

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

HISTORY A

H505

For first teaching in 2015

Y222/01 Summer 2022 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 answers 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 OCR.

Advance Information for Summer 2022 assessments

To support student revision, advance information was published about the focus of exams for Summer 2022 assessments. Advance information was available for most GCSE, AS and A Level subjects, Core Maths, FSMQ, and Cambridge Nationals Information Technologies. You can find more information on our [website](#).

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Paper Y222/01 series overview

Y222 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 response essay and a traditional essay. The paper contains two questions, each having two parts, a short response essay and a traditional essay and candidates have to answer both parts of one question.

To do well on the short 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. 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.

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

Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Which of the following was of greater importance to President Eisenhower in containing communism in Indochina?

(i) The Geneva Conference, 1954

(ii) SEATO

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

[10]

This was the less popular of the two choices on this paper. This question elicited a range of responses with a significant number of candidates unsure of one or the other of the two given factors, meaning that many responses were partially focused. The best responses were able to demonstrate the importance of the Geneva Conference in terms of containing communism by discussing the division of Vietnam at the 17th parallel and the prevention of a communist takeover. Only the strongest responses acknowledged the lack of support from China and the USSR for Ho while weaker responses gave some description of the terms of the Geneva Conference. Many candidates explained the terms without discussing their relation to the containment of communism in Indochina.

SEATO was surprisingly less well-known and although many candidates were able to explain its purpose, fewer could point to how it did or did not contain communism. Only the strongest responses were able to discuss its weaknesses although many were able to show how it began to decline with members leaving in the 1970s and its eventual dissolution.

Exemplar 1 demonstrates a successful discussion of the Geneva Conference and a link to the containment of communism. This was a strong Level 5 response.

Exemplar 1

1	a	<p>The Geneva Conference was of greater importance to Eisenhower in containing communism in Indochina. This is because it divided Vietnam by the 17th parallel, meaning the North was Communist and the South was not. This contained Communism to North Vietnam, important to Eisenhower. Additionally it secured Diem as the leader of Vietnam in the South, and he could be influenced by the US to remain capitalist, and it fit with his ideology as well. This was important to Eisenhower - containing communism because it meant that he was assured that South Vietnam would not fall to Communism. Although there was meant to be elections in Vietnam - 1956, this did not occur, meaning Communism was contained. Furthermore, although the Geneva conference prohibited foreign powers aiding Indochina, this was soon broken, allowing Eisenhower to contain communism more by providing aid to Vietnam, to deter it from becoming Communist. Therefore the Geneva Conference was of greater importance to Eisenhower in containing Communism because it meant that there was a clear divide in Vietnam and out a capitalist and American sympathizer in power which meant South Vietnam would not fall to Communism, so it was contained in the South.</p>
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Question 1 (b)*

(b)* 'Nationalism rather than communism was the motivation for the policies and actions of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge in the period from 1975 to 1978.' How far do you agree? **[20]**

This was reasonably well answered by many candidates. Most candidates were able to differentiate between communism and nationalism with very good responses demonstrating the links between the two. Better responses demonstrated the rejection of communist ideas from other countries and discussed the Khmer Rouge's hatred of foreigners and their persecution of non-Khmer Cambodians including Chinese and Vietnamese. Few discussed religious policies.

In examining communism most candidates discussed collectivisation and the evacuation of cities as well as the anti-intellectual drives that targeted the intelligentsia. Few candidates were able to discuss the abolition of money and wages or the emphasis of revolution as a virtue.

Exemplar 2 demonstrates the level of knowledge needed for a Level 5 response; while it could be improved, it is nevertheless an example of a candidate answering the question and approaching the essay in an analytical manner.

Exemplar 2

1)	b)	<p>It can definitely be argued that Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge were motivated not by communism, but by nationalism and tying in to nationalism, even racism, with their policies and actions reflecting this.</p>
		<p>Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge's main ideology was that Khmer people were undeniably better and more advanced, than other races cultures and cultures. They aimed to protect pure Khmer people and the Khmer bloodline by removing those who weren't Khmer. This is a clear show that it was nationalism, a love for ones own country and culture that spurred them on, that then manifested into racism to then hating other countries and cultures. The main example of this is the Cambodian genocide. While Lon Nol was in power 75% of non ethnic Khmer fled, and when Pol Pot got in power, the rest were brutally murdered, 2^{million} of the 8 million people in Cambodia at the time, were killed. Killing anyone not of Khmer blood, is a especially in as brutal ways as the Khmer Rouge were, like hitting babies against trees until they died, clearly shows that it was not the communist ideas of equality for all</p>
		<p>that they were focusing on, but merely the want to remove other races from their country.</p>

The border clashes Pol Pot began to engage in with Vietnam, which was under communist control, again shows they were not driven by communism. The Khmer Rouge's hatred for Vietnamese people, viewing them as lesser than Khmer people, even though they were both communist countries in Asia, leading them to attack Vietnam, causing the ^{Vietnam} invasion of Cambodia and the eventual end to the war exhibits the deep rooted racism caused by an excess of nationalism. ~~With~~ Even the Vietnamese communists disapproved with Pol Pot's violent ways, showing it did not follow communist ideals.

Although Pol Pot's regime at this time did have communist inspiration, they followed a form of more agricultural communism, wanting to disconnect entirely from the big cities of Cambodia and live in the countryside. This led to the death march in the self-proclaimed 'year zero', where every person was 'encouraged' to the countryside, having to march even if they could barely walk and being shot if they were unable to. This still violent method, as well as the disconnecting from the outside world ~~was~~ having no real foreign relations, was reminiscent of communist

ideals, so it was that removal from a capitalist lifestyle into a more basic one. But while aspects of the regime were communist, it was the instant focus of their efforts into removing anyone who wasn't ethnic Khmer and ~~brainwashing ethnic~~ ^{believing} Khmer, even children, into the racist ideals that other cultures were inferior, that makes nationalism the main motivation.

Not only did the Khmer Rouge take it upon themselves to 'punish' Cambodia with a mass genocide in the killing fields, but they also taught their nationalist, but arguably racist, ideals to the Khmer Rouge. They ~~took part in a form of~~ brainwashed the Khmer people into believing that they were superior and any other nationality was inferior, and did not deserve to live. Children were mainly targeted for this 'brainwashing' even being encouraged to inform on their parents. While the teachings of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge to their people, mainly the manner of execution, should have revolved around anti-capitalism and other key communist ideals, if their ~~as~~ motivation was communism, the nationalist focus cannot be ignored.

In conclusion, it definitely cannot be argued that communism was the sole or even main motivation for Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge's actions and policies. While yes, some of their actions and policies did follow communist ideals, like the disconnection from the outside world, and moving the nation to the countryside, this was not what spurred them on. Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge's main focus was consistently the belief that ethnic Khmer were superior, and therefore the aim to remove other nationalities, like through the horrific Cambodian genocide. In reality, communism was almost an excuse or cover up for the true nationalist motivations, a love for their own morality. And this nationalism manifested in a violent, hate-filled regime which led to the loss of so many lives, all as part of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge's policies.

Question 2 (a)

2 (a) Which of the following was of greater importance in ending the war in Vietnam?

- (i) The Tet Offensive, 1968
- (ii) The US bombing campaign, 1969–1972

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

[10]

This was the more popular of the two questions. Most candidates were able to discuss both factors, although the bombing campaign of 1969-72 was often characterised by generalised information and confusion with Rolling Thunder. The strongest responses were able to name some of the campaigns such as Linebacker and wrote in detail about the incursions into Laos, etc. However only the strongest responses linked this to Nixon's desire to end the war and the peace conference. Tet was well-known by most, although some argued that this was a huge military defeat for the US and the ARVN. Most were able to link Tet to dissatisfaction at home and a growing anti-war movement and thus demonstrate links to the question.

Misconception



Several candidates included Rolling Thunder as part of the bombing campaigns of 1969-72.

Question 2 (b)*

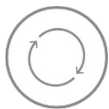
(b)* 'The incompetence of Diem's army was the main reason for his overthrow in 1963.' How far do you agree? [20]

Many responses were able to call on a range of factors in this essay, ranging from corruption, Diem's leadership, religious policies as well as the incompetence of the army. Weaker responses went beyond 1963 with discussions of My Lai and Tet, with limited understanding of Diem's overthrow. Mid-range responses tended to focus on other factors, with limited knowledge of Diem's army, but with good understanding of the corruption in government and the repressive nature of the regime. These responses preferred to discuss the strengths of Ho's army and Giap's role. Strategic Hamlets were well-known as were the attacks on Buddhists. Only the strongest responses could discuss Diem's army in great detail. Many wrote generally about a lack of motivation and training. Better responses were able to note the importance of US military advisors and failures such as at Ap Bac. Very few responses discussed the formation of the MACV.

Exemplar 3 highlights the judgement made in a strong Level 5 response to this question. Candidates should be encouraged to draw each argument to a conclusion with an interim judgement as well as making an overall judgement on the view given in the question. This is something required of strong Level 5 and Level 6 responses.

Exemplar 3

In final evaluation, the incompetence of the ARVN while a significant contributing factor that were complicit with US plans to rid of Diem, was not the primary reason for his removal as the ARVN's problems remained to the very end in 1975 despite having one of the world's largest armies and airforces that were equipped with the latest technology but failed to effectively fight the VC or PAVN. What was likely the single greatest factor was Diem himself who was implementing divisive anti-Buddhist policies and was unpopular himself to the peasant population outside Saigon and the major cities, the US prevented a possible uprising or avenue of usurpation from the people by removing Diem to allow for less autocratic policies on the people, as well as the undemocratic nature of his post that undermined US policy and further alienated the people of South Vietnam, underpinning every factor but ultimately not as important as Diem's policies himself that forced his assassination in 1963.

Assessment for learning

Candidates should focus on a detailed consideration of the main factor noted in an essay and not just focus on alternative factors to go beyond a mid-range response.

Assessment for learning

Candidates must make sure that they make judgements throughout their essays and in particular in the conclusion. This is a requirement of Level 5 and Level 6 essays.

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