
A-level HISTORY

Italy and Fascism, c1900–1945

Paper 2L

Specimen 2014

Morning Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is **2L**.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 60 minutes on Question 01
 - 45 minutes on each of the two questions in Section B.
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Section AAnswer Question 01.

Source A

Adapted from Carlo Levi's book, 'Christ Stopped at Eboli', in which he describes how peasants reacted to Mussolini's declaration of war on Abyssinia in 1935. Levi was an anti-Fascist writer who was arrested and sent into exile to a remote region of southern Italy in 1935. The book was published after his release from prison in 1943.

The peasants were not interested in war. They considered war to be just another unavoidable misfortune, like a tax on goats. 3 October, the day of the official opening of the war was a miserable sort of day. About twenty or twenty-five peasants roped in by the police and the Fascist scouts stood woodenly in the square to listen to the historical pronouncements that came over the radio. The war, so light-heartedly set in motion in Rome, was greeted in Cagliari with stony indifference. Don Luigi spoke from the balcony of the town hall. He enthused about the eternal grandeur of Rome, the seven hills, the wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus. He said the world hated us for our greatness but that the enemies of Rome would soon bite the dust, because Rome was everlasting and invincible. Huddled against the wall below, the peasants listened in silence, shielding their eyes from the sun and looking, in their black suits, as dark and gloomy as bats.

Source B

Adapted from Mussolini's speech in the Piazza Venezia in Rome announcing Italy's entry into the Second World War, June 1940, with comments (in brackets) on the reaction to it by a contemporary observer.

An hour that has been marked out by Destiny is sounding in the sky above our Fatherland! (Lively acclaim.) The hour of fateful decisions! Our declaration of war (Acclamations, loud shouts of 'War! War!') has already been handed to the ambassadors of Great Britain and France. If today we have decided to face the risks and sacrifices of a war, it is because our honour, our interests and our future firmly demand it. A great people can only remain great by holding true to its sacred obligations and not running away from the supreme tests that decide the course of history.

Source C

Adapted from an account by the American journalist Herbert Matthews of the circumstances of Mussolini's speech announcing Italy's entry into the Second World War in 1940. Matthews was head of the Rome Bureau of 'The New York Times' from 1939 to 1941.

There was an immense demonstration for the Duce in front of the Piazza Venezia, but it was entirely organised. The local 'fasci' had their orders to collect members, meet at a certain time and proceed to the square. Fascists went round telling shopkeepers that they had to close at 5 o'clock. There was not the slightest spontaneous feeling and the only cheering came from those, especially the students, who had been brought to the centre of the mob, under Mussolini's balcony. Outside that relatively tiny group of organised applauders, there was a light-hearted indifference which was really appalling, considering the importance of what was happening.

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With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the response of the Italian people to Mussolini's promises to restore Italian greatness through war.

[30 marks]

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0 2

'The post-war crisis in Italy in the years 1919 to 1921 arose from the deep-rooted failings of the ruling elites since 1900.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 3

'It was violence, and the fear of violence, that enabled Mussolini to consolidate his power between October 1922 and 1929.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 4

To what extent had Mussolini's regime brought about a 'Fascist Social Revolution' by 1945?

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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