

The Rise of Fascism— Immediate and Long-Term Factors:

- Long-term Factors:
 - Impact of unification
 - Dislocation in the
 - Economic
 - Social
 - Political consequences
- Immediate impact
 - WW1
 - Also, economic & social cost
 - Political dislocation
 - 16% of all Italian soldiers were killed.
- Only 30% of people spoke Italian
- Parliamentary democracy breakdown
- 1919–1922— Italian Government.
- c.f. Weimar Germany— so democratic that no one party could be elected solely— coalitions— led to coalition breakdown.
- German and Italian political history— quite similar— rule by cabinet— led to rule by Central Government (PM and King)
- In Italy— breakdown made Mussolini's rise so easy— appeals to King— offers him Government at a time when former PM (Facta) is trying to overthrow opposition.
- Dislocation of War / Unification— precursors to Mussolini's rise.
- Contribution of D'Annunzio
- Drew on traditional politics— Coppa and Hibbert (historians who maintain this theory).
- Mack-Smith argues that Mussolini drew on Lebensraum.
- B. Croce argues that Mussolini was a new phenomenon.
- NB. As a precursor to unification in Italy— the importance of Garibaldi, Mazzini & Cavour.
 - When Napoleon imposed "enforced" unity in late 1700s / early 1800s he imposed the beginnings of unity on Germany and Italy.
- Mussolini's Contribution:
 - An opportunist— good sense of timing— took opportunity as it was given.
 - Exploited the weakness and power vacuum— Liberals / Socialists.
 - March on Rome— had doubts— but perhaps thought that if the King would give him power, it was worth it.
 - Manipulated the media (c.f. Hitler)

- Fear of Communism— can explain appeasement (Mack-Smith disagrees).
- "Mussolini was merely formalising an Italian tradition" (Mack-Smith).
- Eclecticism— built in a lot of different ideologies.
- Daring foreign policies.
- A revival of the old Roman Empire— Mediterranean as "an Italian lake".
- Controlled use of force effectively.
- Won over the Church (RC), the King, etc.

Fascist Ideology:

- In the beginning, Mussolini was basically leading to Socialism— also took from D'Annunzio (nationalism).
- Marxist doctrine in Italy
 - Constant collision of class struggles— final synthesis was the rule of the proletariat.
 - Mussolini's doctrine indicates this— dialectic materialism.
- Effect of Social Darwinism:
 - evolution through adaptation
 - 'survival of the fittest'
 - Social Darwinism is this applied to the social structure.
- Both Fascists and Communists drew on the fact that life was a struggle.
- Hitler— "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer"— also drawn from Marxism & Social Darwinism.
- Nazism had a more clever and focused ideology than Italian Fascism.
- Ultimately, Fascist ideologies are responsible by Mussolini, the Nazis and Hitler.
 - common in this way (see)
- The idea of recreating an empire was not a uniquely Fascist idea— from nationalism, colonialism and imperialism— Mussolini draws on this— perhaps an excuse, however. (see E)
- We look at a whole collection of failures that Mussolini seeks to avenge:
 - saving face & vengeance.
 - *Durchstoßlegender* ("stab in the back")— unlike Germany, Italy seeks to avenge, eg. Abyssinia.
- The aim to set up an empire is also common.
- Distinction of Italian fascism— Mussolini tried to make Italy a better place for Italians— dealing with long-standing problems remaining from the Risorgimento years.
- Domestic & foreign policies are moulded and domestic policies take precedence over foreign policies.
- Italian fascism is less unique than Nazism— Nazism is characterised by Anti-Semitism. Italian Fascism is only unique because of its unique methods from Risorgimento days for a unique problem. The ideology is not unique though, in the way it draws on colonialism, etc. It takes wholesale ideas and calls it "Fascism".

- AJP Taylor— Hitler's foreign policy is nothing more than an extension of Wilhelmine foreign policy.
 - eg. Stresemann— AJPT would argue that his policies were the same as those employed later, eg. by Von Neurath.
 - Breaks down— eg. Anti-Semitism, enshrined in doctrine under Hitler from a previous idea.
 - Interpretation and application makes it uniquely Hitlerian, and primacy given is unique to Nazism.
 - Therefore, Mussolini's foreign policy draws on Risorgimento thinking.