

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE History

Candidate Exemplar Work (June 2009):

- HIS2K: A New Roman Empire?

Mussolini's Italy, 1922–1945



The following responses are not 'model' answers, nor are they indicative of specific overall grades, but are intended to illustrate the application of the mark scheme for this unit. These responses should be read in conjunction with the HIS2K Question Paper, Sources Booklet and Mark Scheme.

Copies of the paper and are available from e-AQA or the AQA History Department.

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AQA GCE History Teacher Resource Bank Commentaries on June 2009 AS answers

General Introduction by the Chief Examiner

The first June examination series for the new AS specification saw some excellent examples of well prepared candidates who were able to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding by addressing the questions set directly and efficiently. Sadly, it also suggested that, whilst some candidates knew the material quite well, they struggled to apply it successfully to the questions asked. At the lowest end, there were, of course, some candidates whose knowledge let them down, but even these might have been able to achieve more highly had they thought more carefully about each question's demands.

The importance of timing for both Units needs to be stressed. In Unit 1 candidates should allow themselves approximately 12 minutes for the first part question and 25 minutes for the second. In Unit 2, they could spend 15 minutes on the first part question and 30 minutes on the second, but they are likely to need slightly longer for the source question. Good time keeping is essential in any examination. No matter how successful the answer to the first part question, an incomplete second part question will always mean a loss of marks (notes receive limited credit).

These commentaries are intended to help teachers and candidates to understand the demands of each question type and consequently to encourage students to perform at the highest level of which they are capable. Please note that errors relating to Quality of Written Communication (of spelling, syntax, etc.) have been reproduced without correction. Please note that the AQA convention for question numbering will be changing as from the June 2010 examination papers. Examples of the new format for question papers can be found elsewhere in the Teacher Resource Bank.

Unit 1

The first part of each question in Unit 1 (those questions labelled 01, 03 and 05 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks candidates to 'explain why' an event, issue or development came about. The best candidates answered this question, not only with a selection of reasons (and a minimum of three well-explained reasons was expected for Level 3/4), but also by showing how those reasons linked together. This is essential to meet Level 4 criteria and can be achieved by prioritising, differentiating between the long and short-term factors, or showing how different categories of reasons, such as political, social and religious inter-link. It is not, however, enough to simply assert that the links exist – they also needed explaining.

Candidates who only performed at Level 2 often wrote too descriptively, whilst many achieved a good Level 3 by offering a range of relevant and clearly explained reasons but failing to make any links between them. As the exemplars demonstrate, answers did not need to be long but they had to be effectively focused and directed to achieve good marks.

The second part of each question (those questions labelled 02, 04 and 06 in the new numbering style) asked for a response to a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful'. Each question stem invited candidates to offer a balanced response and this was the key to an award at high Level 3, 4 or 5. Most answers which achieved only a Level 2 or a low/mid-Level 3 mark contained too much description, were excessively one-sided or lacked depth and precision in their use of examples. Some candidates also failed to address the full question set, often

by ignoring starting or finishing dates. To achieve the higher levels, candidates needed to balance one side against another. For example, a question asking how far 'X' contributed to 'Y' demanded a consideration of the importance of other factors which also contributed to 'Y'. Sometimes questions, particularly 'how important' questions (e.g. how important was 'X' in bringing about 'Y?'), could be balanced by considering the ways in which 'X' was important as opposed to the ways in which it was not, rather than introducing 'other factors'; either approach was equally legitimate. The crucial test of an answer was, therefore, the degree to which the candidate was able to argue the issue and how well that argument was supported by accurate and precise evidence. The best answers at Level 5 managed to sustain a focus and convey convincing individual judgement.

Unit 2

The first part of question 1 (labelled 01 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks students how far the views in two given sources (A and B) differ, in relation to a given topic. Perhaps the most common error was to waste time writing a paragraph or more about the source content before addressing differences. Levels were awarded according to how well candidates identified and explained differences of **view**. This was not simply an exercise in source comprehension, so such answers received an award of only Level 1/2. Contrasting 'views' required students to go beyond the mere words of the sources or their omissions, and to assess 'how far' the sources differed required some awareness of the degree of **similarity** they contained. To meet the full demands of the question and obtain an award at high level 3/4, candidates also needed to introduce some contextual own knowledge to explain the differences and similarities identified – possibly (but not necessarily) referring to provenance when it helped the explanation, and, more often, explaining references in the sources and drawing on their contextual knowledge to account for differing views.

In the second part of question 1 (labelled 02 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to answer a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful' with reference to the sources as well as their own knowledge. The best answers to these questions maintained a balanced argument (as explained for Unit 1 above) and the information given in the sources was used in support of that argument. Poorer answers tried to address the sources separately – at the beginning or end of the answer, or sometimes as an asterisked afterthought. Those who omitted them altogether could not obtain more than top Level 2. Whilst the main criteria for the higher levels was the degree of argument, the precision of the evidence and the judgement conveyed, in addition to these, good source use could ensure that students were placed higher in a level than those who used the sources in a perfunctory way. Source use needed to be explicit, and the best candidates appreciated that Source C was provided to give further ideas and/or information that was of direct relevance to this question.

In questions 2 and 3 (03/04 and 05/06 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to respond to an 'explain why' question – on which comments will be found under the Unit 1 commentary above – and a short, provocative quotation about which they were invited to explain why they agreed or disagreed. The demands here were similar to those for the second part of Unit 1 (b) questions. In adopting a view about the quotation, candidates were expected to examine the opposing arguments in order to reach a balanced judgement on the extent of their agreement/disagreement.

Sally Waller Chief Examiner December 2009

GCE History HIS2K: A New Roman Empire? Mussolini's Italy, 1922–1945

Responses to June 2009 Questions

Candidate 1

- 1 (a) Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to the Matteotti Affair of 1924. (12 marks)

Source A clearly states that the murder of Matteotti “almost toppled Mussolini’s government”. Evidence is then explained as it talks about how the “aventine secession” occurred as a protest to remove Mussolini from power. Source A also, clearly underlines a second danger – “the conservative element”.

In contrast to source B, it explores the ideas that Mussolini “denied any responsibility” in relation to the murder of Matteotti. It also talks about how the “country seemed willing to give him the benefit of the doubt”. This may be due to the “Vatican’s newspaper” and is evident as the Pope withdrew support for the Popolar in 1923. Source B also mentions the king’s role and another distinction emerges as source A talks about how the anti-fascists wanted to convince the conservatives however, source B clearly states that “mainstream conservative opinion was still behind government.

Similarities from the two sources are shown in the respect that both sources state that Mussolini understood that the murder of Matteotti was a danger to his power. Furthermore, both sources also identify that the conservatives wanted to work along side the Fascist government.

It is important to take the source into consideration, as both have been recently published and are looking back in heinseit.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer makes some relevant general comments about similarity and difference but the comparisons are not well developed. The approach to the sources is descriptive and somewhat muddled as to the views being expressed by their authors. The answer merits mid-Level 2 overall – 4 marks.

Candidate 2

- 1 (a) Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to the Matteotti Affair of 1924. (12 marks)

In Source A the writer argues that the main reason Mussolini’s government survived the Matteotti crisis was the continuing support of the conservatives. He states that the affair ‘crippled’ Mussolini and that as a result of it the conservatives became more powerful within the government. In Source B the writer acknowledges that the conservatives remained supporting, but gives Mussolini more credit for being in control – he instructed his staff to ‘create as much confusion as possible’. Source B portrays Mussolini as more powerful within the Matteotti affair and shows that he was in control, whereas Source A argues that he would not have survived without the support of the conservatives.

Sources A and B also disagree on the source of the danger to Mussolini from

outside, Source A gives importance to the Aventine Secession, whereas Source B does not mention the Aventine Secession and states instead that the principal threat to Mussolini from outside his cabinet came from 'the press', which Source A does not mention. However, both sources agree that there was a source of danger within his own cabinet.

Source B also credits numerous other powerful people and organisations that did not oppose Mussolini: namely the King, who 'did nothing' and the Vatican who 'preached forgiveness'. This shows that the writer of Source B thinks that there was opportunity for Mussolini to be defeated from outside, and that he thinks that the inaction of these people was crucial to Mussolini's survival. Source A mentions the Aventine Secession and lists 'Liberals, Catholics, Socialists...' as groups opposed to Mussolini, but does not acknowledge the ineffectual nature of their protect when Mussolini was backed up by such powerful institutions. In fact, it does not mention the support of the king as at all important.

Source B differs from Source A in its estimation of the power personally held by Mussolini – it credits him with influence where Source A does not. It also mentions the King and the Vatican as important, where Source A does not. However, both sources do agree on the power of the conservatives. They differ quite markedly in their views on the nature and sources of Mussolini's opposition and support.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer is crisply expressed and shows a precise understanding of the textual evidence of the two sources. It also has a strong grasp of the views put forward in each source and never slips into line-by-line paraphrase. There is an extended explanation of a range of differences, supported by appropriate specific examples, followed by an equally secure analysis of similarities. Throughout, the comparison shows differentiation as to the degree of similarity and difference, with a secure implicit understanding of the context. This is a substantial, controlled answer, meriting top Level 4 – 12 marks.

Candidate 3

- 1 (b) How important was the use of violence and intimidation in the consolidation of Mussolini's Fascist regime between 1922 and 1929? (24 marks)

Mussolini consolidated his regime between 1922 and 29 through a mixture of opportunism, clever politics used to win support and intimidation of his opponents. Although intimidation and violence was not perhaps as important as other factors, it was used by Mussolini at the crucial moments to enable him to become more powerful.

After Mussolini came to power in October 1922, he almost immediately obtained 'temporary' emergency powers for a year. In December he also set up the Fascist Grand Council, as an alternative to Parliament, and the MVSN, an organisation to create his own private army. These early measures were possible because Mussolini convinced the King and Parliament that they would enable him to increase his personal control he portrayed himself as a strong leader, a welcome change after years of weak Liberal Rule. The Acerbo Law of 1923 was along similar lines – it did away with the system of Proportional Representation, which had meant that it was almost impossible for any decision to be reached in Parliament, as all the different parties disagreed with each other. Here the years of

weak rule and constant changes of Prime Minister were important – Mussolini was a strong leader.

Violence and intimidation were important in the 1924 elections, where, as Source C mentions, the Fascist won 'by a landslide'. They won 66% of the vote. This high figure was mainly due to violence and intimidation. The Fascist squads attacked socialists and allowed Fascist supporters to vote more than once. As Source C describes, the election was 'marred by irregularities and violence'. This was a crucial episode in Mussolini's consolidation of power as a parliamentary majority gave the Fascists a hugely dominant position in Parliament whereas before they had been firmly in the minority. By 1925 there was an all-Fascist cabinet.

Matteotti's denunciation of the election violence and his subsequent murder by Dumini and other leading fascists led to the outrage of much of Mussolini's opposition. As Source A described, the Aventine Secession walked out of Parliament in protest, expecting the king to dismiss Mussolini. The king had no such plans – the high Socialist make-up of the Secession meant it was not at all appealing to him as an alternative government. Their action had been unconstitutional and Mussolini simply banned them from coming back. In a roundabout way violence was a positive force in Mussolini's consolidation of power here – it had looked at first to be the end of him, but it caused the Aventine Secession and therefore an even greater Fascist presence in Parliament. The weakness of the king was also a factor – he had the power to dismiss Mussolini and did not.

Source B also mention the support of the Vatican. Fascism and the Church showed many of the same Conservative values, and Mussolini had secured their support in 1923 when he made it compulsory in elementary schools and persecuted the free-masons. The two also shared a fear of Socialism. In 1929 the Lateran parts secured the support of the Church – Mussolini compensated them for their losses after the Risorgimento. However, it is debateable as to whether this helped him to consolidate his power – it allowed the Church to continue as an ulterior influence as Italians' lives, and prevented Mussolini from having a monopoly on their support.

Mussolini's consolidation of Fascism was based not purely on violence and intimidation – though it certainly played a useful role for him in certain situations, namely the 1924 election. The influence of the past and the fear of Socialism possessed by the king, the Church and the Conservatives, all of whom were very powerful, also enabled him to consolidate the state and increase his personal power. The Matteotti affair was crucial as it resulted in the Legge Fascistissime of December 1925 and Mussolini's power to issue laws by personal decree, both of which were hugely important in the consolidation of his regime. Therefore violence and intimidation were important, although not perhaps in a way that Mussolini would have expected or planned.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer is concise and direct, showing superior skills of organisation and written communication. Precise, selected evidence is deployed with analytical depth. There is a fluent, balance argument in response to the question, showing good conceptual grasp and consistent flashes of insight and judgement. The use of the sources is never descriptive but always integrated into the answer, which clearly merits top Level 5 – 24 marks.

Candidate 4

- 1 (b) How important was the use of violence and intimidation in the consolidation of Mussolini's Fascist regime between 1922 and 1929? (24 marks)

The Importance of violence to the Fascist and Mussolini to gain power was extremely high. It had been used before Mussolini came into power to remove the apparent socialist threat and was continuously used way after 1929 up until the Sab republic in 1943.

Both Sources A and B describe how violence had been used to remove a political opponent. Source C also agrees that "The electorate campaign was marred with irregularities and violence." Source C also continues in explaining that violence was used to remove Matteotti.

In addition Source C describes how "the conservatives became more wary of opposition" due to violence forcing and removing those that opposed the Fascist party and Mussolini.

Furthermore Source C mentions the creation of a secret police and how political parties and trade unions were brought under control. These created great intimidation as many feared their position in society allowing Mussolini to continue to rule the Nation unopposed. Source B also supports this view as the king did nothing in relation in order to retain his power and more importantly not be removed from head of state. Not only this but many people began to simply obey and become loyal to Mussolini in order to retain the position as well as be promoted or given more governmental significance.

Finally only those who fully believed in Anti-Fascism ever stood up to the violence of the Fascist squads and later National militia. This is shown in Source A as only "Socialist, Republicans and Communists were drawn from parliament" as these were the frequent political target of the Fascist regime. In addition the often outraged Papacy signed the Lateran agreements in 1929 as a result of Fascist intimidation and power and even though this agreement did not last long and was over by 1939 it had shown the power and dominance over other potential powerful groups who were concerned about the threat of violence.

As you can see violence played a pivotal role in the consolidation of Mussolini's Fascist regime between 1922 and 1929 as other political groups and powers did little to stand up against the Fascist regime problems such as the Matteotti crisis occurred or when Anti-Semitism hit the country which most did not agree with or support yet thousands of Jews were sent away.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer has relevance and awareness of the general issues in the question but it lacks accurate details and is handicapped by its weaknesses in the quality of written communication (making spelling mistakes when quoting from the sources is particularly unfortunate). The sources are used adequately but the own knowledge offered is slender and insecure. The conclusion is rather muddled and lacking focus on the question. The answer merits mid-Level 2 – 9 marks.

Candidate 5

- 2 (a) Explain why Mussolini launched the 'Battle for Grain' in 1925. (12 marks)

In order for Mussolini to achieve his aim's of restoring Italy to the great days of Ancient Rome and be a powerful country, it had to be self-sufficient. Battle of the Grain was the increase in production in the grain. If Italy didn't have to trade with others, and could rely on its self it could go to war with anyone without any fear.

Mussolini wanted to gain more colonial empires in northern Africa and the Mediterraen. In order to avoid any sanctions on trade, as it did happen during the invasion of Ethiopia, Italy had to be self-sufficient. Mussolini encouraged farmers in the south to produce goods that were more suitable to grow if those conditions. e.g. Olive.

Also in order for Italy to be a great power it had to rely less on imports and produce more. Many farmers were given subsidies to buy new machinery and tractors. They were also given free advice on how to grow better crops. Farmers were guaranteed high prices for production.

To conclude Mussolini launched the 'Battle of Grain' to increase production and allow it to become self-sufficient. It would be easier for them to go to war and achieve their foreign ambitions.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer addresses a range of relevant general issues in the question but it lacks precise specific evidence and is often loose and generalised in its written communication. The conclusion adds little but merely repeats what has already been presented. The answer merits Level 3 but is placed lower in the level due to its shallow and generalised expression. Level 3 – 7 marks.

Candidate 6

- 2 (b) 'Mussolini's economic policies in the years 1925 to 1939 were very successful.'
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. (24 marks)

Throughout Mussolini's Fascist regime his economic policies altered quite frequently according to Il Duce's vision for the nation. At first Mussolini was only concerned with consolidating support of industrialists but as the 1920s developed he became to keep present his own vision for the country's economic welfare, mainly in the form of the corporate state. In the 1930s Mussolini's foreign policy ambitions made the strive for autarky the most prominent economic issue. Throughout this changing economic climate there were some successful and some not so successful policies.

In many ways Mussolini enacted many successful policies during this time, especially early on. The appointment of expert de Stefani as treasury minister not only pleased industrialists but limited inflation as he advised less government spending. It also allowed the continuation of the economic boom which increased the value of workers wages. The early policies of The Battle for Grain and The Battle for the Marshes were also very important. Grain imports were reduced by 70% making Ital much more self sufficient. The Battle for the Marshes also helped

increase the amount of available farmland and, through proper irrigates, the number of cases of malaria were reduced.

Another of Mussolini's successes was the way the fascist government dealt with the depression, as they ignored the *laissez faire* ideas of western democracies. Public works schemes, notably building motorways and hydroelectric power plants, were instrumental in providing employment and putting money back into circulation. The government was also not afraid to bail out the banks, with the IRI established to take control of their shares. This gave banks a lifeline and the IRI also replaced banks in giving loans to industry and offered latest advice on management. Though this may have cost the tax payer much money, it did allow the country to weather the depression a little better than western democracies.

However, despite Mussolini's early success with the various economic battles and dealing with the depression, the economy also did experience much failure in this period. Autarky was never achieved as the battle for grain was dependant on oil and fertiliser imports. Mussolini's strive for autarky meant export industries went into serious decline. This was particularly prevalent after the Battle for the Lira, where the reduction of the lira to 90 to the pound made exports twice as expensive to foreign buyers. Import duties also made exported goods more expensive for Italian buyers. Living standards seriously declined with real wages estimated to drop 10% during this period, as reflected in the declining consumption of meat and vegetables. Italy lay 18th in a European table for daily calorie intake. Though some industrial workers migrated to cities they found little better there.

Overall, Mussolini's early economic policy was relatively successful. However, his push for autarky had many negative impacts on the economy. The export industry went into serious decline, as did living standards. High expenditure on foreign adventures left Italy in debt and it was unprepared in 1939 for a European war as it could not even replace its losses. Mussolini's foreign policy ambition eclipsed the economic welfare of Italy.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The answer is well directed with a sustained focus on assessment and evaluation. The introduction provides a convincing overview, showing excellent grasp of the political context of Mussolini's economic policies, especially the economic battles. There is a slight lack of balance and coverage, with little on the later 1930s, but overall, the answer merits upper Level 4 – 20 marks..