1.1 Power, sovereignty and legitimacy

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 27 marks**

KEY WORDS sovereignty • legitimacy

Power, sovereignty and legitimacy

Objective

Define and apply power (hard, soft, three faces), sovereignty, legitimacy and interdependence, and analyse political sources by claim, evidence and perspective (core: understanding power and global politics).

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

Core toolkit. Power is relational: hard (force, sanctions), soft (attraction, culture), smart (the blend); three faces – decide, set the agenda, shape preferences. Sovereignty: internal, external, Westphalian; challenged from above (institutions), below (separatism, non-state actors), within (failure); bundled – pooled, leased, lost by degrees. Legitimacy: Weber's traditional, charismatic, legal-rational; consent tested by performance; the authoritarian dilemma. Interdependence: symmetric or asymmetric; dependence as leverage (chokepoints, clearing, chips). Sources: claim, evidence, perspective; silences are evidence.

2 Practice

2.1 Define power and state why it is relational. [2]

2.2 Distinguish hard power from soft power, with one example of each. [2]

2.3 Name Weber's three types of legitimacy with one example of each. [3]

2.4 State the three directions from which sovereignty is challenged, with one example of any one of them. [3]

2.5 Distinguish symmetric from asymmetric interdependence and say which one creates leverage. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Stimulus style.)* A stimulus reports a mid-sized state defying a great power's sanctions threat to join a regional trade initiative. Using power's three faces and interdependence, explain the outcome. [6]

3.2 *(Concept style.)* "Sovereignty today is bundled, not lost." With reference to one state that pools sovereignty and one whose sovereignty is nominal, evaluate this claim. [5]

3.3 *(Source style.)* An official communiqué states a government "acted to uphold international law". Identify the claim, one piece of evidence a stronger source would need, and one silence. [4]

Solutions

2.1 Power is the ability to influence outcomes and others' behaviour (1); it is relational because A's power exists only over B in a context – the same capacity yields different outcomes in different relationships (1).

2.2 Hard power compels through force or coercion – sanctions, or military intervention (1); soft power co-opts through attraction – a country's universities, media and values drawing others to want what it wants (1).

2.3 Traditional: authority by custom – a hereditary monarch (1); charismatic: the leader's personal bond – a revolutionary founder whose followers obey him rather than rules (1); legal-rational: authority by rules and offices – an elected government under a constitution (1).

2.4 From above: institutions and treaties binding the state (a trade body's rules or a rights court) (1); from below: separatists and non-state actors claiming authority inside (1); from within: state failure leaving sovereignty nominal (1). Example of any one earns the third mark.

2.5 Symmetric interdependence is mutual and balanced – both sides bear rupture comparably (1); asymmetric leaves one side able to bear the rupture more cheaply, which is exactly the leverage sanctions and chokepoints exploit (1).

3.1 First face: the great power could not compel – its sanctions threat was a decision-blocking instrument that failed to change the vote (2). Second face: the agenda had been reset – the regional institution reframed the initiative as sovereignty asserted, so the defection carried no cost in standing (2). Asymmetric interdependence: the initiative's banks and market gave the mid-sized state a hedge – it could bear the rupture more cheaply than the threatener assumed, so the hard power was real but unusable (2).

3.2 Pooled: an EU member state shares currency, trade and court authority by treaty, accepting binding rules in exchange for market scale and collective weight – sovereignty exercised collectively, not surrendered (2). Nominal: a state whose government cannot enforce law across its territory holds sovereignty in name – external recognition persists while internal authority has collapsed (2). Evaluation: bundling captures the pooling case but risks euphemism for the nominal case, where little is left to bundle – sovereignty is best read as a bundle of rights that can be separately ceded, strained or hollowed (1).

3.3 Claim: the action was lawful and legitimate (1). Evidence a stronger source would need: the specific legal instrument relied on (authorisation, treaty article) and independent verification of the facts, not the government's own account (2). Silence: the communiqué does not state who authorised the action or what alternatives were considered; the omission of authority is itself evidence of the position being defended (1).

Local review guidance: name the face of power before each move; (R1 3.2) evaluation weighs both cases against the claim's exact word – bundled, not lost; (R1 3.3) a silence is a named absence, not a general doubt. Authored guidance.