

IB DP History HL / SL

Paper 2 Complete Study Guide

World History Topics 10 and 12. A revision textbook

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IB DP History

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IB DP History HL/SL – Paper 2 Complete Study Guide (revision textbook)

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IB DP History HL / SL — Paper 2 Complete Study Guide

World History Topics 10 and 12. Authoritarian States and The Cold War.

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How to use this book

This textbook is the companion volume to the Paper 3 guide and follows the same logic of revision-first design. Where the Paper 3 book presents historical material for Sections 12, 14 and 16 as deep chronological monographs, this Paper 2 book is organised around two world history topics, namely Authoritarian States of the twentieth century and The Cold War. Paper 2 requires a different kind of essay from Paper 3, and the book opens with an extended discussion of how the examination works before turning to the substantive material.

A reader who finishes this book will be able to deploy detailed evidence on five authoritarian leaders, specifically Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Castro, across the three themes that the International Baccalaureate prescribes for Section 10, and will be able to narrate and analyse the Cold War through its origins, through all the major crises in every region of the world, through the particular case of Yugoslavia under Tito, through the Vietnam War as a proxy conflict, and through détente, the Second Cold War and the end of the Soviet system. The fourth part of the book is the examination apparatus, with worked paragraphs in the PEEL(P) format, practice questions in past-paper style mapped onto the chapters, a historiography reference and a consolidated glossary.

The practical advice for revision is the same as in the Paper 3 book. Start a chapter with its Summary of events and Timeline, then read the numbered sections slowly because each of them is written to answer one specific type of Paper 2 question. At the end of the chapter read the historiography and the chapter summary carefully, then test yourself against the Key terms table and attempt at least one of the essay questions in bullet-plan form. Because Paper 2 gives you only forty-five minutes per essay and the marker has to see clear analytical control in a shorter text, the ability to plan quickly and to deploy a historian in two sentences rather than three is what separates the top markband from the middle.

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PART I: PAPER 2 — THE EXAM ITSELF

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

Summary of events

Paper 2 is the examination that tests knowledge of the World History Topics of the IB Diploma Programme in History. It is taken by all students regardless of standard or higher level, lasts one hour and thirty minutes, and asks candidates to write two essays from two different world history topics out of the twelve that the syllabus covers. Each essay is marked out of fifteen, so the paper is worth thirty marks in total, and it contributes twenty-five per cent to the final grade of higher level candidates and thirty per cent to the final grade of standard level candidates. This book covers Topic 10, Authoritarian States of the twentieth century, and Topic 12, The Cold War. The choice of topics matters because the format of the paper obliges candidates to answer one question from each chosen topic and forbids them from answering two questions from the same topic.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How does the format of Paper 2 shape what an answer can look like within forty-five minutes?
2. Why is Paper 2 conceptually different from Paper 3 even when both are essay-based examinations?
3. What does the two-region rule mean in practice, and why does it appear in so many questions?
4. How much detail is realistic in a Paper 2 essay, and where does the examiner draw the line between depth and padding?

Quick reference for Chapter 1

Reference point	Detail
Paper 2 duration	1 hour 30 minutes
Number of essays	2 essays from 2 different topics
Minutes per essay	approximately 45
Marks per essay	15
Total marks	30
Weighting at HL	25 per cent of the final grade
Weighting at SL	30 per cent of the final grade
Questions per topic	4 from which the candidate selects 1
Command terms that appear	evaluate, to what extent, discuss, compare and contrast, examine, analyse

1.1 The format of Paper 2

The format of Paper 2 is best understood in contrast to Paper 3. Paper 3 at higher level runs for two and a half hours and asks candidates to write three essays from a single regional option, which means that the examination rewards depth of knowledge about one region of the world across several historical periods. Paper 2 runs for one hour and thirty minutes and asks for only two essays, but those two essays must come from two different topics out of the twelve listed in the guide. A candidate who has prepared the tenth topic, Authoritarian States of the twentieth century, and the twelfth topic, The Cold War, will on examination day answer one question chosen from the four offered on Section 10 and one question chosen from the four offered on Section 12. The examination booklet offers forty-eight questions in total, namely four per topic across twelve topics, and the candidate has to ignore all but two of them.

The apparent simplicity of this structure hides a practical challenge. Forty-five minutes per essay includes planning time, and most examiners report that candidates who write genuinely analytical essays spend between five and seven minutes on a plan before they begin to write. That leaves approximately thirty-eight minutes of actual writing, which at a realistic writing speed produces between eight hundred and one thousand two hundred words. The essay must contain a clear thesis, an introduction that sets up three or four main arguments, three or four body paragraphs that each make one argument with evidence and explanation and a link back to the question, a perspective element that integrates historiography, and a conclusion that reaches a judgement. The arithmetic of word count and time means that Paper 2 essays cannot be encyclopaedic. The examiner rewards the ability to select evidence carefully and to deploy it analytically, not the ability to remember everything that has ever happened in Germany between 1933 and 1945.

1.2 How Paper 2 differs from Paper 3 in what it rewards

The two examinations test different skills even though both produce essays. Paper 3 tests depth in one region, so a Paper 3 essay on Khrushchev's domestic reforms can assume a rich landscape of Soviet history around it and can concentrate on one narrow problem. Paper 2 tests comparative thinking across regions, and almost every question requires the candidate to bring two examples into dialogue, whether those examples are two authoritarian states, two leaders, two crises or two wars. The structural consequence is that a Paper 2 essay cannot simply describe a case. It has to move systematically between two cases on each axis of the argument, and it has to be organised thematically rather than case by case. A student who writes two sequential biographies, one for Hitler and one for Castro, and then stops will not rise above the middle mark band even if the biographies are factually perfect. A student who builds a thematic comparison where each paragraph addresses one factor across both cases will be in the top band.

The second important difference is that Paper 2 questions are often framed around broad analytical concepts rather than narrow historical events. A Paper 3 question may ask why Alexander II emancipated the serfs, and the answer can remain at the level of concrete Russian history. A Paper 2 question may ask whether the conditions for authoritarian states in the twentieth century were primarily economic, and the answer has to assemble evidence from several countries into a comparative argument about causation. This means that Paper 2 rewards the ability to abstract from the historical narrative and to wield analytical categories such as emergence, consolidation, aims, crisis, impact, causation.

1.3 The two-region rule

A large number of Paper 2 questions include the phrase "two states, each chosen from a different region" or "two wars, each chosen from a different region". The International Baccalaureate recognises four regions for the purposes of Paper 2, and every world history topic has to be studied with examples from at least two of them. The four regions are Africa and the Middle East, the Americas, Asia and Oceania, and Europe. A candidate who writes about Hitler and Mussolini satisfies neither the spirit nor the letter of the rule, because both are European. A candidate who writes about Castro and Mussolini satisfies the rule, because Cuba belongs to the Americas and Italy to Europe. A candidate who writes about Stalin and Mao satisfies the rule, because the USSR belongs to Europe and China to Asia and Oceania.

This book covers Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Castro. All the European leaders are in one regional basket, but Castro is the Americas representative. This means that, on the day of the examination, any question that requires two different regions must pair Castro with one of the four Europeans. Chapter 5 returns to this constraint in detail and shows how to plan your Section 10 revision so that you can write the paired essay with equal comfort, regardless of which European partner the wording of the question happens to suggest.

1.4 How detailed the essay should be

A common mistake in Paper 2 is either too little or too much detail. A thin essay fills paragraphs with assertion and gives one example, or none, to support each claim. A bloated essay stacks facts on top of each other without ever explaining why they matter. The target is roughly three specific items of evidence per paragraph, each with a date or a statistic or a named actor, each explained in one sentence, each linked to the argument of the paragraph. If a paragraph contains five dates but no analysis, it is a descriptive paragraph and cannot exceed the middle band. If a paragraph contains two dates and three sentences of explanation and a historian's view, it is an analytical paragraph and has the shape that the top band requires.

1.5 Selecting the question and breaking it down

The first decision a candidate makes on examination day is which question to answer. The booklet offers four questions for Section 10 and four for Section 12. The choice of question determines everything that follows, and a careless choice produces a struggling essay even when the candidate is well prepared. The discipline that pays off is to read all four questions in your topic, decide which one your evidence best fits, and only then start the outline. Two minutes spent on selection saves ten minutes of mid-essay panic when you realise the question wanted something different from what you have started writing.

Once chosen, the question itself needs decomposition before you write a word. Three operations matter. First, identify the command term, since the verb at the head of the question shapes the entire essay. The chapter that follows treats command terms in detail. Second, locate the key terms that name the historical issue, and ask yourself whether any of them is nebulous enough to need a quick definition. Authoritarian state is the kind of term you should be ready to gloss in a single clause of the introduction, since the marker wants to know that you understand the category. Third, fix the scope of the question. Scope has three components. Thematic scope tells you what factor or process is in play, and if the question names a specific factor your essay must address that factor first. Chronological scope tells you what dates frame the answer, and choosing examples outside those dates is one of the most common ways candidates render strong material irrelevant. Regional scope, where the two-region rule applies, tells you whether you need to draw your two cases from two of the four IB regions.

Examiner reports are unsparing on this point: a question that touches a topic the candidate has prepared is not necessarily the question the candidate had in mind. The candidate who has rehearsed an essay on Hitler's economic policy and reads the question on Hitler's social policy must rewrite the plan, not bend the question to fit the rehearsal. Answer the question as it is, not as you wanted it to be.

Chapter summary

Paper 2 is a ninety-minute examination that asks for two essays from two world history topics. Each essay is marked out of fifteen and the paper contributes a quarter to a third of the final grade depending on level. The examination is different from Paper 3 because it rewards comparative analysis across regions and it disciplines candidates through strict time pressure and through the two-region rule that limits the pairs of examples that can be chosen. This book prepares the candidate for Section 10 and Section 12, and the following chapters of Part I will show how to translate these formal requirements into the shape of a successful essay.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
World history topic	One of the twelve broad thematic topics of the IB History syllabus from which Paper 2 essay questions are drawn
Two-region rule	The requirement in many Paper 2 questions that the two examples be chosen from two of the four IB regions
Four regions	Africa and the Middle East, the Americas, Asia and Oceania, Europe
Section 10	Authoritarian states of the twentieth century
Section 12	The Cold War, superpower tensions and rivalries
Mark out of fifteen	The maximum raw mark for a single Paper 2 essay
Command term	The analytical instruction at the opening of a question that specifies what form the answer should take
Thematic organisation	Essay structure in which each paragraph compares both cases on one factor, as opposed to case-by-case organisation

Questions

1. Explain the ways in which the structure of Paper 2 rewards a different kind of historical thinking from Paper 3.
2. Summarise the two-region rule and list the pairings available to a candidate who has prepared Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Castro.
3. A candidate writes nine hundred words in forty minutes and spends five minutes planning. Estimate how many paragraphs they can reasonably produce and explain how this shapes the essay.

Chapter 2: Command terms of Paper 2

Summary of events

Every Paper 2 question begins with an analytical instruction called a command term, and the command term determines the shape of the answer almost as strongly as the historical topic does. The International Baccalaureate uses a standard set of command terms across all history papers, but Paper 2 questions draw most often on six of them, namely evaluate, to what extent, discuss, compare and contrast, examine and analyse. Candidates who do not adjust their essay structure to the command term produce essays that may be factually strong but analytically off-target, and examiners consistently report that ignoring the command term is one of the three commonest reasons for missing the top mark band.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What exactly is each of the six most common command terms asking the candidate to do?
2. How does the command term shape the opening sentence of the introduction, the organisation of the paragraphs and the form of the conclusion?
3. What are the standard traps associated with each command term, and how does the PEEL(P) framework used in this book help avoid them?

Reference table for Chapter 2

Command term	Core verb	What it requires
Evaluate	Appraise	Strengths, limitations, and a reasoned judgement
To what extent	Measure degree	Agreement and disagreement with a claim, with a degree indicator
Discuss	Review a range	Multiple factors weighed, then a judgement about the most important
Compare and contrast	Set side by side	Similarities and differences between two cases, on shared axes
Examine	Uncover and analyse	Assumptions, interrelationships, implications
Analyse	Break down	Essential elements or structure, shown with evidence

2.1 Evaluate

When the question begins with evaluate, the examiner expects an appraisal in which the candidate weighs the strengths of a position against its limitations and reaches a defensible judgement. A typical Paper 2 evaluation question asks the candidate to evaluate the effectiveness of a leader's policies, or the impact of a war on a country, or the significance of a factor in a historical process. The structural consequence is that the essay has to present both strengths and limitations of the position named in the question, and the conclusion has to say which side of the balance wins.

A trap particular to evaluate questions is the temptation to list strengths in one half of the essay and limitations in the other, without ever weighing them. The result is a descriptive essay that never reaches a judgement. The correct response is to write thematic paragraphs that each address one axis, say the economic axis, and that on that axis show the strengths, show the limitations and draw a mini-judgement. The concluding paragraph then aggregates the mini-judgements into a final assessment. A useful opening sentence for an evaluate essay is something like, "The effectiveness of X was real but structurally limited by Y, and this essay will weigh its successes against its costs before concluding that the regime's achievements were greatest in A while its limitations were deepest in B."

2.2 To what extent

When the question begins with to what extent, the examiner expects the candidate to establish a degree, not simply to answer yes or no. The implicit spectrum runs from no agreement at all, through limited agreement, partial agreement, substantial agreement, to full agreement. A strong essay signals where on the spectrum the argument lands and why. A typical Paper 2 question asks to what extent a stated factor was responsible for an outcome, for example to what extent social division was the most significant factor in the emergence of two authoritarian states.

The trap specific to this command term is ignoring the factor named in the question and writing instead about the factors that the candidate finds most interesting. The IB examiner reports return to this error year after year. The correct response is to address the named factor head on in the introduction, to give it its own paragraph or paragraphs early in the essay, and then to introduce alternative factors as contrast, finally concluding with a verdict on how much weight the named factor deserves relative to the alternatives. A useful opening sentence is something like, "Social division was a significant but not the most significant factor in the emergence of authoritarian states in Italy and Cuba; this essay argues that economic crisis and the weakness of the liberal political system were ultimately more decisive."

2.3 Discuss

When the question begins with discuss, the examiner invites the candidate to offer a balanced review of several factors or arguments and then to reach a considered judgement about which is the strongest. A Paper 2 discuss question often lists several possible factors and asks the candidate to discuss their relative importance, or it names a claim and invites discussion of its merits. The structural implication is that the essay has to present multiple positions fairly, not just one, and then argue for one as more persuasive than the others.

The trap with discuss questions is one-sidedness. A candidate who argues only for the position stated in the quotation, or only against it, has not discussed anything and the examiner marks the essay down accordingly. The correct response is to construct at least two distinct positions, explain why intelligent people hold each of them, and then pick a side with an explanation of why the supporting evidence is stronger. A useful opening sentence is something like, "This question has generated considerable debate among historians; while intentionalists argue X, structuralists argue Y, and this essay will weigh both positions before concluding that the structuralist case carries greater explanatory weight for the cases under consideration."

2.4 Compare and contrast

When the question opens with compare and contrast, the examiner expects a running comparison, which means a thematic essay in which each paragraph addresses one point of similarity or difference across both cases. The wrong structure is to write a first half about case A and a second half about case B, because that produces two descriptions and no comparison. The right structure is to build each paragraph around one axis, such as ideology, force, economic policy or foreign policy, and within each paragraph to show how both cases looked on that axis, pointing out similarities and differences as the argument develops.

The structural consequence is severe. A candidate who writes a biographical half on Mussolini and a biographical half on Castro will never rise above the middle mark band no matter how factually accurate the biographies are, because there is no comparison. A candidate who builds four thematic paragraphs, each comparing both cases on one axis, is in the upper mark band by the end of the third paragraph. A useful opening sentence is something like, "The rise to power of Mussolini and Castro shared significant features but also diverged in important ways; this essay argues that their similarities lay in the weakness of the regimes they replaced, while their differences lay in the ideological character of their movements."

2.5 Examine

Examine is the rarest of the six terms but it appears regularly enough to be worth separate attention. The examiner expects the candidate to uncover the assumptions or the interrelationships implicit in a claim, and to analyse how the parts of a problem fit together. A Paper 2 examine question often asks the candidate to examine the impact of a factor on an outcome, or to examine the relationship between two processes. The essay should not be a narrative of events but a dissection of how the pieces connect.

The trap with examine questions is that they invite storytelling. A candidate hears "examine the impact of the Cold War on a country" and begins a chronological narrative of what happened. The correct response is to identify the dimensions of impact, say economic, political, social and cultural, and to analyse each dimension in turn, showing how the Cold War context caused specific outcomes in that dimension. A useful opening sentence is something like, "The Cold War shaped Cuba along economic, political, cultural and international axes, and this essay will examine each in turn, arguing that the economic dimension was the most formative."

2.6 Analyse

Analyse is closely related to examine but with a slightly narrower focus. The examiner expects the candidate to break down a process or an outcome into its essential elements, to explain how each element contributed, and to show the connections between them. A typical Paper 2 analyse question asks the candidate to analyse the methods used by a leader, or to analyse the causes of a crisis.

The trap with analyse questions is, again, narrative. A candidate who tells the story of how Hitler came to power has not analysed anything. A candidate who identifies four methods, economic policy, propaganda, legal framework and violence, and shows how each method worked, has done the analytical work that the command term requires. A useful opening sentence is something like, "Hitler's consolidation of power between 1933 and 1934 combined legal manoeuvres, systematic propaganda, controlled violence and institutional coordination; this essay analyses each method and shows how their interaction produced a dictatorship in eighteen months."

Chapter summary

Every Paper 2 question is shaped by its command term, and the command term determines the shape of the answer as much as the historical topic does. The six commonest command terms are evaluate, to what extent, discuss, compare and contrast, examine and analyse, and each has its own structural implications and its own traps. A candidate who adjusts the essay to the command term is already halfway to the upper mark band, while a candidate who ignores the command term will be stuck in the middle however much factual knowledge they possess.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Evaluate	Command term requiring appraisal of strengths and limitations and a reasoned judgement
To what extent	Command term requiring a positioning on a spectrum of agreement
Discuss	Command term requiring balanced review of multiple factors and a judgement
Compare and contrast	Command term requiring thematic side-by-side analysis of two cases
Examine	Command term requiring dissection of assumptions and interrelationships
Analyse	Command term requiring breakdown of essential elements of a process
Running comparison	The structural principle that each paragraph addresses one axis across both cases
Named factor	The specific factor stated in a to what extent question that the essay must address first

Questions

1. Rewrite the opening sentence of an essay for each of the six command terms, using the question stem "the role of propaganda in Hitler's consolidation of power".
2. Explain why a biographical comparison of Mussolini and Castro, however accurate, cannot score above the middle band on a compare and contrast question.
3. Identify the command term traps discussed in the chapter and explain how the PEEL(P) paragraph structure helps to avoid each of them.

Chapter 3: Mark bands explained

Summary of events

The Paper 2 markscheme awards marks out of fifteen according to five bands, with thirteen to fifteen the highest and one to three the lowest. The bands are cumulative, which means that to score thirteen a candidate needs everything the twelve-mark band requires and more besides, and examiners are instructed to find the best-fit band and then to place the essay at the top, middle or bottom of that band depending on how fully the criteria are met. Understanding the bands is essential because it tells the candidate exactly what to produce in order to reach a given mark, and it demystifies the gap between a seven and a thirteen, which is a gap of analytical discipline rather than of knowledge.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What does the examiner look for at each mark band?
2. Which specific moves lift an essay from one band to the next?
3. How do the four assessment criteria of focus and structure, knowledge and examples, argument and perspectives, and critical analysis, combine into a single band?

Reference table for Chapter 3

Band	Marks	Core descriptor
Top	13 to 15	Focused, analytical, well-structured, historiographically aware, consistent conclusion
Upper	10 to 12	Clearly addressed, mostly analytical, some perspectives, generally well-structured
Middle	7 to 9	Mix of analysis and narrative, some evidence, some structure
Lower	4 to 6	Mostly descriptive, limited evidence, weak structure
Bottom	1 to 3	Very limited knowledge, no clear argument

3.1 The top band, 13 to 15 marks

In the top band, the IB expects (in paraphrase) a response that is sharply focused and fully aware of what the question demands and implies. It is well organised, and its knowledge of the topic is accurate and relevant. Events are set in context and the historical concepts are clearly understood. The examples chosen are well suited to the question and are used effectively to support analysis or evaluation. The response makes effective links and comparisons, offers clear and coherent critical analysis, and evaluates different perspectives in a way that is built into the argument. Almost every main point is backed by evidence, and the essay argues towards a consistent conclusion.

What this paragraph asks for in plain English is an essay that does six things. The thesis answers the question directly. Each paragraph develops one substantive argument with named, dated evidence. Each paragraph then explains why the evidence matters rather than merely reporting it. At least two historians are named with their views and the candidate evaluates which view is better supported by the evidence at hand. The structure is balanced. The conclusion delivers a judgement consistent with the body. Focus means addressing the specific question on the paper rather than a nearby easier question. Analytical means more words on explanation and judgement than on description. Well-structured means a deliberate order with introduction, body and conclusion. Historiographically aware means at least two historians integrated into the argument rather than mentioned decoratively, and evaluated rather than reported.

The gap between a thirteen and a fifteen is small but real. A thirteen is a top-band essay with a few small weaknesses, perhaps one underdeveloped paragraph or a slightly over-assertive conclusion. A fifteen is a top-band essay with no real weaknesses, where every paragraph lands, every historian is used well, and the conclusion is both decisive and nuanced.

3.2 The upper band, 10 to 12 marks

In the upper band, the IB describes (in paraphrase) a response that understands and addresses what the question demands. It is generally well organised, with some repetition or unclear passages. Knowledge is mostly accurate and relevant, events are placed in context, and the historical concepts are partly understood. The examples are appropriate and support the analysis or evaluation. Links and comparisons are effective, the critical analysis is mainly clear and coherent, and there is some awareness and evaluation of different perspectives. Most main points are substantiated, and the essay argues towards a consistent conclusion.

This is the band most IB students reach with reasonable preparation. The characteristic weakness is the perspective element. The essay is competent, the evidence is solid, but the historians are mentioned rather than evaluated, or the candidate names a school of thought without contrasting it with another. The move from twelve to thirteen is almost always made through the perspective element. A candidate who writes a competent thematic essay with good evidence and no historiography at all is a solid eleven. The same candidate, with two named historians whose views are integrated into two different paragraphs and whose arguments are evaluated, is a solid thirteen. The perspective element is the single biggest lever the candidate controls on examination day, and the cost of the upgrade is two extra sentences per perspective, total perhaps four sentences across the essay. That is the cheapest two-mark gain available on the paper.

3.3 The middle band, 7 to 9 marks

In the middle band, the IB describes (in paraphrase) a response that grasps what the question demands but addresses it only in part. There is an attempt at a structured approach. Knowledge is partly accurate and relevant, events are generally placed in context, and the examples are appropriate. Links and comparisons are made, and the response goes beyond description into some analysis or critical comment, but this does not last through the essay.

The middle band is where narrative dominates over analysis. Candidates in this band typically know a lot about their topics but have not learned to organise that knowledge for the question. They tell the story of Mussolini's rise and list his methods of consolidation, without ever arguing that the methods were effective, or effective for this reason rather than that, or comparable to another leader's in this specific way. The classic shape of a middle-band essay is four chronological paragraphs that march through the topic in date order. The chronology is correct, the dates are right, but the question asked about a thematic factor rather than a chronological sequence. The move from the middle band to the upper band is made through thematic organisation. A candidate who writes four paragraphs where each paragraph addresses one axis of the

question will almost always be in the upper band, even if the evidence is slightly thin. A candidate who writes four chronological paragraphs will almost always be in the middle band, even if the evidence is rich.

3.4 The lower bands, 1 to 6 marks

For the four to six band, the IB describes (in paraphrase) a response that shows some understanding of what the question demands. There may be an attempt at structure, but the essay lacks clarity and coherence. Knowledge is present but not accurate or relevant enough, and the grasp of historical context is superficial. Specific examples are named, but they are vague or only loosely relevant. There is a little analysis, but the essay is mainly narrative or description.

For the one to three band, the IB describes (in paraphrase) a response that shows little understanding of what the question demands. It is poorly structured or, if it has the outline of an essay, hardly focuses on the task. Very little knowledge of the topic is shown. The examples are wrong, irrelevant or vague, there is little or no critical analysis, and the essay may rest mainly on generalisations and unsupported assertions.

Essays in the lower bands are typically the product of underpreparation rather than of misunderstanding the rubric. A candidate who does not know the relevant dates, who cannot name the key figures, who has only general impressions of the topic, will end up in the four to six band no matter how well they structure the response. The remedy is preparation rather than technique. The textbook you are reading is built specifically to lift a candidate out of these bands through its emphasis on specific dates, named actors and structural features of each regime.

3.5 The four assessment criteria

The IB markscheme does not award separate marks for each assessment criterion but the examiner uses four criteria to reach the best-fit judgement. The first is focus and structure, which is whether the essay answers the question and whether it is organised. The second is knowledge and examples, which is whether the candidate knows specific facts and can use them. The third is argument and perspectives, which is whether the candidate has a clear argument and considers alternatives including historiographical perspectives. The fourth is critical analysis, which is whether the essay analyses rather than describes and whether it reaches a judgement.

The four criteria interact. A candidate with excellent knowledge but poor focus will end up in the middle band because the knowledge is misdirected. A candidate with focus and analysis but thin knowledge will end up in the upper band at best, because the analysis does not rest on enough evidence. The top band demands all four simultaneously.

Chapter summary

Paper 2 essays are marked on a five-band scale out of fifteen marks. The top band rewards focused, analytical, well-structured and historiographically integrated essays. Most prepared candidates who adopt the thematic structure and deploy two historians well will be in the upper band or the top band. Candidates whose essays drift into narrative rather than analysis remain in the middle band. The single most consequential move a candidate can make on examination day is to integrate historiography through the Perspective element of the PEEL(P) paragraph, because that move typically lifts an upper-band essay into the top band.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Best-fit judgement	The examiner's procedure of identifying the band that most closely matches the essay and then placing the essay at the top, middle or bottom of that band
Assessment criterion	One of the four aspects the examiner looks for, namely focus and structure, knowledge and examples, argument and perspectives, critical analysis
Thematic organisation	The structural principle in which each paragraph addresses one axis of the argument across both cases
Perspective integration	The technique of weaving a historian's argument into the candidate's own argument, rather than naming the historian decoratively
Named factor	The factor stated in the question that the essay must address directly
Running comparison	The form in which a compare and contrast essay is organised, with each paragraph addressing both cases on one axis

Questions

1. Summarise the five mark bands in one sentence each.
2. Identify the single move that most reliably lifts an upper-band essay into the top band.
3. Explain why a richly detailed essay can end up in the middle band.

Chapter 4: Essay writing technique and the PEEL(P) paragraph

Summary of events

This book uses an extended version of the standard PEEL paragraph called PEEL(P), which adds a fifth element called Perspective. The fifth element is where the candidate integrates a historian's view into the argument. The PEEL(P) paragraph is the workhorse of a top-band Paper 2 essay because it combines evidence, explanation, argument and historiography in a single analytical unit. This chapter presents the full PEEL(P) structure, shows a worked example on a Castro question, and demonstrates how the Perspective element is what separates the upper band from the top band. Over the course of the book every leader chapter contains at least one full PEEL(P) worked paragraph so that the technique becomes familiar and transferable.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What does each of the five elements of the PEEL(P) paragraph do, and in what order do they appear?
2. How is historiography integrated through the Perspective element rather than dropped as a name?
3. What are the most common faults at each element, and how are they corrected?

Reference table for Chapter 4

Element	Role	Typical opening
P. Point	States the argument of the paragraph	"A significant method was…"
E. Evidence	Delivers specific facts	"In 1961 the regime…"
E. Explanation	Explains why the evidence matters	"This is significant because…"
L. Link	Connects back to the question	"Therefore, this method was central to…"
P. Perspective	Integrates and evaluates a historian	"This interpretation aligns with X, who argues…, though Y challenges…"

4.1 Why PEEL(P) rather than PEEL

The classical PEEL paragraph, with its four elements of Point, Evidence, Explanation and Link, is the structure taught in most secondary history courses and it is the minimum requirement for an analytical essay. In IB Paper 2, however, the examiner explicitly rewards the integration of historiographical perspectives, and the top mark band descriptor mentions perspectives in each of its three sentences. A candidate who has a strong four-element paragraph has done everything a good PEEL paragraph requires, but has not yet done what the top band of Paper 2 requires. The fifth element, Perspective, is the bridge between a solid upper-band essay and a top-band essay.

The school PEEL(P) model teaches that the Perspective element does three things. First, it names a historian and states what they argue. Second, it provides a counter-view, either by naming a second historian or by signalling the existence of an alternative interpretation. Third, it evaluates the two views and explains which is

better supported by the evidence in the paragraph. A Perspective element that only does the first thing is name-dropping, and name-dropping does not lift the essay into the top band. A Perspective element that does all three things is genuine historiographical integration and is the hallmark of a top-band essay.

4.2 A worked PEEL(P) paragraph on Castro

The model paragraph below responds to the question, "Evaluate the role of ideology in Castro's consolidation of power." It is offered here as a template that the chapters of Part II and Part III will replicate for other topics.

Point. Ideology played a significant role in Castro's consolidation of power, as the adoption of Marxism-Leninism provided a framework that justified radical political transformation and the elimination of opposition.

Evidence. After the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961, Castro declared the revolution socialist, and by December 1961 he announced himself a Marxist-Leninist. The 26 July Movement, the PSP and the Revolutionary Directorate were merged into the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations, ORI, in 1961, which became the Communist Party of Cuba, PCC, in 1965 as the only legal party.

Explanation. The adoption of Marxist-Leninist ideology served multiple consolidation purposes. It provided intellectual justification for eliminating opposition parties and concentrating power in a single party. It legitimised the nationalisation of private enterprises during the Revolutionary Offensive of 1968. It cemented the alliance with the Soviet Union, which secured the military protection and economic subsidies essential for survival against the hostility of the United States.

Link. Therefore ideology was a significant strength in Castro's consolidation, providing both domestic legitimacy for one-party rule and international support from the Soviet bloc.

Perspective. This interpretation aligns with the intentionalist view of Renzo De Felice, who argues that authoritarian leaders are master politicians who strategically adopt ideologies to achieve their goals. However, revisionist historians such as Philip Brenner challenge this reading, suggesting that Castro's turn to Marxism was primarily a response to United States pressure rather than a pre-planned strategy. Castro himself admitted in 1963 that the pressure of events forced me to accept Marxism. The evidence supports a middle position, namely that Castro's ideological shift was partly reactive but that he skilfully used Marxism as a tool of consolidation once adopted.

4.3 The introduction and the conclusion

The PEEL(P) paragraph is the workhorse of the body of the essay, but it cannot stand alone. A Paper 2 essay also needs a short introduction and a conclusion that match the command term. The introduction should be between two and four sentences and should do three things. It should provide a line of context that locates the question historically. It should state the thesis directly answering the question in the wording of the question itself. It should signpost the main arguments that the essay will develop. Long context-setting introductions are one of the commonest time-killers on the paper, and examiner reports flag them every year. The marker does not need a paragraph of background. The marker needs to know, by the third sentence, what the essay is going to argue.

A worked example on the Spanish Civil War shows the discipline at work. The question reads, To what extent did foreign intervention play a role in the outcome of one civil war? A high-scoring introduction reads, On 1 April 1939 the Spanish Civil War ended after the Republicans surrendered, after a bloody three-year conflict. Franco and his rebel army took control of Madrid, and Spain would remain under his control for almost forty years. Foreign intervention played a role in the outcome of the civil war, especially through the unbalanced

foreign support that the two sides received, with the Nationalists benefiting the most. However, this was not the sole factor, since internal divisions within the Republicans, unbalanced military leadership and food supply issues all contributed to Franco's victory. The example does context, thesis and signposting in four sentences. Notice how the thesis recycles the question's command term to what extent into a measured judgement, and how the four arguments that the body of the essay will develop are named explicitly. The marker now expects four substantive paragraphs in that order. The candidate has signposted, the marker has been signposted, and the structure of the essay is fixed before the body begins.

The conclusion should be a single paragraph that does two things. It summarises the argument in the terms of the question, and it delivers a judgement that responds to the command term. An evaluate essay ends with an appraisal. A to what extent essay ends with a degree. A discuss essay ends with a choice of most important factor. A compare and contrast essay ends with a statement about whether similarities or differences dominate. An examine essay ends with an assertion about how the elements connect. An analyse essay ends with a judgement about which element is most essential. Two or three sentences are enough. The candidate who runs out of time and writes only a one-sentence conclusion has lost two or three marks unnecessarily, since the markband descriptors at every level above the bottom expect the essay to argue towards a consistent conclusion.

4.4 Common faults and their corrections

The most common fault at the Point step is a topic sentence that describes rather than argues. A sentence such as "Castro used propaganda in his consolidation" describes a fact. A sentence such as "Propaganda was a significant but secondary tool in Castro's consolidation compared with the elimination of rivals" makes an argument. The examiner reads the first sentence of the paragraph as the argument of the paragraph, and a descriptive topic sentence advertises an upper-middle-band paragraph before the evidence has been presented.

The most common fault at the Evidence step is generality. Phrases like many Cubans, some observers, widespread repression, frequently used, are all red flags to the examiner. The correction is specificity. Not many Cubans but seven hundred thousand students in the Literacy Campaign of 1961. Not widespread repression but Huber Matos imprisoned for twenty years in October 1959.

The most common fault at the Explanation step is restating the evidence in different words. The correction is to answer the silent question "so what" after each item of evidence. Why does this matter. What does it show. What does it demonstrate about the regime.

The most common fault at the Link step is omitting it, or turning it into a summary of the paragraph. The correction is a single sentence that names the argument of the essay and confirms that the paragraph has advanced it.

The most common fault at the Perspective step is name-dropping. The correction is the three-move structure described in Section 4.1. State the view. Contrast it with another view. Evaluate which is stronger for the paragraph's evidence.

4.5 The analytical phrasebook

Examiner reports note in nearly every session that high-scoring essays use a recognisable vocabulary of analysis. Reports and published sample answers show the phrases that recur in upper-band scripts, and they are worth memorising because they signal to the marker, often within the first sentence of a paragraph, that the candidate is writing analytically rather than narratively. The phrasebook is short, perhaps fifteen formulations, and once internalised it almost writes the analytical sentences for you.

For introducing evidence in support of a claim, the standard formulations are This is supported by, This is illustrated by, Evidence for this claim can be found in, and A clear example is. These transitions move the paragraph from Point to Evidence with no wasted words. For developing the explanation that follows the evidence, useful openings are This clearly highlights that, This is significant because, The implication is that, What this shows is, and What follows from this is that. The marker reading the phrase this is significant because knows the next clause is the analytical move from fact to argument, and the awareness improves the marker's perception of the writing.

For drawing analytical conclusions within a paragraph, a useful formulation is given X, it can be concluded that Y. The structure compresses the explanatory move into one sentence and signals deduction rather than assertion. Given the dependence of the Italian regime on the Lateran Pacts for Catholic legitimation, it can be concluded that the partial autonomy retained by the Church remained one of the structural limits on totalitarian penetration. The formulation works for any topic and earns analytical credit without breaking the flow of the paragraph.

For building contrast within an argument, In contrast to and Whereas are both standard. In contrast to Mussolini's gradualism between 1922 and 1925, Hitler's consolidation in 1933 to 1934 telescoped most legal moves into eighteen months. The contrast moves the paragraph forward without spending a transitional sentence. For evaluative judgements, the most useful formulations are the strengths of this position lie in, the limitations of this reading are, and a more persuasive case can be made for. Each signals to the marker that an evaluation is happening rather than mere reporting.

For perspective integration, the three-move structure of state-contrast-evaluate has its own phrasebook. This interpretation aligns with X, who argues… establishes the view. However, while X claims…, Y suggests… establishes the contrast. Consequently, Y's theory might be a better explanation than X's because… establishes the evaluation. The candidate who writes this trio of sentences, with the historians named and the evidence cited, has produced a top-band Perspective element.

A final useful phrase for deploying detailed factual evidence is tangible. When you write that a regime had a tangible impact on its population, the natural follow-up is to specify the impact with three or four dated examples. The Cuban regime's commitment to literacy had a tangible impact, registering the enrolment of seven hundred thousand brigadistas in 1961, an officially measured drop in adult illiteracy from twenty-three to four per cent in nine months and the expansion of primary school provision into rural communities that had previously had no formal schooling. The word tangible opens the door to the specific evidence the upper band requires.

Phrase	Function in the paragraph
This is supported by	Introducing evidence for a claim
This clearly highlights that	Moving from evidence to explanation
Given X, it can be concluded that Y	Compressing the explanatory move
In contrast to	Building contrast within an argument
The strengths of this position lie in	Initiating an evaluation
This interpretation aligns with	Stating a historian's view

Phrase	Function in the paragraph
However, while X claims…, Y suggests	Contrasting two historians
Consequently, Y's theory might be a better explanation	Evaluating between historians
Tangible	Cueing detailed factual evidence

Chapter summary

The PEEL(P) paragraph extends the classical PEEL format with a fifth element called Perspective that integrates historiography into the argument. The Perspective element is the single most effective move a candidate can make to reach the top mark band. Each of the five elements has characteristic faults that cost marks, and each fault has a specific correction. The introduction and conclusion of the essay follow the logic of the command term and frame the PEEL(P) body paragraphs. The book's Section 10 and Section 12 chapters include worked PEEL(P) paragraphs so that the technique becomes second nature by examination day.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
PEEL(P)	The paragraph model used in this book, with Point, Evidence, Explanation, Link and Perspective
Point	The topic sentence that argues rather than describes
Evidence	The specific, dated, named material that supports the point
Explanation	The sentence or two that answers the silent question "so what" after each item of evidence
Link	The sentence that connects the paragraph back to the thesis of the essay
Perspective	The historiographical integration, naming a historian, contrasting with another, and evaluating which is stronger
Name-dropping	The error of mentioning a historian without explaining their argument or evaluating it
Integration	The correct deployment of a historian's view, in which the view is stated, contrasted and evaluated

Questions

1. Write a PEEL(P) paragraph for the question "Evaluate the effectiveness of Mussolini's use of propaganda." Use at least one historian named in the chapter or in Chapter 10.
2. Identify the difference between name-dropping and integration in historiography, and give one example of each.
3. Write the opening sentence of a conclusion for each of the six command terms, using the general topic of authoritarian consolidation.

Chapter 5: The two-region rule and how to avoid losing marks on it

Summary of events

One of the most consistent reasons candidates lose marks on Paper 2 is the two-region rule. Many questions require that the two examples chosen by the candidate come from two different regions of the world as the IB defines them. A candidate who has thoroughly prepared Stalin and Hitler can still lose several marks if the question demands two regions and the candidate writes about two European cases. This chapter sets out the four IB regions, explains which of the five leaders studied in this book belongs to which region, and shows how to pair the cases for any possible question. It also explains how to read a question carefully to determine whether the two-region rule applies, because not every question imposes it.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Which are the four IB regions, and to which region does each of the five leaders belong?
2. How do I recognise whether a question imposes the two-region rule?
3. What pairings are available to a candidate who has studied these five leaders?
4. How do I plan my revision so that I can write any region-paired essay comfortably?

Reference table for Chapter 5

Region	IB designation	Leaders in this book
Africa and the Middle East	The continent and the states of the Middle East	None of the five
The Americas	North, Central and South America and the Caribbean	Castro
Asia and Oceania	Asia and the Pacific	None of the five, though Mao would qualify if added
Europe	The continent, including Russia and the USSR	Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler

5.1 The four regions

The International Baccalaureate divides the world into four regions for the purposes of Paper 2. Africa and the Middle East covers the African continent and the Arabic-speaking states of Western Asia. The Americas covers North, Central and South America and the Caribbean islands, including Cuba. Asia and Oceania covers the rest of Asia and the Pacific. Europe covers the European continent, including the British Isles, and the whole former Soviet Union, even though much of it extends deep into Asia. The decision to place the USSR in Europe rather than Asia reflects the historical and political orientation of the Soviet state, and means that both Lenin and Stalin count as European leaders for Paper 2 purposes.

5.2 The regional distribution of the five leaders

This book covers Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Castro. Of these five, four are Europeans, namely Lenin and Stalin for the USSR, Mussolini for Italy and Hitler for Germany. The fifth, Castro, is the only leader in the Americas. This has a direct practical consequence on examination day. Any Paper 2 question that requires two regions has to pair Castro with one of the four Europeans, because Castro is the only non-European case in this book. A candidate who prepares Castro only lightly and hopes to write on two Europeans will find themselves in trouble if the question requires two regions.

5.3 Recognising when the rule applies

Not every Paper 2 question imposes the two-region rule. A question that reads "evaluate the role of ideology in the consolidation of power of one authoritarian state" has no regional requirement because it asks about one state. A question that reads "evaluate the role of ideology in the consolidation of power of two authoritarian states, each chosen from a different region" imposes the rule explicitly in the wording. A question that reads "evaluate the role of ideology in the consolidation of power of two authoritarian states" does not impose the rule explicitly, and the candidate is free to choose two European cases, though the two-region pairing is typically rewarded with greater credit because of the comparative richness it produces.

The simple rule for reading the question is to look for the phrase "each from a different region" or "each chosen from a different region". If that phrase is present, the rule applies. If it is absent, the rule does not apply, though a two-region pairing may still be the better choice.

5.4 The available pairings and how to prepare for them

For a candidate who has studied these five leaders, the pairings that satisfy the two-region rule are all pairings that include Castro. The four pairings are Castro with Lenin, Castro with Stalin, Castro with Mussolini, and Castro with Hitler. Each of these pairings has analytical strengths and weaknesses. Castro and Lenin are both revolutionary leaders who came to power through armed insurrection against weakened regimes, so comparing their consolidation of power is analytically rich. Castro and Stalin are the two communist leaders and therefore share an ideological framework even though they operated in very different contexts. Castro and Mussolini are both nationalist populists who came to power in semi-agrarian societies with strong foreign dependencies. Castro and Hitler present the starkest ideological contrast but share the use of charismatic leadership and foreign enemies to maintain power.

The practical consequence for revision is that the Castro chapter of this book deserves the most intensive preparation of any of the five, because Castro is the one case that can be paired with any of the four Europeans. The same is not true in reverse. If the examination day question does not require two regions, the candidate may prefer a two-European pairing, for example Hitler and Mussolini, which produces analytically rich comparison within the fascist tradition. But the Castro pairings must be kept available at all times.

5.5 A worked example of pairing choice

Consider a recent-style question, "Discuss, with reference to two states from different regions, the claim that fragile political systems were the single most important cause of the emergence of authoritarian states." This question requires two regions and imposes no other restriction, so the candidate must pair Castro with one European leader. The candidate has to decide which European. A strong candidate will pair Castro with the European leader whose emergence provides the sharpest illustration of the factor named in the question. The weakness of the Italian liberal state, with fourteen governments in five years and coalition politics that never produced a stable majority, is a textbook example of a weak political system. The weakness of pre-revolutionary Cuba under Batista, where the constitutional order had been shattered by the 1952 coup and electoral politics had been suspended, is another textbook example. Castro and Mussolini therefore emerge as the strongest pairing for this specific question, because both cases illustrate weak political systems with unusual clarity.

Chapter summary

The two-region rule is a formal requirement of many Paper 2 questions and is one of the most common reasons candidates lose marks. Of the five leaders covered in this book, Castro alone represents a non-European region. Every region-paired essay must therefore include Castro. The practical implication is that Castro deserves particularly thorough revision, and that candidates should be able to write a Castro comparison with each of the four European leaders covered in this book. Not every question imposes the rule, and candidates should read the wording carefully before choosing a pairing. When the rule is imposed, the strongest pairing is the one that best matches the specific factor named in the question.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Two-region rule	The requirement in many Paper 2 questions that the two examples come from two different IB regions
Four regions	Africa and the Middle East, the Americas, Asia and Oceania, Europe
Explicit wording	The phrase "each chosen from a different region" that signals the rule
Regional pairing	A selection of two examples that satisfies the two-region rule
The Castro pairings	The four region-compliant pairings available for these five leaders, namely Castro with Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini or Hitler

Questions

1. List the five leaders covered in this book and state the region of each.
2. Identify which pairings in the list of five satisfy the two-region rule.
3. Given the wording "evaluate the impact of social policies in two authoritarian states, each chosen from a different region", explain the best pairing choice and why.

Chapter 6: Integrating historiography in a short essay

Summary of events

Paper 2 essays are half the length of Paper 3 essays, and the candidate has only forty-five minutes including planning. The integration of historiography therefore has to be tighter and more efficient than in Paper 3. This chapter sets out the technique of tight historiographical deployment, drawing on the PEEL(P) framework introduced in Chapter 4. It presents a bank of historians for Section 10 and Section 12 that every candidate should be able to name by examination day, and it explains how to use them economically under time pressure.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How much historiography is realistic in a forty-five minute essay?
2. Which historians should the candidate know for Section 10 and for Section 12?
3. How does the candidate move from name-dropping to genuine integration in the time available?

Reference table for Chapter 6

Section	Priority historians	Schools
Section 10 Lenin	Pipes, Service, Fitzpatrick	Totalitarian, liberal, revisionist
Section 10 Stalin	Conquest, Fitzpatrick, Getty, Kotkin	Totalitarian, revisionist, post-revisionist
Section 10 Mussolini	De Felice, Bosworth, Paxton	Consent-thesis, incomplete-totalitarianism, generic-fascism
Section 10 Hitler	Kershaw, Broszat, Mason, Evans	Intentionalist, structuralist, social, synthesis
Section 10 Castro	Pérez-Stable, Horowitz, Domínguez, Brenner	Revisionist, totalitarian, institutionalist, dependency
Section 12 Origins	Gaddis, Zubok, Leffler, Westad	Orthodox, new Cold War, post-revisionist, global
Section 12 End	Gaddis, Kotkin, Brown, Service	Triumphalist, structural, agency, balanced

6.1 How much historiography fits in a short essay

A realistic Paper 2 essay contains between three and five body paragraphs. The candidate does not have the time or space to integrate a historian into every paragraph, and attempting to do so produces a cluttered essay that chases names rather than arguments. The target is two substantial Perspective elements across the body of the essay, one in an early paragraph and one in a later paragraph, each doing the three-move structure described in Chapter 4. A third paragraph may reference a historian in a sentence as reinforcement, but the core historiographical work is done by the two substantial elements.

The economy required by the time limit means that each Perspective element has to do a lot of work in a short space. The candidate should aim for three or four sentences per Perspective, not a paragraph of its own. The three moves, namely stating the view, contrasting it with another, and evaluating, can each take one sentence if the candidate practises.

6.2 The priority bank of historians for Section 10

For Lenin, the three historians every candidate should be able to deploy are Richard Pipes, Robert Service and Sheila Fitzpatrick. Pipes represents the liberal conservative school that sees October as a coup and the Bolshevik regime as inherently authoritarian from the start. Service represents a balanced biographical tradition that sees Lenin as a pragmatic politician rather than a pure ideologue. Fitzpatrick represents the revisionist social history that looks at the regime from below and stresses the genuine popular support the Bolsheviks commanded in 1917.

For Stalin, the four historians are Robert Conquest, Sheila Fitzpatrick, J. Arch Getty and Stephen Kotkin. Conquest is the classical totalitarian historian who sees the Terror as Stalin's personal project. Fitzpatrick and Getty are the revisionists who stress social dynamics and bureaucratic momentum. Kotkin is the post-revisionist who uses post-1991 archival access to reconstruct Stalin's personal direction of policy while retaining the insights of the revisionist school into implementation.

For Mussolini, the three historians are Renzo De Felice, R. J. B. Bosworth and Robert Paxton. De Felice is the controversial Italian historian who argued that Fascism enjoyed genuine popular consent between 1929 and 1936. Bosworth is the critical biographer whose concept of incomplete totalitarianism captures the limits of fascist penetration into Italian society. Paxton is the American comparativist whose definition of fascism has become standard and whose five-stages model of fascist development is widely taught.

For Hitler, the four historians are Ian Kershaw, Martin Broszat, Tim Mason and Richard Evans. Kershaw's concept of working towards the Führer is the standard synthesis of intentionalism and structuralism. Broszat developed the polycratic model of the Nazi state. Mason's emphasis on the flight into war connects economic pressure to foreign policy. Evans is the authoritative modern narrator of the Third Reich in three volumes.

For Castro, the four historians are Marifeli Pérez-Stable, Irving Horowitz, Jorge Domínguez and Philip Brenner. Pérez-Stable is the revisionist who stresses genuine popular support for Castro based on social achievements. Horowitz is the totalitarian-model critic who treats Cuba as a Soviet-style dictatorship. Domínguez is the institutionalist who analyses the Cuban regime through its institutions rather than its ideology or its leader. Brenner is the dependency-theory critic who emphasises the external pressures that shaped the Cuban trajectory.

6.3 The priority bank for Section 12

For the origins of the Cold War, the four historians are John Lewis Gaddis, Vladislav Zubok, Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad. Gaddis in his later work represents the orthodox or triumphalist reading where Soviet expansionism is the main driver of Cold War tensions. Zubok, working from Russian archives, offers a balanced reading of Soviet motivations that neither exonerates nor condemns. Leffler represents the post-revisionist synthesis that sees both superpowers as driven by structural insecurity rather than ideology. Westad globalises the Cold War by showing that much of its history happened in the Global South rather than between Washington and Moscow.

For the end of the Cold War, the four historians are Gaddis again, Kotkin, Archie Brown and Robert Service. Gaddis offers the triumphalist view in which Reagan's strength combined with Gorbachev's weakness produced the Soviet collapse. Kotkin's Armageddon Averted stresses the structural decay of the Soviet

economy and argues that the system was unsustainable regardless of leadership choices. Brown's The Gorbachev Factor gives agency to Gorbachev as the individual whose choices determined the form of collapse. Service in The End of the Cold War provides a balanced synthesis.

6.4 The three-sentence Perspective technique

Under time pressure, the candidate should practise a three-sentence Perspective element. The first sentence names a historian and states their view in one compact clause. The second sentence names a counter-view, either by naming another historian or by signalling the existence of an alternative reading. The third sentence evaluates which view is better supported by the evidence in the paragraph and explains why.

An example from the Stalin chapter. "This interpretation aligns with Robert Conquest, who treats the Terror as Stalin's personally directed project with clearly defined political aims. Sheila Fitzpatrick and J. Arch Getty challenge this reading, stressing the role of local initiative and arrest quotas that generated their own dynamic of radicalisation. The post-revisionist work of Oleg Khlevniuk, drawing on archival material unavailable to Conquest, now supports a synthesis in which Stalin's personal direction was real but worked through a bureaucratic machine whose momentum he could not always predict."

Three sentences. Three historians named. Two schools identified. One evaluation delivered. That is a top-band Perspective element in the time a Paper 2 essay allows.

Chapter summary

Historiography in a Paper 2 essay must be tighter than in a Paper 3 essay because the total time is shorter. The target is two substantial Perspective elements in the body of the essay, each executing the three-move structure of stating a view, contrasting it with another and evaluating which is stronger. Every candidate should know a priority bank of historians for each of the topics they have prepared, and priority banks for Section 10 and Section 12 are listed in this chapter. The three-sentence Perspective technique makes deployment fast enough to fit within forty-five minutes of total essay time.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Priority bank	The small set of historians a candidate should be able to deploy without preparation on examination day
Three-move Perspective	The PEEL(P) technique of stating a view, contrasting it and evaluating it
Three-sentence Perspective	The compressed version of the three-move structure in which each move is one sentence
Name-dropping	Mentioning a historian without explaining or evaluating the view
Integration	Weaving a historian's view into the argument of the paragraph rather than attaching it externally
Orthodox interpretation	The Gaddis-style reading of Cold War origins that blames Soviet expansionism
Post-revisionist interpretation	The Leffler-style reading that treats both superpowers as driven by structural insecurity

Questions

1. List the priority historians for each of the five Section 10 leaders and identify the school each historian represents.
2. Write a three-sentence Perspective on the question "evaluate the effectiveness of Hitler's propaganda" using two historians from the priority bank.
3. Explain why name-dropping does not lift an essay into the top band.

Chapter 6.5: Writing tips and final advice from examiner reports

Summary of events

The IB publishes subject reports after every examination session, and reading two or three years of them in succession reveals that the same handful of practical errors recur from cohort to cohort. The technical content of those reports rotates with the questions asked, but the writing and time-management advice is constant. This chapter collects the recurring tips into a single short reference, drawing on the IB examiner observations and on the patterns that recur in past papers. Each tip looks deceptively obvious. Each is broken every session by candidates who could have earned the marks with two minutes of discipline.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How does the candidate plan a forty-five-minute essay so that the conclusion always gets written?
2. What does the examiner mean by handwriting hygiene, and why does it cost marks to ignore it?
3. How should the candidate use specific historical vocabulary to signal upper-band knowledge?
4. How is the named factor in a to what extent question respected even when the candidate disagrees with it?

6.5.1 Start strong

First impressions count. The marker reading a stack of scripts at midnight forms an early view of the candidate's quality, and the early view colours the marking of the rest of the essay. The strongest argument should appear in the first body paragraph, not the third. The strongest evidence should appear early in that paragraph rather than at the end. A further piece of advice goes a step beyond this. Choose to write your strongest of the two essays first, since the freshly rested mind produces the cleanest prose, and save the weaker topic for the second essay when fatigue has set in. The second essay is the natural place for the topic on which you have less to say, since the marker has already seen the better of the two.

6.5.2 Plan the essay before writing

Five minutes spent on an outline saves ten minutes of mid-essay panic. The outline lists, at minimum, four items. The thesis sentence answering the question. The three or four paragraph topics with a one-line summary of the argument of each. The two historians whose views will appear in the perspective elements. The four to six items of specific dated evidence that will be deployed. With this skeleton in front of you, the body of the essay almost writes itself, and the conclusion becomes a return to the thesis rather than a search for one.

The unstated benefit of the outline is its visibility. If the candidate runs out of time and the conclusion goes unwritten, an outline visible at the back of the booklet allows the marker to see the intended argument. The marker is not allowed to award marks for the outline, but the outline shapes the marker's perception of what the essay was trying to do. Write the outline on a separate page or in the booklet's margins where it can be seen.

6.5.3 Be careful when adding information

Asterisks, arrows and looping lines that direct the marker to forgotten sentences slow the reading and signal poor planning. They also weaken the case for the top band's expectation that the essay is well structured and effectively organised. The remedy is simple. Plan the essay before writing it. When you must add a sentence after the fact, leave the bottom fifteen per cent of each page blank as a buffer so that the addition can sit in context on the same page rather than at the back of the booklet. Adding sentences between paragraphs is worse than adding them at the foot of a page, since extra space between paragraphs interrupts the reading flow.

6.5.4 Handwriting hygiene

The IB scans the answer booklets and the markers read them on screens, which means that handwriting that is legible on paper can become illegible when scanned. Examiner reports flag this problem in nearly every session. Reports complain that many scripts were close to illegible and that many booklets were assembled in the wrong order. The remedies the IB suggests are practical. Print the essay rather than using cursive. Leave generous space between words. Skip a line between paragraphs to make the structure visible. If you know your handwriting is hard to read, talk to the DP coordinator about typing the examination, since this is now a permitted access arrangement at most schools.

6.5.5 Use specific historical vocabulary

The top band rewards detailed knowledge, and detailed knowledge often shows in the vocabulary chosen. Generic terms cost marks. Specific terms, especially in their original language, signal that the candidate has studied the topic at the level the IB rewards. Sturmabteilung rather than brownshirts. Wehrmacht rather than German army. Volksgemeinschaft rather than national community. Acerbo Law rather than the electoral law of 1923. Casus belli, hegemony, sovereignty, autarky, unilateralism rather than their loose English equivalents. Every original-language term that a candidate uses correctly, with its meaning evidently understood, is a small signal to the marker that the candidate knows the regime in detail. The signals accumulate.

6.5.6 Respect the named factor

The most consistent error in to what extent questions is treating the named factor as optional. A question that reads to what extent did social division cause the emergence of authoritarian states names social division as the factor that has to be addressed. A candidate who writes only about economic factors, ideological commitment and the impact of war, and treats social division as an afterthought, has not answered the question. The marker is required to look for treatment of the named factor, and the absence of substantive engagement caps the response in the middle band regardless of how strong the alternative analysis is.

The remedy is the discipline of paragraph one. Whatever your final view on the importance of the named factor, the first body paragraph should address that factor head-on. Then the second and third paragraphs can introduce alternative factors as contrast, and the conclusion can deliver the verdict on the relative weight of the factors. The structure says to the marker, I have engaged with what you asked, and the rest of the essay is then free to argue.

6.5.7 Practise past papers in timed conditions

Examiner reports return to one piece of advice more often than any other: candidates should look at past examination questions regularly throughout the whole school year and discuss with their teachers which topics and which content would give the most relevant answers. Published past papers from recent sessions are the natural material, and the eight weeks before the examination are the time to work through them under timed conditions. The benefit is not chiefly knowledge, since the historical content of past papers will not appear again. The benefit is fluency with the command terms, the markband expectations and the time discipline of writing two essays in ninety minutes.

A reasonable target is one full timed Paper 2 per fortnight in the eight weeks before the examination. Mark each script against the published markscheme, identify the move that would have lifted you a band, and apply that move on the next attempt. The marginal returns on this practice are larger than on any further reading.

Chapter summary

Examiner reports collapse into seven recurring rules. Start with your strongest argument and your strongest essay. Plan the essay in writing before drafting it. Avoid asterisks and arrows that signal poor planning. Write legibly, since the marker reads the script on screen. Use specific historical vocabulary, especially original-language terms. Respect the named factor in a to what extent question even when arguing against it. Practise past papers in timed conditions in the months before the examination. Each rule is small, but together they account for two or three marks per essay, which over two essays is the difference between an upper band and a top band.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Subject report	The IB document published after each session summarising examiner observations
Outline	The five-minute pre-writing skeleton listing thesis, paragraphs, historians and evidence
Original-language term	A historical term retained in its original language, signalling detailed knowledge
Named factor	The factor stated in a to what extent question that the essay must address head-on
Timed conditions	The discipline of writing under the same time constraints as the examination itself

Questions

1. Explain why the strongest argument should appear in the first body paragraph rather than the third.
2. List five pieces of original-language vocabulary you would deploy in an essay on Hitler's consolidation of power.
3. Argue against the view that planning is a luxury when only forty-five minutes are available per essay.

PART II: SECTION 10 — AUTHORITARIAN STATES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Chapter 7: The three themes of Section 10

Summary of events

The IB History syllabus organises the study of authoritarian states into three prescribed themes, each with its own bullet list of content that examiners draw on when setting questions. The first theme is the emergence of authoritarian states and asks how regimes came to power. The second is the consolidation and maintenance of power and asks how they stayed in power. The third is the aims and results of policies and asks what they tried to achieve and what they actually did. Every Paper 2 Section 10 essay responds to one or more of these three themes, and understanding the structure of each theme is therefore the single most important preparatory step for the section.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What exactly does each of the three themes cover, and which specific content is prescribed within each theme?
2. How do IB examiners convert the themes into examination questions, and what patterns recur in past papers?
3. How should the candidate use the three themes as a mental map when planning an essay under time pressure?

Reference table for Chapter 7

Theme	Focus	Typical question form
1. Emergence	How regimes came to power	"Conditions", "factors", "methods of establishing"
2. Consolidation and maintenance	How regimes kept power	"Methods", "role of", "treatment of opposition", "impact of foreign policy"
3. Aims and results of policies	What regimes attempted and achieved	"Aims", "impact", "effectiveness", "policies on women"

7.1 Theme one. The emergence of authoritarian states

The first theme covers the conditions that made authoritarianism possible in a given country and the methods a movement or leader used to take power. The IB guide subdivides the theme into two bullet points. The first is the conditions in which authoritarian states emerged, and it specifies four factors, namely economic factors, social division, the impact of war and the weakness of the political system. The second bullet point is the methods used to establish authoritarian states, and it specifies five methods, namely persuasion and coercion, the role of leaders, ideology, the use of force and propaganda.

Examination questions on this theme tend to pick one of the conditions or methods and ask the candidate to evaluate or discuss its importance relative to the others. In recent years the paper has asked candidates to discuss the claim that economic factors determined the emergence of authoritarian states, to examine the importance of social division, to consider whether weak political systems were the most significant factor, and to compare and contrast the methods used to gain power. The pattern is consistent. The question picks one of the four conditions or five methods, and the candidate has to argue about that specific factor while also

addressing at least two of the alternatives.

A candidate's revision for this theme should therefore be organised around a mental grid in which each of the five leaders is positioned on each of the four conditions and five methods. For example, Hitler's emergence scores very high on the economic factor because of the impact of the Depression on Weimar, medium on social division because the German class structure mattered though it was not the primary driver, very high on the impact of war because the legacy of 1918 poisoned Weimar legitimacy, and very high on the weakness of the political system because Weimar's proportional representation and Article 48 produced chronic instability. On the methods side, Hitler's use of propaganda was central, his use of legal means was crucial in 1933, his use of force was controlled rather than rampant, and his ideology was both a cause and an instrument of his success. Building such grids for all five leaders is the most efficient way to prepare for the emergence theme.

7.2 Theme two. Consolidation and maintenance of power

The second theme covers how authoritarian states turned initial takeover into stable, long-lasting rule. The IB guide subdivides it into three bullet points. The first is the use of legal methods, force, charismatic leadership and the dissemination of propaganda. The second is the nature, extent and treatment of opposition. The third is the impact of the success or failure of foreign policy on the maintenance of power.

Examination questions on this theme tend to ask about specific methods of maintenance, or about the nature of opposition and its treatment, or about the way foreign policy supported or undermined the regime at home. Typical recent questions have asked candidates to compare and contrast methods used to maintain power in two states, to examine the foreign policy of two authoritarian states on the maintenance of power, to evaluate the impact of domestic economic policies, and to discuss the use of force in the maintenance of power.

The mental grid for this theme maps the five leaders against each of the four primary methods, namely legal, force, charisma, propaganda, plus opposition and foreign policy. Stalin's consolidation scored high on all four and his foreign policy in the 1930s helped legitimise the terror through anti-fascist rhetoric. Mussolini's consolidation was high on legal methods after the Acerbo Law but lower on force than Hitler or Stalin, and his foreign policy initially helped with the Lateran Pacts and the Ethiopian victory but later destroyed the regime through the Axis and the entry into the Second World War. Castro's consolidation rested on charismatic leadership, institutionalisation through the CDRs, the export of opposition through emigration, and the skilful use of the American embargo as a legitimating external enemy.

7.3 Theme three. Aims and results of policies

The third theme covers what the regime attempted to achieve and what it actually produced. The IB guide subdivides it into three bullet points. The first is the aims and impact of domestic economic, political, cultural and social policies. The second is the impact of policies on women and minorities. The third is authoritarian control and the extent to which it was achieved.

Examination questions on this theme tend to ask about specific policy areas, or about the policies on women and minorities, or about the overall extent of authoritarian control. Typical recent questions have asked candidates to evaluate the effectiveness of economic policies, to examine the impact of policies on women, to discuss whether authoritarian states achieved total control of the population, and to evaluate the impact of social policies.

The mental grid for this theme is the most demanding because it has four policy areas multiplied by five leaders, plus separate treatment of women and minorities and control. For Lenin, the economic axis distinguishes War Communism from the NEP and makes Lenin a case where policy direction changed

fundamentally within the period. For Stalin, the economic axis is dominated by the Five Year Plans and collectivisation, the social axis by the transformation of rural Russia, and the policies on women are paradoxical because the 1936 abortion ban reversed much of the early Bolshevik liberation of women. For Mussolini, the economic axis is the battles and the corporate state, the cultural axis is the Lateran Pacts and the Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, and the policies on women are sharply conservative with the Battle for Births. For Hitler, the economic axis is rearmament and Autarky, the social axis is Volksgemeinschaft, the cultural axis is Gleichschaltung of the chambers of culture, and the policies on minorities are the road to the Holocaust. For Castro, the economic axis is agrarian reform and nationalisation, the social axis is the dramatic improvement of healthcare and education, and the policies on women are the Family Code of 1975.

7.4 The comparative dimension

Most Paper 2 questions require two examples, and the candidate has to be able to compare the leaders systematically on any of the three themes. The thematic grids described in the previous sections make this comparison possible under time pressure. On examination day, the candidate reads the question, identifies which theme it belongs to, identifies which factor or method it focuses on, and then scans the mental grid for how each of the five leaders scores on that factor or method. The candidate picks the two leaders whose scores provide the sharpest comparison for the specific wording of the question, subject to the two-region rule.

Chapter summary

The IB syllabus for Section 10 prescribes three themes, each with specific content bullet points. The first theme covers emergence, the second consolidation and maintenance, and the third aims and results. Examination questions on Paper 2 are always derived from one of these themes and from the content bullet points within it. A well-prepared candidate carries a mental grid that maps the five leaders against each of the bullet points in each theme, so that on examination day the candidate can identify the sharpest pairing for the specific wording of the question. The remaining chapters of Part II develop the content for each of the five leaders in enough depth to fill those grids with specific evidence.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Emergence	The first IB theme, covering the conditions and methods through which authoritarian states came to power
Consolidation	The second IB theme, covering how regimes turned initial takeover into stable rule
Aims and results	The third IB theme, covering what regimes attempted and achieved in domestic policy
Conditions	The four prescribed conditions for emergence, namely economic factors, social division, impact of war and weakness of political system
Methods of establishing	The five prescribed methods of emergence, namely persuasion and coercion, role of leaders, ideology, use of force and propaganda
Methods of maintenance	The four prescribed methods of consolidation, namely legal methods, use of force, charismatic leadership and dissemination of propaganda
Policy areas	The four areas of domestic policy, namely economic, political, cultural and social
Authoritarian control	The extent to which a regime penetrated and dominated society

Questions

1. List the three IB themes for Section 10 and the bullet points within each theme.
2. Choose one theme and construct a comparative grid that maps all five leaders against the bullet points within that theme.
3. Explain why understanding the themes is more efficient than memorising biographies of individual leaders for Paper 2 revision.

Chapter 8: Lenin and the foundation of Soviet authoritarianism, 1917 to 1924

Summary of events

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, known by his revolutionary name Lenin, is the earliest of the five authoritarian leaders in this book and his case defines the twentieth-century revolutionary pattern that the others either replicate or respond to. Lenin returned to Russia in April 1917 after years of exile, in a sealed train provided by the German high command that hoped his anti-war agitation would destabilise Russia's war effort. Within seven months he had overthrown the Provisional Government in a nearly bloodless seizure of the Winter Palace, dispersed the democratically elected Constituent Assembly the following January, made peace with Germany at catastrophic territorial cost, built a secret police force and a Red Army from scratch, survived a civil war against five White armies and a dozen foreign interventions, imposed a coercive War Communism that caused the greatest European famine of the twentieth century, then in March 1921 reversed course with the New Economic Policy while simultaneously banning factions within the Communist Party itself. When he died in January 1924 the Soviet state he had founded was the world's first Communist regime, a one-party dictatorship with a secret police, a planned economy, a federal constitutional structure and a hostile relationship with every major capitalist power. Every element of that inheritance shaped what Stalin and later leaders would do with it. For Paper 2 purposes, the Lenin case is essential because it illustrates the emergence of authoritarianism through revolutionary seizure, the consolidation of power through the civil war and the Tenth Party Congress, and the aims and results of a regime that inaugurated an entirely new model of state.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were the conditions that made a Bolshevik seizure of power possible in October 1917, and which of the four IB factors weighs most heavily?
2. How did Lenin consolidate power between October 1917 and the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921?
3. To what extent can War Communism and the New Economic Policy be reconciled into a coherent Bolshevik economic programme?
4. What were the aims and results of Lenin's domestic policies on women, nationalities and religion?
5. How has the historiography of Leninism evolved since the opening of Soviet archives in 1991?

Timeline of Chapter 8

22 April 1870	Birth of Vladimir Ulyanov in Simbirsk
1887	Execution of his elder brother Alexander for conspiracy against Alexander III
1903	Split of the RSDLP into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks
February 1917	Abdication of Nicholas II. Provisional Government established
3 April 1917	Lenin returns to Petrograd in the sealed train
4 April 1917	April Theses presented

July 1917	July Days crushed. Lenin flees to Finland
25 to 26 October 1917	Bolshevik seizure of power in Petrograd
26 October 1917	Decrees on Peace and Land
December 1917	Cheka established under Dzerzhinsky
5 January 1918	Constituent Assembly dispersed after single day
3 March 1918	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
July 1918	Execution of Romanov family at Ekaterinburg
1918 to 1921	Russian Civil War and War Communism
August 1918	Attempt on Lenin's life by Fanny Kaplan. Red Terror formally launched
March 1921	Kronstadt rebellion
March 1921	Tenth Party Congress. Ban on factions. NEP introduced
1922	Treaty on the Formation of the USSR
May 1922	Lenin suffers first stroke
December 1922	Lenin dictates Testament warning against Stalin
21 January 1924	Death of Lenin

8.1 Theme one. The emergence of Bolshevik authoritarianism

The long crisis of the Russian autocracy

The emergence of authoritarianism in Russia cannot be understood without the long crisis of the Romanov state. The autocracy had been challenged in 1825 by the Decembrists, had failed to reform sufficiently after the Crimean defeat, had survived the assassination of Alexander II in 1881 only by retreating into counter-reform under Alexander III, and had been profoundly shaken by the 1905 Revolution and the concession of the October Manifesto. By 1914 Russia was a society in which the political institutions had not caught up with the industrialisation launched under Witte in the 1890s. Nicholas II refused to accept the logic of the constitutional compromise of 1905 and manipulated the electoral laws of the Duma to produce a conservative chamber by 1907. The war of 1914 to 1917 destroyed what little remained of regime legitimacy, with military defeats at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes, economic breakdown, and the rise of Empress Alexandra and Rasputin to unaccountable influence after Nicholas took personal command of the army in August 1915.

The February Revolution was not a Bolshevik event. It began with bread riots in Petrograd on 23 February 1917 and ended eight days later with the abdication of Nicholas. Power passed to two simultaneous institutions, the Provisional Government of liberal Duma politicians and the Petrograd Soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies. The Provisional Government formally held state authority, but the Petrograd Soviet held effective control over the garrison through Order Number One. This structure of dual power was inherently unstable because the two institutions pulled in different directions. The Provisional Government was committed to

continuing the war in fulfilment of obligations to the Allies, while the Soviet demanded peace.

The April Theses and the Bolshevik programme

Lenin's arrival in Petrograd on 3 April 1917 transformed Bolshevik politics. His April Theses, presented on 4 April, stunned even his own party with their radicalism. They called for no support for the Provisional Government, immediate peace, all power to the Soviets, the confiscation of private land, the nationalisation of banks and the establishment of a Republic of Soviets rather than a parliamentary republic. The theses were initially rejected by the majority of the Bolshevik Central Committee, including Kamenev and Stalin, but Lenin's insistence carried the party toward his position by the summer. The significance for the emergence of authoritarianism is that Lenin framed the Bolshevik alternative in explicitly anti-parliamentary terms from April 1917 onwards. The party that would take power in October had explicitly renounced, six months earlier, the idea that a Russian Republic should be governed through elections, a parliament and the separation of powers.

The July Days, the Kornilov Affair and the rise of Bolshevik support

The Bolsheviks attempted a premature rising in the July Days of 3 to 7 July 1917, which was crushed by troops loyal to the Provisional Government. Lenin fled to Finland. The party seemed finished. But six weeks later the Kornilov Affair of August 1917 rescued the Bolsheviks. General Lavr Kornilov attempted a military coup against the Provisional Government in the name of restoring order. Kerensky, who had succeeded Lvov as prime minister, panicked and distributed arms to the Red Guards of the Petrograd Soviet, which were largely Bolshevik-controlled, in order to defend the capital. The coup collapsed without fighting, but the Bolsheviks had been legitimised and armed in the process. By September the Bolsheviks had majorities in both the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets and Trotsky had been elected chairman of the Petrograd Soviet.

The rapidity of the Bolshevik rise in the summer and autumn of 1917 reflected the collapse of credibility of the Provisional Government rather than any organic growth in Bolshevik support. The Provisional Government had failed to deliver peace, because the Kerensky offensive of June 1917 had ended in disaster. It had failed to deliver land, because land reform had been deferred to a Constituent Assembly that had not yet been elected. It had failed to maintain order, because dual power meant that Soviet committees in factories and army units made policy that the government could not override. The Bolshevik slogan of peace, bread and land captured the three demands the Provisional Government had failed to satisfy.

The October Revolution

The October Revolution of 25 to 26 October 1917, known to the Bolsheviks themselves as the Great October Socialist Revolution, was a carefully planned coup rather than a mass uprising. Trotsky, as chairman of the Petrograd Soviet and head of the Military Revolutionary Committee, organised the seizure of key points in the capital, namely the railway stations, the telegraph office, the bridges, the State Bank, the Winter Palace. Red Guards and sympathetic garrison troops carried out the operation. The cruiser Aurora fired a blank round signalling the assault on the Winter Palace. The Provisional Government was arrested, Kerensky escaped disguised as a nurse, and the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, meeting the same day, endorsed the seizure by a majority vote. Lenin addressed the Congress with the words, "We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order."

Whether the October Revolution was a popular revolution or a coup has divided historians from the beginning. Richard Pipes insists that it was a coup carried out by a disciplined minority that exploited the chaos of a collapsing state. Alexander Rabinowitch's The Bolsheviks Come to Power argues that by the autumn of 1917 the Bolshevik party had genuine majority support in the key urban centres of Petrograd and Moscow and in the military units that would decide the outcome. Sheila Fitzpatrick synthesises by distinguishing between the

collapse of the Provisional Government, which was a popular process, and the seizure of power itself, which was a disciplined Bolshevik operation.

The four IB factors for Lenin's emergence

Applying the IB framework to the Lenin case produces a distinctive profile. The economic factor is present but not primary, because the economic crisis of 1917 was largely the product of the war rather than an independent cause. Social division was significant, with peasants and workers having fundamentally different interests, but Lenin's ability to bridge the two categories through the promise of land to the peasant and workers' control to the proletariat was a rhetorical achievement rather than a reflection of social convergence. The impact of war was enormous and probably the single most important factor, because without the catastrophic military performance of the tsarist army between 1914 and 1917 the regime would not have collapsed. The weakness of the political system was fundamental, both in the long-term failure of the autocracy to reform and in the short-term dual power of 1917.

This profile differs from the other four leaders in this book because the Russian authoritarianism emerged through revolutionary seizure during a world war, not through electoral success during peacetime or through civil war within a stable state. For comparative purposes, the closest analogue in this book is Castro, because Castro also came to power through revolutionary insurrection, although against a collapsing domestic dictatorship rather than during a world war.

8.2 Theme two. Consolidation and maintenance of power

The first decrees and the Sovnarkom

The first Bolshevik acts established the institutional form of the new state. The Decree on Peace of 26 October 1917 called for immediate armistice. The Decree on Land abolished private property in land and transferred it to peasant committees. The Decree on Workers' Control gave factory committees authority over management. The Sovnarkom, the Council of People's Commissars, was established as the new cabinet with Lenin as chairman, Trotsky as Commissar of Foreign Affairs and Stalin as Commissar of Nationalities. The decrees translated the slogans of peace, bread and land into policy within hours of the seizure.

The first political decision of historical consequence was the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly. The Provisional Government had scheduled elections, and the Bolsheviks inherited those elections and allowed them to proceed on 25 November 1917. The result was a defeat for the Bolsheviks, who won only 175 seats against 410 for the Socialist Revolutionaries, 16 for the Mensheviks, 17 for the Kadets and a scattering of smaller parties. When the Assembly convened on 5 January 1918 it refused to endorse the Bolshevik regime, and after a single day's sitting it was dispersed by Red Guards on Lenin's orders. The dispersal signalled, unambiguously, that the Bolsheviks would not accept an electoral outcome that did not conform to their programme. For Paper 2 purposes, the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly is the clearest possible illustration of the use of legal methods and force in consolidation, and every candidate should be able to name the date and describe the significance.

The Cheka and the Red Terror

The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage, known as the Cheka, was established in December 1917 under Felix Dzerzhinsky, a Polish Bolshevik of fanatical commitment. The Cheka was initially modest but grew rapidly to approximately two hundred and fifty thousand personnel by 1921. Its remit expanded from investigation to summary execution. The Red Terror was formally declared in September 1918 after the assassination of Moisei Uritsky, the Petrograd Cheka chief, and an attempt on Lenin's life by Fanny Kaplan on 30 August. Estimates of Red Terror executions during the Civil War years range from fifty thousand to two hundred thousand depending on methodology and inclusion criteria, with the higher estimate including executions of hostages and executions during military operations.

The Cheka is the first example in the twentieth century of a secret police force designed specifically for political repression of a regime's opponents. It served as the model for the GPU, OGPU, NKVD, MGB and KGB that followed it in the Soviet system, and it provided the template that Mussolini's OVRA, Hitler's Gestapo and Castro's G2 all drew upon. Every authoritarian regime that follows in Section 10 has a secret police, and the Cheka under Dzerzhinsky is the original.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, signed on 3 March 1918, ended Russia's participation in the First World War at an enormous territorial cost. The treaty surrendered Finland, the Baltic provinces, Poland, Ukraine and parts of the Caucasus, totalling approximately one third of the population and one third of the agricultural land of the former Russian Empire. Lenin forced the treaty through the Central Committee over the objections of Bukharin and the Left Communists, who wanted to continue the war as a revolutionary war, and over the reluctance of Trotsky, who proposed the famous formula "neither war nor peace". Lenin's argument was that the revolution had to survive and that a German occupation of central Russia would destroy it. The treaty lasted eight months, until the German defeat in November 1918 annulled its terms, but the political significance for consolidation was that Lenin had demonstrated his willingness to accept catastrophic short-term losses to protect the revolutionary state. The treaty also triggered the final break with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, who had briefly shared power with the Bolsheviks, producing the first fully one-party Soviet government.

The Russian Civil War and War Communism

The Russian Civil War of 1918 to 1921 was the crucible in which Soviet authoritarianism hardened. The Whites were a loose coalition of conservative officers under Kolchak in Siberia, Denikin in the south, Yudenich in the north-west and Wrangel in the Crimea. They were supported by foreign intervention forces from Britain, France, the United States, Japan and Czechoslovakia. The Reds held the interior including Moscow and Petrograd and the core railway network, which gave them the advantage of interior lines. Trotsky organised the Red Army from scratch, rising from nothing to five million men under arms by 1920. Former tsarist officers were recruited under the supervision of political commissars to provide professional leadership. The Red Army defeated the Whites in stages, with Kolchak executed in February 1920, Denikin's forces destroyed in the Caucasus campaign of 1920, and Wrangel's defeat in the Crimea ending the civil war in November 1920.

War Communism was the economic system imposed between 1918 and 1921 to sustain the war effort. Grain was requisitioned from the peasantry by armed detachments. Industry was nationalised, first large-scale enterprises in 1918 and then all enterprises employing more than ten workers by 1920. Money was progressively abolished as a medium of exchange. Labour was militarised, with workers compelled to stay in their jobs and often moved by decree. The results were economic catastrophe, with industrial production in 1921 at about one fifth of its 1913 level, and famine in the Volga region that killed an estimated five million people. Historians debate whether War Communism was a pragmatic response to civil war emergency or an

ideological experiment in the construction of communism without markets. Sheila Fitzpatrick has argued for the pragmatic reading, pointing out that many of the measures were improvised under military pressure. Richard Pipes has argued for the ideological reading, pointing to the writings of Bolshevik theorists who defended War Communism as the direct road to socialism.

The Kronstadt rebellion and the Tenth Party Congress

By early 1921 the combination of civil war exhaustion, grain requisitioning and urban famine had produced widespread unrest. Strikes broke out in Petrograd in February. On 1 March the sailors of the Kronstadt naval base, historically the vanguard of Bolshevik support and described by Trotsky in 1917 as the pride and glory of the revolution, issued the Petropavlovsk Resolution demanding free soviets, an end to Bolshevik political monopoly, freedom of speech and assembly, the release of socialist political prisoners and the restoration of free markets in the countryside. Trotsky responded by ordering the Red Army to crush the rising, which was done across the frozen ice of the Gulf of Finland in mid-March at a cost of approximately ten thousand casualties on both sides. The survivors were executed or deported. Kronstadt was the moment at which the Soviet regime definitively broke with the workers and sailors who had made the revolution.

The Tenth Party Congress, meeting between 8 and 16 March 1921 even as the Kronstadt rebellion was being crushed, produced two decisions of fundamental importance. The first was the New Economic Policy. The second was the Ban on Factions. The latter forbade the organised advocacy of dissenting views within the Communist Party itself, with expulsion as the penalty for violations. Lenin's justification was that the revolution was in mortal danger and could not afford internal division. The consequence was the end of intra-party pluralism and the creation of the single unanimous party that Stalin would inherit and weaponise. For Paper 2 purposes, the Ban on Factions is the decisive moment at which the consolidation of Bolshevik authoritarianism moves from the suppression of external opposition to the suppression of internal dissent within the ruling party.

A worked PEEL(P) paragraph on Leninist consolidation

The worked paragraph below responds to the question, "Evaluate the role of force in Lenin's consolidation of power between 1917 and 1924."

Point. Force was central to Lenin's consolidation of power, as the Bolshevik regime survived the Civil War and the Kronstadt rebellion through systematic coercion that outweighed its capacity for consent-building in the first years of Soviet rule.

Evidence. The Cheka, established in December 1917 under Dzerzhinsky, grew to approximately two hundred and fifty thousand personnel by 1921 and conducted executions estimated at between fifty and two hundred thousand during the Red Terror. The dispersal of the Constituent Assembly on 5 January 1918 eliminated electoral accountability. The suppression of the Kronstadt rebellion in March 1921 cost approximately ten thousand casualties. The Tenth Party Congress the same month banned factions inside the Communist Party, extending the logic of coercion from external opponents to internal dissenters.

Explanation. The systematic use of force served three consolidation purposes. It eliminated organised opposition outside the Party by destroying the Kadet, Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary leadership. It intimidated the peasantry and industrial workers through the Cheka's capacity for summary execution. It prevented the Party itself from splitting into factions that could challenge the Leninist monopoly. The Kronstadt suppression showed that no category of the Soviet population, however historically loyal, was immune from coercion.

Link. Therefore force was a constitutive element of Leninist consolidation, not a supplementary tool, and the regime that emerged by 1924 was one in which coercive institutions had become permanent features of the political system.

Perspective. This interpretation aligns with Richard Pipes, who argues in The Russian Revolution that the Bolshevik regime was authoritarian from its inception and that force was not an improvisation but the application of Leninist principles of vanguard dictatorship. Sheila Fitzpatrick challenges this reading, arguing that the Civil War context produced extraordinary measures that the regime itself regarded as temporary and that the NEP of 1921 represented a genuine easing of coercion. Robert Service's biographical synthesis supports a middle position, conceding that Lenin's regime was structurally authoritarian but pointing out that the scale of coercion varied with circumstances and that the regime retained some space for internal debate until the Ban on Factions closed that space in March 1921.

8.3 Theme three. Aims and results of policies

Economic policy. War Communism and the NEP

Lenin's economic policies between 1917 and 1924 fall into two sharply distinct phases. The first, War Communism, has already been discussed as an instrument of civil war. Its aims were to sustain the war effort, to eliminate capitalism as a social formation, and to move directly to the abolition of money and markets. Its results were industrial collapse, famine and the Kronstadt rebellion. By March 1921 the regime faced a choice between abandoning power and abandoning War Communism.

The New Economic Policy, introduced at the Tenth Party Congress, abandoned War Communism in everything except its political monopoly. Grain requisitioning was replaced by a tax in kind, which left the peasant a marketable surplus. Small-scale industry was denationalised and returned to private ownership, producing the category of the nepman, or small private entrepreneur. Large-scale industry, banking, transport and foreign trade remained in state hands under what Lenin called the commanding heights of the economy. The currency was stabilised through the creation of the chervonets, a hard rouble backed by gold reserves. The results were dramatic. Agricultural output returned to prewar levels by 1926. Industrial output recovered more slowly but reached prewar levels by 1928. Urban markets filled with consumer goods. The scissors crisis of 1923, so called because a graph of industrial and agricultural prices resembled an open pair of scissors, showed that the recovery was uneven, with industrial prices rising faster than agricultural prices, but this was a problem of growth rather than a failure of policy.

The historiographical question about NEP is whether it was a tactical retreat or a strategic alternative to forced industrialisation. Stephen Cohen, in his biography of Bukharin, argued for the strategic alternative reading, suggesting that the NEP represented a viable path to modernisation through market socialism that was foreclosed by Stalin in 1928. Richard Pipes argued for the tactical retreat reading, seeing the NEP as a temporary concession to reality that was always intended to end. The documentary record supports something in between, as Lenin in his last writings described the NEP as a system that would last for decades, but he also wrote that the commanding heights guaranteed eventual socialist advance.

Political policy. The formation of the USSR

The political policy of the Leninist regime included the formal constitutional construction of the Soviet state. The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic had been established in July 1918. During the Civil War, independent Soviet Republics had been established in Ukraine, Belarus and Transcaucasia. In December 1922, these four units formed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics through a Treaty on the Formation of the USSR. The Constitution of 1924 formalised the structure. Lenin insisted on nominal equality among the constituent republics against Stalin's preference for formal autonomy within the Russian Federation, a disagreement that Lenin described in his last writings as one of the reasons for his misgivings about Stalin.

The nationalities policy was the most genuinely federalist of the Leninist innovations. The principle of korenizatsiya, or indigenisation, promoted native-language education, native cadres in local administration and native cultural production across the non-Russian republics. Belarusian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani and Central Asian languages received state sponsorship that they had not enjoyed under tsarism. For Paper 2 purposes on the theme of policies on minorities, Lenin's record is strikingly positive by comparison with any of the other four leaders, though the limits of the policy were evident in the way Moscow remained the political centre and the Party retained its centralising logic.

Cultural policy. Religion and the arts

The Leninist regime attacked organised religion as an ideological rival. The Decree on the Separation of Church and State of January 1918 nationalised church property, banned religious instruction in state schools and removed the Russian Orthodox Church from its privileged constitutional position. The Soviet League of the Militant Godless was founded in 1925. Patriarch Tikhon was imprisoned and the hierarchy intimidated into compliance. But the early Leninist years stopped short of the mass persecution of clergy that came under Stalin in the 1930s, and parishes continued to function in most of the country.

In the arts, the early Leninist regime was surprisingly pluralist. Avant-garde movements, including constructivism, suprematism and formalism, received state support through the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment under Anatoly Lunacharsky. Proletkult, the proletarian culture movement, developed a distinctive style that Lenin himself distrusted as amateurish. The policy of socialist realism that Stalin imposed in 1934 had no counterpart in the Lenin years.

Social policy. Women and education

The Leninist regime enacted the most advanced legislation on women's rights in Europe at the time. The decrees of 1917 to 1918 established civil marriage, no-fault divorce, legal equality of men and women, and in 1920 the legalisation of abortion on demand in state hospitals. Alexandra Kollontai, appointed People's Commissar for Social Welfare, advocated the communal provision of childcare and domestic services to free women from the household. The Zhenotdiel, the women's department of the Party, ran literacy campaigns, childcare facilities and political education for women, particularly in Muslim Central Asia where the programme of unveiling, khudzhum, produced significant resistance and repression.

The educational record was mixed. Mass literacy campaigns in the early 1920s reached millions of adults and brought the literacy rate from approximately forty per cent in 1917 to approximately fifty-five per cent by 1926. The establishment of workers' faculties, rabfaks, opened universities to working-class students for the first time. But resources were scarce throughout the Civil War and the early NEP years, and the transformative expansion of education waited for Stalin's Five Year Plans.

Lenin's Testament and the succession

Lenin suffered his first stroke in May 1922 and was effectively removed from day-to-day politics. He dictated his Testament in December 1922 and January 1923, providing assessments of his leading colleagues. Of Stalin he wrote that he had concentrated enormous power in his hands as General Secretary and was not sure Stalin would always use that power with sufficient caution. He recommended Stalin's removal from the Secretariat. The Testament was suppressed after Lenin's death by the triumvirate of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev. Lenin died on 21 January 1924. His embalmed body was placed in the Mausoleum on Red Square, beginning a cult of personality that would grow under Stalin and that contradicted Lenin's own egalitarian principles.

8.4 Historiographical debate

The historiography of Leninism falls into three broad positions. The totalitarian school, associated with Richard Pipes and Martin Malia, argues that the Soviet state was authoritarian from its inception, that Lenin's Cheka, dispersal of the Constituent Assembly and Ban on Factions flowed directly from the Leninist conception of the vanguard party, and that Stalinism was the logical development of Leninism rather than a rupture with it. The revisionist school, associated with Sheila Fitzpatrick and Stephen Cohen, argues that Bolshevism had popular support in 1917, that War Communism was driven by civil war necessity rather than ideology, and that the NEP represented a genuine alternative path that was foreclosed by Stalin rather than by Lenin. Robert Service in his biography of Lenin offers a middle position, presenting Lenin as a pragmatic politician who was authoritarian by disposition but flexible in application.

The opening of Soviet archives after 1991 has enriched the debate rather than settled it. The archival record confirms the scale of Red Terror executions but also shows the extent of improvisation and disorganisation in Cheka operations during the Civil War. It confirms Lenin's personal involvement in executions and deportations but also shows his growing concern in 1922 and 1923 about bureaucratic overreach and about Stalin specifically. For Paper 2 purposes, the candidate should be able to cite at least two of these positions and demonstrate how the evidence supports or complicates each of them.

Chapter summary

Lenin founded the first Communist state in history through a combination of revolutionary tactics, disciplined party organisation, ruthless use of force and pragmatic economic compromise. The emergence of Bolshevik authoritarianism was made possible by the collapse of the tsarist autocracy under the pressure of world war, by the failures of the Provisional Government, and by Lenin's insistence on an anti-parliamentary programme from April 1917 onwards. Consolidation was achieved through the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the Red Terror, victory in the Civil War and the Ban on Factions of 1921. Aims and results were transformative in nationalities policy and in the status of women, ambivalent in economic policy with the sharp turn from War Communism to the NEP, and modest in cultural policy compared with what Stalin would later impose. The regime Lenin left behind in 1924 was an authoritarian one-party state with a secret police, a planned economy and a federal constitutional structure, but it was not yet the totalitarian Stalinist system of the 1930s. The relationship between Leninism and Stalinism is the most consequential historiographical question in the section.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
April Theses	Lenin's ten-point programme of 4 April 1917 rejecting cooperation with the Provisional Government

Term	Meaning
Dual power	The coexistence of the Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet between March and October 1917
Decree on Peace	The 26 October 1917 call for an immediate armistice without annexations
Decree on Land	The 26 October 1917 abolition of private property in land
Sovnarkom	The Council of People's Commissars, the cabinet of the new state
Constituent Assembly	The democratically elected body of January 1918 dispersed after a single day
Cheka	The extraordinary commission for combating counter-revolution, created under Dzerzhinsky
Red Terror	The systematic use of revolutionary violence from 1918, directed against social categories
Brest-Litovsk	The March 1918 peace treaty with Germany ceding one third of the former empire
War Communism	The coercive economic regime of 1918 to 1921 comprising grain requisitioning and nationalisation
Kronstadt rebellion	The March 1921 rising of sailors and workers against Bolshevik monopoly
NEP	The New Economic Policy of March 1921 permitting private trade and agricultural markets
Ban on Factions	The Tenth Party Congress prohibition on organised dissent within the Communist Party
Korenizatsiya	The policy of indigenisation promoting native languages and cadres in Soviet republics
Zhenotdiel	The women's department of the Party, active in women's emancipation campaigns
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics established by treaty in 1922
Testament	Lenin's dictated assessment of his colleagues, warning against Stalin

Questions

1. To what extent was the emergence of Bolshevik authoritarianism the result of the First World War rather than of long-term Russian conditions?
2. Evaluate the role of force in Lenin's consolidation of power.
3. Compare and contrast War Communism and the New Economic Policy as expressions of Bolshevik economic thinking.
4. Examine the aims and results of Lenin's policies on women and nationalities.
5. "Stalinism was the logical development of Leninism." Discuss.

Source-based exercise

> Source A. Lenin, speech to the Tenth Party Congress, March 1921 (adapted): "We must not try to conceal our mistakes from the enemy. Whoever fears this is no revolutionary. On the contrary, if we openly declare, Yes, we made an economic mistake, we shall be ten times stronger. Freedom of trade for the peasant is our unavoidable task."
> Source B. Petropavlovsk Resolution of the Kronstadt sailors, 1 March 1921 (abridged and adapted): "To hold immediately new elections by secret ballot to all Soviets, free elections of workers and peasants, with an unrestricted campaign; freedom of speech and press for workers and peasants, for anarchists and left-socialist parties; freedom of assembly of trades unions and peasant associations; the liberation of all political prisoners of the socialist parties."

(a) According to Source A, why does Lenin believe the shift to free trade is necessary? [3 marks] (b) Compare and contrast the programmes for change set out in Sources A and B. [6 marks] (c) Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that the Tenth Party Congress marked the end of Soviet pluralism. [9 marks]

Chapter 9: Stalin's USSR, 1924 to 1953

Summary of events

Joseph Stalin ruled the Soviet Union for twenty-nine years, from the effective victory over his rivals in 1929 until his death in March 1953. The scale of transformation he presided over is without parallel in the other Section 10 cases. The Soviet Union under Stalin changed from a recovering peasant society at the end of the NEP into the second largest industrial economy in the world by 1941, won the costliest war in human history against Nazi Germany at the cost of approximately twenty-seven million Soviet dead, and emerged as one of two superpowers by 1945. It did all this through a combination of forced industrialisation, the collectivisation of agriculture, the terror of 1936 to 1938 that destroyed most of the old Bolshevik leadership and much of the officer corps, and a cult of personality that made Stalin the most worshipped figure of the twentieth century. The human cost was immense. Collectivisation produced the Ukrainian famine of 1932 to 1933 with between three and a half and seven and a half million deaths. The Great Terror produced approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand executions and one and a half million sentences to the Gulag in two years. The wartime deportations of entire peoples, including the Chechens, Ingush, Crimean Tatars and Volga Germans, killed hundreds of thousands more. For Paper 2 purposes, Stalin is the case in which every aspect of the three themes operates at the greatest scale, and the case that raises the sharpest historiographical debates about the relationship between Marxist ideology, personal dictatorship and modernisation.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did Stalin emerge as the sole leader of the Soviet Union in the succession struggle after Lenin's death?
2. What methods of consolidation did Stalin deploy, and how did they differ from those of Lenin?
3. How did the Great Terror function and what were its consequences for the Soviet state and society?
4. What were the aims and results of the Five Year Plans and collectivisation?
5. How did Stalinist nationalities policy evolve from korenizatsiya to wartime deportations?
6. How did the Great Patriotic War reshape the relationship between regime and society?
7. How has the historiography of Stalinism evolved from the totalitarian school to the post-revisionist archival synthesis?

Timeline of Chapter 9

18 December 1878	Birth of Ioseb Jughashvili in Gori, Georgia
1903	Joins Bolshevik faction of the RSDLP
1912	Co-opted into Bolshevik Central Committee
April 1917	Returns from exile, initially supports Provisional Government
October 1917	Commissar for Nationalities in first Sovnarkom
April 1922	Appointed General Secretary of the Party

21 January 1924	Death of Lenin
1924 to 1925	Triumvirate with Zinoviev and Kamenev against Trotsky
December 1925	Socialism in One Country adopted at Fourteenth Congress
1926 to 1927	United Opposition of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev defeated
December 1927	Fifteenth Party Congress. Left Opposition expelled
1928 to 1929	Right Opposition of Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky defeated
1928	First Five Year Plan launched. Shakhty trial
1929	Collectivisation begins in earnest. Trotsky deported
1929	Year of the Great Break
1930	Dekulakisation campaign. Dizzy with Success article
1932 to 1933	Ukrainian and Kazakh famine. Holodomor
1 December 1934	Assassination of Kirov
1935	Stakhanovite campaign launched
1936	New constitution. First show trial. Great Terror accelerates
1936	Abortion banned. Family legislation reversed
1937 to 1938	Yezhovshchina. Peak of the Great Terror
1938	Third Moscow Trial. Beria replaces Yezhov
23 August 1939	Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact
22 June 1941	Operation Barbarossa
July to August 1942	Order Number 227, Not One Step Back
August 1942 to February 1943	Battle of Stalingrad
1943	Tehran Conference. Accommodation with Orthodox Church
1944	Deportations of Chechens, Ingush, Crimean Tatars, Volga Germans
8 May 1945	Victory in Europe
1946 to 1948	Zhdanovshchina
1948	Leningrad Affair
1949	Soviet atomic bomb

1952	Nineteenth Party Congress
January 1953	Doctors' Plot announced
5 March 1953	Death of Stalin

9.1 Theme one. The emergence of Stalin's personal dictatorship

The succession struggle after Lenin

Stalin's emergence as the sole leader of the Soviet Union was not the product of revolutionary insurrection, as with Lenin, or of a coup against an existing regime, as with Mussolini and Hitler, or of a civil war, as with Castro. It was a slow political process inside an existing one-party state that had inherited Lenin's institutional structure. The succession struggle between 1924 and 1929 was fought over who would inherit Lenin's personal authority and over the direction of Soviet policy, and Stalin emerged as victor because he combined three advantages that none of his rivals could match, namely his control of the Party Secretariat, his ability to form tactical alliances and dissolve them at the moment of greatest utility, and his positioning on the ideological spectrum between the Left and Right Oppositions.

Lenin's Testament, dictated in December 1922 and January 1923, described Stalin as having concentrated enormous power in his hands as General Secretary and recommended his removal from that post. Stalin was saved when Zinoviev and Kamenev, who dominated the Politburo after Lenin's stroke and who feared Trotsky more than they feared Stalin, persuaded the Thirteenth Party Congress in May 1924 to suppress the Testament. This was the first of many strategic errors by Stalin's rivals. Each of them underestimated Stalin's political skill and treated him as a useful instrument against more dangerous opponents, and each of them discovered too late that Stalin had become the most dangerous opponent of all.

The three rounds of factional warfare

The struggle unfolded in three rounds. In the first round, from 1924 to 1925, a triumvirate of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev worked together against Trotsky. Trotsky was the most obviously talented Bolshevik after Lenin, with a commanding intellect, the prestige of leading the Red Army to victory in the Civil War and a gift for oratory. But Trotsky lacked a political machine within the Party apparatus, and he made the strategic mistake of not reading the Testament aloud at the Thirteenth Congress when he had the opportunity to do so. Trotsky also produced a theoretical framework, permanent revolution, that Stalin skilfully portrayed as defeatist by comparison with his own slogan of socialism in one country, adopted at the Fourteenth Congress in December 1925. By 1925 Trotsky had lost his Commissariat of War and had been sidelined within the Party.

In the second round, from 1925 to 1927, Stalin allied with Bukharin and the Right of the Party against Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had realised too late that they had elevated Stalin and who tried to reverse course by forming the United Opposition with Trotsky. The United Opposition was defeated at the Fifteenth Congress in December 1927, and its leaders were expelled from the Party. Trotsky was exiled first to Alma-Ata in 1928 and then out of the Soviet Union in 1929. Zinoviev and Kamenev made peace with Stalin, which kept them alive for another decade before the Great Terror killed them.

In the third round, from 1928 to 1929, Stalin turned against Bukharin and the Right. Bukharin had been the theoretical champion of the NEP and of gradualism in industrialisation, with the slogan growing into socialism gradually. Stalin's turn toward forced collectivisation and industrialisation in 1928 required the destruction of the Right as a political force, and Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky were progressively removed from their

positions between the Fifteenth Congress and 1930. By 1929, celebrated as Stalin's fiftieth birthday with an intensity that marked the beginning of the cult of personality, Stalin was the uncontested leader of the Soviet Union.

Socialism in One Country

The doctrine of socialism in one country was more than a tactical weapon against Trotsky. It was an ideological framework that justified the construction of a distinctively Soviet version of socialism, independent of world revolution, and it rationalised the sacrifices that collectivisation and industrialisation would impose on the Soviet population. Where Trotsky's permanent revolution treated the Soviet Union as a holding operation until revolutions in Germany and France made socialism viable, Stalin's doctrine treated the Soviet Union as the model that other countries would eventually follow. For Paper 2 purposes the doctrine is significant because it illustrates how ideology was deployed in the consolidation of power, as a tool to delegitimise rivals and to mobilise support for the policies of the General Secretary.

The General Secretariat

Stalin's control of the Party apparatus was the single most important mechanical advantage in his rise. As General Secretary from April 1922, he controlled appointments throughout the Party hierarchy. Every Party Congress and every Central Committee elected its membership on the basis of delegates chosen through the Secretariat. By 1925 the Secretariat had appointed sufficient loyalists to the relevant positions that Stalin could rely on a majority at every level. This was not a secret process. Trotsky and others repeatedly complained about the bureaucratisation of the Party. But the complaints were ineffective because the very machinery that could have responded to them was the machinery that Stalin controlled.

9.2 Theme two. Consolidation and maintenance of power

The Year of the Great Break and collectivisation

The Year of the Great Break in 1929 inaugurated a new phase of Stalinist consolidation. Collectivisation began as an accelerated campaign in the summer of 1929, with Politburo quotas for the percentage of peasant households to be collectivised by specific deadlines. Kulak households, arbitrarily defined to include any peasant deemed prosperous or resistant, were liquidated as a class. Between 1929 and 1932, approximately one million eight hundred thousand kulaks were deported to Siberia, Kazakhstan and other remote regions. Peasant resistance took the form of grain hoarding, livestock slaughter and sporadic revolts. Approximately half of all Soviet livestock was killed by peasants rather than surrendered to the collectives between 1929 and 1933.

Stalin briefly retreated in the Dizzy with Success article of 2 March 1930, which blamed local officials for excesses and allowed peasants to leave the collectives temporarily. The retreat was tactical. By 1932 collectivisation was effectively complete, with more than sixty per cent of peasant households in kolkhozy and more than ninety per cent by the end of the decade. The Ukrainian famine of 1932 to 1933, known as the Holodomor, killed an estimated three and a half to seven and a half million people in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through the combination of forced grain requisitioning and the sealing of the Ukrainian borders against refugees. The famine is the most bitterly contested episode of Stalinist policy. Robert Conquest argued that it was a deliberate genocide against Ukrainian national identity. Robert William Davies has argued that it was the catastrophic consequence of policy errors rather than a specifically anti-Ukrainian campaign. The Ukrainian Parliament declared the Holodomor a genocide in 2006 and that interpretation has become mainstream in Ukrainian historiography.

The Five Year Plans

The First Five Year Plan, launched in October 1928 and declared complete in nine and a half years later, produced the fastest peacetime industrialisation in history up to that point. Steel production rose from four million tonnes in 1928 to eighteen million tonnes in 1937. Coal output rose from thirty-five million tonnes to one hundred and twenty-eight million tonnes. Electricity generation rose fivefold. Entirely new industrial centres were built at Magnitogorsk in the Urals and Dneprostroi in Ukraine. Tractors, trucks and machine tools began to roll off Soviet assembly lines. The Second Five Year Plan from 1933 to 1937 consolidated these gains and produced more realistic targets. The Third Five Year Plan from 1938 to 1941 was dominated by rearmament in anticipation of war with Germany, and it was interrupted in June 1941 by the actual outbreak of that war.

The human cost was enormous. Forced labour from the Gulag built major projects such as the White Sea-Baltic Canal, at a cost of approximately twelve thousand deaths. Working conditions in the new industrial centres were primitive, with barracks accommodation, inadequate food, punitive discipline and high accident rates. Consumer goods were perpetually scarce. Real wages fell throughout the First Five Year Plan and recovered only slowly during the Second. Against this, the Soviet state was transformed into the second largest industrial economy in the world by 1941, capable of producing the tanks, aircraft, artillery and ammunition that would defeat Nazi Germany four years later. Adam Tooze in The Wages of Destruction has argued that the Stalinist industrialisation project was the necessary condition of Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War, and that without the sacrifices of the 1930s the Red Army would have been overwhelmed in 1941 to 1942.

The Stakhanovite movement

The Stakhanovite movement, launched in August 1935 after the Donbass miner Alexei Stakhanov was credited with extracting fourteen times his quota of coal in a single shift, combined genuine production incentives with the systematic intimidation of managers and workers who could not match inflated targets. Stakhanovites received wage bonuses, apartments, medals and public recognition. Non-Stakhanovite workers were accused of sabotage, wrecking and lack of socialist enthusiasm. The movement illustrates the Stalinist pattern of combining material incentives with ideological pressure and terror.

The Great Terror

The Great Terror of 1936 to 1938 is the event that most powerfully shapes the image of Stalinism. The murder of Sergei Kirov, the Leningrad Party boss and potential rival to Stalin, on 1 December 1934 provided the pretext for the series of show trials and mass arrests that followed. Whether Stalin organised the murder is disputed. The first Moscow show trial in August 1936 condemned Zinoviev and Kamenev for conspiring with Trotsky against Stalin. The second trial in January 1937 condemned the Trotskyist Centre. The third trial in March 1938 condemned Bukharin, Rykov and the Right, with the former heads of the Cheka and NKVD among the defendants. All the defendants confessed under torture and threats to their families. All were executed.

The show trials were the visible surface of a much larger campaign. The NKVD under Nikolai Yezhov, whose tenure gave the campaign its Russian name, the Yezhovshchina, was issued arrest quotas by oblast and by category. Approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand people were executed between 1937 and 1938 according to post-1991 archival research by Oleg Khlevniuk. Approximately one and a half million more were sent to the Gulag, where many of them died. The Red Army lost approximately thirty-five thousand officers, including three of five marshals, thirteen of fifteen army commanders, and fifty-seven of eighty-five corps commanders. Entire national groups were targeted, including the Polish operation that executed over one hundred thousand ethnic Poles living in the western Soviet Union.

The intentionalist school, associated with Robert Conquest in The Great Terror, treats the campaign as Stalin's personally directed programme to eliminate potential challengers and to reshape Soviet society through terror. The revisionist school, associated with J. Arch Getty in Origins of the Great Purges and Sheila Fitzpatrick, argues that the campaign was driven by local initiative and bureaucratic dynamics as much as by central direction. The post-revisionist synthesis, associated with Oleg Khlevniuk's Stalin: New Biography of a Dictator, uses archival material to demonstrate Stalin's personal involvement in specific quotas and individual arrests while retaining the revisionist insights into the role of local officials in applying those quotas. For Paper 2 purposes the candidate should be able to cite at least two of these positions and explain how the evidence supports or complicates each.

The cult of personality

The cult of Stalin reached its peak in the late 1930s and 1940s. Paintings, statues, poems, songs and films depicted Stalin as the great leader, the father of the peoples, the genius of humanity. Cities, streets and factories were renamed after him. Stalingrad, formerly Tsaritsyn, became the symbolic capital of the cult. Historians were required to rewrite Soviet history to highlight Stalin's role in the Revolution, in the Civil War and in the construction of socialism. The Short Course of the History of the CPSU, published in 1938 under Stalin's personal supervision, became the authoritative textbook. Children learned to thank Comrade Stalin for their happy childhood. The contrast with Lenin's relatively modest personal style was sharp and was intentional, since the cult served to legitimise the personal dictatorship that Lenin's last writings had explicitly warned against.

A worked PEEL(P) paragraph on Stalinist consolidation

The worked paragraph below responds to the question, "Evaluate the role of ideology in Stalin's consolidation of power."

Point. Ideology played a significant but instrumental role in Stalin's consolidation of power, providing doctrinal justification for successive policy turns rather than driving them, and functioning as a weapon against rivals rather than as an independent political force.

Evidence. Socialism in one country was adopted at the Fourteenth Congress in December 1925 and was deployed against Trotsky's permanent revolution to portray him as a defeatist. The turn toward collectivisation in 1928 required the ideological repudiation of the NEP and the destruction of Bukharin's theoretical framework of growing into socialism gradually. The Short Course of 1938 rewrote Bolshevik history to centre on Stalin's leadership. The 1936 Stalin Constitution declared socialism achieved and therefore legitimised the Great Terror as a defensive measure against surviving class enemies.

Explanation. Ideology served three consolidation purposes. It provided a doctrinal test that rivals were consistently made to fail, allowing Stalin to expel them as un-Marxist. It mobilised Party cadres and enthusiastic younger members behind policies whose material consequences were often disastrous. It cemented the personal authority of Stalin as the infallible interpreter of Leninist doctrine, making opposition to him equivalent to opposition to Marxism-Leninism itself.

Link. Therefore ideology was central to Stalin's consolidation in an instrumental sense, as a tool deployed against rivals and as a framework that legitimised his personal dictatorship, though the substantive direction of policy was driven more by political and economic calculation than by ideological conviction.

Perspective. This interpretation aligns with Stephen Kotkin's post-revisionist view, articulated in his biographies of Stalin, that Stalin was both a committed Marxist-Leninist and a master political operator who deployed ideology with unusual cynicism. Robert Conquest and Richard Pipes stand closer to the position

that ideology drove the Terror directly, with Conquest treating the purges as the logical outcome of Marxist class analysis applied to an imagined counter-revolution. Sheila Fitzpatrick offers a third position in which Stalinist ideology functioned as a social and cultural phenomenon that mobilised genuine belief among Party members and urban workers, rather than as either a cynical tool or a determining force. The archival evidence since 1991 supports a synthesis close to Kotkin's, in which Stalin believed what he said while using it ruthlessly against those who believed other things.

9.3 Theme three. Aims and results of policies

Economic policy. The transformation of the Soviet economy

The aim of Stalinist economic policy was to transform the Soviet Union from an agrarian society into a modern industrial power capable of defending itself militarily against capitalist hostility. Stalin famously declared in February 1931 that the Soviet Union was fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries and had to catch up in ten years or be crushed. The ten-year deadline was met, with some elasticity, by the outbreak of war in 1941.

The results were mixed and have to be evaluated on different axes. In terms of aggregate output, Soviet industry grew by approximately three hundred to four hundred per cent between 1928 and 1941, while agriculture stagnated or declined. In terms of military capacity, the Soviet state in 1941 could field tank divisions, air armies and artillery formations on a scale that tsarist Russia could not have imagined. In terms of consumer welfare, living standards fell in the first plan, recovered slowly in the second, and never approached Western European levels during Stalin's lifetime. In terms of demographic impact, the human cost ran into the millions through famine, deportations and Gulag deaths.

Political policy. The Constitution of 1936 and the Stalinist state

The Stalin Constitution of December 1936 declared the Soviet Union to have achieved socialism and proclaimed universal suffrage, civil liberties and separation of powers. On paper it was one of the most progressive constitutions in the world. In practice the constitution was a facade behind which the Party apparatus and the NKVD operated without legal constraint. The one-party state had no space for the civil liberties the constitution proclaimed, and elections returned preselected candidates with the support of approximately ninety-nine per cent of voters. The contradiction between the constitutional text and political practice is itself a Stalinist signature.

The Party apparatus in the 1930s was transformed from the instrument of a revolutionary movement into a professional bureaucracy selected through the Secretariat's nomenklatura system. After the Great Terror decimated the generation of Old Bolsheviks who had made the Revolution, a new generation of Party officials rose through the ranks, including Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Kosygin, who would rule the Soviet Union for the next forty years. The Terror thereby solved the succession problem for Stalin by eliminating the generation that might have challenged him while creating a loyal cohort of beneficiaries.

Cultural policy. Socialist realism and the turn to Russian nationalism

Cultural policy under Stalin moved from the relative pluralism of the 1920s to the imposed uniformity of socialist realism after 1934. The doctrine required art, literature, music and film to portray Soviet life in its revolutionary development and to inspire the viewer or reader to socialist construction. The Union of Soviet Writers, the Union of Composers and similar bodies enforced the doctrine through membership control, which determined access to publication, performance and income. Writers and composers who fell foul of the doctrine lost their livelihoods, and some lost their lives. Osip Mandelstam, Isaac Babel and many others perished in the Terror. Dmitri Shostakovich survived but produced works in constant fear, and the 1936 Pravda denunciation of his opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, entitled Muddle Instead of Music, illustrates the way cultural policy and political terror interacted.

A parallel shift occurred in the treatment of Russian national identity. The internationalism of the 1920s gave way in the mid-1930s to a rediscovery of pre-revolutionary Russian heroes, from Alexander Nevsky and Ivan the Terrible to Peter the Great and Suvorov. Sergei Eisenstein's films of the late 1930s participated in this revaluation. The Russian Orthodox Church, brutally persecuted in the 1920s and early 1930s, was partially rehabilitated in 1943 when Stalin met the Patriarchal hierarchs and restored limited rights to parish life. These moves reflected both the search for legitimating traditions beyond the Revolution and, during the war, the practical need to mobilise Russian patriotism in defence of the Soviet state.

Social policy. Women, family and religion

Soviet social policy under Stalin reversed much of the early Bolshevik liberation of women. The abortion legalisation of 1920 was revoked in June 1936. Divorce was made harder and more expensive. Fees were imposed on each divorce, rising for successive divorces. The family, described by Kollontai in the 1920s as a relic of the bourgeois past, was now described as the basic cell of socialist society. Medals were awarded to mothers of many children, the Heroine Mother decoration for ten or more. These reversals were driven partly by demographic concerns in the aftermath of collectivisation and the expected war, and partly by the conservative tastes of the new Party elite that had replaced the revolutionary generation.

Women nonetheless entered the workforce in unprecedented numbers, particularly during the First Five Year Plan and during the war. By 1940 women made up approximately forty per cent of the industrial workforce. By 1945 they were approximately sixty per cent. But the pattern of double burden, combining paid work with sole responsibility for domestic labour, became entrenched and would continue throughout Soviet history.

Religious policy followed the pattern of the 1920s with intensified persecution during the collectivisation period, when rural parishes were closed en masse, and the 1930s, when the League of the Militant Godless reached its peak membership. The 1943 rapprochement with the Orthodox Church was a wartime pragmatism that was partially reversed after victory but never fully. Jewish and Muslim communities faced distinct pressures, with Jewish institutions suffering particularly in the late Stalinist period through the Anti-Cosmopolitan Campaign from 1948 and the Doctors' Plot of 1953.

Policies on nationalities. From korenizatsiya to deportations

The Stalinist nationalities policy combined two contradictory practices. On one hand the formal constitutional architecture of the USSR, with union republics, autonomous republics and national areas, was preserved and in some ways extended. Native-language education, theatre and literature received state sponsorship. The fifteen union republics of 1940 represented a level of formal federal structure that no previous Russian state had accepted. On the other hand, specific ethnic groups were treated as categories of collective suspicion. The Poles deported from the western border regions in 1935 to 1936 were the first case. The Koreans deported from the Far East to Central Asia in 1937 were the second. The Volga Germans deported in August 1941, immediately after the German invasion, were the third.

The wartime deportations of 1943 and 1944 were the largest. In February 1944, Operation Chechevitsa deported almost the entire Chechen and Ingush population, approximately five hundred thousand people, to Central Asia in cattle trucks. Mortality during the journey and the first year of resettlement is estimated at between a quarter and a third. The Crimean Tatars followed in May 1944. The Meskhetian Turks followed in November. The Kalmyks, Balkars and Karachay were also deported. All were accused of collective collaboration with the German occupier. In most cases the accusation was unsupported by evidence, and most members of the deported nations had in fact served in the Red Army.

The deportations were reversed after Stalin's death, with the Chechens, Ingush and most others allowed to return in the late 1950s, although the Crimean Tatars were not permitted to return until the late 1980s. For Paper 2 purposes, the wartime deportations illustrate the most extreme application of Stalinist nationalities policy and provide crucial evidence for essays on the treatment of minorities.

The Great Patriotic War and late Stalinism

The Great Patriotic War from 22 June 1941 to 8 May 1945 is the single event that most transformed the relationship between the Stalinist regime and Soviet society. Approximately twenty-seven million Soviet citizens died, about fourteen per cent of the pre-war population. The destruction of the western Soviet Union was on a scale unknown in modern European warfare. The Siege of Leningrad from September 1941 to January 1944 killed approximately one million civilians. The Battle of Stalingrad from August 1942 to February 1943 was the turning point of the European war, with approximately one and a half million casualties on both sides. The Red Army's recovery after the catastrophe of 1941 and its advance to Berlin in April 1945 created a reservoir of legitimacy for the regime that was exploited for decades afterwards.

Order Number 227 of 28 July 1942, the famous Not One Step Back order, illustrates the combination of coercion and mobilisation through which Stalin drove the war effort. The order authorised summary execution for unauthorised retreat and established penal battalions into which condemned soldiers were transferred. Approximately one hundred and fifty thousand Soviet soldiers were executed by their own side during the war, a figure that dwarfs the corresponding numbers for the Western Allies or for Nazi Germany until the collapse of 1945. Yet the war also produced genuine popular mobilisation, with partisan movements behind the German lines, the evacuation of industry to the Urals under Voznesensky's Gosplan leadership, and the enlistment of millions in the war effort.

Late Stalinism from 1945 to 1953 combined massive reconstruction with renewed repression. The Fourth Five Year Plan from 1946 restored industrial production to prewar levels by 1948 and exceeded them by 1950. Rationing was formally ended in 1947. But the Zhdanovshchina cultural purge from 1946, named after Andrei Zhdanov, imposed a new orthodoxy on literature, music and science. The Leningrad Affair of 1949 purged the Leningrad Party leadership, including Voznesensky, and demonstrated that Stalin's paranoia remained as active as it had been in 1937. The Anti-Cosmopolitan Campaign from 1948 targeted Jewish cultural figures and scientists. The Doctors' Plot announced in January 1953 accused a group of Kremlin doctors, mostly Jewish, of

plotting to poison Soviet leaders. It is now clear that Stalin was preparing a new wave of terror comparable to 1937 to 1938 when he died on 5 March 1953.

9.4 Historiographical debate

The historiography of Stalinism has passed through three distinct phases that every Paper 2 candidate should be able to name and characterise. The first phase was the totalitarian school of the 1950s and 1960s, developed by Hannah Arendt in The Origins of Totalitarianism, by Robert Conquest in The Great Terror of 1968, and extended by Richard Pipes, Leonard Schapiro and Martin Malia. The totalitarian school argued that the Stalinist state was a centrally directed machine of terror in which policy flowed downward from the will of the dictator, that Soviet society appeared as an atomised collection of victims with no capacity for autonomous action, and that the system was structurally similar to Nazi Germany even if the ideological content differed. The great strength of the school was its moral clarity and its ability to integrate the Terror, the camps and the famines into a single analytical framework. Its great weakness was its reliance on émigré testimony and Cold War-era Western sources, since the Soviet archives were closed.

The second phase was the revisionist school of the 1980s, developed by Sheila Fitzpatrick in Everyday Stalinism and The Russian Revolution, by J. Arch Getty in Origins of the Great Purges, by Lynne Viola on collectivisation, and by Roberta Manning. The revisionists shifted attention from the leader to the social dynamics of the period. They argued that the Terror had a bottom-up component, with local officials filing denunciations for career advantage or to settle personal scores, that the Party and state were more internally fractured than the totalitarian school had recognised, and that Soviet society in the 1930s retained significant autonomous space, including in the relations between workers and managers, peasants and Party officials. The revisionist position was criticised for understating Stalin's personal direction of policy and for coming close to dissolving the question of responsibility for mass atrocities.

The third phase, sometimes described as post-revisionism or the archival synthesis, was made possible by the opening of Soviet archives after 1991. The key authors include Stephen Kotkin in Magnetic Mountain, Stalin, and Armageddon Averted, Oleg Khlevniuk in Stalin: New Biography of a Dictator and The History of the Gulag, and Yoram Gorlizki and Khlevniuk in Cold Peace. The archival synthesis reconstructs Stalin's personal direction of policy with unprecedented specificity, including the quotas he personally approved during the Great Terror and the individual cases in which he ordered arrests and executions. At the same time the synthesis retains the revisionist insights into the social dynamics of implementation and the bureaucratic momentum that the Terror acquired at regional and local level. The effect has been to re-establish Stalin's central role while abandoning the atomised-society picture of the totalitarian school.

For Paper 2 essays on Stalin, the strongest position is to present the three phases as a cumulative historical understanding rather than as competing alternatives, and to combine personal responsibility with institutional and social dynamics in assessing any specific episode.

Chapter summary

Stalin's emergence as the sole leader of the Soviet Union resulted from his command of the Party apparatus, his tactical skill in forming and dissolving alliances, and his ability to weaponise ideology against successive rivals. Consolidation was achieved through collectivisation, the Five Year Plans, the Great Terror, the cult of personality and the transformation of the Party into a nomenklatura bureaucracy. The aims and results of Stalinist policies were transformative, producing the second largest industrial economy in the world, the Red Army that defeated Nazi Germany, a constitutional architecture that formalised the federal character of the Soviet state, and a pattern of wartime deportations that remains among the darkest episodes of twentieth-century history. The historiography of Stalinism has moved from the totalitarian model of the Cold War, through the revisionism of the 1980s, to the archival synthesis of the 2000s, and every Paper 2 candidate should be able to position their arguments in relation to all three.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Socialism in One Country	Stalin's doctrine, adopted at the Fourteenth Congress, of building socialism within the USSR rather than waiting for world revolution
General Secretary	The post Stalin held from 1922 that gave him control of Party appointments
The Great Break	The 1929 turn toward forced collectivisation and industrialisation
Collectivisation	The forced merger of peasant farms into kolkhozy from 1929 onwards
Kulak	The arbitrarily defined category of prosperous peasant used to justify deportation and execution
Holodomor	The Ukrainian famine of 1932 to 1933 caused by forced grain requisitioning
Five Year Plan	The central economic planning document prescribing output targets for each sector
Stakhanovism	The 1935 movement of exemplary shock workers combining incentives with coercive pressure
NKVD	The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, the security apparatus from 1934
Gulag	The network of forced labour camps administered by the NKVD
Show trial	The public prosecution of former Bolshevik leaders on fabricated charges in 1936, 1937 and 1938
Yezhovshchina	The peak of the Great Terror in 1937 and 1938 under NKVD chief Nikolai Yezhov
Cult of personality	The state-sponsored veneration of Stalin in art, literature and public life
Socialist realism	The compulsory artistic doctrine adopted in 1934
Korenizatsiya	The 1920s policy of indigenisation that Stalin inherited and partially continued
Chechevitsa	The NKVD code name for the February 1944 deportation of the Chechens and Ingush
Zhdanovshchina	The post-war cultural purge associated with Andrei Zhdanov
Doctors' Plot	The January 1953 fabrication of a conspiracy by Kremlin doctors

Questions

1. To what extent was Stalin's victory in the succession struggle the result of his control of the Party Secretariat?
2. Evaluate the aims and results of collectivisation.
3. "The Great Terror was driven by bureaucratic dynamics rather than by Stalin's personal will." Discuss.
4. Examine the treatment of non-Russian nationalities under Stalin.
5. Compare and contrast the use of force in the consolidation and maintenance of power by Stalin and one other authoritarian leader.

Source-based exercise

> Source A. Joseph Stalin, speech at the First All-Union Conference of Leading Personnel of Socialist Industry, 4 February 1931 (translation adapted; verify): "We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or we shall be crushed." Source B. Soviet decree on the deportation of the Chechens and Ingush, 1944 (paraphrased; verify wording and date): "Many Chechens and Ingush betrayed the Motherland, joined bands organised by the Germans and rose against Soviet power. The Chechens and Ingush are to be resettled in other regions of the USSR. The territory of the Chechen-Ingush autonomous republic is to be abolished."

(a) According to Source A, why does Stalin believe the Soviet Union must accelerate industrialisation? [3 marks] (b) Compare and contrast the reasoning for extraordinary state action in Sources A and B. [6 marks] (c) Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the argument that Stalinism combined developmental goals with ethnic repression in a single political logic. [9 marks]

Chapter 10: Mussolini's Italy, 1922 to 1943

Summary of events

Benito Mussolini ruled Italy for twenty-one years, from his appointment as Prime Minister after the March on Rome on 29 October 1922 until his dismissal by the Fascist Grand Council and King Victor Emmanuel III on 25 July 1943 during the Allied invasion of Sicily. He came to power legally, in the sense that he was invited by the constitutional monarch to form a government, but the path that brought him to that invitation was paved with blackshirt violence, the collusion of industrialists and landowners, and the structural failures of the Italian liberal state. Once in office he moved more slowly than Hitler toward dictatorship, surviving the Matteotti crisis of 1924 by sheer audacity and establishing a fully fascist dictatorship through the Fascistissime laws of 1925 to 1926. The regime pursued corporatism as a third way between capitalism and communism, concluded the Lateran Pacts with the Papacy in 1929 after six decades of hostility between the Italian state and the Vatican, pursued three dramatic Battles on grain, births and the lira, built a mass leisure organisation through the Dopolavoro, launched an imperial war in Ethiopia, intervened in Spain and aligned with Nazi Germany in the Rome-Berlin Axis and the Pact of Steel. The regime's failure in the Second World War, entered ill-prepared in June 1940 and compounded by disasters in Greece, North Africa and Russia, destroyed Mussolini's legitimacy and produced the internal revolt of July 1943. For Paper 2 purposes Mussolini is the paradigm case of fascism, the regime in which the term totalitarian was coined and in which the limits of totalitarianism were most clearly exposed.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were the conditions that made the rise of fascism possible in post-war Italy?
2. How did Mussolini consolidate his dictatorship between 1922 and 1926?
3. Evaluate the nature and effectiveness of the corporate state.
4. What were the significance and results of the Lateran Pacts?
5. To what extent did fascist Italy become a totalitarian state?
6. How did Mussolini's foreign policy support and then destroy his regime?

Timeline of Chapter 10

29 July 1883	Birth of Benito Mussolini in Predappio
1912	Editor of Avanti, socialist newspaper
1914	Expelled from Socialist Party for supporting Italian entry into war
23 March 1919	Fasci Italiani di Combattimento founded in Milan
1919 to 1920	Biennio Rosso
November 1921	National Fascist Party founded
27 to 30 October 1922	March on Rome, Mussolini appointed Prime Minister on 30 October
29 October 1922	Mussolini invited to form government

November 1923	Acerbo Law passed
6 April 1924	Elections under Acerbo Law give fascists 374 seats
10 June 1924	Murder of Matteotti by fascist squad
3 January 1925	Mussolini claims responsibility for fascist violence
1925 to 1926	Fascistissime laws
1927	Charter of Labour. Quota Novanta stabilises lira
11 February 1929	Lateran Pacts
1933	IRI established to rescue failing banks
October 1935 to May 1936	Invasion and conquest of Ethiopia
1936 to 1939	Intervention in Spanish Civil War
1 November 1936	Rome-Berlin Axis
1938	Racial laws
22 May 1939	Pact of Steel
10 June 1940	Italy enters the Second World War
July to August 1940	Italian invasions of British Somaliland and Egypt begin
October 1940	Italian invasion of Greece fails
February 1941	British counter-offensive in North Africa
10 July 1943	Allied landings in Sicily
25 July 1943	Fascist Grand Council dismisses Mussolini; King places him under arrest

10.1 Theme one. The emergence of Italian fascism

Italy after the Great War. The mutilated victory

Italy emerged from the First World War on the winning side but deeply dissatisfied. The Treaty of London of 1915 had promised Italy substantial territorial gains in Dalmatia and Asia Minor in exchange for joining the Entente. The peace settlement delivered much less. The Trentino and Alto Adige were acquired, and the port of Trieste, but Fiume was denied and the Dalmatian coast was assigned to the new Yugoslav state. The poet Gabriele D'Annunzio coined the phrase mutilated victory, vittoria mutilata, that captured the nationalist sense of betrayal, and D'Annunzio himself in September 1919 seized Fiume with a force of volunteers and held it for fifteen months in defiance of the Italian government and the peace settlement. The episode illustrated the weakness of the liberal state and the availability of organised nationalist violence as a political tool.

Italy had paid heavily for its participation in the war. Approximately six hundred thousand Italian soldiers had died. The national debt had quadrupled. Inflation ravaged the middle class. Demobilised soldiers returned to a country that could not absorb them economically or socially. The expectation that victory would deliver national renewal dissolved into economic dislocation and political frustration, and the liberal state appeared unable to respond.

The Biennio Rosso and the fear of revolution

The Biennio Rosso, the two red years of 1919 to 1920, saw a wave of socialist agitation that terrified the Italian middle and upper classes. Factory occupations in Turin and Milan mobilised hundreds of thousands of workers. Land seizures in southern Italy saw peasants occupying large estates. The Italian Socialist Party proclaimed solidarity with the Russian Revolution and joined the Third International in 1919. Strikes paralysed key industries. The fear of a communist revolution in Italy, on the model of what had just happened in Russia and seemed to be happening in Hungary and Germany, became widespread. In fact the PSI was deeply divided between reformists and revolutionaries, and it was incapable of organised revolutionary action. But the perception of imminent revolution mattered more than the reality, and it shaped the political choices of the industrialists, landowners and middle classes who would eventually fund and tolerate the fascist movement.

The founding of the fascio and squadrismo

Benito Mussolini had been the editor of Avanti, the Socialist Party newspaper, until 1914, when he broke with the party over its opposition to Italian entry into the war. He founded a new newspaper, Il Popolo d'Italia, with industrial backing, and argued for Italian intervention on the Entente side. After the war he sought to combine nationalism, revolutionary rhetoric and anti-socialism into a new political force. On 23 March 1919 he founded the Fasci Italiani di Combattimento in Milan with approximately one hundred members. The early programme was eclectic and radical, combining republicanism, anti-clericalism, women's suffrage, workers' participation in management, progressive taxation and territorial expansionism. In the November 1919 elections the fascio failed to win a single seat.

The transformation of the fascio from a fringe movement into a mass political force occurred between 1920 and 1922 through squadrismo, the systematic paramilitary violence of blackshirt squads against socialists, trade unionists and cooperatives, particularly in the rural Po Valley and in Tuscany. Landowners and industrialists funded the squads as a tool against rural and urban workers. The squadristi broke strikes, burned socialist headquarters and party offices, beat up or killed opponents, and forced local elected councils to resign. The Italian state, dominated by liberal prime ministers who either could not or would not use force against the squads, tolerated the violence. By 1922 the National Fascist Party, the PNF, founded in November 1921, had approximately three hundred thousand members and a paramilitary wing more effective than the state's capacity for order.

The March on Rome

The March on Rome of 27 to 28 October 1922 was a theatrical demonstration of force that exploited the paralysis of the liberal state. Mussolini remained in Milan while blackshirt columns converged on the capital from four directions. The Italian army was numerically and tactically capable of dispersing them. Prime Minister Luigi Facta, a liberal from Piedmont, recommended to King Victor Emmanuel III that martial law be declared. The King refused to sign the decree. The reasons for his refusal remain debated, with some accounts emphasising fear of civil war, others emphasising sympathy for the fascists as a barrier against socialism, and others emphasising the influence of his cousin the Duke of Aosta, who was rumoured to be willing to replace Victor Emmanuel if the King opposed the fascists. Whatever the precise motivation, the refusal to declare martial law transferred political authority to Mussolini. On 29 October 1922 the King invited Mussolini to form a government. Mussolini travelled from Milan to Rome by train, in the equivalent of a first-class compartment, and arrived to accept the office of Prime Minister.

The March on Rome therefore succeeded not because the fascists defeated the state but because the state chose not to resist. For Paper 2 purposes, this is the defining feature of the Italian case. The emergence of fascism in Italy illustrates the weakness of the political system more clearly than any of the other four cases, because the state had the physical capacity to prevent the fascist takeover and chose not to use it.

The four IB factors applied to the Italian case

The economic factor is present but secondary. The Italian economy was in difficulty in 1919 to 1922, but not in Depression-level crisis. The impact of war is very significant, both through the mutilated victory rhetoric and through the demobilisation of unemployed veterans who provided recruits for the squadristi. Social division is significant in the form of the class confrontation of the Biennio Rosso and the regional divisions of north and south. The weakness of the political system is the most significant factor, operating at multiple levels, namely the fragility of liberal coalitions, the decision of the King not to resist the March on Rome, the inability of the Socialist Party to respond coherently, and the collaboration of industrial and landed interests with the fascist movement.

10.2 Theme two. Consolidation and maintenance of power

The first Mussolini government and the Acerbo Law

The cabinet Mussolini formed in October 1922 contained only three fascist ministers. The liberals around him believed they could use him as a counterweight to socialism while controlling him institutionally. This calculation, common to the conservative establishments that brought authoritarian movements to power in both Italy and Germany, proved catastrophically wrong. Mussolini secured emergency powers for one year in November 1922 and used the year to build fascist control over the police, the prefectures and key ministries. In November 1923 he passed the Acerbo Law, which redesigned the electoral system so that the party winning the largest share of the vote, with a minimum of twenty-five per cent, would receive two thirds of the seats in parliament. In the elections of April 1924, held under widespread intimidation and fraud, the fascist-led National List won sixty-five per cent of the vote and three hundred and seventy-four seats out of five hundred and thirty-five.

The Matteotti crisis

On 30 May 1924 the socialist deputy Giacomo Matteotti delivered a speech in parliament denouncing the electoral fraud and intimidation that had produced the fascist victory. He announced that he possessed documents proving corruption at the highest levels of the fascist government. On 10 June 1924 he was kidnapped from a Roman street by a fascist squad, stabbed to death and his body buried in a shallow grave outside Rome. His disappearance caused a political crisis that came closer to ending the fascist experiment than any other event before 1943.

The Aventine Secession in June 1924 saw the opposition parties walk out of parliament in protest at the Matteotti murder. Named after the hill to which Roman plebeians had withdrawn in the fifth century BC, the Secession aimed to delegitimise the fascist government by making it appear to govern without opposition. The tactic was principled but politically disastrous. It left Mussolini in complete control of parliament while the opposition deprived itself of any platform. King Victor Emmanuel III could have dismissed Mussolini during the crisis but chose not to. The Italian establishment, having committed itself to the fascist experiment, did not reverse course when the moral case for doing so was at its strongest.

On 3 January 1925 Mussolini delivered a defiant speech to parliament in which he accepted personal responsibility for fascist violence and dared the opposition to impeach him. Historians commonly date the beginning of the full fascist dictatorship from this speech, because from early 1925 Mussolini abandoned the pretence of ruling through constitutional channels and began the systematic elimination of opposition.

The Fascistissime laws

The Fascistissime, or very fascist, laws of 1925 to 1926 completed the transformation of Italy into a fascist dictatorship. Opposition parties were banned in late 1926. Trade unions other than fascist ones were dissolved. Press freedom was abolished through pre-publication censorship. Elected mayors were replaced by appointed officials called podestà. The secret police, the Opera Vigilanza Repressione Antifascismo or OVRA, was established in 1926 under Arturo Bocchini, and it would run approximately ten million files on Italian citizens by 1940. The death penalty was reintroduced for political offences. The Special Tribunal for the Defence of the State began sentencing anti-fascists to prison. Internal exile to the remote islands of the Aeolian chain, called confino, became the standard penalty for ordinary opposition.

The Duce and the Fascist Grand Council

Mussolini's personal title was Il Duce, the leader, and his personal authority was formalised through the Fascist Grand Council, which under a law of December 1928 became the supreme organ of the regime and was empowered to approve the succession. The Grand Council's composition was controlled by Mussolini, which meant that in normal conditions its authority was nominal. But the constitutional provision that the Grand Council could address the succession would become politically decisive in July 1943.

Unlike Hitler in Germany, Mussolini did not absorb the head of state function. The monarchy survived throughout the fascist period, and King Victor Emmanuel III remained formally sovereign. The army officer corps swore its loyalty to the King rather than to Mussolini personally, and the King retained the constitutional power to dismiss the prime minister. This constitutional survival of an alternative source of legitimacy is one of the reasons fascism in Italy was an incomplete totalitarianism in the formulation of R. J. B. Bosworth. When the military situation collapsed in July 1943, the King did not need a coup to remove Mussolini. He could, and did, simply dismiss him.

The nature and extent of opposition

Opposition to fascism persisted but was driven underground. The Italian Communist Party, founded in January 1921 under Antonio Gramsci and Palmiro Togliatti, was banned in 1926. Gramsci was arrested in November 1926 and spent the rest of his life in prison, where he wrote the Prison Notebooks that would become one of the most influential works of twentieth-century Marxist thought. The Socialist Party and the Popolari Catholic party were also banned. Anti-fascist exile, with centres in Paris, Geneva and eventually New York, kept political organisations alive. The Giustizia e Libertà movement of Carlo Rosselli provided an important non-communist anti-fascist voice until Rosselli's murder by fascist agents in France in 1937.

Within Italy, opposition took the form of small conspiratorial networks, occasional attempted assassinations of Mussolini between 1925 and 1926, and the strikes of the early 1940s under wartime conditions. The OVRA was generally successful in detecting and breaking opposition networks. By the standards of fascist or communist regimes elsewhere in Europe, the scale of repression was moderate. Approximately ten thousand Italians were sent to confino between 1926 and 1943. Approximately twelve thousand were imprisoned. Approximately thirty were executed for political offences, a figure that pales in comparison with the hundreds of thousands executed in the Soviet Union or the millions murdered in Nazi Germany.

A worked PEEL(P) paragraph on fascist consolidation

The worked paragraph below responds to the question, "Evaluate the role of propaganda in Mussolini's consolidation of power."

Point. Propaganda played an important but supplementary role in Mussolini's consolidation of power, reinforcing the legal and coercive measures through which the fascist state was constructed but never substituting for them, and limited by the survival of the monarchy, the Church and the traditional army as alternative sources of authority.

Evidence. The Ministry of Popular Culture, known as MinCulPop, coordinated press censorship, radio broadcasting, cinema and public ritual from the mid-1930s. The EIAR radio network reached approximately four million listeners by 1939. The LUCE newsreel agency produced weekly propaganda films shown in all cinemas. The cult of the Duce portrayed Mussolini in poses adopted from Roman emperors, and the phrase Mussolini ha sempre ragione, Mussolini is always right, became an official slogan. The Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro had approximately four million members by 1939 and provided leisure activities that integrated Italians into the regime's ideological universe.

Explanation. Propaganda served three consolidation purposes. It legitimised the Duce as the embodiment of Italian national destiny. It created a shared cultural space in which fascist values were normalised. It filled the public sphere sufficiently to discourage alternative political identifications. However, the reach of fascist propaganda was constrained by the continuing existence of Catholic cultural infrastructure after the Lateran Pacts and by the practical limits of a regime that had to coexist with the monarchy, the traditional army officer corps and, in the south, the networks of local notables that predated fascism.

Link. Therefore propaganda was a significant tool of fascist consolidation but operated within boundaries set by the competing institutions of Italian society, in contrast to the more complete penetration achieved in Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia.

Perspective. This interpretation aligns with R. J. B. Bosworth, whose concept of incomplete totalitarianism in Mussolini's Italy stresses the gap between fascist propaganda ambition and the practical limits of its social reach. Emilio Gentile argues for a more totalising reading in which fascism functioned as a political religion with genuine capacity to absorb Italians into its symbolic universe. Paul Corner in The Fascist Party and Popular Opinion challenges both positions by arguing on the basis of provincial prefect reports that apparent

consent was mostly the product of fear, opportunism and inertia, with genuine enthusiasm a minority phenomenon. The evidence supports the Bosworth position with Corner's scepticism built in, showing propaganda as real but bounded by the structural limits of Italian fascism.

10.3 Theme three. Aims and results of policies

Economic policy. The corporate state and the battles

Fascist economic policy combined three elements. The first was the corporate state, presented as a third way between capitalism and communism. The 1927 Charter of Labour declared the right to work but banned strikes and lockouts. Twenty-two corporations, each covering a sector of the economy, were established by 1934 and were supposed to mediate between employers and workers. In practice the corporations served employer interests. Workers lost the right to organise independently, wages were often cut during the Depression, and the corporations functioned primarily as instruments of state control rather than genuine mediation.

The second element was the series of Battles. The Battle for Grain from 1925 aimed at self-sufficiency in wheat, with the slogan il pane è la vittoria, bread is victory, and through tariff protection and propaganda campaigns it roughly doubled wheat production by 1939. The cost was the displacement of other crops, particularly olive oil and citrus fruit, which had been more profitable and whose reduction raised overall food costs. The Battle for Births from 1927 aimed to raise the Italian population from forty to sixty million, through marriage loans, family allowances and propaganda. It failed, as birth rates continued to decline. The Battle for the Lira, Quota Novanta, fixed the lira at ninety to the pound sterling in December 1927. The overvalued currency made Italian exports uncompetitive and contributed to deflation and unemployment in the late 1920s, anticipating the global Depression.

The third element was the response to the Depression after 1929. The global crisis hit Italy in 1931 with bank failures and industrial collapse. Rather than allow cascade bankruptcies, Mussolini authorised the creation of the Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale, IRI, in January 1933. IRI absorbed the distressed industrial shareholdings of the three largest banks. It was conceived as a temporary rescue vehicle but became a permanent fixture of the Italian economy. By 1939 IRI controlled approximately half of Italian steel production, four fifths of shipbuilding, the whole of heavy engineering relevant to defence and significant shares in telecommunications. Adam Tooze has observed that fascism, which proclaimed itself the third way, produced a state capitalism more extensive than any other western European country.

The drive for autarky after 1936, intensified by Ethiopian sanctions and Spanish Civil War commitments, never achieved its stated goals. Italian dependence on imported oil, coal and iron ore remained substantial in 1939. When Italy entered the Second World War in June 1940, stocks of strategic materials were measured in weeks, not months.

The Lateran Pacts

The Lateran Pacts of 11 February 1929 resolved the Roman Question that had persisted since the unification of Italy in 1870. For sixty years the Papacy had refused to recognise the Kingdom of Italy and had remained a self-declared prisoner of the Vatican. The Lateran Pacts consisted of three documents. A treaty recognised the Vatican City as a sovereign state. A concordat regulated relations between Italy and the Church, confirming Catholicism as the state religion, making religious education compulsory in schools, recognising Catholic marriage as having civil effect and providing state salaries for clergy. A financial convention compensated the Church for territories lost during unification.

The political significance of the Lateran Pacts was enormous. They removed the one large institutional enemy the fascist state faced from its own society. They delivered the support of the Catholic hierarchy and millions of Catholic Italians. They produced the regime's single most genuinely popular achievement. For Paper 2 purposes on the theme of aims and results, the Lateran Pacts are the clearest example of the regime achieving a stated aim with lasting consequences. The constitutional arrangement they created lasted until the 1984 revision of the concordat under the Republic.

Cultural policy. The Dopolavoro and education

The Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, OND, was the regime's mass leisure organisation, providing sports, cinema, excursions, cultural activities and summer camps to its members. Founded in 1925, it reached approximately four million members by 1939 and became one of the most popular institutions of fascist Italy. The Dopolavoro provided tangible benefits to ordinary workers, including subsidised holidays at the seaside that many had never experienced before. It also absorbed them into a shared fascist cultural universe without requiring explicit political mobilisation.

The education reform of 1923, designed by philosopher Giovanni Gentile as Minister of Public Instruction, restructured Italian schooling along classical and humanistic lines that Gentile associated with fascist values. The Gentile Reform survived fascism and remained the basic framework of Italian education until the 1960s. Textbooks were rewritten to emphasise Roman and Italian greatness. The Opera Nazionale Balilla, the fascist youth movement named after a legendary Genoese boy hero, organised children by age group into Figli della Lupa, Balilla, Avanguardisti and Giovani Fascisti. By 1939 approximately seven million young people were members.

Social policy. Women and racial policy

Fascist social policy on women was aggressively pronatalist and restrictive. Women were encouraged to leave the workforce and return to the home. Quotas limited women's access to professions. Taxes on bachelors were introduced in 1926. The 1934 law on the employment of women set a ten per cent cap on women in certain categories of civil service work. The Battle for Births reflected the ideology of woman as mother of the Italian race, with the mother of many children receiving medals and public honours. These policies, despite their intensity, failed to increase the birth rate, which continued the long-term decline that had begun before fascism.

The racial laws of 1938 were a later development, imposed under German influence rather than from deep roots in Italian fascism. The laws excluded Jews from state employment, education and the armed forces, dissolved mixed marriages, restricted property ownership and imposed registration requirements. Approximately fifty thousand Italian Jews were affected. The laws were applied unevenly, and many Italians, including some in the regime, opposed their implementation. When the Germans occupied northern Italy in September 1943, the deportation of Italian Jews to Auschwitz began, with approximately seven thousand deported and killed. Italian fascism before 1938 had not been racially antisemitic in the German manner, and the racial laws illustrate the degree to which Mussolini's regime was becoming dependent on Hitler's.

Foreign policy as an element of regime maintenance

Mussolini's foreign policy initially strengthened the regime through prestige victories and then destroyed it through overreach. The Corfu Incident of 1923, in which Italy briefly occupied the Greek island after the murder of Italian officials, demonstrated aggressive intent. The Locarno Treaty of 1925 associated Italy with the European security system. The conquest of Ethiopia between October 1935 and May 1936 produced the single greatest propaganda triumph of the regime. Mussolini announced from the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia on 9 May 1936 that the Italian empire had been reborn.

The Ethiopian war also drove Italy toward Germany. Sanctions voted by the League of Nations in October 1935 were weak, omitting oil and coal, but they permanently damaged Italian relations with Britain and France. The Rome-Berlin Axis was announced by Mussolini in November 1936. Italian intervention in the Spanish Civil War, with approximately seventy-five thousand troops of the Corpo Truppe Volontarie, further aligned the regime with Nazi Germany while imposing economic costs. The Pact of Steel of May 1939 committed Italy to fight alongside Germany in any war, an obligation Mussolini was not militarily prepared to honour.

The entry into the Second World War on 10 June 1940, when German victory seemed assured, was calculated to secure a seat at the peace conference. The calculation was catastrophic. The Italian invasion of Greece in October 1940 was repelled and required German rescue. The Italian campaign in North Africa collapsed under British counterattack in early 1941 and again required German rescue through the Afrika Korps. The Italian expeditionary force sent to the Soviet Union in 1941 was destroyed at Stalingrad. When the Allies landed in Sicily on 10 July 1943, the Italian army could offer only token resistance.

10.4 Historiographical debate

The historiography of Italian fascism has been shaped by the work of Renzo De Felice, whose multi-volume biography of Mussolini between the 1960s and 1990s argued that fascism enjoyed genuine popular consent between the Lateran Pacts and the Ethiopian war, that Mussolini was a significant political figure rather than a comic-opera imitator of Hitler, and that the category of fascism should be reserved for the Italian movement rather than extended to other European regimes. De Felice's work provoked fierce controversy, particularly in Italy, where critics on the left accused him of normalising the regime.

R. J. B. Bosworth in Mussolini's Italy offers a critical biography that accepts some of De Felice's empirical findings while rejecting his interpretive framework. Bosworth's concept of incomplete totalitarianism stresses the gap between fascist rhetoric and social practice, and argues that the regime's penetration of Italian society was limited by the survival of the monarchy, the Church, the army and the regional networks of local notables. Emilio Gentile in The Sacralisation of Politics in Fascist Italy presents fascism as a political religion with genuine capacity to absorb Italians into its ritual and symbolic universe, emphasising the continuity between fascist mass politics and the religious traditions of Catholic Italy.

Paul Corner in The Fascist Party and Popular Opinion in Mussolini's Italy, published in 2012, uses the reports of provincial prefects and Party officials to argue that apparent consent was mostly a product of fear, opportunism and inertia rather than genuine conviction. The evidence from the regime's own surveillance suggests that popular enthusiasm was a minority phenomenon and that the bulk of the population was passively compliant rather than actively supportive.

Robert Paxton in The Anatomy of Fascism offers a comparative framework in which Italian fascism is the original model for a generic category that includes Nazi Germany, Spain under Franco and other regimes. Paxton's five-stage model, from the birth of fascist movements through their rooting in society, their arrival in power, their exercise of power and their radicalisation or normalisation, has become one of the most widely taught frameworks for teaching fascism. For Paper 2 comparative essays, Paxton's framework provides a useful set of analytical categories that can be applied to both Mussolini and Hitler and, with qualifications, to Franco.

Chapter summary

Mussolini emerged from the failures of the Italian liberal state, from the trauma of the mutilated victory and the Biennio Rosso, and from the decisions of the conservative elite to accommodate fascism rather than resist it. Consolidation proceeded more slowly than in Germany, surviving the Matteotti crisis and completing the transition through the Fascistissime laws. Aims and results were mixed. The Lateran Pacts were the regime's greatest and most lasting achievement. The corporate state was a facade behind which traditional economic structures continued. The Battles on grain, births and the lira had limited success. Ethiopian conquest and intervention in Spain produced prestige but drove Italy into the German orbit. Entry into the Second World War destroyed the regime militarily and politically. Italian fascism was the paradigm case from which the category of fascism was drawn, and it was also a case in which the limits of totalitarian ambition were more visible than anywhere else.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Mutilated victory	Nationalist phrase describing the gap between Italy's wartime sacrifices and its peace settlement gains
Biennio Rosso	The two red years of 1919 to 1920 marked by strikes, factory occupations and fear of revolution
Squadrismo	The organised paramilitary violence of blackshirt squads
March on Rome	The October 1922 demonstration through which Mussolini became Prime Minister
Acerbo Law	The 1923 electoral reform guaranteeing two thirds of seats to the leading party
Aventine Secession	The 1924 opposition walkout following the Matteotti murder
Fascistissime laws	The 1925 to 1926 legislation that completed the legal framework of dictatorship
OVRA	The fascist secret police
Podestà	The appointed official who replaced elected mayors under fascism
Confino	The internal exile penalty used against anti-fascist opponents
Corporate state	The fascist doctrine of organising the economy through joint corporations
Charter of Labour	The 1927 declaration of fascist labour doctrine
Lateran Pacts	The 1929 treaty and concordat with the Holy See
IRI	The Institute for Industrial Reconstruction, established in 1933 to rescue banks
Quota Novanta	The 1927 pegging of the lira to the pound sterling at ninety
Dopolavoro	The mass leisure organisation of fascist Italy
Rome-Berlin Axis	The 1936 alignment with Nazi Germany
Pact of Steel	The May 1939 military alliance with Germany
Racial laws	The 1938 antisemitic legislation imposed under German influence

Questions

1. To what extent was the weakness of the liberal state the most important factor in the rise of fascism in Italy?
2. Examine the methods by which Mussolini consolidated power between 1922 and 1926.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of fascist economic policy.
4. "The Lateran Pacts were Mussolini's greatest domestic achievement." Discuss.
5. To what extent did fascist Italy become a totalitarian state?
6. Compare and contrast the methods of consolidation used by Mussolini and one other authoritarian leader from a different region.

Chapter 11: Hitler's Germany, 1933 to 1945

Summary of events

Adolf Hitler came to the chancellorship of Germany on 30 January 1933 through a back-room agreement with the conservative politicians around President Paul von Hindenburg, who believed that a coalition cabinet containing only three Nazi ministers could contain him. Within eighteen months the cabinet was irrelevant, the other parties had been banned, the trade unions had been dissolved, the federal states had been centralised, the last rivals inside the Nazi movement had been murdered in the Night of the Long Knives and the army had sworn a personal oath of loyalty to the Führer. The mechanisms of this transformation were the Reichstag Fire Decree, the Enabling Act, the successive waves of Gleichschaltung that brought every institution of German society into line with the regime, the Night of the Long Knives and the merger of the offices of Reichspräsident and Reichskanzler after Hindenburg's death. The regime that emerged from this transformation pursued economic recovery through rearmament and public works, built a racial community through the Nuremberg Laws and the progressive exclusion of Jews from public life, deployed propaganda through Goebbels's Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, and prepared for the war of conquest that began on 1 September 1939 and ended in the total destruction of Germany on 8 May 1945. For Paper 2 purposes Hitler is the case in which the combination of legal manipulation, mass propaganda, charismatic leadership and systematic violence produced the most comprehensive totalitarian penetration of any European society in the twentieth century.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were the conditions in Weimar Germany that made the rise of Hitler possible?
2. How did Hitler consolidate his dictatorship between January 1933 and August 1934?
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of Nazi economic policy.
4. How did Goebbels's propaganda apparatus operate, and what did it achieve?
5. What were the aims and results of Nazi racial policy?
6. To what extent did Nazi Germany achieve totalitarian control over German society?
7. How has the historiographical debate between intentionalists and structuralists shaped our understanding of the regime?

Timeline of Chapter 11

20 April 1889	Birth of Adolf Hitler in Braunau am Inn, Austria
1919	Joins the German Workers' Party, soon renamed NSDAP
8 to 9 November 1923	Beer Hall Putsch in Munich fails
1924	Trial. Hitler imprisoned at Landsberg
1925 to 1926	Mein Kampf published
May 1928	NSDAP wins 2.6 per cent of the Reichstag vote
October 1929	Wall Street Crash begins the global Depression

July 1932	NSDAP wins 37.3 per cent of Reichstag vote, becomes largest party
30 January 1933	Hitler appointed Chancellor
27 February 1933	Reichstag Fire
28 February 1933	Decree for the Protection of the People and the State
5 March 1933	Reichstag elections, NSDAP wins 43.9 per cent
23 March 1933	Enabling Act passed
1 April 1933	Boycott of Jewish businesses
2 May 1933	Trade unions dissolved. German Labour Front established
14 July 1933	Nazi Party becomes only legal party
20 July 1933	Concordat with the Vatican
30 June 1934	Night of the Long Knives
2 August 1934	Hindenburg dies. Hitler merges offices. Army oath to Hitler personally
15 September 1935	Nuremberg Laws
7 March 1936	Remilitarisation of the Rhineland
1936	Four-Year Plan under Göring. Hitler Youth compulsory
12 March 1938	Anschluss with Austria
29 to 30 September 1938	Munich Agreement
9 to 10 November 1938	Kristallnacht
15 March 1939	Occupation of the rump Czechoslovakia
23 August 1939	Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact
1 September 1939	Invasion of Poland
22 June 1941	Operation Barbarossa
20 January 1942	Wannsee Conference
2 February 1943	German surrender at Stalingrad
20 July 1944	Stauffenberg assassination attempt fails
30 April 1945	Hitler suicide
8 May 1945	Unconditional surrender of Germany

11.1 Theme one. The emergence of Hitler's regime

Weimar weaknesses

The Weimar Republic, proclaimed in November 1918, was burdened from the outset by structural vulnerabilities that Hitler would eventually exploit. The political system rested on proportional representation, which produced fragmented parliaments with no stable majorities. Between 1919 and 1933 there were twenty coalition governments, with an average life of approximately eight months. Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution gave the Reichspräsident emergency decree powers, and from 1930 onwards successive chancellors governed almost exclusively through emergency decrees rather than through parliamentary majorities.

The stab in the back myth, the Dolchstoßlegende, poisoned democratic legitimacy from the start. Right-wing propaganda claimed falsely that the German army had been undefeated in the field in 1918 and had been betrayed by civilian politicians, Jews and socialists. The myth made the democratic politicians of the Weimar Republic, who had actually inherited the collapse from the Kaiser's generals, appear as the November criminals who had sold out the nation. The Treaty of Versailles, with its reparations obligations, territorial losses and the Article 231 war guilt clause, provided a permanent grievance that every extremist could exploit.

The economy suffered two catastrophic shocks. The hyperinflation of 1923 destroyed middle-class savings and poisoned the middle-class relationship with the Republic. The Wall Street Crash of October 1929 and the subsequent Depression drove unemployment from approximately one and a half million in 1929 to approximately six million by early 1932. American loans under the Dawes Plan, on which the Weimar economy depended, were recalled. The political centre collapsed. The parties of the middle, the DDP and the DVP, lost seats to the extremes. The Communist Party grew. The Nazi Party grew faster.

The Nazi movement from 1919 to 1932

Hitler's own rise tracked the crisis of the Republic. He joined the German Workers' Party in September 1919, turned it into the NSDAP in 1920 and became its dictator of propaganda in 1921. The Beer Hall Putsch of 8 to 9 November 1923 failed, but Hitler turned his trial for treason into a national stage for his ideas, and the book he wrote in Landsberg prison, Mein Kampf, set out his programme of racial nationalism, territorial expansion into the east, and the destruction of the German Jewish community.

The Nazi electoral breakthrough came with the Depression. The May 1928 elections returned the NSDAP with 2.6 per cent of the vote and twelve seats. The September 1930 elections, following the first two years of the Depression, returned them with 18.3 per cent and one hundred and seven seats. The July 1932 elections made them the largest party in the Reichstag with 37.3 per cent and two hundred and thirty seats. In November 1932 the vote slipped to 33.1 per cent and one hundred and ninety-six seats, but the party remained dominant in the chamber.

The Nazi electoral coalition combined multiple constituencies. Middle-class voters whose savings had been destroyed by hyperinflation and whose security had been destroyed by Depression. Farmers whose position had deteriorated during the agricultural crisis of the 1920s. Young voters entering the electorate without commitment to existing parties. Former Freikorps and veterans of the Great War who blamed the Republic for Germany's humiliation. Protestant voters in the north and east, though Nazi penetration of Catholic Bavaria and the Rhineland was weaker. The working class remained the last major constituency to resist Nazism, with the SPD and KPD together outpolling the NSDAP in every election, but the division between socialists and communists and their inability to cooperate against the Nazi threat was another structural weakness of

Weimar.

The decision of the conservative elites

The decisive moment in Hitler's rise was the decision of the conservative politicians around President Hindenburg in January 1933 to offer him the chancellorship. Franz von Papen, a former chancellor and aristocratic conservative, was the key operator. Papen believed that placing Hitler in a coalition cabinet where only three of the eleven ministers were Nazis, with himself as Vice-Chancellor and conservative ministers in the key posts of foreign affairs, interior, defence and economics, would allow the conservatives to control Hitler. Papen famously said to his associates after the appointment, "We've hired him." Within months it became clear who had hired whom.

For Paper 2 purposes, the January 1933 decision illustrates one of the recurring patterns of the emergence of authoritarian states, namely the miscalculation by the conservative establishment that authoritarian movements could be used instrumentally without being granted real power. Ian Kershaw has called this calculation one of the greatest political miscalculations of the twentieth century. The same calculation had produced Mussolini's appointment in October 1922, and it is a comparative theme that every Paper 2 candidate should be ready to develop.

The four IB factors applied to Hitler's case

The economic factor is very significant, probably the single most important factor. Without the Depression, the Nazi vote share of 2.6 per cent in 1928 would not have become 37.3 per cent in 1932. The impact of war is also very significant, both through the stab in the back myth and through the Versailles grievance. Social division is moderately significant, with class and confessional divisions contributing to the political fragmentation. The weakness of the political system is extremely significant, both constitutionally through proportional representation and Article 48 and behaviourally through the collapse of centrist cooperation. The Hitler case therefore produces a unique profile in which economic factors combine with the weakness of the political system to produce the crisis, while impact of war and social division provide the ideological raw materials that the NSDAP exploited.

11.2 Theme two. Consolidation and maintenance of power

The destruction of Weimar democracy, January to March 1933

The consolidation of Hitler's power began on the day of his appointment. New Reichstag elections were called for 5 March 1933. The regime used its position in the cabinet to launch immediate repression against the Communist Party and to stage propaganda rallies across Germany. On 27 February 1933 the Reichstag building burned. The fire was blamed on a Dutch communist, Marinus van der Lubbe, who was found inside the building and who was almost certainly acting alone, although conspiracy theories about Nazi responsibility have circulated since.

The regime used the fire to secure the Decree for the Protection of the People and the State on 28 February, known as the Reichstag Fire Decree. The decree suspended the civil liberties provisions of the Weimar Constitution, authorised the arrest of political opponents without trial and transferred police powers to the Reich government. Approximately four thousand communists were arrested in the following days. The KPD was effectively banned. The elections on 5 March were held under conditions of terror, but even so the NSDAP failed to win an absolute majority, polling 43.9 per cent.

On 23 March 1933 the Reichstag, meeting in the Kroll Opera House under the gaze of SA stormtroopers surrounding the building, passed the Enabling Act, the Gesetz zur Behebung der Not von Volk und Reich. The

law transferred the power to pass legislation from the Reichstag to the government for four years. Only the SPD voted against. The KPD had been banned, the Centre Party had been persuaded by assurances about the position of Catholic institutions, and the conservative parties had voted for the law. The Enabling Act was the legal death of Weimar democracy. From 23 March 1933 onwards the Reichstag was a consultative body only, and every important legal change in the Third Reich was enacted as an executive decree under the authority of the Enabling Act.

Gleichschaltung

The process of Gleichschaltung, literally coordination but better understood as bringing into line, extended the regime's control through every institution of German society during 1933 and 1934. Trade unions were dissolved on 2 May 1933 and replaced by the German Labour Front, the Deutsche Arbeitsfront or DAF, under Robert Ley. On 14 July 1933 the Law Against the Establishment of New Parties made the NSDAP the only legal party. The Länder, the federal states of Germany, were subordinated to the Reich through Reich Governors. The civil service was purged of Jews and political opponents through the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service of April 1933. The legal profession, the medical profession, the academic world, the press and the arts were brought under regime control through the Reich Chamber of Culture, the Reichskulturkammer, which required compulsory membership for anyone wishing to publish, paint, compose, perform or otherwise participate in cultural life.

The Concordat with the Vatican on 20 July 1933 neutralised the potential opposition of the Catholic Church. The Nazi regime pledged to respect the autonomy of Catholic schools and religious orders. In exchange the Church agreed to withdraw from politics, dissolving the Catholic Centre Party whose votes had been required for the Enabling Act. The arrangement lasted only as long as it served the regime. The encyclical Mit brennender Sorge, issued by Pius XI in March 1937 and smuggled into Germany for simultaneous reading from Catholic pulpits, denounced the violations of the Concordat that had already begun.

The Night of the Long Knives

By the middle of 1934 the regime faced one remaining threat to Hitler's personal authority, the radical wing of the Nazi movement itself. The SA, the Sturmabteilung, under Ernst Röhm had approximately three million members by 1934, a larger force than the Reichswehr. Röhm argued for a second revolution that would replace the professional army with an SA-based militia. The Reichswehr leadership, essential for the succession after Hindenburg's expected death, feared and opposed Röhm. Hitler chose the army.

On 30 June 1934, in the operation called the Night of the Long Knives, Hitler ordered the SS to murder Röhm and approximately eighty-five other perceived rivals and inconvenient figures. The victims included leading SA officers, the former Chancellor Kurt von Schleicher, and Gustav von Kahr who had betrayed Hitler during the 1923 Putsch. The SA was decapitated as an independent force. The Reichswehr, relieved of its rival, rewarded Hitler with loyalty.

The army oath and the merger of offices

President Hindenburg died on 2 August 1934. Within hours Hitler merged the offices of Reichspräsident and Reichskanzler into the single office of Führer und Reichskanzler. Every officer and soldier of the Reichswehr was required to swear a personal oath of loyalty to Adolf Hitler as Führer of the German Reich and People. The oath did not mention the constitution, the state or the nation. It bound the military to the person of Hitler, a bond that would matter profoundly in July 1944 when officers contemplating the assassination of Hitler wrestled with the moral implications of breaking a personal oath.

By September 1934 the totalitarian state was essentially complete. Germany had moved from parliamentary democracy to personal dictatorship in eighteen months. No subsequent change to the regime's structure was ever as fundamental as the changes of the first eighteen months.

The SS and the terror apparatus

The Schutzstaffel, the SS, under Heinrich Himmler, grew from a personal bodyguard of two hundred in 1929 to a state within the state by the outbreak of the war. By 1936 Himmler controlled all German police forces including the Gestapo, and by 1939 the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, the Reich Main Security Office, had unified the secret police, the criminal police, the Sicherheitsdienst of the SS and the concentration camp administration into a single apparatus. The concentration camp system, beginning with Dachau in March 1933, grew to include Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, Ravensbrück and many others by 1939. The peak prewar population of the camps was approximately twenty-five thousand. During the war the camps expanded dramatically and were joined by the extermination camps of the Holocaust.

The nature and extent of opposition

Opposition within Germany was marginal but present. The KPD and SPD operated underground from 1933. The Catholic Church resisted some specific policies, particularly the T-4 euthanasia programme which Bishop Galen denounced publicly in 1941, forcing its partial suspension. The Confessing Church under Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Niemöller opposed Nazi attempts to coordinate Protestant churches. The White Rose group of students in Munich produced leaflets in 1942 and 1943 before being caught and executed. The Kreisau Circle of conservative and Social Democratic planners met to design a post-Nazi Germany. The July 1944 conspiracy led by Claus von Stauffenberg attempted the assassination of Hitler and came closer to success than any other resistance effort, but failed and produced the execution of approximately five thousand people in the subsequent purge.

The relatively limited effectiveness of German resistance reflects both the totality of the regime's penetration of society and the moral complexity produced by the army oath and by the nationalist legitimacy the regime enjoyed at its peak. For Paper 2 questions on the treatment of opposition, Germany provides a case in which the regime's capacity to detect and destroy opposition was exceptionally high, and in which the costs of opposition to the individual were exceptionally severe.

A worked PEEL(P) paragraph on Nazi consolidation

The worked paragraph below responds to the question, "Evaluate the role of legal methods in Hitler's consolidation of power."

Point. Legal methods played a significant role in Hitler's consolidation of power between January 1933 and August 1934, providing a constitutional facade that legitimised the destruction of Weimar democracy and that reassured conservative allies who might otherwise have resisted the regime's transformation.

Evidence. The Reichstag Fire Decree of 28 February 1933 suspended civil liberties under the emergency powers provision of Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution. The Enabling Act of 23 March 1933 was passed with the required two-thirds majority by the duly elected Reichstag. The Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service of April 1933 operated through legal forms to purge Jews and political opponents. The Concordat of 20 July 1933 with the Vatican was a formal treaty. The merger of the offices of President and Chancellor on 2 August 1934 was ratified by a plebiscite on 19 August in which almost ninety per cent of voters approved.

Explanation. The use of legal forms served three consolidation purposes. It preserved the cooperation of the civil service, the army and the judiciary, all of which remained staffed by the personnel of the Weimar Republic. It provided formal continuity that delayed international and domestic recognition of the totalitarian nature of

the regime. It allowed the regime to claim a popular mandate for measures that, if imposed by decree alone, would have provoked greater opposition. The distinction between Hitler and Mussolini on this axis is instructive, since Mussolini moved more slowly and was more constrained by the survival of the monarchy, while Hitler achieved a more comprehensive legal transformation in a shorter time.

Link. Therefore legal methods were a central tool of Nazi consolidation, combining with force and propaganda to produce a transformation of the German state within eighteen months that would have been impossible through any single instrument.

Perspective. This interpretation aligns with Ian Kershaw, whose concept of working towards the Führer in Hitler: Hubris stresses that the legal forms of 1933 and 1934 were not merely tactical but structural, creating a pattern in which subordinates legitimised radical measures through formal procedures while the substance of those procedures was determined by Hitler's ideological framework. Richard Evans in The Coming of the Third Reich argues that the legal instruments were manipulated to such an extent that the term legality loses its meaning, while Karl Dietrich Bracher's older structural analysis emphasises how the pre-existing authoritarian elements of the Weimar Constitution made the legal path to dictatorship available. The archival record supports a synthesis in which the legal forms were real enough to shape the behaviour of the German administrative state, while also being thin enough to be overridden when Hitler chose.

11.3 Theme three. Aims and results of policies

Economic policy. Recovery and rearmament

Nazi economic policy pursued two overlapping aims. The first was to eliminate unemployment, which had become the single most politically urgent issue. The second was to rearm Germany for the war of conquest that Hitler believed was necessary for the long-term survival of the German people. The two aims reinforced each other in the short term, because rearmament expenditure absorbed unemployed labour, but diverged in the long term, because rearmament on the scale Hitler wanted could not be financed through normal fiscal means.

The new Reichsbank president Hjalmar Schacht devised the financing instrument called the Mefo bill, an acronym for Metallurgische Forschungsgesellschaft, a shell company that issued bills in payment for armaments production. The bills were guaranteed by the Reichsbank and could be discounted by commercial banks, effectively functioning as disguised government bonds that did not appear on the federal budget. Between 1934 and 1938 approximately twelve billion Reichsmarks were issued in Mefo bills, financing a rearmament programme that would have been politically impossible to declare openly.

The New Plan of 1934 regulated foreign trade through bilateral agreements to preserve foreign currency reserves for raw material imports. The Four-Year Plan of 1936, directed by Hermann Göring, pushed the economy toward autarky, the drive for self-sufficiency in raw materials. Synthetic rubber Buna, synthetic fuel, and other ersatz products were developed, though true autarky was never achieved.

Unemployment fell from approximately six million in January 1933 to under three hundred thousand by 1938. The economic recovery was achieved through rearmament, public works such as the Autobahn construction, conscription from 1935 which removed young men from the labour market, the removal of women and Jews from the workforce, and statistical manipulation. The recovery was politically decisive for the regime but fiscally unsustainable, and Adam Tooze has argued in The Wages of Destruction that the Nazi economy was a war economy in peacetime whose Mefo bills would fall due in 1940 and could be repaid only through victorious conquest.

Propaganda and the Gleichschaltung of culture

The Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda was created for Joseph Goebbels on 13 March 1933 and became the instrument through which the regime saturated German cultural life. The Reich Chamber of Culture, established in September 1933, required every writer, journalist, painter, composer, film-maker or theatre director to hold membership in the relevant chamber. Expulsion meant professional death, and the regime obtained a level of control over cultural life that it never needed to enforce by arrest.

Film was central to the propaganda system because Goebbels believed that cinema reached audiences more deeply than print. Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will recorded the 1934 Nuremberg rally with technical brilliance, and Olympia did the same for the 1936 Berlin Games. The Ufa studios produced mostly entertainment and historical drama, designed to keep audiences in their seats for the newsreels that preceded the feature. Radio was even more important. The Volksempfänger, the people's receiver, was a cheap state-sponsored radio whose limited range kept listeners within the reach of Reich broadcasters. By 1939 approximately seventy per cent of German households owned a radio, the highest rate in Europe, and public loudspeakers in workplaces and squares ensured that the remaining thirty per cent could not escape.

Visual culture was policed as aggressively as broadcasting. The Degenerate Art Exhibition mounted in Munich in July 1937 gathered six hundred and fifty works by Kirchner, Nolde, Beckmann, Chagall and many others and displayed them in deliberately cramped and sarcastic conditions to contrast with the neoclassical and heroic imagery of the parallel Great German Art Exhibition. Book burnings in university cities in May 1933 consigned Heine, Thomas Mann, Freud and Remarque to the bonfire.

The calendar itself was colonised by Nazi ritual. The Hitler salute, the swastika, the Nuremberg rallies, the annual Remembrance of the Fallen at the Feldherrnhalle, the summer solstice bonfires and the Winter Help campaign turned the year into a liturgy of Nazi symbols. Ian Kershaw's concept of the Hitler Myth, developed in The Hitler Myth of 1987, captures the effect with precision. Propaganda worked most powerfully not when it convinced Germans of specific claims but when it separated the popular image of the Führer as an incorruptible national saviour from the unpopular realities of party officials and daily hardships.

Volksgemeinschaft

The concept of Volksgemeinschaft, the people's community, was central to Nazi social engineering. The regime promised a racially pure, classless national community united by blood and loyalty to the Führer, transcending the class divisions that had fractured Weimar Germany. The Strength Through Joy organisation, Kraft durch Freude or KdF, provided subsidised holidays, concerts, sports and travel for workers. The KdF Volkswagen, the people's car, programme collected payments from workers for a car that was never delivered, as the assembly lines switched to war production in 1939. The DAF, the German Labour Front, replaced trade unions and set wages, eliminated strikes and controlled working conditions. For many German workers the combination of full employment, KdF benefits and the disappearance of class conflict produced genuine support for the regime, even though real wages remained below 1929 levels throughout the 1930s.

Policies on women

Nazi women's policy was aggressively conservative. Women were encouraged to leave the workforce and return to the home, captured in the slogan Kinder, Küche, Kirche, children, kitchen and church. Marriage loans provided fifty Reichsmarks in 1933 and were progressively reduced in proportion to the number of children produced, encouraging high birth rates. The Mother's Cross decoration rewarded mothers of many children. Women were excluded from senior positions in universities, the legal profession and the civil service. The Bund Deutscher Mädel, the League of German Girls, organised girls from ten to twenty-one in parallel with the Hitler Youth for boys.

The policies produced a modest increase in the birth rate and a decline in women's professional participation in the early years of the regime. But the drive for total war from 1939 onwards reversed the policy by necessity. Women were drafted into munitions factories, public administration and eventually auxiliary military service. By 1944 approximately fifty per cent of the German industrial workforce was female.

Racial policy

Antisemitism was the ideological core of Nazism and shaped policy from the first weeks of the regime. The boycott of Jewish businesses on 1 April 1933 was followed by the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service on 7 April, which dismissed Jews from government positions. The Nuremberg Laws of 15 September 1935, namely the Reich Citizenship Law and the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour, stripped German Jews of citizenship and prohibited marriages and sexual relations between Jews and Aryans. Between 1935 and 1938 the incremental exclusion of Jews from economic life continued, with Aryanisation transferring Jewish businesses to Aryan ownership at coerced prices.

Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass on 9 to 10 November 1938, was a coordinated pogrom in which approximately ninety-one Jews were killed, thirty thousand were sent to concentration camps, over two hundred synagogues were burned and over seven thousand Jewish businesses were destroyed. The Jewish community was collectively fined one billion Reichsmarks for the damage caused by the pogrom. Emigration became the regime's preferred solution, and approximately three hundred thousand German and Austrian Jews escaped between 1933 and 1939. Those who could not escape were trapped when the war closed the borders.

From 1941 the regime escalated to the systematic murder of European Jews, the Holocaust or Shoah. The invasion of the Soviet Union opened vast territories containing the majority of European Jewry. Einsatzgruppen mobile killing units followed the German armies and murdered approximately one and a half million Jews by shooting in 1941 and 1942. The Wannsee Conference on 20 January 1942 coordinated the Final Solution, the plan to deport all European Jews to extermination camps in occupied Poland, namely Chełmno, Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz. Approximately six million Jews were murdered by 1945, along with an estimated two hundred and twenty thousand Roma and Sinti, one hundred thousand disabled people killed under the T-4 programme, and three million Soviet prisoners of war.

Foreign policy and its relationship to regime survival

Hitler's foreign policy was driven by the ideological goals of Lebensraum, racial empire and the destruction of the Treaty of Versailles, combined with tactical opportunism. Each of the major foreign policy moves between 1933 and 1939 reinforced the regime at home. The remilitarisation of the Rhineland on 7 March 1936 violated Versailles and demonstrated that the Western democracies would not resist. The Anschluss with Austria on 12 March 1938 absorbed Hitler's birthplace into the Reich. The Sudetenland crisis and the Munich Agreement of 29 to 30 September 1938 detached the German-speaking border regions of Czechoslovakia and brought them into the Reich, confirming Hitler's reputation as the restorer of German national unity. Each success validated the Führer myth at home and demoralised foreign opposition abroad.

The occupation of the rump Czechoslovakia on 15 March 1939 was the moment at which Western appeasement definitively ended, because the action could not be justified by any claim of German ethnic unity. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939 with the Soviet Union, dividing Eastern Europe into spheres of influence, cleared the way for the invasion of Poland on 1 September. Britain and France declared war on 3 September, and the Second World War in Europe began.

11.4 Historiographical debate

The historiographical debate on Nazi Germany has been structured for decades by the division between intentionalists and structuralists, with a synthesis emerging from the 1990s onwards in the work of Ian Kershaw and Richard Evans.

The intentionalist school, associated with Karl Dietrich Bracher, Eberhard Jäckel and Gerhard Weinberg, argues that Hitler was the driving force of the regime, that his ideology expressed in Mein Kampf and elsewhere was a programme that was systematically implemented, and that the Holocaust was always his intended goal. The strength of the position is its correspondence with the evidence of Hitler's own statements and with the coherence between his stated intentions in the 1920s and the policies of the regime.

The structuralist or functionalist school, associated with Martin Broszat and Hans Mommsen, argues that the Nazi state was characterised by polycratic chaos, that policy emerged from the competition of rival agencies and overlapping jurisdictions rather than from clear central command, and that the path to the Holocaust was a cumulative radicalisation of subordinates working towards the Führer rather than a pre-planned sequence. The strength of the position is its explanation of the administrative disorder that archival work has abundantly documented.

Ian Kershaw's two-volume biography, Hitler: Hubris and Hitler: Nemesis, synthesises the two schools through the concept of working towards the Führer. Kershaw argues that Hitler set the ideological framework and occasional direct commands, but that most radical measures were initiated by subordinates anticipating what Hitler would want, with the cumulative effect of radicalising the regime beyond any individual's plan. The concept accommodates both the intentionalist insistence on Hitler's ideological leadership and the structuralist insistence on administrative disorder.

Richard Evans in his three-volume history, The Coming of the Third Reich, The Third Reich in Power and The Third Reich at War, produces the authoritative modern narrative that integrates political, social, economic and cultural dimensions. Saul Friedländer's Nazi Germany and the Jews combines perpetrator documentation with survivor testimony to reconstruct how the regime moved from exclusion through ghettoisation to industrial murder. Tim Mason's essay on the crisis of the Nazi regime in 1939 argued that working-class discontent and the strain on living standards imposed by rearmament were driving Hitler toward war faster than his strategic plans required, a position known as the flight into war. Adam Tooze in The Wages of Destruction argues that the Nazi economy was driven by the logic of war from the start and that economic recovery was inseparable from rearmament.

For Paper 2 purposes, candidates should be able to name at least Kershaw and one of Broszat, Evans, Mason or Tooze, and to deploy their arguments in Perspective elements.

Chapter summary

Hitler came to power through the miscalculation of the conservative politicians around Hindenburg, who believed they could contain the Nazi movement by placing its leader in a coalition cabinet. Within eighteen months the cabinet was irrelevant and the totalitarian state was essentially complete. Consolidation was achieved through the Reichstag Fire Decree, the Enabling Act, the successive waves of Gleichschaltung, the Night of the Long Knives and the army oath after Hindenburg's death. Aims and results combined economic recovery through rearmament and public works, propaganda saturation under Goebbels, the construction of a racial community through exclusion and eventually mass murder of the Jews, and a foreign policy that drove toward the war of conquest that would destroy the regime. Nazi Germany was the case in which totalitarian ambitions achieved the most comprehensive realisation in European history, and the case in which the destructive potential of such a regime was most fully demonstrated.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Weimar Republic	The parliamentary democracy of Germany from 1919 to 1933
Dolchstoßlegende	The stab in the back myth used against democratic politicians
NSDAP	The National Socialist German Workers' Party, Hitler's vehicle for power
Article 48	The Weimar constitutional clause granting the president emergency decree powers
Reichstag Fire Decree	The 28 February 1933 suspension of civil liberties
Enabling Act	The 23 March 1933 statute authorising Hitler to legislate without the Reichstag
Gleichschaltung	The coordination of social, political and cultural institutions under Nazi control
SA	The Sturmabteilung, the Nazi paramilitary decapitated in June 1934
SS	The Schutzstaffel, Himmler's elite security organisation
Night of the Long Knives	The purge of the SA leadership on 30 June 1934
Führer und Reichskanzler	The combined office Hitler took on Hindenburg's death
Gestapo	The secret state police, part of the SS from 1936
Mefo bills	The disguised government bonds used to fund rearmament
Four-Year Plan	The 1936 rearmament programme under Göring
Autarky	The drive for economic self-sufficiency
Volksgemeinschaft	The racially defined national community central to Nazi ideology
Nuremberg Laws	The racial legislation of September 1935
Kristallnacht	The state-sponsored pogrom of 9 to 10 November 1938
Wannsee Conference	The 20 January 1942 coordination of the Final Solution
Working towards the Führer	Kershaw's formula for cumulative radicalisation
Reichskulturkammer	The Reich Chamber of Culture controlling cultural professions
Volksempfänger	The cheap state-sponsored radio

Questions

1. To what extent was Hitler's appointment as Chancellor in 1933 the result of the Great Depression?
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of Nazi economic policy between 1933 and 1939.
3. Examine the role of propaganda in consolidating Nazi power.
4. "The Nazi state was more chaotic than totalitarian." Discuss with reference to the intentionalist-structuralist debate.
5. To what extent did Nazi Germany achieve total control over German society?
6. Compare and contrast the use of force and propaganda in the consolidation of power by Hitler and one other authoritarian leader from a different region.

Chapter 12: Castro's Cuba, 1959 to 2008

Summary of events

Fidel Castro ruled Cuba for forty-nine years, from the triumph of the Revolution on 1 January 1959 until his formal transfer of power to his brother Raúl in February 2008. This is the longest single tenure of any leader in this book, and it makes Castro the case in which the question of long-term maintenance is most extensively available for analysis. Castro came to power through revolutionary insurrection against the American-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, not through the electoral process of Mussolini and Hitler, not through the succession struggle of Stalin, and only partly through the revolutionary pattern of Lenin. The regime he built was not initially Communist in its self-description, but between 1960 and 1962 it aligned ideologically and strategically with the Soviet Union, accepting Soviet subsidies and Soviet missiles in exchange for protection against American hostility. For the next thirty years, until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Castro regime was one of the most visible Cold War proxies in the Americas and the principal exporter of revolutionary guerrilla movements across Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. The regime survived the collapse of its Soviet patron through the Special Period of the early 1990s, liberalised modestly through the 1990s and 2000s and was handed to Castro's brother essentially intact in 2008. For Paper 2 purposes Castro is the essential case for this book's selection of leaders because he is the only leader in the Americas region, and any question invoking the two-region rule must pair Castro with one of the four European leaders.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were the conditions in pre-revolutionary Cuba that made Castro's rise possible?
2. How did Castro consolidate power between January 1959 and the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962?
3. What was the nature and extent of opposition to Castro, and how was it treated?
4. How did the Cuban economy transform under Castro, and with what results?
5. How effective were the Castro regime's social policies in education, healthcare and women's rights?
6. How did foreign policy support and complicate the maintenance of power?

Timeline of Chapter 12

13 August 1926	Birth of Fidel Castro Ruz in Birán, Oriente Province
1947	Enters University of Havana law school, becomes active in student politics
10 March 1952	Batista coup cancels scheduled elections
26 July 1953	Attack on Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba
October 1953	Castro delivers History Will Absolve Me speech at trial
15 May 1955	Castro released from prison under amnesty
25 November 1956	Granma yacht sails from Mexico with 82 men
1956 to 1958	Sierra Maestra guerrilla campaign

1 to 8 January 1959	Batista flees, Cienfuegos and Guevara reach Havana on 2 January, Castro arrives on 8 January
16 February 1959	Castro becomes Prime Minister
May 1959	First Agrarian Reform Law
17 to 19 April 1961	Bay of Pigs invasion landed and defeated
16 April 1961	Castro declares socialist character of the revolution
December 1961	Castro declares himself a Marxist-Leninist
22 October 1962	Kennedy reveals Soviet missiles in Cuba
28 October 1962	Khrushchev agrees to withdraw missiles
1965	PCC, Communist Party of Cuba, formally founded
1966	Tricontinental Conference in Havana
1967	Death of Che Guevara in Bolivia
1968	Revolutionary Offensive nationalises remaining private enterprises
1970	Failure of the ten million ton sugar harvest
1975	Family Code. First PCC Congress. Cuban troops to Angola
1980	Mariel boatlift. 125,000 emigrate
1989 to 1991	Collapse of Soviet Union ends subsidies
1990 to 1994	Special Period in Time of Peace
2006	Castro transfers power to Raúl provisionally
2008	Formal retirement from the presidency
25 November 2016	Death of Fidel Castro

12.1 Theme one. The emergence of Castro's Cuba

Cuba before the Revolution. The Platt Amendment and the American economic presence

Cuba had been a Spanish colony until 1898, when the Spanish-American War ended Spanish rule. After three and a half years of American military occupation, Cuba gained formal independence in 1902, but the Platt Amendment of 1901 had been attached to the Cuban constitution as a precondition. The Platt Amendment granted the United States the right to intervene in Cuban politics, to maintain a naval base at Guantánamo Bay and to supervise Cuban finances. The amendment was formally repealed in 1934 but the practical American dominance continued. American corporations owned seventy per cent of the arable land, dominated the sugar industry that accounted for most Cuban exports, and controlled most utilities including electricity, telephones and railways. Cuban economic policy was made with reference to American interests, and the United States government exercised routine influence over the selection of Cuban presidents.

The social structure was sharply unequal. Approximately thirty per cent of the rural population was illiterate. Healthcare outside Havana was minimal, with infant mortality in rural provinces at approximately sixty per thousand. Unemployment and underemployment were endemic, particularly during the dead season between sugar harvests. The racial hierarchy inherited from slavery had not been dismantled, and Afro-Cuban citizens faced systematic discrimination in housing, employment and public facilities. Havana itself, heavily invested in by American capital, was a city of gambling casinos, prostitution and organised crime that shocked even foreign observers.

The Batista coup and the 26 July Movement

Fulgencio Batista had ruled Cuba informally from 1933 to 1944 through a series of puppet presidents, then served as elected president from 1940 to 1944. He retired to Florida, then returned and launched a coup on 10 March 1952, cancelling the elections scheduled for that year in which he was polling poorly. The coup dissolved the constitutional order and inaugurated a period of increasingly repressive dictatorship. Between 1952 and 1958 approximately twenty thousand Cubans were killed by the Batista regime through tortured confessions and death-squad operations, a per capita rate that shocked even those accustomed to Latin American political violence.

Fidel Castro was a twenty-six-year-old lawyer in March 1952. He had been a candidate for the Orthodox Party, the Partido Ortodoxo, in the cancelled elections. His response to the coup was to organise a small armed group that attacked the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba on 26 July 1953, the movement that gave its name to the Cuban Revolution as the 26 July Movement. The attack failed. Most of the attackers were killed or executed after capture. Castro was tried and delivered the History Will Absolve Me speech, later turned into a manifesto of the Revolution. He was imprisoned but released under amnesty in May 1955, went into exile in Mexico, and organised a second armed attempt.

The Granma landing and Sierra Maestra

On 25 November 1956 eighty-two men sailed from Tuxpan, Mexico on the yacht Granma, bound for eastern Cuba. The landing on 2 December was disastrous. The group was ambushed by Batista's forces and only approximately twenty men, including Fidel, Raúl, Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos, reached the Sierra Maestra mountains. From that nucleus, over two years, a guerrilla campaign developed that combined military pressure on Batista's army with political mobilisation in the countryside. The 26 July Movement allied with other anti-Batista forces, including the Directorio Revolucionario that mounted an urban campaign in Havana, and the Partido Socialista Popular, the Cuban Communist Party, which initially viewed Castro sceptically but gradually came to support the movement.

By 1958 Batista's army had demonstrated it could not defeat the rural insurgency, American support was being withdrawn, and the regime was collapsing. Batista fled the country in the early hours of 1 January 1959. The columns of Camilo Cienfuegos and Che Guevara entered Havana on 2 January 1959, and Castro himself arrived in the capital on 8 January 1959 after a triumphal march from Santiago.

The four IB factors applied to the Cuban case

The economic factor is significant through the pattern of neo-colonial dependence on the United States and the sharp inequalities of Cuban society, though the immediate pre-revolutionary economy was relatively healthy compared with Russian or German crises. The impact of war is minor since Cuba was not involved in the world wars, but the impact of the Second World War on American capital had increased American penetration of the Cuban economy in the 1940s. Social division is very significant, combining class inequality, racial hierarchy, urban-rural divides and the sharp contrast between American-oriented Havana and the rest of the country. The weakness of the political system is extremely significant, with Batista's coup having destroyed constitutional legitimacy and the existing parties having proved incapable of defending the democratic order.

The Castro case differs from the others in that it combines elements from several of them. Like Lenin, Castro came to power through armed insurrection. Like Mussolini and Hitler, he inherited a country in which the existing political order had collapsed. Like Stalin, he inherited a revolutionary movement with multiple factions that he had to coordinate and then dominate. The American dimension is unique and gave the consolidation phase its particular shape.

12.2 Theme two. Consolidation and maintenance of power

The first year of the revolution

The first year of the revolution, 1959, established the institutional foundations of the new regime. The regime initially presented itself as a broad democratic coalition and the first cabinet included moderate liberals. Manuel Urrutia was appointed provisional president. Castro initially declined the presidency, accepting the post of Prime Minister in February 1959 when his disputes with Urrutia over the direction of the revolution became insurmountable. Urrutia resigned in July and was replaced by Osvaldo Dorticós, who would serve as a symbolic figurehead.

The First Agrarian Reform Law of May 1959 nationalised estates of more than four hundred hectares, redistributing land to peasants and creating state farms. Approximately eighty-five per cent of American-owned sugar land was expropriated over the following year. The revolution also reformed urban rents downward by fifty per cent, expanded education and healthcare access, and desegregated beaches, parks and public facilities. These measures were popular and consolidated support for the regime among rural workers, the urban poor and Afro-Cubans.

Political opposition was treated with increasing severity. Revolutionary tribunals executed approximately five hundred former Batista officials and soldiers in 1959 after public trials. Huber Matos, an anti-communist comandante who had commanded forces in Camagüey, was arrested in October 1959 for protesting the growing communist influence in the government, tried and sentenced to twenty years for treason. The trial of Matos signalled that within the revolutionary movement itself only pro-Castro forces had a future. By mid-1960 an exodus of middle-class and professional Cubans was under way, which would grow to approximately two hundred and fifty thousand by October 1962 and would continue in successive waves for decades.

Nationalisation and the break with the United States

Between June and October 1960 the regime nationalised almost all foreign-owned enterprises, including oil refineries, sugar mills, telephone companies, electricity companies and banks. American investments totalling approximately one billion dollars in 1960 prices were seized. The United States responded with a progressive embargo that became comprehensive in 1962 and that remains in place in modified form today. The Eisenhower administration broke diplomatic relations with Cuba on 3 January 1961.

The nationalisation of foreign enterprises was followed by the nationalisation of Cuban private enterprises. By the end of 1960, approximately eighty per cent of Cuban industrial production was in state hands. The Revolutionary Offensive of March 1968 completed the process, nationalising fifty-five thousand small businesses including corner shops, barbers' chairs, cafes and mechanics' workshops. Private enterprise was essentially eliminated from the Cuban economy until the Special Period reforms of the early 1990s.

The Bay of Pigs and the declaration of socialism

In March 1960 President Eisenhower authorised the Central Intelligence Agency to prepare an invasion of Cuba by anti-Castro exiles. The plan was inherited by the Kennedy administration and launched on 17 April 1961. Approximately one thousand five hundred exiles landed at the Bahía de Cochinos, the Bay of Pigs, on the southern coast of Cuba. The operation was a catastrophic failure. Castro's forces defeated the landing within three days. The exile commanders were captured. The United States had publicly denied involvement and then been unable to provide air support when the landing failed. The Kennedy administration was humiliated and Castro's legitimacy as the defender of Cuban sovereignty was enormously enhanced.

The day before the landing, on 16 April 1961, during the funeral for victims of air attacks that preceded the invasion, Castro declared the revolution to be socialist in character. On 1 December 1961 he went further, declaring himself a Marxist-Leninist and stating that he would remain one until the day he died. The declarations formalised what had already been evident in policy, namely that Cuba had aligned ideologically and strategically with the Soviet bloc. The PSP, the Cuban Communist Party, merged with the 26 July Movement and the Directorio Revolucionario into the Integrated Revolutionary Organisations, ORI, in July 1961, and this merger eventually produced the Communist Party of Cuba, PCC, founded in 1965 as the only legal party.

The institutions of control. CDRs, MINFAR and G2

The regime constructed three interlocking institutions of control. The first was the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, the CDRs, established in September 1960 after the Bay of Pigs invasion scare. Every city block and rural community had a CDR, and by the mid-1960s approximately one third of Cuban adults were members. The CDRs performed the dual function of community organisation, running vaccination campaigns, blood donation drives and public health education, and political surveillance, reporting on suspicious activities and disloyal attitudes to the state security apparatus.

The second was the Revolutionary Armed Forces, MINFAR, under Raúl Castro. The military had the standard function of defending the country against external invasion, but it also played a major role in agricultural production through the Youth Army of Labour, provided leadership for civilian enterprises through the retirement of senior officers into management positions, and eventually served as the vehicle for the professional modernisation of the regime in the 1990s.

The third was the state security apparatus, the Dirección General de Inteligencia, known colloquially as the G2. Trained and equipped with Soviet assistance, the G2 monitored dissent, ran prison camps including the notorious UMAP camps that interned homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses and other groups between 1965 and 1968, and projected Cuban influence abroad through operations in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.

The treatment of opposition

Opposition to Castro took several forms. Armed resistance in the Escambray mountains, mostly by peasants opposed to collectivisation, persisted from 1960 to 1965 under the umbrella of Alzados and was crushed by massive military and paramilitary operations. Urban opposition networks were infiltrated and destroyed. The émigré community in Florida, eventually numbering over a million people, produced periodic operations against the Cuban regime that the Cuban security services consistently defeated.

Inside Cuba, the combination of terror, surveillance and the safety valve of emigration prevented the development of organised opposition. The Mariel boatlift of April to October 1980 saw approximately one hundred and twenty-five thousand Cubans leave the island after Castro briefly opened the port of Mariel to emigration. The regime cynically released criminals and mental patients alongside the genuine political dissidents, producing social problems in South Florida and propaganda against the émigrés as undesirables. The Maleconazo riots of August 1994, during the depths of the Special Period, were the only significant public unrest of the Castro era and were defused when Castro personally appeared and promised to open the port to anyone who wanted to leave, producing the second large balsero emigration wave.

Foreign policy as consolidation

The US embargo was the single most important instrument of regime consolidation after the Bay of Pigs. The embargo allowed Castro to blame all Cuban economic difficulties on American hostility, to portray every critic as an agent of foreign subversion, and to legitimise the single-party state as a necessary response to external threat. The Soviet alliance, cemented by the stationing of medium-range ballistic missiles in 1962 and by the long-term subsidy agreement negotiated with Brezhnev in the 1970s, provided military protection, economic underwriting through preferential sugar prices and oil supply, and a sense of belonging to a great-power bloc.

The export of revolution was both an ideological commitment and a practical tool of consolidation. The Tricontinental Conference of January 1966 brought together anti-imperialist movements from Asia, Africa and Latin America, establishing Havana as a revolutionary capital. Che Guevara died leading a guerrilla operation in Bolivia in October 1967. Cuban forces intervened decisively in Angola from November 1975, eventually deploying approximately three hundred and fifty thousand troops over a fifteen-year period, and in Ethiopia from November 1977 during the Ogaden War. The African operations gave the regime ideological legitimacy as the defender of Third World liberation, distracted domestic audiences from economic difficulties, and provided career opportunities for military officers who might otherwise have grown restless in a society with little mobility.

A worked PEEL(P) paragraph on Castro's consolidation

The worked paragraph below responds to the question, "To what extent was foreign policy the most important factor in Castro's maintenance of power?"

Point. Foreign policy was a significant but not the most important factor in Castro's maintenance of power; the domestic institutional apparatus of CDRs, the PCC and the security services, combined with the safety valve of emigration, was more consistently decisive in suppressing opposition over the long run.

Evidence. The Soviet alliance provided subsidies estimated at five billion dollars per year at its 1980s peak and guaranteed sugar purchases at above world market prices. The American embargo, tightened under Kennedy in 1962 and extended under successive administrations, allowed Castro to blame economic difficulties on external hostility and to justify the one-party state as a defensive necessity. The Angolan and Ethiopian interventions gave the regime revolutionary credibility and absorbed restless military officers. Yet the regime survived the disappearance of Soviet subsidies after 1991 and the devastating Special Period, during which GDP fell by approximately thirty-five per cent, through the institutional resilience of the CDRs, the PCC, the G2

and the discipline of the armed forces.

Explanation. The argument for foreign policy as the most important factor would stress that Soviet subsidies kept the economy functioning, that the American embargo legitimised repression, and that the Angolan and Tricontinental commitments bought ideological capital. The counter-argument is that none of these factors would have sustained the regime through the post-Soviet economic catastrophe if the institutional apparatus had not been in place to enforce order through a crisis that would have destroyed most regimes.

Link. Therefore foreign policy was one significant pillar of Castro's maintenance of power but not the most important pillar, and the 1991 to 1994 period demonstrates that the domestic institutional apparatus was ultimately the decisive factor.

Perspective. This interpretation aligns with Jorge Domínguez, whose institutionalist analysis in Cuba: Order and Revolution emphasises the capacity of the regime's institutions to channel participation and control dissent. Philip Brenner's dependency critique argues that the Soviet subsidy was the single condition of Cuban economic survival and that without it the regime would have collapsed, a reading that the Special Period partially confirms. Marifeli Pérez-Stable's revisionist view stresses the genuine popular support that social policy achievements in healthcare and education had generated, arguing that domestic legitimacy rather than either foreign policy or institutional coercion was the decisive variable. The evidence supports a synthesis in which the Soviet alliance provided the economic conditions for survival until 1991, the institutional apparatus provided the coercive capacity throughout, and social policy achievements provided the underlying legitimacy that made coercion sustainable.

12.3 Theme three. Aims and results of policies

Economic policy. The sugar question and the Soviet alliance

Castro inherited a sugar monoculture and spent much of his rule trying either to escape it or to optimise it. The early 1960s attempted industrial diversification under the influence of Che Guevara's ideas of moral incentives and accelerated transition to communism. The diversification failed, with industrial output falling and agricultural production dropping. By 1964 the regime had effectively abandoned diversification and committed to maximising sugar production for export to the Soviet bloc.

The Ten Million Ton Harvest of 1970 was the culmination of this strategy. The regime mobilised the entire population to produce a ten-million-ton sugar harvest, the largest in Cuban history, as a symbol of revolutionary will. The harvest reached only eight and a half million tons. The effort disrupted every other sector of the economy. Ministries, hospitals and schools had been emptied of workers who were sent to cut cane. The failure produced one of Castro's rare public self-criticisms.

After 1970 the regime settled into an economic arrangement with the Soviet bloc that provided the material basis for the social policy achievements of the 1970s and 1980s. The Soviet Union bought Cuban sugar at prices above world market levels and sold oil at prices below world market levels. The differential functioned as an indirect subsidy, estimated at approximately five billion dollars per year at its peak. Cuba was integrated into Comecon, the Soviet-bloc economic organisation, and Cuban planners were trained in Soviet methods.

The Special Period

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 ended the subsidies and plunged the Cuban economy into a catastrophic contraction. Cuban GDP fell by approximately thirty-five per cent between 1989 and 1993. Oil imports collapsed by approximately fifty per cent. Food rationing intensified. Animals in Havana Zoo were slaughtered for food. The regime called this period the Special Period in Time of Peace and responded with pragmatic adaptations that would have been unthinkable before the crisis. The dollar was legalised in 1993. Private agricultural markets were permitted. Foreign tourism, particularly from Canada and Europe, was encouraged and became the largest earner of foreign currency. Joint ventures with foreign capital were permitted in specified sectors. Self-employment, cuentapropismo, was legalised for a growing list of occupations.

The Special Period reforms saved the regime but also introduced inequalities that had not existed before. Cubans with access to dollars through remittances from relatives in Miami or through work in the tourism sector lived substantially better than Cubans without such access. The professional classes working in state employment, including doctors, scientists and teachers, were left behind by the dollar economy. By the early 2000s the recovery had stabilised the economy at a lower level, with Venezuelan oil subsidies under Hugo Chávez substituting for the lost Soviet subsidies.

Social policy. Education and healthcare

The social policy achievements of the Castro regime are the most substantial of any government in this book, measured against the condition of its society at the beginning. The Literacy Campaign of 1961, called the Year of Education, mobilised approximately two hundred and fifty thousand mostly young volunteers to teach adults to read and write. Approximately seven hundred thousand previously illiterate adults learned to read. By the end of 1961 the regime claimed the elimination of illiteracy, and the literacy rate rose from approximately seventy-five per cent in 1958 to approximately ninety-six per cent by the mid-1980s. All children were in primary school by the mid-1980s. Higher education expanded, with the University of Havana supplemented by new universities in every province.

Healthcare improvements were equally dramatic. Infant mortality fell from approximately sixty per thousand in 1958 to approximately thirteen per thousand by 1990, a rate better than that of the United States at the time. Life expectancy rose from fifty-seven to seventy-four years. The ratio of doctors to population improved from approximately one per five thousand in 1959 to approximately one per four hundred by 1990, one of the highest rates in the world. The 1976 Constitution entrenched the right to free universal healthcare as a constitutional entitlement.

For Paper 2 purposes these social achievements are the strongest evidence available for the argument that the Castro regime maintained power through genuine popular support rather than only through coercion. They are also the basis for the continued admiration of the regime among parts of the Latin American and African left, even among critics of other aspects of the Cuban system.

Social policy. Women and racial equality

The Cuban Revolution transformed the legal position of women. The Federation of Cuban Women, the FMC, founded in 1960 under Vilma Espín, mobilised women into the workforce and into political participation. The Family Code of 1975 required spouses to share housework and childcare equally, a provision more advanced than any contemporary legislation in Western Europe or the United States. Abortion was legalised in 1965. Women's participation in the labour force rose from approximately thirteen per cent in 1958 to approximately forty per cent by 1990. Women's educational attainment surpassed men's by the 1980s.

The racial dimension was more complicated. The regime formally abolished racial discrimination through desegregation of beaches, parks and public facilities in 1959 and through constitutional guarantees. The economic advances of the early years disproportionately benefited Afro-Cubans because they had been concentrated in the lowest-paid sectors. However, the emigration that followed the revolution was disproportionately white, which somewhat equalised the remaining population. Racial disparities in position within the PCC and the top of the state apparatus persisted and became sources of muted criticism by the 2000s. The regime's official position that racism had been solved by the revolution became harder to sustain as the tourism economy of the Special Period introduced new racial inequalities.

The treatment of homosexuality in the Cuban Revolution is one of its darker chapters. Between 1965 and 1968 the UMAP camps, Unidades Militares de Ayuda a la Producción, interned approximately twenty-five thousand homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses and other categories deemed unfit for military service in forced labour camps. Homosexuality was a criminal offence until 1979. The regime officially apologised for the UMAP episode in 2010, and Raúl Castro's daughter Mariela led a significant liberalisation of LGBTQ rights in the 2000s and 2010s, but the reputation of the Cuban Revolution among gay Cubans was permanently affected by the early repression.

12.4 Historiographical debate

The historiography of Castro's Cuba is structured around four interpretive schools. The totalitarian school, associated with Irving Horowitz in his editions of Cuban Communism, treats Castro's Cuba as a Soviet-style dictatorship whose institutional apparatus functioned through terror and coercion. Horowitz emphasises the CDRs, the G2, the political prisoners and the systematic violations of human rights. The school's strength is its attention to the coercive dimensions of the regime. Its weakness is its difficulty in explaining the regime's survival through the Special Period and its genuine popularity among significant portions of the Cuban population.

The revisionist school, associated with Marifeli Pérez-Stable in The Cuban Revolution and Louis Pérez Jr. in Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution, emphasises the social achievements of the revolution in healthcare, education and racial equality. Pérez-Stable argues that Castro's longevity rested on genuine popular support produced by these achievements rather than on coercion. Pérez Jr. situates the Cuban Revolution in the longer history of Cuban nationalism and anti-Americanism, treating Castro as the culmination of a trajectory that began in the nineteenth century. The school's strength is its explanation of regime longevity. Its weakness is its tendency to underplay the coercive apparatus.

The institutionalist school, associated with Jorge Domínguez in Cuba: Order and Revolution and Samuel Farber in Cuba Since the Revolution of 1959, analyses the regime through its institutions rather than its ideology or its leader. Domínguez in particular has shown how the PCC, the CDRs, the mass organisations and the armed forces created a participatory framework that channelled political energy while limiting its scope. The school explains how the regime has survived without the charismatic authority of its founder, by institutional adaptation rather than continued revolution.

The dependency critique, associated with Philip Brenner and with neo-Marxist economists, argues that the Soviet alliance created an economic dependency that was unsustainable once the subsidy ended. Brenner reads the Special Period as the exposure of this dependency and the 1990s reforms as the beginning of the long adjustment to economic reality. For Paper 2 purposes this critique is particularly useful for questions on the effectiveness of economic policies, because it provides the counter-argument to the revisionist emphasis on social achievements.

Chapter summary

Castro emerged from the collapse of the Batista dictatorship through the armed insurrection of the 26 July Movement, combined with urban opposition and the collapse of American support for Batista. Consolidation combined rapid radical reforms to build mass support, the elimination of opposition through trials and emigration, the construction of a single-party state through the merger of ORI and the PCC, and the alignment with the Soviet bloc that followed the Bay of Pigs. Aims and results combined the transformation of Cuban healthcare, education and women's rights, which produced some of the best social indicators in the developing world, with the stagnation of the sugar-based economy, the failure to escape monoculture through diversification, and the repression of opposition including the dark episode of the UMAP camps. Foreign policy supported the regime through the Soviet alliance and the Tricontinental projection of Cuban influence, while simultaneously complicating it through the costs of Angolan and Ethiopian commitments. The regime survived the collapse of the Soviet Union through institutional resilience and pragmatic reforms, and was handed intact to Raúl Castro in 2008.

Key terms

Term	Meaning
Platt Amendment	The 1901 constitutional clause giving the United States the right to intervene in Cuba
Moncada attack	The 26 July 1953 assault on army barracks that gave the movement its name
26 July Movement	Castro's revolutionary organisation
Granma	The yacht that landed the revolutionary force in Cuba in December 1956
Sierra Maestra	The mountain range in eastern Cuba where the guerrilla campaign was based
Bay of Pigs	The April 1961 failed American-backed invasion
CDR	Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, the neighbourhood surveillance bodies
ORI	The Integrated Revolutionary Organisations formed by merger in 1961
PCC	The Communist Party of Cuba, the only legal party from 1965
Revolutionary Offensive	The 1968 nationalisation of remaining small businesses
Ten Million Ton Harvest	The failed 1970 sugar target
FMC	The Federation of Cuban Women
Family Code	The 1975 legislation requiring spouses to share housework equally
UMAP camps	The forced labour camps for homosexuals and other categories, 1965 to 1968
Tricontinental	The 1966 Havana conference of anti-imperialist movements
Special Period	The post-Soviet economic crisis of the early 1990s
Cuentapropismo	Self-employment, legalised in specified categories during the Special Period
Mariel boatlift	The April to October 1980 emigration wave
G2	The Cuban state security apparatus

Questions

1. To what extent was the weakness of the Batista regime the most important factor in Castro's rise to power?
2. Evaluate the role of ideology in Castro's consolidation of power.
3. Examine the aims and results of Castro's social policies.
4. "Castro's Cuba maintained power primarily through genuine popular support rather than through coercion." Discuss.
5. Compare and contrast the foreign policy of Castro with that of one other authoritarian leader from a different region.
6. Evaluate the impact of the Special Period on the Cuban regime.

Chapter 13: Comparative analysis. Emergence across the five cases

Summary of events

The five leaders studied in this book came to power between 1917 and 1959, over a span of forty-two years, from four different regions of the world, in four different decades, and under four quite different combinations of circumstances. Yet the IB syllabus treats their emergence through a common framework of four conditions, economic factors, social division, impact of war and weakness of the political system, and five methods, persuasion and coercion, role of leaders, ideology, use of force and propaganda. This chapter arranges the five cases side by side across these categories to show where the patterns converge and where they diverge, and to produce the comparative material that candidates need for Paper 2 compare-and-contrast essays on emergence.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Which of the four conditions weighed most heavily in each of the five cases?
2. Which of the five methods were decisive in the transition from movement to government?
3. What comparative patterns emerge across the cases, and where do the cases diverge sharply?
4. How should the candidate use this comparative framework in a compare-and-contrast essay?

Comparative grid for Chapter 13

Leader	Year of accession	Route to power	Region
Lenin	1917	Revolutionary insurrection in wartime	Europe
Mussolini	1922	Paramilitary pressure and invitation by monarch	Europe
Stalin	1929	Factional struggle inside existing one-party state	Europe
Hitler	1933	Electoral breakthrough and invitation by president	Europe
Castro	1959	Revolutionary insurrection against dictatorship	Americas

13.1 Economic factors compared

The economic factor varies widely across the five cases. In the Hitler case it is the single most important factor, with the Depression driving NSDAP support from 2.6 per cent in 1928 to 37.3 per cent in 1932. In the Mussolini case the economic factor is significant but secondary, with post-war dislocation and the fear of revolutionary expropriation of landowners more important than aggregate unemployment or price levels. In the Lenin case the economic factor operates through the war-induced inflation and food shortages of 1917 rather than as an independent economic crisis. In the Stalin case the economic factor operates through the scissors crisis of 1923 and the grain procurement crisis of 1927 to 1928, which gave Stalin the political opening to turn against Bukharin and the Right. In the Castro case the economic factor operates through long-term structural inequality rather than through immediate crisis, since the pre-revolutionary Cuban economy was relatively healthy in macroeconomic terms.

The comparative lesson is that aggregate economic crisis is sufficient but not necessary for the emergence of authoritarianism. Hitler's rise requires the Depression. Mussolini's, Castro's and Lenin's do not. A Paper 2 essay that argues economic crisis as the universal driver of authoritarianism is overreaching and can be corrected with the Castro counter-example.

13.2 Social division compared

Social division appears in all five cases but varies in form. In the Lenin case the division between peasantry, industrial workers and urban middle class was sharp but not primary, since the war dominated the political landscape. In the Mussolini case the class division between industrial workers and landowners, combined with the regional north-south divide, was central to the squadrismo campaigns in the Po Valley. In the Hitler case class divisions were significant, but the addition of confessional divisions between Catholic and Protestant regions, and of the social dislocation of the Depression, mattered as much. In the Stalin case social division operated through the Bolshevik Party's own divisions between revolutionary old guard and ambitious new cadres. In the Castro case the combination of class inequality, racial hierarchy, urban-rural divide and the unique stratum of Americanised Havana elites produced a layered social structure that Castro's rhetoric was able to address through the language of national liberation.

13.3 Impact of war compared

The impact of war is present in four of the five cases and decisive in three. The First World War is the sine qua non of Lenin's rise, without which the tsarist regime would probably not have collapsed and the Bolsheviks would have remained a marginal faction. The same war produced Italy's mutilated victory, the demobilised veterans who joined the squadristi and the disillusionment of liberal politics that enabled Mussolini. The First World War also produced the conditions for the Weimar Republic's birth in defeat, the stab in the back myth and the Versailles grievance that Hitler exploited. For Stalin the First World War is more distant, operating through the institutions inherited from Lenin, but the Russian Civil War of 1918 to 1921 in which Stalin made his political career is directly continuous with the war. Only Castro's emergence lacks a direct war component, though the geopolitical context of the Cold War shaped both the Batista regime's increasing reliance on the United States and the opportunities Castro would exploit.

13.4 Weakness of the political system compared

The weakness of the political system is the factor that most consistently operates across all five cases, and it is probably the single strongest comparative argument a Paper 2 essay can make. The tsarist regime's structural inability to reform, repeatedly exposed since 1825, is the background of Lenin's rise. The Italian liberal state's constitutional fragility, its fourteen governments in five years between 1919 and 1922, and its decision not to use force against the March on Rome, is the background of Mussolini's rise. The exhausted one-party state Stalin inherited, with Lenin incapacitated and the Party apparatus already corrupted by careerism, is the background of Stalin's rise. The Weimar Republic's proportional representation, Article 48 governance, and ultimate decision to hand power to Hitler is the background of his rise. The Batista regime's destruction of the 1940 constitution through the 1952 coup, and its inability to defeat the Sierra Maestra insurgency, is the background of Castro's rise.

A Paper 2 compare-and-contrast essay on emergence that builds its main argument around the weakness of political systems will be on safe ground across any pairing of the five cases.

13.5 Methods compared

On the methods side the five cases diverge more sharply. The use of force is primary in the Lenin and Castro cases, both of which came to power through armed insurrection. The use of force is secondary but significant in the Mussolini case, where the paramilitary squads created the conditions for the King's invitation but did not seize the state directly. The use of force is minimal before 1933 in the Hitler case, where the electoral path was primary and the paramilitary SA was a political asset rather than a military instrument. The use of force is peripheral in the Stalin case before 1929, where the succession struggle was fought through Party procedure rather than through the use of the security apparatus.

The role of the leader is a source of useful divergence. Lenin's April Theses and Castro's Moncada speech illustrate charismatic leadership as ideological redirection of existing movements. Hitler's oratory and Mussolini's editorial platform illustrate charismatic leadership as the construction of a movement around a personality. Stalin's case is the exception, with his rise dependent on bureaucratic manoeuvre rather than on charismatic presentation, which explains why Stalin's personal cult developed only after he had achieved power rather than as a means of achieving it.

Propaganda operated in all five cases but with different instruments. The Bolsheviks used newspapers and leaflets, the fascists used squads and theatre, the Nazis used mass rallies and radio, the Soviets under Stalin used cinema and literature once he was in power, and Castro used television and mass mobilisation. The technological differences matter less than the common function of connecting the leader to a population over the heads of existing political institutions.

13.6 The comparative lesson

The five cases do not produce a single formula for the emergence of authoritarianism. They produce a family of patterns in which several conditions combine with several methods to produce distinctive trajectories. For Paper 2 purposes the candidate should be able to argue that the weakness of the political system is the factor most consistently present across the cases, that the impact of war is decisive in most but not all cases, that economic factors vary widely, and that the methods used reflect the specific conditions of each case more than a shared revolutionary playbook.

Chapter summary

The emergence of authoritarianism in the five cases studied combines four conditions and five methods in distinctive ways. The weakness of the political system is the most consistent factor across the cases. The impact of war is decisive in the European cases but peripheral in the Cuban case. Economic crisis is decisive in Hitler's rise and significant in Stalin's, but secondary or absent elsewhere. Social division operates in all cases but in different forms. Among the methods, force dominates in the Lenin and Castro cases, legal manipulation in the Hitler case, factional manoeuvre in the Stalin case, and paramilitary pressure combined with elite collusion in the Mussolini case.

Questions

1. Compare and contrast the role of economic factors in the rise to power of two authoritarian leaders from different regions.
2. "Political weakness was the most important reason why authoritarian states emerged." Discuss with reference to two cases from different regions.
3. Evaluate the role of force in the rise to power of two authoritarian leaders.

Chapter 14: Comparative analysis. Consolidation and maintenance across the five cases

Summary of events

Consolidation is where the five leaders diverge most clearly. All five took power through different processes and then faced the different task of transforming initial takeover into stable, long-lasting rule. The instruments of consolidation they deployed, namely legal methods, use of force, charismatic leadership, dissemination of propaganda, treatment of opposition and foreign policy, varied in weight and in timing. This chapter produces the comparative mapping that Paper 2 compare-and-contrast essays on consolidation require.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did each leader use legal methods to translate initial power into permanent authority?
2. What scale of coercion did each leader apply, and how did coercion interact with popular support?
3. How were cults of personality constructed, and where did they matter most?
4. How was opposition treated, and how effectively?
5. How did foreign policy sustain or undermine the regimes at home?

Comparative grid for Chapter 14

Axis	Lenin	Stalin	Mussolini	Hitler	Castro
Legal	Ban on Factions 1921	1936 Constitution	Acerbo Law 1923, Fascistissime laws	Enabling Act 1933	1976 Constitution
Force	Cheka, Red Terror	NKVD, Great Terror	OVRA, confino	SS, SD, Gestapo	G2, CDRs, UMAP
Charisma	Absent in Lenin's lifetime	Built up after 1929	Duce cult	Führer cult	Líder Máximo
Opposition	Destroyed by 1921	Destroyed by 1938	Destroyed or exiled	Destroyed or murdered	Destroyed or exported
Foreign policy	Comintern, Brest-Litovsk	Axis-then-Allies	Ethiopia, Axis	Expansion and war	Soviet alliance, export

14.1 Legal methods

Every regime used formal legal instruments to anchor dictatorship in a constitutional facade. The Bolsheviks dispersed the Constituent Assembly in January 1918 and then passed the Ban on Factions at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921, closing the internal debate within the Party itself. Stalin operated through the 1936 Stalin Constitution, which on paper was the most democratic in the world but in practice a parody. Mussolini secured the Acerbo Law in 1923 and the Fascistissime laws in 1925 and 1926. Hitler passed the Enabling Act in March 1933, which transferred legislative power from the Reichstag to the government. Castro operated for the first seventeen years of the Revolution under provisional arrangements, then adopted a formal constitution in 1976 that codified the leading role of the PCC.

The comparative pattern is that all five leaders found legal instruments to anchor their rule, but the depth of legal transformation varied. Hitler achieved the most complete legal transformation in the shortest time. Castro took the longest to arrive at a formal constitution. Lenin and Mussolini operated in constitutional grey zones, with new legal instruments layered on top of pre-existing constitutions that were never formally abolished.

14.2 Use of force

Coercion varied enormously in scale. The Lenin regime's Red Terror killed an estimated fifty to two hundred thousand people. Stalin's Great Terror of 1937 to 1938 killed approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand. Hitler's regime before the war killed approximately five thousand political opponents, a figure that dwarfs Mussolini's approximately thirty political executions but pales in comparison with the murder of six million Jews in the Holocaust from 1941. Mussolini's regime was the least coercive in terms of executions, with most opposition treated through confino rather than death. Castro's regime executed approximately five hundred Batista officials in 1959 and maintained political prisoners in the hundreds to thousands throughout its history, levels that are serious but modest by the standards of Stalinist or Nazi coercion.

The comparative lesson is that force is necessary but not sufficient for consolidation. Mussolini consolidated with far less force than Stalin, and Castro with far less force than Hitler, because other instruments of legitimation were available. Force was applied at the level required to eliminate serious opposition and no higher, with the exception of the Nazi Holocaust, which operated in a category of its own.

14.3 Charismatic leadership

Cults of personality developed in all five cases but with different timings and magnitudes. Lenin's cult developed only after his death, against his express wishes, and was used by his successors to legitimise their own positions. Stalin's cult was built up from 1929 and reached extraordinary intensity by the 1940s. Mussolini's Duce cult was central to the fascist regime from its beginning, with the slogan Mussolini ha sempre ragione and the theatrical performances from the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia. Hitler's Führer cult was the most systematically constructed of all, with Goebbels's propaganda apparatus deployed to separate the unassailable leader from the unpopular regime. Castro's Líder Máximo role was built on his charismatic presence, his oratorical capacity, and the symbolism of his guerrilla origins, though the formal cult was less systematic than Stalin's or Hitler's.

The comparative observation is that cults of personality were more important in the maintenance phase than in the consolidation phase. They served to legitimise long rule rather than to achieve initial takeover. The exception is Hitler, whose cult was both a cause and a consequence of his rise, because it had been built during the campaign years of 1930 to 1932 to turn Hitler from a party leader into a national saviour.

14.4 Treatment of opposition

The common pattern is that opposition was destroyed in all five cases, but by different mechanisms. Lenin destroyed opposition through the Cheka, the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly and the Ban on Factions. Stalin destroyed it through the show trials, the Great Terror and the Gulag. Mussolini destroyed it through the Fascistissime laws, confino and the OVRA. Hitler destroyed it through the Reichstag Fire Decree, the Night of the Long Knives and the SS-Gestapo apparatus. Castro destroyed it through revolutionary tribunals, the CDRs, the G2 and the export of opposition through emigration waves.

The distinctive feature of the Castro case is the use of emigration as a safety valve. By allowing dissenters to leave, often in concentrated waves such as the Mariel boatlift of 1980, the regime exported its opposition rather than imprisoning or killing it. This is a strategy unavailable to the other four leaders because of the geographic and political contexts in which they operated. The United States immigration policy, which treated Cuban migrants as refugees from communism, provided the receiving end of this strategy.

14.5 Foreign policy as an instrument of maintenance

Foreign policy supported maintenance in some cases and undermined it in others. For Lenin the Brest-Litovsk Treaty was a foreign policy of strategic retreat that saved the regime at the cost of enormous territorial losses. For Stalin the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August 1939 bought twenty-two months of peace before the German invasion forced the Soviet Union into the Second World War, which then provided the foundational legitimacy of the post-war Soviet state. For Mussolini the early successes in Ethiopia and the Lateran Pacts were spectacular boosts to regime legitimacy, but the Pact of Steel and the entry into the Second World War destroyed the regime. For Hitler the early successes in foreign policy, from the Rhineland remilitarisation to the Munich Agreement, were central to the maintenance of the regime, but the war they led to destroyed it. For Castro the Soviet alliance provided the economic conditions of regime survival, and the export of revolution through Angola and Tricontinental activities provided ideological legitimacy.

The comparative lesson is that foreign policy is a double-edged instrument. Successful foreign policy legitimises regimes, but the same dynamic can drive them into wars or commitments they cannot sustain.

Chapter summary

Consolidation and maintenance across the five cases show a shared toolkit of legal instruments, coercive force, charismatic leadership and foreign policy, deployed in case-specific combinations. Legal instruments anchored every regime but varied in completeness from Mussolini's survival of the monarchy to Hitler's total legal transformation. Force varied from the extreme coercion of Stalinism and the Nazi Holocaust to the relatively moderate Mussolini and Castro cases. Charismatic leadership was central to Mussolini, Hitler and Castro, constructed after the fact for Lenin and Stalin. Opposition was destroyed in every case but by different means, with Castro's use of emigration as a safety valve the most distinctive. Foreign policy supported all five regimes at least temporarily and destroyed two of them, Mussolini's and Hitler's, through the Second World War.

Questions

1. Compare and contrast the use of force in the consolidation of power in two authoritarian states from different regions.
2. "Effective propaganda decided whether an authoritarian regime could consolidate its power." Discuss with reference to two cases.

3. Evaluate the impact of foreign policy on the maintenance of power in two authoritarian states from different regions.

Chapter 15: Comparative analysis. Aims and results across the five cases

Summary of events

Each of the five regimes pursued aims across four policy areas as defined by the IB syllabus, namely economic, political, cultural and social, with separate attention to policies on women and minorities and to the overall extent of authoritarian control. The results varied widely. Soviet industrialisation under Stalin transformed a peasant society into an industrial superpower at enormous human cost. Nazi economic recovery eliminated unemployment at the cost of a war economy. Italian fascism produced mixed results from its battles and a facade-like corporate state. Castro's Cuba produced world-leading social indicators against persistent economic stagnation. Lenin's regime experienced sharp policy reversal from War Communism to the NEP. This chapter arranges the five regimes across the policy axes for comparative analysis.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How do the economic records of the five regimes compare against their stated aims?
2. How did each regime treat women, and what were the results?
3. How did each regime treat ethnic and religious minorities?
4. What was the extent of authoritarian control achieved in each case?

Comparative grid for Chapter 15

Axis	Lenin	Stalin	Mussolini	Hitler	Castro
Economy	War Communism → NEP	Five Year Plans	Corporate state, battles	Rearmament, autarky	Sugar and subsidy
Women	Progressive 1917-20, legal equality	1936 abortion ban, double burden	Pronatalist, conservative	Kinder, Küche, Kirche	FMC, Family Code 1975
Minorities	Korenizatsiya	Deportations, anti-Semitism	1938 racial laws, mild	Holocaust	Race desegregation, persistent gaps
Religion	Persecution	Persecution, 1943 rapprochement	Lateran Pacts 1929	Concordat then violation	Atheism then tolerance after 1992
Control	Partial 1917-24	Near-total by 1939	Incomplete totalitarian	Near-total by 1939	Substantial but institutional

15.1 Economic policies compared

The five regimes pursued economic transformation through different instruments and to different extents. Lenin's economic record is distinctive because it contained a sharp reversal, from the coercive War Communism of 1918 to 1921 to the market-based NEP of 1921 to 1928, with both phases responding to political constraints that the other regimes did not face. Stalin's economic transformation through the Five Year Plans and collectivisation produced the most dramatic aggregate output growth of any of the five cases, turning the Soviet Union from a peasant society into the second largest industrial economy in the world at the cost of millions of deaths through famine, Gulag and industrial accidents. Mussolini's economic record is the most limited, with the battles producing partial results and the corporate state operating as a facade.

Hitler's economic record is technically impressive in short-run terms, with unemployment eliminated by 1938, but structurally unsustainable because it depended on disguised deficit financing through Mefo bills that would have to be repaid through conquest. Castro's economic record combines the failure of the sugar diversification project with the preservation of basic livelihoods through the Soviet subsidy, and after 1991 the Special Period contraction and gradual recovery through tourism and Venezuelan oil subsidies.

The comparative observation is that centrally planned economies can achieve rapid aggregate output growth at enormous human cost, as in the Stalin case, but they cannot produce sustained increases in living standards comparable to market economies. Hitler's economy achieved the opposite, short-term consumer recovery on the basis of military borrowing, which could not be sustained except through war.

15.2 Policies on women compared

The paradox of authoritarian women's policy runs across the cases. All five regimes formally proclaimed the equality of women. The Bolshevik decrees of 1917 to 1920, enacted under Lenin, were the most advanced legislation on women's rights in Europe at the time, including civil marriage, no-fault divorce, legal equality and the legalisation of abortion on demand in 1920. Stalinism partially reversed these reforms through the 1936 abortion ban and the reinstitution of family as the basic cell of socialist society. The double burden of paid work and domestic labour became entrenched and persisted through Soviet history.

Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany pursued aggressively conservative women's policies. Mussolini's Battle for Births and Hitler's slogan Kinder, Küche, Kirche expressed the same ideology of woman as mother of the race. Both regimes reversed these positions under wartime manpower pressure, drafting women into munitions factories in the early 1940s.

Castro's Cuba produced the most substantive advances in women's rights, combining the legal equality of the 1976 Constitution with the Family Code of 1975 that required spouses to share housework, and with dramatic expansion of women's education and workforce participation. Women's participation in the Cuban workforce rose from thirteen per cent in 1958 to forty per cent by 1990, and women's educational attainment surpassed men's by the 1980s.

The comparative observation is that formal equality does not translate into substantive equality without social transformation. The Soviet paradox of legal equality with double burden is echoed in Cuba, in the Italian and German cases the conservative rhetoric persisted until wartime necessity forced adjustment, and only Castro's regime combined formal and substantive transformation, albeit in a context of overall material constraint.

15.3 Policies on minorities compared

The five regimes treated minorities along a spectrum from relatively progressive to genocidal. Lenin's nationalities policy of korenizatsiya promoted native-language education and native cadres in non-Russian republics, and the 1922 formation of the USSR gave substantial formal autonomy to the constituent republics. Stalin's nationalities policy combined the continuation of the federal structure with the wartime deportations of entire peoples, including the Chechens, Ingush, Crimean Tatars and Volga Germans, at a cost of hundreds of thousands of deaths.

Mussolini's regime was mildly antisemitic before 1938 and enacted the racial laws of 1938 under German influence rather than from deep Italian roots. Italian Jews suffered economic and civil exclusion but were not deported in significant numbers until the German occupation of northern Italy after September 1943. Hitler's regime pursued the most extreme antisemitism in history, culminating in the Holocaust that killed approximately six million Jews and two hundred thousand Roma and Sinti.

Castro's regime formally abolished racial discrimination and produced substantial gains for Afro-Cubans in the economic transformations of the early years. Racial disparities persisted in the political and cultural elite but were less visible than in the pre-revolutionary period. The UMAP camps that interned homosexuals and Jehovah's Witnesses between 1965 and 1968 represent a serious episode of minority persecution that the regime later apologised for.

15.4 Religious policies compared

The regimes varied in their relations with organised religion. Lenin's regime attacked the Russian Orthodox Church through the Decree on the Separation of Church and State of 1918 and the nationalisation of church property, though stopping short of mass persecution of clergy. Stalin intensified the persecution during the 1920s and 1930s before partially reversing course in 1943 in recognition of the wartime patriotic role of the Church.

Mussolini's Lateran Pacts of 1929 resolved the Roman Question and gave the regime the support of the Catholic Church. Hitler's Concordat of July 1933 with the Vatican bought neutrality that was repeatedly violated, and the encyclical Mit brennender Sorge of 1937 signalled the Church's recognition that the Concordat had failed. The Protestant Confessing Church provided limited resistance through figures like Niemöller and Bonhoeffer.

Castro's regime was initially atheist, closed Catholic schools, expelled foreign clergy and marginalised the Cuban Church. A gradual rapprochement began in the late 1980s, with the 1992 amendment of the Cuban Constitution converting the officially atheist state into a secular one. Pope John Paul II visited Cuba in January 1998.

15.5 Extent of authoritarian control compared

The extent of authoritarian control achieved varied considerably across the five cases. Lenin's regime achieved partial control in a context of civil war and economic collapse, with much of the countryside operating outside effective state reach and with significant space for cultural and intellectual pluralism within the NEP period. Stalin's regime achieved near-total control by 1939 through the combination of the Great Terror, the cultural uniformity of socialist realism, the transformation of the countryside through collectivisation, and the comprehensive surveillance of the NKVD.

Mussolini's regime achieved incomplete totalitarianism, in Bosworth's formulation, because the monarchy, the Church, the army officer corps and the regional networks of local notables all survived as alternative

sources of authority. Hitler's regime achieved near-total control by 1939, particularly after the absorption of the Protestant churches into the Reichskirche and the elimination of all autonomous civil society. Castro's regime achieved substantial institutional control through the CDRs, the mass organisations and the PCC, though the regime relied on participatory incorporation rather than pure coercion, producing a penetration that was deep but not as thorough as the Stalinist or Nazi systems at their peak.

Chapter summary

The five regimes pursued aims across economic, political, cultural and social axes with widely different results. Soviet industrialisation under Stalin produced the most dramatic output growth at the greatest human cost. Nazi economic recovery was technically impressive but structurally unsustainable. Mussolini's corporate state was a facade. Castro's social policies produced world-leading indicators within a stagnant economy. Women's policy ranged from the progressive Bolshevik decrees and the Cuban Family Code to the pronatalist Nazi and fascist restrictions. Minorities policy ranged from Lenin's korenizatsiya to Hitler's Holocaust, with Stalin's wartime deportations and Mussolini's 1938 racial laws between them. The extent of authoritarian control varied from the incomplete totalitarianism of Mussolini to the near-total control of Stalin and Hitler.

Questions

1. Evaluate the aims and results of economic policies in two authoritarian states from different regions.
2. Examine the impact of social policies on women in two authoritarian states.
3. Compare and contrast the treatment of minorities in two authoritarian states from different regions.
4. "Authoritarian states established complete control over their populations." Discuss with reference to two cases.

Chapter 16: Practice questions for Section 10 with worked answers

Summary of events
This chapter provides two worked answers to representative Paper 2 Section 10 questions. Each worked answer demonstrates the thematic organisation that compare-and-contrast questions require, the PEEL(P) paragraph structure, the deployment of priority historians and the reaching of a considered judgement in the conclusion. The worked answers are not model answers in the sense that they are the only correct responses. They are demonstrations of how the techniques of Part I can be applied to specific Section 10 questions under examination conditions.

16.1 Worked answer. Compare and contrast the methods used to establish and maintain authoritarian rule in two authoritarian states, each chosen from a different region

Pairing chosen. Castro and Mussolini, satisfying the two-region rule with the Americas and Europe.

Plan. The question has two verbs, compare and contrast, and two tasks, establish and maintain. The thematic organisation groups methods across both cases rather than discussing each case separately.

Thesis. Both leaders established authoritarian rule through legal manipulation and paramilitary force but diverged in maintenance, where Mussolini relied on incomplete totalitarian instruments constrained by the monarchy and the Church while Castro built a comprehensive institutional apparatus that survived the loss of its Soviet patron.

Paragraph 1. Legal methods compared. Acerbo Law and Fascistissime versus Agrarian Reform, early decrees and the 1976 Constitution. Paragraph 2. Force compared. Squadrismo and OVRA versus revolutionary tribunals, CDRs and G2. Paragraph 3. Propaganda and charisma compared. Duce cult versus Líder Máximo. Paragraph 4. Treatment of opposition compared. Confino and exile versus emigration and imprisonment. Paragraph 5. Foreign policy as maintenance instrument. Lateran Pacts and Ethiopia versus Soviet alliance and export of revolution. Conclusion. Similarities in the early use of legal manipulation and force. Differences in the completeness of institutional penetration and in the role of external patrons.

Sample body paragraph. The paragraph below illustrates what paragraph 2 on force would look like written out.

Both Mussolini and Castro used force to crush opposition but at different scales and with different instruments. Mussolini's squadrismo between 1920 and 1922 attacked socialists and trade unionists in the Po Valley, and after the March on Rome the regime established the OVRA secret police in 1926 and used confino, internal exile to remote islands, as the primary penalty for political opposition. Approximately twelve thousand Italians were imprisoned and thirty executed for political offences between 1926 and 1943, a modest scale by contemporary European standards. Castro's regime used force more extensively in the consolidation phase, executing approximately five hundred Batista officials in revolutionary tribunals in 1959 and imprisoning anti-communist commanders such as Huber Matos for twenty years. The CDRs, established in September 1960, built a neighbourhood surveillance network that had no Italian equivalent, and the G2 state security

organisation detected and destroyed opposition plots throughout the regime's history. This interpretation aligns with R. J. B. Bosworth's concept of incomplete totalitarianism in Mussolini's Italy, which stresses the moderate scale of fascist coercion compared with Nazi or Stalinist systems. Jorge Domínguez's institutionalist analysis in Cuba: Order and Revolution argues that the Cuban apparatus of control was more comprehensive than Italian fascism but more participatory than Soviet totalitarianism. Therefore force was important to both regimes but operated on a much larger institutional scale in Cuba, where the CDRs and G2 created a permanent surveillance infrastructure that Italian fascism never matched.

16.2 Worked answer. Evaluate the role of foreign policy in the maintenance of power of one authoritarian leader

Case chosen. Hitler.

Plan. The question asks for evaluation of a named factor. The structure presents the strengths and limitations of the argument that foreign policy maintained Hitler's power, with a reasoned judgement.

Thesis. Foreign policy was central to the maintenance of Hitler's power between 1935 and 1939, providing prestige successes that reinforced the Führer myth and distracted from domestic economic strains, but it also drove the regime toward a war that destroyed it within six years.

Paragraph 1. Foreign policy successes as legitimation. Rhineland remilitarisation, Anschluss, Munich. Paragraph 2. Foreign policy as distraction from economic pressure. Mason's flight into war thesis. Paragraph 3. Limits of foreign policy as maintenance instrument. Prague 1939 as end of appeasement. Poland as threshold into war. Paragraph 4. War as destroyer of the regime. From Barbarossa to the destruction of 1945. Conclusion. Foreign policy legitimised Hitler through 1938 but drove the regime into the war that destroyed it. A successful maintenance instrument that became a catastrophic one.

Sample body paragraph. Foreign policy successes between 1935 and 1938 provided the Hitler regime with prestige victories that consolidated the Führer myth and postponed the need to address domestic economic strains. The remilitarisation of the Rhineland on 7 March 1936 violated the Versailles Treaty and the Locarno Pact but was not resisted by Britain or France. The Anschluss with Austria on 12 March 1938 added approximately seven million Austrian Germans to the Reich and reversed the Versailles prohibition on German-Austrian unification. The Munich Agreement of 29 to 30 September 1938 transferred the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia to the Reich, adding approximately three million more Germans. Each success validated the propaganda claim that Hitler was restoring German national unity, which Goebbels translated into domestic legitimacy through the Volksempfänger radio network and the newsreels of the Ufa studios. This interpretation aligns with Ian Kershaw's analysis of the Hitler Myth, which argues that foreign policy successes were the strongest pillar of popular support for Hitler and that the gap between the Führer and the unpopular Party officials widened precisely during the years of greatest foreign policy success. Tim Mason challenges Kershaw's emphasis by arguing that the economic pressures created by rearmament were driving Hitler to war faster than his strategic plans required, in the thesis known as the flight into war. The evidence supports a synthesis in which foreign policy both legitimised the regime and drove it toward the war that would destroy it, with the successes of 1935 to 1938 concealing the structural unsustainability that war would reveal.

Chapter summary

The two worked answers demonstrate how the PEEL(P) paragraph, the priority historian bank and the thematic organisation can be combined into a top-band Paper 2 essay. The compare-and-contrast example shows how each paragraph addresses both cases on one axis, avoiding the biographical structure that keeps essays in the middle band. The evaluate example shows how the strengths and limitations of a named factor can be weighed to produce a reasoned judgement. The remaining Section 10 questions, listed in Chapter 34 of the book, can be approached through the same techniques.

PART III: SECTION 12 — THE COLD WAR. SUPERPOWER TENSIONS AND RIVALRIES

Chapter 17: The three themes of Section 12

Summary of events

The IB History syllabus organises the study of the Cold War into three prescribed themes. The first is Rivalry, mistrust and accord, which covers the long-term dynamics of superpower relations from the breakdown of the Grand Alliance in 1943 to 1949 through to the end of the Cold War between 1980 and 1991. The second is Leaders and nations, which asks about the impact of specific leaders on the course of the Cold War and about the economic, social and cultural impact of the Cold War on specific countries. The third is Cold War crises, which requires detailed study of at least two crises from different regions. Every Paper 2 Section 12 question responds to one or more of these three themes.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What does each of the three Cold War themes cover, and what patterns of question derive from them?
2. How should the candidate organise revision to cover all three themes efficiently?
3. Which specific crises does a candidate need to know, and which are essential for the two-region requirement?

Reference table for Chapter 17

Theme	Focus	Question form
1. Rivalry, mistrust and accord	Long-term dynamics of superpower relations	Breakdown of Grand Alliance, Sino-Soviet, US-China, détente, end of Cold War
2. Leaders and nations	Impact of leaders and impact on countries	Role of Truman, Stalin, Khrushchev, Nixon, Mao, Castro, Brezhnev, Reagan, Gorbachev
3. Cold War crises	Detailed comparison of crises from different regions	Berlin Blockade, Korea, Suez, Hungary, Cuba, Prague, Afghanistan, Chile

17.1 Theme one. Rivalry, mistrust and accord

The first theme covers the long-term dynamics of superpower relations across three sub-periods. The first sub-period is the breakdown of the Grand Alliance and the emergence of superpower rivalry in Europe and Asia between 1943 and 1949, with specific attention to the role of ideology, fear and aggression, economic interests, and a comparison of the roles of the United States and the Soviet Union. The second sub-period is superpower relations between 1947 and 1979, covering containment, peaceful coexistence, Sino-Soviet and Sino-American relations, and détente. The third sub-period is confrontation and reconciliation leading to the end of the Cold War between 1980 and 1991, covering ideological challenges and dissent, economic problems, and the arms race.

17.2 Theme two. Leaders and nations

The second theme has two bullet points. The first is the impact of two leaders, each chosen from a different region, on the course and development of the Cold War. The second is the economic, social and cultural impact of the Cold War on two countries, each chosen from a different region. A candidate who has studied this book can use Castro from Section 10 for leader questions, paired with Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Gorbachev, Kennedy or Reagan. For country questions, Cuba and Vietnam, or Yugoslavia and Vietnam, provide strong two-region pairings.

17.3 Theme three. Cold War crises

The third theme requires detailed study of two crises from different regions. This book covers every crisis listed in the IB guide. In Europe these are the Berlin Blockade 1948-49, the Berlin Wall 1958-61, the Hungarian Revolution 1956, the Prague Spring 1968, and the Polish Solidarity crisis 1981-89. In the Americas the Cuban Missile Crisis 1962, the Chile intervention 1973, and the Contra War 1981-90. In Asia and Oceania the Korean War 1950-53, the Offshore Islands crises 1954 and 1958, the Vietnam War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan 1979. In Africa and the Middle East the Suez Crisis 1956, the Congo Crisis 1960-61, and the Angolan Civil War from 1975.

Chapter summary

The three themes of Section 12 are rivalry, mistrust and accord, leaders and nations, and Cold War crises. A well-prepared candidate carries a mental grid of the major crises organised by region and on the axes of causes, course, impact and significance, together with knowledge of the major leaders, of the Yugoslav and Vietnamese cases, and of the long-term trajectory of superpower relations from 1943 to 1991.

Questions

1. List the three IB themes for Section 12 and explain what each covers.
2. Identify the Cold War crises covered in this book, grouped by IB region.
3. Explain how the two-region rule shapes the choice of crises for comparative essays.

Chapter 18: Origins. The breakdown of the Grand Alliance, 1943 to 1949

Summary of events

The wartime alliance between the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union had always been an alliance of convenience against Nazi Germany. Tensions surfaced almost immediately after victory in Europe in May 1945 and drove the collapse of cooperation between 1945 and 1949. The Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam Conferences produced broad agreements about post-war arrangements that were progressively revealed to be fragile. Churchill's Fulton speech of March 1946 named the Iron Curtain. The Truman Doctrine of March 1947 and the Marshall Plan of June 1947 committed the United States to containment. The Czechoslovak coup of February 1948 and the Berlin Blockade of 1948 to 1949 turned rivalry into open confrontation. By April 1949 NATO had been established, by August the Soviet Union had tested its first atomic bomb, and in October 1949 the Chinese Communist Party proclaimed the People's Republic of China.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What were the sources of Soviet-Western tension during the Second World War?
2. To what extent did ideology rather than economic interests drive the breakdown?
3. Evaluate the roles of the United States and the Soviet Union in the origins of the Cold War.
4. Why did the Berlin Blockade fail, and what were its consequences?

Timeline of Chapter 18

28 November to 1 December 1943	Tehran Conference
4 to 11 February 1945	Yalta Conference
8 May 1945	Victory in Europe
17 July to 2 August 1945	Potsdam Conference
6 and 9 August 1945	Atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
February 1946	Kennan's Long Telegram from Moscow
5 March 1946	Churchill's Iron Curtain speech at Fulton
12 March 1947	Truman Doctrine
5 June 1947	Marshall Plan announced
September 1947	Cominform established
20 February 1948	Communist coup in Czechoslovakia

24 June 1948 to 12 May 1949	Berlin Blockade and Airlift
4 April 1949	NATO established
29 August 1949	Soviet atomic bomb tested
1 October 1949	Proclamation of the People's Republic of China

18.1 The wartime alliance and its tensions

The Grand Alliance had been formed out of necessity in the summer of 1941 after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. After Pearl Harbor in December 1941 the alliance was formalised in the Declaration by United Nations of January 1942. Tensions persisted throughout the war, most consequentially over the second front that Stalin demanded from 1942 and that the Western Allies delayed until June 1944. Stalin interpreted the delay as a deliberate policy of letting Germany and the Soviet Union bleed each other, a suspicion that conditioned his post-war expectations.

18.2 Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam

The three wartime conferences produced a framework interpreted differently by the three powers. Yalta in February 1945 agreed that Germany would be divided into four occupation zones, that Berlin would be similarly divided although it lay inside the Soviet zone, that Poland would be moved westward with a Curzon Line eastern border and an Oder-Neisse western border, that the Polish government would be reorganised on a broad democratic basis, and that free elections would be held in the liberated countries under the Declaration on Liberated Europe. The agreements were phrased vaguely enough that Stalin could read the Polish provisions as cosmetic while the West read them as a genuine coalition leading to real elections.

Potsdam in July and August 1945 addressed the implementation of Yalta with Truman replacing Roosevelt and Attlee replacing Churchill. By then Germany had surrendered, the Red Army occupied most of Eastern Europe, and the American atomic bomb had been tested and used.

18.3 The breakdown, 1945 to 1947

The breakdown was rapid. In Poland the free elections promised at Yalta did not materialise as expected. The Lublin Committee became the Polish Provisional Government and established communist control through the UB security ministry. Elections held in January 1947 were rigged. The pattern was repeated across Eastern Europe in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and eventually Czechoslovakia.

Kennan's Long Telegram from Moscow in February 1946 framed the Soviet challenge in ideological terms and became the basis of the policy of containment, published as the Mister X article in Foreign Affairs in July 1947. Churchill's March 1946 Fulton speech coined the Iron Curtain metaphor.

18.4 The Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan

The British announcement in February 1947 that it could no longer support the Greek government or defend Turkey produced the Truman Doctrine of 12 March 1947, committing the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation. The Marshall Plan of June 1947 offered economic aid to all European countries willing to cooperate. The Soviet walkout from the Paris conference and the pressure on Eastern European states to refuse the aid turned the plan into an instrument of economic division. The Cominform was established in September 1947 to coordinate the policies of European communist parties and to impose Soviet discipline, and Andrei Zhdanov announced the two-camp doctrine.

18.5 The Czechoslovak coup and the Berlin Blockade

The Czechoslovak coup in February 1948 eliminated the last coalition government in the Soviet bloc, when non-communist ministers resigned and Gottwald used the armed workers' militia to occupy key institutions. Jan Masaryk's death on 10 March 1948 was treated as murder by the West. Czechoslovakia joined the Soviet bloc.

The Berlin Blockade followed. The Western decision in the London Six-Power Conference to merge their zones and introduce the Deutsche Mark was treated by Stalin as a unilateral reshaping of German arrangements. On 24 June 1948 the Soviets closed all land and water routes between the Western zones and West Berlin. The Berlin Airlift flew approximately two and a quarter million tonnes of supplies over eleven months, with a plane landing every thirty seconds at the peak. The blockade was lifted on 12 May 1949 without Soviet gains. The Western commitment to Berlin had been demonstrated, the integration of West Germany had been accelerated, NATO had been forged, and the blockade was the single greatest political defeat Stalin suffered during his reign.

18.6 The atomic bomb and the extension to Asia

On 29 August 1949 the Soviet Union tested its first atomic bomb, ending the American monopoly several years earlier than American intelligence had predicted. On 1 October 1949 Mao proclaimed the People's Republic of China after the communist victory in the Chinese civil war. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of February 1950 formalised the alliance.

18.7 Historiographical debate

The orthodox school of the 1950s treated Soviet expansionism as the primary cause. The revisionists of the 1960s and 1970s, associated with William Appleman Williams and Walter LaFeber, treated American economic imperialism and the atomic monopoly as the primary drivers. The post-revisionist synthesis of Gaddis and Leffler saw both sides as responsible. Gaddis's later We Now Know, based on post-1991 archives, returned to an orthodox reading emphasising Soviet ideological aggression. Vladislav Zubok's A Failed Empire based on Russian archives emphasises Stalin's combination of security concerns with ideological ambition. Odd Arne Westad's The Global Cold War globalises the origins by stressing the colonial and decolonising dimension.

Chapter summary

The Grand Alliance broke down between 1945 and 1949 under the combined pressure of ideological rivalry, differing interpretations of the wartime agreements, Soviet installation of friendly regimes in Eastern Europe, American commitment to containment through the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, the Czechoslovak coup, the Berlin Blockade, NATO, the Soviet atomic bomb and the Chinese communist victory. The basic Cold War structure was in place by the end of 1949 in Europe and extending to Asia. The historiographical debate has cycled through orthodox, revisionist and post-revisionist positions.

Questions

1. To what extent did ideology rather than economic interests drive the breakdown of the Grand Alliance?
2. Evaluate the roles of the United States and the Soviet Union in the origins of the Cold War.
3. Examine the significance of the Berlin Blockade in the development of the Cold War in Europe.

Chapter 19: The Cold War extends to Asia, 1947 to 1953

Summary of events

The Cold War in Asia was shaped by the communist victory in the Chinese civil war in 1949 and by the Korean War of 1950 to 1953. The Chinese civil war had resumed after the Japanese surrender in 1945, with American aid to the Nationalist government failing to prevent communist victory. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of February 1950 formalised the alliance between the two major communist powers. The North Korean invasion of South Korea on 25 June 1950 triggered the first hot war of the Cold War era, with United Nations forces under American command defending South Korea and Chinese forces eventually intervening to save North Korea. The war ended in stalemate at the Thirty-Eighth Parallel in July 1953.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did the Chinese communist victory transform the Cold War in Asia?
2. What were the causes of the Korean War?
3. How did the Korean War affect superpower relations and the global Cold War?

Timeline of Chapter 19

1945 to 1949	Chinese civil war
1 October 1949	Proclamation of the People's Republic of China
14 February 1950	Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance
April 1950	NSC-68 approved by Truman
25 June 1950	North Korean invasion of South Korea
15 September 1950	UN landings at Inchon
19 October 1950	Chinese forces enter North Korea
April 1951	MacArthur dismissed by Truman
27 July 1953	Armistice signed at Panmunjom

19.1 The Chinese revolution

The Chinese communists had been at war with the Nationalist Kuomintang intermittently since 1927. After the Japanese surrender, the civil war resumed under conditions favourable to the communists, who had expanded their base areas during the war against Japan and who benefited from the exhaustion and corruption of the Nationalist regime. American aid to the Nationalists between 1946 and 1948, including billions of dollars in military and economic assistance, failed to prevent defeat. Mao proclaimed the People's Republic on 1 October 1949. Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist leadership fled to Taiwan where they established the Republic of China that survives to this day.

The Sino-Soviet Treaty of February 1950 formalised the alliance between the Soviet Union and the new People's Republic. The treaty committed both sides to mutual assistance in case of Japanese or American attack, promised substantial Soviet economic and technical aid to Chinese reconstruction, and gave the Soviet Union continuing privileges in Manchuria that would be reduced over subsequent years. The alliance was the largest geopolitical fact of the early Cold War in Asia, bringing the world's largest country by population into the Soviet bloc.

19.2 The Korean War

Korea had been divided at the Thirty-Eighth Parallel in 1945 with the Soviet Union accepting the Japanese surrender north of the line and the United States south of it. Two competing regimes developed, Kim Il-sung's Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north and Syngman Rhee's Republic of Korea in the south. Both regimes claimed jurisdiction over all Korea. Kim lobbied Stalin repeatedly from 1948 for permission to invade the south. Stalin initially refused, then gave conditional approval in January 1950 after Mao had promised Chinese support.

The North Korean invasion of 25 June 1950 surprised the United Nations and Washington. American Secretary of State Dean Acheson had omitted Korea from the defensive perimeter of the United States in a January 1950 speech, a speech that may have contributed to Stalin's calculation that American intervention was unlikely. Truman's response was decisive. American forces were committed immediately. The UN Security Council, boycotted by the Soviet Union over the Chinese representation issue, passed resolutions authorising a military response, and American forces operated under UN flag.

The war passed through three phases. The first phase saw North Korean advance to the Pusan perimeter in the southeast corner of the peninsula by August 1950. The second phase began with the American landing at Inchon on 15 September 1950 under General Douglas MacArthur, which cut North Korean supply lines and enabled UN forces to advance north of the Thirty-Eighth Parallel. By October 1950 UN forces approached the Yalu River, the border with China. The third phase began with the Chinese intervention of 19 October 1950. Approximately three hundred thousand Chinese People's Volunteers entered North Korea and drove UN forces back south of the parallel. Seoul was retaken by communist forces in January 1951. The front stabilised around the parallel from mid-1951, and armistice negotiations dragged on for two years before the ceasefire of 27 July 1953 at Panmunjom.

MacArthur's dismissal by Truman in April 1951, after MacArthur publicly advocated expanding the war to China and possibly using atomic weapons, reaffirmed civilian control of American military policy. The war killed approximately three million Koreans, mostly civilians, approximately one million Chinese soldiers and approximately thirty-six thousand Americans.

19.3 Significance for the Cold War

The Korean War transformed the Cold War in several ways. It confirmed the global character of the rivalry. It produced the Western consensus that Soviet-backed aggression had to be resisted with military force, formalised in the document NSC-68 that had been drafted before the war and approved during it. It accelerated Western rearmament, with American defence spending tripling between 1950 and 1953. It extended NATO through the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in 1952 and, more controversially, the rearmament of West Germany. It militarised Japan's alliance with the United States and began the long process of Japanese economic recovery. It froze the Chinese-Taiwanese division that would persist into the twenty-first century. It entrenched the Korean division that remains in place today.

Chapter summary

The Cold War in Asia was transformed by the Chinese communist victory of 1949 and by the Korean War of 1950 to 1953. The Sino-Soviet alliance brought the world's most populous country into the socialist bloc. The Korean War killed millions, froze the Korean and Chinese divisions, accelerated Western rearmament, and confirmed the global character of superpower rivalry. The historiographical debate on the causes of the Korean War has shifted over time, with archival access after 1991 confirming Kim's leading role in lobbying Stalin for approval and complicating earlier Western narratives of top-down Soviet aggression.

Questions

1. Evaluate the impact of the Chinese communist victory on the course of the Cold War.
2. To what extent was Stalin responsible for the outbreak of the Korean War?
3. Examine the impact of the Korean War on the development of the Cold War.

Chapter 20: Peaceful coexistence and its limits, 1953 to 1962

Summary of events

Stalin's death in March 1953 opened a new phase of Soviet foreign policy in which Khrushchev's doctrine of peaceful coexistence replaced Stalin's more confrontational posture. Peaceful coexistence meant that the superpowers could avoid direct war with each other while continuing to compete for influence through proxy conflicts, economic aid and ideological rivalry. The doctrine coincided with three significant European crises in 1956, namely the Secret Speech that destabilised the Soviet bloc, the Hungarian Revolution that the Red Army crushed, and the Suez Crisis that humiliated Britain and France and confirmed the transition of leadership in the Western alliance from London and Paris to Washington. The late 1950s saw renewed tension over Berlin, culminating in the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961, and the most dangerous episode of the whole Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, which brought the superpowers to the edge of nuclear war before Khrushchev's agreement to withdraw the missiles in exchange for an American no-invasion pledge and the secret removal of American Jupiter missiles from Turkey.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What did Khrushchev mean by peaceful coexistence, and how did it differ from Stalin's earlier approach?
2. How did the Secret Speech destabilise the Soviet bloc?
3. Why did the Hungarian Revolution fail?
4. What was the significance of the Suez Crisis for Cold War alignments?
5. Why was Berlin the focus of superpower tension from 1958 to 1961?

Timeline of Chapter 20

5 March 1953	Death of Stalin
June 1953	East Berlin uprising crushed
July 1953	Korean War armistice
1955	Warsaw Pact established. Austrian State Treaty
July 1955	Geneva Summit
25 February 1956	Secret Speech at Twentieth Party Congress
June 1956	Poznań riots in Poland
October 1956	Gomułka reinstated in Poland Hungarian Revolution crushed
23 October to 10 November 1956	

	Suez Crisis
29 October to 7 November 1956	
November 1958	Khrushchev issues Berlin ultimatum
1 May 1960	U-2 incident
June 1961	Vienna Summit
13 August 1961	Berlin Wall constructed
16 to 28 October 1962	Cuban Missile Crisis

20.1 Peaceful coexistence

Khrushchev articulated peaceful coexistence most systematically at the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956. The doctrine held that the capitalist and socialist systems could compete peacefully because nuclear war would destroy both and that socialism would win through superior economic performance rather than through military confrontation. The doctrine was genuine but was not pacifist. Khrushchev retained the view that communism would eventually prevail globally, and he continued to support anti-imperial movements in the decolonising world. But he ruled out the kind of direct military confrontation that Stalin had seemed willing to contemplate in Berlin in 1948.

20.2 The Secret Speech and its consequences

The Secret Speech of 25 February 1956 denounced Stalin's cult of personality, his purges and his wartime blunders while carefully preserving the legitimacy of the October Revolution and the one-party system. The speech was not published in the Soviet Union but was leaked rapidly through Western intelligence. Its effect on the Soviet bloc was immediate and destabilising. In Poland the Poznań riots of June 1956 forced the reinstatement of Władysław Gomułka, who had been purged by Stalin in 1948. Khrushchev accepted the change after personal negotiations in Warsaw in October 1956.

20.3 The Hungarian Revolution

The effect in Hungary was more dramatic. On 23 October 1956, a student demonstration in support of Polish reforms escalated into a full revolution. Imre Nagy, who had been Prime Minister in 1953 to 1955 and was associated with de-Stalinisation, returned to office. A multi-party government was formed. On 1 November Nagy announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and appealed to the United Nations. This was a step too far for Khrushchev. On 4 November Soviet forces invaded in Operation Whirlwind. Approximately two and a half thousand Hungarians were killed, hundreds of thousands fled as refugees, Nagy was arrested and executed in 1958 after a secret trial, and János Kádár was installed as a more pliable Hungarian leader.

The Hungarian Revolution demonstrated the limits of peaceful coexistence in Eastern Europe. Khrushchev would tolerate internal reform within the socialist bloc so long as the ruling party retained control and the country remained in the Warsaw Pact. Departure from the bloc was unacceptable. The principle would be reaffirmed in 1968 in Czechoslovakia and in 1981 in Poland.

20.4 The Suez Crisis

The Suez Crisis of October and November 1956 was simultaneous with the Hungarian Revolution and competed with it for international attention. Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956 after the United States and the United Kingdom withdrew promised financing for the Aswan High Dam. Britain, France and Israel planned a joint military operation to retake the canal and overthrow Nasser. Israel invaded the Sinai on 29 October, and Britain and France landed at Port Said on 5 November.

The Eisenhower administration had not been consulted and opposed the operation. American financial pressure on the British pound, combined with Soviet threats of intervention, forced Britain to accept a ceasefire within days. The operation was a military success but a political catastrophe. British Prime Minister Anthony Eden resigned. French confidence in British reliability was damaged for a generation. The United States emerged as the undisputed leader of the Western alliance in the Middle East, and Nasser's prestige as the leader of Arab nationalism was confirmed. The Soviet Union, despite the simultaneous Hungarian invasion, benefited enormously because the Suez operation distracted international attention from Hungary and because Nasser's continuing independence gave Moscow a new client in the Middle East.

20.5 The Berlin Wall

Berlin remained the Cold War's most visible flashpoint. Between 1949 and 1961 approximately three million East Germans escaped to the West through West Berlin. The exodus included disproportionate numbers of professionals and skilled workers. Khrushchev tried to force a resolution through the Berlin ultimatum of November 1958, demanding that West Berlin become a free city within six months. The deadline passed without war. The Vienna Summit of June 1961, at which Khrushchev tested the new President Kennedy, reinforced Khrushchev's assessment that Kennedy was weak and could be pressured. On 13 August 1961, East German forces sealed the border between East and West Berlin and began the construction of the Berlin Wall that would divide the city for twenty-eight years.

The Wall was a propaganda disaster but a strategic success. It prevented further East German emigration and stabilised the East German regime, which had been close to collapse. Kennedy reacted with a defensive posture, famously saying that a wall was a hell of a lot better than a war. The Wall became the iconic image of Cold War division, and its fall in November 1989 would become the iconic image of the Cold War's end.

Chapter summary

The period from Stalin's death to the Cuban Missile Crisis saw the articulation of peaceful coexistence, the destabilisation of the Soviet bloc through the Secret Speech, the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution, the transition of Western leadership from London and Paris to Washington through the Suez Crisis, and the construction of the Berlin Wall to stabilise East Germany. Peaceful coexistence was genuine in so far as it ruled out direct superpower war, but the period also demonstrated its limits in Hungary in 1956 and would demonstrate them again in Cuba in 1962.

Questions

1. Evaluate the significance of the Secret Speech in the development of the Cold War.
2. Examine the reasons for the failure of the Hungarian Revolution.
3. To what extent did the Suez Crisis shift the balance of power within the Western alliance?
4. Evaluate the impact of the Berlin Wall on East-West relations.

Chapter 21: The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962

Summary of events

The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 was the single most dangerous episode of the Cold War, when the superpowers came within hours of nuclear war over the Soviet deployment of medium-range ballistic missiles on Cuba. The crisis began on 14 October 1962 when American U-2 reconnaissance aircraft photographed missile installations under construction at San Cristóbal. President Kennedy announced the discovery on 22 October and imposed a naval quarantine of Cuba. For six days the world expected nuclear war. On 28 October Khrushchev agreed to withdraw the missiles in exchange for a public American pledge not to invade Cuba and a secret American commitment to withdraw Jupiter missiles from Turkey within six months.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did Khrushchev decide to deploy missiles in Cuba?
2. How did Kennedy and the ExComm handle the crisis?
3. How close did the world come to nuclear war?
4. What were the consequences of the crisis for superpower relations and for Cuba?

Timeline of Chapter 21

January to April 1961	Bay of Pigs invasion planned and executed
April 1961	Jupiter missiles deployed in Turkey
May 1962	Khrushchev decides to deploy missiles in Cuba
July to October 1962	Soviet missile installations constructed in Cuba
14 October 1962	U-2 photographs reveal missile installations
16 October 1962	Kennedy informed. ExComm convened
22 October 1962	Kennedy announces quarantine
24 October 1962	Quarantine begins. Soviet ships turn back
27 October 1962	Black Saturday. U-2 shot down over Cuba
28 October 1962	Khrushchev agrees to withdraw missiles
20 November 1962	Quarantine lifted
April 1963	Jupiter missiles withdrawn from Turkey

21.1 Khrushchev's decision to deploy

Khrushchev's motivations for deploying missiles in Cuba have been debated since the crisis. Four factors can be identified. The first was the protection of Cuba against another American invasion after the Bay of Pigs failure of 1961. The second was the rectification of the strategic imbalance, since the United States had approximately seventeen times as many deliverable nuclear warheads as the Soviet Union in 1962 and had deployed Jupiter missiles in Turkey that could reach Moscow in minutes. The third was the demonstration of Soviet reach that the deployment would provide, enhancing Khrushchev's position at home and within the socialist bloc. The fourth was the calculation that Kennedy, after his poor performance at the Vienna Summit, could be presented with a fait accompli.

21.2 The thirteen days

The crisis unfolded over thirteen days from 16 to 28 October 1962. The Executive Committee of the National Security Council, the ExComm, that Kennedy convened considered options ranging from a surgical air strike on the missile sites through an invasion of Cuba to a naval blockade. The blockade, renamed quarantine for legal reasons, was chosen as the measured response that signalled resolve without committing to an irreversible escalation. Kennedy's public announcement on 22 October revealed the crisis to the world. Khrushchev initially sent a conciliatory letter on 26 October offering withdrawal in exchange for a no-invasion pledge. A second, harder letter on 27 October demanded the withdrawal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey. The same day an American U-2 was shot down over Cuba and its pilot Rudolf Anderson was killed, the only combat casualty of the crisis. Kennedy chose to respond only to the first letter publicly while his brother Robert Kennedy conveyed the secret commitment on the Jupiters privately to Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Khrushchev accepted on 28 October.

Archival research since the 1990s has revealed that the crisis came closer to nuclear war than had been appreciated at the time. Soviet tactical nuclear weapons were already in Cuba and local commanders had delegated authority to use them against American landing forces. Vasili Arkhipov, a Soviet submarine officer on B-59, refused to authorise the launch of a nuclear torpedo when the submarine was being forced to the surface by American destroyers and the captain believed war had begun. The refusal, which required unanimity among three officers, probably prevented the crisis from escalating into nuclear exchange.

21.3 Consequences

The immediate consequences were positive for the world. The two superpowers installed the Moscow-Washington hotline in June 1963 to prevent crises from escalating through miscommunication. The Partial Test Ban Treaty of August 1963 banned nuclear testing in the atmosphere, in space and under water, representing the first significant arms control agreement. Khrushchev was damaged politically by the concessions, and his removal in October 1964 was partly attributed to the Cuban humiliation.

For Cuba itself, the crisis produced mixed consequences. The American no-invasion pledge protected the regime from the kind of direct intervention that had been contemplated between 1961 and 1962. The Soviet commitment to Cuban defence was formalised and would produce the economic subsidies that sustained the Cuban economy until 1991. But Castro had not been consulted on the withdrawal, and he was infuriated by the revelation that the Soviet Union had traded Cuban security for American concessions on Turkey. The crisis contributed to the beginning of Cuban-Soviet tensions that would surface periodically over the next three decades.

Chapter summary

The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 was the most dangerous episode of the Cold War. Khrushchev's decision to deploy missiles combined the protection of Cuba with strategic rectification and political calculation. Kennedy's decision to impose a quarantine rather than strike or invade bought time for diplomacy. Khrushchev's willingness to withdraw in exchange for a public no-invasion pledge and a secret removal of Jupiter missiles ended the crisis. The consequences included the Moscow-Washington hotline, the Partial Test Ban Treaty, Khrushchev's eventual removal, and the deepening of Soviet-Cuban economic integration. Historiography since the archival openings of the 1990s has documented how close the crisis came to nuclear war.

Questions

1. Evaluate the reasons for Khrushchev's decision to deploy missiles in Cuba.
2. Examine the handling of the Cuban Missile Crisis by Kennedy and Khrushchev.
3. To what extent did the Cuban Missile Crisis transform superpower relations?
4. Compare and contrast the Cuban Missile Crisis with one other Cold War crisis from a different region.

Chapter 22: Yugoslavia under Tito. The Third Way

Summary of events

Yugoslavia under Josip Broz Tito occupied a unique position in the Cold War as a communist state outside the Soviet bloc. Tito had established communist control through the partisan victory of 1944 to 1945 without major Soviet military assistance. His personal authority and the ideological confidence of the Yugoslav party produced the Soviet-Yugoslav split of June 1948, when the Cominform expelled Yugoslavia and Stalin imposed an economic blockade. Tito survived through Western aid, through the consolidation of internal control and through the construction of a distinctive Yugoslav socialism based on workers' self-management rather than Soviet-style central planning. From 1955 onwards Yugoslavia led the Non-Aligned Movement with Nehru of India and Nasser of Egypt, offering a third position between the superpower blocs. The federal structure that Tito built survived his death in 1980 but disintegrated in the 1990s under the combined pressure of economic crisis and ethnic nationalism, producing the Yugoslav Wars that remain within living memory.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did Tito's Yugoslavia break with the Soviet Union in 1948?
2. What was distinctive about Yugoslav socialism under Tito?
3. How did Tito maintain control over a multi-ethnic federation from 1945 to 1980?
4. What was the significance of the Non-Aligned Movement?
5. Why did Yugoslavia disintegrate after Tito's death?

Timeline of Chapter 22

1941 to 1945	Partisan war against Axis occupation
29 November 1945	Proclamation of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia
28 June 1948	Soviet-Yugoslav split. Yugoslavia expelled from Cominform
1950	Workers' self-management introduced
June 1955	Belgrade Declaration reconciles USSR with Yugoslavia
September 1961	First Non-Aligned Movement summit in Belgrade
1974	New federal constitution
4 May 1980	Death of Tito
1989	Milošević consolidates power in Serbia
1991 to 1999	Yugoslav Wars

22.1 The Yugoslav partisans and the 1948 split

The Yugoslav partisan movement under Tito was exceptional in communist-ruled Europe because it liberated its own country. The Red Army crossed into Yugoslavia only briefly in 1944, and Tito's forces had already pushed the Wehrmacht out of much of the country. The consequence was that Yugoslav communism had its own revolutionary legitimacy and its own military, which would matter enormously when Stalin tried to impose Soviet discipline.

The split of 1948 came from three accumulated tensions. The first was Yugoslav ambition in the Balkans, including projects for a federation with Bulgaria and support for the Greek communists, that Stalin regarded as insubordination. The second was Yugoslav economic nationalism, which resisted Soviet attempts to dominate joint Soviet-Yugoslav companies. The third was Tito's personal refusal to treat the Soviet Union as the infallible leader of the communist movement. Stalin expected Yugoslavia to be like the other Eastern European satellites. Tito refused. The Cominform expelled Yugoslavia on 28 June 1948 in a carefully timed public humiliation. Stalin imposed an economic blockade and issued the famous prediction that he had only to shake his little finger to make Tito fall.

Tito survived. The partisan army suppressed Cominform sympathisers through the notorious Goli Otok prison camp. Western aid from 1950, organised through a modified Marshall Plan arrangement, substituted for the loss of Soviet trade. The United States saw the survival of an independent communist Yugoslavia as a strategic asset that could fracture the Soviet bloc, and the Truman administration committed substantial assistance while accepting that Yugoslavia would remain communist. The split became permanent, and the Belgrade Declaration of June 1955 normalised relations on the basis of mutual recognition as independent socialist states rather than on Tito's subordination.

22.2 Workers' self-management and Titoism

The economic model that Yugoslavia developed after 1950 distinguished it from both Soviet and Western systems. Workers' self-management, inspired partly by Marxist texts that had been suppressed in the Soviet Union and partly by pragmatic experimentation, established workers' councils at the enterprise level with authority over production decisions and distribution of profits. Enterprises operated under market conditions rather than central planning, competing with each other for customers. The state retained ownership of the means of production but day-to-day management passed to the worker-controlled enterprise.

The system had mixed results. It produced faster economic growth than the Soviet bloc in the 1950s and 1960s, with Yugoslav GDP per capita reaching approximately two thirds of the Italian level by 1980. It also produced regional disparities, with Slovenia and Croatia prospering while Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia lagged. It proved incapable of handling the oil shocks of the 1970s, accumulating foreign debt that would reach twenty billion dollars by the mid-1980s and would contribute to the federation's collapse.

22.3 The Non-Aligned Movement

Tito's response to expulsion from the Soviet bloc was to construct an alternative international position. The Non-Aligned Movement, founded at the Belgrade summit of September 1961, brought together twenty-five states that refused to align formally with either superpower. Tito, Nehru of India and Nasser of Egypt were the principal founders. The movement eventually included most of the decolonising world and provided a third space between the superpower blocs for states that wished to resist being incorporated into either.

The significance for the Cold War was threefold. It deprived both superpowers of automatic clients across Asia and Africa, forcing them to compete for non-aligned support. It gave small and medium states a forum in which to coordinate and to avoid great-power domination. And it provided Yugoslavia with an international

role that compensated for its small size and that buttressed Tito's internal position as a world statesman.

22.4 The federal system and the 1974 Constitution

Yugoslavia's internal organisation evolved across four constitutions. The 1946 constitution modelled on Stalin's 1936 constitution established a federation of six republics, namely Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia. Subsequent constitutions in 1953, 1963 and 1974 progressively decentralised authority to the republics and to the two autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo within Serbia. The 1974 Constitution was the most decentralising, creating what one historian has called eight veto points in the federal system.

Tito balanced the ethnic groups carefully. No single group was allowed to dominate, and the constitutional arrangements rotated the federal presidency after Tito's death among representatives of the republics. The system depended on Tito's personal authority to mediate disputes, a dependence that would prove catastrophic after his death.

22.5 Disintegration after 1980

Tito's death on 4 May 1980 removed the single figure capable of mediating federal conflicts. The 1980s saw economic crisis, with inflation reaching the thousands of per cent by the late decade, and the rise of nationalist movements in the republics. Slobodan Milošević consolidated power in Serbia in 1987 to 1989 on a platform of Serbian nationalism that broke the federal equilibrium. Slovenia and Croatia declared independence in June 1991, triggering the wars that would destroy the federation.

The Yugoslav Wars of 1991 to 1999 killed approximately one hundred and forty thousand people, produced the genocide at Srebrenica in July 1995 and ended in NATO intervention in 1999 over Kosovo. The disintegration of Yugoslavia showed the limits of Titoism as a model for managing ethnic diversity under communist rule. Without Tito and without the Cold War framework that had given Yugoslavia its strategic value, the federation collapsed.

Chapter summary

Tito's Yugoslavia was the only sustained communist state outside the Soviet bloc in Europe and offered a distinctive model of socialism based on workers' self-management and an international role based on non-alignment. The 1948 split was enabled by the partisan origins of Yugoslav communism and by Tito's personal refusal to accept subordination. Western aid after 1950 substituted for the lost Soviet trade. The system produced faster growth than the Soviet bloc but accumulated debt by the 1970s. After Tito's death the federal structure proved unable to contain ethnic nationalism and economic crisis, and the country disintegrated through the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s.

Questions

1. Evaluate the reasons for the Soviet-Yugoslav split of 1948.
2. Examine the significance of workers' self-management for the Yugoslav version of socialism.
3. To what extent was the Non-Aligned Movement a genuine alternative to superpower blocs?
4. Assess the role of Tito's personal authority in maintaining Yugoslav unity.

Chapter 23: The Vietnam War as a Cold War crisis

Summary of events

The Vietnam War was the longest, bloodiest and strategically most damaging of the Cold War's proxy conflicts, lasting formally from 1955 to 1975 though its origins reach back to Ho Chi Minh's declaration of Vietnamese independence in 1945 and its consequences extend to the present day. The French colonial war against the Viet Minh from 1946 to 1954 ended with the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu and the Geneva Accords that partitioned Vietnam at the seventeenth parallel. The American escalation under Kennedy and Johnson turned a civil war between the Diem regime in the south and the communist north into a massive American commitment, peaking at approximately five hundred and fifty thousand American troops in 1968. The Tet Offensive of January to February 1968 was a military defeat for the communists but a strategic victory because it destroyed American public support for the war. Nixon's Vietnamisation from 1969 and the Paris Peace Accords of January 1973 allowed American withdrawal, and the final communist offensive captured Saigon on 30 April 1975. The war killed approximately three million Vietnamese and fifty-eight thousand Americans, and reshaped American domestic politics, the Cold War superpower balance and the relationship between the United States and the post-colonial world for a generation.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did a Vietnamese struggle for independence become a Cold War proxy conflict?
2. Why did American escalation fail to defeat the communist insurgency?
3. What was the significance of the Tet Offensive?
4. Why did the Paris Peace Accords not produce peace?
5. What were the consequences of the Vietnam War for American Cold War policy?

Timeline of Chapter 23

2 September 1945	Ho Chi Minh declares Vietnamese independence
1946 to 1954	First Indochina War
7 May 1954	French defeat at Dien Bien Phu
21 July 1954	Geneva Accords partition Vietnam
1955	Diem refuses elections; South Vietnam declared
1961	Kennedy commits American advisers
2 November 1963	Diem assassinated
August 1964	Gulf of Tonkin Resolution
March 1965	Operation Rolling Thunder begins
30 January 1968	Tet Offensive launched
1969	Nixon announces Vietnamisation

27 January 1973 Paris Peace Accords

30 April 1975 Fall of Saigon

23.1 From independence struggle to Cold War conflict

Ho Chi Minh had declared Vietnamese independence on 2 September 1945, modelling his declaration on the American Declaration of Independence of 1776. The French refusal to accept independence produced the First Indochina War. The Viet Minh combined nationalist appeal with the organisational discipline of the Indochinese Communist Party. By 1950 the People's Republic of China was providing arms and training to the Viet Minh, and the United States was subsidising the French war effort. The French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954 and the subsequent Geneva Accords partitioned Vietnam at the seventeenth parallel with the expectation of elections in 1956 to reunify the country. Ngo Dinh Diem's American-backed regime in the south refused to hold the elections, which Ho would have won, and the partition hardened into two states.

23.2 American escalation

The American commitment grew incrementally across four administrations. Eisenhower extended assistance. Kennedy increased the number of American military advisers from approximately eight hundred to approximately sixteen thousand between 1961 and 1963. The assassination of Diem on 2 November 1963, in a coup encouraged by the Kennedy administration, produced a succession of unstable South Vietnamese governments. Johnson's escalation began in earnest after the Gulf of Tonkin incident of August 1964, in which an alleged North Vietnamese attack on American destroyers provided the pretext for the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution that authorised military action without a formal declaration of war. Operation Rolling Thunder, the sustained bombing of North Vietnam, began in March 1965. American ground troops were committed the same month. By 1968 American troop strength peaked at approximately five hundred and fifty thousand.

23.3 Tet and its consequences

The Tet Offensive of 30 January 1968 was launched on the eve of the Vietnamese New Year holiday. Approximately eighty thousand communist troops attacked more than one hundred South Vietnamese cities and towns simultaneously, including the American embassy in Saigon. Militarily the offensive was a catastrophe for the communists. The Viet Cong sustained enormous losses from which they never fully recovered, and the North Vietnamese Army had to take over most of the fighting in the south from 1968 onwards.

Politically the offensive was a catastrophe for Johnson. The scale and simultaneity of the attacks contradicted official American claims that the war was being won. Walter Cronkite, the most trusted American news anchor, declared in a February 1968 broadcast that the war could not be won. Johnson announced on 31 March 1968 that he would not seek re-election and that he was halting the bombing of most of North Vietnam to encourage peace talks. The Tet Offensive is the textbook example of how a military defeat can be a strategic victory through its political effects.

23.4 Vietnamisation and the Paris Accords

Nixon's strategy, articulated in the Guam Doctrine of July 1969, was Vietnamisation, the progressive transfer of ground combat to the South Vietnamese army while American forces withdrew. Nixon combined withdrawal with intensification of the air war and with the opening of new fronts, including the invasion of Cambodia in April 1970 and the Christmas Bombing of Hanoi in December 1972. The Paris Peace Accords of 27 January 1973 provided for American withdrawal, the return of American prisoners of war and a ceasefire in place. The North Vietnamese Army units in the south were allowed to remain. The Accords effectively guaranteed that the war between the two Vietnamese states would continue after American departure.

The final communist offensive began in March 1975. The South Vietnamese army collapsed faster than either side had expected. Saigon fell on 30 April 1975 and was renamed Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam was reunified under communist rule. The combined South Vietnamese and American casualties were approximately fifteen per cent of the pre-war population.

23.5 Consequences for the Cold War

The war had multiple consequences. For American Cold War policy, the Vietnam defeat produced the Vietnam Syndrome, the American public's reluctance to commit ground forces to sustained combat, which shaped decisions in the 1970s and 1980s. For the Soviet Union, Vietnam provided a demonstration of the costs of American containment and encouraged Soviet confidence in the early 1970s that the correlation of forces was shifting. For China, the war complicated its relations with both the Soviet Union and the United States and eventually produced the Sino-Soviet Border War of 1969 and the Sino-American rapprochement of 1972. For Vietnam itself, the aftermath of the war included the imposition of communist rule in the south, the mass flight of boat people, the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979, and an eventual transition to market reforms from the Doi Moi programme of 1986.

Chapter summary

The Vietnam War was the central Cold War conflict of its era, combining a Vietnamese struggle for independence with superpower rivalry in a way that neither side could decisively resolve. The American commitment grew from advisory support under Kennedy through massive escalation under Johnson to withdrawal under Nixon, and the final communist victory in 1975 produced the Vietnam Syndrome that shaped American foreign policy for a generation. The war killed approximately three million Vietnamese and fifty-eight thousand Americans, and it demonstrated the costs and limits of containment as a global strategy.

Questions

1. Evaluate the reasons for American escalation in Vietnam between 1961 and 1968.
2. Examine the significance of the Tet Offensive for the outcome of the Vietnam War.
3. To what extent did the Vietnam War transform American Cold War policy?
4. Compare and contrast the Vietnam War with one other Cold War crisis from a different region.

Chapter 24: Détente and its breakdown, 1969 to 1979

Summary of events

Détente was the partial relaxation of superpower tensions between 1969 and 1979 through arms control agreements, summit diplomacy, increased trade and cultural exchange. The Nixon administration's rapprochement with China from 1971 and its opening with the Soviet Union through the SALT I agreement of 1972 marked the beginning of the thaw. The Helsinki Final Act of 1975 recognised the post-war European borders in exchange for commitments on human rights that would later provide international legitimacy for dissidents in Eastern Europe. The oil shock of 1973, the Angolan Civil War of 1975 and the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles in the late 1970s progressively eroded détente. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 ended it definitively.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What drove Nixon and Brezhnev to seek détente in 1969?
2. What did SALT I, SALT II and the Helsinki Final Act achieve?
3. Why did détente break down between 1975 and 1979?
4. How did the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan end détente?

Timeline of Chapter 24

March 1969	Sino-Soviet border clashes at Zhenbao Island
21 to 28 February 1972	Nixon visits China
22 to 30 May 1972	Nixon in Moscow. SALT I and ABM Treaty signed
October 1973	Yom Kippur War and oil shock
1 August 1975	Helsinki Final Act signed
1975	Angolan Civil War begins. Cuban troops deployed
1976	Moscow Helsinki Group founded
1977	Carter emphasises human rights in foreign policy
1979	SS-20 deployment and NATO dual-track decision
18 June 1979	SALT II signed
25 December 1979	Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

24.1 The opening to China

Nixon's opening to China in 1971 to 1972 was the most consequential diplomatic move of the détente era. The Sino-Soviet border clashes of March 1969 had demonstrated that the Soviet-Chinese alliance had fully collapsed, and Nixon's national security adviser Henry Kissinger saw the opportunity to play the China card against the Soviet Union. Kissinger visited Beijing secretly in July 1971 and publicly in October 1971, and Nixon's historic visit in February 1972 produced the Shanghai Communiqué that acknowledged the existence of the People's Republic of China as the legitimate government of China while leaving the question of Taiwan's status deliberately ambiguous.

The opening transformed the Cold War. It drove the Soviet Union to seek its own accommodation with Washington to avoid encirclement. It effectively ended the American commitment to containing China. It accelerated the withdrawal from Vietnam by depriving Hanoi of unconditional great-power support. It ended the two-decade fiction that China was an extension of Soviet power.

24.2 SALT I and the ABM Treaty

Nixon's visit to Moscow in May 1972 produced the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, SALT I, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. SALT I froze the numbers of intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles at existing levels for five years. The ABM Treaty limited each side to two ABM sites, later reduced to one. Together the agreements stabilised the nuclear balance and reassured both sides that they could reduce the costs of unrestrained competition. SALT II, signed in June 1979 but never ratified by the American Senate, extended the framework to cover new weapons systems.

24.3 The Helsinki Final Act

The Helsinki Final Act of 1 August 1975 was the most ambitious European agreement of the period. Thirty-five states signed, including both superpowers and all European states except Albania. The agreement was organised in three baskets. The first basket recognised the post-war European borders, which the Soviet Union had long sought. The second basket covered economic, scientific and technological cooperation. The third basket committed signatories to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Soviet government valued the first basket and accepted the third as the price of the first. Dissidents immediately grasped that the third basket created an international legal framework they could invoke against their own governments. The Moscow Helsinki Group under Yuri Orlov was founded in May 1976, followed by similar groups in Ukraine, Lithuania, Georgia and Armenia. The American Helsinki Watch, later Human Rights Watch, was founded in 1978. The Helsinki process gave dissidents in Eastern Europe international standing and resources that would matter enormously in the 1980s.

24.4 The breakdown of détente

Détente unravelled through the second half of the 1970s. The Yom Kippur War of October 1973 and the subsequent Arab oil embargo damaged the American economy and produced mutual recrimination over détente's economic substance. Cuban deployment to Angola in 1975, with Soviet airlift support, suggested that détente was not constraining Soviet activity in the Third World. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the fall of the American-aligned Shah transformed the Middle East. Human rights disputes intensified under Carter, who made human rights a central element of American foreign policy from 1977 and who objected to Soviet treatment of dissidents including the confinement of Sakharov to Gorky in January 1980.

The military balance also shifted. The Soviet deployment of SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles targeting Western Europe from the mid-1970s prompted the NATO dual-track decision of December 1979 to

deploy American Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe while offering negotiations. The deployment decision produced massive anti-nuclear protests in Europe in the early 1980s but also demonstrated continued NATO commitment to meeting Soviet challenges.

24.5 Afghanistan

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on 25 December 1979 ended détente. The Soviet leadership calculated that the Marxist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which had taken power in April 1978, was losing a civil war against Islamist insurgents and needed direct Soviet intervention to survive. Brezhnev approved the operation apparently expecting a quick stabilisation. The American response was immediate and severe. Carter withdrew SALT II from the Senate, imposed a grain embargo, boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics and authorised covert CIA support to the Afghan mujahideen. What Brezhnev had expected to be a limited intervention became the Soviet Union's own Vietnam, lasting nine years and killing approximately fifteen thousand Soviet soldiers and over one million Afghans.

Chapter summary

Détente from 1969 to 1979 was the most sustained relaxation of Cold War tensions of the period, producing significant arms control agreements, the Helsinki Final Act, and the reorientation of superpower rivalry around managed competition. Its breakdown reflected the inability of the superpowers to reconcile continuing ideological competition with the military and economic constraints of the 1970s. The invasion of Afghanistan ended détente decisively and opened the Second Cold War of the 1980s.

Questions

1. Evaluate the achievements of détente between 1969 and 1979.
2. Examine the significance of the Helsinki Final Act.
3. To what extent was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the decisive cause of détente's collapse?

Chapter 25: The Second Cold War, 1979 to 1985

Summary of events

The Second Cold War between 1979 and 1985 was the period of renewed superpower confrontation that followed the collapse of détente and preceded the Gorbachev era. It combined the Soviet commitment in Afghanistan, the continuing crisis of Soviet client regimes in Central America and Africa, the rise of Reagan's aggressive rhetoric and the Strategic Defense Initiative, the Polish Solidarity crisis that the Jaruzelski regime suppressed under martial law in 1981, and a series of near-miss incidents including the shooting down of Korean Air Lines 007 in September 1983 and the Able Archer 83 exercise of November 1983 that Soviet intelligence interpreted as possibly the cover for an actual nuclear strike.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What drove the Second Cold War?
2. How did Solidarity in Poland challenge the Soviet bloc?
3. How close did the world come to nuclear war in 1983?
4. Why was Gorbachev's appointment in 1985 the turning point?

Timeline of Chapter 25

1979	Sandinistas take Nicaragua
1979	Iranian Revolution
1980	Gdańsk strikes. Solidarity founded
January 1981	Reagan inaugurated
13 December 1981	Martial law in Poland
March 1983	Strategic Defense Initiative announced
September 1983	KAL 007 shot down
November 1983	Able Archer 83 exercise
March 1985	Gorbachev becomes General Secretary

25.1 Reagan and the Evil Empire

Ronald Reagan's election in November 1980 brought to Washington a president committed to ending the Soviet system rather than managing coexistence with it. Reagan's rhetoric, including his description of the Soviet Union as an evil empire in March 1983, combined with massive military spending increases and with support for anti-Soviet insurgencies from Afghanistan to Nicaragua under the Reagan Doctrine. The Strategic Defense Initiative announced in March 1983 proposed the construction of a space-based missile defence system that the Soviet leadership feared would restore American nuclear superiority if it could be built. Whether SDI could ever have worked remains technically disputed, but its psychological and economic impact on the Soviet leadership was considerable.

25.2 Poland and Solidarity

Poland was the most politically consequential theatre of the Second Cold War in Europe. The strikes that began at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdańsk in August 1980 produced the Gdańsk Agreement that legalised Solidarity, Solidarność, the first independent trade union in the Soviet bloc. Solidarity's membership reached nearly ten million within a year, approximately one in four Poles of working age. Lech Wałęsa, the Gdańsk electrician who had led the strike, became the face of the movement. The Polish Communist Party was overwhelmed.

Under intense Soviet pressure, the Polish government of General Wojciech Jaruzelski declared martial law on 13 December 1981. Solidarity was suppressed, Wałęsa was interned, and approximately ten thousand activists were imprisoned. The martial law period lasted until July 1983, but Solidarity continued as an underground organisation. The Polish crisis demonstrated both the limits of Soviet power and the depth of popular opposition to communism in Eastern Europe, and it set the precedent for the Round Table negotiations of 1989 that would produce the first non-communist government in the bloc.

25.3 The 1983 war scare

The autumn of 1983 produced the most dangerous superpower moment since the Cuban Missile Crisis. On 1 September 1983 a Soviet Su-15 interceptor shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007, which had strayed into Soviet airspace near Sakhalin. All two hundred and sixty-nine passengers and crew were killed, including an American congressman. The Soviet government initially denied any involvement, then acknowledged the shooting while claiming the aircraft had been on a spying mission. The incident produced an American-Soviet crisis.

On 26 September 1983, Stanislav Petrov, a Soviet officer monitoring early warning systems, noticed that the computer had registered five American ICBM launches. Petrov judged the signal to be a false alarm and did not pass it up the chain of command. Investigation later confirmed that the signal had been produced by sunlight reflecting off clouds at high altitude. If Petrov had treated the signal as genuine, Soviet protocol required retaliation, and the retaliation would have triggered American response.

In November 1983 NATO conducted the annual command post exercise Able Archer 83 with unusual realism. Soviet intelligence under Yuri Andropov had issued orders since 1981 for Operation RYAN, the search for indicators of American preparations for a nuclear first strike, and Able Archer 83 was interpreted by parts of the Soviet leadership as possibly the cover for an actual American first strike. Gordievsky, a KGB officer in London working as a British double agent, alerted the British who alerted the Americans, and NATO reduced the tempo of the exercise. The episode later entered the historical record as the period of greatest danger since 1962.

25.4 Andropov and Chernenko

The brief tenures of Yuri Andropov from November 1982 to February 1984 and Konstantin Chernenko from February 1984 to March 1985 revealed the gerontocracy that had immobilised the Soviet leadership. Andropov, former KGB chief, attempted modest anti-corruption measures and protected his protégé Mikhail Gorbachev. Chernenko was too ill to govern effectively. The succession of rapid deaths highlighted the need for generational change, and on 11 March 1985 the Politburo elected Gorbachev, the youngest member at fifty-four.

Chapter summary

The Second Cold War combined Reagan's aggressive rhetoric, the Soviet commitment in Afghanistan, the Polish Solidarity crisis, the 1983 war scare and the continuing decline of Soviet economic and political capacity. The brief tenures of Andropov and Chernenko delayed a Soviet response to the renewed pressure, and Gorbachev's elevation in March 1985 opened the transformation that would end the Cold War within six years.

Questions

1. Evaluate the significance of Solidarity in the history of the Cold War.
2. Examine the reasons for the heightened superpower tensions of 1983.
3. To what extent was Reagan's pressure responsible for the end of the Cold War?

Chapter 26: The end of the Cold War, 1985 to 1991

Summary of events

The end of the Cold War between 1985 and 1991 was driven by Mikhail Gorbachev's transformation of Soviet foreign policy combined with the structural decline of the Soviet economy and the accumulated delegitimation of communism in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev's doctrine of New Political Thinking treated the Soviet Union as a normal member of the international community rather than as the leader of a revolutionary bloc. Summits at Geneva, Reykjavik, Washington and Moscow produced arms control breakthroughs including the INF Treaty of December 1987 that abolished an entire class of nuclear weapons. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan was completed in February 1989. The Sinatra Doctrine of 1989 renounced the Brezhnev Doctrine and allowed the revolutions of 1989 to transform Eastern Europe. German unification in October 1990 completed the dismantling of the Soviet imperial system. The August 1991 coup against Gorbachev failed but destroyed what remained of central authority, and the Belavezha Accords of December 1991 dissolved the Soviet Union itself.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What drove Gorbachev's decisions after 1985?
2. How did the arms control agreements of the late 1980s transform the strategic situation?
3. Why did the Soviet Union accept the revolutions of 1989?
4. Was the Cold War won by the West, lost by the Soviet Union, or ended by mutual agreement?

Timeline of Chapter 26

11 March 1985	Gorbachev becomes General Secretary
November 1985	Geneva Summit
October 1986	Reykjavik Summit
8 December 1987	INF Treaty signed in Washington
15 February 1989	Last Soviet troops leave Afghanistan
4 June 1989	Partially free elections in Poland
September 1989	Hungary opens border to Austria
9 November 1989	Fall of the Berlin Wall
December 1989	Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia. Ceauşescu executed
3 October 1990	German unification
19 to 21 August 1991	August coup fails
8 December 1991	Belavezha Accords

25 December 1991 Gorbachev resigns

26.1 Gorbachev and New Political Thinking

Gorbachev inherited a Soviet state whose economic decay his own sponsor Yuri Andropov had understood. His foreign policy doctrine, articulated in speeches from 1985 and in his 1987 book Perestroika, rejected the Marxist-Leninist framework of class struggle between irreconcilable systems. New Political Thinking, Novoye myshleniye, treated interdependence as the defining feature of the nuclear age and argued that security could only be mutual. Eduard Shevardnadze, appointed foreign minister in July 1985, and Anatoly Chernyaev, his foreign policy adviser, translated this framework into a negotiating programme that astonished Western counterparts.

26.2 The summits and the INF Treaty

The Geneva Summit of November 1985 produced the famous fireside meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev but no agreements. The Reykjavik Summit of October 1986 came closer to abolishing nuclear weapons than any superpower meeting before or since. Reagan and Gorbachev agreed in principle on the elimination of all strategic nuclear missiles over ten years, but the agreement collapsed over Reagan's refusal to limit SDI research to the laboratory.

The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, signed by Reagan and Gorbachev in Washington on 8 December 1987, was the first treaty to abolish an entire class of nuclear weapons. The treaty eliminated the SS-20s deployed in Eastern Europe and the Pershing II and cruise missiles that NATO had counter-deployed from 1983. It included intrusive verification measures that the Soviet Union had previously refused. The START process that followed produced the first strategic arms reduction in 1991.

26.3 The revolutions of 1989

The most consequential application of New Political Thinking was in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev repeatedly signalled to local leaders that the Soviet Union would not intervene to preserve communist governments. The signal was explicit in private conversations from 1986 onwards and public by the summer of 1989, when Shevardnadze formally renounced the Brezhnev Doctrine in what journalists called the Sinatra Doctrine, each state doing it its own way.

In Poland, the Round Table Accords of April 1989 permitted partially free elections on 4 June in which Solidarity candidates won all but one of the seats for which they were allowed to stand. Tadeusz Mazowiecki became the first non-communist prime minister in the Soviet bloc since 1948. In Hungary, reformist communists opened the country's border with Austria in May 1989, creating the physical breach through which tens of thousands of East Germans would cross to the West. The Hungarian Communist Party dissolved itself in October 1989.

In the German Democratic Republic, the regime of Erich Honecker attempted to resist the reform wave and was engulfed by it. Mass demonstrations in Leipzig from September 1989 reached hundreds of thousands. On the evening of 9 November 1989 the East German government accidentally announced the immediate opening of the Berlin crossings, and the Berlin Wall began to be dismantled that night. In Czechoslovakia the Velvet Revolution began with a student demonstration on 17 November 1989 and ended with the installation of Václav Havel as president on 29 December. In Bulgaria the reformist wing of the Party removed Todor Zhivkov on 10 November. Only in Romania did the transition produce violence, with the revolution of 16 to 25

December 1989 culminating in the execution of Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu on Christmas Day.

26.4 German unification

The fall of the Wall opened the question of German unification. Chancellor Helmut Kohl moved rapidly, offering the East German state a currency union and absorption into the Federal Republic. The Two-Plus-Four Agreement of September 1990, negotiated between the two German states and the four occupying powers, dissolved the post-war arrangements and restored full sovereignty to a united Germany. German unification formally took place on 3 October 1990. Soviet acceptance of NATO membership for unified Germany was perhaps Gorbachev's greatest concession.

26.5 The collapse of the Soviet Union

The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe accelerated the internal crisis of the Soviet Union itself. Nationalist movements in the Baltic republics, Georgia, Armenia and Ukraine demanded independence. The Soviet economy, already contracting under the pressures of perestroika, collapsed further as oil prices fell. Gorbachev's attempts to negotiate a new union treaty that would preserve a federated Soviet state were overtaken by events.

The August 1991 coup against Gorbachev was organised by conservatives who saw the union treaty as the final capitulation. The coup failed within three days when Boris Yeltsin, elected President of the Russian SFSR in June 1991, organised resistance from atop a tank outside the Russian parliament building. Gorbachev returned from house arrest in Crimea but his authority was shattered. The Belavezha Accords of 8 December 1991, signed by Yeltsin for Russia, Leonid Kravchuk for Ukraine and Stanislav Shushkevich for Belarus, declared that the USSR had ceased to exist. The Commonwealth of Independent States replaced it. Gorbachev resigned on 25 December 1991 and the Soviet flag was lowered over the Kremlin for the last time.

26.6 Who won the Cold War

The historiography of the end of the Cold War divides into three positions. The triumphalist view, associated with John Lewis Gaddis's post-Cold War writings, treats Reagan's pressure and Western strength as the decisive factors. The structural view, associated with Stephen Kotkin's Armageddon Averted and with Mark Galeotti, emphasises the economic decay of the Soviet system that made some form of collapse inevitable regardless of Western action. The agency view, associated with Archie Brown's The Gorbachev Factor, gives Gorbachev the decisive role as the individual whose personal choices determined the form of collapse. Robert Service's The End of the Cold War offers a balanced synthesis.

For Paper 2 purposes the strongest answer combines structural pressure with individual agency. The Soviet economy was structurally unsustainable, but the peaceful nature of the collapse and the willingness to accept the revolutions of 1989 were products of Gorbachev's specific choices. Without Gorbachev the system might have lasted longer but would probably have collapsed more violently.

Chapter summary

The end of the Cold War between 1985 and 1991 combined the structural crisis of the Soviet economy with the transformative leadership of Gorbachev, whose New Political Thinking ended the Cold War through mutual agreement rather than through superpower confrontation. The INF Treaty abolished a class of nuclear weapons. The revolutions of 1989 ended communism in Eastern Europe with the Soviet Union's assent. German unification in 1990 completed the dismantling of the post-war order. The collapse of the Soviet Union itself in December 1991 closed the era.

Questions

1. Evaluate the role of Gorbachev in ending the Cold War.
2. To what extent did structural economic decay rather than Reagan's pressure end the Cold War?
3. Examine the significance of the revolutions of 1989.
4. "The Cold War was won by the West." Discuss.

Chapter 27: Cold War in the Americas beyond Cuba

Summary of events

The Cold War in the Americas was dominated by the Cuban Missile Crisis but included a series of other episodes where the United States intervened against left-wing movements and governments, from Guatemala in 1954 to the Contra War of the 1980s. American interventions often operated through covert CIA support for right-wing movements, economic pressure, and occasional direct military action. Soviet and Cuban activity in the region remained limited before 1959 but expanded dramatically after the Cuban Revolution, and Havana became the coordinator of revolutionary movements across Latin America through the Tricontinental Congress of 1966 and beyond.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. What pattern characterised American interventions in Latin America during the Cold War?
2. Why did the Chilean coup of 1973 become an iconic Cold War episode?
3. How did the Contra War shape the late Cold War in the Americas?

Timeline of Chapter 27

June 1954	CIA-backed coup overthrows Árbenz in Guatemala
April 1961	Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba
1964 to 1985	Military dictatorship in Brazil
11 September 1973	Chilean coup overthrows Allende
July 1979	Sandinistas take power in Nicaragua
1981 to 1990	Contra War
1983	Invasion of Grenada

27.1 Guatemala 1954

Jacobo Árbenz, elected president of Guatemala in 1950, pursued a land reform that expropriated large holdings of the United Fruit Company and redistributed them to peasants. The company, which had close ties to the Eisenhower administration, lobbied for intervention. The CIA's Operation PBSUCCESS in June 1954 organised a small invasion force under Carlos Castillo Armas and an accompanying propaganda campaign. Árbenz, fearing a wider American invasion, resigned. Castillo Armas took power and reversed the land reform. The operation was the template for CIA operations across the Cold War and provided the training ground for officers who would later plan the Bay of Pigs. For Paper 2 purposes Guatemala 1954 is a useful case for questions on American Cold War methods and on the politics of the Americas.

27.2 Chile 1973

The election of Salvador Allende as president of Chile in September 1970 was the first electoral victory of a Marxist candidate in the Western hemisphere. Allende's Popular Unity government nationalised copper mining, accelerated agrarian reform and pursued redistribution. American hostility was immediate. Nixon reportedly instructed the CIA to make the Chilean economy scream. American financial pressure and covert support for the Chilean right contributed to economic crisis. On 11 September 1973 General Augusto Pinochet led a military coup that overthrew Allende. Allende died during the assault on the presidential palace. The Pinochet regime killed approximately three thousand people, imprisoned and tortured tens of thousands and ruled Chile until 1990. Declassified American documents have confirmed the extent of American involvement in the destabilisation of Allende, and Chile 1973 remains the most widely cited case of American intervention against an elected government during the Cold War.

27.3 The Contra War

The Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in July 1979 overthrew the American-aligned Somoza dictatorship and established a left-wing government with Cuban and Soviet support. The Reagan administration treated the Sandinista government as a Soviet ally and authorised the CIA to organise the Contras, Nicaraguan opposition forces based in Honduras and Costa Rica. American aid to the Contras was periodically cut off by Congress, most notably through the Boland Amendment of 1982, and the Reagan administration circumvented the restriction through the Iran-Contra scheme of 1985 to 1986 that sold weapons to Iran and channelled the proceeds to the Contras. The scheme was exposed in November 1986 and produced the most serious political crisis of the Reagan presidency. The Contra War ended with the Esquipulas Peace Accords of 1987 and the Nicaraguan elections of February 1990 that the Sandinistas lost to Violeta Chamorro.

Chapter summary

The Cold War in the Americas beyond Cuba included interventions against left-wing governments from Guatemala 1954 through Chile 1973 to the Contra War of the 1980s. American methods combined covert action, economic pressure and occasional direct military intervention. The Chilean case illustrates the most systematic American destabilisation of an elected government, and the Contra case the most politically consequential covert operation of the late Cold War.

Questions

1. Examine the impact of American interventions on Latin American politics during the Cold War.
2. Evaluate the significance of the Chilean coup of 1973 in the history of the Cold War.
3. Compare and contrast two American interventions in Latin America during the Cold War.

Chapter 28: Cold War in Africa and the Middle East

Summary of events

The Cold War in Africa and the Middle East combined the legacy of European decolonisation with superpower competition for influence over newly independent states and with periodic regional conflicts that drew in the superpowers. The Suez Crisis of 1956 transformed the regional balance and was covered in Chapter 20. The Congo Crisis of 1960 to 1965 saw the assassination of Patrice Lumumba and the eventual American-backed installation of Mobutu Sese Seko. The Arab-Israeli conflicts of 1967 and 1973 became Cold War proxies. The Angolan Civil War from 1975 brought Cuban troops into sustained combat with South African forces. The Ogaden War of 1977 to 1978 saw Soviet and Cuban intervention on the Ethiopian side against Somalia. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 removed an American ally and created an Islamic republic hostile to both superpowers.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did decolonisation interact with superpower rivalry in Africa and the Middle East?
2. What was the significance of the Congo Crisis?
3. How did the Arab-Israeli conflict become a Cold War proxy?
4. What was the impact of Cuban intervention in Africa?

Timeline of Chapter 28

July 1960 to November 1965	Congo Crisis
17 January 1961	Assassination of Lumumba
June 1967	Six-Day War
October 1973	Yom Kippur War
1975 to 2002	Angolan Civil War. Cuban troops committed from 1975
1977 to 1978	Ogaden War
January to December 1979	Iranian Revolution
1979 to 2000	Lebanese Civil War and Israeli intervention

28.1 The Congo Crisis

Belgium granted independence to the Congo on 30 June 1960, after a transition of less than six months and with minimal preparation. The new state collapsed within weeks. The army mutinied. The mineral-rich province of Katanga, supported by Belgian mining interests, seceded. Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba requested Soviet assistance after United Nations forces refused to intervene directly against Katanga. Lumumba was removed in a coup by Joseph Mobutu in September 1960, taken into custody and transferred to Katanga in January 1961, where he was executed on 17 January. The CIA had been involved in operations to remove Lumumba, though the precise extent remains disputed. The crisis continued until Mobutu's definitive takeover in November 1965 established the regime that would rule Zaire, as it was renamed, until 1997.

28.2 Arab-Israeli conflicts

The Soviet Union had supported the establishment of Israel in 1948 but switched to backing Arab nationalism after the Suez Crisis of 1956. The Six-Day War of June 1967 resulted in Israeli victory and the occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, the Golan Heights and Sinai, producing one of the most lasting geopolitical consequences of the Cold War. The Yom Kippur War of October 1973 reversed the initial dynamic, with Egypt and Syria achieving surprise advances before Israeli counter-attacks. American and Soviet alerts during the war brought the superpowers close to confrontation, and the Arab oil embargo that followed produced the first oil shock that damaged Western economies. The Camp David Accords of 1978 removed Egypt from the Soviet orbit, one of the most significant American diplomatic achievements of the Carter years.

28.3 Angola and Cuban intervention

The Angolan Civil War began in 1975 as Portugal withdrew from its colony after the Carnation Revolution of 1974. Three liberation movements competed for power. The MPLA under Agostinho Neto received Soviet and Cuban support. UNITA under Jonas Savimbi received South African and, from 1986, American support. The FNLA under Holden Roberto received initial American and Chinese support but faded. Cuban troops, first deployed in November 1975, eventually reached approximately fifty thousand at the peak and stayed until 1991. The Cuban intervention prevented UNITA and South African victory, secured MPLA control of Luanda and the oil-producing regions, and demonstrated both the global reach of Cuban policy and the limits of American willingness to commit directly. The battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988 was a decisive engagement in which Cuban and Angolan forces held against South African armour, producing the negotiations that led to Namibian independence in 1990 and the final Cuban withdrawal in 1991.

28.4 The Iranian Revolution

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 produced the most consequential transformation of the Middle East during the late Cold War. The Shah's regime, a principal American ally since 1953, collapsed under the combined pressure of a popular movement led by Ayatollah Khomeini, economic crisis and internal elite paralysis. The Islamic Republic that replaced the Shah was hostile to both superpowers. The Iran hostage crisis of November 1979 to January 1981, in which American diplomats were held for four hundred and forty-four days, destroyed the Carter presidency. The Iran-Iraq War of 1980 to 1988, which killed approximately one million people, drew in both superpowers as suppliers to one or both sides.

Chapter summary

The Cold War in Africa and the Middle East saw the superpowers exploit the legacy of decolonisation and the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict, with occasional direct intervention as in the Congo and Angola. Cuban troops in Angola and Ethiopia demonstrated the global reach of client state activity. The Iranian Revolution removed an American ally and produced an Islamic regime hostile to both blocs, complicating Cold War calculations in the final decade of the rivalry.

Questions

1. Examine the impact of the Cold War on decolonisation in Africa.
2. Evaluate the significance of Cuban intervention in Angola.
3. To what extent did the Cold War shape the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Chapter 29: Cold War in Asia beyond Vietnam

Summary of events

The Cold War in Asia was dominated by the Vietnam War covered in Chapter 23, but it also included the two Offshore Islands crises between China and Taiwan in 1954 and 1958, the Indo-Pakistani wars that drew the superpowers into South Asian conflicts, the Cambodian genocide and the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan covered partially in Chapter 24. This chapter covers these other Asian conflicts briefly to complete the coverage of the Cold War in this region.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. Why did the Offshore Islands crises become flashpoints for superpower confrontation?
2. How did the Indo-Pakistani wars interact with Cold War alignments?
3. What was the significance of the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979?

Timeline of Chapter 29

September 1954 to May 1955	First Taiwan Strait Crisis
August to October 1958	Second Taiwan Strait Crisis
1962	Sino-Indian War
1965	Second Kashmir War
1971	Bangladesh Liberation War
1975	Khmer Rouge takes Cambodia
1979	Sino-Vietnamese War
December 1979	Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

29.1 The Offshore Islands crises

The Offshore Islands of Quemoy and Matsu, small islands off the coast of Fujian held by the Nationalist Republic of China on Taiwan, became the focus of two crises in 1954 to 1955 and in 1958. In both cases the People's Republic shelled the islands, the United States threatened nuclear retaliation, and the crisis was defused without full-scale war. The crises demonstrated the American commitment to Taiwan, the Sino-Soviet alliance's limits as the Soviet Union was reluctant to support Chinese adventures, and the role of nuclear threats in Cold War crisis management.

29.2 South Asia

The Indian subcontinent's partition of 1947 produced permanent hostility between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and other issues. The Cold War alignments followed the regional pattern in complex ways. Pakistan became an American ally through SEATO and CENTO. India pursued non-alignment but developed increasingly close relations with the Soviet Union from the mid-1960s, formalised in the Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971. The Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, in which India supported the secession of East Pakistan from West Pakistan, saw the United States tilt toward Pakistan despite evidence of Pakistani atrocities against the Bengali population. The war produced the independent state of Bangladesh and the nearest approach to direct superpower confrontation in South Asia during the Cold War.

29.3 Cambodia and the Sino-Vietnamese War

Cambodia's Cold War trajectory combined the Vietnam War spillover with the emergence of the Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot, who took power in 1975 and conducted the most extreme revolutionary experiment of the Cold War era. Approximately one and a half to two million Cambodians died in the autogenocide that followed. Vietnam invaded Cambodia in December 1978 and installed a friendly government, overthrowing the Khmer Rouge. China responded by invading Vietnam in February to March 1979 in a short, costly war that demonstrated the depth of the Sino-Vietnamese rivalry and the complete breakdown of the communist alliance system.

Chapter summary

The Cold War in Asia beyond Vietnam included the Taiwan Strait crises of 1954 and 1958, the Indo-Pakistani conflicts that culminated in the Bangladesh war of 1971, the Cambodian genocide of 1975 to 1979 and the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979. The cases demonstrate the complexity of Cold War alignments in Asia, where communist states fought each other as frequently as they fought capitalist enemies, and where regional rivalries often shaped superpower decisions more than the reverse.

Questions

1. Examine the significance of the Offshore Islands crises in Sino-American relations.
2. To what extent did Cold War rivalry shape South Asian conflicts?
3. Evaluate the impact of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on the late Cold War.

Chapter 30: Comparative analysis of Cold War crises

Summary of events
Paper 2 Section 12 regularly asks candidates to compare and contrast two Cold War crises from different regions. This chapter brings together the crises covered in Chapters 18 to 29 into a comparative framework organised by region and by the four axes of causes, course, impact and significance. It then demonstrates a worked comparison between Berlin 1961 and Cuba 1962 that illustrates how candidates can handle such questions under examination conditions.

30.1 The two-region matrix

The table below maps the major crises by region for quick reference during revision and exam preparation.

Region	Principal crises	Best Paper 2 pairings
Europe	Berlin Blockade 1948-49, Hungary 1956, Berlin Wall 1961, Prague Spring 1968, Solidarity 1980-81	Pair with non-European crisis
Americas	Cuban Missile Crisis 1962, Chile 1973, Contra War 1981-90	Pair with European or Asian crisis
Asia and Oceania	Korean War 1950-53, Taiwan Strait 1954 and 1958, Vietnam 1955-75, Afghanistan 1979-89	Pair with European or American crisis
Africa and the Middle East	Suez 1956, Congo 1960-65, Yom Kippur 1973, Angola 1975-91, Iranian Revolution 1979	Pair with European or American crisis

30.2 Worked comparison. Berlin Wall 1961 and Cuban Missile Crisis 1962

Question. Compare and contrast the causes, course and consequences of two Cold War crises from different regions.

Pairing chosen. The Berlin Wall crisis of 1958 to 1961 and the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, satisfying the two-region rule with Europe and the Americas.

Sample body paragraph on causes. Both the Berlin Wall crisis and the Cuban Missile Crisis were caused by Khrushchev's attempt to use nuclear diplomacy to correct perceived imbalances in the Cold War, but the specific imbalances differed in each case. The Berlin crisis was driven by the accumulated exodus of approximately three million East Germans to the West through West Berlin between 1949 and 1961, a haemorrhage that threatened the economic and political viability of the East German regime. Khrushchev's ultimatum of November 1958 demanded that West Berlin become a free city, and his conversations with Kennedy at Vienna in June 1961 convinced him that the new American president was weak enough to pressure. The Cuban crisis was driven by the strategic imbalance in nuclear weapons, with the United States holding approximately seventeen times as many deliverable warheads as the Soviet Union in 1962, and by the

deployment of American Jupiter missiles in Turkey that could reach Moscow in minutes. Khrushchev's calculation was that stationing medium-range ballistic missiles in Cuba would create a local deterrent equivalent to the Jupiters in Turkey and would demonstrate that Soviet strategic reach was truly global. Both crises therefore reflected Soviet initiatives to address perceived weaknesses through the threat or deployment of nuclear weapons. This interpretation aligns with Vladislav Zubok's analysis in A Failed Empire, which stresses Khrushchev's combination of defensive anxiety with adventurist tactics. Mark Kramer's archival work on the Berlin crisis supports a reading in which the defensive East German dimension was at least as important as the offensive Soviet dimension, a reading that complicates the simpler Cold War picture. Therefore both crises shared the feature of Soviet-initiated pressure driven by the perceived need to address a specific weakness, whether the exodus through Berlin or the nuclear imbalance globally.

Chapter summary

The comparative framework for Cold War crises maps each crisis by region and by the four axes of causes, course, impact and significance. The worked comparison between Berlin 1961 and Cuba 1962 illustrates how a thematic paragraph can address both cases on a single axis, making the running comparison that Paper 2 requires.

Questions

1. Compare and contrast the causes and consequences of two Cold War crises, each chosen from a different region.
2. "Cold War crises tended to improve superpower relations rather than damage them." Discuss.
3. Evaluate the impact of two Cold War crises on superpower tensions.

Chapter 31: The impact of the Cold War on two countries

Summary of events

Section 12 includes a theme on the economic, social and cultural impact of the Cold War on specific countries. Paper 2 questions regularly ask candidates to examine the impact of the Cold War on two countries from different regions. This chapter provides a short comparative framework for Cuba and Vietnam, the two non-European cases treated in detail in this book, organised along the economic, social and cultural axes the IB syllabus specifies.

Key questions addressed in this chapter

1. How did Cold War alignments shape the economic development of Cuba and Vietnam?
2. What were the social consequences of Cold War entanglement for each country?
3. How did the Cold War shape the cultural orientation of Cuba and Vietnam?

31.1 Economic impact

The Cold War reshaped Cuba's economy through the combination of the American embargo and the Soviet subsidy. The embargo, initially imposed in 1960 and made comprehensive in 1962, cut Cuba off from its natural trading partner and forced a complete reorientation toward the Soviet bloc. Soviet purchases of Cuban sugar at prices above world market levels and supplies of oil at prices below world market levels subsidised the Cuban economy at an estimated five billion dollars per year by the 1980s. The Special Period of the early 1990s, triggered by the end of Soviet subsidies, produced a thirty-five per cent contraction of Cuban GDP, illustrating how comprehensively the Cold War had structured the Cuban economy.

Vietnam's economic trajectory was shaped even more severely by the Cold War. Two decades of warfare from 1945 to 1975 devastated the country, killed approximately three million people, and destroyed much of the agricultural and industrial infrastructure. The communist victory in 1975 produced initial attempts at Soviet-style central planning that aggravated the post-war crisis. The Doi Moi reforms of 1986 introduced market mechanisms while maintaining communist political control, producing the economic recovery that has continued into the present. Both countries illustrate how sustained Cold War entanglement can reshape the fundamental economic structure of small states.

31.2 Social impact

The Cold War transformed social structures in both countries. In Cuba, the revolution produced dramatic improvements in healthcare, education and racial equality that have made Cuban social indicators competitive with developed countries despite low per capita incomes. The legal transformation of women's position through the FMC and the Family Code was profound. But Cold War alignment also produced the waves of emigration, from the Mariel boatlift of 1980 to the Special Period balseros, that have created a permanent Cuban diaspora of approximately two million people, one in six of the island's population.

In Vietnam, the war itself produced massive social dislocation. Approximately three million Vietnamese were killed. Millions more were displaced internally. The boat people crisis after 1975 produced approximately one million refugees. Agent Orange defoliation affected approximately four million Vietnamese and produced

continuing health problems. The Doi Moi reforms have driven rapid urbanisation and the growth of a consumer society, transforming a war-ravaged agrarian country into a middle-income economy within a generation.

31.3 Cultural impact

The cultural orientations of both countries reflect their Cold War positions. Cuba's alignment with the Soviet bloc produced socialist realist cultural norms that competed with older Catholic and Afro-Cuban traditions. Cuban cinema under ICAIC, the Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry, produced internationally recognised work. The embargo's cultural isolation was partially offset by Cuba's engagement with Latin American literature and music, and Havana remained a significant cultural centre despite economic isolation.

Vietnam's cultural inheritance was shaped by both the French colonial period and the Soviet alignment that followed communist victory. Doi Moi has opened the country to Western and East Asian cultural influences, producing a hybrid cultural space that combines communist political rhetoric with consumer aspirations. The war remains the central memory of Vietnamese national identity, and the regime's legitimacy rests substantially on its role as the victor of the independence struggle.

Chapter summary

The Cold War reshaped the economies, societies and cultures of Cuba and Vietnam in distinctive ways. Cuba combined Soviet subsidy with American embargo to produce a socialist state with exceptional social indicators but economic stagnation. Vietnam combined decades of war with post-1975 communist rule and post-1986 market reforms to produce a rapidly modernising economy that retains communist political control. Both cases illustrate how sustained Cold War entanglement can structure the fundamental trajectory of a small state.

Questions

1. Examine the economic impact of the Cold War on two countries from different regions.
2. Compare and contrast the social impact of the Cold War on two countries.
3. Evaluate the cultural impact of the Cold War on Cuba.

Chapter 32: Practice questions for Section 12 with worked answers

Summary of events
This chapter provides three worked answers to representative Paper 2 Section 12 questions. Each worked answer demonstrates the thematic organisation, the PEEL(P) paragraph structure, the deployment of priority historians and the judgment techniques required for the top mark band.

32.1 Worked answer. To what extent did ideology rather than economic interests lead to the breakdown of the Grand Alliance between 1943 and 1949

Plan. The question asks for a degree on a spectrum. Address the named factor, ideology, first, then economic interests, then other factors, and conclude with a considered judgement.

Thesis. Ideology was a significant but not the most significant factor in the breakdown of the Grand Alliance, with both economic interests and security calculations playing substantial complementary roles.

Paragraph 1. Ideology as a genuine driver. Stalin's Marxist framework. Truman's belief that communism was expansionist. Paragraph 2. Economic interests as drivers. American interest in open markets. Soviet interest in reparations and security zones. Paragraph 3. Security and fear as independent drivers. Both sides responding to perceived threats. Paragraph 4. Assessment. Ideology shaped perception of economic interests and security threats, making its causal role indirect but pervasive. Conclusion. Ideology was significant but not uniquely decisive.

32.2 Worked answer. Compare and contrast the causes and consequences of two Cold War crises, each chosen from a different region

Pairing chosen. The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962 and the Hungarian Revolution 1956, satisfying the two-region rule with the Americas and Europe.

Plan. Thesis. Both crises were responses to superpower challenges but diverged sharply in their consequences, with Cuba producing arms control agreements and Hungary entrenching Soviet bloc coercion. Paragraph 1. Causes compared. Khrushchev's strategic motivation for Cuba, Soviet bloc response to de-Stalinisation in Hungary. Paragraph 2. Course compared. Thirteen days of brinkmanship in Cuba, two weeks of revolutionary upsurge and Soviet military response in Hungary. Paragraph 3. Immediate consequences compared. Cuba produced the hotline and the PTBT, Hungary produced two thousand five hundred deaths and the Kádár regime. Paragraph 4. Long-term consequences compared. Cuba reinforced nuclear caution, Hungary established the principle that Soviet bloc departure would be suppressed by force, a principle that lasted until Gorbachev renounced it. Conclusion. Similarities in the Soviet-initiated character and the narrowly averted wider war, differences in the long-term trajectory they produced.

32.3 Worked answer. Evaluate the role of Mikhail Gorbachev in ending the Cold War

Plan. Thesis. Gorbachev's role was decisive but not the sole factor, and the end of the Cold War resulted from the interaction of Gorbachev's individual agency with the structural decay of the Soviet economy and the sustained Western pressure that Reagan inherited from his predecessors. Paragraph 1. Gorbachev's individual role. New Political Thinking, INF, Sinatra Doctrine, non-intervention in 1989. Paragraph 2. Structural economic decay as precondition. Kotkin's argument that the system was unsustainable. Paragraph 3. Western pressure as accelerator. Reagan's military spending, SDI, support for anti-Soviet insurgencies. Paragraph 4. The synthesis. Structural pressure created the crisis Gorbachev inherited, Western policy accelerated the pressure, and Gorbachev's choices determined the peaceful form of the collapse. Conclusion. A synthesis of agency and structure, with Gorbachev as decisive but not alone.

Chapter summary

The three worked answers demonstrate how the PEEL(P) paragraph, the priority historian bank and the thematic organisation can be combined into top-band Paper 2 Section 12 essays. Candidates should be able to write similar plans and worked paragraphs for any plausible Section 12 question by applying the same techniques.

PART IV: EXAMINATION PREPARATION

Chapter 33: PEEL(P) worked examples by command term

Summary of events
The PEEL(P) paragraph is the workhorse of a top-band Paper 2 essay. This chapter provides a worked PEEL(P) paragraph for each of the six most common command terms, using content drawn from Sections 10 and 12. Together with the worked paragraphs embedded in the leader chapters and the comparative chapters, these examples give the candidate a library of models that can be adapted to any plausible Paper 2 question.

33.1 Evaluate

Question. Evaluate the aims and results of Stalin's economic policies.

Point. Stalin's economic policies achieved their primary aim of rapid industrialisation but failed in agricultural modernisation, producing a paradoxical outcome in which the Soviet Union emerged as a military superpower while its population remained materially deprived.

Evidence. Steel production rose from four million tonnes in 1928 to eighteen million tonnes in 1937. Coal production rose from thirty-five million tonnes to one hundred and twenty-eight million tonnes. Industrial output grew by approximately four hundred per cent across the decade. However collectivisation produced the Ukrainian famine of 1932 to 1933 with an estimated three to seven million deaths, and agricultural output per capita in 1939 was below the 1928 level.

Explanation. The industrial achievements were real and politically consequential because they provided the material basis for Soviet resistance to German invasion in 1941, but they were achieved through the deliberate extraction of resources from the countryside through forced procurement prices, resource transfers from consumption to investment, and the coerced labour of the Gulag system. Agricultural failure reflected the incompatibility of collective farms with the peasant mentality of individual property and the routine requisitioning of grain that destroyed incentive.

Link. Therefore the policies achieved their military industrial aims at the cost of agricultural collapse and mass death, a trade-off that the regime accepted but that future Soviet leaders would spend decades attempting to reverse.

Perspective. This interpretation aligns with Adam Tooze's argument in The Wages of Destruction that Soviet industrialisation was the necessary condition of victory over Nazi Germany. Robert Conquest treats the human cost as the defining feature that invalidates the policy claim to success, while Stephen Kotkin argues that the judgement depends on the counter-factual available to Stalin in 1928, and that the alternatives were worse. The evidence supports a synthesis in which the policies achieved narrow aims at costs their architects chose to accept.

33.2 To what extent

Question. To what extent was economic crisis the most significant factor in Hitler's rise to power?

Point. Economic crisis was the most significant factor in Hitler's rise to power, but only because it combined with the structural weakness of Weimar institutions and the miscalculation of conservative elites to produce the specific opportunity of January 1933.

Evidence. The Nazi vote rose from 2.6 per cent in May 1928 to 37.3 per cent in July 1932 as German unemployment rose from approximately one and a half million to approximately six million. Centre-party votes collapsed. Article 48 decree government from 1930 hollowed out parliamentary democracy. Papen's calculation in January 1933 that a three-Nazi cabinet could contain Hitler completed the transfer of power.

Explanation. Without the Depression, the NSDAP would have remained the marginal party of the 1928 elections. But the Depression alone would not have produced Hitler's chancellorship. The constitutional weakness that allowed Brüning, Papen and Schleicher to govern by decree, and the social miscalculation that placed Hitler in the chancellery with the expectation of control, were equally necessary conditions.

Link. Therefore economic crisis was the most significant of several necessary conditions, but the uniqueness of the Hitler outcome reflects the specific combination of these conditions rather than any one of them alone.

Perspective. Ian Kershaw treats the January 1933 decision as a catastrophic miscalculation by the conservative elite that would not have mattered without the economic crisis that had made Hitler politically available. Richard Evans places greater weight on the structural features of Weimar that made decree government possible. The evidence supports the synthesis that multiple factors combined to produce the outcome, with the Depression the single most important but not sufficient alone.

33.3 Discuss

Question. "Cold War crises tended to improve superpower relations rather than damage them." Discuss.

Point. Superpower relations sometimes improved and sometimes worsened as a result of Cold War crises, with the net trajectory depending on whether the crisis produced mutual understanding or entrenched mistrust.

Evidence. The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 produced the Moscow-Washington hotline, the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 and the first serious arms control framework, improving relations. The Berlin Blockade of 1948 to 1949 produced NATO and accelerated the division of Europe, worsening relations. The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 entrenched the Brezhnev Doctrine and deepened Soviet bloc isolation. The Suez Crisis of 1956 transferred Western leadership to Washington and enabled Soviet gains in the Middle East.

Explanation. The crises that improved superpower relations were those in which both sides confronted the possibility of catastrophic war and stepped back, producing agreements designed to prevent recurrence. The crises that worsened relations were those in which one side extended its sphere of influence without provoking decisive counter-action, creating the conditions for further competition in adjacent theatres.

Link. Therefore the claim that Cold War crises improved superpower relations is partially true but does not hold across the full set of crises, and the pattern reflects the specific balance of risks and gains in each case.

Perspective. John Lewis Gaddis in We Now Know argues that the Cuban Missile Crisis was the turning point after which neither superpower was willing to risk direct confrontation, a reading that supports the improvement thesis. Vladislav Zubok's A Failed Empire emphasises the persistence of Soviet ideological commitment to eventual victory, which sustained the competitive dynamic even after Cuba. The evidence supports a qualified agreement with the statement, with improvement specifically in the direct superpower dimension and worsening specifically in the proxy dimensions of client state competition.

33.4 Compare and contrast

Question. Compare and contrast the methods used to maintain power in two authoritarian states, each chosen from a different region.

Pairing chosen. Stalin and Castro, satisfying the two-region rule with Europe and the Americas.

Point. Both Stalin and Castro maintained power through the combination of a single party, a pervasive security apparatus and a cult of personality, but they diverged sharply in the scale of coercion, with Stalin's regime relying on mass terror while Castro's relied on institutional incorporation.

Evidence. Stalin's NKVD executed approximately seven hundred and fifty thousand people in the Great Terror of 1937 to 1938 and sent one and a half million to the Gulag. Castro's revolutionary tribunals executed approximately five hundred Batista officials in 1959 and maintained political prisoners in the hundreds to thousands thereafter. Both leaders built single parties, the CPSU and the PCC, that monopolised political life. Both built cults of personality that made them the personal embodiment of the revolution. But Castro's CDRs, established in 1960, functioned as participatory organisations as much as surveillance networks, involving approximately one third of Cuban adults in activities that ranged from vaccination drives to political monitoring.

Explanation. The difference in coercion scale reflects both the revolutionary contexts of the two regimes and the institutional choices their leaders made. Stalin consolidated inside an existing Soviet state where coercion had already been normalised by Leninist precedent. Castro consolidated in a smaller country where the American embargo functioned as an external enemy that legitimated the one-party state without requiring mass internal terror. The CDR model of participatory surveillance was an institutional innovation that Castro could afford because the scale of opposition was manageable through incorporation rather than extermination.

Link. Therefore both regimes used common instruments of single-party rule and personality cult, but the scale of coercion and the balance between coercion and incorporation differed sharply, reflecting the contextual differences of revolutionary Russia in the 1920s and revolutionary Cuba in the 1960s.

Perspective. Robert Conquest treats Stalinist terror as the defining feature of the regime, while Jorge Domínguez's institutionalist analysis of Cuba stresses the participatory dimension as the key to longevity. The comparative lesson is that authoritarian maintenance does not require a single formula, and that institutional innovation can substitute for mass coercion in contexts where the external enemy legitimises the one-party state.

33.5 Examine

Question. Examine the impact of propaganda on the consolidation of power in Nazi Germany.

Point. Propaganda was a central but not sufficient instrument of Nazi consolidation, operating through the Ministry of Public Enlightenment, the Reich Chamber of Culture and the Volksempfänger radio to saturate German cultural life, but its effectiveness depended on the prior elimination of competing institutions through legal and coercive means.

Evidence. Goebbels's Ministry was established on 13 March 1933, within six weeks of Hitler's appointment. The Reich Chamber of Culture was established in September 1933 and required compulsory membership for cultural producers. By 1939 approximately seventy per cent of German households owned a Volksempfänger, the highest rate in Europe. Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will of 1934 recorded the Nuremberg rally with technical brilliance. The Degenerate Art Exhibition of 1937 displayed forbidden modernist work alongside the

parallel Great German Art Exhibition of approved work.

Explanation. The propaganda apparatus functioned by separating the Hitler Myth from the realities of regime policy, producing a Führer cult that absorbed popular loyalty while Party officials absorbed popular frustration. Its effectiveness depended on the prior destruction of alternative media voices through the press laws of 1933, on the dissolution of trade unions that might have organised resistance, and on the SS-Gestapo apparatus that punished overt dissent. Without the legal destruction of Weimar pluralism, propaganda would have competed with alternative voices rather than dominating the public sphere.

Link. Therefore propaganda was a central instrument of Nazi consolidation but worked in concert with legal and coercive measures rather than substituting for them, and any assessment of its importance has to account for the prior transformations that made its monopoly possible.

Perspective. Ian Kershaw's The Hitler Myth argues that propaganda worked most powerfully when it matched popular expectations rather than when it imposed new ones, a finding that complicates the image of the Nazi propaganda machine as an omnipotent manipulator. Richard Evans's The Third Reich in Power stresses the interaction of propaganda with coercion. The evidence supports a reading in which propaganda was necessary but not sufficient, and in which its effectiveness depended on the specific Weimar pathologies that had produced the regime.

33.6 Analyse

Question. Analyse the methods by which Castro established and maintained authoritarian rule in Cuba.

Point. Castro established and maintained authoritarian rule through four interrelated methods, namely the elimination of organised opposition, the construction of a single-party institutional apparatus, the cult of personality around his guerrilla origins and the use of the American embargo as an external legitimating enemy.

Evidence. Revolutionary tribunals in 1959 executed approximately five hundred Batista officials. Huber Matos was imprisoned for twenty years in October 1959. The CDRs established in September 1960 reached approximately one third of Cuban adults. The ORI of 1961 became the PCC of 1965, the only legal party. Castro's television appearances, often lasting four to six hours, established him as the continuing physical presence of the revolution. The embargo, imposed from 1960 and comprehensive from 1962, provided the continuing external enemy that legitimised the one-party state.

Explanation. Each method reinforced the others. The elimination of opposition prevented organised challenges. The single-party apparatus channelled political energy into regime-approved forms. The cult of personality concentrated legitimacy in one individual whose physical presence could not be replicated by any successor. The embargo provided the continuing crisis rhetoric that justified suspension of normal political freedoms. Together these methods produced a regime that survived forty-nine years of one-man rule and has now survived an additional seventeen years under institutional successors.

Link. Therefore Castro's methods combined elimination, institutionalisation, charisma and external enmity into an integrated system that has proved more durable than most observers predicted at the beginning.

Perspective. Jorge Domínguez in Cuba: Order and Revolution argues that institutional construction was the decisive element, with the CDRs and PCC providing the participatory framework that enabled the regime to survive the Special Period. Irving Horowitz treats the coercive apparatus as central. The evidence supports Domínguez's institutional reading, particularly for the post-1991 period when the external enemy had weakened and the institutional apparatus carried the regime through economic catastrophe.

Chapter summary

The six worked paragraphs illustrate how the PEEL(P) structure can be adapted to each of the main command terms. A candidate who can produce paragraphs of this kind under examination conditions is within reach of the top mark band on any Paper 2 Section 10 or Section 12 question.

Chapter 34: Practice question bank for Sections 10 and 12

Summary of events
This chapter gathers practice questions written in the style of recent Paper 2 examinations (the wording is original to this book, while the command terms and scope follow the IB pattern), grouped by section and by theme, together with a mapping of each question onto the chapters of this book where the relevant material is developed. Candidates should attempt at least one plan per week in the final month before the examination.

34.1 Section 10 questions

Emergence theme

1. "Economic conditions were the main force shaping the emergence of authoritarian states." Discuss with reference to two authoritarian states. Chapters 8 to 13.
2. To what extent did social division, more than any other factor, bring about the emergence of authoritarian rule in two twentieth-century states from different regions? Chapters 8 to 13.
3. "The fragility of political systems was the single most important cause of the emergence of authoritarian states." Discuss with reference to two states. Chapters 8 to 13.
4. Compare and contrast how two authoritarian leaders from different regions achieved power. Chapters 8 to 12.
5. Examine the part played by individual leaders in the emergence of two authoritarian states. Chapters 8 to 12.

Consolidation theme

1. Compare and contrast the ways in which two authoritarian states from different regions maintained their hold on power. Chapters 8 to 12 and Chapter 14.
2. Examine how the foreign policies of two authoritarian states helped those regimes to stay in power. Chapters 8 to 12 and 14.
3. Evaluate the effect of domestic economic policy on the survival of two authoritarian regimes from different regions. Chapters 8 to 12 and 15.
4. Compare and contrast the role of force in keeping two authoritarian regimes in power. Chapters 8 to 12 and 14.
5. "Authoritarian states exercised complete control over their populations." With reference to two states, to what extent do you agree? Chapters 8 to 12 and 15.

Aims and results theme

1. Evaluate the effects of social policy in two authoritarian states. Chapters 8 to 12 and 15.
2. Examine how the policies of two authoritarian states affected women. Chapters 8 to 12 and 15.

3. "Authoritarian states often failed to reach the aims of their social and economic policies." Discuss with reference to one authoritarian state. Chapters 8 to 12.
4. Evaluate the effects of cultural policy in two authoritarian states. Chapters 8 to 12 and 15.
5. To what extent did two authoritarian leaders accomplish what they set out to do? Chapters 8 to 12.

34.2 Section 12 questions

Rivalry, mistrust and accord theme

1. To what extent was the breakdown of the Grand Alliance between 1943 and 1949 caused by economic interests rather than ideology? Chapter 18.
2. "The Grand Alliance broke down between 1943 and 1949 because of superpower rivalry in Europe and Asia." To what extent do you agree? Chapters 18 and 19.
3. "Mutual fear, not aggression, lay behind superpower rivalry between 1943 and 1949." To what extent do you agree? Chapter 18.
4. To what extent was the arms race the main reason the Cold War ended between 1980 and 1991? Chapters 25 and 26.
5. "Ideology was the decisive factor shaping Sino-Soviet relations between 1947 and 1979." To what extent do you agree? Chapters 19 and 24.

Leaders and nations theme

1. Examine how two leaders from different regions influenced the course of the Cold War. Chapters 8 to 12, 20 to 26.
2. Evaluate how Cold War tensions affected two countries from different regions. Chapter 31.
3. Compare and contrast how two Cold War leaders affected superpower tensions. Chapters 20 to 26.
4. Examine the economic effects of the Cold War on two countries from different regions. Chapter 31.

Cold War crises theme

1. Discuss how two Cold War crises from different regions affected the growth of superpower tensions. Chapter 30.
2. "Cold War crises tended to improve superpower relations rather than damage them." Discuss with reference to two crises from different regions. Chapters 20, 21, 30.
3. Evaluate the causes of two Cold War crises from different regions. Chapters 20 to 23 and 30.
4. Compare and contrast the consequences of two Cold War crises from different regions. Chapter 30.

Chapter summary

The bank of practice questions above covers the range of Paper 2 Section 10 and 12 questions. 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 35: Historiography quick reference

Summary of events
This chapter consolidates the historiography discussed throughout the book into a single reference that candidates can scan before the examination. Historians are grouped by section and by school, with the single most important argument summarised for each.

35.1 Section 10 historians

Lenin. Richard Pipes argues that the Bolshevik regime was authoritarian from its inception and that Leninism was the logical precursor of Stalinism. Sheila Fitzpatrick argues that October had genuine popular support and that War Communism was driven by Civil War necessity. Robert Service offers a biographical synthesis of Lenin as pragmatic authoritarian.

Stalin. Robert Conquest treats the Great Terror as Stalin's personally directed programme. Sheila Fitzpatrick and J. Arch Getty stress the role of local initiative and bureaucratic dynamics. Stephen Kotkin's post-archival synthesis combines Stalin's personal direction with social implementation. Oleg Khlevniuk's archival biography confirms the quotas Stalin personally approved.

Mussolini. Renzo De Felice argued for genuine popular consent between 1929 and 1936. R. J. B. Bosworth's concept of incomplete totalitarianism stresses the limits of fascist penetration. Emilio Gentile treats fascism as a political religion. Paul Corner's The Fascist Party and Popular Opinion argues that apparent consent was mostly fear and inertia. Robert Paxton provides the comparative framework in The Anatomy of Fascism.

Hitler. Ian Kershaw's working towards the Führer synthesises intentionalism and structuralism. Martin Broszat pioneered the polycratic analysis. Tim Mason's flight into war links economic pressure to foreign policy. Richard Evans provides the authoritative modern narrative. Adam Tooze shows the rearmament logic of the Nazi economy. Saul Friedländer integrates perpetrator and survivor accounts of the Holocaust.

Castro. Marifeli Pérez-Stable argues for genuine popular support based on social achievements. Irving Horowitz treats Cuba as a Soviet-style dictatorship. Jorge Domínguez provides the institutionalist analysis. Philip Brenner offers the dependency critique. Louis Pérez Jr. situates the Revolution in the longer history of Cuban nationalism.

35.2 Section 12 historians

Origins. John Lewis Gaddis in We Now Know restates the orthodox case emphasising Soviet responsibility, while his earlier work in The United States and the Origins of the Cold War is more post-revisionist. Vladislav Zubok in A Failed Empire uses Russian archives to show Stalin combining security concerns with ideological ambition. Melvyn Leffler in A Preponderance of Power stresses American structural power. Odd Arne Westad in The Global Cold War globalises the analysis.

Crises. Graham Allison's Essence of Decision on the Cuban Missile Crisis remains the standard analytical framework. Michael Dobbs's One Minute to Midnight uses archival material to document how close the crisis came to nuclear war. Charles Gati's Failed Illusions covers the Hungarian Revolution. Hope Harrison on Berlin 1961 stresses the East German role.

End of the Cold War. Archie Brown's The Gorbachev Factor gives Gorbachev the decisive role. Stephen Kotkin's Armageddon Averted stresses structural decay. John Lewis Gaddis's The Cold War: A New History emphasises Reagan's pressure. Robert Service's The End of the Cold War provides a balanced synthesis.

35.3 How to deploy historiography in forty-five minutes

A Paper 2 essay has time for two substantial Perspective elements and one brief reference in a third paragraph. The priority historians listed above are enough to populate both elements in any plausible question. Candidates should practise the three-sentence Perspective technique described in Chapter 6 until it becomes automatic, so that the historiographical integration can be executed quickly under examination pressure.

Chapter summary

The priority historian bank for Section 10 and Section 12 is manageable in the time available for examination revision. Candidates should be able to name at least two historians per leader and per Cold War theme and to deploy their arguments in the PEEL(P) Perspective element. The reference above consolidates the historiography discussed through the book into a single scan-ready list.

Chapter 36: Key vocabulary glossary

Term	Meaning
Able Archer 83	The NATO command post exercise of November 1983 interpreted by Soviet intelligence as possibly covering a first strike
Acerbo Law	The 1923 Italian electoral reform guaranteeing two thirds of seats to the leading party
Anschluss	The 1938 incorporation of Austria into the Reich
April Theses	Lenin's 4 April 1917 programme rejecting cooperation with the Provisional Government
Autarky	Economic self-sufficiency, pursued by Nazi Germany and fascist Italy
Aventine Secession	The 1924 Italian opposition walkout after the Matteotti murder
Batista	The Cuban dictator overthrown in 1959
Bay of Pigs	The April 1961 failed American-backed invasion of Cuba
Belavezha Accords	The December 1991 agreement dissolving the USSR
Berlin Blockade	The 1948 to 1949 Soviet closure of land routes to West Berlin
Berlin Wall	The barrier constructed on 13 August 1961 dividing Berlin until November 1989
Biennio Rosso	The two red years of 1919 to 1920 in Italy
Brest-Litovsk	The March 1918 peace treaty between the Bolsheviks and Germany
Brezhnev Doctrine	The 1968 principle that the USSR would intervene to preserve socialism in bloc states
CDR	Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, the Cuban neighbourhood surveillance bodies
Cheka	The Bolshevik secret police
Cold War	The superpower rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union from 1945 to 1991
Cominform	The Communist Information Bureau established in September 1947
Concordat	A treaty between a state and the Holy See, as in the 1929 Lateran Pacts and the 1933 Nazi concordat
Containment	The American strategic doctrine of preventing Soviet expansion
Corporatism	The economic doctrine of fascist Italy organising the economy into joint corporations
Cuban Missile Crisis	The October 1962 confrontation over Soviet missiles in Cuba
Détente	The 1969 to 1979 reduction of superpower tensions
Doi Moi	The 1986 Vietnamese market reforms
Dolchstoßlegende	The stab-in-the-back myth used against German democratic politicians

Term	Meaning
Dopolavoro	The fascist leisure organisation
Enabling Act	The 23 March 1933 German statute authorising Hitler to legislate without the Reichstag
Estado Novo	Salazar's authoritarian regime in Portugal (context reference, not main case)
Falange	The Spanish fascist movement (context reference)
Family Code	The 1975 Cuban legislation requiring spouses to share housework
Five Year Plan	The Soviet central economic plan
Four-Year Plan	The 1936 Nazi rearmament plan under Göring
Führer	The Nazi title for Hitler as personal leader
G2	The Cuban state security apparatus
Gleichschaltung	The Nazi coordination of institutions under party control
Glasnost	Gorbachev's policy of openness
Grand Alliance	The wartime coalition of the United States, United Kingdom and Soviet Union
Great Terror	The 1936 to 1938 Stalinist purge
Gulag	The Soviet forced labour camp system
Helsinki Final Act	The 1975 pan-European agreement including human rights commitments
Holodomor	The Ukrainian famine of 1932 to 1933
Iron Curtain	Churchill's 1946 metaphor for the European division
KdF	Kraft durch Freude, the Nazi leisure organisation
Khrushchev Secret Speech	The February 1956 denunciation of Stalin
Korenizatsiya	The 1920s Soviet policy of indigenisation in non-Russian republics
Kulak	The arbitrarily defined Soviet category of prosperous peasant
Lateran Pacts	The 1929 treaty and concordat between Italy and the Holy See
Lebensraum	The Nazi doctrine of living space through territorial expansion eastward
Lublin Committee	The Soviet-backed Polish provisional government of 1944
Mariel boatlift	The 1980 Cuban emigration wave of approximately 125,000 people
Marshall Plan	The American economic aid programme for European recovery
Matteotti crisis	The 1924 Italian political crisis following the murder of the socialist deputy
Mefo bills	The disguised German government bonds used to fund Nazi rearmament
Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact	The August 1939 Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact
Moncada	The 26 July 1953 attack on the Batista army barracks
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, established April 1949
NEP	The Bolshevik New Economic Policy of March 1921

Term	Meaning
New Political Thinking	Gorbachev's foreign policy doctrine
Night of the Long Knives	The 30 June 1934 Nazi purge of the SA leadership
NKVD	The Soviet secret police from 1934
Non-Aligned Movement	The 1961 coalition of states refusing formal alignment with either superpower
Nuremberg Laws	The September 1935 Nazi racial legislation
October Revolution	The 25 to 26 October 1917 Bolshevik seizure of power
OVRA	The fascist Italian secret police
PCC	The Communist Party of Cuba, the only legal party from 1965
PEEL(P)	The school paragraph model with Point, Evidence, Explanation, Link and Perspective
Perestroika	Gorbachev's programme of economic restructuring
Potsdam Conference	The July to August 1945 meeting of Truman, Stalin and Attlee
Prague Spring	The 1968 Czechoslovak reform movement crushed by Warsaw Pact invasion
Proxy war	A conflict in which the superpowers support opposing sides without fighting directly
Reichstag Fire Decree	The 28 February 1933 suspension of German civil liberties
Sandinistas	The Nicaraguan revolutionary movement that took power in 1979
Sinatra Doctrine	Gorbachev's 1989 informal renunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine
Socialism in One Country	Stalin's 1925 doctrine of building socialism inside the USSR
Solidarity	The Polish independent trade union founded in 1980
SS	The Nazi Schutzstaffel under Himmler
Stakhanov	The Soviet shock worker lending his name to the productivity campaign of 1935
Suez Crisis	The October to November 1956 Anglo-French-Israeli operation against Egypt
Tehran Conference	The November 1943 meeting of the Big Three
Tet Offensive	The January 1968 Vietnamese communist offensive
Truman Doctrine	The March 1947 American commitment to support free peoples resisting subjugation
UMAP	The Cuban forced labour camps of 1965 to 1968
Vietnamisation	Nixon's strategy of transferring combat to the South Vietnamese army
Volksgemeinschaft	The racially defined national community of Nazi ideology
War Communism	The coercive Bolshevik economic regime of 1918 to 1921
Warsaw Pact	The Soviet bloc military alliance established in May 1955
Wannsee Conference	The 20 January 1942 coordination of the Final Solution
Yalta Conference	The February 1945 meeting of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin
Zhdanovshchina	The post-war Soviet cultural purge

End of the book. Good luck on the examination.