

**LIBERAL STUDIES (MODERN WORLD) AS-LEVEL**

1.30 pm – 4.00 pm (2½ hours)

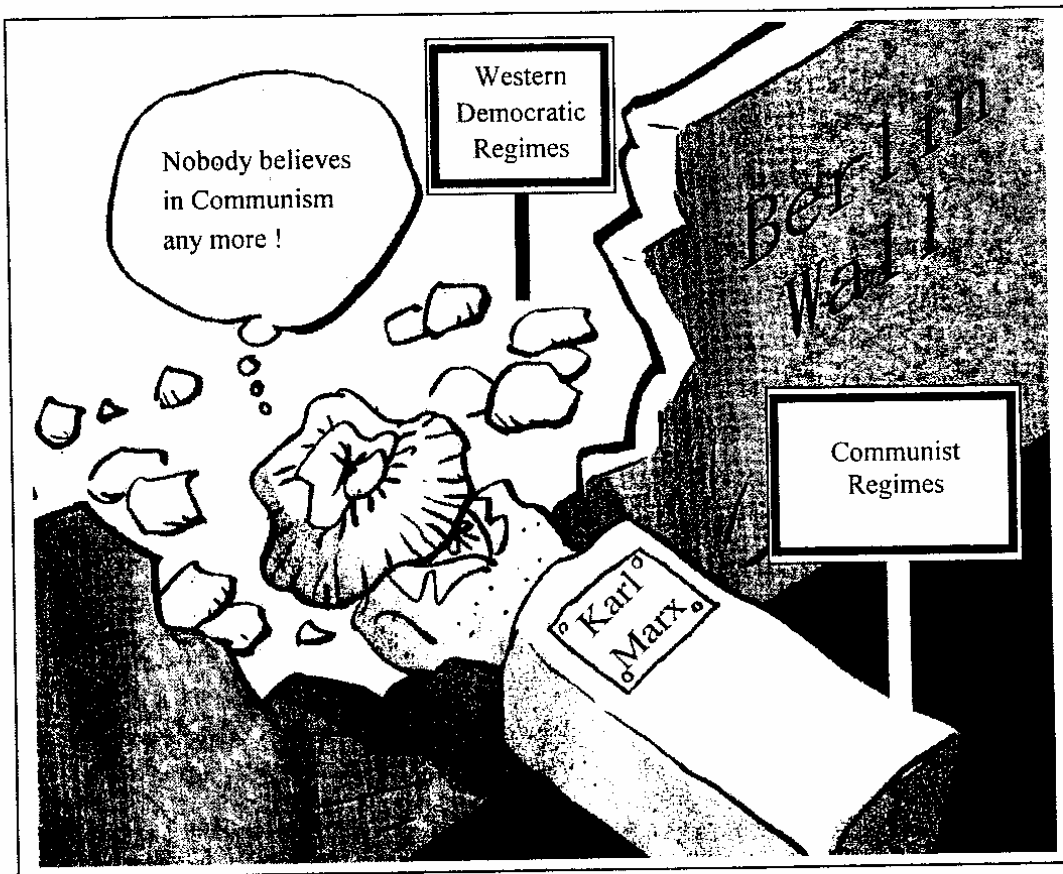
This paper must be answered in English

1. This paper consists of **Section 1** and **Section 2**. Section 1 carries 75% of the module marks, and Section 2 carries 25%.
2. **Section 1** consists of three questions, *all* of which are to be answered. **Section 2** consists of four questions, of which candidates may attempt any *one*.
3. Each question is worth 25 marks: 20 marks are allocated for content and 5 marks for effective communication.
4. The maximum content marks are indicated in brackets at the end of each question and sub-question. They are a guide to the length of answer required, which may vary from one to several paragraphs.
5. Candidates are reminded that this subject emphasises the ability to present and support points of view in a clear, concise and logical manner, rather than the ability to recite facts.

## SECTION 1

Answer *all* the questions in this section.

1. Read the following cartoon:

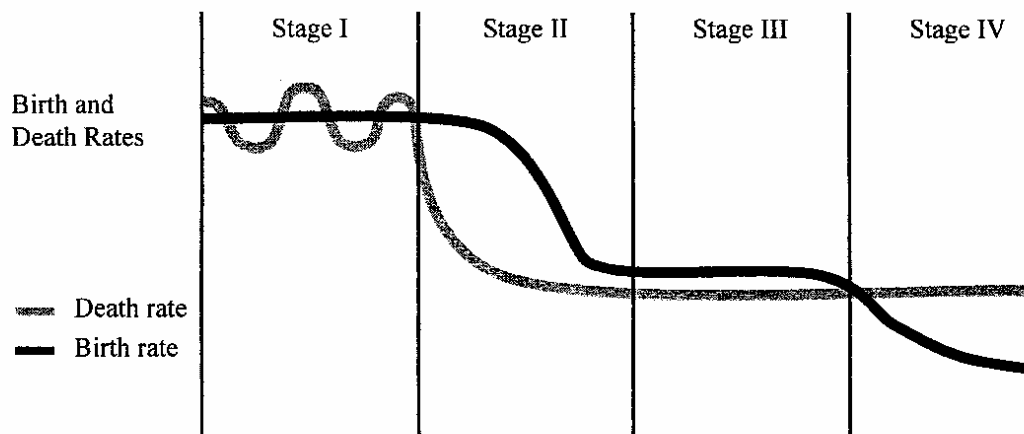


Note: Adapted from *Apple Daily News*, 6 November 2004.

- (a) In the light of the above cartoon and the political developments thereafter, discuss to what extent the impact of political beliefs is declining as a divisive force separating the world. (10 marks)
- (b) "A common political belief is developing in the modern world." How true is this statement? Explain your answer. (10 marks)

2. Read the following information about population development in the world.

**Figure 1 : Stages of national population development**



**Table 1 : Forecast population changes**

Region	Population sizes (millions)			
	Year			
	2000	2025	2050	2075
Central Asia	56	81	100	107
Eastern Europe	121	117	104	87
South Asia	1 367	1 940	2 249	2 242
Sub-Saharan Africa	611	976	1 319	1 522
Western Europe	456	478	470	433

Note: Adapted from K. Shimko, *International Relations: Perspectives & Controversies*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

- (a) Select from Table 1 any **two** regions showing **different** stages of population development and identify which stage of population development (as shown in Figure 1) each of them is experiencing from 2000 to 2050. Justify your answer with reference to the information in Figure 1 and Table 1. (8 marks)
- (b) Explain why each of the regions you selected in (a) is experiencing the stage of population development you identified. (12 marks)

3. The National Power Index measures a nation's power in terms of demographic, industrial and military dimensions:

- the demographic dimension is measured by total population;
- the industrial dimension is measured by urban population, steel production and fuel consumption;
- the military dimension is measured by the number of military personnel and military expenditure.

A higher National Power Index means a nation is more powerful.

The table below shows the National Power Indices of four countries.

Nation	National Power Index	
	1995	2001
China	29	34
Japan	11	10
Russia	13	11
United States	29	30

Note: Adapted from J. Ray & J. Kaarbo, *Global Politics*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

- (a) With reference to the above table, identify and account for the changes in the National Power Indices of the four countries between 1995 and 2001. (12 marks)
- (b) Suggest reasons why the factors incorporated in the National Power Index may not fully reflect the real power of a nation. (8 marks)

## SECTION 2

Answer *one* question from this section.

4. Read the following news extract about Multinational Corporations (MNCs).

Of the 100 largest economic entities in the world, 53 were Multinational Corporations (MNCs) such as Nokia, Hutchison Whampoa and McDonald's. These private companies were wealthier than more than 120 individual nations. From a mere 3,000 in 1990, the number of MNCs has grown to more than 63,000 today. Along with their 821,000 subsidiaries spread all over the world, they directly employ 90 million people and produce 25% of the world's gross product. The top 1,000 companies account for 80% of the world's industrial output.

MNCs bring about some beneficial effects. They pay increasing taxes to the governments of countries where they operate, provide employment opportunities, offer goods and services that were previously unavailable, and bring in capital, technology and management techniques to the host countries.

However, the list of negative outcomes from their operations is also long. One of the concerns relates to culture. They dominate media production and distribution (just 6 corporations sell 80% of all recorded music) and introduce ideas and images that some governments and religious groups fear may destabilise society. Some multi-national fast food companies have been accused of promoting an unhealthy diet. The enormous political and economic influence of the MNCs could also be a threat to the democratic process in many countries.

Note: Adapted from *South China Morning Post*, 25 November 2003.

- (a) In the light of the above information, discuss the benefits and the drawbacks brought about by the Multinational Corporations (MNCs) in the process of globalisation. (10 marks)
- (b) As a resident of Hong Kong, discuss whether you would welcome more MNCs operating in Hong Kong. Illustrate your answer with examples. (10 marks)

5. Read the following passage about ethnic conflicts.

Ethnic hostility is perhaps the most important source of conflict in the numerous wars now occurring throughout the world. Ethnic groups are large groups of people who share racial, language, cultural or religious ties and a common identity. Ethnic hostility itself stems from a dislike or hatred that members of one ethnic group frequently feel towards another ethnic group. Why do ethnic groups frequently dislike each other? It is often because there are long-standing historical conflicts over specific territories or natural resources, or over one ethnic group's economic exploitation or political domination of another, or over cultural and religious values.

Note: Adapted from J.S. Goldstein, *International Relations*, N.Y.: Longman, 2004.

- (a) In the light of the above passage, discuss how ethnic hostility may lead to conflicts between and within nations. Illustrate your answer with examples. (12 marks)
- (b) Suggest ways to reduce ethnic conflicts between and within nations. (8 marks)

6. Read the following information about the purposes of the United Nations.

The purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in its Charter, are to:

- maintain international peace and security;
- develop friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples;
- co-operate in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations in attaining these common ends.

Note: Adapted from United Nations, *Basic Facts About the United Nations*, N.Y.: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1995.

- (a) Select any *two* of the purposes above and discuss the effectiveness of the United Nations in attaining them during the past five years. (10 marks)
- (b) It has been suggested that the United Nations is dominated by developed countries. Suggest some reforms that might reduce such dominance. Explain your answer. (10 marks)

7. Read the following news about relations between China, the United States (U.S.), and the European Union.

**China seen as a power broker on the world stage: showing it can lever European aspirations against U.S. unilateralism.**

The successful visits to Beijing in April 2004 by U.S. Vice-President Cheney and the former European Commission President Prodi illustrate China's ability to play one power off against another and further strengthen its aspirations to build a multi-polar world. Beijing's simultaneous hosting of the two leaders demonstrates that the mainland can lever European aspirations against U.S. unilateralism. China has always maintained that the world should be multi-polar, dominated not by just one superpower but governed by many.

Prodi said: "The European Union is looking to China to play its part. It is in both powers' interests as strategic partners on the international scene to safeguard and promote development, peace and stability."

Cheney said: "There were common strategic interests and, with careful consultation, both Beijing and Washington could avoid the kind of conflict and confrontation that would be a tragedy for everybody."

Beijing's economic reforms have brought it many rewards. Not only has it gained substantial wealth, but it has gained the leverage required to become a global power broker.

Note: Adapted from *South China Morning Post*, 17 April 2004.

- (a) In the light of the above information and other relevant issues, explain how China is becoming a global power broker. (12 marks)
- (b) Discuss the prospects for international peace in a world with China as a global power broker. (8 marks)

**END OF PAPER**