

## **A LEVEL**

*Examiners' report*

# **HISTORY A**

**H505**



For first teaching in 2015

## **Y213/01 Summer 2019 series**

Version 1

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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. 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 can be downloaded from OCR.

## Paper Y213/01 series overview

Y213 is one of twenty four units for the revised A Level examination for GCE History. This unit tests an extended period of History of about one hundred years through a short answer essay and a traditional essay. The paper contains two questions, each having two parts, a short answer essay and a traditional essay and candidates have to answer both parts of one question.

To do well on the short essay question (a), candidates need to consider the significance or importance 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. In order to reach the higher levels candidates will need to assess the issues they discuss and reach a supported judgement, at least in the conclusion.

| <b><i>Candidates who did well on this paper generally did the following:</i></b>  | <b><i>Candidates who did less well on this paper generally did the following:</i></b>   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gave equal consideration to the two issues in the short answer essay</li> <li>• reached a developed and supported judgement as to which issue was more significant or important</li> <li>• linked their knowledge of the issues to the focus of the question</li> <li>• in answering the essay question, discussed at least two issues in depth</li> <li>• gave supporting detail that was both accurate and relevant to the question set, not just the topic</li> <li>• reached a supported judgement about the issue in the question</li> <li>• made a series of interim judgements about the issues discussed in relation to the question.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• considered only one of the issues or discussed one in a superficial way</li> <li>• produced a judgement that was not supported and was therefore assertion or a judgement that did not follow logically from the response</li> <li>• were unable to use their knowledge to address the issue in the question</li> <li>• showed a poor understanding of the major issues relevant to the essay</li> <li>• were unable to support their answer with relevant or accurate material</li> <li>• did not focus on the precise wording of the question</li> <li>• made unsupported comments about issues which were no more than assertions.</li> </ul> |

## Option overview

Question 1 was more popular, than Question 2.

### Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Which of the following had the greater impact on the development of the French Revolution?

(i) The Civil Constitution of the Clergy

(ii) The flight to Varennes

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

[10]

This question worked particularly well as it offered real scope for candidates to display their understanding of two crucial, linked factors in the development of the French Revolution. As ever, and particularly in the French Revolution, accurate chronology is vital and most candidates were confident in this respect, placing the two events in the right order and relating them well to the revolution as a whole. Weaker responses often did not grasp the significance of the clerical oath that followed the Civil Constitution, but, overall, candidates wrote thoughtfully about both factors, as is illustrated by Exemplar 1.

#### Exemplar 1

The Civil Constitution of the Clergy had a great impact on the development of the French Revolution. The National Constituent Assembly issued it on the 1<sup>st</sup> Estate (the Clergy) in order to ~~cut~~ <sup>take</sup> their power and take ~~power~~ <sup>more power</sup> for <sup>the AS</sup> themselves, taking ownership of and selling church lands, abolishing the tithes (tax paid to the 1<sup>st</sup> estate), <sup>making the church reliant on the state for wages/money</sup> and requiring all priests to swear an oath of loyalty to the New Constitution. This had a great impact on the Revolution for many reasons. For example, it ~~attended~~ resulted in the alienation of many peasants in the countryside, who were very religious and strongly Catholic, so resented any government intervention in what they saw as an authority higher than the government. This led to several small riots and uprisings and reducing overall unity of the 3<sup>rd</sup> estate, who were 98% of the population.

Overall, the flight to Varennes <sup>had</sup> ~~was~~ more of an impact on the development of the French Revolution, because it was a more concrete manifestation of the King's lack of support for the Revolution, and so directly led to his downfall, ~~an~~ <sup>a</sup> great ~~important~~ development as it allowed all future radical revolutionary governments to come into power. However, the civil constitution of the clergy was also important as it led to a split of some from supporting the Revolution because of their religion, but was not as important as <sup>it</sup> ~~it~~ did not have ~~so~~ much of a direct link with such a key development in the Revolution as the flight to Varennes.

The flight to Varennes also had a great impact on the development of the Revolution. This was when, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1790, Louis and his family attempted to flee Paris, <sup>secretly</sup> where they were effectively prisoners, to outside Paris, where he could negotiate with more of an advantage with the National Constituent Assembly. However he was stopped by officials at Varennes and sent back to Paris. This had a great impact on the Revolution, as it was a concrete demonstration of his lack of support for the Revolution, whereas before, people had assumed he wasn't against it because he offered such little resistance to it. Now, this physical demonstration of his lack of support led to an ~~increase in those in favour of~~ <sup>increase in those in favour of</sup> it was a key factor of the failure of the Constitutional Monarchy and his ~~head~~ <sup>beheading</sup> in 1793, and even before that a real mistrust of the monarchy from the nation.

## Question 1 (b)

(b)\* 'Napoleon himself brought about his own downfall.' How far do you agree?

[20]

Many candidates found this question attractive and produced effective answers. This is a 'big' question and a considerable variety of material can be brought to bear in answering it. One obvious discriminator in the ways in which the candidates discussed the important reasons for Napoleon's downfall was their control of accurate, detailed evidence, whether it be campaign losses, the composition of anti-Napoleonic coalitions or, simply, chronology. The best responses showed a good appreciation of Napoleon's own failings and how these caught up with him after 1812. Exemplar 2 has a grip of the question but is something of a list of factors, lacking the range or development expected for higher marks in Level 5.

## Exemplar 2

Napoleon's downfall ~~to~~ came about for several reasons, such as the Spanish War, the war with Russia and the continental system. While the failures of these were not all directly his fault, his voluntary involvement in all of them leads to the conclusion that he himself brought about his own downfall. One reason for Napoleon's downfall was the failure of the war in Russia. ~~6000~~ 600,000 troops left to conquer Russia, and the actual invasion was a success. However, the retreatment of the French back to France after their victory proved disastrous. The Russians scorched earth so it could not be relied upon by the French to survive <sup>as it was unsuitable for crops</sup> or live, and bands of criminals ~~patrol~~ patrolled the lands the French had to pass through, making attacks and robberies common and severely depleting their numbers. Only 25,000 out of 600,000 soldiers returned to France after the expedition, leading it to be seen as a failure and ~~as~~ undermined Napoleon's position of power ~~was~~ severely, leading to his downfall. While ~~it is~~ as the conditions were not necessarily

~~Another reason~~ Napoleon's fault, his decision to go to war and arguably bad leadership in getting them out was, and led to his downfall.

Another reason Napoleon brought about his own downfall was the establishment of the ineffective continental system. After Britain blockaded France and refused trade with them, Napoleon established a continental system of trade between him and all his allies (countries he'd conquered), forbidding them also to trade with Britain. This proved to be ineffective and a failure, and a cause of the 'Spanish Ulcer' in defending his system, a financial drain. Bread prices went up and there were riots, showing Napoleon to be more and more unpopular, as his administration got poorer and weaker due to inefficient trade and closing of trade with Britain, leading to his downfall.

Another, final reason for the downfall of Napoleon was the 'Spanish Ulcer'. Britain ~~was~~ were attempting to invade Spain, which Napoleon had conquered, and undermined his <sup>and Continental System.</sup> empire in this way. As a result, Napoleon had to spend a lot of money, ~~and~~ resources and troops in defending Spain. Because it went on for so long and there were no ultimate benefits to it, it became known as the 'Spanish Ulcer' as it drained French supplies. This was arguably not Napoleon's fault as he was forced to do this to defend his empire; it was more Britain's persistence than Napoleon's bad decision making that made it such a problem. However, it ~~it~~ does link back to the establishment of the Continental



System, a cause of the 'Spanish ulcer' and therefore a more important reason for Napoleon's ~~the~~ downfall, and was more Napoleon's fault as he should have devised a more effective system of trade, and not been so ambitious.

Overall, I agree that it was Napoleon <sup>who</sup> brought about his own downfall, ~~as~~ the most important reason for this is that he established the continental system, which proved damning to the economy and trade of his empire, severely undermining his power and leading to his downfall. The Spanish Ulcer was also important as it was another financial drain, but not as important as the continental system as it was more of an off-shoot ~~problem~~ of the ineffectiveness, and objections by the British, of the system itself. The Spanish War was ~~also~~ also very important, as it proved that Napoleon's military prowess, which is what he had based his entire career on, and justified his dictatorial power by, was not as effective, and was possibly even weak. Overall, the ~~main~~ problem was the culmination of all these problems that Napoleon had directly ~~w~~ indirectly caused, culminating to break down his power.

\* In spreading his empire out so wide that he was too thinly spread.

## Question 2 (a)

- 2 (a) Which of the following was of greater importance in gaining support for Napoleon?
- (i) The Italian campaign
  - (ii) The Egyptian campaign

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

[10]

There were some excellent answers to this question but plenty that had some idea of how to discuss these two factors lacked important factual ammunition. In particular, the ways in which Napoleon used the contemporary media in these two campaigns was often neglected. Moreover, military and diplomatic details could be sparse or erratic. Exemplar 3 captures the essentials for a Level 5 response.

## Exemplar 3

Both of these battles between 1796-1798 held importance in gaining support for Napoleon, one more than the other.

The Italian campaign took place between 1786-1798. The Italian campaign was Napoleon's first streak of controlling a small army which he led to great success. In the early stages of his Italian campaigns Napoleon defeated many small Austrian and Dutch armies in the Northern Border of Italy using new tactics which many opposing enemies weren't accustomed to, such as using their artillery more effectively, living off the land reducing supply times and marching around 25 kilometres per day. ~~From~~ ~~was~~ ~~of~~ These small victories was gaining greater support and saw him becoming more feared by the Austrians. Napoleon's most significant victory came 100 kilometres outside Vienna and with this the Austrians sued for peace, showing how feared Napoleon was to his enemies.

From this Napoleon negotiated the Treaty of Campo Formio which saw Napoleon ~~and~~ and France gain Belgium and much of Northern Italy. This success can be thanked to his new and never seen before tactics as well as keeping morale amongst his small army high by having them constantly in the front line of battle.

Secondly the Egyptian campaign also held importance in gaining Napoleon greater support. Napoleon's new and unique tactics were by too powerful for the Ottomans who they were fighting as the Ottomans had severely outdated weapons and tactics such as swords and tactics which led to Napoleon and his army easily being able to ~~do~~ defeat them. This was reported back to France which gained Napoleon even more support from back home in France. However Napoleon's campaign finally came to an end after they were defeated in the Battle of Nile by the English navy. This was Napoleon's first defeat which came at the hands of the English Navy and Nelson which may have prompted his hatred for the English. This defeat may have affected Napoleon's support but because of the effective propaganda this war is reported back to France, keeping his impressive reputation intact.

In conclusion I believe that the Italian campaign had greater importance in gaining support for Napoleon as he brought France more land adding to their and eventually Napoleons empire. Also ~~this~~ the Italian campaign showed off Napoleons military skills and therefore gained greater support from many generals and officers within the French army.

## Question 2 (b)

(b)\* How important were events in Paris in the development of the French Revolution during 1789? [20]

This question proved to be the most searching on the paper, simply because it included two specific terms: 'Paris' and 'during 1789'. The best responses immediately seized on the issues raised, making the clear distinction between events in Paris in 1789 (most obviously, the fall of the Bastille and the October uprising) and events elsewhere in 1789 (Versailles, where the Estates General and National Assembly met, and the rest of the country, for instance the Grande Peur). Too often, candidates failed to make either the distinction about location or about the year 1789 and their responses lost momentum. Sadly, a number of candidates attempted to twist the question into a more general discussion of the causes of the French Revolution, using a lot of tangential pre-1789 material. Exemplar 4 is a response that does acknowledge the 1789 element in the question but fails to make a clear Paris/Versailles distinction, fitting the criteria for high Level 4, rather than Level 5.

## Exemplar 4

The events in Paris were extremely important in developing the French Revolution further during 1789. These events include the storming of the Bastille which could be seen as the official start of the Revolution, the Women's march to Versailles during the October Days and lastly the Estates General which led to the forming of the National Assembly after the

Tennis Court Oath. There are also other factors to consider such as the bad harvests and poor economic situation leading to greater unemployment, which influenced an already bad situation in Paris in 1789.

Firstly, the calling of the Estates General in ~~July~~ July 1789 ~~had~~ planted the seed in the French Revolution. The first and second estates wanted voting by order but the third estate wanted voting by head when ~~was~~ deciding what to do with the grievances and reforms. This created a month deadlock in deciding what to do and finally Louis had lost his ~~patience~~ patience and decided to lock the third estate out of the ~~meeting~~ room due to a significant difference in class and status in French society. This greatly angered the third estate who moved to a nearby ~~tennis~~ indoor tennis court and swore an oath not to disperse until they had given France a constitution. They called themselves the National Assembly and represented the people of France. News about this broke out into the Paris streets which influenced the Paris ~~army~~ mob. Louis feared a revolution so called in 2000 national guards.

However, on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 1789 the storming of the Bastille occurred which was a major turning point in the French Revolution and technically started the

the French Revolution and technically started the French Revolution. The Paris mob picked up as much arsenal as they could from shops and storerooms but had no gunpowder which was stored in the Bastille. The Paris mob stormed the Bastille and Lacroix ordered the National Guard to open fire on the mob killing 93 people and Lacroix was also murdered in the crowd and his head marched around Paris. This was very significant in the developments of the Revolution as it showed that Louis couldn't control the Paris mob and that they could effectively run riot in the streets of Paris. Also Louis had lost support of the National Guard as many were unwilling to open fire due to many of them believing in what the revolutionaries were fighting for. This was a major development of the French Revolution.

Lastly developing French Revolution in during 1789 in Paris was the October days and most importantly the Women's March to Versailles on the 10 October 1789. The 10,000 women set off in the pouring rain to Versailles in order to get the August Decrees accepted and to stop prevent Louis using the suspense into. The National Guard and Lafayette were unwilling to open fire on the women so were accepted into the Versailles palace where they ordered Louis to ~~come back~~ and his family to come back to

Paris and for Louis to accept the August Decrees. These included everyone being taxed equally, establishment of secularism and abolishing hunting rights. This was a big breakthrough for the revolutionaries as through much of the Third Estate including the Bourgeoisie as everyone was to be treated and ~~taxed~~ taxed equally and fairly. Also by bringing back Louis and his family to Paris it effectively made them prisoners within the city, and due to Louis' weak leadership it would therefore be even easier to pass laws and acts through Louis. This therefore shows that the revolutionaries had ~~lost~~ a greater amount ~~amount~~ amount of control over Louis and also shows that Louis was losing his power over France rapidly.

However events in Paris weren't the only development in the revolution there was also the very bad harvests which ~~caused~~ occurred during the early months of 1789. This had the effect of driving up bread ~~cost~~ cost, especially bread prices massively leaving peasants with very little sources of income or food. This caused a very tense situation in Paris but also across the country and ~~rising~~ prices of food rising even ~~further~~ further this inflamed and tense situation in Paris. Therefore meaning that this may have had a knock on effect causing the revolution.

Overall I believe that the ~~the~~ events which occurred in Paris during 1789 were ~~very~~ extremely important in developing the French Revolution especially the storming of the Bastille. This was a major turning point in the ~~the~~ revolution as it showed that Louis no longer had control over Paris or over ~~the~~ many of the National Guard. Also this event signified the ~~beginning~~ beginning of the French Revolution in many historians eyes. October Days especially the Women's march to Versailles was also greatly significant in developing the French Revolution as this had given the revolutionaries what they severely wanted the August Decrees as it brought tithes and equality into the tax system and the French tithing.



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