

AQA A Level History 2L
Italy and Fascism c.1900 – 1945
Part One: The Crisis of Liberal Italy and the Rise of Mussolini, c.1900-1926

Unit 1 Part A: Liberal Italy 1870-1900 - From Unification to Crisis:

- The political, economic and social condition of Italy c1900: the legacy of unification; divisions between North and South; the conflict between Church and State; class divisions

Unit 1 Part B: Liberal Italy 1900-1915 – From Giolitti to War

- The political system and Giolittianism: the role of the monarchy; the dominance of government by the liberal oligarchy; anticlericalism; the role of Giolitti
- Challenges to the ruling elites: Industrialisation and social change; the rise of socialism and new political movements
- Italian foreign policies: the Triple Alliance; colonial ambitions in Abyssinia and Libya; Italy's decision to enter the war in 1915

How will you be assessed?

One exam that will take 2 hours 30 minutes.

You are advised to spend around:

- 60 minutes on the first section (question one based on 3 sources)
- 1 hour 30 minutes on the second section (answer 2 essay questions)

7 key questions underpin this course:

- How stable, secure and united was Italy by 1900?
- How stable, secure and united was Italy by 1915?
- How did the First World War make the problems of Liberal Italy worse?
- Why was Mussolini appointed Prime Minister of Italy in 1922?
- How did Mussolini consolidate his power in the years 1922 to 1926?
- To what extent did Mussolini create 'a nation of fascists'?
- Why did Mussolini fall from power?

KEY PEOPLE

Count Cavour: Prime Minister of Piedmont (1852-61). He was a moderate Liberal who wanted to create an independent Liberal state in the northern half of Italy. He realized that Piedmont would need French help to defeat Austria. Was worried about radical nationalists but eventually managed to outmanoeuvre them to create a Liberal Italian state as an extended form of Piedmont.

Francesco Crispi: Minister of the Interior (1876 and 1877). Was Prime Minister of Italy (1887-90 and again from 1893-96). In foreign affairs he was pro-German and anti-French. He pursued a policy of colonial expansion.

Agodtino Depretis: A supporter of Cavour and the Piedmontese monarchy and was Prime Minister on several occasions between 1876 and 1881. His administration passed important reforms concerning education, taxation and the franchise, and engineered Italy's entry into the Triple Alliance in 1882.

Count Otterino Gentiloni (1865-1916) The head of the Catholic Electoral Union. He was a conservative Catholic and opposed the 'modernist' wing of Catholic reformers who shared many of the socialists' aspirations. He claimed to have influenced the 1913 election results in 228 constituencies by persuading Catholics to vote for liberal candidates who would be favourable to the policies of the Catholic Church. This is known as the Gentiloni Pact and it helped Giolitti to survive the 1913 elections.

Garibaldi: Radical nationalist guerrilla leader. Popular with the masses and aimed to liberate them although his peasant followers were hoping for social reforms rather than a united Italy. Made the mistake of trusting Victor Emmanuel. In 1860, 1862 and 1867 he tried to march on Rome to gain it for Italy. He toured Britain and was well known for his red shirt and inspired the Garibaldi biscuit!

Giovanni Giolitti (1842-1928) A Liberal politician and Prime Minister on five separate occasions. Giolitti was an expert in *Trasformismo*, using corruption, patronage and manipulation to achieve his political aims. He believed that Liberal governments should help the poor through social reforms and was responsible in 1912 for adding 5 million more male voters to the existing electorate of 3 million. He tried to win support by working with moderate Socialists and Catholics. He tried in 1915 to keep Italy out of the First World War. He underestimated the Fascists after the First World War and offered them an electoral alliance in 1921.

Mazzini: Radical Republican nationalist. He failed to inspire mass revolts and became a fierce critic of the 'conservative revolution' nature of unification.

KEY PEOPLE

Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) Prime Minister and Fascist dictator of Italy from 1922 to 1943. He trained as a teacher and in 1902, while living in Switzerland, he became a socialist. He was expelled from Switzerland for revolutionary activity. After military service in 1910 he founded a weekly socialist paper and began a career as one of Italy's most notable journalists. By 1911 he was editor of the socialist paper *Avanti*. He became increasingly convinced that nationalism was the key to political power and was expelled from the Socialist Party when he abandoned the pacifist line and supported joining the First World War against Austria. Having supported Italy's participation in the First World War and considered a communist revolution in Italy, Mussolini joined the Fascists. He became Prime Minister in 1922 and established a dictatorship by the end of 1925.

Pope Pius IX: Leader of the Catholic Church. Lost control of Rome and the Papal States to the new Kingdom of Italy in 1870. He was a conservative and denounced the united Italian State as 'un-Christian' and refused to recognize the legitimacy of the State. He also forbade Catholics to vote in elections and take part in the political life of the new nation, depriving it of a stabilizing force.

Pope Pius X (1903-1914) felt that some Catholic activists had become too sympathetic to socialism. He thought their influence was too great and was unhappy that they were out of the control of the church hierarchy. His response to what he called the sin of 'modernism' was to abolish the *Opera dei Congressi* in 1904 and replace it with Catholic Action, which was controlled by the bishops.

Antonio Salandra (1853-1931) Prime Minister from 1914-1916 and a prominent moderate liberal and former university professor. In 1915, he took Italy into the First World War, causing a bitter split with anti-war liberal politicians like Giolitti so that the two men found it impossible to work together after this. He failed to impose political control over the Italian military campaign and after the war, he backed fascist policies. In 1928, he became a senator under Mussolini.

Sidney Sonnino (1847-1922) Served as minister of finance under Prime Minister Crispi and became Prime Minister briefly in 1906 and again in 1909-10. At the outbreak of the First World War, he was a supporter of the Central Powers. After becoming foreign minister in November 1914, he switched his allegiance to the Entente. With Prime Minister Salandra in 1915, he negotiated the Treaty of London. Sonnino was disappointed with the results of the Paris Peace Conference and retired from politics in 1919.

Filippo Turati (1857-1932) A Milanese lawyer and founder member of the Italian Worker's Party in 1892 (which became the PSI, the Italian Socialist Party in 1893). This was a Party of workers who sought to achieve socialism but in the meantime, they would work towards social reform which would benefit workers. They believed in reform through parliament and co-operation with existing bourgeois parties and so they tried to win parliamentary seats.

Victor Emmanuel II: King of Piedmont, head of the House of Savoy and became the first King of Italy in 1861.

Victor Emmanuel III (1860-1947) Became King of Italy in 1900 at the age of 30. He was shy, short and devoted to the army. Despite being rather uncharismatic, he was anxious to be a good constitutional monarch. His father informed him that all he needed to do to be king was 'to be able to ride a horse, sign his name and read a newspaper'. He supported Italy's entry in the First World War in 1915.

Umberto I: Came to the throne in 1878 after his father's death and was assassinated in 1900 by an anarchist.

KEY WORDS

Allies The states that opposed the Central Powers in the First World War. These included the Entente Powers, as well as Japan, the USA and Italy.

Anarchists Italian anarchists followed the Russian revolutionary Mikhail Bakunin (1814-76). They believed all governments were repressive and wanted a society based on voluntary co-operation without private property. They also tended to be fiercely anti-Church/religion.

Catholic Action the name given to the reorganised *Opera dei Congressi*. Founded in 1905, it was a Catholic organisation, under the control of the bishops that included a number of unions including those for youth, women, charitable causes, economic issues and to mobilise the vote.

Central Powers One of the two main factions in the First world War, consisting of Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria.

Entente Powers the allied forces of Great Britain, France and Russia in the First World War.

Fiat A car manufacturing company founded in 1899 by a number of cavalry officers, including Giovanni Agnelli. Fiat stands for *Fabbrica Italiano Automobile Torino* – Italian cars made in Turin.

Futurism A strongly nationalistic and imperialistic cultural movement of the early twentieth century, futurism valued action, speed and violence. It also embraced the virtues of modern technology. Filippo Marinetti, a writer, was the most famous futurist.

Interventionists Italian politicians who wanted Italy to join the fighting of the First World War, they were worried about missing out if they were not on the winning side at the end of the war.

Nationalism a patriotic feeling towards your country, a sense of belonging to your nation. Some in the Liberal regime called for foreign expansion in the interests of making their nation, Italy, great.

National Debt The total debt owed by the state to its own citizens and to foreign creditors.

KEY WORDS

Neutralists Italian politicians who argued that Italy should remain neutral during the First World. They were worried that Italy was not ready for war and that war would harm the country and the economy.

Opera dei Congressi e dei Comitati Cattolici A lay Catholic organisation founded by the Church for Catholics to work through to promote moral causes and the interests of the Church. It was influential in local government, focussed on education and rural banks to help Catholic peasants. By 1897, it ran 24 daily newspapers and 155 journals.

Pacifist Someone who rejects war and violence, believing that disputes should be settled peacefully.

Petty bourgeoisie The lower-middle class, including minor businessmen or traders.

Sacred egoism A phrase used by PM Salandra which indicated that he would negotiate with the other powers purely to secure gains for Italy.

Syndicalism A radical form of socialism.

Syndicalist Party Revolutionary group committed to the idea of achieving power through industrial action, like strikes. This is often referred to as direct action.

Trade Deficit A country has trade deficit if the value of what it imports exceeds the value of what it exports. A prolonged period of trade deficit can cause a country to go into debt.

Treaty of London France, Britain and Italy agreed that at the end of the First World War, Italy would be given the Austrian districts of Trentino, South Tyrol and Istria as well as the city of Trieste and a large part of Dalmatia on the coast of the Adriatic Sea. It gave the Allies, valuable Italian military support.

Triple Entente An alliance between Great Britain, France and Russia formed in 1907.

Universal male suffrage the right of all men over the age of 21 to vote, introduced in 1912.

KEY EVENTS

- 1900** King Umberto assassinated
- 1900-1914** Rapid industrialisation in the north of Italy
- 1900-1914** Giolitti is Prime Minister for much of this time and introduces a series of reforms to try to win over the masses
- 1901** Giolitti Minister of the Interior
- 1902** Women's working day limited to 11 hours and child labour under 12 banned
- 1903** Giolitti becomes Prime Minister
- 1904** General Strike in Italy, with violent incidents in Milan. Subsequent elections return a conservative majority
- 1907** 71 car manufacturers operating in Italy
- 1907** Compulsory rest day each week introduced
- 1908** Olivetti typewriter production starts
- 1910** Italian Nationalist Association founded and first National Congress held
- 1910** 41 sugar refineries operating
- 1911** Italy defeats Turkey and annexes Libya
- 1911** Mussolini became editor of the socialist paper 'Avanti'
- 1912** Franchise extended to all literate men over 21 and all men over 30
- 1912** Mussolini emerges as a major leader of radical Socialists
- 1912** FIAT begin production of cheap mass-produced cars
- 1913** The Gentiloni Pact, the Catholic Electoral Union sought guarantees on educational issues and attitudes towards divorce before it recommended Catholics to vote for individual liberal candidates
- 1914** March Resignation of Giolitti
- 1914** March Salandra appointed Prime Minister by the king
- 1914** June Wave of unrest; Red Week
- 1914** August Outbreak of First World War, Italy is initially neutral
- 1914** Nov Mussolini is expelled from the Socialist Party for arguing that Italy should join the war
- 1914** Mussolini founds the important paper 'Il Popolo d'Italia' (after the War, this became the main source for spreading the fascist message)
- 1914** 1 million kilowatts of hydroelectric power produced
- 1915** April Treaty of London with Allies promises Italy major gains if it joins the war
- 1915** May Italy joined First World War on the side of Britain and France

Example Question 1:

This will always be based on **3 sources** and will be worth **30 marks**. You should spend about **60 minutes** on this type of question. You have to answer question **1!**

With reference to these source and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of this source to an historian studying Italy in the early years of the 20th century.

Source A

From 'The Proletarian Nations and Nationalism', by Enrico Corradini, published 1911. Corradini was a writer and a Nationalist. He was a founder of the Italian Nationalist Association in 1910.

We must seek to discover the reasons why Italy does not possess any developed national awareness. We must start by recognising that she does not possess one, because she cannot. And here are the reasons why she cannot:

First of all, until quite recently, Italy had, in fact, never been a nation.

Secondly, Italy has never had, and still does not have, a national language except in literature.

Thirdly, she was created with little fighting and little revolution.

Fourthly, Italy was created as a result of the efforts of too many people, often in conflict among themselves and these conflicts persisted and still persist.

Fifthly, Italy too quickly declined into the class struggle.

Finally, Italy – and this could not be otherwise because of the smallness of the revolution which created her – fell into the hands of politicians who are the dregs of traditions and people already decadent and decaying under a regime of tiny, timid government.

Example essay question:

The next 2 questions are essays and you choose 2 from 3 possible questions. They are worth **25 marks** each. You should spend around **45 minutes** on each question. Here is an example:

'To what extent had Giolitti made Italy more secure by 1915?'
(25marks)