The invasion of Abyssinia was different from the Manchurian Crisis.

The Abyssinian crisis was much easier for the League to deal with. France had a border with Italy and parts of the British Empire in Africa were close to Abyssinia. Both countries could therefore threaten action against any invasion of Abyssinia.

Why did Mussolini invade Abyssinia?

- **For revenge** - In 1896 an Italian invasion of Abyssinia had failed. A modern well equipped Italian force had been defeated by poorly equipped Abyssinian tribesmen.

- **Raw materials** - Mussolini wanted Abyssinia’s mineral resources to help Italy’s recovery from the depression.

- **Glory and conquest** - Mussolini saw himself as a great military leader, he talked of recreating the glory of the Roman Empire.

Why did the League fail to deal with the Abyssinian crisis?

- **Self Interest** - Britain and France wanted to maintain good relations with Mussolini as Hitler was now seen as a bigger threat. Britain and France could have stopped the Italian attack by closing the Suez canal, this would have stopped the Italians as their ships would not have been able to get to Abyssinia.

- The League was once more **slow to act**. Between January and October 1935 a lot of discussion took place at the League but no action was taken or decisions made.

- **Absence of USA** - The League delayed a decision on imposing sanctions on oil exports to Italy. It was feared that the USA would not support the
sanctions so they would be pointless. The British government also feared that sanctions would cause the loss of 30,000 mining jobs in Britain.

- On the 7th of March 1936 with the problem still unsolved Hitler invaded the Rhineland. Britain and France were desperate for Mussolini’s support against Germany. They therefore left Abyssinia to its fate (self-interest again).