

History Answers and commentaries A-level (7042)

1B Spain in the Age of Discovery, 1469 — 1598

Marked answers from students for questions from the June 2022 exams. Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written and have not been subject to the usual standardisation process.

This resource is to be used alongside the A-level History Component 1B Spain in the Age of Discovery, 1469–1598 June 2022 Question paper and inserts.

Question 1

Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to opposition faced by Philip II in the years 1568 to 1598.

[30 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5: Shows a very good understanding of the interpretations put forward in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context.

 25–30
- L4: Shows a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. The evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported, and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context.

 19–24
- L3: Provides some supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts and comments on the strength of these arguments in relation to their historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context.

 13–18
- **L2:** Provides some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis, but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strength of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**

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L1: Either shows an accurate understanding of the interpretation given in one extract only or addresses two/three extracts, but in a generalist way, showing limited accurate understanding of the arguments they contain, although there may be some general awareness of the historical context. Any comments on the strength of the arguments are likely to be generalist and contain some inaccuracy and/or irrelevance. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context.

Nothing worthy of credit.

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Student responses

Response A

Mckinnon-Bell's principle argument in extract A that Philip was seriously challenged by opposition in Spain appears doubtable. His references to the 'significant impact' of the cortes on his 'ability to rule effectively' is undoubtable exaggerative as Philp inherited the cortes from Charles V which had essentially lost all power. Phillip further reduced any chance of opposition from the cotes by calling it only to hear regional grievances and project an image of a king who followed tradition. Mcleinnon-Bell further over-estimates the severity of the Aragonese and Morisco revolts as he suggests they 'shook the kings authority to its core'. This is a highly dubious assertion as the Araganese revolt never became significant opposition to Philips rule as the revolt barely occurred outside Zaragoza and only lasted from 1590-1592 with a general amnesty agreed. However there is some merit in his reference to the Morisco revolt which gathered 30,000 members by January 1570 and did make some territorial gains across Granada without the capture of seron the moriscos killing 1509 people and enslaving 80. However this opposition was successfully suppressed by Don John of Austria by November 1570. The secondary argument presented in this extract that the dutch revolt was the most serious opposition faced by Philip is, in contrast, highly persuasive. The revolt in the Netherlands lasts from 1568 until after Philips death in 1598 and saw the collapse of Spanish rule. Following the Spanish Fury in 1576 the consequential Pacicication of Ghent united the 17 duch provinces against Spanish authority. This strongly substantiates Mckinnon-Bell's argument as Philip faced united opposition from catholic and Calvinist provinces. This opposition further increased in signicicance with the intervention of the English with the 1585 Treaty of Nonsuch where Elizabeth I sent 6,000 men in support of the Dutch. This was undoubtably serious opposition to Philip due to the foreign involvement and as the longest period of opposition Philip faced. Mckeinnon-Bell is therefore highly convincing in his assertions towards opposition in Europe however does-exaggerate the threat of the moisco and Aragonese revolt.

In Extract B Hunt's primary argument that the opposition faced by Philip in Spain was never a serious threat to his royal authority is highly compelling. His assertion that 'the authority of the crown had never been in doubt during the rebellion' is well substantiated (in reference to the morisco revolt) as the moriscos of Granada failed to form alliances with the Ottomans, or corsairs, had this collusion occurred the revolt would be much more serious. In addition the morisco revolt was isolated to Granada as the morisco populations of castile and Araga never joined in uprising. Furthermore whilst moriscos made up over 50% of Granada's population they were never more then 6% of the population of the Iberia penninsula. However it must be noted that the extent of the opposition in Granada is underestimated by Hunt as within the kingdom the numbers involved increased from 4,000 to 30,000 within a year. Hunts secondary argument that Philip successfully suppressed opposition in Spain is irrefutable. In relation to the Aragonese revolt Hunt notes that 'Aragon lost much of its autonomy' which is clearly evident as Philip arranged the office of the justicar to a lifetime appointment made by the king. Furthermore in dealing with the revolt Philip acted harshly in arresting and executing ISO ringleaders and the justicar to set a precident for the consequence in uprising against the king. Hunt is furthermore justified in his assertions towards Granada that the 'Morisco population was firmly suppressed'. Following the general amnesty in 1492 Philip redistributed

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90,000 moriscos around the peninsula with laws banning moriscos going within 10 leagues of Granada. This greatly reduced any chance of united morisco opposition as the population of Granada dropped by 25% and 30% of moriscos died en route to new parishes. It is therefore evident that Hunt's argument in relation to the severity of opposition in Spain are highly legitimate and well substantiated by Philip's actions as neither revolts were significant threats to his crown and both were swiftly dealt with.

The main argument presented by Elliot in extract C that the opposition in Aragon was due to a look of royal authority is somewhat persuasive. It is apparent that the Aragonese sense of fueros did go some way to causing the revolts as Antonio Perez Antonio sought sanctuary (the right to manifestation) from the justicar of Zaragoza. As a fugitive of Habsburg justice for his involvement in the murder of Escabada and concealing of letters from Philip II this did directly oppose the authority of Philip II. Elliots further refrences to 'social divisions' in the country is also well substantiated as from 1578 the poor in Aragon increasingly expressed grievences to their land lords as Aragon remained under the medieval feudal system. This was further exacerbated as Philip only called meetings of the Araganese cotes 3 times during his reign. However it is also evident that Philip himself was in part responsible for the opposition in Aragon. His appointment of the non-native Almenara to viceray of Aragon in 1588 was a direct and disastrous challenge to Aragonese fueros. This decision was exacerbated in its impact as Almenora befriended the unpopular treasuerer the count of Chincon. The accumulation of this policy was the uproar in Zaragoza and the court of the justicar who formed opposition against Philip. The appointment of Almenara further casts doubt on Elliot's final argument that Philip pacified Aragon by respecting their fueros as he refrences how 'Philip chose to respect the laws'. It is notable that as Philip did not respect the fueros in 1588 the continued to remodel Aragonese government to reduce its fueros by removing the justicars right to grant sanctuary form Habsburg justice Elliot's arguments are therefore somewhat convincing although he does ignore the role of Philip II in creating the problems which caused the opposition in Aragon.

This is a Level 5 response

In each case, this script addresses the overall interpretation presented in the extracts and uses precise supporting detail to both corroborate and challenge the arguments put forward. The identification of secondary lines of argument within the extracts confirms that there is very good understanding of the extracts. The contextual own knowledge deployed is both detailed and pertinent, which leads to convincing evaluations. There is an awareness of the relative threat presented by the Dutch Revolt compared to the internal Spanish revolts, which is supported by very good context in the commentary on Extract A. There is a strong awareness of the historical context throughout the answer.

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Response B

One argument that Mckinnon-Bell puts forward is that Philip II of Spain was not an effective king, regarding the population and society, which was then a factor for the numerous revolts that occurred throughout his reign, which is supported by evidence. Due to his father, Charles V's, previous religious policy, regarding the Moriscos, that issue was allowed to remain into Philip's reign. This enabled the religious policy for Philip to be fractured as he ascends to the throne, which is evident in the Morisco revolt. Form December 1568 to January 1570, there was an increase of over 30,000 rebels who joined the revolt, showcasing Philip's inability to effectively put down the revolt. Supporting evidence for Philp's ineffectiveness as King comes from the end a the morisco revolt. It was not until Don John arrived with his Italian troops that the rebellion was stopped, which then supports the argument that Philip was not an effective King and that he had a 'weak grip over his non-Castilian subjects'. In addition to this Mckinnon-Bell also states that the Castilian Cortes 'frequently challenged' Philips authority, however this can be guestioned. Philip it was said to be a monarch who always needed to know all the information regarding any policies or issues within the country. This statement can be questioned, since the Castilian Corte's power and authority was reduced during Philips's reign, to ensure that it was Philip who had the most authority in the country.

Another argument that Mckinnon-Bell puts forward is that it was the revolts in the Netherlands that were the most significant during his reign, due to the many causal factors that can be attributed to it. This is supported by the fact that the first Dutch revolt broke out over Philip's authority in the Netherlands, and the impact of the fury in 1566. Mckinnon-Bell states that the revolt was 'exhausting' which is also supported, since the problems within the country lasted from the early 1560s to the 1580s and early 1590s where an eventual truce was signed speaking 12 years of peace between Spain and the Netherlands. However, due to the rebellions in the Netherlands, Spain was in an economic crisis, as well as due to other foreign relations, such as the Armada with England, and the cost of overseas possessions that belonged to Portugal. Because of this, the argument can be supported, since it was in 1596 that Philip II declared his fourth and final bankruptcy, which can be attributed to the cost of the rebellions in the Netherlands. It was also the most significance revolt during his reign because the northern states were eventually recognised as their own country by the early 1590's, since only the Southern States had been won back by the Duke of Parma. Therefore, Mckinnon-Bell's second argument is convincing.

One argument out forward by the Hunt was that Philip II did not lose his royal authority during the Morisco or Aragonese revolts in Spain, which is a convincing argument. Due to Philip's authority within Spain, there were only two serious uprisings, which were ended after only a short amount of time. This is supported by the fact that the Netherlands rebellions lasted for a total of over 20 years, which highlights Philips ineffectiveness abroad, but his authority within the country. This can be attributed to the fact that after 1559, Philip II never left Spain, and became a centralised monarch, rather than a peripateic monarch like his father and great-grandparents, Ferdinand and Isabella, had previously been. In addition this the argument is also convincing because during the rebellions, Philip remained in control of the rest of the country, which is supported by the fact that he was still able to organise galleys for his naval forces, as well as continue to build his authority in Spanish possessions abroad, such as in the Netherlands under the Duke of Alba from 1567 to 1573. While Alba's position as

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governor was not overall effective, it did demonstrate Philip's ability to maintain his authority, during rebellion in Spain, as well as attempt to in overseas possessions. Therefore, the argument is convincing.

A second argument that Hunt puts forward is that Philip was effective in crushing the opposition faced in the internal rebellions, which also a convincing argument. The defeat of the morisco revolt by October 1570 was attributed to the troops led by Don John, and this effectiveness is demonstrated in the fact that Don John was also entrusted with the leadership of the Spanish force at the Battle Lepanto in 157, which therefore supports Philip II's effectiveness as King. Support also lies in the handling of the Aragonese revolts from 1590-1592. The Council of Aragon was entrusted with all policies and issues regarding the kingdom which ensured their control. However the argument can also be questioned. Hunt states that 'Aragon lost much of its autonomy' and Philip became an absolute monarch. This can be questioned, since it was the council of Aragon and the existing fueros which ensured that Aragon would remain separate to the kingdom of Castile. Therefore, Hunts second argument is convincing, however, there are also aspects which can be questioned.

One argument put forward by Elliot is that Philip II reflected on his previous victory with Portugal, which led to an effective crushing of the Aragonse revolt, which is a convincing argument. Much of Philip's success with the annexation of Portugal in 1589, came from his respect of Portuguese customs, such as promising to learn Portuguese and wearing traditional clothing. This respect can also be seen with the handling of the Aragonese revolt Elliott states that 'Philip chose to respect the laws' which is evident when the council of Aragon is promised to have only native Aragonese councillors. He also summoned the Aragonese Cortes for a final time after the revolt was crushed in 1591 ensuring that it would be the Aragonse who would have authority, within the kingdom, with this in mind, it can be said that Spain appeared to be unified on an international level, as Elliott states 'Spanish unity preserved', but this can be questioned. Due to the fueros within Aragon, Philip II would not have full control at the kingdom, which brings doubt to how united the country was as a whole. Therefore, the argument is convincing, but it can also be questioned.

A second argument that Elliot suggests is that it was due to Philip's lack of royal control which sparked the Aragonese revolt, which is a convincing argument. During Philip's reign, the Aragonese Cortes were only summoned 3 times, and the final time was after the revolt, and as well as this, due to the creation of the centralised government in Madrid, Philip hardly travelled to the other Kingdoms within Spain. This can be attributed to the causation of the revolt, due to his ineffectiveness as the monarch. As well as this, there were also disagreements between members of the nobility and their workers which also heightened the tensions within the kingdom. There was also the influence of Antonio Perez after he fled Castile arrived in Aragon, in 1590, where rumours spread that Philip was intending to break the fueros in or der to claim Perez back. These factors can also be attributed to Philip's ineffectiveness as monarch which therefore supports the argument. Due to the fueros in place in Aragon, there were limitations to Philip's royal authority. Which impacted his decisions. Regarding the kingdoms. Due to his low amount of authority in Aragon, the argument is convincing, since Philip was not able to fully control the kingdom which therefore impacted his authority. Therefore the argument put forward by Elliot is convincing.

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This is a Level 3 response

This script makes some supported comment on the interpretations given in each of the extracts. It approaches this through a variety of sub-arguments, rather than by identifying the overall interpretation of the passage. For example, Extract A is evaluated for the arguments that Philip was 'not an effective king', that Philip was frequently challenged, and that 'the revolts in the Netherlands ... were the most significant'. Some contextual knowledge is offered to either support or challenge these points, but this tends to lack appropriate depth. Where there is evaluation of a point of view, for example on Philip's authority in Aragon after the revolt (Extract C), the evaluation is limited. The statement that the continued existence of the fueros meant that Philip 'would not have full control', shows an understanding of context but lacks the comment lacks depth.

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Question 2

'The economy of Spain was significantly strengthened in the years 1492 to 1516.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Mark scheme

- L5: Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement.

 21–25
- L4: Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated.

16-20

- Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. 11–15
- L2: The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist.

 6-10
- **L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**

Nothing worthy of credit.

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Student responses

Response A

Between 1492 to 1516 the economy of Spain was weakened by the disastrous economic policy of Ferdinand and Isabella. Whilst it must be noted that the discovery of the New world in 1492 and establishment of the casa de contraction in 1503 did greatly improve the regional economy of servile, the monarch's expensive foreign policy and reliance on loans created ongoing economic problems into the reign of Charles V. In addition through their overfavouring of the mesta and neglect of Aragon they greatly undermined the Spanish economy by 1516.

Ferdinand and Isablla's overfavouring of the mesta significantly contributed to the economic instability in Spain 1516. The enlargement of the canadas in 1489 and law of land lease in 1501 provided the mesta the rights to historic sheep pastures at fixed rents. These laws greatly encouraged sheep farming which came to dominate central southern Spain. This created serious problems for arabal farming in Spain as famers saw the opportunities within the wool industry, This decline in arabal faming meant from 1506 Spain was reliant on regular wheat imports from Sicily hich increased Spanish dependance on international trade – a trade easily threatened by corsair and burbary pirates in the western mediterranean. In causing further arabal decline the monarchs inherently increased their dependency on the wool trade and in 1500 several senior mesta figures were appointed to the royal council. In allowing this dominance Spain's economic diversity seriously decreased and further gave way to the mestas overmighty power.

This overmighty power of the mesta contributed significantly to the decline of the Aragonese economy. The mesta's sense of particularism meant they refused to co-operate with the catalonions as they sought a trade agreement with Genoese. This particularism increased the economic divisions between kingdoms which were exacerbated by Ferdinand and Isabella's failure to remove the internal custom barriers which hindered trade and co-operation. In addition as the monarch's economic policy focused overwhelmingly on castile the Aragonese economy fell largely into decline. This was in part due to the strict in trade from the aragonese coastal towns of Valencia and Barcelona to the castilian towns of Burgos (granted consulados over the wool trade in 1494) and seville from 1503. From this focus on castile and the mesca it is apparent that Aragon's economy was greatly neglected. This was not only a significant problem for Aragon but increased the burden on castile to fund the monarch's foreign policy.

In relation to foreign policy it is clear that Ferdinand and Isabella's international campaigns cam at the expense of the Castilian economy. Despite the increased contributions of the Alcabala which made up to 90% of the royal income the monarchs became increasingly dependant on raising juror and foreign loans. This created long-term instability in the Spanish economy as by 1516 131 million maravedis was owed to Genoese and Jewish financies and the cost of Ferdinand's Italian campaigns came to around 366 million maravedis. This economic burden could not be met by the underdeveloped castilion economy and must be seen as the monarchs ignoring economic consequences for their foreign involvement. This is further evident in the exponential increase in the military costs from 1492 to 1516 as it rose from 20 million to 80 million maravedis per annum. This disregard for spains economy clearly

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did more to weaken spanish finances then strengthen them and shows a lack of long-term investment at the expense of short term policy.

However it must be noted that the discovery of the New World in 1492 did strengthen the economy of castile. Ferdinand and Isabella's wise decision to secure seville's consulados over trade with the New World in 1503 with the establishment of the case de contraction ensured that all trade with the New World would pass through servile. This was a turning point for the position of servile as it became the center of European trade and experienced the highest volume of customs duties in Northern Europe. This importance further came with extensive population growth as foreign merchants and traders moved to servile. This immigration was essential to counting the economic impacts of the expulsion of the Jews in 1492 as foreign workers were granted a 10 year tax exemption Whilst in the short-term Seville's wealth in relation to the new world was largely concentrated on the export of goods such as trading corks it became increasingly wealthy due to the increase of bullion which began from around 1510. This bullion became essential in the long-term to the funding of Charles V and Philip II's extensive foreign policy. It is subsequently clear that in regards to seville and the New World the economy of spain was somewhat strengthened.

However due to Ferdinand and Isabella's overwhelming poor economic policy the economy of Spain cannot be seen to be strengthened in the years 1492 to 1516. This weakening was directly a consequence of their over-reliance on the mesca, neglect of Aragon and disregard for the financial costs of war. Therefore despite some gains from the discovery of the new world the spanish economy was left unstable and underdeveloped in 1516.

This is a Level 5 response

This essay establishes a strong argument in the opening paragraph, with an acknowledgement that there will be balance to the answer. The argument against the statement is thorough and very well supported. Specific and precise information is offered on the domination of the Mesta, the lack of investment in agriculture, the continuation of customs duties and the consequences of international campaigns. The significance of 'the over mighty power of the Mesta' is explored, producing a strong and convincing analysis. A detailed paragraph on the discovery of the 'New World', the control of trade through Seville, and the accumulation of bullion provides balance to the argument. There is a passing reference to the longer term consequences of these developments, which is linked back to the argument on the strengthening of the economy. The full demands of the question have been met. The answer is fully analytical and reaches a well-substantiated judgement.

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Response B

During Ferdinand and Isabella's reign from 1492 to 1516, it can be argued that overall the economy of Spain was strengthened. Due to the discovery of the New World as well as changes and taxations were granted in the country, the economy was strengthened. While the many military campaigns did significantly impact the economy, the more convincing argument is that, by 1516, the economy was strengthened.

Much of the income that the crown received came from taxation, and one of the most important forms of tax was the alcabala tax, which was a 10% tax on commerce goods, and it contributed to around 90% of the crown's income, during Ferdinand and Isabella's reign, As well as this, due to the Granada war, which lasted from 1482-1492, the Pope granted a crusade tax, which raised money specifically for the military campaigns during the war. Ferdinand and Isabella also developed changes to the economy, which allowed for it to strengthen, both the economy of the country, but also for the wider population. One example is that the currency in both Castile and Aragon had both of the monarchs minted, in the hopes of creating more unity between the two kingdoms. The currency in Castile and Aragon was also standardised to be the same value, also hoping that unity would be created between both kingdoms. At the beginning of the 1470's, the income for the kingdom of Castile was significantly lower than expected, due to many factors, such as tax farmers who were not giving all money collected straight to the treasury. Therefore, Ferdinand and Isabella made changes to ensure that all money collected would be given directly to Castille. Due to these changes, by 1504, the Crown's income increased significantly to over 500 million maravedis. Those changes and introduction of new forms of taxation allowed for the economy of Spain to strengthen significantly.

The economy of Spain was also aided by the discovery of the New World, by Christopher Colombus in 1492. Due to the discovery, Spain was able to ensure that all gold and silver that was found went straight to the income for the country. As well as this, the discovery of the New World allowed for new trading parts to be established which strengthened the economy. In 1503, the casa de contraction was established which allowed for Seville to be given a monopoly, and be a major city in Spain which allowed for trade with the New World. This then allowed for Spanish merchants to increase their income, due to the monopoly created, and the opportunities to sell their products for the New World. Referring back to the fold and silver bullion, it was due to the discovery of the New World that during Charles V's reign, by 1551, the income for Spain rose to over 800 million ducats, from the bullion of gold and silver. While the discovery of the New World did help strengthen the economy by 1516, it was, however, during Charles V's reign that the impact was felt more significantly, therefore, by 1516, the economy was only strengthened to an extent.

However, it can also be argued that the economy was not strengthened significantly, due to Ferdinand and Isabella's foreign policies, including the many military campaigns that took place throughout their reigns. Regarding Spain, the most significant military campaign was the war with Granada, which lasted from 1482-1492. While there was support from the Pope, with the granting of the crusade tax, the Granada War campaigns cost the economy over 800 million maravedis, which significantly impacted the stability of the country. As well as this, the campaign to conquer and take back the territory of Navarre cost over 100 million maravedis,

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in the later years of Ferdinand's reign. While the territory was successfully recaptured, the economy was also imparted, due to the costs of running an maintaining the area. In addition to this, the Naples campaign at the beginning at the 18th Century said to have Spain over 300 million maravedis, further impacting the stability of the economy. Regarding the military campaigns, while they did aid Spain in achieving international prestige they had a significant impact on Spain's economy, weakening the stability of it. Therefore, the economy was not significantly strengthened by 1516.

Overall, while the military campaign, in Spain and abroad, did significantly impact the economy, it was due to the discovery of the New World and the taxations and income to the Crown, which allowed for the economy to be strengthened by 1516. Although, it is more convincing that regarding the New World, the economy was not impacted until Charles V's reign, with the increase of gold and silver bullion, but overall, the economy was strengthened.

This is a Level 3 response

The opening paragraph shows that the question has been understood and promises a balanced response. The answer as a whole shows an awareness of some key features and issues, with largely accurate supporting information on the discovery of the 'New World', the imposition of a new currency, and the development of Seville. This is balanced by the argument that foreign policy was a burden to the economy, although this section is quite generalised in nature and could have been more closely tied into the question. The focus on the issue is not always maintained. The discussion of royal finances could have been linked more strongly to the issue with, for example, a reference to investment. Only the more general comment is made that 'new forms of taxation allowed for the economy of Spain to strengthen.' The answer is effectively organised but lacks precision of detail.

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