Question 7

Analyze the factors that led to the rise of right-wing authoritarian regimes in continental Europe in the interwar period (1919–1939).

9-8 Points

- Thesis is explicit and fully responsive to the question.
- Organization is clear, consistently followed and effective, addressing multiple factors clearly linked to rise of regimes.
- Essay is well balanced; all major topics suggested by the prompt are covered, although essay may contain more specific evidence from one regime than another or may treat right-wing regimes as a category with strong emphasis on developing the factors and links.
- All major assertions in the essay are supported by multiple pieces of relevant evidence.
- May contain errors that do not detract from the argument; identifying the USSR as a right-wing regime detracts from the argument, for example.

7-6 Points

- Thesis is explicit and responsive to the question.
- Organization is clear and effective; it must clearly link factors to the rise of regimes.
- Essay is balanced; essay may address one regime significantly less than another if factors and linkage to rise of regimes are well balanced.
- All major assertions in the essay are supported by at least one piece of relevant evidence.
- May contain an error that detracts from the argument; identifying the USSR as a right-wing regime can be ignored if this is the only major error.

5-4 Points

- Thesis is explicit, but not fully responsive to the question, or it is weakly developed.
- Organization is clear and effective; may focus more on causes or responses and may have somewhat rudimentary analysis.
- Essay shows some imbalance:
  - Strong discussion of only one regime that clearly links factors to rise of regime
  - More focus on conditions or regime building
  - Emphasizes time period after rise to power more than rise to power.
- Most of the major assertions in the essay are supported by at least one piece of relevant evidence; essay needs to do more than assert that conditions after WWI were poor.
- May contain a few errors that detract from the argument.

3-2 Points

- No explicit thesis or has a thesis that merely repeats or paraphrases the prompt or is poorly developed.
- Organization is unclear and ineffective.
- Essay shows serious imbalance; may have some information on one regime, information may be very generic, or essay may not support the thesis.
- Only one or two major assertions are supported by relevant evidence; these essays are less specific and may describe generally poor conditions.
- May contain several errors that detract from the argument.
Question 7 (continued)

1-0 Points

- No discernible attempt at a thesis or has a thesis that is wholly undeveloped.
- No discernible organization.
- Only one or none of the major topics suggested is mentioned or topics are undeveloped.
- Little or no relevant supporting evidence used.
Historical Background

Italy

- Political Factors: postwar democratic government could not find consensus between Socialist and Catholic parties and was not effective in dealing with issues such as: Treaty of Versailles (Italia irredenta, Fiume 1919), inflation, unemployment, Red Years 1920–1922 (progressive tax, legalized peasant land seizures).
- Social and economic factors: demobilized soldiers increase unemployment; high inflation; agricultural depression (rural workers form Red Leagues); banditry in south; Socialists gain influence; workers/unions become more militant; fears of USSR; industrialists and landowners worried; fascist groups create disruption through riots and violence.
- Rise of Mussolini: promises strong, militarized state to restore Italy to Roman glory; appeals to middle class and landowners; funded by wealthy industrialists and landowners; use of violence and terror against political left and to create disruption; use of propaganda; 1922 march on Rome, King Victor Emmanuel III asks Mussolini to form government, legislature grants Mussolini permission to rule by decree, Fascists become majority party in 1923 elections.

Germany

- Political Factors: Weimar Republic (parliamentary system, blamed for surrender and Versailles, Socialists and Communists gaining seats but at odds with each other); fear of revolution (growing Socialist/Communist influence contributes to growing militancy of right-wing groups like Freikorps); Spartacist revolt in 1919 crushed by Freikorps.
- Social and economic factors: disappointment with Versailles (Clause 231 on war guilt, reparations, loss of natural resources, military limitations); inflation (reparations, burning/playing with worthless money, wheelbarrows of money, Germany defaults and France occupies Ruhr Valley 1923, Dawes Plan 1924); growing conviction that Jews and Socialists “stabbed Germany in the back” and stole the German victory; Great Depression (6 million unemployed by 1932, 44 percent drop in production, loss of welfare benefits).
- Rise of Nazi party: helped by depression; scapegoats (primarily Communists, Socialists and Jews); racial nationalism; Hitler (leader by 1921, Beer Hall Putsch 1923, Mein Kampf 1925); appeals to middle class, small property owners, pensioners, elderly, war widows, rural middle class, workers in small businesses; second largest party in Reichstag in 1930; 1933, Hitler becomes Chancellor, Reichstag fire, proclaims Third Reich, Enabling Act.

Spain

- Political Factors: weak monarchy hurt by regionalism; political power dominated by coalitions of nobility, church and army; loses Morocco; falls to Second Republic in 1931; leftist “October Revolution” in 1934 lasted two weeks before Franco crushed it; Popular Front (Radicals, Communists, Socialists, some anarchists) v. conservative groups (old elites, church, monarchists, nationalists, most of army); country polarized between left and right until Civil War in 1936 (Hitler and Mussolini support Franco, USSR helps Republicans, West stays out, Republicans split, conservatives include most of army and are increasingly unified around Franco).
- Social and economic factors: labor, peasantry, nobles, church, small middle class all at odds with each other; strikes; violence (Falange or Black Shirts 1933); weak economy (lack of infrastructure, regional differences, attempts to modernize, land reform, labor reform all fail).
- Rise of Franco: supported by army and church; aid from Italy and Germany; brutal warfare.
Eastern Europe

- Political Factors: new democracies very fragile, little or no experience ruling themselves (multiple parties span political spectrum, rise of radical agrarian parties, legacies from different empires, clash of old and new elites); peace treaties (all countries felt their territorial claims had been violated, large populations of national minorities); had to build administration and rebuild from war; fears of communism.
- Social and economic factors: high illiteracy rates; small middle class; agriculture depressed by grain imports; economies hampered by national tariffs that impeded prewar flow of goods; only Austria and Czechoslovakia had advanced industries; lack of infrastructure; growing/displaced populations; economic and social conflicts reinforced by ethnic and religious differences.
- By 1939, right-wing authoritarian regimes in Poland (1926), Lithuania (1926), Albania (1928), Yugoslavia (1929), Hungary (1932), Austria (1933), Estonia (1934), Latvia (1934), Bulgaria (1935), Greece (1936), and Romania (1938).

General Issues

- Political Factors: fear of communism; old elites lost power and prestige after World War I; contested boundaries in many areas led to nationalism competing with new democracies; mass mobilization techniques used by parties; revolutionary new political movements on right and left; parliamentary governments seem unable to deal with crises so dictator looks more attractive; nationalism growing.
- Social and economic factors: changed economic conditions as result of war and depression (war debt, inflation, increased government regulation of economy, beginnings of welfare states, rise of corporatism, increasingly militant working class); cultural change causes uncertainty, right-wing promises return to roots; middle class loses savings and security in economic crises and fear the left.
- Fascist ideology
  - Mass mobilization but not political participation; hierarchical structure; rejection of parliamentary rule
  - Borrowed from other ideologies: conservative values of hierarchy and order and contempt for parliamentary ineffectiveness; popular racist doctrines; corporatism (unity over class warfare); Christian images of blood and martyrdom
  - New social and political order based on the nation; national identity overrides all others (rejection of class distinction); usually expansionist (not Spain or Portugal)
- Fascism’s Appeal:
  - Spoke to many groups: World War I vets renew “camaraderie of the trenches” and patriotism; rural society threatened by urbanization; small businesses threatened by large corporations; businessmen threatened by workers; middle class threatened by socialism; old elites threatened by democracy; unemployed threatened by depression; religious way of life threatened by secularism; all fear communism.
  - Notion of service to the nation attractive; emphasizes unity over individualism; uniforms (shirts of one color that anyone can afford); paramilitary organization; decisive action to remake society through discipline and force; street drama, symbols, propaganda; violence; technology and modernization; seen as outside of corrupting politics of democracy; patriotism of World War I; holds “enemies” responsible for poor economy and bad governments (liberal politicians, Jews, Marxists, foreigners); fascism promises orderly, united and prosperous state.
After the collapse of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires during the First World War, various nation states took the place of the unoccupied territories in Eastern Europe, including Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. Though these nations were set up based on the principle of democratic self-determination, not all exist for Czechoslovakia devolved into militaristic regimes. A similar fate occurred in Spain. Although economic decline and the weakness of existing democratic liberties proved influential factors in this trend, the most important reason for right-wing regimes won the favor of international opinion was their stance on the interwar affair, as governments tended to fear the socialist Empire of the Soviet Union and developed reactionary regimes in response.

Economic difficulties during the inter-war period led to discontent with liberalism. After the war, the Versailles Treaty, signed by U.S., Britain, and France, required the payment of reparations among the losing state and their successors, particularly Germany, under the War Guilt Clause. The economic issues were exacerbated in Germany due to hyperinflation of the Reichsmark. Such difficulties only worsened with time, given the harsh terms of the peace, and aroused sentiment against the Versailles Treaty and the
western bourgeois democratic powers. In France, Hitler rejected the reparations due to France in his 25 Points. European dictators imposed by foreign powers combined Eastern European nations to pursue ultranationalist anti-foreign policies, mostly sympathetic to right-wing fascists. After the Great Depression in the 1930's, economies which to suffer stagnation and unemployment and governments were convinced that western capitalism would fail. The Nazi Party used the economic decline to its advantage and other Eastern nations such as Hungary depended on Nazi assistance in their weak regime economies. Thus, economic difficulties caused opposition to foreigners and distrust with liberalism.

Another key factor in the rise of rightist regimes was the lack of political liberalism in the predecessors to Eastern European states. Before the World War II, the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian empire, and the Russian Empire were all anti-democratic conservative powers. Thus, any politically liberal developments that took place elsewhere in Europe were suppressed in these empires. After the World War, the sudden absence of autocratic imperial regimes was not properly handled by the politicians of the successor states due to lack of experience with civic liberalism. The absence of an oppressive empire allowed ethnic strife between
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Authority groups and nationalist concerns are central. The
situation was not handled democratically, but by the use
of an oppressive dictatorship that took advantage of the power
vacuum in the weak government to form rightist regime.

However, the most influential factor in allowing
rightist regimes to maintain authoritarian power was the
international politics due to the development of leftist
political parties and states. Immediately after the war, the Soviet Union was established on
socialist and Bolshevik revolutionary principles, which posed
a threat to bourgeois democratic governments in Western
Europe. Communist revolutions in Hungary, and in
Bela and Germany, and then Czechoslovakia, also heightened the
few of worker's revolutions in Eastern Europe. As a
result, rightist regimes that could receive moderate
support from Western capitalist powers by ideologically
opposing the socialist revolution. The policy is apparent
in the Munich Conference, when the Western powers
called German occupation of Sudetenland, demonstrated
moderate Western sympathies to rightist regime, which
satisfied their power in Europe. After the Republican
government came to power in Spain, the perceived
threat of communism was brought to Western Europe.

As a result, the opposition of the Soviet Union to...
result of Soviet support for the
result of Soviet support for the democratic Spanish
government, anti-Bolshevik forces were invited to support
the Falangist Fascist takeover in Spain. The
bourgeois democratic power of the west pursued neutrality
with rightist governments against the spread of Soviet
communism. Thus, the emergence of Soviet power
led to international relations among western powers
sympathetic to right-wing authoritarian states to maintain
control. This tradition shield them from the spread of leftist.

Thus, the economic difficulties, folly the war and
two depression, the absence of political liberties in
predecessor states, and the international support against Soviet
communism led to the rise of authoritarian regimes.
The regimes of Europe andclient led to the prevention
of the conflict of the Second World War.
After World War I. During the interwar period, many countries were rebuilding from the devastation caused by World War I, both structurally and economically. The weakened state of some right-winged regimes allowed strong men/dictators to emerge. The weakened German economy left lots of German people starving because of inflation. They also had a weak government, these conditions allowed Hitler to rise to power. The Italian economy was also weakened. Weak central government also allowed the dictators to emerge because they had the support of the people. The weak economy and weak central governments helped lead to the rise of strong men/right-winged dictators.

In Germany, the winner republic printed lots of money to help pay off the war reparations; this led to huge inflation of the German mark. The mark became worthless, and thousands of people starved to death because it took wellbarrels full of money to buy bread. With the weakened economy, many people wanted change, and someone to blame for the problem. Hitler promised that he could improve the economy and used the Jews as a scapegoat for the reason the economy was so bad. Italy also had economic problems. Although not as severe, it allowed Mussolini to promise that he could make it better. This allowed Mussolini to gain favor with the people.

A weak central government also helped the right-right-winged authoritarian regimes to rise. After World War I, the German
Vimer republic was not strong enough to keep order. Hitler used his SA stormtroopers to cause panic and show the people how weak the government was. The SA would cause riots and beat and kill opposing political party members. With the government not strong enough to stop them, the people turned to Hitler to ensure safety. He used his power to eventually become the German Prime minister and put Nazi officials in office. In Italy Mussolini also exploited the government weakness by using his black shirt to start riots and cause chaos. He got the people scared enough that they wanted someone to protect them. Mussolini promised peace and order if he was in charge. He took his black shirts to Rome and demanded to become Prime minister. After a stand off the people elected him prime minister. Both Hitler and Mussolini exploited the clause in the constitutions stating that if the constitution can be suspended in a time of danger.

There were three main factors that led to the rise of right wing authoritarian regimes. A weak and economy which made the people resent the government because they could not provide for them. Weak central governments also led to the rise because they were not strong enough to stop them. There was also an amendment in the constitution allowing the constitution be suspended and the leader given dictatorial powers.
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

The twentieth century was a turbulent period in time that gave rise to extreme radical forms of government. It was the introduction of three dictators that the world would never forget. Rocking these men to power, Mussolini used terror tactics to scare the government into giving him power. Hitler convinced the people that they were wronged by WWI, and Stalin was able to gain top seat in the politburo.

Starting with Mussolini, he was a ruler unlike anything the world had seen before. He single-handedly invented the term fascist, which refers to a government type that suppresses the people and has full power. Mussolini primarily rose to power from terrorizing the people and threatening the government. He employed thugs on the streets called squadristi to tell people until the government granted his party full power. To seal the deal he conducted the march on Rome, where, in a "heroic" display, managed to snatch the power from the weak government and gain control of the people. The squadristi later turned into a more formal army called the Blackshirt.

Adolph Hitler was an admirer of Mussolini. He loved the idea of a fascist government and he too very strategically became a dictator. By convincing the people of Germany that they were being treated unfairly from the Treaty of Versailles, he presented that he was able to right the wrongs. He was a cunning master of deception.
and used propaganda with his minister Goebbels to convince and control the people. Also, by Neville Chamberlain, the British prime minister appeasing to Hitler's every request in order to avoid another war, Hitler was able to push around the rest of Europe and get exactly what he wanted.

Stalin, the supreme dictator of the Soviet Union, rose quickly to power after Lenin died. His position in the politburo was general secretary, which granted him full power to appointing and removing people from the group. So he simply expelled Trotsky, his highest competitor, and took over as the leader of the politburo and, thus Russia. Stalin eliminated all opposing parties simply by killing them. He centralized all industry, farms, etc. which granted him full power over everything.

Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin rose to power through organized terror, clever propaganda, and cunning loopholes in the governmental system.
Overview

The question was intended to assess students’ ability to analyze the problems in the interwar period, the failure of post-1918 governments to address those problems, and how this failure contributed to the rise of right-wing dictatorships in continental Europe.

Sample: 7A
Score: 9

The essay has a fully responsive, explicit thesis at the end of the first paragraph. The essay is organized thematically by factors with multiple pieces of evidence for every major assertion. The essay is well-balanced: it emphasizes the factors that led to the rise of right-wing regimes and includes linkages specific to Germany and Spain, and it uses several East European countries to highlight the particular problems faced there in the interwar period. The essay contains a sophisticated analysis of factors and linkages for several countries, and it has no errors that detract from the argument. The essay was scored higher than 8 because of the strong analysis and use of relevant evidence from several regimes to support the argument.

Sample: 7B
Score: 6

The essay has a workable thesis at the end and thematic but straightforward organization that addresses the prompt. The essay is balanced between factors and rise of regimes but is stronger and has more evidence on Germany than on Italy. It contains adequate evidence with clear linkages between factors and rise of regimes. The essay was scored lower than 7 because the evidence is not developed in an analytical manner, and the essay was scored higher than 5 because it contains more relevant, accurately presented evidence than the typical essay that received a 5.

Sample: 7C
Score: 2

The essay has a simplistic thesis, minimal organization by regime, and generic information about the rise to power of right-wing dictators with very little discussion of causal factors. The argument is simplistic and limited with only a hint of evidence to support its assertions. The essay contains a major error by including the Soviet Union as a right-wing government. The essay was scored lower than 3 because it fails to provide even rudimentary coverage of the question, and it was scored higher than 1 because it has a thesis and demonstrates a basic understanding of the prompt.