sources cannot reach the upper band.

Mark allocation is nine, time allocation is twenty-five minutes, and it is sensible to spend the first four to five of those twenty-five on a written outline. The outline lists, at minimum, three or four items of own knowledge that can be deployed and two or three substantive arguments that genuinely answer the question. The remaining twenty minutes go to the introduction, three or four body paragraphs and a brief conclusion. Candidates who skip the outline almost always run out of time on the conclusion or on the third body paragraph. The five minutes spent planning are repaid four times over in writing speed.

The official IB markbands for Question 4 are short, and their sense can be summarised in three steps (this is a paraphrase, not the official text). In the 1–3 band, the answer drifts away from the question. It mentions the sources, but mostly describes what they say instead of using them as evidence, and it shows either no own knowledge or knowledge that is wrong or beside the point. In the 4–6 band, the answer is largely on the question and uses the sources as evidence for its analysis. Any own knowledge is patchy in relevance or accuracy, and there is little or no attempt to combine own knowledge with the sources. In the 7–9 band, the

answer stays on the question, uses clear references to the sources effectively as evidence, shows accurate and relevant own knowledge, and weaves the two together. The keyword of the upper band is synthesis, and synthesis is the technical name for the move from evidence to argument.

7.5 The recommended structure

The structure that consistently delivers upper-band marks is straightforward. The introduction states the thesis using the wording of the question and presents the main arguments. No long context-setting. The first body paragraph offers the strongest argument with a topic sentence, supports it with one or two sources cited as Source A, Source C, and one or two items of own knowledge such as a date, a treaty article or a named figure. The second body paragraph repeats this structure with the second-strongest argument. The third body paragraph either develops a third argument or presents a counterpoint that the candidate explains is less convincing on the available evidence. A brief conclusion of two or three sentences returns to the thesis and delivers the final judgement.

A practical hint that examiners reward without saying so explicitly is to underline every reference to the sources. Writing Source A, Source B, Source C, Source D with a pencil mark each time draws the marker's attention to source use. Synthesis is invisible if the marker has to hunt for it. Your job is to make synthesis visible.

Finally, certain phrases earn detailed-knowledge marks almost automatically when followed up with the right specifics. The word tangible in an argument creates the natural opening for for example, the Tripartite Pact of September 1940, the freezing of Japanese assets on 25 July 1941 and the Hull note of 26 November 1941. Three named events with dates is the kind of evidence the upper band requires. Memorise short clusters of dated events for each topic and use a tangible sentence to deploy them.

7.6 Worked model answer skeleton

The example sketches the structure of a 7+/9 response to the question, "Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree that mutual fear led to increasing tensions between the United States and Japan?"

> Introduction. Mutual fear was an important factor in the deterioration of US-Japanese relations between 1937 and 1941, but it was not the only one. Japan's resource crisis, the breakdown of the Washington system and the ideological commitment to Asian leadership combined with mutual fear to push the two states toward war. This essay will argue that mutual fear was significant but secondary to the structural pressures of resources and ideology.
> Paragraph 1. Mutual fear was real on both sides, as Source A indicates by describing the American oil embargo as a measure intended to deter, and as Source D suggests by treating Japanese strategic moves as defensive responses to the strengthening of British and American Pacific positions. Own-knowledge evidence reinforces this picture: the United States moved its Pacific Fleet from San Diego to Pearl Harbor in May 1940 specifically to project deterrence, and the Hull note of November 1941 was read in Tokyo as an ultimatum.
> Paragraph 2. Resource pressure was the deeper cause. Source C, the gangster cartoon, makes this point graphically when it labels the filling station as the Dutch East Indies, and Source B confirms that Japanese officers identified oil as the binding constraint. Own knowledge supplies the figures: by mid-1941 Japan held an estimated eighteen months of oil reserves, the embargo was projected to exhaust them by 1943, and Yamamoto's strategic memoranda treated this fact as decisive.
> Paragraph 3. Ideology shaped how Japan read the resource pressure. Source D's emphasis on Japan's defensive interpretation of British and American moves understates the offensive component of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere doctrine articulated by Konoe and codified at imperial conferences in 1940 and 1941.
> Conclusion. Mutual fear was a real factor, but the structural pressures of resources and the ideological commitment to Asian leadership turned that fear into war. The statement is partially correct, but the deeper drivers lay elsewhere.

This shape is reproducible across any Question 4 stem on any prescribed subject, and the candidate who internalises it can move from question to outline to draft in twenty-five minutes.

7.7 The standard errors

The errors at Question 4 cluster around four patterns. The first is the pure essay, in which the candidate writes from memory and never cites the sources. The remedy is the discipline of citing at least one source per body paragraph. The second is the source summary, in which the candidate paraphrases the four sources sequentially without bringing in any own knowledge. The remedy is the discipline of contributing one item of own knowledge per body paragraph. The third is the bolted-on essay, in which the candidate writes essentially from memory and adds source references as decoration. The remedy is to write the paragraphs with sources and own knowledge interleaved from the start, not to add them later. The fourth is omitting the conclusion under time pressure. The remedy is to manage time so that two or three sentences of conclusion are always written.

Chapter summary

Question 4 is the highest-value question on Paper 1, worth nine marks. The required skill is synthesis, the genuine integration of source evidence and own knowledge in a short evaluative essay. The structural shape is a brief introduction with thesis, three or four PEEL paragraphs each citing sources and own knowledge, and a brief conclusion. The candidate who masters synthesis routinely scores in the upper band, while the candidate who treats the question as either a pure essay or a pure source summary stays in the middle band even with strong content.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Synthesis	The genuine integration of source evidence with own knowledge in a single argument
Mini-essay	The Question 4 short evaluative essay, about two pages in length
PEEL adapted	The Paper 1 variant in which each paragraph cites at least one source
Direct quotation	A two to four word quotation from a source supporting a specific claim
Paraphrase	A summary of a source's claim in the candidate's words, attributed to the source by letter

Questions

1. Define synthesis in your own words and give an example sentence that demonstrates it.
2. Explain why the bolted-on essay strategy fails to reach the upper band.
3. Outline the structural shape of a Question 4 answer in roughly two hundred words.

Chapter 8: Common traps and time management

Summary of events

Paper 1 is a short, dense, time-pressured examination. Sixty minutes is not generous given the four sources to read and the four questions to answer. The successful candidate is the one who has rehearsed the technique often enough that they can move through the paper without hesitation, and who has internalised the time discipline that allocates effort proportional to marks. This chapter consolidates the techniques from the previous seven chapters into a compact set of rules and provides a recommended time allocation.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What is the recommended time allocation across the four questions?
2. What are the most common traps reported by IB examiners?
3. How does the candidate practise efficiently in the months before the examination?

Reference table for Chapter 8

Phase	Time	Activity
Reading	5 minutes	Read all four sources carefully, marking key points
Q1 a and b	5 minutes	Three plus two points, with quotations
Q2	5 minutes	OPCVL with value-and-limitations argument
Q3	12 minutes	Running comparison, similarities then differences
Q4	25 minutes	Mini-essay with synthesis
Reserve	8 minutes	For any question that runs over, plus final check

8.1 The recommended time allocation

The arithmetic of the paper reduces to twelve minutes of unallocated time. Reading takes five, Q1 takes five, Q2 takes five, Q3 takes twelve, Q4 takes twenty-five. That leaves eight minutes as reserve. The reserve is not optional. It absorbs the inevitable overruns on Q3 and Q4 and provides a window to check the answers at the end. A candidate who plans without reserve almost always finishes incomplete.

8.2 The reading phase

The first five minutes are for reading the sources and the questions. Read the questions first, because that tells you what to look for in the sources. Then read each source, marking key claims with a pencil. Note which sources are visual and which are written, and pay particular attention to the provenance of each. By the end of the five minutes the candidate should have a mental map of where each question's evidence is going to come from.

8.3 The standard traps

The IB examiner reports recur on the same set of errors year after year. The most consistent are these. Candidates over-write Question 4 and run out of time. Candidates under-write Question 1 part a, settling for two points instead of three. Candidates write OPCVL at Question 2 without drawing the value-and-limitations argument from the OPC. Candidates write sequential description at Question 3 instead of running comparison. Candidates write either pure essays or pure source summaries at Question 4 instead of synthesising. Candidates forget to manage time and finish without writing a conclusion at Question 4.

Each of these errors has a specific remedy that has been discussed in the relevant chapter. The candidate who works through the worked answers in Part IV of this book will have practised the remedies enough times that they become automatic.

8.4 Practice strategy

Paper 1 rewards practice more than any other paper in the IB History course. The recommended strategy is to do at least one full past paper per week in the two months before the examination, marking yourself against the markscheme. The Paper 1 markschemes are publicly available and provide indicative content for each question, which lets the candidate see what sorts of points the examiner was expecting.

Published Paper 1 papers from recent sessions are the best practice material. Working systematically through four of them, plus the worked papers in Part IV of this book, gives the candidate roughly six full papers of practice. That is the floor for serious preparation. Eight or ten is better.

Chapter summary

Paper 1 is a one-hour paper that punishes weak time management. The recommended allocation is five minutes for reading, five for Q1, five for Q2, twelve for Q3, twenty-five for Q4 and eight in reserve. The most common traps are over-writing Q4, under-writing Q1, mechanical OPCVL at Q2, sequential description at Q3 and unsynthesised essays at Q4. Each trap has a specific remedy. The single most effective preparation is repeated practice on past papers, of which many sessions are available.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Time allocation	The plan for distributing one hour across the four questions and the reading phase
Reading phase	The first five minutes, used to orient the candidate to sources and questions
Reserve	The unallocated minutes that absorb overruns on later questions
Indicative content	The examiner's list of expected points, published in the markscheme

Questions

1. State the recommended time allocation for each question and explain the reasoning.
2. Identify the five most common traps reported by IB examiners and the remedy for each.
3. Describe a practice strategy for the eight weeks before the examination.

Chapter 8.5: Final tips from examiner reports

Summary of events
The IB publishes subject reports after each examination session, and reading two or three years of them gives the candidate a clearer picture of what high-scoring answers actually look like than any technique manual can supply on its own. The patterns in those reports recur with such regularity that they can be summarised into five practical rules. Each one looks deceptively obvious. Each one is broken by candidates every session. The chapter that follows translates the most consistent advice into continuous prose because the prose form encourages reflection rather than mechanical compliance.

8.5.1 Practice makes perfect

The single most repeated examiner observation is that practice with past papers in timed conditions matters more than any other preparation activity. Examiner reports advise, in effect, that candidates should work through previous source and question booklets before the examination so that the papers feel familiar and the candidate feels confident. Published past papers from earlier sessions are available, and the eight weeks before the examination are the time to work through them. Use them. The benefit is not chiefly knowledge, since the historical content of past papers will not appear again. The benefit is fluency with the four-question architecture and the muscle memory of writing under pressure for sixty minutes.

A reasonable target is one full timed paper a week for the eight weeks before the examination. Mark it yourself against the published markscheme, then revisit your weakest question type for ten minutes the following day. By the time you reach the real examination, the architecture will feel familiar rather than novel.

8.5.2 Time management is essential

The same examiner reports flag time management as the second most consistent failure point. Reports recommend that candidates get used to the timing of Paper 1, including the five minutes of reading time, and that they practise under timed conditions so that they can leave enough time for the last question, which carries the most marks. The point that the last question carries the most marks deserves underlining. Twenty-five minutes for Question 4 is not a luxury, it is a floor. Candidates who slip below twenty minutes on Question 4 routinely lose two to three marks they could have earned with a fuller conclusion or a third body paragraph.

The remedy that practice papers reveal is the discipline of stopping Questions 1, 2 and 3 even when they feel unfinished. A 3 out of 3 on Question 1a in four minutes is no better than a 3 out of 3 in seven minutes. Those three minutes are now investment capital that can flow into Question 4.

8.5.3 Read the questions carefully

Examiners remind candidates to read each question carefully, so that the response refers to the correct source or sources and stays focused on what the question actually asks. The error this rule addresses is small but expensive. A candidate writing about Source A when Question 2 specifies Source D loses up to four marks. A candidate compare-and-contrasting Sources A and C when the question pairs Sources B and D loses up to six marks.

The remedy is the deliberate ten seconds of underlining the source identifier and the historical issue at the head of every question. Even when the room is quiet and the panic is rising, those ten seconds are non-negotiable.

8.5.4 Both case studies must be taught, but neither needs months

The IB syllabus prescribes two case studies for each prescribed subject, and the examination paper draws all four sources and all four questions from one or the other. The candidate cannot know in advance which case study the paper will set. Examiners observe that candidates need to know the content and concepts of both case studies of the chosen prescribed subject, because that knowledge is what lets them understand the context of the sources and build accurate, relevant knowledge into the final question. The unstated corollary is equally important. Neither case study requires the depth of preparation that Paper 2 or Paper 3 demands, because Paper 1 is a source paper rather than a content paper. Two months of focused work on each case study is enough. Trying to make Paper 1 preparation rival Paper 2 in scope is wasted time that could go to revising the world history topics.

The way the IB has shaped Paper 1 over the last decade rewards balanced rather than deep preparation. Know the chronological skeleton, the named individuals, the key events with dates. Know enough to recognise what a source is referring to and to drop one or two facts into the Question 4 mini-essay. Beyond that, your time is better spent elsewhere.

8.5.5 Know your markschemes, but write in continuous prose

The final examiner observation is the most counterintuitive. Reports acknowledge that past markschemes are useful, since they show how the different question types can be approached and which points could be relevant, but they warn against answering in note form or bullet points and ask for analysis and evaluation in continuous prose. Markschemes are essential reading for revision. They reveal what the IB examiners were looking for in any given session, and the indicative content sections name the historical points the marker was trained to reward.

The trap is to treat the markscheme as a template and to write the answer in note form because that is how the markscheme presents the points. The marker awards full marks only to answers in continuous prose. Bullet points cap the response at the lower band regardless of content. The remedy is to use the markscheme as a checklist for content but to write the answer as if it were a short essay, with sentences that contain finite verbs, with paragraphs that begin with topic sentences, and with linkage that signals comparison and analysis. Your reader is a tired examiner working through a stack of scripts at midnight. Make the prose easy to follow and the marks will follow with it.

Chapter summary

Examiner reports collapse into five recurring rules: practise with past papers in timed conditions, manage your time so Question 4 gets twenty-five minutes, read the question carefully and refer to the correct source, prepare both case studies but do not over-invest in either, and write in continuous prose even when consulting markschemes for revision. Internalising these five rules is worth more than any extra historical content, and they are the cheapest marks the paper offers.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Subject report	The IB document published after each session summarising examiner observations
Indicative content	The list of expected historical points published in the markscheme
Continuous prose	Sentence-and-paragraph writing as opposed to note form or bullet points
Practice question bank	The collection of previous examination papers available for practice
Timed conditions	Sixty minutes from start to finish, no pauses, no resources beyond the booklet

Questions

1. State the five examiner-report rules in your own words.
2. Explain why a candidate who scores three out of three on Question 1a in four minutes has done as well as one who scored three out of three in seven minutes.
3. Argue against the view that Paper 1 preparation should match Paper 2 in scope and depth.

PART II: CASE STUDY 1 — JAPANESE EXPANSION IN EAST ASIA, 1931 TO 1941

Chapter 9: Japan from the Meiji Restoration to the late Taishō era, 1854 to 1926

Summary of events

The IB syllabus for Case Study 1 begins formally in 1931, but the candidate cannot understand Japanese expansion in the 1930s without knowing the longer trajectory that produced it. The story begins in 1854, when Commodore Matthew Perry's American naval squadron forced Japan to open its ports after two and a half centuries of Tokugawa isolation. The shock of this forced opening drove a generation of young samurai reformers to overthrow the shogunate in 1868 in the Meiji Restoration, named after the young emperor whose authority was symbolically restored. The new regime transformed Japan within a generation. Western military, industrial, educational and constitutional models were imported wholesale. Conscription replaced the samurai class. A modern industrial base was built around heavy industry and railways. By 1894 to 1895 Japan had defeated Qing China in the First Sino-Japanese War and acquired Taiwan and influence in Korea. By 1905 Japan had defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, the first time a non-European power had defeated a European great power in modern times, and acquired the Liaodong Peninsula and the south Sakhalin. The Taishō era from 1912 to 1926 saw the development of party politics, the rise of organised labour and a brief experiment in liberal democracy, but it also coincided with the Great Depression of the 1930s that would destabilise the system and bring military influence back to dominance.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did Japan transform itself from a feudal society to an industrial great power between 1868 and 1905?
2. What was the legacy of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars for Japanese strategic thinking?
3. Why did Taishō democracy fail to consolidate as a stable parliamentary system?
4. What long-term factors should the candidate keep in mind when reading Paper 1 sources on Japan?

Timeline of Chapter 9

1853 to 1854	Commodore Perry's expedition forces Japan to open ports
1858	Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United States
1868	Meiji Restoration. Tokugawa shogunate abolished
1872	Conscription introduced. Universal compulsory education from 1872
1877	Satsuma Rebellion crushed. Last samurai resistance
1889	Meiji Constitution promulgated
1890	First Imperial Diet convenes
1894 to 1895	First Sino-Japanese War. Treaty of Shimonoseki

1902	Anglo-Japanese Alliance
1904 to 1905	Russo-Japanese War. Treaty of Portsmouth
1910	Annexation of Korea
1912	Death of Emperor Meiji. Taishō era begins
1914 to 1918	Japan in the First World War on the Allied side
1915	Twenty-One Demands on China
1919	Paris Peace Conference. Japan acquires former German Pacific possessions
1921 to 1922	Washington Naval Conference. Five Power Treaty
1923	Great Kantō earthquake
1925	Universal male suffrage. Peace Preservation Law
1926	Death of Emperor Taishō. Shōwa era begins under Emperor Hirohito

9.1 The opening of Japan and the Meiji Restoration

When Commodore Perry's four black ships sailed into Edo Bay in July 1853, Japan had been formally closed to almost all Western contact for over two centuries. The Tokugawa shogunate had banned Christianity, restricted foreign trade to a single Dutch outpost on the artificial island of Dejima at Nagasaki, and prohibited Japanese from leaving the country on pain of death. The arrival of Perry's squadron, with naval guns and the explicit threat of bombardment if Japan refused to open its ports, exposed the technological gap between Japan and the industrialising West. The Treaty of Amity and Commerce of 1858 opened Japan to American trade on terms that the Japanese regarded as unequal. Similar treaties with Britain, France, Russia and the Netherlands followed.

The shock to the Japanese political order was profound. Domain leaders, particularly in the southern domains of Satsuma and Chōshū, concluded that the shogunate had failed in its primary duty of defending Japan from foreign encroachment. A coalition of these domains and reform-minded courtiers around the young Emperor Meiji overthrew the shogunate in January 1868 in what became known as the Meiji Restoration. The slogan was fukoku kyōhei, rich country and strong army. The strategic conclusion was that Japan had to industrialise, militarise and modernise on Western models in order to avoid the colonial subordination that China, Korea and Vietnam had already entered.

9.2 The transformation of Meiji Japan

The Meiji government implemented one of the fastest social transformations in modern history. The samurai class was abolished as a hereditary status in the 1870s and was replaced by a conscript army modelled on the Prussian system. A national education system delivered universal compulsory primary education from 1872. Railways spread from Tokyo across the country. Heavy industry was promoted through state enterprise and through the zaibatsu, large private conglomerates that combined banks, trading houses and manufacturing under family ownership. Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo and Yasuda became the corporate spine of industrial Japan.

The political system was reshaped as well. The Meiji Constitution of 1889 was a German-influenced document that established a constitutional monarchy with the emperor at the apex of authority and an Imperial Diet with limited legislative power. The first elections to the Diet in 1890 were held on a narrow male property franchise, but by 1925 universal male suffrage had been achieved. The constitutional system created the framework within which Japanese politics would operate until 1945, but it also embedded ambiguities. The military reported directly to the emperor rather than to the cabinet, and this gave armed forces leaders a constitutional claim to political independence that they would exploit in the 1930s.

9.3 The wars and their consequences

The First Sino-Japanese War of 1894 to 1895 was Japan's first test as a modernised great power. Fought primarily over influence in Korea, the war ended with Japanese victory at Pyongyang and the destruction of the Qing fleet at the Battle of the Yalu River. The Treaty of Shimonoseki of April 1895 ceded Taiwan to Japan, recognised Korean independence in form and Japanese influence in fact, and required China to pay a substantial indemnity. The Triple Intervention by Russia, Germany and France forced Japan to return the Liaodong Peninsula, which Russia subsequently leased for itself. The episode confirmed two lessons for Japanese strategic thinkers, namely that military victory could deliver concrete colonial gains, and that the European great powers would intervene to limit Japanese gains.

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904 to 1905 was the more consequential conflict. Japan struck first with a surprise attack on the Russian Pacific Fleet at Port Arthur in February 1904, repeating a pattern that would become familiar in 1941. The Battle of Mukden in February and March 1905 was the largest land battle the world had seen up to that point. The Battle of Tsushima in May 1905 destroyed the Russian Baltic Fleet, which had sailed around the world to reach the Pacific. The Treaty of Portsmouth of September 1905, mediated by Theodore Roosevelt, transferred to Japan the Russian lease on Liaodong, the southern half of Sakhalin, and Russian influence in southern Manchuria. The war established Japan as the first non-European great power of the modern age and set the precedent of Japan as an Asian rival to the Western imperial powers.

9.4 Korea, the First World War and the Twenty-One Demands

Korea was annexed outright in 1910, formalising the protectorate that had been in place since 1905. The annexation made Japan a continental colonial power and provided a base for further expansion into Manchuria. Korea's experience of Japanese colonial rule, characterised by economic exploitation, suppression of Korean language and culture, and harsh police controls, would shape the political memory of Japanese rule across East Asia for generations.

Japan's participation in the First World War on the Allied side was opportunistic. Japan declared war on Germany in August 1914 and quickly seized German concessions in Shandong and German Pacific island territories. The Twenty-One Demands of January 1915 sought to make China a Japanese protectorate, claiming Japanese rights in Shandong, southern Manchuria and Mongolia, requiring Chinese acceptance of Japanese economic supervision, and effectively reducing China to a satellite. Western pressure forced Japan to drop the most extreme demands, but the episode poisoned Japanese-Chinese relations for a generation and confirmed Western suspicion of Japanese ambitions.

The peace settlement at Versailles in 1919 transferred former German Pacific possessions north of the equator to Japan as League of Nations mandates. Japan also kept its Shandong gains until the Washington Conference of 1921 to 1922 forced their return to China. The Washington system, with its Five Power Treaty limiting capital ship tonnage and its Nine Power Treaty guaranteeing Chinese territorial integrity, established the framework for naval and Pacific affairs that Japan would respect for a decade and ultimately repudiate.

9.5 Taishō democracy and its fragility

The Taishō era from 1912 to 1926 saw the genuine if incomplete development of party politics in Japan. The Seiyūkai and Kenseikai parties alternated in office. Cabinets responded to Diet majorities. Universal male suffrage was achieved in 1925. Organised labour and tenant farmer movements developed. A liberal urban culture flourished in Tokyo and Osaka, with cafes, jazz, cinema and Western fashion among the urban middle class.

The fragility of Taishō democracy lay in three structural features. The military was constitutionally outside cabinet control. The bureaucracy and the zaibatsu retained extensive influence outside electoral politics. The Peace Preservation Law of 1925, passed alongside universal male suffrage, criminalised political organisations advocating systemic change and was used to suppress communists, socialists and eventually liberals. When the Great Depression arrived in 1929 and exposed the vulnerabilities of the export economy, the political institutions of Taishō democracy proved unable to manage the crisis and progressively yielded ground to military and ultranationalist alternatives. The story of Chapter 10 begins where this chapter ends.

Chapter summary

Japan transformed itself between 1854 and 1905 from a feudal society into an industrial great power capable of defeating Russia in war. The Meiji Restoration of 1868 created the institutional framework for this transformation, importing Western models of military, industrial, educational and constitutional organisation while preserving the symbolic centrality of the emperor. The wars against China in 1894 to 1895 and Russia in 1904 to 1905 confirmed Japan as a great power and established a pattern of Asian expansion that would continue. The Taishō era saw the genuine but fragile development of party politics, ended by the structural vulnerabilities of the Meiji constitutional system and the economic crisis of the late 1920s.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Tokugawa shogunate	The military government that ruled Japan from 1603 to 1868
Black Ships	Commodore Perry's American squadron that forced Japan to open in 1853 to 1854
Meiji Restoration	The 1868 overthrow of the shogunate and the formal restoration of imperial authority
Fukoku kyōhei	Rich country, strong army. The slogan of Meiji modernisation
Zaibatsu	The large family-owned industrial conglomerates of imperial Japan
Meiji Constitution	The 1889 document establishing constitutional monarchy with the military reporting to the emperor
First Sino-Japanese War	The 1894 to 1895 war that brought Taiwan into the Japanese empire
Russo-Japanese War	The 1904 to 1905 war that established Japan as a great power
Twenty-One Demands	The 1915 Japanese demands on China that sought to make it a protectorate
Taishō democracy	The party-political experiment of the 1912 to 1926 reign
Peace Preservation Law	The 1925 law criminalising radical political organisations

Questions

1. To what extent did the Meiji Restoration produce the institutions that would later enable Japanese expansion?
2. Examine the consequences of the Russo-Japanese War for Japanese strategic thinking.
3. Explain the structural vulnerabilities that prevented Taishō democracy from consolidating.

Source-based exercise

> Source A. Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors, issued in the name of Emperor Meiji, 1882 (adapted): "Soldiers and sailors should consider loyalty their essential duty. Whoever lacks loyalty, however clever or skilled in the arts and sciences, is no better than a wooden puppet. Whoever fails in loyalty is unworthy of the imperial favour."
> Source B. Theodore Roosevelt, letter to George von Lengerke Meyer, 1905, on the Treaty of Portsmouth (adapted): "The Japanese have made of themselves a great civilised people, entitled to stand on a footing of absolute equality with all other peoples. Their conduct of the war has been admirable. They have a right to be treated as our equals. To deal with them in any other way would be folly."

(a) According to Source A, what does the Imperial Rescript identify as the soldier's central duty? [3 marks] (b) Compare and contrast the views of Japan in Sources A and B. [6 marks] (c) Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the Meiji transformation gave Japan the institutions and the international standing that would later enable its expansionist policies. [9 marks]

Chapter 10: The impact of nationalism and militarism on Japanese foreign policy

Summary of events

Japanese nationalism and militarism were not products of the 1930s but had deep roots in the Meiji ideological framework, in the constitutional independence of the military from cabinet control, and in the cultural prestige that the military had accumulated through the victories of 1895 and 1905. The 1920s saw the development of a vocal ultranationalist current that combined imperial loyalty, anti-Western resentment and demands for an aggressive Asian foreign policy. The economic crisis of 1929 onwards turned this current from a fringe phenomenon into a major political force. By the early 1930s the political system was incapable of restraining the army and navy, and a series of political assassinations of moderate politicians by ultranationalist officers progressively eliminated civilian alternatives. The Manchurian Incident of September 1931 was the first, but not the last, action by Japanese officers conducted without prior approval from Tokyo. By the time of the February 26 Incident in 1936, the question of whether the army could be controlled by the civilian government had effectively been answered in the negative.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were the ideological roots of Japanese nationalism and militarism?
2. How did the constitutional independence of the military from civilian control matter politically?
3. What role did political assassinations play in the breakdown of civilian government?
4. How did the army's autonomy in Manchuria become possible?

Timeline of Chapter 10

1882	Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors
1890	Imperial Rescript on Education
1924	Founding of the Kokuhonsha ultranationalist society
1928	Assassination of Zhang Zuolin in Manchuria by Kwantung Army officers
14 November 1930	Prime Minister Hamaguchi shot by ultranationalist
18 September 1931	Mukden Incident. Manchurian Incident begins
15 May 1932	Prime Minister Inukai assassinated. End of party government
26 February 1936	February 26 Incident. Attempted coup by army officers
1937	Outbreak of full-scale Sino-Japanese War
1940	Imperial Rule Assistance Association replaces political parties

10.1 The ideological roots of Japanese nationalism

Japanese nationalism in the modern sense was shaped by the Meiji project of building a strong centralised state from 1868. The ideology combined the Shinto religious framework, in which the emperor traced unbroken descent from the sun goddess Amaterasu, with a reworked Confucian ethic of loyalty and filial piety, and with the European nation-state model that Meiji reformers had imported. The 1882 Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors made loyalty to the emperor the soldier's central duty. The 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education extended the same loyalty into the school system, requiring every classroom to begin the day with a reading of the Rescript before a portrait of the emperor.

The doctrine of kokutai, often translated as national polity or national essence, gave this ideology a distinctive Japanese character. Kokutai held that Japan's political community was uniquely structured around the imperial line and that the relationship between emperor and subjects was a moral bond of family rather than a contractual relation between state and citizen. This made Japanese nationalism less amenable to the constitutional limits that Western liberal nationalism had developed, because the emperor stood outside ordinary politics rather than at its head.

10.2 The military's constitutional independence

The Meiji Constitution gave the military a unique position in the Japanese state. The army and navy reported directly to the emperor as commander-in-chief, not to the cabinet through ministerial chains of command. The Army Ministry and Navy Ministry had to be headed by serving officers, not civilians. By a precedent established in the early twentieth century, the army or navy could bring down a cabinet by withdrawing its minister, and could prevent a new cabinet from forming by refusing to nominate one.

This constitutional arrangement created a structural vulnerability in Japanese democracy. The civilian cabinet could disagree with the army or navy on policy, but it had no constitutional means to compel agreement. The army and navy could appeal directly to the emperor over the cabinet's head, and could use the threat of ministerial withdrawal to force concessions. Throughout the 1920s the prime ministers of the Seiyūkai and Kenseikai parties tried to manage this constraint, but the Depression-era loss of party legitimacy made the constraint binding.

10.3 The Kwantung Army and continental autonomy

The Kwantung Army was the Japanese garrison in the Liaodong leased territory and along the South Manchurian Railway. Its commanders, geographically distant from Tokyo and culturally close to Manchurian Chinese warlords and Russian officers, developed habits of operational autonomy that would prove decisive. The 1928 assassination of the Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin, blown up on a train near Mukden by Kwantung officers without Tokyo's authorisation, was the first major demonstration of this autonomy. Tokyo learned of the assassination from foreign press reports. The officers responsible were not punished. Prime Minister Tanaka, who tried to discipline them, was forced from office.

By 1931 the Kwantung Army leadership, particularly Colonel Ishiwara Kanji and Colonel Itagaki Seishirō, had developed a strategic doctrine of total war between Japan and the Western powers and had concluded that Manchuria was the strategic resource base that Japan would need for that war. They planned the Mukden Incident as a deliberate provocation that would force Tokyo to authorise the conquest of Manchuria. The plan worked.

10.4 The political assassinations and the end of party government

The early 1930s saw a wave of ultranationalist political violence that progressively eliminated moderate civilian alternatives. Prime Minister Hamaguchi, a Kenseikai politician who had supported the London Naval Treaty over military objections, was shot at Tokyo Station on 14 November 1930 and died of his wounds the following August. Prime Minister Inukai of the Seiyūkai was assassinated on 15 May 1932 by naval officers who burst into his official residence. Inukai's reported last words, "If we could just talk, you would understand", and the officers' reported reply, "Dialogue is useless", became symbols of the breakdown of civilian government. After Inukai, Japan would not have a party prime minister until 1945.

The February 26 Incident of 1936 was the most dramatic of these episodes. Approximately fourteen hundred junior officers of the army's First Division attempted a coup, assassinated several senior politicians and generals, and held central Tokyo for three days before the emperor personally ordered their suppression. The incident was contained, but it confirmed two trends. The army was capable of independent political action. The civilian government depended on the personal authority of the emperor for its survival. The cabinets of the late 1930s were progressively staffed with senior generals, and after Tojo Hideki became prime minister in October 1941 the civilian-military distinction had collapsed entirely.

Chapter summary

Japanese nationalism and militarism were rooted in the Meiji ideological framework and in the constitutional independence of the military from civilian control. The Kwantung Army's autonomy in Manchuria, established through the unpunished assassination of Zhang Zuolin in 1928, set the precedent for the Manchurian Incident of 1931. The wave of political assassinations from 1930 to 1936 progressively eliminated civilian alternatives to military influence. By the time of the February 26 Incident, the question of whether civilian government could constrain the military had been answered in the negative. The chapter establishes the political context within which the events of the case study, beginning with the Manchurian Incident in Chapter 13, took place.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Kokutai	The doctrine of Japan's unique national polity centred on the imperial line
Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors	The 1882 statement of the soldier's loyalty to the emperor
Constitutional independence	The military's direct subordination to the emperor rather than to the cabinet
Ministerial withdrawal	The army or navy's power to bring down a cabinet by recalling its minister
Kwantung Army	The Japanese garrison along the South Manchurian Railway
Zhang Zuolin	The Manchurian warlord assassinated by Kwantung officers in 1928
Ishiwara Kanji	The Kwantung Army colonel who planned the Mukden Incident
15 May Incident	The 1932 assassination of Prime Minister Inukai
February 26 Incident	The 1936 attempted military coup in Tokyo

Questions

1. Examine the constitutional features that gave the Japanese military independence from civilian control.
2. To what extent did the assassination of Zhang Zuolin in 1928 set the precedent for the Manchurian Incident in 1931?
3. Explain the significance of the February 26 Incident for Japanese politics.

Chapter 11: Japanese domestic issues and their impact on foreign relations

Summary of events

The Japanese domestic context that shaped the move toward expansion was dominated by the impact of the Great Depression after 1929. The Japanese economy in the 1920s had become heavily dependent on exports to the United States, particularly raw silk, which collapsed when American consumer demand evaporated. Rural Japan, where about half of the population still lived, was hit even harder than the cities. Tenant farmers, paying half their crop in rent, faced famine in northern Honshu and Tohoku in 1931 and 1934. Politicised by ultranationalist organisations, rural and urban discontent fed support for the radical right and undermined the legitimacy of the Taishō party system. Finance Minister Korekiyo Takahashi pursued unorthodox reflationary policies that pulled Japan out of the Depression earlier than most Western countries, but Takahashi's resistance to military spending demands led to his assassination during the February 26 Incident in 1936. The economy of the late 1930s was increasingly organised around military production, and the demand for raw materials, particularly oil, iron and rubber, became the practical driver of expansionist foreign policy.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did the Great Depression affect Japan, and how did the impact differ between cities and countryside?
2. What was Korekiyo Takahashi's economic strategy and why did it succeed in the short term?
3. How did economic pressures translate into foreign policy preferences?
4. Why was the question of raw materials central to expansion?

Timeline of Chapter 11

October 1929	Wall Street Crash
1929	Hamaguchi government adopts gold standard
1930	Silk export prices collapse
1931	Hamaguchi government falls. Takahashi returns to Finance Ministry
December 1931	Japan abandons gold standard
1931 to 1932	Famine in Tohoku
1934	Second Tohoku famine
1935 to 1936	Industrial recovery. Military spending rises
26 February 1936	Takahashi assassinated
1937 to 1941	War economy

11.1 The export economy and the Wall Street Crash

The Japanese economy of the 1920s had developed a structural dependence on raw silk exports to the United States, where silk stockings and ties consumed approximately seventy per cent of Japanese silk output. When American consumer demand collapsed after October 1929, the silk price fell by approximately fifty per cent within a year. Rural Japan, where silk production was concentrated as a supplementary income for tenant farmer households, was devastated. Cocoon prices fell below the cost of production. Many farmers could not afford to feed their families. The phrase that entered the political vocabulary was "selling daughters", referring to the practice of indentured prostitution by which destitute farmers raised cash, and the phrase became a powerful piece of evidence for ultranationalist agitation against the urban political class.

11.2 Takahashi's reflation

Korekiyo Takahashi returned to the Finance Ministry in late 1931 in the cabinet of Inukai. He was a veteran financier who had managed Japan's wartime financing during the Russo-Japanese War. His response to the Depression combined three measures. He took Japan off the gold standard in December 1931, allowing the yen to depreciate by approximately forty per cent. He cut interest rates aggressively. He expanded government spending, particularly on rural relief and on public works, financed by direct Bank of Japan purchases of government bonds. The combination produced inflation but also rapid recovery. Industrial output recovered to pre-Depression levels by 1933, ahead of the United States and most of Europe. Unemployment fell. Rural conditions remained difficult but stabilised.

Takahashi's success bought the Japanese state time, but it did not address the underlying political crisis. The military used the recovery to demand sustained increases in military spending, which Takahashi opposed as inflationary. By 1935 he was cutting military budgets and raising taxes to control inflation, and the army leadership had come to regard him as the principal civilian obstacle to military expansion. His murder in his bed during the February 26 Incident eliminated the last serious civilian voice for fiscal restraint, and military spending rose without effective opposition for the rest of the decade.

11.3 Raw materials and the strategic case for expansion

Japanese strategic thinkers had identified the raw materials problem since the Russo-Japanese War. Japan lacked domestic supplies of oil, iron ore, rubber, tin and several other strategic materials. The country imported approximately ninety per cent of its oil from the United States and the Dutch East Indies, approximately eighty per cent of its iron ore from China and Korea, and almost all of its rubber from Southeast Asia. In peacetime this dependence was manageable through trade. In wartime against the major Western powers, the same dependence would be catastrophic if the Western powers blockaded Japan or used embargoes as policy tools.

The strategic conclusion was that Japan needed a controlled territorial sphere within which it could secure raw materials independently. Manchuria was the first answer, providing iron, coal and agricultural land. The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere of 1940 to 1941 was the more ambitious answer, claiming Southeast Asian oil and rubber. The American oil embargo of August 1941 was the immediate trigger of the decision for war with the United States, because the embargo confirmed the strategic vulnerability that the entire territorial expansion programme had been designed to remedy.

11.4 The political consequences

Japanese economic conditions translated into foreign policy preferences in three ways. First, rural distress fed ultranationalist agitation that attacked the party political class as corrupt and weak, creating mass support for an aggressive nationalist alternative. Second, the loss of confidence in liberal economic management discredited the broader liberal political programme of the Taishō era, including its commitment to international cooperation through the League of Nations and the Washington Treaty system. Third, the demand for sustained military spending, justified by the strategic case for expansion, became progressively harder to resist as the political legitimacy of civilian fiscal authority eroded after Takahashi's death.

Chapter summary

The Great Depression hit Japan hardest in the silk-producing rural districts that depended on American consumer demand. Korekiyo Takahashi's reflationary policies pulled Japan out of the Depression by 1933, but his resistance to military spending demands cost him his life in February 1936. The economic basis of expansionist foreign policy was the strategic dependence on imported raw materials, particularly oil and iron, which the Japanese state proposed to remedy through territorial control of resource regions in Manchuria and Southeast Asia. Domestic economic crisis fed ultranationalist agitation that delegitimised the Taishō party system and provided mass political support for the aggressive foreign policy the army leadership wanted to pursue.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Wall Street Crash	The October 1929 stock market collapse that triggered the global Depression
Silk exports	The Japanese commodity most exposed to American demand collapse
Tohoku famine	The 1931 to 1932 and 1934 famines in northern Honshu
Korekiyo Takahashi	The Finance Minister whose reflationary policies pulled Japan out of the Depression
Gold standard	The fixed-currency regime Japan abandoned in December 1931
Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere	The 1940 to 1941 doctrine of Japanese-led Asian economic bloc
Strategic raw materials	Oil, iron, rubber, tin and other materials Japan imported
Oil embargo	The August 1941 American measure that triggered the decision for war

Questions

1. To what extent did the Great Depression cause the breakdown of Japanese liberal democracy?
2. Examine the significance of Korekiyo Takahashi's economic policies and his assassination.
3. Explain how the strategic raw materials problem shaped the case for expansion.

Chapter 12: Political instability in China, 1911 to 1937

Summary of events

The third condition for Japanese expansion was the chronic political instability of China, which gave Japanese strategists reason to think that aggressive action would meet only weak resistance. The Qing dynasty fell in 1911 and was replaced by a republican government that quickly fractured into competing centres of authority. Between 1916 and 1928 China was divided among regional warlords whose private armies fought each other and resisted central authority. The Northern Expedition of 1926 to 1928 under Chiang Kai-shek nominally reunified the country under the Kuomintang, but the unification was incomplete and the new Nationalist government had to fight both regional warlords and the Chinese Communist Party throughout the Nanjing Decade of 1928 to 1937. The First United Front between the Kuomintang and the Communists collapsed in 1927 in violence that left the Communists nearly destroyed. The Long March of 1934 to 1935 saved a remnant of the Communist movement under Mao Zedong, but the country at the time of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937 was still divided between a fragile Nationalist government, surviving warlords and a Communist base area in Shaanxi province.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did the Qing dynasty collapse and what political vacuum did it leave?
2. What was the Warlord Era and how did it shape Chinese state capacity?
3. How did the Northern Expedition reunify China, and how complete was the reunification?
4. What was the relationship between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party?

Timeline of Chapter 12

October 1911	Wuchang Uprising. Xinhai Revolution begins
February 1912	Abdication of last Qing emperor. Republic of China proclaimed
1913	Yuan Shikai's brief presidency. Second Revolution fails
1916	Death of Yuan Shikai. Warlord Era begins
4 May 1919	May Fourth Movement protests Versailles settlement
1921	Chinese Communist Party founded
1923	First United Front between Kuomintang and CCP
March 1925	Death of Sun Yat-sen
1926 to 1928	Northern Expedition under Chiang Kai-shek
12 April 1927	Shanghai Massacre. White Terror against communists
1927 to 1937	Nanjing Decade
1928	Nationalist government formally unifies China

1931	Communist Soviet Republic established in Jiangxi
1934 to 1935	Long March
1936	Xi'an Incident. Chiang forced into Second United Front
1937	Outbreak of full Sino-Japanese War

12.1 The fall of the Qing and the failure of the Republic

The Qing dynasty had ruled China since 1644 but had been weakened by internal rebellions, the Opium Wars and the unequal treaties imposed by Western powers and Japan. The Wuchang Uprising of 10 October 1911 triggered the Xinhai Revolution, which spread across the country and forced the abdication of the last emperor, the six-year-old Pu Yi, in February 1912. Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Tongmenghui revolutionary movement, briefly served as provisional president of the new Republic of China, but he resigned in favour of Yuan Shikai, the most powerful military commander, in the hope of unifying the country.

Yuan's presidency rapidly degenerated into authoritarianism and then into an attempt to reestablish the monarchy with himself as emperor in late 1915. His death in June 1916 left no successor capable of holding the country together. The formal Republic continued in Beijing, but real power passed to regional military commanders, the warlords, who controlled their provinces through private armies and cooperated or fought as their interests dictated.

12.2 The Warlord Era, 1916 to 1928

The Warlord Era was a period of political fragmentation comparable to the worst periods of medieval European disorder. Approximately five hundred warlords have been identified in the historical record, controlling territories that ranged from a single city to several provinces. The major warlords organised themselves into shifting coalitions, the Anhui clique under Duan Qirui, the Zhili clique under Wu Peifu, the Fengtian clique under Zhang Zuolin in Manchuria, and others. Major wars between warlord coalitions were fought in 1920, 1922 and 1924, with hundreds of thousands of casualties.

The consequences for state capacity were severe. Tax collection broke down outside warlord territories. The army of the Beijing government, nominally the national army, was simply a warlord force itself. Foreign powers retained their concessions and treaty privileges without effective Chinese resistance. Japan exploited the disorder through the Twenty-One Demands of 1915 and through continuing pressure for additional concessions. The May Fourth Movement of 1919, in which Chinese students protested the Versailles settlement and the Beijing government's acceptance of Japanese gains in Shandong, became a foundational moment for both Chinese nationalism and the future Communist Party.

12.3 The Kuomintang, the First United Front and the Northern Expedition

Sun Yat-sen reorganised the Kuomintang, the Nationalist Party, in 1923 with Soviet advice and material support. The Soviet Union provided Soviet advisers, including the political adviser Mikhail Borodin and the military adviser Vasily Blücher, and the new Kuomintang adopted a Leninist organisational structure. The First United Front of 1923 to 1927 brought the Chinese Communist Party into the Kuomintang as a junior partner, with Communist members holding individual party membership in the KMT while retaining their Communist affiliation.

The Northern Expedition of 1926 to 1928 was the military campaign that the reorganised Kuomintang launched from its base in Guangzhou to defeat the warlords and reunify China. Under the command of Chiang Kai-shek, who had taken over the KMT after Sun's death in March 1925, the National Revolutionary Army moved north through Wuhan, Nanjing and Shanghai, defeating warlord forces and absorbing local commanders into the Nationalist coalition. Beijing fell in June 1928. China was nominally reunified for the first time since 1916.

12.4 The Shanghai Massacre and the White Terror

The First United Front collapsed in violence at Shanghai in April 1927. Chiang Kai-shek had become increasingly suspicious of Communist influence within the KMT and concerned about Communist organisation of urban workers. On 12 April 1927, Chiang's forces and allied gangsters from the Green Gang attacked Communist organisers and trade unionists across Shanghai, killing approximately five thousand. The White Terror that followed killed Communists and suspected sympathisers across KMT-controlled territory. The Communist movement was nearly destroyed in the cities and survived only by retreating to rural base areas.

Mao Zedong's leadership of the Jiangxi Soviet from 1931 onwards represented the new rural strategy of the Chinese Communist Party. KMT extermination campaigns drove the Communists out of Jiangxi in October 1934. The Long March, the year-long retreat of approximately ten thousand kilometres from Jiangxi to Shaanxi province, reduced Communist numbers from approximately one hundred thousand to approximately ten thousand by the time the survivors reached Yan'an in October 1935. The Communist remnant nonetheless constituted an organised political and military force outside Nationalist control.

12.5 The Nanjing Decade and the Xi'an Incident

The Nanjing Decade of 1928 to 1937 saw the Nationalist government attempt to consolidate authority and modernise the country. Achievements included partial recovery of customs autonomy from foreign powers, currency reform, infrastructure development including railways and roads, and the New Life Movement aimed at moral and civic reform. Limitations included Chiang Kai-shek's authoritarian leadership, persistent corruption, the inability to control large portions of the country still effectively held by regional warlords, and the chronic priority Chiang placed on suppressing the Communists rather than resisting Japanese expansion. The Nationalist slogan "internal pacification before external resistance" expressed the priority Chiang assigned to defeating the Communists before confronting Japan.

The Xi'an Incident of December 1936 reversed this priority. Chiang flew to Xi'an to direct another offensive against the Communists in Yan'an. The local commander Zhang Xueliang, who had inherited the Manchurian Fengtian forces from his assassinated father Zhang Zuolin and had a personal grievance against Japanese expansion, arrested Chiang on 12 December and held him for two weeks. Communist representatives including Zhou Enlai joined the negotiations. The result was the Second United Front, with the KMT and CCP nominally cooperating against Japan. The pact would prove fragile, but at the moment of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July 1937 China entered full war with Japan with at least the appearance of a unified national resistance.

Chapter summary

China's political fragmentation between 1911 and 1937 created the conditions in which Japanese expansion appeared strategically attractive. The Warlord Era of 1916 to 1928 destroyed central state capacity. The Northern Expedition of 1926 to 1928 nominally reunified the country under the Kuomintang, but the new Nationalist government remained weak and divided. The Shanghai Massacre of 1927 collapsed the First United Front and drove the Communists into rural base areas. The Long March of 1934 to 1935 saved a Communist remnant. The Xi'an Incident of December 1936 produced the fragile Second United Front under which China would resist the full Japanese invasion that began in July 1937. Throughout the period Chinese state weakness made aggressive Japanese policy plausible to Japanese strategists.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Xinhai Revolution	The 1911 to 1912 revolution that overthrew the Qing dynasty
Warlord Era	The period of regional military fragmentation, 1916 to 1928
May Fourth Movement	The 1919 Chinese protest against the Versailles settlement
First United Front	The 1923 to 1927 alliance between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party
Northern Expedition	The 1926 to 1928 military campaign that reunified China under the KMT
Shanghai Massacre	The 12 April 1927 attack on Communists that ended the First United Front
Long March	The 1934 to 1935 Communist retreat from Jiangxi to Shaanxi
Nanjing Decade	The 1928 to 1937 KMT government period
Xi'an Incident	The December 1936 detention of Chiang Kai-shek that produced the Second United Front

Questions

1. Examine the consequences of the Warlord Era for Chinese state capacity.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Nanjing Decade as a programme of national modernisation.
3. To what extent did the political instability of China make Japanese expansion strategically plausible?

Chapter 13: The Manchurian Incident and the Lytton Report, 1931 to 1933

Summary of events

The Manchurian Incident began on the night of 18 September 1931, when Kwantung Army officers detonated a small explosive on the South Manchurian Railway near Mukden, blamed the explosion on Chinese soldiers and used the incident as a pretext to occupy the city. Within weeks the Kwantung Army had moved beyond the railway zone and was conquering the three provinces of Manchuria. The Tokyo cabinet under Prime Minister Wakatsuki had not authorised the operation but proved unable to halt it. By February 1932 the Japanese had created the puppet state of Manchukuo, with the deposed Qing emperor Pu Yi as its nominal head. The League of Nations responded by sending an investigative commission under the British peer Lord Lytton. The Lytton Report of October 1932 acknowledged that Japan had legitimate grievances but concluded that the Manchurian Incident had been a Japanese aggression and that Manchukuo was a Japanese puppet state. The League's General Assembly accepted the report on 24 February 1933 by forty-two votes to one, with Japan as the only dissenting voter. Japan's representative Matsuoka Yōsuke walked out of the chamber, and Japan withdrew from the League in March 1933.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did the Mukden Incident actually unfold and who organised it?
2. Why did the Tokyo government fail to control the Kwantung Army's operations?
3. What did the Lytton Report conclude and on what basis?
4. What were the consequences of Japan's withdrawal from the League?

Timeline of Chapter 13

18 September 1931	Mukden Incident. South Manchurian Railway explosion
19 September 1931	Kwantung Army occupies Mukden, Changchun and Jilin
October 1931	Kwantung Army advances beyond railway zone
December 1931	Wakatsuki cabinet falls. Inukai becomes prime minister
28 January 1932	Shanghai Incident. Japanese forces attack Chinese sectors
1 March 1932	Manchukuo proclaimed
9 March 1932	Pu Yi installed as Manchukuo head of state
15 May 1932	Inukai assassinated. End of party government
1 October 1932	Lytton Report published
24 February 1933	League Assembly votes 42 to 1 to accept Lytton Report
27 March 1933	Japan announces withdrawal from League of Nations

13.1 The Mukden Incident

The Mukden Incident of 18 September 1931 was a deliberate provocation orchestrated by senior Kwantung Army officers, Colonel Ishiwara Kanji and Colonel Itagaki Seishirō. A small charge of dynamite was placed on the South Manchurian Railway track near Liutiaohu, north of Mukden. The damage was minimal, and a train passed over the track shortly after the explosion without difficulty. The Japanese officers blamed Chinese soldiers from the nearby barracks of Zhang Xueliang's North-Eastern Army, which the Kwantung Army then attacked at Mukden's Beidaying barracks. Japanese forces were inside the city by morning. Within forty-eight hours they had taken Changchun and Jilin. By the end of October Kwantung forces had pushed deep into Heilongjiang and were operating across the entire north of Manchuria.

The crucial feature of the operation, for Paper 1 purposes, was that it was launched without authorisation from Tokyo. Prime Minister Wakatsuki's cabinet learned of the events from the operations themselves and from press reports. War Minister Minami Jirō was apparently complicit and certainly did not act to recall the Kwantung Army. By the time the cabinet might have asserted control, the operation had developed sufficient momentum, and ultranationalist domestic sympathies had generated sufficient support, that any cabinet attempt to reverse it would have brought the cabinet down.

13.2 The escalation and the creation of Manchukuo

The Shanghai Incident of January and February 1932 extended Japanese aggression to the southern Chinese coast. Japanese marines landed at Shanghai after a series of provocations between Japanese and Chinese factions, and a major battle developed in the Chinese city around the International Settlement. The Chinese 19th Route Army resisted unexpectedly effectively, and the Japanese force of approximately fifty thousand suffered notable casualties before a ceasefire was negotiated in May 1932. The Shanghai Incident demonstrated to Western observers that Japanese expansion was not confined to Manchuria, and produced Western press coverage that was significantly more critical than the coverage of the Manchurian operations themselves.

In the meantime the Kwantung Army was constructing the puppet state of Manchukuo. The new state was proclaimed on 1 March 1932 with the deposed Qing emperor Pu Yi installed first as chief executive and from 1934 as Emperor Kang-de. The Manchukuo government was nominally Manchurian but was administered through a parallel Japanese structure of advisers and officers who held the real authority in every ministry. The Kwantung Army commander served as Japanese ambassador to Manchukuo, an arrangement that confirmed that the new state was an extension of Japanese military authority rather than an independent entity.

13.3 The Lytton Commission and Report

The Chinese government appealed to the League of Nations on 21 September 1931, three days after the Mukden Incident. The League initially called on Japan to withdraw to the railway zone but had no instruments to enforce the call. The League Council authorised a Commission of Enquiry on 10 December 1931, with five members representing Britain, France, the United States, Germany and Italy. The British peer Victor Bulwer-Lytton, second Earl of Lytton, served as chairman and gave the commission its informal name.

The Lytton Commission visited Manchuria, met Japanese, Manchukuo and Chinese officials, and gathered extensive testimony. The Lytton Report, published on 1 October 1932, was a substantial document that did not simply condemn Japan. The report acknowledged that Japan had legitimate economic and security interests in Manchuria, including the railway concessions, treaty rights and approximately one billion yen of investment. The report criticised the Chinese government for failing to maintain order in Manchuria and for the persistent

boycott of Japanese goods. But the report concluded that the Mukden Incident had been a Japanese provocation rather than a defensive response, that the Japanese military operations that followed had not been justified by self-defence, and that Manchukuo was a Japanese puppet state not enjoying genuine Manchurian support.

13.4 The League vote and Japan's withdrawal

The League's Special Assembly accepted the Lytton Report on 24 February 1933 by forty-two votes to one. Only Japan voted against. Siam, the modern Thailand, abstained. The vote did not authorise any sanctions against Japan, and the report's recommendation of an autonomous Manchuria under Chinese sovereignty went unimplemented. The League had, however, formally identified Japan as an aggressor.

The Japanese delegation under Matsuoka Yōsuke walked out of the assembly chamber after the vote. On 27 March 1933 the Japanese government formally announced its withdrawal from the League of Nations, effective two years later as required by the Covenant. Japan was the first major member to withdraw from the League, and the withdrawal was a direct demonstration that the League's system of collective security could not constrain a determined great power. Hitler, who had become German Chancellor two months earlier, took note. Germany withdrew from the League in October of the same year.

13.5 The significance for Paper 1

The Manchurian Incident and its aftermath are central to the Paper 1 case study because they illustrate every theme the IB syllabus identifies for Case Study 1. The independence of the Kwantung Army illustrates the impact of nationalism and militarism on foreign policy. The economic case for Manchurian conquest illustrates the impact of domestic economic issues. The weakness of the Wakatsuki cabinet's response illustrates the political instability of Japan itself. The Lytton Report illustrates the international response, and the failure of that response illustrates the limits of collective security. Sources on the Manchurian Incident in past papers have included the Lytton Report itself, contemporary American newspaper coverage, Japanese military reports, the proclamation of Manchukuo and political cartoons commenting on the League's failure.

Chapter summary

The Manchurian Incident of 18 September 1931 was a provocation orchestrated by Kwantung Army officers without Tokyo's prior authorisation. The Tokyo cabinet failed to control the operation, which expanded into a conquest of all of Manchuria and the creation of the puppet state of Manchukuo by March 1932. The Lytton Report of October 1932 concluded that Japan had been the aggressor. The League's Special Assembly accepted the report by forty-two votes to one in February 1933, and Japan withdrew from the League the following month. The episode demonstrated both the inability of civilian government in Japan to control its own military and the inability of the League of Nations to constrain a determined great power, and set the precedent that other revisionist powers would soon follow.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Mukden Incident	The 18 September 1931 staged railway explosion that began the Japanese conquest of Manchuria
Kwantung Army	The Japanese garrison along the South Manchurian Railway
Ishiwara Kanji	The Kwantung Army colonel who planned the Mukden Incident

Term	Meaning
Pu Yi	The deposed Qing emperor installed as Manchukuo head of state
Manchukuo	The puppet state proclaimed in March 1932
Shanghai Incident	The January to May 1932 Japanese attack on Shanghai
Lytton Commission	The League of Nations Commission of Enquiry chaired by Lord Lytton
Lytton Report	The October 1932 report concluding Japan had been the aggressor
Matsuoka Yōsuke	The Japanese delegate who walked out of the League assembly in February 1933

Questions

1. Examine the planning and execution of the Mukden Incident.
2. Evaluate the conclusions and significance of the Lytton Report.
3. To what extent was Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations a turning point in international relations?

Source-based exercise

> Source A. Lytton Report, 1932, summary conclusions (adapted): "The military operations of the Japanese troops during the night of September 18 to 19 cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defence. The new state, Manchukuo, has been imposed on the inhabitants of Manchuria by the Japanese army; it does not exist by virtue of a genuine and spontaneous independence movement."
> Source B. Speech by Matsuoka Yōsuke, Japanese delegate, to the League of Nations Assembly, 24 February 1933 (paraphrased): "Japan has been criticised by all the powers of the West for actions that those same powers themselves practised in Asia for a century. Japan, however, will not bow to the demands of those who do not understand the realities of the Far East. Japan must follow her own path."

(a) According to Source A, what does the Lytton Commission conclude about the legitimacy of Japanese actions in Manchuria? [3 marks] (b) Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources A and B about Japan's actions in Manchuria. [6 marks] (c) Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the Manchurian Incident exposed the failure of the League's system of collective security. [9 marks]

Chapter 14: From Manchuria to full war, 1933 to 1937

Summary of events

The Manchurian Incident did not produce a settled peace between Japan and China. The Kwantung Army continued to push southward beyond Manchuria, occupying the province of Jehol in March 1933 and the Tanggu Truce in May created a demilitarised zone south of the Great Wall. Through the mid-1930s the Japanese state pursued a policy of progressive encroachment on northern China through autonomy movements, smuggling operations and pressure on local Chinese officials to align with Japan rather than Nanjing. By 1936 Japan had forced the establishment of the East Hebei Autonomous Council, a Japanese-influenced regime in north-eastern China. Within Japan the political climate hardened toward expansion. The February 26 Incident of 1936 confirmed military influence over the cabinet. The Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany in November 1936 announced an alignment with revisionist Europe. By July 1937 the conditions for full war existed, and the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 7 July 1937 provided the trigger.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did Japan extend its control beyond Manchuria into north China?
2. What was the significance of the Tanggu Truce and the East Hebei Council?
3. How did the Anti-Comintern Pact reshape Japanese strategic alignment?
4. What were the immediate causes of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident?

Timeline of Chapter 14

1 January 1933	Japanese forces enter Shanhaiguan
March 1933	Japanese conquest of Jehol Province
31 May 1933	Tanggu Truce
1934	Amau Doctrine declared by Japanese Foreign Ministry
1935	He-Umezu Agreement
November 1935	East Hebei Autonomous Council established
26 February 1936	February 26 Incident
25 November 1936	Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany
7 July 1937	Marco Polo Bridge Incident

14.1 Beyond Manchuria. Jehol and the Great Wall

The Tanggu Truce of 31 May 1933 ended the formal Manchurian crisis but established conditions favourable to further Japanese encroachment. The truce created a demilitarised zone of approximately one hundred kilometres south of the Great Wall, in which Chinese forces could not be stationed and Japanese forces could operate freely. The Kwantung Army had effectively annexed Jehol Province in March 1933 in the campaign that preceded the truce, adding it to Manchukuo. The Great Wall now functioned as the southern border of Japanese-controlled territory, and the demilitarised zone south of it functioned as a Japanese-controlled buffer.

Throughout 1934 and 1935 Japanese policy in north China combined three elements. The Amau Doctrine of April 1934, named after the Foreign Ministry spokesman who delivered it, asserted Japan's special interest in East Asia and warned other powers against interfering in Chinese affairs. The He-Umezu Agreement of June 1935 forced the Nationalist government to remove its forces and Kuomintang officials from Hebei province north of Tianjin. Smuggling operations conducted through Manchukuo and the demilitarised zone undermined Chinese customs revenue while supplying Japanese-aligned interests with cheap goods. By 1936 the East Hebei Autonomous Council had been established under the warlord Yin Rugeng, a Japanese-aligned puppet who governed an area south of the Great Wall and east of Beijing.

14.2 The political climate in Japan

The political climate in Japan during this period was shaped by the continued ascendancy of the army over civilian government. The Imperial Way faction, kōdōha, and the Control faction, tōseiha, struggled within the army for primacy. The kōdōha emphasised the spiritual revival of Japan and direct imperial rule, while the tōseiha emphasised technocratic modernisation and total war planning. The February 26 Incident of 1936 was an attempted kōdōha coup that the tōseiha defeated, leaving the Control faction in clear ascendancy after the suppression. The new prime minister, Hirota Kōki, was civilian but governed in close consultation with the army, and his cabinet's foreign policy was set largely by the General Staff.

14.3 The Anti-Comintern Pact

The Anti-Comintern Pact of 25 November 1936 was the formal alignment of Japan with Nazi Germany against the Soviet Union and against international communism. The published text was a brief commitment to consult and to share intelligence on Comintern activities. A secret protocol committed both parties to refrain from conduct beneficial to the Soviet Union if either was attacked by the Soviet Union, and to consult on responses. Italy joined the pact in November 1937. The Anti-Comintern Pact was significant primarily as a diplomatic signal. It announced to Britain, France and the United States that Japan was aligning with the European revisionist powers, and it bound the Japanese leadership psychologically to a fascist coalition that would shape the next decade.

14.4 The Marco Polo Bridge Incident

The Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 7 July 1937 began as a minor confrontation between Japanese and Chinese troops near the Marco Polo Bridge southwest of Beijing. A Japanese soldier was briefly missing during a night exercise, the Japanese commander demanded entry to the nearby town of Wanping to search for him, and the Chinese garrison refused. Shots were exchanged. Both sides initially expected the incident to be resolved by local negotiation, as previous incidents had been. But the Japanese government in Tokyo took the position that the Chinese refusal was an unacceptable challenge to Japanese rights. Reinforcements were dispatched to north China. The Chinese government under Chiang Kai-shek concluded that further concessions would lead only to further demands and committed itself to resistance.

By the end of July 1937 Japanese forces had occupied Beijing and Tianjin. The Battle of Shanghai began on 13 August and lasted three months, ending in Japanese victory at heavy cost. The Chinese government withdrew first to Wuhan and then to Chongqing. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident had become full war, even though neither side formally declared war until much later.

Chapter summary

Between the Tanggu Truce of 1933 and the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937, Japan extended its control beyond Manchuria into north China through a combination of military pressure, political manipulation and economic encroachment. The Amau Doctrine asserted Japan's special interest in East Asia. The He-Umezu Agreement removed Chinese authority from Hebei. The East Hebei Autonomous Council established a puppet regime south of the Great Wall. The February 26 Incident of 1936 confirmed army ascendancy in Tokyo. The Anti-Comintern Pact aligned Japan with Nazi Germany. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July 1937 was the trigger that turned localised encroachment into full war.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Tanggu Truce	The May 1933 agreement establishing a demilitarised zone south of the Great Wall
Jehol Province	The province incorporated into Manchukuo in March 1933
Amau Doctrine	The April 1934 assertion of Japanese special interest in East Asia
He-Umezu Agreement	The June 1935 forced removal of Chinese forces from Hebei
East Hebei Autonomous Council	The 1935 Japanese-aligned regime south of the Great Wall
Kōdōha	The Imperial Way faction within the army
Tōseiha	The Control faction within the army
Anti-Comintern Pact	The November 1936 alignment with Nazi Germany
Marco Polo Bridge Incident	The 7 July 1937 trigger of full Sino-Japanese War

Questions

1. Examine the methods by which Japan extended its control into north China between 1933 and 1937.
2. To what extent was the Anti-Comintern Pact a fundamental shift in Japanese foreign alignment?
3. Evaluate the immediate causes of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident.

Chapter 15: The Sino-Japanese War and the Second United Front, 1937 to 1941

Summary of events

The Sino-Japanese War from 1937 onwards was the largest land war of the late 1930s and produced casualties on a scale comparable to the European fronts of the Second World War. Japanese forces took Beijing and Tianjin within weeks of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. The Battle of Shanghai from August to November 1937 destroyed the Chinese Nationalist army's professional core but cost the Japanese force three months and approximately seventy thousand casualties. The fall of Nanjing in December 1937 was followed by the Rape of Nanjing, the systematic massacre and rape of approximately two hundred thousand to three hundred thousand Chinese civilians and disarmed soldiers over six weeks. The Battle of Wuhan from June to October 1938 was the largest single battle of the war. By the end of 1938 the Chinese government had retreated to Chongqing in Sichuan, beyond the practical reach of Japanese ground forces. The war became a stalemate. The Second United Front between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party fragmented in practice while remaining nominal. The communist forces in Shaanxi conducted increasingly successful guerrilla operations in Japanese rear areas, while Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces conducted conventional resistance from Chongqing. Foreign aid from the Soviet Union from 1937 to 1941 and from the American Volunteer Group from 1941 sustained Chinese resistance. The war did not end until Japan's defeat in August 1945.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did the Sino-Japanese War unfold militarily between 1937 and 1941?
2. What was the Rape of Nanjing and how does it relate to the broader question of Japanese conduct?
3. How did the Second United Front function in practice?
4. What was the role of foreign aid in sustaining Chinese resistance?

Timeline of Chapter 15

7 July 1937	Marco Polo Bridge Incident
30 July 1937	Beijing falls
13 August to 26 November 1937	Battle of Shanghai
13 December 1937	Nanjing falls. Rape of Nanjing begins
August 1937 to August 1939	Soviet aid to China through Sino-Soviet Treaty
June to October 1938	Battle of Wuhan
October 1938	Wuhan falls. Government retreats to Chongqing
1939	Battle of Khalkhin Gol. Japanese-Soviet border conflict

13 April 1941 — Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact

December 1941 — American entry into the war

15.1 The opening campaigns

Japanese forces moved with overwhelming force in the summer of 1937. Beijing was taken on 30 July, Tianjin on 30 July. The Battle of Shanghai began on 13 August when Japanese marines were attacked in the Chinese sectors of the city and reinforcements were dispatched. Chiang Kai-shek committed his best German-trained divisions, including approximately seventy thousand troops of the Nationalist elite, to defending Shanghai. The battle was a catastrophe for Chinese arms. By November the Chinese force had lost approximately two hundred and fifty thousand killed or wounded, the Japanese approximately seventy thousand, and the Chinese position had collapsed. The professional core of the Nationalist army had been largely destroyed in three months.

The fall of Nanjing followed on 13 December 1937. The Nationalist government had already evacuated to Wuhan, but a defensive force remained in the capital under Tang Shengzhi. Japanese commander Matsui Iwane ordered the city taken. What followed was the Rape of Nanjing, six weeks of systematic massacre, rape, looting and arson conducted by Japanese troops with the knowledge and apparent approval of senior commanders. Estimates of the death toll range from forty thousand to over three hundred thousand depending on methodology and area covered, with the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall maintaining a figure of approximately three hundred thousand. The episode was reported by Western journalists in Nanjing including the German businessman John Rabe, whose diary recorded individual incidents and provided contemporary documentation. Japanese authorities prosecuted Matsui after the war, and he was hanged at the Tokyo Trials in 1948.

15.2 The middle phase. Wuhan, Chongqing and stalemate

The Battle of Wuhan from June to October 1938 was the largest single engagement of the war. Approximately one million Chinese troops defended the central Yangtze city against approximately three hundred and fifty thousand Japanese. Wuhan fell on 25 October after four months of resistance. The Nationalist government retreated up the Yangtze to Chongqing, in mountainous Sichuan, beyond the practical reach of Japanese ground forces. From November 1938 through 1944 Chongqing endured systematic Japanese aerial bombardment that killed approximately ten thousand civilians and damaged most of the city, but the government was never dislodged.

The war from late 1938 onwards was a strategic stalemate. Japan controlled the major coastal and river cities of eastern China and the rail network connecting them. The Nationalist government held the interior west of the Yangtze gorges. The Communist base areas in Shaanxi and the rear areas of north China conducted increasingly effective guerrilla operations in the regions Japan nominally controlled. Wang Jingwei, formerly a senior Kuomintang leader, defected to Japan in 1938 and from 1940 led a Japanese-backed Reorganised National Government in Nanjing that nominally claimed all of China but in practice administered only Japanese-controlled territory.

15.3 The Second United Front in practice

The Second United Front between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party had been agreed in principle at Xi'an in December 1936, formalised after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July 1937 and further codified in formal agreements in September 1937. In practice the front was a tactical accommodation rather than a genuine alliance. The Communists were assigned the Eighth Route Army in Shaanxi and the New Fourth Army in central China, both formally part of the National Revolutionary Army but in practice independent of Chiang Kai-shek's command.

The fragility of the front was demonstrated by the New Fourth Army Incident of January 1941, when Nationalist forces attacked the Communist headquarters of the New Fourth Army in southern Anhui, killing approximately three thousand Communist troops. The incident shattered the practical cooperation, although the formal United Front survived until 1945. The Communist movement under Mao Zedong used the war years to expand its base areas, recruit peasants, develop guerrilla tactics and prepare for the renewed civil war that would follow Japanese defeat. By 1945 the Communist Party held an estimated ninety million people under its administration, compared with several thousand in 1934.

15.4 Foreign aid

Soviet aid to China between 1937 and 1941 was significant and underestimated. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1937 committed the Soviet Union to material support, and approximately one billion dollars in equivalent value of military equipment, including aircraft, tanks and artillery, was supplied between 1937 and 1939. Soviet pilots flew Chinese aircraft in combat in 1938 and 1939 in numbers comparable to the later American Volunteer Group. The Soviet aid programme reflected Stalin's strategic interest in keeping Japan occupied in China and unable to attack the Soviet Far East. The aid declined sharply after the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact of April 1941 and ended after the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941.

American aid before 1941 was modest and constrained by the Neutrality Acts. The American Volunteer Group, the Flying Tigers under Claire Chennault, was a private mercenary force of American pilots flying P-40 fighters in Chinese service from late 1941. Lend-Lease assistance to China formally began in May 1941 but operated on a small scale until after Pearl Harbor. After the American entry into the war in December 1941, China became one of the four allied great powers in formal terms, though in practice American aid remained constrained by the prioritisation of Europe and by the difficulty of supplying China overland from India via the Burma Road and later by air over the Hump.

Chapter summary

The Sino-Japanese War from 1937 to 1941 was a large-scale war that produced massive casualties and the systematic Japanese atrocities at Nanjing in December 1937. The Battle of Shanghai destroyed the Chinese Nationalist professional army. The Battle of Wuhan in 1938 ended Japanese hopes of decisive victory and forced the Chinese government to Chongqing. The war became a stalemate in which Japan controlled cities and railways, the Nationalists held the interior, and the Communists expanded in the Japanese rear areas. The Second United Front was tactical rather than substantive and effectively collapsed after the New Fourth Army Incident of January 1941. Soviet aid sustained Chinese resistance through 1941, and American aid increased after Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Marco Polo Bridge Incident	The 7 July 1937 trigger of full war
Battle of Shanghai	The August to November 1937 battle that destroyed the Nationalist professional army
Rape of Nanjing	The six weeks of systematic atrocities after Nanjing's fall in December 1937
John Rabe	The German businessman whose diary documented Nanjing atrocities
Battle of Wuhan	The June to October 1938 battle that ended hopes of decisive Japanese victory
Chongqing	The Sichuan capital of the Nationalist government from 1938
Wang Jingwei	The KMT defector who led the Japanese-backed Reorganised National Government from 1940
Second United Front	The 1937 to 1945 nominal alliance between KMT and CCP
New Fourth Army Incident	The January 1941 KMT attack on Communist forces
Sino-Soviet Treaty	The August 1937 agreement that brought Soviet aid to China
Flying Tigers	The American Volunteer Group under Claire Chennault

Questions

1. Examine the conduct of the Battle of Shanghai and its significance for Chinese resistance.
2. To what extent did the Rape of Nanjing reflect Japanese military policy rather than localised excess?
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Second United Front between 1937 and 1941.

Chapter 16: The international response to Japanese aggression, 1931 to 1941

Summary of events

The international response to Japanese aggression between 1931 and 1941 was characterised by limited capacity, divergent interests among the major powers, and progressive escalation that arrived too late to prevent war. The League of Nations responded to the Manchurian Incident through the Lytton Commission and Report but had no enforcement instruments and saw Japan withdraw rather than comply. The United States adopted the Stimson Doctrine of non-recognition in 1932 but did not impose sanctions. Britain and France, distracted by European crises and economically dependent on Japanese trade, declined to lead a collective response. The Soviet Union, the only major power directly threatened by Japanese expansion, fought localised border conflicts at Lake Khasan in 1938 and Khalkhin Gol in 1939 before signing the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact in April 1941. The American response began to harden after 1937 with the Quarantine Speech and accelerated through 1939 to 1941 with progressive embargoes that culminated in the oil embargo of August 1941. The American demand at the Hull-Nomura negotiations of November 1941 that Japan withdraw from China and Indochina was unacceptable to Tokyo, and the decision for war with the United States followed.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What was the Stimson Doctrine and what did it commit the United States to?
2. How did the League of Nations respond to Japanese aggression and why was the response so limited?
3. What was the Quarantine Speech and what did it signal?
4. How did the American embargo escalate between 1939 and 1941?
5. What were the Hull-Nomura negotiations and why did they fail?

Timeline of Chapter 16

7 January 1932	Stimson Doctrine of non-recognition
1932 to 1933	League of Nations Lytton process
5 October 1937	Roosevelt's Quarantine Speech
12 December 1937	USS Panay sunk by Japanese aircraft
July 1938 to August 1938	Battle of Lake Khasan
May to September 1939	Battle of Khalkhin Gol
26 July 1939	American notice to terminate 1911 trade treaty with Japan
26 September 1940	American embargo on iron and steel scrap to Japan
13 April 1941	Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact

24 July 1941	Japanese occupation of southern French Indochina
26 July 1941	American freezing of Japanese assets
1 August 1941	American oil embargo
November 1941	Hull-Nomura negotiations
26 November 1941	Hull Note delivered
7 December 1941	Pearl Harbor

16.1 The Stimson Doctrine and the limits of American power

Henry Stimson, the American Secretary of State under President Hoover, responded to the Manchurian Incident with what became known as the Stimson Doctrine. The doctrine, communicated by diplomatic note to Japan and China on 7 January 1932 and elaborated in subsequent statements, declared that the United States would not recognise any territorial change brought about by means contrary to the Pact of Paris of 1928, the Kellogg-Briand Pact that had outlawed war as an instrument of national policy. The doctrine refused American recognition of Manchukuo. It also committed the United States to no enforcement action.

The League of Nations endorsed the principle of non-recognition in its eventual response to the Lytton Report. But neither the League nor the United States imposed sanctions, even economic sanctions, against Japan. The reasons were primarily economic. The Depression had driven world trade into crisis. American policymakers feared that sanctions against Japan would push Japan further toward conflict and would damage American exports. Stimson argued internally for sanctions but Hoover declined.

16.2 The League's enforcement weakness

The League's failure in Manchuria was not the result of bad faith on the part of its members. It was the structural failure of an organisation designed to manage international disputes among states that wished to be managed. Japan had no intention of being managed. The League's Covenant provided in Article 16 for economic sanctions against members that violated the Covenant, but the application of Article 16 required collective action by the League Council, which any major power could effectively veto. Britain and France, the dominant Council members, declined to lead a sanctions effort that they would have had to enforce militarily and that would have damaged their own economic interests in East Asia.

The deeper failure was the League's inability to compel a major power to accept its findings. Japan simply withdrew from the League. The Covenant had no provision for action against a state that withdrew, beyond a two-year notice period during which the state's obligations technically remained. The League could not occupy Manchuria, could not blockade Japan and could not punish Japan in any way. The lesson was learned by Hitler in October 1933 when he withdrew Germany from the League over the Disarmament Conference, by Italy in 1937 after the Abyssinia sanctions, and by Japan again as it conducted full war in China after 1937.

16.3 The Quarantine Speech

President Roosevelt's Quarantine Speech of 5 October 1937 in Chicago marked a shift in American rhetoric toward Japanese aggression after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. Roosevelt called for a quarantine of aggressor nations to prevent the spread of war, drawing an analogy with the medical quarantine of contagious disease. The speech did not propose specific sanctions and was followed by no immediate change in American policy. It did, however, signal that American public opinion was moving away from the strict isolationism of the early 1930s and toward a greater willingness to act against expansionist powers.

The Panay Incident of 12 December 1937, in which Japanese aircraft sank the American gunboat USS Panay on the Yangtze River near Nanjing, killed three American sailors and produced a brief crisis. The Japanese government apologised and paid an indemnity. The incident did not produce sanctions but did harden American attitudes. American press coverage of the Rape of Nanjing in December 1937 and January 1938, including footage and photographs that reached American audiences, produced significant public sympathy for China.

16.4 The Soviet response. Khasan and Khalkhin Gol

The Soviet Union was the major power most directly threatened by Japanese expansion in northeast Asia. Two large border conflicts between Japanese and Soviet forces tested the Japanese army's capacity against a major industrial power. The Battle of Lake Khasan in July and August 1938 was a Japanese probe across the disputed border between Korea and the Soviet Union that the Soviet Far Eastern Front under Vasily Blücher repulsed at significant cost. The Battle of Khalkhin Gol from May to September 1939 was a much larger engagement on the Manchukuo-Mongolian border in which Soviet forces under Georgy Zhukov decisively defeated the Japanese 23rd Division. Japanese casualties were approximately twenty thousand. The defeat persuaded the Japanese army that war with the Soviet Union should be avoided and that expansion should be directed southward toward Southeast Asian resources rather than northward into Soviet territory.

The Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact of 13 April 1941 formalised the strategic conclusion. Both powers committed to neutrality if either was attacked by a third power. The pact freed Japan to direct its expansion southward and freed the Soviet Union to concentrate forces against Germany. The pact survived until April 1945 when the Soviet Union gave the year's notice required for termination, with the Soviet Union finally entering the Pacific war in August 1945.

16.5 The escalation of American economic pressure

American economic pressure on Japan escalated through three phases. The first phase, from 1937 to 1939, was rhetorical and largely ineffective. The Quarantine Speech, the moral embargo on aircraft sales of June 1938, and the notice in July 1939 to terminate the 1911 commercial treaty produced no immediate change. The second phase, from late 1939 through 1940, introduced specific export restrictions. American export licences were required for aviation gasoline from July 1940, and then for iron and steel scrap from September 1940. Japan responded by accelerating its planning for southward expansion and by signing the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy on 27 September 1940.

The third phase, from late 1940 through 1941, accelerated to comprehensive embargo. The Japanese occupation of southern French Indochina on 24 July 1941, threatening British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, triggered the freezing of Japanese assets in the United States on 26 July and the comprehensive oil embargo on 1 August. Britain and the Dutch East Indies followed. Japan now faced the choice of either negotiating an American-acceptable withdrawal from China and Indochina or going to war with the United States while it still had oil reserves. The Hull-Nomura negotiations from August through November tried to find

a compromise. The Hull Note of 26 November 1941 demanded full Japanese withdrawal from China and Indochina, recognition of the Nationalist government and abandonment of the Tripartite Pact. The Tojo cabinet, which had taken office on 18 October 1941, treated the Hull Note as an ultimatum that confirmed the inevitability of war.

16.6 The Brussels Conference, November 1937

The Brussels Conference of November 1937 was the last serious attempt to organise a multilateral response to Japanese aggression in the framework of the Nine-Power Treaty of 1922 rather than the League. The conference was convened at American suggestion in the wake of the Quarantine Speech and met in the Belgian capital from 3 to 24 November 1937. Nineteen powers attended, including the United States, Britain, France, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union and China, but Japan refused to attend on the grounds that it considered the Sino-Japanese conflict a bilateral matter outside the scope of the Nine-Power Treaty. The conference produced a declaration affirming the Nine-Power principles of Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity but agreed on no enforcement action. The American delegation, led by Norman Davis, refused to support sanctions, with Roosevelt himself instructing Davis to avoid any commitment that might require American military or economic enforcement. The conference adjourned on 24 November and never reconvened. Brussels confirmed that even outside the discredited League framework the Western powers were not prepared to convert moral disapproval of Japanese expansion into material consequences.

16.7 Britain and France between Singapore and the Burma Road

British policy toward Japanese expansion was constrained by the structural fact that Britain was simultaneously appeasing Germany in Europe and could not afford a second war in Asia. The defensive doctrine, articulated by the Chiefs of Staff in successive memoranda from 1937 onwards, was the Singapore strategy, the assumption that the Royal Navy could send a fleet to Singapore in time to deter or defeat any Japanese advance toward British possessions in Southeast Asia. The doctrine assumed naval availability that the simultaneous European crises did not in fact provide. Singapore fell on 15 February 1942 in part because the strategic assumption underlying its defence had been quietly hollowed out by the redirection of fleet resources to home waters and the Mediterranean.

The Tianjin Incident of June to August 1939 brought British appeasement of Japan to its limit. Japanese forces in northern China demanded that the British concession at Tianjin hand over four Chinese suspects accused of assassinating a Japanese collaborator. The British concession authorities initially refused. Japan responded by blockading the concession, restricting food and imposing public humiliations on British residents. The British government, calculating that war with Japan over a concession would be strategically catastrophic, conceded the demands. The Craigie-Arita Agreement of 24 July 1939 acknowledged the right of Japan to maintain order in occupied China. Two days later, on 26 July 1939, the United States gave six-month notice of termination of its 1911 commercial treaty with Japan, exposing the divergence between American and British policy. Britain was retreating where the United States was advancing.

The Burma Road episode of July to October 1940 was the next British concession. The Burma Road, a thousand-kilometre supply route from Lashio in Burma to Kunming in China, was the principal channel for Western supplies reaching the Nationalist government after the closure of the Indochina route. Japan demanded its closure. Churchill's government, facing imminent invasion at home and the loss of France, agreed in July 1940 to close the road for three months. The road was reopened in October 1940 once the immediate crisis had passed and once the Tripartite Pact made it clear that further appeasement of Japan would not detach Japan from the Axis. The Burma Road episode illustrated the chronic British weakness of resources relative to commitments and the consequent willingness to make concessions in Asia in order to

free resources for Europe.

France's response to Japanese expansion was constrained by the same European crisis. French Indochina was militarily indefensible against any serious Japanese force. After the fall of France in June 1940, the Vichy government granted Japan first basing rights in northern Indochina in September 1940 and then full occupation rights in southern Indochina in July 1941. The southern occupation was the proximate trigger for the American oil embargo. French policy was made by a defeated state that lacked the means to resist, but the cumulative effect was to provide Japan with the strategic bases for the southward advance.

16.8 China's diplomacy and the failed appeals

Nationalist China conducted an increasingly sophisticated diplomatic campaign to draw the Western powers into more substantive support. Wellington Koo, the Chinese ambassador in Paris and later London, and Hu Shih, ambassador in Washington from 1938 to 1942, were articulate advocates of the Chinese case at the League and in the Western capitals. The Nationalist government appealed to the League under Article 10 in September 1937 after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, but the League responded only with the Brussels Conference, which produced no enforcement action. China simultaneously sought support from the Soviet Union, signing the Sino-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 21 August 1937 that provided Soviet aircraft, advisers and credits, and from the United States, where the December 1938 loan of twenty-five million dollars on credit against tung oil exports was the first substantive American material support. Lend-Lease was extended to China in May 1941, formalising the American commitment to Chinese resistance.

The American response to Chinese appeals evolved more from American strategic calculation than from Chinese persuasion. The strategic logic, articulated by Stanley Hornbeck, the State Department's Far Eastern adviser, was that a Japan tied down in China could not threaten Southeast Asia or the Philippines. Hornbeck advocated steady economic pressure on Japan precisely because, in his view, the embargo would fall short of provoking war while constraining Japanese options. The argument assumed a degree of Japanese economic rationality that the Tojo cabinet did not in the event display. Hornbeck's miscalculation was on the Japanese side, not on the Chinese side. The Chinese resistance was real, and Chinese diplomacy successfully positioned China as a victim of aggression deserving Western support. What the Chinese case could not produce was a Western response sufficient to deter Japanese escalation.

16.9 The Japanese view of the international response

Japanese decision-makers read the international response through a lens that emphasised opportunity rather than threat. The League's failure in Manchuria persuaded the army that international constraints could be defied without serious consequence. The American Quarantine Speech and the Panay Incident were noted but did not register as warnings of imminent escalation. The pattern of Western concession at Tianjin and on the Burma Road in 1939 and 1940 reinforced the perception that the Western powers were militarily and politically weak. The fall of France in June 1940 and the German bombing of Britain through autumn 1940 confirmed the Japanese assessment that the European war had created a strategic window during which Southeast Asia could be seized cheaply.

The American escalation of mid-1941 confronted the Japanese government with a choice that the previous pattern had not prepared it for. The cabinet of Konoe Fumimaro initially attempted to negotiate, but the American demand at the Hull Note for full withdrawal from China was not negotiable for any Japanese government, given the army's position that the four years of war and the casualties it had cost were sunk costs that could not be written off. The argument inside the Imperial Conferences of September and November 1941 was not whether to fight but when. The November argument, captured in the Imperial Liaison Conference records, calculated that an attack while oil reserves remained at eighteen months of supply would have a

better chance than an attack postponed until reserves dwindled. The decision for war on 1 December 1941 was not a panicked response to the embargo but a strategic calculation that war now offered better odds than diplomatic capitulation or war later. The miscalculation was about American resilience, not about American power.

16.10 Historiographical debate. Did the embargo cause the war?

A persistent historiographical debate concerns whether the American oil embargo of August 1941 caused the Japanese decision for war. The orthodox American interpretation, articulated in Herbert Feis's The Road to Pearl Harbor of 1950 and accepted by most American scholarship through the 1960s, holds that the embargo was a justified response to Japanese aggression and that the Japanese decision for war was the responsibility of an aggressive militarist regime. The revisionist interpretation, articulated by Charles Beard in President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War of 1948, by Charles Tansill in Back Door to War of 1952, and at the popular end by Robert Stinnett in Day of Deceit of 2000, argues that the embargo was deliberately calibrated to provoke war by Roosevelt, who needed a back door into the European war that public opinion would not let him enter directly.

The contemporary mainstream rejects both extremes. Akira Iriye in The Origins of the Second World War in Asia and the Pacific of 1987 frames the war as a tragic miscalculation on both sides. Iriye argues that the embargo was not designed to provoke war but failed to anticipate the strategic logic by which a resource-starved Japan would prefer the gamble of war to the certainty of strategic decline. American policymakers expected Japan to negotiate; Japanese policymakers, calculating that their negotiating position would only weaken with time, calculated that fighting now offered better odds than fighting later. Iriye's framing, supported in different ways by Michael Barnhart's Japan Prepares for Total War of 1987 and Edward Miller's Bankrupting the Enemy of 2007, treats the embargo as a contributing cause without making it the proximate cause. The proximate cause was the structural mismatch between American expectations of Japanese rationality and the actual logic of Japanese strategic choice under conditions of military commitment in China that no government could renounce without political collapse.

Chapter summary

The international response to Japanese aggression was characterised by limited League enforcement capacity, divergent interests among the major powers, and progressive American escalation that arrived too late to prevent war. The Stimson Doctrine and the Lytton Report established the principle of non-recognition without imposing sanctions. The Quarantine Speech and the Panay Incident shifted American rhetoric without changing policy. Soviet defeats of Japanese forces at Khasan and Khalkhin Gol redirected Japanese expansion southward. The American embargo escalated from mid-1940 through August 1941 to comprehensive economic warfare. The Hull Note of 26 November 1941 demanded a Japanese withdrawal that the Japanese government could not accept, and the decision for war with the United States followed.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Stimson Doctrine	The 1932 American commitment to non-recognition of territorial changes by force
Pact of Paris	The 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war as policy
Quarantine Speech	Roosevelt's October 1937 Chicago speech proposing quarantine of aggressors
Panay Incident	The December 1937 sinking of the American gunboat by Japanese aircraft

Term	Meaning
Lake Khasan	The 1938 Soviet-Japanese border battle
Khalkhin Gol	The 1939 Soviet-Japanese battle decisively won by Zhukov
Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact	The April 1941 agreement that freed both powers strategically
Hull Note	The 26 November 1941 American demand for Japanese withdrawal

Questions

1. Examine the limitations of the League of Nations response to Japanese aggression.
2. To what extent did American economic pressure between 1939 and 1941 cause the Japanese decision for war?
3. Evaluate the significance of Khalkhin Gol for Japanese strategic decisions.

Chapter 17: The Tripartite Pact, the road to Pearl Harbor and the outbreak of war, 1940 to 1941

Summary of events

The final road to war between Japan and the United States ran from the Tripartite Pact of September 1940 through the southern advance into French Indochina in July 1940 and again in July 1941, the American oil embargo of August 1941, the Hull-Nomura negotiations through autumn 1941 and the decision for war taken in early November 1941. The attack on Pearl Harbor on the morning of 7 December 1941 was simultaneous with attacks on Malaya, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Guam and Wake Island, and inaugurated the Pacific War. Japan's strategic calculation was that a quick decisive victory in the Pacific and Southeast Asia would create a defensive perimeter from which Japan could resist American counter-attack until the United States, exhausted by simultaneous war in Europe, accepted a negotiated settlement leaving Japan in possession of its conquests. The calculation proved fatally optimistic, but it explains why the decision for war was taken despite the obvious disparity in industrial capacity between Japan and the United States.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What was the Tripartite Pact and what did it commit Japan to?
2. Why did Japan move into Indochina in 1940 and 1941?
3. What was the strategic rationale for the attack on Pearl Harbor?
4. Why did the Hull-Nomura negotiations fail to produce a compromise?

Timeline of Chapter 17

22 June 1940	French armistice with Germany
September 1940	Japanese occupation of northern French Indochina
27 September 1940	Tripartite Pact signed
24 July 1941	Japanese occupation of southern French Indochina
26 July 1941	American freezing of Japanese assets
1 August 1941	American oil embargo
August to November 1941	Hull-Nomura negotiations
18 October 1941	Tojo Hideki becomes Prime Minister
5 November 1941	Imperial Conference approves war
26 November 1941	Hull Note delivered. Pearl Harbor strike force sails
7 December 1941	Pearl Harbor attack. Pacific War begins

8 December 1941 — American declaration of war on Japan

11 December 1941 — German and Italian declarations of war on the United States

17.1 The Tripartite Pact

The Tripartite Pact, signed in Berlin on 27 September 1940 by Japan, Germany and Italy, created the formal alliance known as the Axis. The text committed each signatory to come to the aid of any other if attacked by a power not currently at war with any of them. The exclusion of the Soviet Union was deliberate, since the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939 was still in effect. The exclusion of China was deliberate, since the Sino-Japanese War was already underway. The intended target of the pact was the United States, which was being warned that intervention in either the European or the Pacific war would trigger a multi-front conflict with all three Axis powers.

For Japan the Tripartite Pact represented a strategic gamble. The pact aligned Japan with European powers whose interests were not always parallel to Japanese interests in East Asia. It risked entangling Japan in European wars that did not directly concern it. But the pact also provided diplomatic cover for the southern advance and a credible deterrent against American intervention. Foreign Minister Matsuoka Yōsuke, who had walked out of the League in 1933 and returned to government in July 1940, was the architect of the pact and saw it as the foundation of a Japanese-led Asian order.

17.2 The southern advance into Indochina

The fall of France in June 1940 transformed the strategic landscape in Southeast Asia. French Indochina was now governed by Vichy France, which lacked the military or political capacity to resist Japanese pressure. Japan demanded and received the right to station troops in northern French Indochina in September 1940, ostensibly to cut supply lines to Chiang Kai-shek's forces in southwest China. The American response was the iron and steel scrap embargo of 26 September 1940, the day before the Tripartite Pact was signed.

The southern advance accelerated in July 1941. Japanese forces moved into southern French Indochina on 24 July, threatening British Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and the Philippines. The American response was decisive. On 26 July President Roosevelt froze Japanese assets in the United States, on 1 August he imposed a comprehensive oil embargo, and Britain and the Dutch East Indies followed. Japan now imported approximately ninety per cent of its oil from sources controlled by the embargoing powers. With approximately two years of stockpiles, Japan faced a strategic choice. Negotiate a withdrawal from China and Indochina that the United States demanded, or strike before stockpiles ran out.

17.3 The Hull-Nomura negotiations

The Hull-Nomura negotiations between Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Japanese Ambassador Nomura Kichisaburō ran from August through November 1941. Both sides genuinely wanted to avoid war, but their minimum positions could not be reconciled. The Japanese minimum was American acceptance of Japanese gains in China, including Manchukuo, in exchange for Japanese withdrawal from Indochina and a non-aggression commitment. The American minimum was full Japanese withdrawal from China including Manchukuo, recognition of the Nationalist government in Chongqing, and abandonment of the Tripartite Pact.

The Hull Note of 26 November 1941 stated the American minimum in stark terms. The note was not a formal ultimatum but the Tojo cabinet, which had replaced the more flexible Konoe cabinet on 18 October, interpreted it as an unacceptable demand. The Japanese decision for war had effectively been taken at the

Imperial Conference of 5 November, which approved a final negotiating position with a deadline of late November. When the Hull Note arrived without compromise on the central issues, the Pearl Harbor strike force sailed from the Kuril Islands and the war was unstoppable.

17.4 The strategic logic of Pearl Harbor

The attack on Pearl Harbor on the morning of 7 December 1941 was conceived as a preventive strike designed to disable the American Pacific Fleet for long enough that Japan could secure its territorial gains in Southeast Asia and establish a defensive perimeter. Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku, who had commanded the strike force planning, doubted that Japan could win a long war with the United States and proposed Pearl Harbor as a calculated risk that might create the conditions for a negotiated settlement. The attack succeeded tactically, sinking or damaging seventeen American ships including the battleships USS Arizona and USS Oklahoma, destroying approximately one hundred and eighty-eight aircraft on the ground and killing approximately two thousand four hundred American servicemen.

The strategic outcome was the opposite of what Yamamoto had hoped. The attack unified American public opinion behind war in a way that no embargo could have achieved. President Roosevelt's address to Congress the following day, in which he called 7 December "a date which will live in infamy", produced a near-unanimous declaration of war. Hitler's gratuitous declaration of war on the United States on 11 December brought the United States into the European war as well, transforming the strategic balance of the global conflict. The Pearl Harbor strike that was meant to buy Japan a defensive perimeter instead activated the industrial capacity of the world's largest economy in a war Japan could not win.

The simultaneous Japanese attacks on Malaya, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island and Thailand produced rapid territorial gains. Malaya fell by January 1942, Singapore on 15 February 1942, the Dutch East Indies by March, the Philippines by May. The defensive perimeter that Yamamoto had imagined was constructed within six months. But the American industrial mobilisation that the perimeter was supposed to prevent had begun, and within a year the Battle of Midway in June 1942 had reversed the strategic balance of the Pacific war.

Chapter summary

The road to Pearl Harbor ran from the Tripartite Pact of September 1940 through the southern advance into Indochina, the American oil embargo of August 1941 and the failed Hull-Nomura negotiations of autumn 1941. The Tojo cabinet decided for war when the Hull Note demanded a withdrawal from China that Japan could not accept. The Pearl Harbor attack was conceived as a preventive strike to buy time for the construction of a defensive perimeter, but it produced the unification of American public opinion that made a negotiated settlement impossible. The attacks of 7 December 1941 inaugurated the Pacific War, which ended with Japan's defeat in August 1945.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Tripartite Pact	The 27 September 1940 Axis alliance among Japan, Germany and Italy
Vichy France	The French rump state that nominally governed Indochina from 1940
Konoe Fumimaro	The Prime Minister who pursued the Hull-Nomura negotiations
Tojo Hideki	The general who became Prime Minister on 18 October 1941

Term	Meaning
Hull-Nomura negotiations	The August to November 1941 talks that failed to produce compromise
Hull Note	The 26 November 1941 American minimum demand
Pearl Harbor	The 7 December 1941 Japanese attack on the American Pacific Fleet
Yamamoto Isoroku	The Japanese admiral who planned Pearl Harbor
Day of infamy	Roosevelt's phrase for the Pearl Harbor attack

Questions

1. Examine the strategic significance of the Tripartite Pact for Japanese foreign policy.
2. To what extent was the American oil embargo the immediate cause of the Pacific War?
3. Evaluate the rationale and outcome of the Pearl Harbor attack.

Chapter 18: Japan source bank with worked questions

Summary of events
This chapter assembles representative source materials from across the Japan case study, paired with worked questions in each of the four Paper 1 formats. The aim is to give the candidate concrete examples of how Paper 1 sources look and how the four questions can be applied to them. The sources here are paraphrased or summarised rather than reproduced verbatim, and candidates should not memorise them as if they were the actual examination text. The technique is what matters.

18.1 Source A. The Lytton Report, 1932, summary

The military operations of the Japanese troops during the night of September 18 to 19 cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defence. The new state, Manchukuo, has been imposed on the inhabitants of Manchuria by the Japanese army. It does not exist by virtue of a genuine and spontaneous independence movement. Japan has, however, legitimate economic and security interests in Manchuria, and a return to the conditions before September 1931 is neither possible nor desirable. The Commission therefore proposes an autonomous government in Manchuria under Chinese sovereignty.

18.2 Source B. Speech by Matsuoka Yōsuke, 1933

Japan has been criticised by all the powers of the West for actions that those same powers themselves practised in Asia for a century. Japan, however, will not bow to the demands of those who do not understand the realities of the Far East. The Japanese mission in East Asia is to lead the awakening of yellow peoples against white imperialism, and Japan will follow her own path regardless of the censure of the League.

18.3 Source C. American newspaper cartoon, 1937

A cartoon shows the figure of the League of Nations as a tortoise on its back, with all four legs waving helplessly in the air. A Japanese soldier with a rising-sun flag stands on the tortoise's belly, looking down with an expression of contempt. A small dove of peace flies away in the upper corner of the frame, looking back with concern. The caption reads, "Article 16 in action".

18.4 Source D. American Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Japanese Ambassador Nomura, 26 November 1941

> *The Government of Japan will withdraw all military, naval, air and police forces from China and from Indochina. The Government of Japan will recognise no government in China other than the National Government with capital at Chungking. Both Governments will agree that no agreement entered into by either with any third power shall be interpreted by them in such a way as to conflict with the fundamental purpose of this agreement, namely the establishment and preservation of peace throughout the Pacific area.*

18.5 Worked Question 1 part a, three points

Question. What does Source A suggest about the Lytton Commission's view of Japanese actions in Manchuria?

Worked answer. Firstly, the source suggests that the Commission concluded that Japanese military operations on the night of 18 to 19 September 1931 were not legitimate self-defence, as shown by the phrase "cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defence". Secondly, the source suggests that the Commission viewed Manchukuo as a Japanese imposition rather than a genuine state, as shown by the phrase "imposed on the inhabitants of Manchuria by the Japanese army". Thirdly, the source suggests that the Commission acknowledged that Japan had legitimate interests in Manchuria, as shown by the reference to "legitimate economic and security interests".

18.6 Worked Question 1 part b, two messages

Question. What is the message of Source C?

Worked answer. The first message of the cartoon is that the League of Nations was paralysed and unable to act against Japanese aggression, as shown by the figure of the tortoise on its back with its legs waving helplessly. The second message is that the principle of collective security through Article 16 had been demonstrated to be ineffective, as shown by the caption "Article 16 in action" in ironic relation to the picture.

18.7 Worked Question 2, full OPCVL on Source A

Question. With reference to its origin, purpose and content, evaluate the value and limitations of Source A for a historian studying the international response to Japanese aggression in Manchuria.

Worked answer. The origin of Source A is the official report of the Lytton Commission of Enquiry, published in October 1932 after a year of investigation in Manchuria, China and Japan. The Commission was composed of five members representing major League powers, with Lord Lytton of Britain as chairman. The purpose of the report was to advise the League Council on how to respond to the Manchurian Incident, providing an authoritative international assessment that would shape collective action. The content of the source is the Commission's central conclusions, denying that Japanese operations were self-defence and rejecting Manchukuo as a genuine state, while acknowledging Japanese interests and proposing autonomous Manchurian government under Chinese sovereignty.

The source is highly valuable to a historian studying the international response because it provides the central document on which the League's vote of February 1933 was based, and it represents the considered judgement of an international commission with access to all parties. The careful balance of the conclusions, condemning Japanese actions while acknowledging Japanese interests, illustrates the diplomatic difficulty the League faced. The source is limited because it presents the formal League position rather than the diverging views of the individual member powers. A historian studying the actual capacity of the League to respond, rather than its formal position, would need to consult Cabinet papers and diplomatic correspondence from the major members. The proposal of autonomous Manchurian government, never

implemented, also signals the gap between the report's recommendations and the international community's willingness or capacity to enforce them.

18.8 Worked Question 3, running comparison on Sources A and B

Question. Compare and contrast the views in Sources A and B about Japanese actions in Manchuria.

Worked answer. Sources A and B share the framing of Manchurian events as being assessed against international standards, but they reach opposite conclusions on the legitimacy of Japanese actions. Both sources accept that the central question is how to evaluate the Manchurian operations, with Source A treating that question through the framework of collective security and self-defence and Source B treating it through the framework of historical comparison with Western imperialism. Both sources also acknowledge that Japan acted with reference to East Asian conditions, with Source A admitting Japanese economic and security interests and Source B asserting Japanese understanding of Asian realities.

The sources differ sharply in their conclusions and in their rhetorical posture. Source A is the formal product of an international commission and adopts the measured tone of diplomatic assessment, concluding that Japanese operations were not self-defence and that Manchukuo was an imposition. Source B is a political speech delivered by the Japanese delegate at the moment of the League's vote, and adopts a defiant tone of national assertion, arguing that Western criticism is hypocritical and that Japan will follow her own path. Where Source A treats the Manchurian episode as a violation of international law, Source B treats it as the legitimate exercise of Asian self-determination against Western imperialism. The provenance difference, with Source A produced by an international body and Source B produced by the Japanese government, explains the divergence in both content and tone.

18.9 Worked Question 4, mini-essay on the international response

Question. Using all four sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the international response to Japanese expansion was too limited to constrain Japanese policy until it was too late to prevent war.

Worked answer outline. The argument that the international response was too limited until too late is broadly correct but needs qualification. The introduction sets out the thesis. Three body paragraphs develop the argument. The first paragraph addresses the League's failure in 1932 to 1933, drawing on Sources A and B and on own knowledge of the Lytton process and Japan's withdrawal. The second paragraph addresses the period of escalation from 1933 to 1940, drawing on Source C and on own knowledge of the Stimson Doctrine, the Quarantine Speech and the slow tightening of American export controls. The third paragraph addresses the final escalation of 1941, drawing on Source D and on own knowledge of the oil embargo, the Hull-Nomura negotiations and the Tojo cabinet's decision for war. The conclusion returns to the thesis with a judgement that international response was indeed too limited for too long, but that the eventual American escalation of 1941 was severe enough to provoke war rather than restrain it, raising the more complicated question of whether earlier and steadier pressure might have prevented war altogether.

Chapter summary

The Japan case study source bank illustrates the kinds of source material the Paper 1 examination is likely to draw on, including the Lytton Report, Japanese government statements, Western political cartoons and American diplomatic notes. The worked questions show how each of the four Paper 1 question types can be applied to such sources. Candidates should practise similar exercises on past papers, on the materials in the Cambridge textbook by Allan Todd, and on the further sources in Chapter 36's past paper bank.

PART III: CASE STUDY 2 — GERMAN AND ITALIAN EXPANSION, 1933 TO 1940

Chapter 19: The post-Versailles order and its weaknesses

Summary of events

The European order in which German and Italian expansion took place was the product of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 and the agreements that followed. The Treaty of Versailles imposed reparations and territorial penalties on Germany, the Treaty of Saint-Germain dismembered Austria-Hungary, and the Treaty of Sèvres and its successor at Lausanne reshaped the Middle East. The League of Nations was created to manage international disputes peacefully, supplemented by Locarno in 1925 and the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928, which together built the framework of collective security. By the early 1930s this framework was eroding under the pressure of the Depression, the rise of revisionist powers and the absence of the United States from the League. The World Disarmament Conference of 1932 to 1934 failed to produce general disarmament and provided the diplomatic occasion for Germany's withdrawal from the League in October 1933. The framework that German and Italian expansion would test was already weakened before either set of expansionist plans began in earnest.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What did the Versailles settlement establish, and where were its weaknesses?
2. How did the Locarno and Kellogg-Briand agreements try to strengthen collective security?
3. Why did the World Disarmament Conference fail?
4. What does Italian dissatisfaction with the Versailles settlement tell us about the post-war order?

Timeline of Chapter 19

28 June 1919	Treaty of Versailles signed
10 January 1920	League of Nations Covenant comes into force
19 March 1920	American Senate rejects ratification of Versailles
16 April 1922	Treaty of Rapallo. Germany and Soviet Russia recognise each other
1923	French occupation of the Ruhr
1924	Dawes Plan reschedules German reparations
1 December 1925	Locarno Treaties signed
September 1926	Germany joins the League of Nations
27 August 1928	Kellogg-Briand Pact signed in Paris
1929	Young Plan further reschedules reparations
1929	Wall Street Crash

February 1932 — World Disarmament Conference opens in Geneva

October 1933 — German withdrawal from Disarmament Conference and League

19.1 Versailles and its discontents

The Treaty of Versailles imposed on Germany on 28 June 1919 contained four categories of provision that would shape German politics for the next twenty years. The territorial provisions transferred Alsace-Lorraine to France, Eupen and Malmedy to Belgium, large parts of West Prussia and Posen to a reborn Poland, and Memel to Lithuania. Danzig became a Free City under League supervision. The Saarland was placed under fifteen-year League administration with a plebiscite scheduled for 1935. The military provisions limited the German army to one hundred thousand men, banned an air force, restricted the navy and demilitarised the Rhineland. The reparations provisions, set at one hundred and thirty-two billion gold marks in 1921, imposed a financial burden whose precise weight is still debated by economic historians but which was politically unbearable. The Article 231 war guilt clause assigned formal responsibility for the war to Germany, providing the legal basis for reparations and, in German political discourse, the basis for a permanent grievance.

The League of Nations was meant to manage post-war disputes through collective security under Article 16 of the Covenant, which provided for economic and potentially military sanctions against members that violated the Covenant. The structural weakness was that the United States, despite President Wilson's central role in drafting the Covenant, never joined the League. The American Senate's rejection of the Treaty of Versailles in March 1920 left the League without the world's largest economy as a member. The Soviet Union, regarded by Western governments as ideologically illegitimate, was excluded until 1934. The League was therefore, from its first day, an organisation of the European victors of the First World War, primarily Britain and France, with significant support from the smaller European democracies and from Japan until 1933.

19.2 Locarno and Kellogg-Briand

The mid-1920s saw efforts to strengthen the post-war order through additional agreements. The Locarno Treaties of 1 December 1925 normalised relations between Germany, France and Belgium, with Germany formally accepting its western borders, and with Britain and Italy guaranteeing the agreements. Locarno was widely celebrated as the foundation of a new European order based on consent rather than imposition. Germany joined the League in September 1926. The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 27 August 1928, signed in Paris by sixty-three states including all the major powers, formally renounced war as an instrument of national policy. The pact contained no enforcement provisions but was significant as a moral declaration and as the legal basis for later assertions, including the Stimson Doctrine of non-recognition.

The collective security architecture that Locarno and Kellogg-Briand built rested on assumptions that the Depression would soon undermine. The first assumption was that the great powers shared a long-term interest in stability over revision. The Depression revealed that this was true only of Britain and France among the major European powers. The second assumption was that economic interdependence would constrain great-power conflict. The collapse of world trade after 1929 destroyed this constraint. The third assumption was that domestic politics in the great powers would remain broadly consistent with international cooperation. The Nazi seizure of power in January 1933 destroyed this assumption.

19.3 The World Disarmament Conference

The World Disarmament Conference, which opened in Geneva in February 1932, was the largest single attempt to strengthen the post-war order through general disarmament. The conference was based on the principle, asserted in Article 8 of the League Covenant, that the maintenance of peace required the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety. Sixty states attended. The conference ran for over two years.

The negotiations failed because the major powers could not agree on the principles of disarmament. France wanted security guarantees before disarmament, namely a commitment by Britain and the United States to come to French aid if Germany rearmed. Britain refused such guarantees. Germany demanded equality of treatment, namely either the right to rearm to French levels or the obligation of France to disarm to German levels. Hitler, who had become Chancellor in January 1933, used the deadlock as the occasion for German withdrawal in October 1933. Germany simultaneously left the League. The Disarmament Conference continued formally until 1937 but was dead in practice from late 1933.

19.4 Italian dissatisfaction with the Versailles settlement

Italy had entered the First World War on the Allied side in 1915 in exchange for promises of territorial gain in the Treaty of London. The Versailles settlement delivered some of these gains, including South Tyrol and the Trentino, but withheld others, particularly Fiume and the Dalmatian coast, which were assigned to the new Yugoslav state instead. The Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio coined the phrase mutilated victory, vittoria mutilata, that captured the nationalist sense of grievance. D'Annunzio's seizure of Fiume in September 1919 with a force of volunteers, holding the city for fifteen months in defiance of the Italian government and the peace settlement, demonstrated the political potency of revisionist sentiment in Italian politics.

Mussolini's foreign policy from 1922 onwards was shaped by the rhetoric of mutilated victory and by ambitions to revise the Versailles settlement in Italy's favour. Italian foreign policy in the 1920s was nonetheless relatively cautious, accepting Locarno and the international system. The shift toward open revisionism began with the Ethiopia campaign of 1935 to 1936 and accelerated through the Spanish Civil War from 1936 and the Rome-Berlin Axis of November 1936. Italian dissatisfaction with Versailles, which had been latent since 1919, became active policy in the mid-1930s.

Chapter summary

The post-Versailles order rested on the Treaty of Versailles, the League Covenant, the Locarno Treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The order's structural weaknesses included the absence of the United States from the League, the exclusion of the Soviet Union, the contested legitimacy of Versailles in Germany, and Italian dissatisfaction with the limited gains from the war. The Depression undermined the assumptions of economic interdependence on which the order rested. The World Disarmament Conference of 1932 to 1934 failed to produce general disarmament and provided the diplomatic occasion for Germany's withdrawal in October 1933. The framework that Italian and German expansion would test was therefore already eroding before either expansionist programme began in earnest.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Treaty of Versailles	The 28 June 1919 peace settlement with Germany
Article 231	The war guilt clause assigning responsibility to Germany

Term	Meaning
League of Nations	The international organisation established by the Versailles Covenant
Locarno Treaties	The 1925 agreements normalising Germany's western frontier
Kellogg-Briand Pact	The 1928 renunciation of war as an instrument of policy
World Disarmament Conference	The 1932 to 1934 Geneva negotiations on general disarmament
Mutilated victory	The Italian nationalist phrase describing the limited gains from Versailles
Vittoria mutilata	The Italian original of the same phrase, often referenced in sources

Questions

1. To what extent did the structural design of the League of Nations create the conditions for its later failures?
2. Examine the significance of the Locarno Treaties for the post-Versailles order.
3. Evaluate the reasons for the failure of the World Disarmament Conference.

Chapter 20: The impact of fascism on Italian foreign policy

Summary of events

Italian foreign policy under Mussolini between 1922 and 1933 was shaped by three principal influences. The first was fascist ideology, with its rhetoric of romanità, the revival of Roman imperial greatness, and mare nostrum, the assertion of an Italian Mediterranean. The second was domestic political pressure for tangible foreign policy successes that could legitimise the regime. The third was the practical constraint of Italian economic and military weakness relative to the great powers, which limited Mussolini's adventures to opportunities where the great powers were unlikely to intervene. The Corfu Incident of 1923 illustrated the pattern early. The Lateran Pacts of 1929 with the Vatican consolidated domestic legitimacy. The Stresa Front of April 1935, in which Italy aligned with Britain and France against German rearmament, represented the high point of Italian integration into the Western system. The Ethiopia campaign of 1935 to 1936 destroyed the Stresa Front and pushed Italy decisively toward Germany. By 1933 Italian foreign policy was poised between integration and revisionism, with the choice depending on the international circumstances of the next year.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were the ideological foundations of fascist foreign policy?
2. How did Italian foreign policy operate in practice between 1922 and 1933?
3. What was the Stresa Front and why did it matter?
4. How did the Lateran Pacts strengthen the regime's foreign policy capacity?

Timeline of Chapter 20

30 October 1922	Mussolini appointed Prime Minister, formally takes office on 31 October
August to September 1923	Corfu Incident
27 January 1924	Treaty of Rome with Yugoslavia. Italy gains Fiume
1925 to 1926	Italy signs Locarno Treaties as guarantor
11 February 1929	Lateran Pacts with the Holy See
1932	Italian-Soviet Treaty of friendship and non-aggression
11 to 14 April 1935	Stresa Conference
October 1935	Italian invasion of Ethiopia begins

20.1 The ideological foundations

Fascist foreign policy ideology drew on several intellectual traditions. Italian nationalism since the Risorgimento had cultivated the idea of Italy's mission as heir to the Roman Empire and as the leader of the Mediterranean. The poet and adventurer Gabriele D'Annunzio had given this nationalism a romantic and aggressive cast through his works and through his Fiume adventure of 1919 to 1920. Mussolini absorbed D'Annunzio's rhetoric and added his own emphasis on action, struggle and the heroic remaking of the nation through war.

The doctrine of romanità, the spirit of Rome, infused fascist symbolism. The fasces themselves were Roman symbols, the bundle of rods carried before magistrates. Mussolini's regime built archaeological excavations and architectural projects that emphasised continuity with Roman imperial Rome. The doctrine of mare nostrum, our sea, asserted Italian maritime primacy in the Mediterranean and underlay claims on Tunisia, Corsica, Malta and parts of the Dalmatian coast. The doctrine of spazio vitale, vital space, applied the German concept of Lebensraum to an Italian context, justifying expansion into North Africa and the Balkans as necessary for Italian demographic growth.

These ideological elements coexisted with the practical recognition that Italy was the weakest of the great powers. Italian industrial output was approximately one-fifth of British output and approximately one-tenth of American output. The Italian army was numerically large but technologically backward, lacking modern artillery and armour. The Italian navy was a credible Mediterranean force but no match for the British Mediterranean Fleet. Mussolini's foreign policy therefore had to be opportunistic rather than systematic, exploiting moments when the great powers were preoccupied with other concerns.

20.2 Italian foreign policy in practice, 1922 to 1933

The Corfu Incident of 1923 was the first test. After the assassination of an Italian general on the Greek-Albanian border, Mussolini ordered the Italian fleet to bombard and occupy the Greek island of Corfu, demanding compensation. The League of Nations and the major powers pressured Italy to withdraw, and a compromise involving an indemnity to Italy was negotiated through the Conference of Ambassadors. Mussolini withdrew but claimed the outcome as a victory. The episode demonstrated his willingness to use force opportunistically and the willingness of the international system to accommodate him as long as the disruption was modest.

The Treaty of Rome of January 1924 with Yugoslavia gave Italy the city of Fiume, satisfying one of the central grievances of mutilated victory. Italy signed the Locarno Treaties in 1925 as a guarantor power, accepting and underwriting the German western frontier. Italian foreign policy in the 1920s was therefore broadly consistent with the international system, with selective revisionist gestures aimed primarily at domestic audiences.

The Lateran Pacts of 11 February 1929 with the Vatican resolved the Roman Question that had soured Italian-papal relations since 1870 and gave the regime the diplomatic recognition of the Holy See. The pacts had a foreign policy dimension as well as a domestic one. The Vatican had global Catholic constituencies, particularly in France, the Americas and parts of Eastern Europe, whose attitudes toward Italy mattered for diplomatic positioning. The pacts also gave the regime a moral legitimacy that domestic critics found difficult to challenge.

Italian-Soviet relations developed cautiously. The 1932 Treaty of friendship and non-aggression formalised the relationship between Mussolini's anti-communist regime and Stalin's Soviet Union, and reflected the pragmatism of both leaders. Mussolini was prepared to do business with any state whose interests aligned, and the Soviet Union was prepared to do business with any anti-Western state. The treaty would later be eclipsed by Italy's alignment with Nazi Germany, but its existence in the early 1930s indicated the flexibility of fascist diplomatic positioning.

20.3 The Stresa Front

The Stresa Front of 14 to 17 April 1935 was the high point of Italian integration into the Western great-power system. Mussolini, the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and the French Prime Minister Pierre-Étienne Flandin met at Stresa on Lake Maggiore to coordinate the response to Hitler's announcement on 16 March 1935 that Germany would reintroduce conscription and rebuild its army in violation of Versailles. The three powers issued a joint declaration condemning the German action and committing to oppose any unilateral repudiation of treaties.

The Stresa Front lasted six months. Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in October 1935 broke it, since Britain and France could not align with an Italian invasion of a fellow League member. The collapse of Stresa was the moment at which Italy's strategic alignment shifted from West to centre, and it set up the further drift toward alignment with Germany that the Spanish Civil War and the Rome-Berlin Axis would consolidate. Chapter 22 examines the Ethiopia campaign in detail.

Chapter summary

Italian fascist foreign policy combined an aggressive ideological rhetoric of romanità and mare nostrum with the practical constraints of Italian economic and military weakness. Mussolini operated opportunistically, exploiting moments of great-power distraction such as the Corfu Incident of 1923 and seeking domestic legitimacy through diplomatic gestures such as the Treaty of Rome with Yugoslavia in 1924 and the Lateran Pacts of 1929. The Stresa Front of April 1935 represented the high point of Italian integration into the Western system and was destroyed by the Ethiopian campaign that began in October 1935. Italian foreign policy by 1933 was poised between integration and revisionism, with the next two years deciding the question.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Romanità	The fascist doctrine of continuity with Roman imperial greatness
Mare nostrum	The fascist claim of Italian primacy in the Mediterranean
Spazio vitale	The Italian counterpart of Lebensraum
Corfu Incident	The 1923 Italian bombardment and occupation of the Greek island
Treaty of Rome 1924	The Italian-Yugoslav settlement giving Fiume to Italy
Lateran Pacts	The 1929 agreements with the Holy See
Stresa Front	The April 1935 Italian-British-French alignment against German rearmament

Questions

1. Examine the ideological foundations of fascist foreign policy.
2. Evaluate the significance of the Corfu Incident as an indicator of fascist methods.
3. To what extent did the Stresa Front represent a genuine integration of Italy into the Western system?

Chapter 21: The impact of Nazism on German foreign policy

Summary of events

Nazi foreign policy was shaped from the outset by the ideological commitments Hitler had set out in Mein Kampf during his Landsberg imprisonment in 1924. The doctrine of Lebensraum, living space, called for German expansion into Eastern Europe at the expense of the Slavic peoples, with the Soviet Union as the eventual target. The doctrine of racial hierarchy positioned Germans as the master race entitled to dominate inferior peoples. The doctrine of the destruction of Versailles called for the systematic dismantling of the post-1919 settlement. These ideological commitments coexisted with tactical flexibility about timing and methods. Between 1933 and 1936 Hitler's foreign policy was relatively cautious, emphasising rhetorical reassurance and selective diplomatic moves designed to test rather than confront. From 1936 onwards the pace of expansion accelerated with the Rhineland remilitarisation, the Anschluss, the Sudeten Crisis, the destruction of Czechoslovakia and the invasion of Poland. The combination of ideological commitment and tactical opportunism is the central feature of Nazi foreign policy.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What ideological commitments did Hitler bring to foreign policy?
2. How did Nazi foreign policy operate tactically between 1933 and 1935?
3. What did the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935 represent?
4. How did Hitler's relationship with Mussolini evolve?

Timeline of Chapter 21

30 January 1933	Hitler appointed Chancellor
October 1933	German withdrawal from League and Disarmament Conference
26 January 1934	German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact
25 July 1934	Failed Nazi coup in Austria. Dollfuss assassinated
13 January 1935	Saar plebiscite returns territory to Germany
16 March 1935	Conscription reintroduced. Wehrmacht expansion announced
18 June 1935	Anglo-German Naval Agreement
7 March 1936	Remilitarisation of the Rhineland

21.1 The ideological commitments

Hitler's foreign policy ideology had three core commitments. The first was Lebensraum, the doctrine that Germany required additional territory to support its population and that the territory should be acquired in Eastern Europe through conquest. Mein Kampf identified the Soviet Union as the ultimate target. The doctrine combined demographic argument, the claim that Germany needed more territory for its growing population, with racial argument, the claim that Slavic peoples were inferior and entitled to less territory than they currently held.

The second commitment was the destruction of the Versailles settlement. Every German government since 1919 had sought to revise Versailles, but Hitler's commitment was distinctive in its extent and in its willingness to use force. The reintroduction of conscription, the rebuilding of the army, the remilitarisation of the Rhineland, the absorption of Austria, the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia and the invasion of Poland all represented stages in this systematic destruction.

The third commitment was the racial hierarchy that justified expansion. The destruction of Jewish, Slavic, Roma and other populations was presented in Nazi ideology as the natural consequence of the German master race's claim to its rightful place. The link between foreign policy expansion and racial policy is essential for understanding why the German occupation of Poland and the Soviet Union from 1939 onwards produced atrocities on a scale unparalleled in modern European history. Foreign policy and racial policy were not separate domains but elements of a single project.

21.2 Tactical caution, 1933 to 1935

Hitler's foreign policy in the first three years was tactically cautious despite the ideological commitments. Germany withdrew from the World Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations in October 1933, but the withdrawal was diplomatic rather than confrontational. The German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact of January 1934 reassured Eastern European states that Germany did not have immediate aggressive intentions. The Saar plebiscite of January 1935, in which the territory voted to return to Germany after fifteen years of League administration, was conducted peacefully and within the framework of the Versailles arrangements.

The reintroduction of conscription on 16 March 1935 was the first overtly revisionist move. Hitler announced that Germany would build an army of thirty-six divisions and would create an air force, the Luftwaffe, that he claimed already existed. The announcement violated Versailles. The Stresa Front of April 1935 was the immediate international response. But the response stopped at declaration without sanctions, and Hitler concluded that the Western powers would not enforce Versailles by force. The conclusion shaped his subsequent calculations about the Rhineland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 18 June 1935 was particularly significant. Britain agreed to a German naval rebuilding programme limited to thirty-five per cent of British tonnage, in apparent contradiction to the Versailles naval restrictions. The agreement was negotiated bilaterally without consultation with France or Italy, breaking the Stresa Front from the British side and signalling that Britain was prepared to revise Versailles unilaterally. The agreement encouraged Hitler in two ways. It indicated that Britain would treat with Germany as a normal great power rather than as a treaty violator. It suggested that Britain might be persuaded to acquiesce in further revisions to the post-war order.

21.3 The relationship with Mussolini

The Italian-German relationship in the early years of Hitler's rule was distant and at times hostile. Mussolini regarded himself as the senior fascist statesman and Hitler as a junior imitator. The two men met for the first time in Venice in June 1934, with the meeting going badly because of mutual misunderstanding and Hitler's poor Italian. The failed Nazi coup in Austria in July 1934, in which Engelbert Dollfuss was assassinated, was a crisis for Italian-German relations because Mussolini regarded Austria as within the Italian sphere of influence and reacted to the coup attempt by mobilising Italian forces on the Brenner Pass. Hitler disavowed the coup, but the episode signalled the difficulty of integrating German expansionist ambitions with Italian regional priorities.

The relationship transformed during the Ethiopian campaign of 1935 to 1936. German support for Italy in the face of British and French hostility, combined with the collapse of the Stresa Front, drove Mussolini toward Hitler. By the time of the Rome-Berlin Axis announcement of 1 November 1936 the relationship was a working alliance, and the years that followed would see it consolidated through the Spanish Civil War, the Anti-Comintern Pact, the Pact of Steel and the Tripartite Pact.

Chapter summary

Nazi foreign policy combined deep ideological commitment to Lebensraum, the destruction of Versailles and racial hierarchy with tactical flexibility about timing and methods. Between 1933 and 1935 the regime moved cautiously, securing the Saar return, signing the German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact, and announcing rearmament without major immediate confrontation. The Stresa Front of April 1935 was a warning that the major Western powers had registered. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 1935 broke the Stresa Front from the British side. The Italian-German relationship was initially tense over Austria but transformed through the Ethiopia campaign of 1935 to 1936, opening the path toward the working alliance that would shape the next four years.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Mein Kampf	Hitler's 1924 to 1925 statement of ideological foundations
Lebensraum	The doctrine of German expansion into Eastern Europe
Master race	The Nazi racial doctrine positioning Germans above other peoples
German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact	The January 1934 reassurance to Poland
Saar plebiscite	The January 1935 vote returning the Saar to Germany
Conscription announcement	The 16 March 1935 announcement of German rearmament
Anglo-German Naval Agreement	The June 1935 bilateral agreement on German naval rebuilding
Dollfuss	The Austrian Chancellor assassinated in the failed July 1934 coup

Questions

1. To what extent was Nazi foreign policy ideological rather than opportunistic?

2. Examine the significance of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement for the Stresa Front.
3. Evaluate the development of the Italian-German relationship between 1933 and 1936.

Chapter 22: Italian expansion. Abyssinia, 1935 to 1936

Summary of events

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia, then known internationally as Abyssinia, between October 1935 and May 1936 was the first major test of the post-Versailles collective security system and the first that the system clearly failed. Mussolini had ambitions on Ethiopia from the early 1930s, motivated by avenging the Italian defeat at Adowa in 1896, by economic interest in colonial expansion, by the demographic argument for settler outlets, and by the political utility of a successful imperial war. The Walwal Incident of December 1934 provided a pretext. Italian forces under Marshal Emilio De Bono invaded on 3 October 1935 from Eritrea. The League of Nations declared Italy an aggressor on 7 October and imposed limited sanctions on 18 November. Britain and France pursued a parallel diplomatic effort to reach a compromise, culminating in the Hoare-Laval Pact of December 1935, which would have ceded approximately two-thirds of Ethiopia to Italy. The pact was leaked to the press, denounced by public opinion in both Britain and France, and abandoned. The Italians used poison gas, particularly mustard gas dropped from aircraft, in violation of the Geneva Protocol. Addis Ababa fell on 5 May 1936. Mussolini announced from the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia on 9 May that the Italian empire had been reborn. The League sanctions were lifted on 4 July 1936 without having achieved their objective. The Stresa Front had been destroyed, Italy had been driven toward Germany, and the League of Nations had been demonstrated to be incapable of constraining a determined major power.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were Mussolini's motivations for the Ethiopian campaign?
2. What were the conduct and methods of the Italian campaign?
3. How did the League of Nations respond and why was the response ineffective?
4. What was the Hoare-Laval Pact and why did it collapse?
5. What were the consequences of the campaign for European diplomacy?

Timeline of Chapter 22

1 March 1896	Battle of Adowa. Ethiopian victory over Italy
5 December 1934	Walwal Incident
January 1935	Franco-Italian agreement gives France free hand on the Rhine
11 to 14 April 1935	Stresa Conference
3 October 1935	Italian invasion begins
7 October 1935	League declares Italy an aggressor
18 November 1935	League sanctions imposed
7 to 9 December 1935	Hoare-Laval Pact negotiated and leaked
18 December 1935	Hoare resigns

31 March 1936	Battle of Mai Ceu
5 May 1936	Addis Ababa falls
9 May 1936	Mussolini announces the Italian empire
4 July 1936	League sanctions lifted

22.1 The motivations for the campaign

Mussolini's motivations for the Ethiopian campaign were overlapping rather than singular. The avenging of Adowa was a matter of nationalist symbolism. In March 1896 an Italian colonial army of approximately fifteen thousand had been defeated by an Ethiopian force of approximately one hundred thousand under Emperor Menelik II at the Battle of Adowa, with approximately seven thousand Italian dead. The defeat had ended Italian aspirations in Ethiopia for forty years and had been the most humiliating colonial defeat suffered by a European power. Ethiopia was the only African state that had defeated a European invader and retained genuine independence. Avenging Adowa was part of the symbolic vocabulary of fascist nationalism.

The economic argument for empire was pursued in fascist propaganda but was weaker in practice. Italian colonial economists had argued for decades that Italy needed colonies to absorb its excess agricultural population, since emigration to the Americas had largely ended after the 1924 American immigration restrictions. In practice Ethiopian highland conditions were poorly suited to Italian agricultural settlement, and the colony absorbed substantial Italian state subsidies without producing significant economic returns. Italian East Africa, the federation that included Eritrea, Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia from 1936, never paid for itself.

The strategic argument was about the Red Sea corridor. Italian East Africa, linking Eritrea on the Red Sea with Italian Somaliland on the Indian Ocean, would establish Italy as a power on the maritime route between Britain and India. Combined with the Italian position in Libya, the East African empire would give Italy a significant presence in the world's most important strategic waterway and a credible threat to British communications.

The political argument for the campaign was the most immediate. Mussolini's regime had achieved domestic consolidation but had not produced a foreign policy success on the scale that the propaganda about romanità and mare nostrum demanded. A successful imperial war would provide the visible vindication of fascist ambitions. The political calculation was that Britain and France, distracted by German rearmament and economically weak from the Depression, would not seriously oppose Italian expansion in a region of marginal Western interest.

22.2 The Walwal Incident and the diplomatic preparation

The Walwal Incident of 5 December 1934 occurred at a small disputed oasis on the border between Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia. Italian and Ethiopian forces clashed, with approximately two hundred Ethiopians and approximately fifty Italians killed. The dispute over responsibility was referred to arbitration. Mussolini used the incident as the occasion for a sustained build-up of Italian forces in Eritrea and Somaliland that left no doubt about his intentions.

The diplomatic preparation through 1935 was unusually systematic. The Franco-Italian agreement of January 1935, negotiated by Foreign Minister Pierre Laval, gave France a free hand against German rearmament in exchange for accepting Italian ambitions in Africa. Mussolini interpreted this as a French green light. The Stresa

Front of April 1935 confirmed Italian alignment with Britain and France against German rearmament. Mussolini interpreted the Western preoccupation with Germany as an opportunity to act in Africa with limited consequences. The British position was complicated. Foreign Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare and the Foreign Office wanted to constrain Italian action without provoking confrontation, but the British public, mobilised by the League of Nations Union and influenced by ecclesiastical opinion, demanded firm action through the League. The Peace Ballot of June 1935, organised by the League of Nations Union, returned approximately eleven million British responses, of which seventy per cent supported military action against an aggressor.

22.3 The campaign and its conduct

The invasion began on 3 October 1935 with three Italian columns moving south from Eritrea. Italian forces totalled approximately four hundred thousand at peak strength, supported by aircraft, tanks and modern artillery. The Ethiopian force was approximately five hundred thousand but armed primarily with rifles, with limited modern weapons and almost no aviation. Despite the numerical balance, the Italian advance was slow during the first phase. The terrain was difficult, the rains in autumn 1935 were heavy, and the Ethiopian forces fought effectively in mountainous defensive positions. By December 1935 Italian forces had advanced only approximately one hundred kilometres into Ethiopian territory.

Mussolini replaced De Bono with the more aggressive Marshal Pietro Badoglio in November 1935 and authorised the use of poison gas. Mustard gas was dropped from aircraft on Ethiopian positions and on civilian populations beginning in December 1935. The use of chemical weapons violated the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which Italy had signed and ratified. The Italians also used standard aerial bombing of unprotected towns including Adowa, Aksum and Harar. Total Ethiopian deaths from the campaign and from later resistance through 1941 are estimated at approximately seven hundred and sixty thousand, including civilians killed by gas, bombing and reprisals.

The Battle of Mai Ceu on 31 March 1936 was the decisive engagement. The Ethiopian Imperial Guard under Emperor Haile Selassie attacked Italian fortified positions and was destroyed by air-supported counter-attacks. The Emperor escaped to British Sudan and from there to England. Italian forces took Addis Ababa on 5 May 1936. Mussolini's announcement from the Palazzo Venezia balcony on 9 May proclaimed the rebirth of the Italian empire and his own elevation as the founder of empire alongside the King.

22.4 The Hoare-Laval Pact

The Hoare-Laval Pact of December 1935 was the parallel diplomatic effort to negotiate a compromise. Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary, and Pierre Laval, the French Prime Minister, met in Paris and developed a plan that would have ceded approximately two-thirds of Ethiopia to Italy, including the lowland Ogaden, the Tigray plateau and a fertile southern strip, while leaving Emperor Haile Selassie nominal sovereignty over the remaining highland core. The plan was leaked to the French and British press on 9 December 1935, almost certainly by elements within the French Foreign Ministry.

The public response was outrage. British and French public opinion regarded the plan as a sellout of a fellow League member to a fascist aggressor. The Conservative government in London faced a parliamentary revolt, and Hoare resigned on 18 December. Anthony Eden replaced him as Foreign Secretary. Laval lost office in January 1936. The pact was repudiated. The episode demonstrated that the Western governments wanted to find a way to accommodate Mussolini but that domestic public opinion would not let them. League sanctions continued, but at a level low enough to fail to constrain Italian operations.

22.5 The League sanctions and their failure

The League sanctions imposed on 18 November 1935 covered arms exports, financial credits, and certain raw material exports including rubber and tin. The sanctions notably did not cover oil, coal, iron, steel, or the closure of the Suez Canal to Italian shipping. Britain controlled the Suez Canal and could have closed it to Italian troopships supplying the campaign. The closure would have stopped the campaign within months. Britain declined to close the canal because the cabinet feared that closure would provoke Italian war against Britain in the Mediterranean.

The reasoning behind the limited sanctions reflected the contradiction in Western policy. Britain and France wanted to support the League and collective security, but they also wanted to retain Italy as a partner against Germany. Sanctions severe enough to defeat the campaign would have driven Italy permanently toward Germany. Sanctions ineffective enough to allow the campaign to succeed would discredit collective security. The Western governments chose the second option, calculating that the loss of credibility would be more recoverable than the loss of Italian alignment. The calculation was wrong on both counts. Sanctions were lifted on 4 July 1936, two months after Addis Ababa fell. Italy was permanently driven toward Germany. The League's credibility was destroyed.

22.6 The consequences

The Ethiopian campaign produced four interconnected consequences. The Stresa Front had been destroyed, removing the principal counterweight to German revisionism in central Europe. Italy had been pushed toward Germany, opening the path to the Rome-Berlin Axis of November 1936 and the subsequent alliance system. The League of Nations had been exposed as incapable of enforcing collective security against a major power, encouraging German, Italian and Japanese further aggression. Hitler had drawn the conclusion that decisive action against the Versailles settlement could be undertaken with limited international consequence, and the remilitarisation of the Rhineland on 7 March 1936 followed within months.

For Ethiopia itself, the consequences were severe. Italian occupation lasted until April 1941, when British forces from Sudan and Kenya restored Haile Selassie. Estimates of total Ethiopian deaths during the occupation, including resistance casualties and reprisals, range from three hundred and fifty thousand to seven hundred and sixty thousand. The Italian colonial administration was characterised by racial segregation laws on the Italian fascist model and by the systematic destruction of educated Ethiopian leadership. The 1937 Yekatit massacre in Addis Ababa, in which Italian forces killed approximately twenty thousand civilians in three days following an attempted assassination of Marshal Graziani, was the worst single atrocity of the occupation.

Chapter summary

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia between October 1935 and May 1936 was driven by overlapping motivations of nationalist symbolism, economic argument, strategic interest in the Red Sea corridor and political calculation. The campaign used poison gas in violation of the Geneva Protocol and produced civilian casualties on a large scale. The League of Nations imposed limited sanctions that failed to constrain the campaign. The Hoare-Laval Pact of December 1935 attempted a diplomatic compromise but was leaked and abandoned. The campaign destroyed the Stresa Front, drove Italy toward Germany, exposed the League's incapacity, and encouraged further revisionist action by all three Axis powers. For Ethiopia the campaign produced an occupation of nearly five years and casualties that approached the demographic capacity of the country.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Adowa	The 1896 Ethiopian victory that fascist propaganda sought to avenge
Walwal Incident	The December 1934 border clash that provided the pretext for invasion
De Bono	The first Italian commander, replaced for slow progress
Badoglio	The second Italian commander who used poison gas
Hoare-Laval Pact	The December 1935 diplomatic compromise that was leaked and abandoned
Haile Selassie	The Ethiopian Emperor who escaped to England
Mai Ceu	The decisive battle of 31 March 1936
Yekatit massacre	The February 1937 Italian killing of approximately twenty thousand civilians in Addis Ababa

Questions

1. Examine Mussolini's motivations for the invasion of Ethiopia.
2. To what extent did the Hoare-Laval Pact reflect the structural dilemma of Western policy toward Italy?
3. Evaluate the consequences of the Ethiopian campaign for European diplomacy.

Source-based exercise

> Source A. Speech by Haile Selassie to the League of Nations Assembly, 30 June 1936 (adapted): "It is us today. It will be you tomorrow. The League refused to take any of the measures which alone would have stopped the Italian aggression. The League declined to apply oil sanctions, declined to close the Suez Canal, declined to provide collective security to a member who had been faithfully discharging her obligations. I ask the League, what answer am I to take back to my people?"
> Source B. Editorial in The Times, London, 11 December 1935, on the Hoare-Laval Pact (paraphrased, verify): "The plan emerged from the wisdom of two responsible statesmen who understood the realities of the international situation. It would have spared Ethiopia further suffering, retained Italy in the framework of the European powers and avoided a war that would have benefited only Germany. The public outcry against the plan, however well-intentioned, threatens to substitute moral satisfaction for diplomatic effectiveness."

(a) According to Source A, what does Haile Selassie identify as the League's failures? [3 marks] (b) Compare and contrast the views in Sources A and B about the Western response to the Ethiopian campaign. [6 marks] (c) Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the Western response to the Ethiopian campaign destroyed the credibility of the League's system of collective security. [9 marks]

Chapter 23: The Spanish Civil War as a fascist proxy

Summary of events

The Spanish Civil War from July 1936 to April 1939 was the most consequential proxy conflict of the late 1930s. The Spanish Nationalist insurgents under General Francisco Franco received substantial military assistance from Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, while the Spanish Republican government received support from the Soviet Union and from international volunteers organised through the Comintern. Britain and France pursued a policy of non-intervention through the London Non-Intervention Committee, which failed to constrain Italian and German aid to the Nationalists. The Italian Corpo Truppe Volontarie, the CTV, deployed approximately seventy-five thousand troops to Spain. The German Condor Legion deployed approximately nineteen thousand personnel including the aircraft that bombed Guernica on 26 April 1937. The war was a strategic and ideological success for the Axis. It tested German tactics and equipment that would be used in 1939 to 1941. It cemented the working relationship between Mussolini and Hitler. It demonstrated the limits of British and French willingness to intervene in central European or Mediterranean conflicts. It produced a fascist-aligned regime in Spain that would last until 1975. For Paper 1 purposes, the Spanish Civil War is essential as the testing ground of Axis cooperation and as the moment at which Italy and Germany ceased to be parallel revisionists and became active allies.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did Mussolini and Hitler intervene in the Spanish Civil War?
2. What did Italian and German aid contribute to the Nationalist victory?
3. What was the Non-Intervention Committee and why did it fail?
4. How did the war shape the Italian-German relationship?

Timeline of Chapter 23

17 to 18 July 1936	Spanish military uprising begins
Late July 1936	German and Italian aircraft transport Franco's army from Morocco
August 1936	Non-Intervention Committee established
October 1936	Soviet aid to Republic begins
1 November 1936	Mussolini's speech announcing Rome-Berlin Axis
26 April 1937	Bombing of Guernica by Condor Legion
March 1938	Italian aerial bombing of Barcelona
23 December 1938	Nationalist offensive in Catalonia
26 January 1939	Barcelona falls
28 March 1939	Madrid falls
1 April 1939	Franco declares war over

23.1 The motivations for fascist intervention

Mussolini's motivations for intervention in Spain were the most extensive among the foreign participants. A friendly Spanish government would secure the Italian western Mediterranean position, threatening French communications with North Africa through the Balearics. The defeat of a Republican government with anarchist and communist participation would consolidate fascist ideology against its principal European rivals. Material support for Franco would demonstrate Italian military reach and would provide combat experience for Italian forces. The political benefit of a successful intervention would consolidate Mussolini's prestige after the Ethiopian victory.

Hitler's motivations were narrower but equally clear. Spain provided combat testing for the Luftwaffe and for new German equipment. Spanish iron ore was strategically valuable. A fascist-aligned regime in Spain would threaten France from the south, potentially requiring France to deploy forces against the Spanish frontier in any future European war. Hitler authorised limited but significant German aid in the autumn of 1936, including the Condor Legion of approximately one hundred aircraft and supporting personnel.

The combined Italian and German aid was decisive in the early months of the conflict. The transport of Franco's Army of Africa from Morocco to mainland Spain in July and August 1936, conducted by Italian Savoia-Marchetti and German Junkers transport aircraft, was the operation that converted a failed coup into a viable war. Without Italian and German aircraft, Franco's troops would have been trapped in Morocco and the Republican forces would probably have crushed the uprising in mainland Spain.

23.2 The scale of Italian and German aid

Italian aid to the Nationalists was the largest external intervention in the war. The Corpo Truppe Volontarie, established in December 1936, eventually deployed approximately seventy-five thousand Italian troops to Spain on rotation, with peak strength of approximately fifty thousand at any one time. Italy supplied approximately seven hundred and fifty aircraft, two thousand artillery pieces, approximately six thousand machine guns and substantial naval support including the Italian submarine campaign that attacked Republican shipping in the Mediterranean. Italian financial cost was estimated at approximately fourteen billion lira, equivalent to one Italian fiscal year of prewar military spending.

German aid was smaller in volume but qualitatively significant. The Condor Legion, commanded successively by Hugo Sperrle and Wolfram von Richthofen, was a self-contained air force with fighter, bomber, transport and supporting elements. Approximately nineteen thousand German personnel served in Spain on rotation, with peak strength of approximately five thousand at any one time. The Condor Legion's bombing of Guernica on 26 April 1937 became the most famous single episode of the war and the subject of Picasso's painting completed for the Paris World's Fair later that year. Approximately one hundred and fifty German tanks and the equivalent number of aircraft were supplied directly. The Legion provided the Luftwaffe with combat experience that would inform tactical doctrine in 1939 to 1941.

The Republican side received substantial Soviet aid, with approximately one billion dollars of equivalent value supplied through 1937 and into 1938, including approximately one thousand tanks, fifteen hundred aircraft and approximately two thousand Soviet advisers including significant numbers of pilots flying Republican aircraft. The International Brigades, organised by the Comintern, recruited approximately thirty-five thousand foreign volunteers. The combined aid was substantial but was constrained by Soviet logistical difficulties, by the distance from the Soviet Union and by the necessity of supplying through the French border or through Mediterranean shipping that German and Italian submarines attacked.

23.3 The Non-Intervention Committee

The London Non-Intervention Committee was established in August 1936 on Anglo-French initiative. The committee, chaired by Lord Plymouth, included representatives of the major European powers including Italy, Germany and the Soviet Union. The committee's stated purpose was to prevent foreign intervention in the Spanish conflict and to allow the Spanish parties to resolve the conflict among themselves. In practice the committee functioned as a fig leaf for Italian and German intervention while constraining French and Soviet aid to the Republic.

The structural problem was that Italy and Germany simply lied about their interventions, denying that Italian troops or German aircraft were participating in the war. The committee had no investigative or enforcement capacity. The committee did, however, have moral authority over Britain and France, which observed its strictures while Italy and Germany disregarded them. The Republican government, which received significant Soviet aid, was technically also in violation of the committee's principles, but the bulk of Republican supply came from purchases on the international arms market rather than from direct Soviet government transfer.

The non-intervention policy was the most consequential expression of British and French appeasement before Munich. The policy reflected the calculation that intervention would risk turning the Spanish conflict into a general European war, that the Republican government's communist alignment was at least as undesirable as a Nationalist victory, and that Western military weakness counselled caution. The historical assessment is that non-intervention substantially benefited the Nationalists, since their German and Italian supporters disregarded the committee while the Republican supporters, primarily the Soviet Union, were constrained by distance and by the committee's effects on the international arms market. Most assessments, including those by historians critical of the British and French governments, conclude that the war's outcome would probably have been different if the Western powers had supplied the Republic at the level Italy and Germany supplied the Nationalists.

23.4 The Italian-German alliance consolidates

The Spanish Civil War was the period in which the Italian-German relationship transformed from parallel revisionism to active alliance. Mussolini's announcement of the Rome-Berlin Axis on 1 November 1936, in a speech in Milan, used the new term explicitly. The Anti-Comintern Pact of 25 November 1936 between Germany and Japan was joined by Italy on 6 November 1937. Mussolini's visit to Berlin in September 1937 produced extensive joint demonstrations and propaganda. Hitler's visit to Rome in May 1938 reciprocated. By the time of the Sudeten Crisis in September 1938, Hitler could rely on Italian support and Mussolini could expect German support in return.

The Spanish war also produced one specific institutional consequence that would matter later. Italian and German staffs cooperated extensively on operational matters, exchanged officers, and developed joint procedures for combined operations. The cooperation provided practical experience that the Pact of Steel of May 1939 would formalise.

Chapter summary

The Spanish Civil War was the testing ground of the Italian-German alliance and a strategic and ideological success for the Axis. Italian intervention with the CTV provided the largest external force in the war, while German intervention through the Condor Legion provided combat testing for Luftwaffe equipment and tactics. The Non-Intervention Committee functioned as a fig leaf for Axis intervention while constraining Western and Soviet aid to the Republic. The war cemented the working relationship between Mussolini and Hitler, demonstrated by the Rome-Berlin Axis announcement of November 1936, and produced the Franco regime in Spain that would survive until 1975.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Francisco Franco	The Spanish Nationalist leader who emerged as Caudillo
Corpo Truppe Volontarie	The Italian intervention force, the CTV
Condor Legion	The German air force expedition to Spain
Guernica	The Basque town bombed on 26 April 1937
Non-Intervention Committee	The London body that nominally prohibited foreign intervention
International Brigades	The Comintern-organised foreign volunteers fighting for the Republic
Rome-Berlin Axis	The November 1936 announcement of Italian-German alignment

Questions

1. Examine the contributions of Italian and German intervention to the Nationalist victory.
2. To what extent did the Non-Intervention Committee fail in its stated purpose?
3. Evaluate the significance of the Spanish Civil War for the development of the Axis alliance.

Chapter 24: The Rome-Berlin Axis, the Anti-Comintern Pact and Albania, 1936 to 1939

Summary of events

Between Mussolini's Axis announcement of November 1936 and the German destruction of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, the Italian-German relationship deepened into a working alliance, Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact and conducted the invasion of Albania, and the Axis began to function as a coordinated diplomatic combination. The Italian invasion of Albania in April 1939 was the immediate Italian counterpart to the German occupation of the rump Czechoslovakia in March, and it confirmed that Italy was a partner in revisionist expansion rather than merely a sympathiser. By the spring of 1939 the Axis was a working alliance, the British guarantee to Poland of 31 March followed within days of the Albanian operation, and the Pact of Steel of May 1939 formalised what had become evident.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What did Mussolini mean by the Rome-Berlin Axis?
2. How did the Anti-Comintern Pact develop and what did Italian membership signal?
3. What were the motivations and consequences of the Italian invasion of Albania?
4. How did the Anschluss alter the Italian-German relationship?

Timeline of Chapter 24

1 November 1936	Mussolini's Milan speech announcing Rome-Berlin Axis
25 November 1936	Anti-Comintern Pact signed by Germany and Japan
6 November 1937	Italy joins the Anti-Comintern Pact
11 December 1937	Italy withdraws from the League of Nations
12 March 1938	Anschluss between Germany and Austria
3 May 1938	Hitler visits Rome
7 April 1939	Italian invasion of Albania
21 April 1939	Albania annexed to Italian crown
22 May 1939	Pact of Steel signed

24.1 The Rome-Berlin Axis announcement

Mussolini's speech in Piazza del Duomo in Milan on 1 November 1936 introduced the term Asse Roma-Berlino, the Rome-Berlin Axis, into international politics. The speech was delivered following the working visit of Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law, to Berlin in October 1936. The visit had produced a confidential protocol coordinating Italian and German positions on Spain, Austria, the Mediterranean and the question of the post-Versailles settlement. The Milan speech publicly announced the new alignment without revealing the protocol's specifics, asserting that the relationship between Rome and Berlin formed a vertical line around which European states could orient themselves.

The Axis announcement was significant in two ways. It changed the diplomatic vocabulary, introducing the metaphor of an axis that would shape European political language for the next decade. It confirmed publicly that the Italian-German rivalry over Austria of 1934 had been replaced by collaboration. The Italian guarantee to Austrian independence, which had been the foundation of Italian alignment with Britain and France in 1934 to 1935, was now effectively withdrawn, although the formal Italian position on Austria would not change until the Anschluss of March 1938.

24.2 The Anti-Comintern Pact and Italian membership

The Anti-Comintern Pact was originally signed by Germany and Japan on 25 November 1936, two and a half weeks after the Milan speech. The pact was nominally directed against the Communist International, the Comintern, and against the Soviet Union as the patron of international communism. The pact's published text was a brief commitment to consult and to share intelligence on Comintern activities. A secret protocol committed both parties to refrain from conduct beneficial to the Soviet Union if either was attacked by the Soviet Union, and to consult on responses.

Italy joined the pact on 6 November 1937, completing the triangular alignment that would later become the Tripartite Pact. The Italian withdrawal from the League of Nations, announced on 11 December 1937, completed the formal Italian abandonment of the international system that had been the framework of Italian foreign policy under Mussolini's predecessors and during the early Mussolini years. The Italian regime now defined itself diplomatically by alignment with Germany and Japan and by opposition to the League and to Soviet communism.

24.3 The Anschluss and the Italian acquiescence

The German absorption of Austria on 12 March 1938 was the test of how the Axis would handle Italian-German interests in central Europe. In 1934 Mussolini had mobilised four divisions on the Brenner Pass after the Nazi coup attempt against Dollfuss, and Hitler had then disavowed the coup. By 1938 the situation was reversed. Hitler informed Mussolini through Prince Philipp of Hesse that the Anschluss would proceed and asked for Italian acquiescence. Mussolini provided it. Hitler's response, "I will never forget him for this", was conveyed through Hesse to Mussolini in a phone call recorded for posterity.

The Italian acquiescence in the Anschluss confirmed that the Axis had become a working alliance. Italy had abandoned its 1934 position that Austrian independence was an Italian interest. Italy had received nothing concrete in exchange beyond the verbal expression of Hitler's gratitude. The exchange demonstrated the asymmetry of the relationship, with Italy progressively conceding to German priorities while expecting German support for Italian initiatives that would not always be forthcoming on the same terms. The pattern would persist through the Sudeten Crisis, the Pact of Steel and the entry into the Second World War.

24.4 The invasion of Albania

The Italian invasion of Albania on 7 April 1939 was the Italian operational counterpart to the German occupation of the rump Czechoslovakia three weeks earlier. Mussolini had been considering Albanian annexation since the early 1930s. Albania had been an Italian client state since the 1920s, with Italian troops, Italian financial control and Italian advisers operating throughout the country. King Zog had ruled since 1928 with Italian support. The political shift toward open annexation reflected Mussolini's belief that the Axis required Italian operational successes parallel to German ones to maintain credibility.

The invasion took five days. Italian forces of approximately one hundred thousand encountered limited resistance from a small Albanian army. King Zog fled with his treasury. The Albanian Constituent Assembly voted to offer the Albanian crown to Victor Emmanuel III on 12 April. The annexation was formalised on 21 April. The international response was muted. The League of Nations, which Italy had left, did not respond. Britain and France, which had given guarantees to Greece and Romania, did not extend such guarantees to Albania.

The strategic significance of the Albanian operation was less than the political significance. Italy had effectively controlled Albania for years before the formal annexation. The operation was primarily symbolic, demonstrating that Italy was an active revisionist power on the German model and that Italian expansion would parallel German expansion. The British guarantee to Greece on 13 April 1939, extended in response to fears of further Italian operations in the Balkans, was the most consequential international consequence.

Chapter summary

Between November 1936 and April 1939 the Italian-German relationship deepened into a working alliance through the Rome-Berlin Axis announcement, the Italian membership of the Anti-Comintern Pact, the Italian acquiescence in the Anschluss, and the parallel revisionist operations in Czechoslovakia and Albania. The Axis became a coordinated diplomatic combination that would now confront Britain and France with simultaneous Italian and German pressure. The Pact of Steel of May 1939 would formalise the alliance.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Asse Roma-Berlino	The Italian phrase for the Rome-Berlin Axis
Galeazzo Ciano	Mussolini's son-in-law and Foreign Minister
Anti-Comintern Pact	The 1936 agreement against international communism, joined by Italy in 1937
Italian withdrawal from League	The December 1937 formal exit
Anschluss	The 12 March 1938 German absorption of Austria
King Zog	The Albanian king who fled the Italian invasion
Albanian annexation	The 7 April to 21 April 1939 Italian operation

Questions

1. Examine the significance of the Rome-Berlin Axis announcement of November 1936.
2. To what extent did the Italian acquiescence in the Anschluss demonstrate Italian subordination to German priorities?

3. Evaluate the motivations and consequences of the Italian invasion of Albania.

Chapter 25: German challenges to Versailles, 1933 to 1938

Summary of events

Between 1933 and 1938 Hitler systematically dismantled the Versailles settlement through a sequence of carefully timed moves. The withdrawal from the League and the Disarmament Conference in October 1933, the announcement of conscription in March 1935, the Anglo-German Naval Agreement in June 1935, the remilitarisation of the Rhineland in March 1936 and the Anschluss in March 1938 each tested international response and each succeeded without significant cost. The Hossbach Memorandum of 5 November 1937 documents Hitler's strategic conferencing on the next phase, in which Austria and Czechoslovakia were identified as immediate targets and the timing for general European war was discussed in terms of the late 1930s and early 1940s. The pattern of moves had three consistent features. Each was a violation of an existing treaty obligation. Each was presented as a defensive or restorative action rather than as aggression. Each succeeded without British or French military response. The pattern conditioned Hitler's expectations for the Sudeten crisis and the destruction of Czechoslovakia in 1938 to 1939, with consequences that would prove fatal in 1939.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What was the sequence of Hitler's challenges to Versailles between 1933 and 1938?
2. How did the international response evolve and why did it fail to deter further moves?
3. What does the Hossbach Memorandum reveal about Hitler's strategic thinking in late 1937?
4. What was the significance of the Anschluss as a foreign policy event?

Timeline of Chapter 25

14 October 1933	German withdrawal from Disarmament Conference and League
26 January 1934	German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact
13 January 1935	Saar plebiscite returns territory to Germany
16 March 1935	Conscription announced
18 June 1935	Anglo-German Naval Agreement
7 March 1936	Remilitarisation of Rhineland
August 1936	Four-Year Plan announced
5 November 1937	Hossbach Conference
4 February 1938	Hitler reorganises military command
12 March 1938	Anschluss with Austria

25.1 The remilitarisation of the Rhineland

The remilitarisation of the Rhineland on 7 March 1936 was the moment at which Hitler concluded that the Western powers would not enforce Versailles by force. Approximately twenty thousand German troops crossed into the demilitarised Rhineland in violation of the Versailles and Locarno Treaties. The forces were small enough that they could have been withdrawn rapidly if challenged, and Hitler later admitted to his interpreter that the forty-eight hours after the move had been the most nerve-wracking of his life. The French Cabinet under Albert Sarraut considered military response, but the French general staff under Maurice Gamelin advised that any response would require general mobilisation, which was politically and economically unfeasible during the run-up to the May 1936 elections. The British government opposed any French military action. The result was that no enforcement action followed.

The episode was decisive for several reasons. It established that France would not act militarily against German Versailles violations even when France had the legal right and military capacity to do so. It encouraged Hitler to believe that further violations would meet similar weakness. It coincided with the active phase of the Italian campaign in Ethiopia, demonstrating that the Western powers were too distracted by simultaneous crises to respond effectively to either. It confirmed that the post-Versailles order rested on Western willingness to enforce that no longer existed.

25.2 The Hossbach Memorandum

The Hossbach Memorandum is the unsigned record kept by Colonel Friedrich Hossbach, Hitler's military adjutant, of a conference held in the Reich Chancellery on 5 November 1937. The conference brought together Hitler with the Foreign Minister Konstantin von Neurath, the War Minister Werner von Blomberg, the Army Chief Werner von Fritsch, the Navy Chief Erich Raeder and the Air Force Chief Hermann Göring. Hossbach's record was written from memory five days later. Hitler's instructions on the document indicate that he regarded it as a substantial statement.

The memorandum's content addresses German strategic planning for the next phase. Hitler argued that Germany's space and resource problem had to be solved by force within the next six to eight years, with timing decided by international circumstances. Three contingencies were considered. If France and Britain remained in their current condition, the deadline would be 1943 to 1945. If France were involved in war with another power, action would come earlier. If France were itself in domestic crisis, action could come immediately. The targets identified were Austria and Czechoslovakia, both of which Hitler considered necessary preliminaries before any larger expansion eastward. The memorandum did not specify Poland or the Soviet Union as immediate targets but referenced eastward expansion in general terms.

For historians the memorandum has been crucial as evidence of Hitler's intentions. The trial of major war criminals at Nuremberg in 1945 to 1946 used the memorandum as evidence of the conspiratorial planning of aggressive war. The intentionalist school of Hitler historiography, associated with Klaus Hildebrand and Andreas Hillgruber, treats the memorandum as evidence of long-term programmatic planning. The structuralist school, associated with Tim Mason and Hans Mommsen, treats the memorandum as evidence of contingent calculation rather than fixed planning. For Paper 1 purposes the candidate should be able to identify the memorandum's content and to discuss its evidential value.

25.3 The Anschluss

The Anschluss with Austria on 12 March 1938 was the first German territorial annexation across an international border. The political crisis that produced the Anschluss began with Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg's announcement on 9 March 1938 of a plebiscite on Austrian independence to be held on 13 March. Hitler, fearing that the plebiscite would produce a vote against Anschluss, demanded its cancellation. Schuschnigg complied on 10 March but resigned on 11 March under German pressure. President Wilhelm Miklas eventually appointed the Nazi Arthur Seyss-Inquart as Chancellor at midnight on 11 to 12 March. German forces crossed the border on the morning of 12 March without resistance. Hitler entered Austria the same day and gave a triumphal speech at Linz, his birthplace.

The international response was minimal. Italy had acquiesced through the Hesse phone call. France was in another government crisis with Léon Blum forming his second cabinet on 13 March. Britain expressed protest but took no action. The League of Nations did not act. The Anschluss therefore confirmed the pattern established by the Rhineland. Each German revisionist move was acquiesced in by the Western powers, encouraging the next move.

The strategic consequence of the Anschluss was to surround Czechoslovakia on three sides. The Czech Sudetenland, with its largely German-speaking population, now bordered Germany on the west, north and south. The Czech defensive fortifications, which had been designed to face Germany on the western frontier, were now exposed on the southern frontier. The Czech strategic position was decisively weakened, and the Sudeten crisis of summer 1938 followed within months.

Chapter summary

Hitler's challenges to Versailles between 1933 and 1938 followed a consistent pattern of treaty violations presented as defensive moves, each succeeding without significant Western response. The remilitarisation of the Rhineland in March 1936 was the decisive moment, establishing that France would not act militarily even when legally entitled and militarily capable. The Hossbach Memorandum of November 1937 documents the strategic conference at which Hitler discussed Austria and Czechoslovakia as immediate targets and referenced general European war within six to eight years. The Anschluss of March 1938 confirmed the pattern and strategically surrounded Czechoslovakia, setting up the Sudeten crisis that followed within months.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Rhineland remilitarisation	The 7 March 1936 German violation of Versailles and Locarno
Hossbach Memorandum	The unsigned record of the 5 November 1937 strategic conference
Konstantin von Neurath	The Foreign Minister at the Hossbach Conference
Werner von Blomberg	The War Minister, dismissed in February 1938
Werner von Fritsch	The Army Chief, dismissed in February 1938
Anschluss	The 12 March 1938 German absorption of Austria
Kurt Schuschnigg	The Austrian Chancellor forced to resign
Arthur Seyss-Inquart	The Austrian Nazi appointed Chancellor at midnight

Questions

1. Examine the significance of the Rhineland remilitarisation for Hitler's subsequent calculations.
2. What does the Hossbach Memorandum reveal about Hitler's strategic thinking?
3. To what extent did the Anschluss alter the strategic position of Czechoslovakia?

Chapter 26: The Sudeten Crisis and the Munich Agreement, 1938

Summary of events

The Sudeten Crisis of summer 1938 brought Europe to the brink of war and ended in the Munich Agreement of 29 to 30 September 1938 that ceded the Sudeten regions of Czechoslovakia to Germany without Czech consent. The crisis was driven by Hitler's strategic decision after the Anschluss to absorb Czechoslovakia, or at least to dismember it, before turning to Poland. The German-speaking Sudeten regions, which contained Czech defensive fortifications and approximately three million ethnic Germans, were the chosen mechanism. Konrad Henlein's Sudeten German Party agitated for autonomy through the spring and summer, with German support and direction. By September Hitler was threatening war over the Sudeten question. The British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain flew three times to Germany, the third time to Munich, where he and the French Prime Minister Édouard Daladier accepted the German terms with Italian mediation by Mussolini. The Munich Agreement transferred the Sudetenland to Germany over ten days from 1 to 10 October 1938 without Czech participation in the negotiations. Chamberlain returned to London claiming peace for our time. Six months later Hitler occupied the rump Czechoslovakia and the appeasement policy was discredited. The Sudeten Crisis is one of the most extensively studied episodes of twentieth-century diplomacy, and Paper 1 questions on it are common.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were Hitler's intentions in the Sudeten Crisis?
2. What was the role of Konrad Henlein and the Sudeten German Party?
3. How did Chamberlain's diplomacy at Berchtesgaden, Bad Godesberg and Munich function?
4. What were the terms of the Munich Agreement and what were its consequences?

Timeline of Chapter 26

24 April 1938	Henlein's Karlsbad Eight demands
20 to 22 May 1938	May Crisis. Czech mobilisation
30 May 1938	Hitler issues Case Green directive
12 to 13 September 1938	Sudeten German uprising and Czech repression
15 September 1938	Chamberlain at Berchtesgaden
22 to 24 September 1938	Chamberlain at Bad Godesberg
27 September 1938	Chamberlain's "far away country" radio address
29 to 30 September 1938	Munich Conference

1 to 10 October 1938 Sudeten transfer to Germany

5 October 1938 Beneš resigns as Czech President

26.1 Hitler's strategy and the Sudeten German Party

Hitler's strategic calculation after the Anschluss treated Czechoslovakia as the next target. The country had been created by the Versailles settlement from territories of the former Austria-Hungary and contained substantial ethnic minorities, including approximately three million Germans in the Sudeten border regions, approximately seven hundred thousand Hungarians in southern Slovakia and approximately five hundred thousand Poles around Teschen. The Czech defensive fortifications had been built along the western and southern frontiers facing Germany and Austria, but the post-Anschluss strategic situation exposed them on three sides.

Konrad Henlein's Sudeten German Party served as Hitler's instrument inside Czechoslovakia. The party had been founded in 1933 and had received German subsidies and direction from 1935. By 1938 it received its instructions directly from Berlin, with Henlein operating to the principle, articulated in a memorandum by Hitler, that the party should always demand more than the Czech government could grant. Henlein's Karlsbad Eight Demands of 24 April 1938 set out the maximum programme of Sudeten autonomy. Czech Prime Minister Milan Hodža negotiated through May and June, conceding most of the Sudeten demands, but Henlein systematically raised additional demands as old ones were granted.

26.2 The May Crisis and Case Green

The May Crisis of 20 to 22 May 1938 was the dress rehearsal for September. Czech intelligence reported what they interpreted as German troop movements toward the Czech border. The Czech government ordered partial mobilisation. Britain and France demanded German clarification, and the German Foreign Ministry denied any aggressive intentions. The crisis ended within forty-eight hours, but Hitler was deeply angered by the Czech mobilisation, which he treated as a personal humiliation. On 30 May 1938 he issued the Case Green directive, which required the Wehrmacht to be prepared to invade Czechoslovakia by 1 October 1938. The deadline was a self-imposed one based on Hitler's anger rather than on military necessity, and it shaped the timetable of the September crisis.

26.3 Chamberlain's three visits

Neville Chamberlain had become Prime Minister on 28 May 1937 and had committed himself to active personal diplomacy with the dictators. His decision to fly to Germany three times during the September crisis was unprecedented in British diplomatic practice. The first meeting at Berchtesgaden on 15 September produced an agreement in principle that Germany would receive Sudeten regions where Germans formed a majority, subject to international supervision. The second meeting at Bad Godesberg on 22 to 24 September produced a crisis. Hitler now demanded immediate German occupation of the Sudeten regions without an international supervisory mechanism. Chamberlain refused. The British and French governments authorised partial mobilisations. The Czech government rejected the Bad Godesberg terms. War seemed imminent.

The third meeting at Munich on 29 to 30 September was facilitated by Mussolini, who proposed the conference and provided a mediating role. The conference was attended by Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier. Czechoslovakia was not invited. The Soviet Union was not invited despite its existing treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia. The conference produced an agreement that combined elements of the

Berchtesgaden and Bad Godesberg positions. Germany would receive the Sudeten regions over ten days from 1 to 10 October, with international supervision through a four-power commission. Czech consent was assumed without being sought.

26.4 The terms and the Czech position

The Czech government was informed of the Munich terms on the morning of 30 September. President Edvard Beneš was given a choice between accepting the terms or facing German invasion without Western support. He accepted. The Sudeten transfer began on 1 October. Approximately ten thousand square miles of territory and approximately three million people, including approximately eight hundred thousand Czech speakers as well as the German majority, were transferred to Germany. The Czech border fortifications, the largest in central Europe, were occupied without resistance.

The further consequences for Czechoslovakia were severe. Hungary received southern Slovakia under the First Vienna Award of 2 November 1938. Poland received the Teschen region, which it had disputed with Czechoslovakia since 1920. Slovakia received autonomy within the rump Czechoslovakia, then formal independence in March 1939 as a German client state. Beneš resigned on 5 October 1938 and went into exile. Emil Hácha became President of the rump state.

26.5 The international response and the meaning of Munich

Chamberlain returned to London on 30 September with a paper signed by Hitler that he displayed at Croydon Airport, declaring "peace for our time". The agreement committed Britain and Germany to consult on future questions affecting peace in Europe. The famous photograph and phrase have become the most iconic image of appeasement in twentieth-century memory. Public opinion in Britain at the time was overwhelmingly relieved at the avoidance of war. By March 1939 the same opinion was shocked at having been deceived.

The historiographical assessment of Munich is complex. Defenders of Chamberlain argue that British and French military weakness in 1938 made resistance impractical, that public opinion would not have supported war over Czechoslovakia in September 1938, and that the year's delay between Munich and the actual outbreak of war in September 1939 allowed for substantial British rearmament that would not have been possible in 1938. Critics argue that the Czech defensive fortifications and the Czech army were a substantial military asset that Western policy abandoned, that the moral abandonment of Czechoslovakia damaged Western credibility with potential allies including the Soviet Union, and that the year's delay produced no proportional improvement in Western military preparation. The candidate engaging with sources on Munich for Paper 1 should be able to indicate awareness of both positions.

Chapter summary

The Sudeten Crisis of 1938 was driven by Hitler's strategic decision to dismember Czechoslovakia after the Anschluss, with Henlein's Sudeten German Party as the internal instrument. The May Crisis of 20 to 22 May produced Case Green and the 1 October deadline. Chamberlain's three visits to Germany, culminating in the Munich Conference of 29 to 30 September, accepted German terms with Italian mediation but without Czech participation. The agreement transferred the Sudeten regions to Germany over ten days from 1 to 10 October, dismembered Czechoslovakia further through the First Vienna Award and Polish gains, and produced the rump state that Hitler would destroy six months later in March 1939.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Konrad Henlein	The leader of the Sudeten German Party
Karlsbad Eight Demands	The 24 April 1938 maximum Sudeten programme
Case Green	The 30 May 1938 German directive for war planning against Czechoslovakia
Berchtesgaden	The site of Chamberlain's first visit to Hitler, 15 September 1938
Bad Godesberg	The site of Chamberlain's second, conflict-producing visit, 22 to 24 September
Munich Conference	The 29 to 30 September 1938 four-power conference
Munich Agreement	The agreement transferring the Sudetenland to Germany
Edvard Beneš	The Czech President forced to accept the agreement
First Vienna Award	The 2 November 1938 transfer of southern Slovakia to Hungary
Peace for our time	Chamberlain's phrase on returning to London

Questions

1. Examine the role of Konrad Henlein and the Sudeten German Party in the Sudeten Crisis.
2. To what extent did the Munich Agreement reflect British and French military weakness rather than political miscalculation?
3. Evaluate the consequences of the Munich Agreement for the Czech state and for European diplomacy.

Source-based exercise

> Source A. Speech by Neville Chamberlain to the British public, BBC radio, 27 September 1938 (adapted): "How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas masks here because of a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing. It seems still more impossible that a quarrel which has already been settled in principle should be the subject of war. Yet we cannot in all circumstances undertake to involve the whole British Empire in war simply on her account." Source B. Statement by Winston Churchill in the House of Commons, 5 October 1938 (adapted): "We have sustained a total and unmitigated defeat. The German dictator has obtained sway in Czechoslovakia not by an act of unprovoked aggression but by stages, in negotiations with a friendly power. We are in the presence of a disaster of the first magnitude which has befallen Great Britain and France. Do not let us blind ourselves to that. The whole equilibrium of Europe has been deranged."

(a) According to Source A, what arguments does Chamberlain use to justify the British position on the Sudeten question? [3 marks] (b) Compare and contrast the views in Sources A and B on the Sudeten settlement. [6 marks] (c) Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the Munich Agreement reflected the structural weakness of Western policy rather than the personal misjudgement of Chamberlain. [9 marks]

Chapter 27: The destruction of Czechoslovakia and the Pact of Steel, 1939

Summary of events

The destruction of Czechoslovakia between October 1938 and March 1939 ran in three phases. The Sudeten transfer of October 1938 stripped the country of its border fortifications and approximately one third of its territory and population. The First Vienna Award of November 1938 transferred southern Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia to Hungary. The German occupation of the rump Czech lands on 15 March 1939 completed the destruction. The German action of 15 March was qualitatively different from the earlier moves because it absorbed non-German populations, breaking the principle of national self-determination that had nominally justified the Anschluss and the Sudeten transfer. The British government concluded that appeasement had failed. On 31 March 1939 Britain extended a guarantee to Poland. France followed. The Italian invasion of Albania on 7 April 1939 confirmed the parallel Italian revisionism. The Pact of Steel, signed on 22 May 1939, formalised the Italian-German alliance into a binding mutual defence treaty.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did the destruction of the rump Czechoslovakia proceed?
2. Why was 15 March 1939 the turning point for British policy?
3. What did the British guarantee to Poland commit Britain to?
4. What were the terms of the Pact of Steel and what did they signify?

Timeline of Chapter 27

1 to 10 October 1938	Sudeten transfer to Germany
5 October 1938	Beneš resigns. Hácha becomes President
2 November 1938	First Vienna Award. Southern Slovakia to Hungary
30 November 1938	Hácha confirmed as President
14 March 1939	Slovakia declares independence under Tiso
15 March 1939	German occupation of the rump Czech lands
16 March 1939	Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia proclaimed
23 March 1939	German occupation of Memel from Lithuania
31 March 1939	British guarantee to Poland
7 April 1939	Italian invasion of Albania
22 May 1939	Pact of Steel signed

27.1 The destruction in three phases

The first phase was the Sudeten transfer. The territory ceded under the Munich Agreement included not only ethnically German regions but also Czech minorities of approximately eight hundred thousand. The Czech border fortifications in the Sudeten regions, including approximately ten thousand bunkers and a substantial defensive infrastructure, were occupied by German forces. The territorial integrity of Czechoslovakia, as it had existed since 1918, was decisively broken.

The second phase was the dismemberment of the rump state. The First Vienna Award of 2 November 1938 transferred the southern strip of Slovakia, including the cities of Košice and Užhorod, and most of Subcarpathian Ruthenia, to Hungary. The Polish government had already, on 30 September 1938, presented Czechoslovakia with an ultimatum demanding the Teschen region, which Polish forces occupied on 2 October 1938. By the end of November 1938 Czechoslovakia had lost approximately one third of its territory and approximately five million of its inhabitants.

The third phase was the destruction of what remained. Hitler had decided in autumn 1938 that the rump Czechoslovakia would not survive. The Slovak Catholic clerical leader Jozef Tiso was encouraged to declare Slovak independence. Czech President Hácha was summoned to Berlin on the night of 14 to 15 March 1939 and presented with an ultimatum, threatening immediate German bombing of Prague unless he accepted German occupation of the Czech lands. Hácha, suffering a heart attack during the meeting and revived by injections, signed the document at four in the morning. German forces crossed the border at six. By the afternoon Hitler was in Prague. The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was proclaimed on 16 March under Konstantin von Neurath as Reichsprotektor. Slovakia became a German client state.

27.2 The British turn

The German action of 15 March 1939 produced a turning point in British policy. Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham on 17 March acknowledged that the action could not be reconciled with the Munich Agreement and that British policy had to change. The action confirmed that Hitler's intentions extended beyond the absorption of ethnic Germans and that the principle of national self-determination, which had nominally justified the Anschluss and the Sudeten transfer, was a tactical cover rather than a strategic limit.

The German occupation of the Lithuanian port of Memel on 23 March 1939 confirmed the new pattern. Memel had been a German-speaking enclave that the Versailles settlement had assigned to League supervision and that Lithuania had subsequently absorbed. The German action on Memel was qualitatively similar to the absorption of Austria and the Sudetenland but came so soon after the Czech action that it added to the British conviction that fundamental policy change was required.

27.3 The British guarantee to Poland

The British guarantee to Poland was announced by Chamberlain in the House of Commons on 31 March 1939. The guarantee committed Britain to support Poland in the event of any action that clearly threatened Polish independence and that the Polish government considered it vital to resist. France immediately joined the guarantee. The guarantee was extended to Greece and Romania on 13 April after fears that Italian or German actions might threaten them.

The guarantee was a fundamental departure in British policy. Britain had no military capacity to defend Poland directly, since no land bridge existed and the British navy could not project power into Poland. The guarantee therefore committed Britain to declaring war on Germany if Germany attacked Poland, in a war that Britain would have to fight in the West rather than in defence of Polish territory. The guarantee was a deterrent rather than an operational commitment, intended to persuade Hitler that further aggression would produce

general European war. The deterrent failed. The German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 was followed by the British and French declarations of war on 3 September.

27.4 The Pact of Steel

The Pact of Steel, formally the Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy, was signed in Berlin on 22 May 1939 by Foreign Ministers Joachim von Ribbentrop and Galeazzo Ciano. The pact was a binding mutual defence treaty under which each signatory committed to support the other in any war, including offensive wars initiated by either side. The terms went beyond the Anti-Comintern Pact and beyond any earlier alliance between the two states. The pact was intended as a public demonstration of Axis solidarity and as a deterrent against Western intervention in any future German action.

For Italy the Pact of Steel was a strategic commitment that Italy was not ready to honour. Mussolini's military advisers warned that Italy could not be ready for war against Britain and France until 1942 or 1943. The Italian Foreign Minister Ciano had argued internally for a more limited alliance, but Mussolini had insisted on the full mutual defence commitment. When Germany invaded Poland on 1 September 1939, Italy declared non-belligerency rather than honouring the pact. The discrepancy between the pact's terms and Italian capacity would shape Italian foreign policy through 1939 and into 1940.

The Pact of Steel was significant primarily as a diplomatic signal. It announced that the Axis was now a binding alliance rather than a parallel revisionism. It deepened the British calculation that further appeasement was impossible. It encouraged Hitler to believe that the Polish guarantee would not be enforced, since he expected that Italy's commitment would deter Britain and France from declaring war over Poland.

Chapter summary

The destruction of Czechoslovakia between October 1938 and March 1939 ran through the Sudeten transfer, the First Vienna Award and the German occupation of the rump Czech lands on 15 March 1939. The 15 March action produced the British turn against appeasement, with the British guarantee to Poland of 31 March 1939 committing Britain to fight if Germany attacked Poland. The Italian invasion of Albania on 7 April 1939 confirmed the parallel Italian revisionism. The Pact of Steel of 22 May 1939 formalised the Italian-German alliance as a binding mutual defence treaty, although Italian capacity to honour the commitment was inadequate.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
First Vienna Award	The 2 November 1938 transfer of southern Slovakia to Hungary
Teschen	The region taken by Poland from Czechoslovakia in October 1938
Jozef Tiso	The Slovak Catholic priest who declared Slovak independence on 14 March 1939
Emil Hácha	The Czech President forced to accept German occupation in March 1939
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	The German entity established on 16 March 1939
Memel	The Lithuanian port occupied by Germany on 23 March 1939
British guarantee to Poland	The 31 March 1939 commitment to defend Polish independence
Pact of Steel	The 22 May 1939 binding alliance between Germany and Italy

Questions

1. Examine the significance of 15 March 1939 as a turning point in British policy.
2. To what extent was the British guarantee to Poland a deterrent rather than an operational commitment?
3. Evaluate the strategic significance of the Pact of Steel for Italy and Germany.

Chapter 28: The Nazi-Soviet Pact and the outbreak of war, 1939

Summary of events

The Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, signed in Moscow on 23 August 1939 by Foreign Ministers Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov, was the diplomatic move that completed the strategic preconditions for the German invasion of Poland. The pact reversed the ideological and political opposition between the two states that had appeared fundamental for a decade. A secret protocol divided Eastern Europe into German and Soviet spheres of influence, with Poland to be partitioned, the Baltic states largely assigned to Soviet influence, and Bessarabia recognised as a Soviet interest. The pact freed Hitler to invade Poland without facing a two-front war. It freed Stalin to recover territories lost in 1917 to 1921 without German opposition. The Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union, which had run through summer 1939 and might have produced a counter-alliance, collapsed. On 1 September 1939 Germany invaded Poland. Britain and France declared war on 3 September. The Soviet Union invaded eastern Poland on 17 September. The Second World War in Europe had begun.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did Germany and the Soviet Union sign a non-aggression pact?
2. What were the terms of the secret protocol and what did they accomplish for each side?
3. Why did the Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union fail?
4. How did the German invasion of Poland produce the European war?

Timeline of Chapter 28

11 March 1939	Anglo-French talks with Soviet Union begin
3 May 1939	Litvinov replaced by Molotov as Soviet Foreign Minister
11 to 21 August 1939	Anglo-French military mission in Moscow
23 August 1939	Nazi-Soviet Pact signed in Moscow
25 August 1939	Anglo-Polish alliance formalised
1 September 1939	German invasion of Poland
3 September 1939	British and French declarations of war
17 September 1939	Soviet invasion of eastern Poland
27 September 1939	Warsaw falls
28 September 1939	Soviet-German Boundary and Friendship Treaty
30 November 1939	Soviet invasion of Finland

28.1 Why the pact was signed

The Nazi-Soviet Pact was a startling diplomatic reversal but was not without precedent. Germany and Soviet Russia had cooperated extensively in the 1920s, with German military officers training Soviet forces and Soviet territory hosting German weapons development that violated Versailles restrictions. The Treaty of Rapallo of 1922 had established the Weimar-Soviet relationship that the Nazi seizure of power had ended. By 1939 a number of factors had revived the calculation that Germany and the Soviet Union had complementary rather than conflicting short-term interests.

For Hitler the pact solved the immediate strategic problem of the invasion of Poland. A two-front war with Britain and France in the West and the Soviet Union in the East was something the German General Staff regarded as catastrophic. The Schlieffen Plan calculation that had failed in 1914 still shaped strategic thinking. A pact with the Soviet Union neutralised the Eastern dimension and allowed Germany to concentrate forces in the West. Hitler's broader ideological commitment to eventual war with the Soviet Union was unchanged, but the timing was deferred to a more favourable moment.

For Stalin the pact provided several advantages. Soviet territorial recovery of regions lost in 1917 to 1921, including eastern Poland, the Baltic states and Bessarabia, was secured without the cost of war. The Soviet Far East was protected, since the Soviet-Japanese border had been quiet since the Khalkhin Gol defeat of August 1939, but a German alignment with Japan at this moment would have been strategically disastrous for the Soviet Union. The Soviet calculation also reflected disillusionment with Anglo-French negotiations. The Anglo-French missions to Moscow had been led by relatively junior officers without authority to commit their governments, while the German mission under Ribbentrop carried full plenipotentiary powers. The Soviet conclusion that the Western powers were not serious negotiating partners was reinforced by the obvious British and French reluctance to commit to military cooperation.

28.2 The secret protocol

The Nazi-Soviet Pact's published text was a conventional non-aggression treaty under which each party agreed not to attack the other and to remain neutral if the other was attacked by a third power. The published text did not justify the diplomatic shock that the agreement produced. The secret protocol, however, divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence in terms more sweeping than any post-Versailles diplomatic document. Poland was to be partitioned along a line that initially ran through the Vistula and was renegotiated in late September to run further east, leaving Lithuania mostly in the German sphere but Eastern Galicia in the Soviet sphere. Estonia, Latvia and Finland were assigned to the Soviet sphere. Lithuania was initially in the German sphere but was reassigned in the September renegotiation. Bessarabia was recognised as a Soviet interest.

The secret protocol was kept confidential by both parties throughout the war. Its existence was inferred by Western intelligence from observable Soviet behaviour, including the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland on 17 September 1939, the imposition of military bases on Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in September and October 1939, the Winter War with Finland from November 1939 to March 1940, and the annexation of Bessarabia from Romania in June 1940. The protocol was first published in the West from German archival material captured in 1945. The Soviet government denied the protocol's authenticity until 1989, when the Congress of People's Deputies formally acknowledged its existence and condemned it.

28.3 The Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union

The Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union from spring 1939 had been the road not taken. The Soviet government had proposed a triple alliance immediately after the German occupation of Prague in March 1939. The British Cabinet had been divided, with Halifax and the Foreign Office willing to consider an alliance and Chamberlain personally hostile to any cooperation with the Soviet Union. The negotiations made slow progress through summer 1939. Three issues proved insoluble. The first was the question of automatic guarantees, with the Soviet Union demanding that any Anglo-French alliance be triggered by German action against any of the small states between the Baltic and the Black Seas, while Britain insisted that the small states themselves had to request assistance. The second was the question of indirect aggression, with the Soviet Union demanding the right to intervene in the small states if a friendly German government appeared, while Britain regarded this as a Soviet pretext for absorbing the Baltic states. The third was the question of military cooperation through Polish territory, with the Soviet Union demanding the right to move troops into Poland and Romania to face Germany, while Poland refused this arrangement absolutely.

The Anglo-French military mission to Moscow in August 1939 was led by Admiral Sir Reginald Drax and General Joseph Doumenc. The mission travelled by slow ship from Britain to Leningrad, signalling a lack of urgency. The British members had no plenipotentiary powers to conclude an agreement. The Soviet response on 14 August was to ask whether the Allied missions could commit their governments to specific clauses. The negative response confirmed Soviet suspicions and accelerated the German negotiations that had been running in parallel since May.

28.4 The German invasion and the British and French declarations

Germany invaded Poland at dawn on 1 September 1939. Eighty-five German divisions, including six panzer divisions, crossed the Polish frontier from East Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia and Slovakia. The Polish army of approximately one million was outnumbered, outclassed in equipment and outflanked. The Battle of the Bzura of 9 to 19 September was the largest engagement of the campaign and the largest Polish counter-attack, and it was defeated. Warsaw was besieged from 8 September and surrendered on 27 September. The Polish government and high command escaped through Romania to France and from there eventually to Britain.

Britain and France issued ultimata on 1 September demanding German withdrawal. Germany did not respond. The British declaration of war was made by Chamberlain at eleven on the morning of Sunday 3 September. The French declaration followed at five. The Anglo-Polish alliance signed on 25 August had committed Britain to declare war if Germany invaded Poland, but the Western Allies had no operational plan to assist Poland. The phoney war on the Western Front lasted from September 1939 until the German offensive in May 1940, with Polish resistance unrelieved.

The Soviet invasion of eastern Poland on 17 September completed the partition. The two armies met at Brest-Litovsk on 22 September. The Soviet-German Boundary and Friendship Treaty of 28 September renegotiated the partition line and confirmed the new arrangements. By 6 October Polish resistance had ended. Approximately one hundred thousand Polish soldiers had been killed and approximately seven hundred thousand captured by the Germans. The Soviet capture totalled approximately two hundred and fifty thousand, of whom approximately twenty-two thousand officers were murdered in the Katyń massacre of April 1940.

Chapter summary

The Nazi-Soviet Pact of 23 August 1939 was the diplomatic precondition for the German invasion of Poland. The published text was a conventional non-aggression treaty. The secret protocol divided Eastern Europe into German and Soviet spheres of influence. The Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union, which had run through summer 1939, collapsed because of disagreements about automatic guarantees, indirect aggression and military cooperation through Polish territory, and because of mutual mistrust between the participants. The German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 was followed by British and French declarations of war on 3 September and by the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland on 17 September. The Second World War in Europe had begun.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Nazi-Soviet Pact	The 23 August 1939 non-aggression treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union
Joachim von Ribbentrop	The German Foreign Minister who signed the pact
Vyacheslav Molotov	The Soviet Foreign Minister who signed the pact
Secret protocol	The confidential annex dividing Eastern Europe into spheres of influence
Indirect aggression	The Soviet term for German action through friendly governments in small states
Drax mission	The British military mission to Moscow in August 1939
Schlieffen Plan calculation	The German strategic concern about two-front war
Anglo-Polish alliance	The 25 August 1939 commitment to defend Poland
Katyń massacre	The April 1940 Soviet murder of approximately twenty-two thousand Polish officers

Questions

1. Examine the strategic calculations that led Germany and the Soviet Union to sign the Nazi-Soviet Pact.
2. To what extent did the failure of Anglo-French negotiations with the Soviet Union reflect mutual mistrust rather than substantive disagreement?
3. Evaluate the significance of the secret protocol for understanding the pact.

Chapter 29: Italy enters the Second World War, 1940

Summary of events

Italy did not enter the Second World War on 1 September 1939, despite the Pact of Steel commitments. Mussolini declared non-belligerency on 1 September and maintained that position through the Polish campaign and the phoney war. The Italian decision to enter the war on 10 June 1940 was driven by the German victory over France and by Mussolini's calculation that he needed to claim a place at the peace table that German victory was about to produce. The decision proved catastrophic. Italian operations against France in June 1940 were minor and unsuccessful. The Italian invasion of Greece in October 1940 was repelled and required German rescue in April 1941. The Italian campaign in North Africa collapsed under British counter-attack in late 1940 and required German rescue through the Afrika Korps from February 1941. By the time of the Allied landings in Sicily in July 1943, Italy was a satellite of its own ally, and the dismissal of Mussolini by the Fascist Grand Council and the King on 25 July 1943 ended the regime.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did Italy not enter the war on 1 September 1939?
2. What was the strategic calculation behind the entry on 10 June 1940?
3. How did the Italian campaigns of 1940 and 1941 fail?
4. What were the political consequences of military failure?

Timeline of Chapter 29

1 September 1939	Italian declaration of non-belligerency
10 May 1940	German invasion of France and the Low Countries
10 June 1940	Italian declaration of war on France and Britain
22 June 1940	French armistice with Germany
24 June 1940	French armistice with Italy
August 1940	Italian invasion of British Somaliland
13 September 1940	Italian invasion of Egypt begins
27 September 1940	Tripartite Pact signed
28 October 1940	Italian invasion of Greece
9 December 1940	British counter-offensive in Egypt
February 1941	Afrika Korps deployed under Rommel
April 1941	German invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece
25 July 1943	Mussolini dismissed

29.1 The Italian non-belligerency

The Italian decision not to enter the war in September 1939 reflected the gap between the Pact of Steel commitments and Italian military capacity. Mussolini's military advisers had repeatedly warned that Italy could not be ready for war against Britain and France until 1942 or 1943. Strategic stockpiles of oil, coal, iron and other key materials were inadequate. The Italian army had been depleted by the Ethiopian campaign and by the Spanish intervention. The navy was substantial but primarily a Mediterranean force without ocean reach.

Mussolini's announcement on 1 September used the term non-belligerency rather than neutrality. The distinction was that non-belligerency implied future entry on the German side, while neutrality implied a commitment to remain out of the war. The vocabulary positioned Italy to enter when conditions were favourable. Mussolini believed that conditions might become favourable if Germany achieved a quick victory in the West and if the war then ended through negotiation. The phoney war of autumn and winter 1939 to 1940 supported this calculation.

29.2 The decision for war

The German invasion of France on 10 May 1940 transformed Mussolini's calculation. Within five weeks the Wehrmacht had broken through the Ardennes, encircled the British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk, and captured Paris. France was negotiating an armistice. Mussolini concluded that immediate Italian entry was necessary to claim a share of the post-war settlement. He told Marshal Badoglio, "I only need a few thousand dead to be able to sit at the peace table as a man who has fought".

The Italian declaration of war on 10 June was made before the French collapse was complete. Italian forces attacked across the Alps into south-eastern France on 21 June. The Alpine campaign produced approximately one thousand seven hundred Italian dead and limited territorial gains. The French armistice with Italy on 24 June gave Italy minor border adjustments and a demilitarised zone in metropolitan France. The strategic gain was less than the political damage of having entered the war on weakly prepared terms.

29.3 The catastrophic campaigns

The Italian campaign against Greece, launched on 28 October 1940 from Italian-occupied Albania, was the most spectacular Italian military failure of the war. Mussolini conceived the operation without consulting the German high command and against the advice of his own staff. The Italian invasion force of approximately one hundred and forty thousand was matched by Greek forces of similar size operating in mountainous terrain that favoured the defender. The Greek counter-offensive of November 1940 drove Italian forces back into Albania and threatened the Italian position there. The campaign required German intervention. The German invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece in April 1941 rescued the Italian position and added the Balkans to the German sphere of operations, but at the cost of delaying the German invasion of the Soviet Union by approximately six weeks.

The Italian campaign in North Africa was the second catastrophic failure. The Italian invasion of Egypt from Libya in September 1940, conducted by Marshal Rodolfo Graziani's army of approximately two hundred and fifty thousand, advanced approximately one hundred kilometres before halting at Sidi Barrani. The British counter-offensive of December 1940 under Generals Wavell and O'Connor destroyed approximately one hundred and thirty thousand Italian troops in nine weeks and advanced to El Agheila. The Italian Tenth Army had effectively been destroyed. German intervention through the Afrika Korps under Rommel from February 1941 stabilised the front, but North Africa thereafter was a German rather than an Italian theatre.

The Italian East African empire collapsed during the same period. British forces from Sudan and Kenya reconquered Eritrea, Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia between January and May 1941. Haile Selassie returned to Addis Ababa on 5 May 1941, five years to the day after Mussolini had announced the Italian empire from the Palazzo Venezia. The Italian colonial project of the 1930s had been undone in five months.

29.4 The political consequences

The cumulative effect of the campaigns was to demonstrate that Italy was not a great power capable of independent military action and that the Pact of Steel had committed Italy to a war it could not fight. From 1941 onwards Italy was effectively a satellite of Germany, with Italian forces operating under German command in North Africa and on the Eastern Front, and with Italian strategic decisions made in Berlin rather than Rome. The Italian Eighth Army on the Eastern Front was destroyed in the Soviet counter-offensive at Stalingrad in winter 1942 to 1943. The Allied landing in Sicily on 10 July 1943 brought the war to the Italian homeland.

The political consequence was the dismissal of Mussolini on 25 July 1943. The Fascist Grand Council voted by nineteen to seven to remove him from office, and King Victor Emmanuel III formally dismissed him and appointed Marshal Badoglio as Prime Minister. Mussolini was placed under arrest. The Badoglio government negotiated an armistice with the Allies, which was announced on 8 September 1943. The German response was the immediate occupation of northern and central Italy and the rescue of Mussolini by SS commando forces on 12 September. The Italian Social Republic, established under Mussolini's nominal leadership in northern Italy, was a German puppet state until the Allied advance reached the north in April 1945.

Chapter summary

Italy did not enter the war in September 1939 because of inadequate military preparation. The decision for war on 10 June 1940 was driven by Mussolini's calculation that he needed a place at the peace table that German victory was about to produce. The Italian campaigns of 1940 and 1941, particularly Greece and North Africa, failed catastrophically and required German rescue. From 1941 Italy was a satellite of its own ally. The Allied invasion of Sicily in July 1943 produced the dismissal of Mussolini by the Fascist Grand Council and the King, ending the regime. The German rescue of Mussolini on 12 September 1943 produced the puppet Italian Social Republic, but the substantive history of fascist Italian foreign policy ended with the dismissal of 25 July.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Non-belligerency	The Italian status from 1 September 1939 to 10 June 1940
A few thousand dead	Mussolini's phrase to Badoglio justifying entry into the war
Italian invasion of Greece	The October 1940 operation that required German rescue
Afrika Korps	The German force under Rommel deployed to rescue the Italian position in Libya
Italian East Africa	The federation of Eritrea, Somaliland and Ethiopia, lost between January and May 1941
Fascist Grand Council	The fascist body that voted to remove Mussolini on 25 July 1943
Italian Social Republic	The puppet state under Mussolini in northern Italy from September 1943

Questions

1. Examine the reasons for Italian non-belligerency between September 1939 and June 1940.
2. Evaluate the strategic calculation behind the Italian decision for war on 10 June 1940.
3. To what extent did the campaigns of 1940 and 1941 demonstrate the structural weakness of fascist Italy?

Chapter 30: The international response to German and Italian expansion

Summary of events

The international response to German and Italian expansion between 1933 and 1940 was characterised by the failure of collective security and the emergence of appeasement as the principal Western policy. The League of Nations failed in Manchuria, Ethiopia and the Spanish Civil War, and was no longer a serious factor in European diplomacy by 1937. Britain and France, the major Western democracies, pursued a sequence of accommodations that they hoped would satisfy revisionist demands and preserve peace. The strategy worked in the short term and failed in the long term. The United States remained largely isolationist throughout the period, with the Neutrality Acts of 1935 to 1937 actively constraining American support for victims of aggression. The Soviet Union pursued collective security under Maksim Litvinov until May 1939, then abandoned it for the Nazi-Soviet Pact in August 1939. By the time the Western powers committed to defend Poland in March 1939, the post-Versailles system had been destroyed by their own progressive accommodations as much as by the actions of the revisionist powers.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did collective security fail in the 1930s?
2. What was appeasement and what motivated it?
3. What role did American isolationism play?
4. How did Soviet policy evolve between 1934 and 1939?

Timeline of Chapter 30

1 to 3 February 1935	London communiqué laying ground for Stresa
18 September 1934	Soviet Union joins the League of Nations
31 August 1935	American Neutrality Act
11 to 14 April 1935	Stresa Conference
18 November 1935	League sanctions against Italy
7 March 1936	Rhineland remilitarisation
17 July 1936	Spanish Civil War begins
1937	Neutrality Act extended
5 October 1937	Roosevelt Quarantine Speech
29 to 30 September 1938	Munich Conference
31 March 1939	British guarantee to Poland

23 August 1939 — Nazi-Soviet Pact

3 September 1939 — British and French declarations of war

30.1 The failure of collective security

Collective security, the principle that aggression against any state would meet the collective response of all League members, was the foundational doctrine of the post-Versailles order. The doctrine failed three tests in succession. The Manchurian Incident of 1931 to 1933 produced the Lytton Report but no enforcement action, and Japan withdrew from the League. The Ethiopian campaign of 1935 to 1936 produced limited sanctions that failed to constrain Italian operations and that were lifted after Italian victory. The Spanish Civil War of 1936 to 1939 was conducted around the League rather than through it, with the Non-Intervention Committee functioning as an extra-League substitute that proved ineffective. By 1937 the League was no longer a serious factor in European diplomacy. Italy left in December 1937, completing the withdrawal of the major revisionist powers.

The structural failures of collective security had several sources. The League's enforcement powers under Article 16 required Council agreement that any major power could effectively veto. The major member states had divergent interests that prevented coordinated action. The economic constraints of the Depression made sanctions unattractive. The military constraints of disarmament made enforcement implausible. The League's design assumed that members shared a long-term interest in stability over revision, an assumption that was simply false for the major revisionist powers.

30.2 Appeasement

Appeasement was the British policy that emerged in the 1930s as the alternative to collective security. The policy combined three elements. The first was the recognition that Versailles had been imperfect and that some German grievances were legitimate, requiring revision through negotiation rather than enforcement of treaties that had been made under duress. The second was the practical recognition of British and French military weakness, which made enforcement of treaty obligations expensive and risky. The third was the genuine fear of another European war, given the casualties of the First World War and the development of strategic bombing that promised civilian destruction on an unprecedented scale.

Neville Chamberlain's premiership from May 1937 onwards was the active phase of appeasement. Chamberlain personally pursued direct negotiation with Hitler and Mussolini, treating the dictators as rational actors whose grievances could be addressed through diplomatic concession. The strategy reached its apogee at Munich in September 1938 and its limit at the German occupation of Prague in March 1939. After Prague the British government recognised that Hitler's intentions extended beyond the absorption of ethnic Germans, and the British guarantee to Poland of 31 March 1939 marked the turn against appeasement.

The historiographical debate about appeasement has been extensive. The orthodox interpretation, dominant from 1940 to the 1960s and associated with works such as Guilty Men of 1940 and the Churchill memoirs, treats appeasement as the political failure of weak and short-sighted statesmen who failed to recognise the threat. The revisionist interpretation, dominant from the 1960s and associated with John Charmley and Paul Kennedy among others, treats appeasement as the rational policy of statesmen facing severe military, economic and imperial constraints. Most contemporary historiography combines both elements, recognising that the constraints were real but that specific decisions, particularly at Munich, reflected miscalculation as well as constraint.

30.3 American isolationism

The United States was largely absent from the European response to revisionist expansion. The structural reasons included the geographic insulation provided by the Atlantic, the cultural memory of First World War involvement that had not delivered the promised peaceful aftermath, and the Depression-era political mood that prioritised domestic recovery over international engagement.

The Neutrality Acts of 1935, 1936 and 1937 codified American isolationism. The 1935 Act prohibited the export of arms to belligerents in any war. The 1936 Act extended the prohibition to financial credits. The 1937 Act introduced the cash and carry provisions, requiring belligerents to pay cash for non-military goods and to transport them in their own ships. The acts were intended to prevent the United States being drawn into a European war as it had been in 1917. In practice they constrained American support for the victims of aggression, since aggressors typically had stronger economic positions and could absorb the cash and carry costs more easily than victims.

Roosevelt's Quarantine Speech of October 1937 signalled a possible shift in rhetoric but produced no immediate change in policy. The cash and carry revision in November 1939, which permitted Britain and France to purchase American arms on cash and carry terms, was the first substantive policy shift. The Lend-Lease Act of March 1941 was the more decisive shift, allowing the United States to supply Britain and other Allies with arms without immediate payment. By Pearl Harbor in December 1941 the United States had become the arsenal of democracy, but it had not entered the war and would not have done so without the Japanese attack and Hitler's gratuitous declaration of war on the United States on 11 December 1941.

30.4 Soviet policy

Soviet policy in the 1930s evolved through three phases. The first, from 1934 to 1939, was the collective security phase under Foreign Minister Maksim Litvinov. The Soviet Union joined the League of Nations on 18 September 1934 and pursued alliance with Britain and France against the revisionist powers. The Soviet treaties with France and Czechoslovakia in 1935 reflected the policy. The Comintern's Popular Front strategy from 1935, supporting communist parties' alliance with social democrats and even bourgeois liberals against fascism, was the ideological extension.

The second phase, from May to August 1939, was the transitional period in which Stalin pursued parallel negotiations with the Western powers and with Germany. The replacement of Litvinov by Molotov on 3 May 1939 signalled openness to a different orientation. Litvinov's Jewish background and his identification with the collective security policy made him an awkward representative for negotiations with Nazi Germany. The Anglo-French negotiations through summer 1939 ran in parallel with German overtures, and the negotiations that succeeded were the German ones.

The third phase, from August 1939 to June 1941, was the Nazi-Soviet phase in which the Soviet Union cooperated with Germany in the partition of Eastern Europe and in economic exchanges that supplied Germany with raw materials in exchange for German manufactured goods and industrial equipment. The phase ended with the German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, after which Stalin became the unwilling Western ally that he had failed to become through formal alliance in 1939.

30.5 The Stresa Front and the Hoare-Laval Pact

The Stresa Front of 11 to 14 April 1935 was the first concrete attempt to construct an anti-revisionist alliance after the German announcement of rearmament on 16 March 1935. The conference at Stresa on Lake Maggiore brought together British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, French Prime Minister Pierre-Étienne Flandin and Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini. The three powers issued a joint declaration condemning the unilateral German repudiation of the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles and reaffirming the Locarno guarantees of the western frontier. The Stresa declaration was specific about the European order but silent about Africa, and Mussolini interpreted the silence as British and French acquiescence in his planned invasion of Ethiopia.

The collapse of the Stresa Front through the Ethiopian crisis demonstrated the fragility of any alliance with Mussolini's Italy and the difficulty of compartmentalising European and colonial questions. The Hoare-Laval Pact of December 1935, in which British Foreign Secretary Samuel Hoare and French Prime Minister Pierre Laval secretly agreed to award Mussolini approximately two-thirds of Ethiopian territory in exchange for ending the war, was leaked to the French press on 9 December 1935 and produced a public outcry that forced Hoare's resignation. The pact reflected the realpolitik conviction of British and French officials that Italy needed to be retained in the anti-German coalition even at the cost of Ethiopian territorial integrity. The public reaction, particularly in Britain where the Peace Ballot of 1935 had registered eleven million signatures in favour of collective security, made any continuation of the realpolitik approach impossible. The Hoare-Laval episode left British and French policy without a coherent strategy. Sanctions against Italy continued half-heartedly without oil, the only sanction that would have crippled the Italian campaign, and Italy completed the conquest of Ethiopia by May 1936. Mussolini drifted toward Germany not because the Western powers had been too tough but because they had been intermittently tough enough to alienate him without being consistent enough to constrain him.

30.6 The Rhineland and the Anschluss

The German remilitarisation of the Rhineland on 7 March 1936 was the test case for whether the Versailles system could be enforced after the Ethiopian distraction. Hitler ordered three battalions across the Rhine bridges with instructions to retreat at any sign of French military response. The French government, internally paralysed and lacking British support, did not respond militarily. The British government, through Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, articulated the formula that became standard: the Germans were after all only walking into their own back garden. The remilitarisation revealed the gap between the formal Western commitment to Versailles and the actual willingness to enforce it. Hitler's later claim that the forty-eight hours after the Rhineland operation were the most nervewracking of his life, with the Wehrmacht under instructions to retreat at the first French response, was probably exaggerated for memoir purposes but reflected the genuine vulnerability of an action that the Western powers could have stopped.

The Anschluss of 12 to 13 March 1938 was the next test. Italy had been the guarantor of Austrian independence in 1934, when Italian troops at the Brenner Pass had deterred a previous German push. By 1938 Mussolini's strategic alignment had shifted, and on 11 March 1938 he conveyed through Prince Philip of Hesse his acceptance of the German action, prompting Hitler's famous response, often quoted in the form "tell Mussolini I will never forget him for this". Britain and France protested but took no action. Chamberlain's calculation, articulated in private notes, was that Austria was geographically indefensible and that the practical question was the future of Czechoslovakia rather than the past of Austria. The Anschluss completed the encirclement of Czechoslovakia from north, west and south.

30.7 Munich and its construction

The September 1938 Czech crisis was constructed by the Sudeten German Party at Hitler's instruction. The Karlsbad demands of April 1938, the May crisis when partial Czech mobilisation made Hitler appear to back down, the September incidents in Sudeten towns, and the British Runciman mission of August 1938 sent to mediate between the Sudeten Germans and Prague all worked to position the question as a Sudeten German grievance rather than a German strategic ambition. Chamberlain's three flights to Germany in September 1938, to Berchtesgaden on 15 September, to Bad Godesberg on 22 September and to Munich on 29 September, dramatised personal diplomacy as the alternative to general war.

The Munich Agreement of 29 to 30 September 1938 transferred the Sudetenland to Germany on 1 October. France had a defensive treaty with Czechoslovakia dating from 1925 but did not invoke it; Britain had no treaty obligation but had a sense that French inaction released British inaction. The Soviet Union had a defensive treaty with Czechoslovakia conditional on French action; with French inaction the Soviet treaty obligation lapsed. The Czechoslovak government, presented at Munich with the agreement signed by four powers in its absence, accepted the dismemberment under threat of fighting alone.

The German occupation of Prague on 15 March 1939 destroyed what remained of Czechoslovakia and exposed the appeasement strategy as having delivered, at best, a six-month delay. Chamberlain's Birmingham speech of 17 March 1939 marked the British government's recognition that Hitler could not be appeased through territorial concession. The British guarantee to Poland of 31 March 1939, extended to Romania and Greece on 13 April, transformed British policy from accommodation to deterrence. The transformation was incomplete because British rearmament had not yet matched the strategic commitments. The Polish guarantee promised what the British armed forces could not, in spring 1939, deliver.

30.8 Roosevelt's evolving position

Roosevelt's position evolved more slowly than the European crisis demanded but more substantively than American isolationism alone would suggest. The Quarantine Speech of October 1937 was the rhetorical opening. The Welles Plan of January 1938, an American proposal for a multilateral conference on disarmament and the rules of international conduct, was rejected by Chamberlain on the grounds that it would interfere with British direct negotiations with the dictators. The rejection illustrated the British conviction in 1938 that the European problem could be solved by Europeans without American mediation. The conviction proved mistaken.

The American response to Munich was muted. Roosevelt sent a personal message to Hitler before Munich asking for restraint but did not commit American resources or prestige to the outcome. The Declaration of Lima at the Eighth Pan-American Conference on 24 December 1938 affirmed inter-American solidarity against external aggression but had no extra-hemispheric bite, and Roosevelt's January 1939 message to Congress called for revision of the Neutrality Acts without yet specifying terms. The decisive legislative shift came in November 1939, after the European war had already begun, when the Neutrality Act of 4 November 1939 repealed the arms embargo and extended cash and carry to belligerents in war materials. Britain and France could now buy American arms provided they paid cash and carried the goods in their own ships. The provision favoured the Western Allies because Royal Navy command of the seas made British and French shipping practical while German shipping was bottled up.

The decisive shift was the Destroyers for Bases Agreement of 2 September 1940. Roosevelt transferred fifty First World War-era destroyers to the Royal Navy in exchange for ninety-nine year leases on bases in British possessions in the Western Hemisphere. The agreement was structured as an executive action without congressional approval, which was politically possible because the political climate had shifted after the fall of

France in June 1940. The Lend-Lease Act of March 1941 was the legislative completion of the shift. By Pearl Harbor in December 1941 Roosevelt had moved American policy from isolation to material support for Britain, but had not been willing to commit American forces to combat. Hitler's gratuitous declaration of war on the United States on 11 December 1941 made the question of American entry moot.

30.9 The Czech crisis and Soviet readiness

A persistent historiographical question concerns whether the Soviet Union was prepared to act on its 1935 treaty with Czechoslovakia in September 1938. The Soviet treaty was conditional on French action, which means that Soviet abstention can be attributed to the French decision rather than to Soviet unwillingness. The Soviet government in September 1938 publicly affirmed its commitment under the treaty and put thirty divisions on alert in the western military districts. The practical problem was geographical: there was no Soviet-Czech border, and any Soviet land force would have had to cross either Poland or Romania, both of which refused transit. Soviet aircraft could and did fly to Czech bases through Romanian airspace by Romanian permission. The question of whether a serious Soviet land contribution was logistically possible in 1938 is one to which the answer was probably no, regardless of Soviet intentions.

The diplomatic perception in 1938 was nevertheless that the Soviet Union had been excluded from the Munich settlement by British and French choice. Stalin drew the conclusion that collective security with the Western powers was unworkable. The conclusion was a contributing cause of the eventual Nazi-Soviet alignment of August 1939. Recent scholarship by Geoffrey Roberts in The Soviet Union and the Origins of the Second World War of 1995 emphasises the seriousness of the Soviet collective security commitment in 1938 and treats Munich as a turning point in Soviet calculations rather than as a symbolic event already followed by the Nazi-Soviet inevitability. The argument complicates the traditional Western interpretation in which Soviet ideology made the Pact inevitable; the alternative is that Soviet alignment with the Western powers was possible until the Western powers definitively excluded the Soviet Union from the settlement of European questions.

30.10 Historiographical debate. The appeasement controversy

The historiography of appeasement is among the richest in modern history. The orthodox interpretation, dominant from 1940 to the early 1960s, treats appeasement as the political failure of weak and short-sighted statesmen. Cato's Guilty Men of July 1940 set the framework. Churchill's The Gathering Storm of 1948 elaborated the indictment in memoir form. The orthodox view rested on the assumption that Hitler's intentions were knowable and that earlier and firmer Western action could have stopped the descent into war.

The revisionist interpretation, dominant from the 1960s onwards, treats appeasement as the rational policy of statesmen facing severe military, economic and imperial constraints. A.J.P. Taylor's The Origins of the Second World War of 1961 argued that Hitler was an opportunist rather than a long-range planner and that British and French policy had been more rational than later memory recognised. R.A.C. Parker's Chamberlain and Appeasement of 1993 and Robert Self's Neville Chamberlain biography of 2006 develop the revisionist case in detail, drawing on Cabinet papers that became available from 1970. Paul Kennedy in The Realities Behind Diplomacy of 1981 set British appeasement in the context of imperial overstretch and the rising relative weight of the United States, Germany and the Soviet Union.

The post-revisionist synthesis, articulated in Anthony Adamthwaite's The Making of the Second World War of 1977 and in Donald Cameron Watt's How War Came of 1989, treats appeasement as a defensible response to genuine constraints that nevertheless reflected specific miscalculations, particularly at Munich, that cannot be explained away by structural factors alone. Watt's framing in particular emphasises that the choice in September 1938 was not between Munich and war but between Munich, war, and the alternative course of

accepting that war was likely and using the additional months to rearm. The choice was a real one, and Chamberlain's preference for Munich reflected a misjudgment of Hitler's intentions that was reasonable at the time but was specifically wrong.

The most recent contributions, including Tim Bouverie's Appeasement of 2019, return to a more critical view, arguing that the available evidence in 1938 about Hitler's intentions was sufficient to justify a firmer response and that the structural constraints, while real, did not preclude the alternative course. The appeasement debate is unlikely to settle, because it is fundamentally a debate about counterfactuals, and counterfactuals are unfalsifiable. What can be said with confidence is that the policy of accommodation through 1938 was followed by the policy of guarantee and then by war within twelve months, and that the strategic position of Britain and France in September 1939 was not significantly stronger than it had been in September 1938.

Chapter summary

The international response to German and Italian expansion was characterised by the failure of collective security and the emergence of appeasement as the principal Western policy. The League of Nations failed three tests in succession and was no longer a serious factor in European diplomacy by 1937. British and French appeasement reflected a combination of real military and economic constraints, genuine fear of war, and miscalculation about the intentions and capacities of the revisionist powers. American isolationism, codified in the Neutrality Acts, prevented substantive American support for victims of aggression until Lend-Lease in 1941. Soviet policy moved from collective security under Litvinov, through transitional ambiguity in summer 1939, to the Nazi-Soviet alignment of August 1939 to June 1941. The post-Versailles system was destroyed by the cumulative effect of these responses as well as by the actions of the revisionist powers themselves.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Collective security	The League principle that aggression against any state would meet collective response
Appeasement	The British policy of accommodation through negotiation
Neutrality Acts	The 1935 to 1937 American legislation constraining support for belligerents
Cash and carry	The 1937 provision requiring belligerents to pay cash for goods
Lend-Lease Act	The March 1941 American legislation supplying Allies without immediate payment
Maksim Litvinov	The Soviet Foreign Minister of the collective security phase
Popular Front	The Comintern strategy of communist alliance with non-communist anti-fascists
Vyacheslav Molotov	The Foreign Minister who replaced Litvinov in May 1939

Questions

1. Examine the reasons for the failure of collective security in the 1930s.
2. To what extent was appeasement the rational response to British military and economic constraints?
3. Evaluate the consequences of American isolationism for the international response to expansion.

Chapter 31: Germany and Italy source bank with worked questions

Summary of events
This chapter assembles representative source materials from across the German and Italian case study, paired with worked questions in each of the four Paper 1 formats. As in Chapter 18 for the Japan case study, the sources here are paraphrased or summarised rather than reproduced verbatim, and candidates should not memorise them as actual examination texts. The technique is what matters.

31.1 Source A. Hossbach Memorandum, 5 November 1937, summary

The aim of German policy is to make secure and to preserve the racial community and to enlarge it. It is therefore a question of space. Germany's problem could only be solved by means of force, and this was never without attendant risk. The questions for Germany ran: when and how? In this connection there were three cases to be considered. Case one: the period 1943 to 1945. After this date only a change for the worse, from our point of view, could be expected. Case two: France immobilised by internal strife. Case three: France involved in war with another state.

31.2 Source B. Speech by Neville Chamberlain at Heston aerodrome, 30 September 1938

I have returned from Germany with a paper bearing the signature of Herr Hitler as well as my own. Some of you may have heard already what it contains, but I would just like to read it to you. We the German Führer and Chancellor and the British Prime Minister regard the agreement signed last night and the Anglo-German naval agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again.

31.3 Source C. British political cartoon, October 1938

The cartoon shows Chamberlain returning from Munich with an umbrella and a piece of paper, walking past a series of small figures representing the small states of central Europe, who lie on the ground bound and gagged. The figure of Czechoslovakia is in the foreground, with a German boot on its chest. The caption reads, "The umbrella man returns".

31.4 Source D. Pact of Steel, 22 May 1939, articles 3 and 5

> *Article 3. If, contrary to the wishes and hopes of the contracting parties, it should happen that one of them became involved in war with another power or other powers, the other contracting party would immediately step to its side as ally and support it with all its military forces on land, sea, and in the air. Article 5. The contracting parties bind themselves now to conclude no armistice or peace except by mutual agreement.*

31.5 Worked Question 1 part a, three points

Question. What does Source A suggest about the timing and methods of German expansion as discussed at the Hossbach Conference?

Worked answer. Firstly, the source suggests that German policy was committed to enlarging the German racial community, as shown by the phrase "to make secure and to preserve the racial community and to enlarge it". Secondly, the source suggests that this enlargement would require force, as shown by the phrase "could only be solved by means of force". Thirdly, the source suggests that the timing of action was contingent on international circumstances, as shown by the three contingencies of "Case one" through "Case three" with different timetables and triggers.

31.6 Worked Question 1 part b, two messages

Question. What is the message of Source C?

Worked answer. The first message of the cartoon is that Chamberlain's diplomacy at Munich left the small states of central Europe vulnerable to aggression, as shown by the figures representing those states lying bound and gagged on the ground. The second message is that the Munich Agreement specifically permitted German aggression against Czechoslovakia, as shown by the figure of Czechoslovakia in the foreground with a German boot on its chest.

31.7 Worked Question 2, OPCVL on Source A

Question. With reference to its origin, purpose and content, evaluate the value and limitations of Source A for a historian studying Hitler's intentions toward German expansion in 1937.

Worked answer. The origin of Source A is the unsigned memorandum kept by Colonel Friedrich Hossbach, Hitler's military adjutant, of a conference held at the Reich Chancellery on 5 November 1937. The memorandum was written from memory five days after the conference. The purpose of the original conference was for Hitler to set out his strategic thinking to the senior military and foreign affairs leadership. The purpose of Hossbach's record was internal documentation of the discussion, not for publication. The content of the source is the strategic framework of German expansion, with the key question identified as space, the necessity of force acknowledged, and three contingencies for timing identified.

The source is highly valuable to a historian studying Hitler's intentions because it documents Hitler's strategic thinking in a confidential context, before a small audience of trusted associates, where there was less reason to engage in propaganda or rhetorical posturing than in public speeches. The identification of specific contingencies and timetables, with 1943 to 1945 as a deadline for general action, suggests programmatic planning rather than only opportunistic response.

The source has limitations. Hossbach's record was not signed by Hitler and was reconstructed from memory five days after the conference. The exact wording cannot be guaranteed, and Hitler's emphasis or rhetorical posture may have been altered in transcription. The conference was a single discussion rather than a definitive policy statement. The intentionalist-structuralist debate in Nazi historiography has produced disagreement

about how programmatic Hitler's planning actually was, with some historians treating the Hossbach Memorandum as evidence of long-term planning and others treating it as evidence of contingent calculation. The candidate should be aware that the source's evidential value is contested.

31.8 Worked Question 3, running comparison on Sources B and C

Question. Compare and contrast the views of the Munich Agreement in Sources B and C.

Worked answer. Sources B and C share their focus on the Munich Agreement of September 1938 and on Chamberlain personally as its central figure, but they diverge sharply in their assessment. Both sources treat Chamberlain's diplomacy as a personal achievement, with Source B presenting his return from Munich as the triumphant conclusion of a successful negotiation, evidenced by the public reading of a paper signed by both leaders, and Source C presenting his return as a personal action visible through the symbolic umbrella and the recognisable figure walking past the bound states. Both sources also treat the Anglo-German relationship as a key dimension of the agreement, with Source B emphasising the desire that the two peoples never go to war again and Source C emphasising the abandonment of central European states to German pressure.

The sources differ fundamentally in their evaluative posture. Source B is Chamberlain's own statement at Heston Aerodrome, delivered to a relieved British public, and adopts a tone of celebration and accomplishment. The reading of the paper is presented as evidence of substantive achievement, a binding commitment to peaceful Anglo-German relations. Source C is a critical political cartoon adopting the visual rhetoric of satire, with the bound and gagged small states and the German boot on the chest of Czechoslovakia presenting the agreement as a betrayal of international standing. Where Source B treats the agreement as a foundation for European peace, Source C treats it as the abandonment of central European states to fascist aggression. The provenance difference, with Source B produced by Chamberlain himself and Source C produced by a critic, explains the divergence.

31.9 Worked Question 4, mini-essay on the failure of appeasement

Question. Using all four sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the failure of appeasement was the result of structural constraints on Western policy rather than of personal misjudgement by Western leaders.

Worked answer outline. The argument is partially correct but requires qualification. The introduction sets out the thesis that structural constraints and personal misjudgement both contributed and that the relative weight differs across the period. Three body paragraphs develop the argument. The first addresses the structural constraints, drawing on Source A to show the systematic German planning that any Western policy would have had to confront, and on own knowledge of British and French military weakness, the legacy of First World War casualties, and the economic constraints of the Depression. The second addresses the personal misjudgement at Munich, drawing on Source B as evidence of Chamberlain's overstatement of what the agreement had achieved, and on Source C as evidence that critical contemporary opinion was already available. The third addresses the moment of policy change, drawing on Source D as evidence of how the Pact of Steel demonstrated the binding alliance that the British guarantee to Poland was meant to deter, and on own knowledge of the British turn after Prague in March 1939. The conclusion returns to the thesis with a judgement that structural constraints made appeasement plausible while personal misjudgement explains the specific decisions at Munich, with the failure ultimately of both.

Chapter summary

The Germany and Italy case study source bank illustrates the kinds of source material that Paper 1 examinations on the case study are likely to draw on, including German strategic documents like the Hossbach Memorandum, British political statements like Chamberlain's Heston address, critical political cartoons and treaty texts. The worked questions show how each of the four Paper 1 question types can be applied. Candidates should practise similar exercises on past papers, on the Cambridge textbook by Allan Todd, and on the further sources in Chapter 36's past paper bank.

PART IV: EXAMINATION PREPARATION

Chapter 32: Worked Question 1 answers

Summary of events
This chapter consolidates the Question 1 worked answers from across the book and adds further examples for both case studies. Question 1 part a awards three marks for three separate points from one written source. Part b awards two marks for two messages from one visual source. The technique is signposting, support and brevity. The candidate who masters this question reliably scores four or five out of five and contributes a fifth of the paper's marks before the harder questions begin.

32.1 Worked answer 1. Japan case, Source A on the Lytton Report

The full worked answer for Question 1 part a on Source A of the Japan source bank from Chapter 18 is reproduced here for direct reference during revision.

Question. What does Source A suggest about the Lytton Commission's view of Japanese actions in Manchuria?

Worked answer. Firstly, the source suggests that the Commission concluded that Japanese military operations on the night of 18 to 19 September 1931 were not legitimate self-defence, as shown by the phrase "cannot be regarded as measures of legitimate self-defence". Secondly, the source suggests that the Commission viewed Manchukuo as a Japanese imposition rather than a genuine state, as shown by the phrase "imposed on the inhabitants of Manchuria by the Japanese army". Thirdly, the source suggests that the Commission acknowledged that Japan had legitimate interests in Manchuria, as shown by the reference to "legitimate economic and security interests".

32.2 Worked answer 2. Japan case, Source C cartoon

Question. What is the message of Source C, the cartoon showing the League as a tortoise on its back?

Worked answer. The first message of the cartoon is that the League of Nations was paralysed and unable to act against Japanese aggression, as shown by the figure of the tortoise on its back with its legs waving helplessly. The second message is that the principle of collective security through Article 16 had been demonstrated to be ineffective, as shown by the caption "Article 16 in action" in ironic relation to the picture.

32.3 Worked answer 3. Germany and Italy case, Source A on the Hossbach Memorandum

Question. What does Source A suggest about the timing and methods of German expansion as discussed at the Hossbach Conference?

Worked answer. Firstly, the source suggests that German policy was committed to enlarging the German racial community, as shown by the phrase "to make secure and to preserve the racial community and to enlarge it". Secondly, the source suggests that this enlargement would require force, as shown by the phrase "could only be solved by means of force". Thirdly, the source suggests that the timing of action was contingent on international circumstances, as shown by the three contingencies of "Case one" through "Case three" with different timetables and triggers.

32.4 Worked answer 4. Germany and Italy case, Source C cartoon

Question. What is the message of Source C, the cartoon showing Chamberlain returning from Munich?

Worked answer. The first message of the cartoon is that Chamberlain's diplomacy at Munich left the small states of central Europe vulnerable to aggression, as shown by the figures representing those states lying bound and gagged on the ground. The second message is that the Munich Agreement specifically permitted German aggression against Czechoslovakia, as shown by the figure of Czechoslovakia in the foreground with a German boot on its chest.

32.5 The pattern across worked answers

Each worked answer follows the same template. For Part a, the candidate uses firstly, secondly and thirdly to signpost three separate points, each with a brief two or three word quotation from the source. For Part b, the candidate uses the first message and the second message to signpost two separate messages, each tied to a specific visible element. The candidate avoids long quotations, repetition of the same point in different words, and importing context from outside the source. The technique is straightforward and produces full or near-full marks reliably.

Chapter summary

Question 1 is the most marketable five marks on Paper 1. The technique of signposting, support and brevity, applied to either written or visual sources, produces three or four out of five marks reliably and four or five out of five with practice. The four worked answers above can be used as templates that the candidate adapts to the specific sources and questions of each examination paper.

Chapter 33: Worked Question 2 answers with full OPCVL

Summary of events
This chapter provides three full worked Question 2 answers, demonstrating the OPCVL framework applied to representative sources from across both case studies. Each answer is structured to score in the upper part of the four-mark range, with a clear value-and-limitations argument anchored in the OPC observations.

33.1 Worked answer 1. Source A from Japan case study

Question. With reference to its origin, purpose and content, evaluate the value and limitations of Source A, the Lytton Report extract, for a historian studying the international response to Japanese aggression in Manchuria.

Worked answer. The origin of Source A is the official report of the Lytton Commission of Enquiry, published in October 1932 after a year of investigation in Manchuria, China and Japan. The Commission was composed of five members representing major League powers, with Lord Lytton of Britain as chairman. The purpose of the report was to advise the League Council on how to respond to the Manchurian Incident, providing an authoritative international assessment that would shape collective action. The content of the source is the Commission's central conclusions, denying that Japanese operations were self-defence and rejecting Manchukuo as a genuine state, while acknowledging Japanese interests and proposing autonomous Manchurian government under Chinese sovereignty.

The source is highly valuable to a historian studying the international response because it provides the central document on which the League's vote of February 1933 was based, and it represents the considered judgement of an international commission with access to all parties. The careful balance of the conclusions, condemning Japanese actions while acknowledging Japanese interests, illustrates the diplomatic difficulty the League faced. The source is limited because it presents the formal League position rather than the diverging views of the individual member powers. A historian studying the actual capacity of the League to respond, rather than its formal position, would need to consult Cabinet papers and diplomatic correspondence from the major members. The proposal of autonomous Manchurian government, never implemented, also signals the gap between the report's recommendations and the international community's willingness or capacity to enforce them.

33.2 Worked answer 2. Source D from Japan case study

Question. With reference to its origin, purpose and content, evaluate the value and limitations of Source D, the Hull Note of 26 November 1941, for a historian studying the breakdown of US-Japanese relations.

Worked answer. The origin of Source D is the diplomatic note delivered by American Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Japanese Ambassador Nomura Kichisaburō on 26 November 1941. The note was the formal American statement of minimum requirements for an agreement during the Hull-Nomura negotiations that had run from August 1941. The purpose of the note was to communicate the American negotiating position in unambiguous terms after months of inconclusive discussion, and to test whether the Japanese government

would accept the conditions or would proceed to war. The content of the source is the American demand for full Japanese withdrawal from China and Indochina, recognition of the Nationalist government in Chongqing, and abandonment of agreements with third powers, namely the Tripartite Pact.

The source is valuable to a historian studying the breakdown of US-Japanese relations because it represents the final American negotiating position before war and because the Japanese interpretation of it as an ultimatum directly produced the decision for war. The specific terms of the note allow a historian to identify the issues that proved insoluble. The source is limited because it represents the American minimum position rather than the Japanese understanding of what could be agreed. A historian studying the Japanese decision-making process would need to consult contemporary Japanese cabinet records, including the Liaison Conference deliberations of late November 1941 that interpreted the note. The note also represents only one side of a negotiation that the historian must reconstruct from sources on both sides.

33.3 Worked answer 3. Source D from Germany and Italy case study

Question. With reference to its origin, purpose and content, evaluate the value and limitations of Source D, the Pact of Steel articles 3 and 5, for a historian studying the Italian-German alliance.

Worked answer. The origin of Source D is the formal text of the Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy, signed in Berlin on 22 May 1939 by Foreign Ministers Joachim von Ribbentrop and Galeazzo Ciano. The purpose of the text was to establish a binding international commitment to mutual military support, both as an internal commitment between the two regimes and as a public deterrent to Britain and France. The content of the source is the binding mutual defence commitment of Article 3, requiring each party to support the other in any war regardless of how the war began, and the prohibition on separate armistice or peace negotiations of Article 5.

The source is valuable to a historian studying the Italian-German alliance because it provides the formal terms of the alliance in language that the parties accepted, indicating the level of commitment that the two states formally undertook. The mutual defence commitment without restrictive conditions distinguishes the Pact of Steel from earlier diplomatic alignments and from the Anti-Comintern Pact. The source is limited because the formal text overstates the operational reality. Italy was not militarily ready to honour the commitment when Germany invaded Poland in September 1939, and Italian non-belligerency from 1 September 1939 to 10 June 1940 demonstrated that the formal commitment did not translate into operational reality. A historian studying the alliance in practice rather than on paper would need to consult Italian military assessments, Mussolini's communications with the German leadership, and documents on the parallel Italian-German negotiations about the timing of war.

Chapter summary

The three worked answers demonstrate the application of OPCVL across different types of source. Source A is an international commission report. Source D from Japan is a diplomatic note. Source D from Germany and Italy is a treaty text. Each requires the candidate to identify origin, purpose and content, then to develop a value-and-limitations argument that draws on those observations. The technique is consistent. The historical content varies with the specific source.

Chapter 34: Worked Question 3 answers with running comparison

Summary of events
This chapter provides two full worked Question 3 answers, demonstrating the running comparison technique. Each answer is structured around a similarities paragraph and a differences paragraph, with both sources cited together within each thematic point.

34.1 Worked answer 1. Sources A and B from Japan case study

Question. Compare and contrast the views in Sources A and B about Japanese actions in Manchuria.

Worked answer. Sources A and B share the framing of Manchurian events as being assessed against international standards, but they reach opposite conclusions on the legitimacy of Japanese actions. Both sources accept that the central question is how to evaluate the Manchurian operations, with Source A treating that question through the framework of collective security and self-defence and Source B treating it through the framework of historical comparison with Western imperialism. Both sources also acknowledge that Japan acted with reference to East Asian conditions, with Source A admitting Japanese economic and security interests and Source B asserting Japanese understanding of Asian realities.

The sources differ sharply in their conclusions and in their rhetorical posture. Source A is the formal product of an international commission and adopts the measured tone of diplomatic assessment, concluding that Japanese operations were not self-defence and that Manchukuo was an imposition. Source B is a political speech delivered by the Japanese delegate at the moment of the League's vote, and adopts a defiant tone of national assertion, arguing that Western criticism is hypocritical and that Japan will follow her own path. Where Source A treats the Manchurian episode as a violation of international law, Source B treats it as the legitimate exercise of Asian self-determination against Western imperialism. The provenance difference, with Source A produced by an international body and Source B produced by the Japanese government, explains the divergence in both content and tone.

34.2 Worked answer 2. Sources B and C from Germany and Italy case study

Question. Compare and contrast the views of the Munich Agreement in Sources B and C.

Worked answer. Sources B and C share their focus on the Munich Agreement of September 1938 and on Chamberlain personally as its central figure, but they diverge sharply in their assessment. Both sources treat Chamberlain's diplomacy as a personal achievement, with Source B presenting his return from Munich as the triumphant conclusion of a successful negotiation, evidenced by the public reading of a paper signed by both leaders, and Source C presenting his return as a personal action visible through the symbolic umbrella and the recognisable figure walking past the bound states. Both sources also treat the Anglo-German relationship as a key dimension of the agreement, with Source B emphasising the desire that the two peoples never go to war again and Source C emphasising the abandonment of central European states to German pressure.

The sources differ fundamentally in their evaluative posture. Source B is Chamberlain's own statement at Heston Aerodrome, delivered to a relieved British public, and adopts a tone of celebration and

accomplishment. The reading of the paper is presented as evidence of substantive achievement, a binding commitment to peaceful Anglo-German relations. Source C is a critical political cartoon adopting the visual rhetoric of satire, with the bound and gagged small states and the German boot on the chest of Czechoslovakia presenting the agreement as a betrayal of international standing. Where Source B treats the agreement as a foundation for European peace, Source C treats it as the abandonment of central European states to fascist aggression. The provenance difference, with Source B produced by Chamberlain himself and Source C produced by a critic, explains the divergence.

Chapter summary

The two worked answers demonstrate the running comparison technique. Each is organised around two thematic paragraphs, similarities and differences, with both sources cited together in each paragraph. The structural rule is that no paragraph treats one source alone, and that every comparison is anchored in specific source content. The provenance dimension is incorporated when it explains the divergence in views.

Chapter 35: Worked Question 4 answers with full mini-essays

Summary of events
This chapter provides two worked Question 4 mini-essays, one for each case study, demonstrating the synthesis of source evidence with own knowledge. Each essay is structured with a brief introduction, three or four PEEL body paragraphs and a brief conclusion. Each body paragraph cites at least one source by letter and contributes at least one item of own knowledge that goes beyond the sources.

35.1 Worked answer 1. Japan case study

Question. Using all four sources from the Japan case study source bank in Chapter 18 and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the international response to Japanese expansion was too limited to constrain Japanese policy until it was too late to prevent war.

Worked introduction. The argument that the international response was too limited to constrain Japanese policy until too late is broadly correct. The League of Nations failed to enforce its own findings in 1932 to 1933, the United States did not impose substantive sanctions until 1939 to 1941, and the eventual American escalation of summer 1941 was severe enough to provoke war rather than to restrain it. This essay will examine the League's failure, the prolonged American hesitation and the final escalation of 1941, before concluding that the response was indeed too limited for too long but that the eventual response was severe enough to make war rather than constraint the outcome.

Body paragraph 1. The League's failure. The League of Nations response to the Manchurian Incident demonstrated the structural failure of collective security. The Lytton Report of 1932, summarised in Source A, produced a clear finding that Japanese operations were not self-defence and that Manchukuo was a Japanese imposition. The League's Special Assembly accepted the report by forty-two votes to one in February 1933. But the response stopped at declaration. No sanctions were imposed. The League had no enforcement instruments, and Japan responded by withdrawing from the League in March 1933 with no further consequence. Source B, Matsuoka's defiant speech, illustrates the Japanese contempt that the limited response invited. The Japanese conclusion, that international action could not constrain a determined major power, was reasonable on the available evidence and shaped Japanese expectations for the next eight years.

Body paragraph 2. The prolonged American hesitation. The American response from 1933 to 1939 escalated only rhetorically rather than substantively. The Stimson Doctrine of January 1932 had committed the United States to non-recognition without sanctions. Roosevelt's Quarantine Speech of October 1937, delivered after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, signalled rhetorical disapproval but produced no policy change. The Panay Incident of December 1937, in which Japanese aircraft sank an American gunboat, produced an apology and indemnity rather than retaliation. Source C, the cartoon showing the League as a paralysed tortoise, captures the broader Western failure that the United States as well as the League shared. American economic support for the Sino-Japanese War was constrained by the Neutrality Acts but American oil and steel exports to Japan continued at substantial levels. The combination of rhetorical disapproval with continued material support produced limited pressure on Japanese policy.

Body paragraph 3. The final escalation of 1941. The American response escalated rapidly between July 1939 and August 1941, culminating in the freezing of Japanese assets and the comprehensive oil embargo that produced the immediate crisis. Source D, the Hull Note of 26 November 1941, illustrates the American minimum demands at the end of the negotiation. The demand for Japanese withdrawal from China and Indochina, recognition of the Nationalist government and abandonment of the Tripartite Pact was incompatible with what the Tojo cabinet could accept. The decision for war followed within ten days. The escalation was thus severe enough to provoke war rather than to restrain it. The earlier and steadier pressure that might have constrained Japanese policy, before the strategic and political momentum of expansion had built, had not been applied.

Conclusion. The international response to Japanese expansion was indeed too limited to constrain Japanese policy until too late. The League's failure in 1932 to 1933 invited the further aggression of 1937. The prolonged American hesitation through the 1930s permitted that further aggression to consolidate. The eventual escalation of 1941 was severe enough to make war rather than constraint the outcome. Whether earlier and steadier pressure could have prevented this outcome is a counterfactual question, but the actual sequence shows that limited and late pressure produced the worst possible result.

35.2 Worked answer 2. Germany and Italy case study

Question. Using all four sources from the Germany and Italy case study source bank in Chapter 31 and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the failure of appeasement was the result of structural constraints on Western policy rather than of personal misjudgement by Western leaders.

Worked introduction. The argument is partially correct. Structural constraints on British and French policy were severe and shaped the available range of choices. But personal misjudgement at specific moments, particularly at Munich, exceeded what the structural constraints required. This essay will examine the structural constraints themselves, the personal misjudgement at Munich and the moment of policy change in 1939, before concluding that both factors contributed and that the relative weight differs across the period.

Body paragraph 1. Structural constraints. The structural constraints on Western policy were severe. British and French military weakness in 1936 to 1938 was real, with rearmament programmes underway but not yet producing forces capable of confronting Germany. The economic constraints of the Depression had limited rearmament budgets through the early 1930s. The legacy of First World War casualties had produced a public mood deeply averse to another European war. The imperial commitments of Britain and France constrained the forces available for European deployment. Source A, the Hossbach Memorandum, indicates that German planning was systematic and identified action timetables that any Western policy would have had to confront. The Soviet Union, which might have provided a counterweight in the East, was treated by both Britain and France as ideologically suspect and was excluded from the principal negotiations until summer 1939, when it had become too late to construct a credible alliance.

Body paragraph 2. Personal misjudgement at Munich. The personal misjudgement of Chamberlain at Munich exceeded what the structural constraints required. Source B, his statement at Heston Aerodrome on the return from Munich, treats the agreement as a foundation for European peace and reads the Anglo-German agreement as a binding commitment. Critical contemporary opinion, as in Source C with its image of Chamberlain walking past the bound and gagged small states, was already available and was not adopted. Chamberlain's belief that Hitler had limited and rational objectives was not shared by the British Foreign Office or by significant elements of the British Cabinet. The Munich settlement was not the only outcome the structural constraints permitted. A firmer position at Bad Godesberg might have forced a different German calculation in September 1938, and the year between Munich and the outbreak of war did not produce the

disproportionate Western military improvement that defenders of the agreement have sometimes claimed. The personal misjudgement was Chamberlain's optimism about Hitler's intentions, an optimism that was not required by the structural constraints.

Body paragraph 3. The moment of policy change. The moment of policy change in March 1939 demonstrates that the structural constraints did not fully determine the available options. The German occupation of Prague on 15 March 1939 produced the British turn against appeasement. The British guarantee to Poland of 31 March 1939, followed by the French guarantee, committed the Western Allies to defend Polish independence against German attack. The Pact of Steel of 22 May 1939, summarised in Source D, formalised the Italian-German alliance that the British guarantee was meant to deter. The fact that policy could change in March 1939, despite the same structural constraints that had operated in September 1938, suggests that the earlier policy had not been wholly determined by those constraints. The change reflected a shift in personal judgement by Chamberlain and his colleagues, recognising that their earlier reading of Hitler's intentions had been wrong.

Conclusion. The failure of appeasement was the result of both structural constraints and personal misjudgement. The structural constraints were severe and shaped the range of available choices. The personal misjudgement was specific and exceeded what the structural constraints required, particularly at Munich. The change of policy in March 1939, under the same structural constraints, demonstrates that personal judgement had genuine room for variation. The relative weight of the two factors differs across the period, with structural constraints dominant in the years before Munich and personal misjudgement dominant at Munich itself.

Chapter summary

The two worked mini-essays demonstrate the synthesis of source material with own knowledge across both case studies. Each essay opens with a brief introduction setting out the thesis. Each body paragraph addresses one substantive point, citing at least one source by letter and contributing at least one item of own knowledge. Each essay concludes with a return to the thesis and a final judgement. The candidate who can produce essays of this kind under examination conditions reliably scores in the upper mark band of seven to nine out of nine.

Chapter 36: Practice question bank with mapping to chapters

Summary of events
This chapter collects practice questions in the style of recent IB Paper 1 examinations on The Move to Global War, mapped to the chapters of this book where the relevant material is developed. The questions are written for this book, not copied from examination papers. Candidates should attempt at least one full timed paper per week in the two months before the examination.

36.1 Practice questions for the Japan case study

The questions below are written in the style of past papers and grouped by theme. Candidates should also consult published past papers from recent sessions for the exact wording and the source materials.

Causes of expansion theme

1. Examine the impact of nationalism and militarism on Japanese foreign policy in the 1930s. Chapters 9 to 11.
2. To what extent did domestic economic issues drive Japanese expansion? Chapter 11.
3. Evaluate the significance of political instability in China for Japanese strategic planning. Chapter 12.
4. Compare and contrast two sources on the role of the Kwantung Army. Chapters 10 and 13.

Events theme

1. Examine the causes and consequences of the Manchurian Incident. Chapter 13.
2. To what extent did the Marco Polo Bridge Incident represent an unplanned escalation? Chapter 14.
3. Evaluate the significance of the Tripartite Pact for Japanese foreign policy. Chapter 17.

Responses theme

1. Examine the international response to Japanese aggression in the 1930s. Chapter 16.
2. To what extent was the failure of the League of Nations a structural rather than a contingent failure? Chapters 13 and 16.
3. Evaluate the role of American economic pressure in producing the Pacific War. Chapters 16 and 17.

36.2 Practice questions for the Germany and Italy case study

Causes of expansion theme

1. Examine the impact of fascism on Italian foreign policy. Chapter 20.
2. To what extent did Mein Kampf programme German foreign policy? Chapter 21.
3. Evaluate the significance of domestic economic issues in shaping German and Italian foreign policy. Chapters 20 and 21.

Events theme

1. Examine the causes and consequences of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. Chapter 22.
2. To what extent did the Spanish Civil War transform the Italian-German relationship? Chapter 23.
3. Evaluate the significance of the Anschluss for the strategic position of Czechoslovakia. Chapters 24 and 25.
4. Examine the consequences of the Munich Agreement. Chapter 26.

Responses theme

1. Examine the failure of collective security in the 1930s. Chapter 30.
2. To what extent did appeasement reflect structural constraints rather than personal misjudgement? Chapter 30.
3. Evaluate the role of American isolationism in the international response to expansion. Chapter 30.

Chapter summary

The bank of practice questions above covers the range of Paper 1 questions on The Move to Global War. Candidates should plan responses to at least one question per theme per week in the month before the examination, using the chapters mapped to each question as the primary revision resource.

Chapter 37: Source analysis glossary

Term	Meaning
Primary source	A source produced at the time of the event by someone involved
Secondary source	A source produced later, often by a historian or analyst
Provenance	The information about author, date and type given at the source's head
OPCVL	Origin, Purpose, Content, Value, Limitations
Origin	Who created the source, when and where
Purpose	Why the source was created and for what audience
Content	What the source says and in what tone
Value	What a historian can use the source to study, relative to a specific question
Limitations	What the source cannot teach the historian, given OPC features
Tone	The emotional or rhetorical register of the source
Perspective	The position or viewpoint from which the source is written
Description	Stating what the source says
Analysis	Stating what the source means and why it matters
Bias	The directional slant of a source; not necessarily a flaw
Comprehension	The reading skill tested by Question 1, namely identifying what the source says
Running comparison	The Question 3 structural principle of treating both sources together within each thematic point
Sequential description	The error of describing one source then the other without comparison
Synthesis	The Question 4 skill of weaving source evidence with own knowledge in a single argument
Mini-essay	The Question 4 nine-mark response that integrates sources with own knowledge
PEEL adapted	The Paper 1 variant of PEEL in which each paragraph cites at least one source
Direct quotation	A two to four word quotation from a source supporting a specific claim
Paraphrase	A summary of a source's claim in the candidate's words, attributed to the source by letter
Indicative content	The examiner's list of expected points, published in the markscheme
Reading phase	The first five minutes, used to orient the candidate to sources and questions
Time allocation	The plan for distributing one hour across the four questions and the reading phase

Chapter 38: Key vocabulary glossary

Term	Meaning
Adowa	The 1896 Ethiopian victory that fascist propaganda sought to avenge
Albania, invasion of	The 7 to 21 April 1939 Italian operation
Amau Doctrine	The April 1934 assertion of Japanese special interest in East Asia
Anglo-German Naval Agreement	The June 1935 bilateral agreement on German naval rebuilding
Anglo-Polish alliance	The 25 August 1939 commitment to defend Poland
Anschluss	The 12 March 1938 German absorption of Austria
Anti-Comintern Pact	The 1936 to 1937 alignment among Germany, Japan and Italy against communism
Appeasement	The British policy of accommodation through negotiation
Asse Roma-Berlino	The Italian phrase for the Rome-Berlin Axis
Bad Godesberg	The site of Chamberlain's second visit to Hitler, 22 to 24 September 1938
Beneš	The Czech President forced to accept Munich
Berchtesgaden	The site of Chamberlain's first visit to Hitler, 15 September 1938
British guarantee to Poland	The 31 March 1939 commitment to defend Polish independence
Case Green	The 30 May 1938 German directive for war planning against Czechoslovakia
Cash and carry	The 1937 American provision requiring belligerents to pay cash for goods
Chamberlain	The British Prime Minister whose policy of appeasement culminated at Munich
Chiang Kai-shek	The Kuomintang leader who governed Nationalist China
Collective security	The League principle that aggression against any state would meet collective response
Condor Legion	The German air force expedition to Spain
Corfu Incident	The 1923 Italian bombardment and occupation of the Greek island
Corpo Truppe Volontarie	The Italian intervention force in the Spanish Civil War
Czechoslovakia, destruction of	The October 1938 to March 1939 dismemberment
Disarmament Conference	The 1932 to 1934 Geneva negotiations on general disarmament
Dollfuss	The Austrian Chancellor assassinated in the failed July 1934 coup
East Hebei Council	The 1935 Japanese-aligned regime south of the Great Wall
Ethiopia, invasion of	The October 1935 to May 1936 Italian campaign
February 26 Incident	The 1936 attempted military coup in Tokyo
First Vienna Award	The 2 November 1938 transfer of southern Slovakia to Hungary

Term	Meaning
Five Power Treaty	The 1922 Washington Conference naval limitation
Franco	The Spanish Nationalist leader who emerged as Caudillo
Fukoku kyōhei	Rich country, strong army. The slogan of Meiji modernisation
German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact	The January 1934 reassurance to Poland
Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere	The 1940 to 1941 doctrine of Japanese-led Asian economic bloc
Guernica	The Basque town bombed on 26 April 1937
Hácha	The Czech President forced to accept German occupation in March 1939
Haile Selassie	The Ethiopian Emperor who escaped to England
Henlein	The leader of the Sudeten German Party
Hoare-Laval Pact	The December 1935 diplomatic compromise that was leaked and abandoned
Hossbach Memorandum	The unsigned record of the 5 November 1937 strategic conference
Hull Note	The 26 November 1941 American demand for Japanese withdrawal
Imperial Rescript	The 1882 statement of the soldier's loyalty to the emperor
Inukai	The Prime Minister assassinated in May 1932
Ishiwara Kanji	The Kwantung Army colonel who planned the Mukden Incident
Japanese expansion	The 1931 to 1941 sequence from Manchuria to Pearl Harbor
Kellogg-Briand Pact	The 1928 renunciation of war as an instrument of policy
Khalkhin Gol	The 1939 Soviet-Japanese battle decisively won by Zhukov
Kokutai	The doctrine of Japan's unique national polity centred on the imperial line
Korekiyo Takahashi	The Finance Minister whose reflationary policies pulled Japan out of the Depression
Kuomintang	The Chinese Nationalist Party
Kwantung Army	The Japanese garrison along the South Manchurian Railway
Lake Khasan	The 1938 Soviet-Japanese border battle
Lateran Pacts	The 1929 agreements with the Holy See
Lebensraum	The Nazi doctrine of German expansion into Eastern Europe
Lend-Lease Act	The March 1941 American legislation supplying Allies without immediate payment
Litvinov	The Soviet Foreign Minister of the collective security phase
Long March	The 1934 to 1935 Communist retreat from Jiangxi to Shaanxi
Lytton Commission	The League of Nations Commission of Enquiry chaired by Lord Lytton
Lytton Report	The October 1932 report concluding Japan had been the aggressor
Manchukuo	The puppet state proclaimed in March 1932

Term	Meaning
Manchurian Incident	The 18 September 1931 staged railway explosion that began the Japanese conquest of Manchuria
Marco Polo Bridge Incident	The 7 July 1937 trigger of full Sino-Japanese War
Mare nostrum	The fascist claim of Italian primacy in the Mediterranean
Matsuoka Yōsuke	The Japanese delegate who walked out of the League assembly in February 1933
May Fourth Movement	The 1919 Chinese protest against the Versailles settlement
Mein Kampf	Hitler's 1924 to 1925 statement of ideological foundations
Meiji Restoration	The 1868 overthrow of the shogunate and the formal restoration of imperial authority
Memel	The Lithuanian port occupied by Germany on 23 March 1939
Molotov	The Foreign Minister who replaced Litvinov in May 1939
Mukden Incident	The 18 September 1931 staged railway explosion
Munich Agreement	The 29 to 30 September 1938 four-power conference
Mutilated victory	The Italian nationalist phrase describing the limited gains from Versailles
Nanjing, Rape of	The six weeks of systematic atrocities after Nanjing's fall in December 1937
Nazi-Soviet Pact	The 23 August 1939 non-aggression treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union
Neutrality Acts	The 1935 to 1937 American legislation constraining support for belligerents
Non-Intervention Committee	The London body that nominally prohibited foreign intervention in Spain
Northern Expedition	The 1926 to 1928 military campaign that reunified China under the KMT
Pact of Steel	The 22 May 1939 binding alliance between Germany and Italy
Pact of Paris	The 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war as policy
Panay Incident	The December 1937 sinking of the American gunboat by Japanese aircraft
Peace Preservation Law	The 1925 Japanese law criminalising radical political organisations
Pearl Harbor	The 7 December 1941 Japanese attack on the American Pacific Fleet
Popular Front	The Comintern strategy of communist alliance with non-communist anti-fascists
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia	The German entity established on 16 March 1939
Pu Yi	The deposed Qing emperor installed as Manchukuo head of state
Quarantine Speech	Roosevelt's October 1937 Chicago speech proposing quarantine of aggressors
Reichstag Fire Decree	The 28 February 1933 suspension of German civil liberties
Rhineland remilitarisation	The 7 March 1936 German violation of Versailles and Locarno
Romanità	The fascist doctrine of continuity with Roman imperial greatness
Rome-Berlin Axis	The November 1936 announcement of Italian-German alignment
Russo-Japanese War	The 1904 to 1905 war that established Japan as a great power

Term	Meaning
Saar plebiscite	The January 1935 vote returning the Saar to Germany
Schuschnigg	The Austrian Chancellor forced to resign in March 1938
Second Sino-Japanese War	The full war from July 1937 to August 1945
Second United Front	The 1937 to 1945 nominal alliance between KMT and CCP
Shanghai, Battle of	The August to November 1937 battle that destroyed the Nationalist professional army
Sino-Japanese War, First	The 1894 to 1895 war that brought Taiwan into the Japanese empire
Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact	The April 1941 agreement that freed both powers strategically
Stimson Doctrine	The 1932 American commitment to non-recognition of territorial changes by force
Stresa Front	The April 1935 Italian-British-French alignment against German rearmament
Sudeten Crisis	The summer 1938 confrontation over the Sudeten regions of Czechoslovakia
Sudeten German Party	Henlein's Sudeten German Party that agitated under Berlin's direction
Taishō democracy	The party-political experiment of the 1912 to 1926 reign
Tanaka Memorial	The disputed document allegedly outlining Japanese expansion plans
Tanggu Truce	The May 1933 agreement establishing a demilitarised zone south of the Great Wall
Teschen	The region taken by Poland from Czechoslovakia in October 1938
Tojo Hideki	The general who became Prime Minister on 18 October 1941
Treaty of Versailles	The 28 June 1919 peace settlement with Germany
Tripartite Pact	The 27 September 1940 Axis alliance among Japan, Germany and Italy
Twenty-One Demands	The 1915 Japanese demands on China that sought to make it a protectorate
Vichy France	The French rump state that nominally governed Indochina from 1940
Vittoria mutilata	The Italian original of mutilated victory
Walwal Incident	The December 1934 border clash that provided the pretext for the Italian invasion of Ethiopia
Wanping	The town near the Marco Polo Bridge where the 7 July 1937 incident took place
Wang Jingwei	The KMT defector who led the Japanese-backed Reorganised National Government from 1940
Warlord Era	The period of regional military fragmentation in China, 1916 to 1928
Washington Conference	The 1921 to 1922 naval limitation and Pacific framework
World Disarmament Conference	The 1932 to 1934 Geneva negotiations on general disarmament
Wuhan, Battle of	The June to October 1938 battle that ended hopes of decisive Japanese victory
Xi'an Incident	The December 1936 detention of Chiang Kai-shek that produced the Second United Front

Term	Meaning
Yamamoto Isoroku	The Japanese admiral who planned Pearl Harbor
Zaibatsu	The large family-owned industrial conglomerates of imperial Japan
Zhang Xueliang	The Manchurian commander who detained Chiang Kai-shek at Xi'an
Zhang Zuolin	The Manchurian warlord assassinated by Kwantung officers in 1928

End of the book. Good luck on the examination.