

Examiners' report

A LEVEL

HISTORY A

OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in History A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y215/01 Summer 2025 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate responses is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from [Teach Cambridge](#).

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Paper Y215 series overview

Y215 is one of twenty-four units in Paper 2 for the A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests a coherent period of non-British history through a short answer essay question and a traditional essay question. The paper contains two questions, each having two parts, a short answer essay and a traditional essay. Candidates have to answer both parts of one question.

To do well on the short-answer essay question, candidates need to consider the significance or importance of both issues, factors, individuals or events mentioned in relation to the question. Having analysed or explained both they must reach a supported judgement as to which is the most important or significant.

To do well on the traditional essay, candidates need to address the issue in the question, using detailed supporting knowledge. To reach the higher levels candidates need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement, at least in the conclusion.

The significant majority of candidates chose Question 1.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
• were clear about terminology • had a clear grasp of chronology and, therefore, relevance • could structure their ideas successfully • could organise relevant evidence effectively.	• confused terminology in the questions • had a muddled sense of chronology and, therefore, relevance • did not give form to their ideas • were short of relevant evidence.

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Question 1 (a) (i) and (ii)

1
(a) Which of the following had the greater impact on the creation of the kingdom of Italy in 1861?

(i) The relations of Cavour with Napoleon III

(ii) Cavour and the enlargement of Piedmont

Explain your answer with reference to both **(i)** and **(ii)**.

[10]

There was often an imbalance between the treatment of the two factors, with part (i) generally being handled better than part (ii). The best answers made reference to Piedmont's acquisition of the smaller North Italian states for part (ii) but many treated 'enlargement' in more general terms.

Exemplar 1

1	a	It can definitely be seen that the relations of Cavour with Napoleon III, had a greater impact than Cavour and his enlargement of Piedmont for the eventual creation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. The relations between Cavour and Napoleon III allowed Piedmont to have the extra ^{foreign} help they needed is to to to dismember Austria's empire, that they lacked at the Battle of Custoza in 1848. Therefore for example in the at Plombières agreement 1858, Cavour Napoleon promised to give give ^{lend} 100,000 of his soldiers to fight for Italy's independence, thus allowing them to succeed at both Magenta and Solferino. Despite not winning the war, Italy was able to gain peace ^{and Napoleon's early victory at} Villafranca peace treaty in 1859, Italy were able to gain Lombardy through the ceding of France ^{Lombardy} showing significant progress compared to its previous ^{Piedmont's} attempts. This shows ^{foreign} relations between Cavour and Napoleon were highly effective in initiating independence. On the other hand, it can be argued that by Napoleon ending the war early, he prevented further independence and put his relationship with Cavour in jeopardy. Despite this, Napoleon and Cavour's relations allowed for further independence from Austria and a more united Italy, allowing it to be made in 1861.
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Cavour and the enlargement of Piedmont was also fairly significant in the creation of Italy in 1861, however they prevented further unity of Rome and Venetia. Although he did bring together and enlarge Piedmont's territories, for example he played a significant role in improving Piedmont's economy + global status i.e. he negotiated trade treaties with France, Britain and Austria as well as building 850 km of railroad in the 50s. This development inspired by Cavour as PM would have encouraged other states to annex with the prosperous Piedmont. For example in 1860 both Tuscany and Emilia voted to annex with Piedmont, who then attacked hard Lombardy, essentially allowing for the full complete kingdom of Italy in 1861. On the other hand Cavour possibly prevented further unity and ~~also~~ in 1861 as he fought with Garibaldi and prevented his ¹⁸⁶⁰ expedition along the sea further in the papal states. So Garibaldi couldn't conquer Naples and Sicily. Therefore he arguably hindered/stalled the creation of the kingdom of Italy in 1861.

Overall.

Exemplar 1 makes valid points on both parts (i) and (ii) but does not reach an explicit, substantiated judgement so was placed in Level 4 and given 5 marks.

Question 1 (b)*

(b)* 'Relations with the Church were the most serious domestic problem for the development of Italy during the years from 1861 to 1896.'

How far do you agree?

[20]

Responses to this question generally followed the pattern of assessing the nominated factor, relations with the Church, and then setting this against other factors, typically the incompleteness of unification, the North-South divide or economic and political problems. Better responses appreciated the instability caused in the new state by the church's hostility and also how this softened a little after 1878.

Exemplar 2

1	b	Throughout the period from 1861 to 1896 relations with the church declined greatly. Relations with the church were a serious domestic problem for Italy during the years from 1861 to 1896 however it is certain to find that the economic problems with the Brigands war and the political problems were a more serious threat to the development of Italy. Thus to a relatively large extent disagrees with the view the relations with the church were most serious threat and instead it was the economic troubles. This can be reached because of the strain it had on the south thus not full development of Italy. Relations with the church were the most serious domestic problem for the development of Italy during the years from 1861 to 1896 because of the actions of the Pope. The Pope recognised his weakening grip on power, particularly temporal power and thus the Pope issued certain statements which caused tension and impacted development of Italy. This can be seen in 1864 when the Pope issued the is Syllabus of errors which asserted the turning away from the material world and rejected liberalism. This impacted development of Italy because it meant people had to choose between their political opinion or their spiritual authority of the Pope. Thus liberalism being condemned halted development as the Pope saw this push and drive for unification as wrong. Moreover the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility was put in place in 1870 which affirmed the Pope as the supreme judge and thus his orders can not be questioned. Thus it is clear the odd war between the state and the church affected the actions of the nationalist and government who were driving the development of Italy as they did not have support from the Pope. Further this was exemplified in 1870 when the Pope rejected the letter
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2	b	from Victor Emmanuel II asking the Pope to give up his temporal authority. Thus the Church relations caused serious problems for the development of Italy 1861 to 1896. However it could be argued that the Church relations were not the most serious as the removal of the Pope's temporal power in 1870 was relatively efficient and easy to remove and furthermore the benefits of the Pope not having power were much greater. This is because the Pope's power was dependent on the French garrison and thus by it being removed due to the Franco-Prussian war troops could enter Rome and remove the Pope's power. Further it ended the Clerical monopoly on education and this although was a threat and serious between leads up to 1870 it did not largely effect development as many people supported Victor Emmanuel and a united Italy. Thus to a large extent it is clear to disagree. The economic discontent in the 1860's in Italy was the most serious domestic problem for the development of Italy during the years from 1861 to 1896, thus to a large extent disagree that the relations with the church were the most serious problem. This is because the economic discontent was exemplified through the North South divide. The North particular individuals such as Cavour saw the South as backwards and not as humans but as an inferior species. Thus this strong divide impacted development and impacted it for a long lasting amount of time and thus the most serious domestic problem. The Mezzogiorno was largely dependent on agriculture and harvest were volatile thus affecting the development in the South. Furthermore there were problems with wealth distribution as 0.01% of the population
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2	b	in the south owned 50% of the land. Thus it is clear to see the inequality and thus the impact on development of Italy further with military cuts of 70% and the Gout tax being removed in 1868. Thus the discontent and economic problem can be seen strongly in the Brigandage war from 1861 to 1865 in which 25,000 conscripted men from the south ran away to the hills and became bandits and caused trouble for the 100,000 Piedmontese army sent to deal with them. Moreover the Italian Raid showed how development in Italy was suffering due to the economic discontent and the attitudes of the North to the South. As in the Italian Raid which lasted 6 hours, 400 people were killed, 1000 made homeless and many women were raped. General Negri stated, 'at dawn justice was done to Pontelandolfo'. Thus it is clear how this suffering and violence halted development and Italy couldn't be culturally and socially united for development. However it is also clear that Italy did develop economically through the years of 1861 to 1996. This can be clear with steel production increasing from 4000 tonnes in 1870 to 157,000 tonnes in 1900, moreover the railway expanded from 2157 km in 1870 to around 16,000 in 1900. New roads as well and 21 km. Thus it is clear the development of Italy to improve trade and thus GDP grew by 4% and thus the was economic development. However it is still clear to find that the economic discontent between the South and North was the most serious impact as Italy's growth in comparison to other European countries was not as strong as their economy grew at around 40-50% GDP. Moreover whilst the North and South unified and problems began resolved development of Italy would always suffer and thus more of
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1	b	Strong impact on development. Thus to a strong extent disagree with the claims with the claim being the most serious.
		The Political Problems in Italy from 1861 to 1891 were the most serious domestic problem for the development of Italy and thus disagree with the view. This is because of the introduction of the trasformismo into Italian Politics under Depretis. The trasformismo was a strong factor on development as it did not allow for representation of the poor particularly in the south to have a voice and thus ignored their needs. The trasformismo led to a complacent political stagnation. This is because the trasformismo brought a critic into government a day and thus kept the critic away from following to remove their strength. Furthermore it meant politicians didn't come to meetings. Another political aspect of Italy halted development in Italy because of the lobbia affair under Crispi. The lobbia affair was Crispi defaming other parliamentarians and thus stopping help. Crispi's conversation to deal with problems as if someone went against him he defamed them, thus clear corruption. This is still a problem in Italian Politics today showing the long lasting impact. Thus it is clear through these political issues Italy couldn't develop optimally to reach people's needs. However it could be argued that the trasformismo was actually a good thing as it kept extreme extremists out of power and thus allowed the Italian government to move changes and be more efficient without the attack from extremists. Moreover Depretis introduced positive reforms into politics such as the vote age decreasing from 25 to 21 increasing vote from 2% to 7% of the population. However politics was still a problem as

2	b	He ultimately caused parting with the 29 Prime ministers over the next 50 years and sowed the seeds for people to look and first distrust of the fascist Mussolini, this problem for the development of Italy, this disagrees with the view that relations with the church were most serious. Overall Overall, it is clear to find that the economic problems were the most serious domestic problem for the development of Italy during the years from 1861 to 1896. This is because the economic problems were the root cause of other problems faced and thus if the economic problems of the south and attitudes to the south were improved then the extremist going against government would reduce. Thus the problems for Italian politics would reduce as people in the south if they faced less taxes and there to be more wealthy, communism would not resent the government as much and thus development of Italy could thrive. Moreover the church was not a serious problem as with the removal of temporal power in 1870 it was beneficial to allow Victor Emmanuel to have full control and pursue Italian development and thus to a large extent disagree with the view that relations with the church were the most serious domestic problem for development of Italy.
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Exemplar 2 is a well-informed response, strong on detail and understanding with a clear line of reasoning and some interim judgement. It was given 17 marks, Level 6.

Influence of the Catholic church in 19th Century Italy

Candidates should not underestimate the influence the Catholic church wielded in 19th Century Italy.

Question 2 (a) (i) and (ii)

2

(a) Which of the following had the greater effect on the development of Italy?

(i) The revolution of 1848–1849 in Piedmont

(ii) The revolution of 1848–1849 in Rome

Explain your answer with reference to both **(i)** and **(ii)**.

[10]

Candidates often produced effective answers, recognising that the practical effects of the Piedmontese revolution were more important for Italy's development than the more symbolic drama enacted in Rome. Better responses appreciated the fact that Piedmont mounted a direct military challenge to Austria and also enacted lasting constitutional reform, whereas the Roman revolution was characterised by Mazzini's gestural reforms and Garibaldi's heroic defeat at the hands of the French.

Question 2 (b)*

(b)* 'Support for nationalism in Italy during the years from 1789 to 1847 was insignificant.'

How far do you agree?

[20]

The dates in the question meant that some coverage of the French revolutionary and Napoleonic periods was required, as well as treatment of the restoration period from 1814. As a consequence, many answers lacked evenness and coherence and did not get to grips with what evidence of nationalism there was so fell back on generalisation.

Exemplar 3

2	b	Support for nationalism in Italy during one years from 1789 to 1847 was insignificant to an extent. Although during this time many efforts were made to spread nationalism ultimately it was unsuccessful and insignificant during one period. This is shown through Napoleons rule over Italy from 1805 to 1815, and the Revolutions of 1820-21 and 1830-31. Napoleon I came to power within Italy in 1805, structuring Italy in a way it never had been before, into 3 districts and under one ruler. Napoleon introduced Code Napoleon which made every citizen of Italy under one law despite class, he also introduced better education systems where it was mandatory for children of Italy to learn how to read and write. Under his rule Italians fought together in one army establishing a new sense of nationalism that was not present before it. However, this title was undermined in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna that allowed Reactionary Monarchs even as Victor Emmanuel I and King Ferdinand I to take back control of their states due to Napoleons abdication after the battle of Waterloo. Thus ending the brotherhood between Italians from different states as the monarchs refused to support the concept of nationalism. Showcasing a lack of support for nationalism as a whole.
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The revolutions of 1820-21 also show ~~much~~ support for nationalism were ~~insignificant~~ during this time. Secret societies such as Carbonari used secret passwords and rituals to remain safe, taking part in the revolutions. The revolution with Sicily was caused by many factors including the fact they did not want to be ^{governed alongside} ~~attached to~~ Naples and be their own state. This immediately presents a sense of lack of support for Italian nationalism as whilst being joined, it sparked cause for the revolt which led to temporary separation seen by the rebels as a short term success. However, it could be argued there was significant support ^{for national} at Naples, Sicily and Piedmont did not want to be controlled by their reactionary monarchs ^{and wanted a constitution} highlighting a common interest that boosted nationalist ideals.

The Revolutions of 1830-31 can also support that there was a lack of nationalist support and it was insignificant due to ^{the falling} ~~now separate~~ ~~their~~ ~~arms~~ ~~were~~ membership of the Carbonari that had played a huge role in the previous revolutions, sparking nationalist support was dying out. This can also be shown by the divided aims of the revolutions in Modena, Parma and Papal States. Under the Pope's rule in the papal states, the ~~rebellion~~ revolt also had an aspect of economic hardships

		where there was low literacy rates, high taxes and poor high poverty / famine rates which consumed the revolution to some place and put a stop to the oppressive rule of the Pope. Thus showcasing a ter support for nationalism as insignificant as it was not a driving force in the revolution. However, it could be argued support for nationalism during the revolutions were significant as Parma and Modena rebels set up a chain of communication and provisional government. This was the first time states had worked together in revolt sparking nationalism and brotherhood only seen before under Napoleon's rule. In Conclusion, support for nationalism in Italy during the years 1789-1847 was insignificant to an extent. Although attempts were made to kick start and spread nationalism seen through the rule of Napoleon and the revolutions, ultimately the support was insignificant and did not hold long term.
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Exemplar 3 maintains relevance and has some understanding of nationalism in the Napoleonic and restoration periods. The response is light on detail and there is no treatment of nationalist ideologues, such as Mazzini. Because the response generally addresses the question and has some understanding. It was given 11 marks, Level 4.

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