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| <b>Edexcel – AS GCE<br/>Unit 1: Historical<br/>Themes in Breadth<br/>Option D</b> | <b>D1<br/>Crises, Tensions and Political<br/>Divisions in China, 1900–49</b> | <b>Essay Question</b> |
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## Examiner's Specific Advice

Unit 1 essays require a series of skills. These include focusing on the specific requirements of the question, selecting appropriate and detailed historical knowledge, and analysis and evaluation.

First, it is important to understand what the question is asking. For example, does the question implicitly or explicitly refer to a specific time period? You should also consider the topic that the question is addressing. Finally, you should consider the 'key concept' raised by the question. The key concept could be causation, consequence, continuity, change or significance.

Secondly, you will need to make a series of points supported by detailed historical knowledge. It is also important that this knowledge is relevant to the question.

Thirdly, you must avoid telling the story of the events you are covering. A better approach is to break down, or analyse, the events. This could be done by arranging your information thematically rather than chronologically.

Finally, it is important to deal correctly with the 'key concept'. For example, in a question addressing causation, you must explain explicitly how the factors you have discussed caused the event in question. On the other hand, in a question regarding significance, you must weigh the different factors and reach an overall judgement.

## Exemplar Question

How far do you agree that the failings of the GMD were the main reason for the victory of the CCP in the Chinese Civil War, 1945–1949?

**[30 marks]**

## Planning Your Response

In this question, the topic is the Chinese Civil War, and the 'key concept' is causation, specifically why the CCP won.

In order to evaluate the reasons for the CCP victory, it is necessary to consider a range of factors, starting with the failings of the GMD but also incorporating the strengths of the CCP and outside factors such as international intervention. At the end of the essay, you must reach a judgement about why the CCP won the Chinese Civil War. It is important that this judgement considers the extent to which GMD failings were responsible, not just whether or not they were responsible.

One possible way of structuring an answer to this question would be:

- Introduction: list the factors you are going to discuss and provide a brief answer to the question
- GMD failings
- CCP strengths
- International intervention
- Military tactics and resources
- Conclusion

### **Examiner's Exemplar Answer 1**

In 1921, following the Communist Revolution in Russia, representatives of Comintern were sent to China to establish a Communist Party there. The most famous leader of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was Mao Zedong, known as Chairman Mao. In his youth, he had been attracted to anarchism, but also revered Imperial China. Both of these aspects were reflected in his leadership of the CCP. In 1921, the CCP voted to form an alliance with the Nationalists (GMD), but in 1927 Chiang Kaishek, the leader of the GMD, metaphorically stabbed the Communists in the back, forcing them to go on the Long March, which saved the CCP from destruction. They formed an alliance again during the Second World War in order to defeat the Japanese. However, once the war was over, in 1945, the civil war began again. But how far were the failings of the GMD the main reason for the victory of the CCP in the Chinese Civil War, 1945–1949 (1)?

The main failing of the GMD was Chiang Kaishek's leadership style. Chiang was known for his mistrustful nature. For example, he did not trust many members of the GMD. He was permanently tense and very suspicious of those who surrounded him. Even members of the GMD that he had promoted were under suspicion. Chiang's suspicions may have been based on the assassination of Song Jiaoren, an event which happened in 1913 on a train. Political violence was not uncommon in China and therefore this may explain the continual suspicion felt by Chiang (2).

On the other hand, the CCP had many strengths. For example, Mao was a much better leader than Chiang. Mao had good relationships with his most

(1) This introduction describes the background to the Chinese Civil War, and provides detailed examples of events prior to the War. However, it does not focus on the question posed and so the information cannot be credited.

(2) This paragraph directly addresses the question, but the information about the reasons for Chiang's distrust are not relevant to the argument.

trusted soldiers. The inner circle of the CCP had experienced the Long March together and therefore were good friends. Another advantage of the CCP was Mao's rules on how to treat the Chinese peasants. Members of the CCP were expected to treat them well, unlike the soldiers of the GMD. This meant that the peasants liked the CCP best (3).

Foreign intervention was of little help because although Mao was a Communist and received help from other Communist countries, the leaders of these countries did not trust Mao. For this reason, foreign help was half-hearted and cannot be considered a major reason for the CCP victory in the Chinese Civil War.

Finally, Mao had better tactics than Chiang. The size of Chiang's army meant that he had to fight a traditional war. On the other hand, Mao used guerrilla tactics which were much better.

In conclusion, the CCP was much stronger than the GMD, which was badly led and fought a traditional war. Therefore, GMD failings and CCP strengths were equally important in the CCP victory in the Chinese Civil War (4).

### **Examiner's Assessment**

This essay focuses on the question and is almost entirely accurate. However, it is extremely limited in terms of supporting material. A more detailed answer would score more highly. This essay would achieve Mid Level 3.

### **Examiner's Exemplar Answer 2**

The failures of the GMD were undoubtedly important in deciding the outcome of the Chinese Civil War. However, they do not on their own explain the reasons for the CCP victory. Rather, it was a combination of factors which include the GMD's weaknesses, the CCP's strengths, foreign intervention, and the military resources and tactics of both sides (5).

The most significant failing of the GMD was

(3) From this point on, the essay is focused on the question. However, it is very generalised, with minimal detail in the supporting examples.

(4) This conclusion does not reach an overall judgement. Instead it states that CCP strengths and GMD weaknesses were of equal importance, without justifying this claim.

(5) This is a strong introduction. It both focuses on the question and lists the factors that are to be discussed.

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Chiang Kaishek's paranoia. Chiang's suspicions of able Generals and Governors in the northern provinces meant that he sacked and demoted capable men in Manchuria and replaced them with less-able people who he trusted, from regions such as Kweiyang. Specifically, Zhang Xueliang – the Young Marshall – a highly gifted member of the GMD leadership, was kept under house arrest during the Civil War due to an incident of disloyalty in 1936. Additionally Chiang did not trust the reports of the GMD's spies within the CCP. They fed him useful information which he ignored due to his suspicions. Chiang's suspicious nature was an important factor in the failure of the GMD because it removed the most talented young leaders from the GMD's war effort.

By contrast, Mao Zedong was an inspirational leader. Unlike Chiang, Mao trusted his generals and therefore they were able to outwit the GMD on the battlefield. Lin Biao annihilated the GMD armies in Manchuria in just thirty-one hours. In addition, Mao fostered the support of China's peasants. He insisted that his soldiers pay peasants reparations for any livestock or property that they damaged, he also ordered them to treat women with respect and to dispose of human excrement well away from the peasants' homes, so as not to inconvenience them. This reaped rewards in 1948 when Deng Xioaping was able to call on the support of 2 million peasant soldiers to defeat GMD armies in Manchuria. In this way Mao cultivated the loyalty of those closest to him and the peasants and therefore was able to count on enormous support throughout the campaign.

Both the GMD and the CCP enjoyed foreign aid during the Civil War. The GMD were supported by the USA, who gave \$2 billion in aid to Chiang and the CCP were supplied with weapons by the USSR. In spite of this the foreign aid hindered both the GMD and the CCP. President Truman did not fully trust Chiang and the GMD and therefore refused to provide an extra loan of \$1.5 billion which could have decided the outcome of the Civil War. Similarly, Stalin did not trust Mao's military tactics. For example, Stalin ordered him to surrender areas of Manchuria in 1946 and in 1949 Stalin ordered Mao not to cross the Yangtze River. On both occasions Stalin's orders were counter productive. Foreign aid was of little help because the Americans did not provide enough when

Chiang really needed it and the Russia aid came with strings attached.

Finally, the resources and military tactics of both sides played a role in deciding the outcome. At the beginning of the war Chiang had a bigger army and more weapons. However, Mao used guerrilla tactics, encouraging his soldiers to retreat and disappear into the peasant regions rather than to meet the full force of Chiang's army head on. The PLA also launched surprise attacks on the most vulnerable parts of Chiang's army. Mao's tactics were important in winning the civil war because they undercut the size of Chiang's army and played to the strengths of the PLA (6).

In conclusion, the GMD's weaknesses were significant, but Mao's command of tactics, his treatment of the peasants and the way he treated his lieutenants were more significant, as they not only capitalised in Chiang's weaknesses, they also off set his strengths (7).

### **Examiner's Assessment**

This is a well-structured essay that focuses on the question throughout. In addition, it provides detailed supporting evidence, and reaches a reasoned judgement in its conclusion. Therefore, it is awarded Low Level 5. For a higher mark in Level 5, the argument of the conclusion would need to be integrated into the essay as a whole.

(6) The main body of the essay is well-structured, highly detailed and focuses on the question.

(7) This is a sophisticated conclusion which draws together different aspects of the essay in order to reach a reasoned judgement.

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How far do you agree that the failings of the GMD were the main reason for the victory of the CCP in the Chinese Civil War, 1945–1949?

**[30 marks]**

**Target: AO1a and AO1b**

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| <p><b>Level 1</b></p> | <p>Candidates will produce mostly simple statements. These will be supported by limited factual material which has some accuracy and relevance, although not directed at the focus of the question. The material will be mostly generalised. There will be few, if any, links between the simple statements.</p> <p><i>The qualities of Level 1 are securely displayed; material is convincing in range and depth consistent with Level 1. The writing may have limited coherence and will be generally comprehensible, but passages will lack both clarity and organisation. The skills needed to produce effective writing will not normally be present. Frequent syntactical and/or spelling errors are likely to be present.</i></p> <p><b>Low Level 1: 1–2 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 1 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>and</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>Mid Level 1: 3–4 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 1 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>or</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>High Level 1: 5–6 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 1 are securely displayed.</p> | <p><b>(1–6)</b></p> |
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| <p><b>Level 2</b></p> | <p>Candidates will produce a series of simple statements supported by some mostly accurate and relevant factual material. The analytical focus will be mostly implicit and there are likely to be only limited links between the simple statements. Material is unlikely to be developed very far.</p> <p><i>The writing will have some coherence and will be generally comprehensible, but passages will lack both clarity and organisation. Some of the skills needed to produce effective writing will be present. Frequent syntactical and/or spelling errors are likely to be present.</i></p> <p><b>Low Level 2: 7–8 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 2 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>and</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>Mid Level 2: 9–10 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 2 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>or</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>High Level 2: 11–12 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 2 are securely displayed.</p>   | <p><b>(7–12)</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Level 3</b></p> | <p>Candidates' answers will attempt analysis and will show some understanding of the focus of the question. They will, however, include material which is either descriptive, and thus only implicitly relevant to the question's focus, or which strays from that focus. Factual material will be accurate but it may lack depth and/or relevance in places.</p> <p><i>The writing will be coherent in places but there are likely to be passages which lack clarity and/or proper organisation. Only some of the skills needed to produce convincing extended writing are likely to be present. Syntactical and/or spelling errors are likely to be present.</i></p> <p><b>Low Level 3: 13–14 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 3 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>and</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>Mid Level 3: 15–16 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 3 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>or</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>High Level 3: 17–18 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 3 are securely displayed.</p> | <p><b>(13–18)</b></p> |

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| <p><b>Level 4</b></p> | <p>Candidates offer an analytical response which relates well to the focus of the question and which shows some understanding of the key issues contained in it. The analysis will be supported by accurate factual material which will be mostly relevant to the question asked. The selection of material may lack balance in places.</p> <p><i>The answer will show some degree of direction and control but these attributes may not be sustained throughout the answer. The candidate will demonstrate the skills needed to produce convincing extended writing but there may be passages which lack clarity or coherence. The answer is likely to include some syntactical and/or spelling errors.</i></p> <p><b>Low Level 4: 19–20 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 4 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>and</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>Mid Level 4: 21–22 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 4 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>or</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>High Level 4: 23–24 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 4 are securely displayed.</p> | <p><b>(19–24)</b></p> |
| <p><b>Level 5</b></p> | <p>Candidates offer an analytical response which directly addresses the focus of the question and which demonstrates explicit understanding of the key issues contained in it. It will be broadly balanced in its treatment of these key issues. The analysis will be supported by accurate, relevant and appropriately selected factual material which demonstrates some range and depth.</p> <p><i>The exposition will be controlled and the deployment logical. Some syntactical and/or spelling errors may be found but the writing will be coherent overall. The skills required to produce convincing extended writing will be in place.</i></p> <p><b>Low Level 5: 25–26 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 5 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>and</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>Mid Level 5: 27–28 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 5 are displayed, but material is less convincing in its range/depth <b>or</b> the quality of written communication does not conform.</p> <p><b>High Level 5: 29–30 marks</b><br/>The qualities of Level 5 are securely displayed.</p>   | <p><b>(25–30)</b></p> |

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### **Chronology: Key Events in *China, 1900–1945***

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Event</b>   |
|-------------|--|
| 1900        | Boxer risings  |
|             | Emperor Guangxu and Dowager Empress Cixi flee to Xian        |
| 1902        | Guangxu and Cixi return to Beijing                           |
|             | Anglo-Japanese Alliance                                      |
| 1904        | British demand recognition of Tibetan independence           |
| 1904–05     | Russo-Japanese War   |
| 1905        | Russia recognises Japan's special influence in Manchuria     |
|             | Republican Party set up                                      |
|             | Chinese boycott of American goods                            |
|             | Alliance League founded                                      |
| 1908        | Death of Dowager Empress Cixi                                |
|             | Root-Takahira agreement between USA and Japan                |
| 1909        | Yuan Shikai dismissed  |
|             | President Taft urges China to accept increased US investment |
| 1910        | Korea annexed by Japan                                       |
| 1911        | Double Tenth Rising at Wuhan                                 |
|             | International Banking Commission established                 |
| 1912        | January. Nanjing declared capital of the Chinese Republic    |
|             | Sun Yatsen installed as President of the Republic            |
|             | Yuan Shikai takes over from Sun as President                 |
|             | Manchu abdication  |
|             | Republic set up  |
|             | Guomindang formed  |
|             | Yuan Shikai refuses to recognise Nanjing government          |
| 1913        | 'Second Revolution' fails                                    |
|             | Parliament suspended   |
|             | GMB proscribed   |
|             | Sun Yatsen flees to Japan                                    |
| 1914        | Outbreak of war in Europe                                    |
| 1915        | Japan's 21 Demands   |
| 1916        | Yuan Shikai enthroned as Emperor                             |
|             | Death of Yuan Shikai   |
| 1916–26     | Era of the warlords  |
| 1917        | Attempt to restore Manchus fails                             |
|             | China declares war on Germany                                |
|             | October Revolution in Russia                                 |
| 1918        | Sino-Japanese military alliance signed                       |
|             | End of war in Europe   |
| 1918–20     | Russian Civil War  |
| 1919        | Versailles Settlement humiliates China                       |

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|         |  |
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|         | 4 May Movement begins  |
| 1921    | Comintern agents visit China                                 |
|         | CCP created  |
| 1921–22 | Washington Conference  |
|         | Comintern sends Joffe and Borodin to China                   |
|         | GMD friendship pact with Moscow                              |
|         | CCP Congress votes for union with GMD                        |
| 1924    | CCP-GMD United Front formed                                  |
|         | Russia seizes Outer Mongolia                                 |
|         | GMD constitution published                                   |
| 1925    | Death of Sun Yatsen  |
|         | 30 May Incident  |
|         | Chiang Kaishek becomes leader of GMD                         |
| 1926–28 | Northern Expedition  |
| 1927    | Chiang's 'White Terror' unleashed                            |
|         | Failure of Autumn Harvest; rising led by Mao Zedong          |
|         | Nationalist Government established at Nanjing                |
|         | Tanaka Memorial  |
| 1927–34 | Jiangxi period   |
| 1931    | Mukden incident  |
|         | Japanese occupation of Manchuria                             |
| 1932    | Creation of Manchukuo with Pu Yi installed as Emperor        |
| 1933    | Withdrawal of Japan from the League of Nations               |
| 1934–35 | Long March   |
| 1935    | Mao defeats the urban Reds in the critical CCP vote at Zunyi |
| 1935–45 | Yanan period   |
| 1936    | Xian Incident  |
|         | Germany and Japan sign the Anti-Comintern Pact               |
| 1937–45 | Sino-Japanese War  |
| 1937    | Second CCP-GMD United Front                                  |
|         | Beijing, Shanghai and Nanjing fall to Japan                  |
|         | Rape of Nanjing  |
| 1938    | Nationalist capital moved from Nanjing to Chongqing          |
| 1939    | Nazi-Soviet Pact signed                                      |
| 1940–44 | 'New Government of China' led by Wang Jing Wei at Nanjing    |
| 1940    | Mao Zedong's <i>On New Democracy</i> published               |
|         | USA attempts to impose international oil ban on Japan        |
| 1941    | Non-aggression pact signed between USSR and Japan            |
|         | Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor                               |
| 1942    | Britain and USA abandon extraterritoriality in China         |
| 1943    | Chiang Kaishek's <i>China Destiny</i> published              |
|         | Dissolution of Comintern                                     |
|         | Chiang Kaishek attends Cairo Conference                      |
|         | Mao Zedong's 'Rectification of Conduct Campaign' introduced  |
| 1944    | Mao Zedong proposes CCP-GMD coalition                        |
|         | General Stilwell recalled from China                         |
| 1945    | Mao-Chiang discussions                                       |
|         | Chiang rejects notion of sharing power with CCP              |
|         | Yalta Conference   |
|         | Death of President Roosevelt                                 |

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|         |  |
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|         | Truman becomes President                             |
|         | Atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki             |
|         | USSR declares war on Japan                           |
|         | USSR occupies Manchuria                              |
|         | Japanese surrender                                   |
|         | Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship                     |
|         | General Marshall sent as special US envoy to China   |
| 1945–49 | CCP–GMD civil war                                    |
| 1948    | GMD atrocities at Shanghai                           |
|         | Nationalists defeated at Mukden                      |
|         | Communist victory at Hsuechow                        |
| 1949    | Nationalists surrender Beijing to the Communists     |
|         | Nanjing, Shanghai and Guangzhou fall to the Red Army |

## Teaching Activities

### 1. Charting success

In pairs, students should draw the following axes on a large sheet of paper:



They should then make a list of key events in the history of the CCP in the period 1921–1949. They should write each event on a separate small card and place these cards along the x-axis in their appropriate chronological order.

Students should then reach a judgement about how each event affected the popularity of the CCP. They should move each card up the y-axis accordingly. Next to each card they should write a brief sentence explaining the position of the card.

Students could use their chart to plan an answer to the question: How far do you agree that the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 was the main cause of the growth in the CCP's popularity in the period 1921–1949?

## **2. Civil War card sort**

Students should make a list of all of the reasons for the CCP victory in the Chinese Civil War. They should write each reason on a separate small card.

In pairs, students should divide the cards into different categories of their own choosing. Less-able students could be provided with categories (for example, tactics and resources, the failings of the GMD, Mao's leadership of the CCP, foreign intervention). They should then use these categories as the basis for an essay plan in answer to the question: Why did the CCP win the Chinese Civil War? The category titles should form the paragraph headings, and the information on the small cards should be used as specific examples within each paragraph.

Once students have written up their essay plans, they should write up one paragraph of their essay. They should then pass their plan and paragraph to another group, who should use the following table to peer-mark the work:

| <b>Essay Plan</b>   | Marks out of 10 |
|---|-----------------|
| How well does the plan focus on the question?   |                 |
| How wide-ranging is the plan?   |                 |
| How effective are the categories chosen?  |                 |
| <b>Paragraph</b>  |                 |
| How well does the paragraph focus on the question?  |                 |
| How detailed are the specific examples?   |                 |
| How far does the paragraph explain why the relevant factor helped the CCP to win the Civil War? |                 |

## **Additional Sample Questions**

1. How far were the failings of the Manchu elite the main reason for the Boxer Rebellion of 1911?
2. Why did the Qing dynasty collapse in 1911–1912?
3. Why did the Chinese Republic of 1912–1916 fail?
4. How far do you agree that support from the Soviet Union was the main reason for the successes of the GMD and CCP in the period 1921–1927?
5. Why did Chiang Kaishek end the GMD's alliance with the CCP in 1927?
6. How successful were the GMD's domestic policies in the years 1925–1937?
7. How far do you agree that the leadership of Mao Zedong was the main factor explaining the victory of the CCP in the Chinese Civil War, 1945–1949?
8. How far was the Japanese invasion of China the main reason for the decline of the GMD in the period 1937–1946?

## **Resources**

Jonathan Fenby, *Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-shek and the China He Lost* (Free Press, 2005)

Jonathan Fenby, *The Penguin History of Modern China: The Rise and Fall of a Great Power, 1850–2009* (Penguin, 2009)

Colin Mackerras, *China in Transformation* (Longman, 2008)

Rana Mitter, *A Bitter Revolution: China's Struggle with the Modern World* (OUP Oxford, 2005)

Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (W.W. Norton, 1999)

Geoff Stewart, *China 1900–1976* (Heinemann, 2006)

Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895–1949* (Routledge, 2005)