



Essay writing



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

Modern Languages

Annotated Example

The first year Modern Languages essay on the following pages was written in response to the question:

Italy on the eve of 1860 has often been described as an unlikely nation. Why?

OUTLINE

Thesis

Orientation: Italy described a geographical area, not a nation.

Thesis: there were many obstacles to unification:

- distrust between the states
- lack of planning and common goals amongst those who wanted a united Italy
- disagreement and dislike between the leaders of *Il Risorgimento*.

Background

Historical: comparison of industrial and agricultural progress of other countries to suggest lack of unification was detrimental to the Italian people .

Point 1

Obstacle to unification was the failure of the population to take up the cause.

Why? Common people were poor and illiterate (weren't concerned with matters beyond survival), and little sense of community.

Point 2

Divisiveness and mistrust between the states was a major obstacle; supporting evidence in form of quote from a primary source.

- other supporting evidence: there were regional customs' barriers, and general dislike of regional differences.

Point 3

Lack of common goals and the poor planning associated with the uprisings in Italy (another obstacle to unification).

Point 4

Another obstacle was the dislike between the main agitators in the fight for independence.

Evidence: relations between Cavour, Garibaldi, Mazzini.

Conclusion

Overview of main arguments

Closing: when unification was achieved.



ANNOTATIONS TO THE ESSAY

The annotations in the right-hand column below highlight significant features of the essay, such as structure and how evidence for the argument is incorporated, and UOW Harvard referencing conventions. It is important to check what referencing convention your subject requires.

Example: student essay

On the eve of 1860 the word Italy described not a nation, but a geographical area. The peninsula was split into eight separate states, all independent of one another. Economically, while the whole of Europe seemed to be surging ahead, Italy was lagging behind. At this time, Italy was seen as an unlikely nation because of the many obstacles that lay in the way of unification. The main obstacles were the dislike and distrust between the states and the “slowness of the great bulk of Italians to accept or even comprehend the idea of Italy” (Mack Smith 1968, p. 2). There was also a lack of planning and common goals amongst the minority of the population that wanted a unified country and disagreement and dislike between the leaders of “*Il Risorgimento*”.

After the French Revolution and the collapse of the Napoleonic rule in Italy, the Restoration States were formed by Austria and the Congress of Vienna in 1815. These states consisted of the Papal States, ruled by the Pope, Lombardy-Venetia which was an Austrian province, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies which included the island of Sicily and the Italian mainland south of the Papal States and which was ruled by a Spanish Bourbon. There were the Duchies of Tuscany, Modena, Parma and Lucca, all ruled by members of the Austrian Royal House, and the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, the only Independent state. According to Duggan, on the eve of unification, the economic pace in Europe was quickening while, in contrast, Italy seemed to be stagnating. Britain led the way, with France, Belgium and the German states having similar success. For example, Britain in the 1840's had three thousand miles of railway with this growing to ten thousand miles by 1860.

The output of pig iron and cotton also soared, as did production of other goods. Factories were developed out of small workshops as the middle class grew in size and wealth. In Italy the situation looked far less promising: in comparison with Britain, there was only sixty miles of railway in all of the south in 1860 (Duggan 1994, pp. 117-118). The north of Italy was advancing but the south had very little industry. Agriculture was suffering, as was the peasant population who was living in poverty.

One of the obstacles to unification was the failure of the majority of the population to take up the cause, yet as early as the fifteenth century, Niccolo Machiavelli, the Florentine political philosopher, expressed the idea of Italy under one ruler. He wrote in the *Principe* “the barbarous domination of the stranger stinks in the nostrils of all” (Martinengo-Cesaresco 1895, p. 2), Dante, the great Florentine poet, also expressed similar views. However these ideas remained largely stagnant and in the Restoration States of the mid-nineteenth century the average Italian “was a poor peasant, illiterate, living on the edge of starvation, and with little or no say in the way he was governed,” (Leeds 1974, p. 10) and presumably with little or no thought to any matters other than his own survival. This view is supported by Jucker who says that for most, the family and its interests took precedence over every other form of loyalty. This largely prevented any other feelings of patriotism or a sense of community (Jucker 1970, p. 13).

The divisiveness and mistrust between the states was another major obstacle to national unity. Between these states, a keen political and commercial rivalry existed: the differences between the regions were enormous. Guise Mizzen, the

Orientation
identifies the topic and reiterates the question

thesis statement (also functions as essay outline).

Background

Italy divided into eight independent states

comparing progress of other countries with Italy, suggesting lack of unification was detrimental

topic sentence (first claim in the argument)

supporting explanation

topic sentence (beginning the second point in



Example: student essay

leading agitator for the freedom of Italy at this period, declared:

We have no flag, no political name, no rank among European nations. We have no common centre, no common fact, no common market. We are dismembered into eight states ... all independent of one another, without alliance, without unity of aim, without connection between them ... Eight different systems of currency, weights and measures, civil, commercial and penal legislation, of administrative organization and of police restriction, divide us and render us as much possible strangers to each other (as quoted in Leeds 1974, p. 12).

This view was supported by Mack Smith (1959), who points out that along the course of the Po River, there existed as many as twenty two customs' barriers, a striking example of the secularity "which impeded national unification and the advance of agriculture and industry" (Mack Smith 1959). Italians did, however, share a common historical heritage which was that of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance, also a common religion, Catholicism. There was also a common culture of art and literature, but this was only on a specific level which was that of the ruling and educated middle classes. However, for the most part, this had little relevance in the lives of the majority of the population who spoke the dialect of their own region and were generally illiterate and so were unfamiliar with the great literary works. In fact, when Italy was unified, only four per cent of the population had knowledge of the Italian language (Duggan 1994, p. 156).

The regions were divided by their dislike and distrust of one another. According to Leeds "the Florentine dislike the Venetian, who in turn looked down on the Neapolitan, while the Sicilian was resentful of any suggestion that he might come from the mainland" (Leeds 1974, p. 13). Similarly, Mack Smith (1968, p.3) notes that the regions of the peninsula kept their own foreign policies, and that no one region could be any more politically successful than another without the others reacting vehemently and almost automatically against it.

A good example of the mistrust that existed between the states and impeded unification was an aspect of the 1831 revolutions as told in Duggan. As revolts broke out in the Duchy of Modena and spread south towards Bologna and the Marche, Modena sent troops to help Bologna in the fight against the Austrians. However, as the Bolognese were extremely suspicious of the Modenese, they would only allow them into the city on the condition that they disarmed. Of course the revolt failed and it seemed that the different cities could never let go of their old rivalries and come together for a common cause (Duggan 1994, p. 107).

Another major obstacle in the way of a united Italy was the lack of common goals and the poor planning associated with the uprisings that were occurring throughout Italy. Because of the Restoration States' vigorous censorship, many secret societies emerged after 1815. According to Duggan, these secret societies "lacked unity and a clear sense of what they hoped to achieve on a practical level," (Duggan 1994, p. 103) and this was their main problem. One of these societies was the *carbonari* whose political views ranged from the moderate to the extreme. Penrose Trevelyan suggests that the program of *carbonari* was obviously lacking which in turn limited their capacity to rouse the national spirit. They needed something that would "awaken the masses to the revolution that would be required to free Italy from the foreign and domestic oppressors" (Penrose Trevelyan 1920, pp. 329-330).

the argument)

Primary source quoted to support point

further supporting evidence: barriers to unification

counter-point: common heritage

counter-point: common heritage only for privileged few

topic sentence (elaborating second point in argument)

quotes authority to support point

example to support point that regions were divided by dislike and distrust of one another

consequence, implications

topic sentence (beginning third point in argument)

example of obstacles to unification - secret societies, without common goals

example secret society



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Despite this, however, there were uprisings, though mostly unsuccessful. For example, near Naples in 1820, a revolt led by a squadron of cavalry from a small military unit at Nola broke out. The Spanish King was forced to adopt a constitution, but some of the insurgents wanted a Spanish constitution, mainly because this was what was available to them, and yet others wanted a Neapolitan 'nation'. This caused such divisions that the King was able to prepare the way for a counter revolution, and with the help of the Austrian troops he was able to squash the uprising. During this time, there was never any widespread support for the army and there was very little sign anywhere of much 'Italian' feeling (Mack Smith 1968, p. 37).

further development of argument that those wanting a nation lacked planning and common goals

support: uprisings were unsuccessful

Another example of a failed uprising is that of Palermo in 1820. According to Duggan, it began spontaneously as a workers' revolt. The main forces behind it were peasants whose political ideas were simple: they wanted better working conditions, but with a bitter feud existing between Sicily and Naples, there were elements of mostly middle classes and nobility that joined in hoping to win independence from Naples for the island; but they lacked staying power and when events became difficult to control the army stepped in and put an end to the revolution (Duggan 1994, p. 104). Both of these revolutions, it seems, were very poorly planned, with very little attention paid to strategy and little thought as to what could be achieved. In each example, there were factions at work that had their own political agenda and with neither uprising being specifically aimed at national unity.

further evidence to support point that there was a no planning or common goals

conclusion to the third point in the argument

Yet another obstacle to unity was the dislike and disagreement between the main agitators in the fight for independence. The key figures of "Il Risorgimento" were Count Camillo di Cavour, Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi. Cavour is often said to have been the 'architect of unity': he became Prime Minister of Piedmont in 1852 and was the first Prime Minister of Italy. He was a realist and did not favour extremes. He represented the tiny ruling class of Liberal conservatives who were allowed to vote (Mack Smith 1971, p. 3).

topic sentence (beginning fourth point in argument) evidence - Cavour was a realist

Mazzini, on the other hand, was an idealist. He thought Italy was destined for greatness and according to Cronin, he had an "unshakable belief in the popular will, republicanism, and in the need for social justice" (Cronin 1966, p. 182). Mazzini founded *Giovine Italia* in 1831. The association's objectives were unity and a republic and the only way that this could be achieved was through "education and insurrection, to be adopted simultaneously, and made to harmonize with each other" (as quoted in Leeds 1974, p. 22). *Giovine Italia* attracted a lot of support and by 1833 had sixty thousand members, and of these being Giuseppe Garibaldi.

evidence: Mazzini was an idealist

Garibaldi was a supporter of Mazzini, but unlike Cavour he did not belong to the conservative elite. Garibaldi was, according to Mack Smith, "rough and untutored, with little grasp of long-term strategy, but with remarkable flair for irregular warfare (Mack Smith 1959, p. 15). His men loved him and many thought that he could not be killed or wounded. He had a "single-minded ... love of Italy" (as quoted in Leeds 1974, p. 15).

evidence: Garibaldi supported Mazzini but had little in common with Cavour

It was largely these three men who brought about the unification of Italy, and yet they accomplished this in spite of each other for there was rivalry between them that belied the final results. Mazzini was regarded as unpopular in Piedmont, the province of Cavour. Furthermore, Cavour viewed Mazzini as the enemy of religion and monarchy and even went as far as to forewarn the Austrians (the common enemy) and the other Italian states against Mazzinian

topic sentence further evidence of antipathy and rivalry between key revolutionaries



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activities. Indeed, it has been suggested that “Cavour and Mazzini didn’t like each other” (Mack Smith 1971, p. 26). Cavour was a practical politician who was prepared to work slowly and steadily towards a limited goal of unity which he still considered a remote dream, whereas Mazzini was an idealist who wanted, and could foresee, nothing less than Italian independence (Cronin 1966, p. 189).

evidence

Cavour and Garibaldi had little in common and according to Garibaldi, “Count Cavour bore a lively resemblance to those noblemen of the *ancien regime*, who look down with disdain on the common people and governed them accordingly” (as quoted in Leeds 1974, p. 62). This relationship was further strained when, according to Duggan, in 1858 Cavour met secretly with Napoleon to negotiate terms for a war against Austria. It was agreed that Piedmont would take all of northern Italy and give Savoy and Nice, Garibaldi’s birthplace, to France (Duggan 1994, p. 127). Garibaldi was incensed by what he saw as Cavour’s treachery and betrayal, and he “never forgave Cavour for sacrificing his home town” (Cronin 1966, p. 191), and he thought him a “coward and a fomenter of civil war” (Mack Smith 1959, p. 16).

further evidence of rivalry and dislike amongst the three main agitators for revolution

Garibaldi and Mazzini, on the other hand, appeared to have more in common. Viotti says of their relationship, “Garibaldi’s acquaintance with Mazzini was not only a determining factor in the evolution of his political ideas; it altered the entire course of his life” (Viotti 1979, p. 19). However, Mack Smith (1959) says that whilst Garibaldi called himself a republican, he actually served the monarchy loyally. Mazzini was disgusted when, after conquering half of Italy in the campaign of 1860, Garibaldi meekly handed it over to the King (Smith 1959, p. 15). Cronin agrees with this by saying that Mazzini was deeply disappointed that Italy became united under a monarchy and not a republic as he had always believed it should be (Cronin 1966, p. 197).

evidence: Garibaldi and Mazzini had much in common, but different goals
evidence: Garibaldi acted pro-monarchy, Mazzini was a republican

Before 1860, only a tiny minority of the population believed that Italy could ever become a unified nation under one Italian ruler. Yet, despite this and the differences and suspicion between the many regions of the peninsula, the lack of planning and common goals that saw many uprisings fail and the divergent views and politics amongst the men who fought for unity, “... Out of this jumble of regions and parties, Piedmont was eventually to emerge as the nucleus around which the rest of Italy could gather” (Smith 1959, p. 17). On March 17, 1861, the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed. Italy was no longer a geographical expression, it was a nation.

Conclusion summarises main points of argument, explaining obstacles to unification
refers back to question – why was Italian nationhood considered ‘unlikely’ in 1860?

Insert a new page to start your UOW Harvard Reference list.



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References

- Cronin, V 1966, *A Concise History of Italy*, Cassell and Company Ltd., London.
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- Jucker, N 1970, *Italy*, Thames and Hudson, London.
- Leeds, C 1974, *The Unification of Italy*, Wayland Publishers, London.
- Mack Smith, D 1959, *Italy*, University of Michigan Press, New York.
- Mack Smith, D 1968, *The Making of Italy, 1796-1870*, Harper and Row, New York.
- Mack Smith, D 1971, *Victor Emanuel, Cavour and the Risorgimento*, Oxford University Press, London.
- Martinengo-Cesaresco, E 1895, *The Liberation of Italy, 1815-1870*, Seeley and Co. Limited, London.
- Penrose Trevelyan, J 1920, *A Short History of the Italian People*, Allen and Unwin Ltd., New York.
- Viotti, A 1979, *Garibaldi, The Revolutionary and his Men*, Blandford Press Ltd., Dorset, UK.

The reference list

A list at the end of your assignment which includes full details of each source you have cited in your writing.

Sources are listed in alphabetical order by the author's last name.

NOTE

A reference list appears in alphabetical order at the end of your work. Many people confuse the terms 'reference list' and 'bibliography':

- A 'reference list' includes ONLY the sources that you have CITED/REFERENCED in the body of your work (see the above example).
- A 'bibliography' includes the sources you cited plus any additional resources you may have consulted in your research.

Please check with your tutors which list is required as well as which style of referencing.

Also, this essay is of course only one possible response to the question.

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