



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

October 2020

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In Politics (9PL0/3B)

Paper 3 : Comparative Politics – Global
Politics

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Introduction

The October Global Politics examination was attempted by a far smaller number of students than previous series, which was to be expected. There was, as usual, a real range of responses. There was some evidence that centres and students were recognising the importance of covering the relevant Assessment Objectives in each question and it was pleasing to note that a number of candidates were able, in the longer responses, to move beyond AO1 to significant coverage of AO2 and AO3. These candidates were, of course, well rewarded. This report moves to a concentration on the individual questions with extracts from scripts used to illustrate a number of points and concludes with a few pieces of advice for future examinations in order to help to raise achievement.

1a

Question 1a was the more popular of the two short questions in Section A with most students able to make clear the basic differences between hyperglobalists and globalisation sceptics. There were some excellent examples, including contemporary ones in support of analysis.

Most students linked clearly the hyperglobaliser perspective to Liberal thinkers and the Liberal school and they linked Globalisation sceptics with Realist thinkers and the Realist perspective. Knowledge and understanding progressed with the assertion that hyperglobalisers believe that globalisation drives an integrated global economy and that sovereignty has become less relevant with the demise of the nation state. Stronger responses provided greater explanation and analysis with exploration of the emergence of a globally dominant Western economic model, often with explanation linked to the emergence of the IMF, W Bank and WTO and explanation of the impact of economic, cultural and political globalisation.

The following extract is an example of a script keen to explain the contribution of, in this example, Liberal thinkers in their analysis of the difference between hyperglobalisers and globalisation sceptics.

Globalisation is outlined by political and liberal thinker
Barthiat who said that "if Goods don't cross borders, weapons
will" which is the fundamental aspect of economic ~~interconnected~~
interconnectedness (created by Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane)
that Hyperglobalists favour. This means that by increasing
trade links and alliances, for example facilitated by the
Rome treaty with the EU, globalisation can prevent conflict
between states. Furthermore, through political integration such as
the increase of liberal democracies, which ^{has been} ~~is~~ over half
of the world since 2006, ~~this~~ this would further prevent
conflict, which hyperglobalists believe. This is based on
Fukuyama's concept of the world, coupled with Kant's
theory of peace, therefore stating that Political Globalisation
also prevents conflict. Therefore one can argue that Hyperglobalists
believe that globalisation in all its forms essentially work
to prevent conflict.

Knowledge of Globalisation sceptics tended to focus on assertions that country borders are no less important than they have been previously with regionalism more of a development than globalisation. There were developed responses where examples were used in support of the idea that states remain sovereign in a largely anarchical system and examples such as the one used below, show how this was illustrated with the example of international organisations effectiveness.

Finally both hyper globalisers and sceptics are divided over the role of intergovernmental organisations.

Hyper globalists like ~~the~~ Ohmae argue that as IGOs have more say ~~in~~ in economic ~~and~~ and political affairs than states alone because ultimately ~~the~~ their fortunes are inextricably linked (Keohane). As a result IGOs are regarded as a forum for discussion and even policy making as highlighted in the COVID-19 crisis where WHO recommended all member states to 'test, test, test' and this has become the global strategy. Sceptics argue that IGOs are a danger to their state.

Question 1b was the less popular of the two questions that make up Section A but was still attempted by a decent proportion of the students who sat this examination. A number of students appeared to struggle to be able to examine both the political and also the economic factors which was clearly important in this question.

Stronger responses tended to clearly identify how political and economic factors have led to regionalism. Students often discussed how economic regionalism had acted as a movement for economic benefit for states either in accessing new markets or as a united defence against economically powerful states. Stronger responses were able to provide a more detailed analysis of how, for example, the EU single market had provided growth and prosperity for member states since its creation and the economic focus in other regional bodies such as NAFTA, Mercosur and the African Union. The EU was the most commonly used regional body when students wished to illustrate how regional bodies could stand as effective economic blocs against major states such as the United States and China. Students generally appeared able to explore all of the benefits of EU integration as seen in the example below.

each other for trade. Regionalism creates a system where there can be a decrease in trade barriers. For example, the European Union is the largest single market in the world, with member states having no tariffs on imports and exports from other member states. State's desires to promote economic stability also contributes to this. For example, the EMU was set up to stop fluctuations between interest

And also in this example

For freedoms' of goods, service, capital and people, which benefits all members and their economies, as they don't have to pay extra tariffs for trading in their regional bloc.

Political regionalism tended to focus on the collaboration and cooperation between member states in regional bodies, particularly where those member states tended to share and wish to protect common values. Examples such as the Arab League were used by some students. There was some illustration of this with reference to how the EU tends to focus on common values such as democracy, the rule of law and human rights protection. There was also an explanation that security concerns often led to a development of a common political stance to ensure a degree of protection for members as referenced in this extract.

the world. Politically, there are many factors that have led to regionalism. One of those factors are because of a desire to have national security. This has led to organisations such as the EU, ASEAN, APEC etc. Most importantly, NATO is a military organisation that assures national security via its

Question 2 prompted some excellent examples with pleasing knowledge and analysis. Unfortunately some responses missed the opportunity to make synoptic points and consequently failed to access Level 4 as is made clear in the mark scheme.

Stronger responses were able to explain the concept of the security dilemma and how states are expected to attempt to increase their security in a largely anarchical system. Candidates explained how this is done by developing new weapons capabilities and how this may lead to instability as other states take similar action through suspicion which inevitably leads to increased tension and war. Stronger responses tended to be able to provide a depth of analysis on how spending on military capability is a central aspect of almost all states, particularly where there is distrust of institutions that attempt to provide collective security. There were a number of students able to use historic and contemporary examples in analysis and development of explanation linked to the security dilemma.

Complex interdependence was well understood by most students and it was particularly pleasing to note where students could clearly explain and analyse how complex interdependence is considered by some to make war less likely. Some students were able to explain the role played by regional and global interconnected institutions such as the United Nations and WTO as well as by economics and other factors.

Liberals however, with the concept of complex interdependence, argue that the development of global cooperation through international institutions such as the UN ~~is~~ results in sustained peace and harmony in global relations. It is the belief that as countries become more and more interconnected and interdependent through economic, ~~or~~ politics and culture via the aspects of globalisation and trade assisted by the supranational organisations and multinational businesses - it is not in any states national interest to go to war with each other as it

Complex interdependence is clearly part of the far more optimistic, liberal, view of global politics which clearly contrasts with the realist perspective. The extract below is an example of this

... differ greatly. Where realists see man as a 'greedy, insatiable monster,' (Machiavelli), liberals counter this negative portrayal by arguing that man is inherently altruistic and cooperative.^(Hobbes) The realist's view of humanity informs their take on security: conflict is inevitable because humans inherently crave power and security and will obtain it through war if need be. Liberals, on the other hand, seek out complex interdependence as a solution to this fear because they believe that with the availability of discussion channels and forums, people (thus nations) will naturally co-operate and

The most common synoptic links were between realists and some conservatives on human nature as seen in the brief example below

Realist ^{international} political theory ^{evolves from} ~~perhaps~~ ⁽¹¹⁴⁾ pessimistic perception of human nature. Niccolò Machiavelli once stated "The human kind are in general fickle, hypocritical and greedy for gain". This notion was echoed by conservatives such as Thomas Hobbes who argued that individuals and states

Question 3a was the most popular of the questions tackled by students in Section C of the examination paper. Stronger responses tended to cover a range of both human rights and economic global governance institutions whereas weaker responses tended to struggle to provide any detail or even identify the major global governance institutions.

Students often gave examples of the actions of the IMF, WTO and W Bank and made clear the significance of the fact that they have almost universal membership which leads to the evaluation that states clearly consider these institutions to be of significance and therefore appear to have a particular concern about economic issues. Some students went further and explained the dominance of the most significant states in the economic institutions such as G7 and considered this to be further evidence of the focus on economic issues along with the attempt by less powerful states to counter their power through the establishment of regional bodies with an economic focus.

A convincing argument was that states are more willing to accept and support economic issues rather than human rights issues as the latter is seen as having a more significant impact on state sovereignty

Arguably, one of the main reasons for this is the impact on state sovereignty, and consequently the ease with which policies can be applied. Economic global governance doesn't seek to establish a global standard for economic prosperity but merely ways in which the global economy can prosper. Through the establishment of international institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, states that are struggling or developing are ~~also~~ provided with an opportunity to ~~grow~~ grow and therefore improve the global economic system without infringing on the internal sovereign affairs. By contrast in order to establish an international standard of human rights, there would naturally be an infringement on the sovereignty of certain states. The most prominent example

There was, with stronger students, a pleasing knowledge of human rights bodies such as the special tribunals and the International Criminal Court and plenty of examples of human rights concern and actions as well as counter arguments. Students tended to make the point that concern for human rights has increased in more recent years and made the point that these recent developments and concern suggests that human rights protection and governance appears to have moved above or in relation to other issues such as economic in the global agenda. R2P was evidenced by a number of students to support this view and a good number of students further supported this position with reference to the growing concern for soft power in global politics and the desire to be seen to be concerned about the right things ie human rights. Students were equally keen to set out the limitations of human rights global governance and the failings of institutions such as the ICC.

to account. The ICC is where most should be held to account for crimes against humanity and genocide, however the court is severely limited, states choose to sign up or not and choose whether or not to recognise the court as legitimate. Omar Al-Bashir was not held to account by the court.

3b

Question 3b was the second most popular question tackled by students in this section of the examination paper. There was a real variety in the quality of what was produced with some students sticking closely to the specific question whilst weaker responses tended to discuss the role of the United Nations without relating it to the use of soft or hard power.

The ability of the United Nations to bring states to cooperate and to attract and co-opt as an alternative to the use of hard power, particularly in the nuclear age, was discussed by some candidates although that was balanced by recent examples of states preferring to use hard power with particular reference to the actions of Putin and Trump in undermining the soft power strength of the United Nations. Many students felt that the increased desire of states to gain soft power status in the United Nations and their determination to achieve goals through persuasion and negotiation in the United Nations meant that the United Nations had indeed made soft power more significant than hard power in global politics. Some students linked this to liberal theory.

Furthermore, when considering the theoretical side of the importance of IGOs, especially the UN as it is on such a big global scale, it essentially strengthens the interconnectedness of states, which prevents conflict and thus hard power to be used. This ^{interconnectedness} was established by many liberal theorists, such as Joseph Nye, Robert Keohane, and Basit, however most notably (and suitably) that of Immanuel Kant. ~~He~~ He established that IGOs play a significant role in preventing conflict due to facilitating diplomacy, ~~the~~ according to his triangle of peace. By seeing a rise in the UN, as an IGO, conflict and ^{the} demand for the use of hard power has been on decline - most importantly since the Second World War, ^{in 1945} after which the UN was created in order to prevent this. Therefore, when considering Kant's peace theory, one can see how the UN emphasises the significance of soft power as it essentially prevents conflict, and thus the need to use hard power.

The counter argument tended to focus on a series of arguments which included that the Security Council seems to recognise and reward five states who all have a degree of hard power in global politics. It was also felt that the United Nations can and occasionally does sanction the use of hard power and some examples were used including that of the Gulf War and Korean War. There was also some desire to make clear that Russian actions in Ukraine/Crimea as well as in Georgia showed that hard power was still a legitimate route for certain states and that soft power status and use in global institutions like the UN is not as significant as some may think.

Here is such an example.

its ability to work. This was evident when the US decided to unilaterally invade Iraq in 2003, as ~~they were~~ part of the War on Terror, as they were not willing to wait for the UNSC's investigators to finish. This demonstrates the US' use of ~~hard power~~ of military power to act in their own best interests - an approach realists would agree with due to the clash of

And a further example

This again highlights the influence soft power has in the modern world. However, it is not always effective, and in fact highly depends on the position of the state. For example, Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 is the perfect example that those ~~to~~ countries which possess extensive hardpower can do as they please and not take notice of international condemnation. Therefore this shows that although soft power may be effective in some cases, it is ultimately the possession of hardpower which matters.

3c

Question 3c was the least popular question tackled by students in this section of the examination paper and was tackled by only a small number of students. Those students who decided to tackle this question tended to focus on a few themes. Primarily they considered the extent to which the world remained unipolar and the extent to which

the USA remained the global hegemon. There was also some discussion about the extent to which states remained sovereign in the modern era.

The majority felt that the United States did indeed remain the global hegemon and some argued that the world remained unipolar with the United States significantly more powerful, economically, militarily and culturally than any other state or collection of states. Some disagreed and discussed the rise of China and a resurgent Russia as well as the growing significance of the European Union, Brexit and recession aside.

Example

Furthermore, in an economic sense, China's rapid growth of GDP and vast economic size, has also pushed the state system and world order towards bipolarity and thus it has changed since 2000. For example, China's ~~impressive~~ growth, due to their economic growth have been able to 'invest' in African countries and their economy is growing so fast that ~~it is~~ their GDP is scheduled to overtake USA's in the next few years. This would've been a ~~scarcely~~ scarcely imaginable thought back in 2000 when

Further example

~~Since the~~ The USA's status of hegemony can be argued to have remained in the 21st century, based on its unrivalled military power, its soft and hard power influence and its economic might as the world's largest economy. However, it is undeniably clear that the era of unipolarity is over due to the rise of non-state actors, such as ISIS, and the emerging power of China, since the 2000s. China's ^{rapidly} growing economy, military power

Some students were of the view that the states, values and institutions which were dominant in 2000 remained dominant today. Counter arguments tended to focus on the process of globalisation and the extent to which it had weakened state sovereignty. A number of students also felt that the events of September 11th and the response to it had transformed the world with some discussion of the perceived clash of civilizations which had followed the events.

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

It was pleasing to note the use of contemporary examples to support analysis in Section A and B and in support of analysis and evaluation in Section C of the paper

Many of the stronger Section C, 30 mark responses tended to provide a clear sense of direction in introductions which can include definitions/explanations of key terms and key points for discussion that are likely to follow.

Quotes can be very useful but not in isolation. Make clear the relevance of a quote.

Reference back to the title usually ensures that a response is on target and remains relevant.

Beware the temptation to explain all that you know rather than what is actually relevant to the specific question being asked.

