

2024



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

Set 2

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Document-Based Question

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Question 1: Document-Based Question, Fascism—Revolutionary or Traditional

7 points

General Scoring Notes

- Except where otherwise noted, each point of these rubrics is earned independently; for example, a student could earn a point for evidence without earning a point for thesis/claim.
- **Accuracy:** The components of these rubrics require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- **Clarity:** Exam essays should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and practices described below.

Evaluate whether Italian fascism was a revolutionary or a traditional movement.

| Reporting Category | Scoring Criteria | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Row A Thesis/Claim [0-1 points]</p> | <p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p> | <p>1 point Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</p> |
| Decision Rules and Scoring Notes | | |
| <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not historically defensible. • Only restate or rephrase the prompt. • Do not respond to the prompt. • Do not establish a line of reasoning. • Are overgeneralized. | | <p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a historically defensible thesis or claim about whether Italian fascism was traditional or revolutionary. The thesis or claim must either provide some indication of the reason for making that claim OR establish categories of the argument. |
| <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Provide a restatement of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Fascism was both revolutionary and conservative.”</i> <p>Provide a historically defensible claim, but do not establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Fascists were basically conservative nationalists.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning, but do not provide a historically defensible claim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Mussolini and the fascists opposed radical movements like the communists.”</i> | | <p>Examples that earn this point:</p> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“When they sought to gain power, fascists used the language of revolution, but they became largely conservative when they were in charge.”</i> • <i>“Mussolini and others continued to define the fascist movement as being opposed to the failures of the previous period, so it was a revolutionary movement.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt with analytic categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Fascism was actually quite conservative as can be seen from their economic policies, their alliance with Catholicism, and their treatment of women.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Italian fascism was revolutionary because it replaced democracy in Italy with dictatorship.”</i> [Minimally acceptable thesis/claim] |
| <p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis or claim must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion [which may not be limited to the first or last paragraphs]. • The thesis or claim must identify a relevant development[s] in the period, although it is not required to encompass the entire period. | | |

| Reporting Category | Scoring Criteria | |
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| <p>Row B Contextualization</p> | <p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p> | <p>1 point Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.</p> |
| <p>[0-1 points]</p> | <p>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</p> | |
| <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. Provide a passing phrase or reference. | <p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurately describe a context relevant to whether Italian fascism was traditional or revolutionary. | |
| <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Do not provide context relevant to the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Italy has always been a cultural center of Europe.”</i> <p>Provides only a passing phrase or reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“World War I had just ended when the fascists began to rise in Italy.”</i> <p>Provides historically inaccurate contextualization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Italy was on the losing side in World War I and this shook up the country’s politics.”</i> | <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The devastation of World War I The humiliations suffered by Italians in World War I and the post-war settlements European postwar economic instability The fragmented politics of Italy—the existence of multiple competing parties The spread of socialist and Marxist ideas in Europe during and after World War I The rise of fascism in other parts of Europe beyond Italy [including Nazi Germany] Continued regional differences in Italy—economic, political, cultural Many Italians’ perception of government failure and corruption Nationalism and Italian unification Universal male suffrage achieved in 1918 <p>Examples of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Even though Italy was one of the ‘victors’ of WWI, the country suffered heavily and experienced many costly defeats during the war.”</i> <i>“Democracies across Europe were unstable in the period after World War I.”</i> [Minimally acceptable contextualization] | |
| <p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response must describe broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question that are relevant to the topic of the prompt. To earn this point, the context provided must be more than a phrase or reference. | | |

| Reporting Category | Scoring Criteria | | |
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| Row C Evidence [0-3 points] | Evidence from the Documents | | |
| | 0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point. | 1 point Uses the content of at least three documents to address the topic of the prompt. | 2 points Supports an argument in response to the prompt using at least four documents. |
| Decision Rules and Scoring Notes | | | |
| Responses that do not earn points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use evidence from less than three of the documents Misinterpret the content of the document Quote the content of the documents without providing an accompanying description Address documents collectively rather than considering separately the content of each document | Responses that earn 1 point: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurately describe—rather than simply quote—the content from at least three of the documents to address whether Italian fascism was traditional or revolutionary. Examples of describing the content of a document: Describe evidence from the documents relevant to the topic but do not use that evidence to support an argument <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Document 2]: <i>“Corradini claims there is no daylight between what Mussolini does and what fascism is.”</i> [Document 4]: <i>“The author of the article praises fascist support of the arts.”</i> | Responses that earn 2 points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support an argument in response to the prompt by accurately using the content of at least four documents. Examples of supporting an argument using the content of a document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Document 1]: <i>“By defining himself as being against the communists, the most revolutionary party, Mussolini is establishing his conservative credentials.”</i> [Uses evidence from the document to support an argument about the conservative nature of the Fascist movement] [Document 7]: <i>“The creation of militarized groups of women like the one discussed on Doc 7 indicates that the fascists were willing to go against traditional gender roles if they felt it was necessary.”</i> [Uses evidence from the document to support an argument about the revolutionary tendencies of fascism] | |
| Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To earn two points, the four documents do not have to be used in support of a single argument—they can be used across sub-arguments or to address counterarguments. | | | |

| | | |
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| Row C [Continued] | Evidence beyond the Documents: | |
| | <p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p> | <p>1 point Uses at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence [beyond that found in the documents] relevant to an argument in response to the prompt.</p> |
| | Decision Rules and Scoring Notes | |
| | <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evidence that is not relevant to an argument about the prompt. • Provide evidence that is outside the time period or region specified in the prompt. • Repeat information that is specified in the prompt or in any of the documents. • Provide a passing phrase or reference. | <p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must use at least one specific piece of historical evidence relevant to whether Italian fascism was traditional or revolutionary <p>Examples of specific and relevant evidence beyond the documents that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fascist Italy’s alliance with Nazi Germany • The importance of the Catholic Church in Italian life • Mussolini’s March on Rome [1922] • The Italian fascist conquest of Ethiopia [1935] • Mussolini’s earlier affiliation with the Italian Socialist Party • Socialist, communist, and anarchist movements in Italy • Fascist policies of militarism and arms build-up • Pre-war radicalism in Italy, especially Futurism <p>Examples of evidence beyond the documents relevant to an argument about the prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Futurists, who wanted to destroy the old world they saw as tired and corrupt, supported fascism strongly.”</i> [Provides a piece of evidence not in the documents relevant to an argument about the prompt] • <i>“The conquest of Ethiopia in 1935 indicates the fascists’ desire to act like any other European imperial power.”</i> [Provides a piece of evidence not in the documents relevant to an argument about the prompt] |
| <p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, statements credited as evidence will be more specific than statements credited as contextualization. • To earn this point, the evidence provided must be different from the evidence used to earn the point for contextualization. • To earn this point, the evidence provided must be more than a phrase or reference. • The point for evidence beyond the documents may be awarded for evidence that appears in any part of the response. | | |

| Reporting Category | Scoring Criteria | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Row D Analysis and Reasoning [0-2 points]</p> | Sourcing | |
| | <p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p> | <p>1 point For at least two documents, explains how or why the document’s point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.</p> |
| | Decision Rules and Scoring Notes | |
| <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain sourcing for fewer than two of the documents. Identify the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience but fail to explain how or why it is relevant to an argument. Summarize the content or argument of the document without explaining the relevance of this summary to the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Identify the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience, but do not explain how or why it is relevant to an argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Starace in Document 5 is enthusiastically promoting the benefits of fascist recreational clubs to the general public.”</i> <p>Summarize the content of the document without explaining the relevance of this to the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The flattering illustration of Mussolini signing a treaty with the papacy depicts a defining moment for his regime.”</i> [Note that the inclusion of the word “flattering” is not enough by itself to gain credit for sourcing.] | <p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must explain how or why—rather than simply identifying—the document’s point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience is relevant to an argument that addresses the prompt for each of the two documents sourced. <p>Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the author’s point of view:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Document 4]: <i>“As an artist and critic, Persico judges the fascist regime to be revolutionary based on his ideas about art.”</i> [Identifies the point of view of the source and how this affects the author’s perception of Fascism] <p>Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the author’s purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Document 6]: <i>“The author of a women’s magazine article is attempting to convince mothers that Mussolini and the fascists see their traditional roles as wife and mother as vital for the state.”</i> [Connects the purpose of the document to an argument that fascists were conservative] <p>Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the historical situation of a source:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Document 1]: <i>“Mussolini, speaking just after the war that killed thousands of ordinary Italians seeks to restore their traditional loyalty to symbols like the flag, but employs revolutionary terms to do it.”</i> [Connects the historical situation of the document to an argument about the mixed nature of the fascist movement] <p>Example of acceptable explanation of the relevance of the audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Document 3]: <i>“The illustration on the cover of a major newspaper is aimed at spreading the message that Mussolini is allied with the traditional forces of organized religion to a broad cross-section of Italian society.”</i> [Connects the audience of the document to argument that fascism was conservative] | |

| Row D [continued] | Complexity | |
|---|---|--|
| | <p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p> | <p>1 point Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt through sophisticated argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.</p> |
| Decision Rules and Scoring Notes | | |
| | <p>Responses that earn this point: May demonstrate a complex understanding through sophisticated argumentation that is relevant to the prompt. This may be done in a variety of ways, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining multiple themes or perspectives to explore complexity or nuance; OR • Explaining multiple causes or effects, multiple similarities or differences, or multiple continuities or changes; OR • Explaining both cause and effect, both similarity and difference, or both continuity and change; OR • Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods or geographical areas. These connections should clearly relate to an argument that responds to the prompt. <p>May demonstrate a complex understanding through effective use of evidence relevant to an argument that addresses the prompt. This may be done in a variety of ways, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively using seven documents to support an argument that responds to the prompt; OR • Explaining how the point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience of at least four documents supports an argument that responds to the prompt; OR • Using documents and evidence beyond the documents effectively to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of different perspectives relevant to the prompt. <p>Demonstrating a complex understanding might include any of the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguing that fascist rhetoric before taking power in 1922 is less indicative of the nature of the movement than their policies once they were in power. [Demonstrates sophisticated understanding] • Arguing that nationalist enthusiasm generated by Italian unification in the mid-1800s gradually gave way to disenchantment and anger as a result of Italy’s unstable pre-war politics. [Explains relevant and insightful connections] • Arguing that fascist propaganda depicts the movement as a revolutionary break with the immediate past, but connecting it to the accomplishments of Italy’s ancient past. [Explores complexity or nuance] • Arguing that fascism was politically revolutionary in its destruction of the existing political system but was culturally conservative. [Explains continuity and change] | |
| | <p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This complex understanding must be part of the argument and may be demonstrated in any part of the response. • While it is not necessary for this complex understanding to be woven throughout the response, it must be more than merely a phrase or reference. • To earn a point for complexity by using seven documents in support of an argument, there must be an attempt to use all seven documents to effectively support an argument, but the use of the documents may be unevenly or inconsistently developed, or the document use may be weaker in one or two instances. | |

Document Summaries

| Document | Summary of Content | Explains the relevance of point of view [POV], purpose, situation, and/or audience by elaborating on examples such as: |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Mussolini speech, 1919 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attacks the socialists as reactionary and conservative Announces the Fascists will fight against moral and technological backwardness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a frontline WWI veteran himself, Mussolini makes an emotional appeal to nationalism. [POV] Speaking to an audience that probably included leftwing sympathizers, Mussolini uses Marxist language that attacks industrialists. [situation/audience] |
| 2. Corradini, magazine article, 1925 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claims fascist movement is toppling liberalism and socialism Claims there is perfect unity between the Fascist Party and the state | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The declaration is made only a few years after Mussolini has taken power when he is still trying to shake things up in Italy. [situation/purpose] As a high official in the party, Corradini is eager to justify the actions of the Fascist Party and glorify the changes the fascists are bringing to Italy. [POV] |
| 3. Newspaper cover illustration of treaty signing, 1929 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows Mussolini in a grand setting signing a major treaty with the papacy Shows a high church official cooperating with the head of the fascist government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The newspaper is aimed at a mixed audience of party members and non-party members, many of whom would welcome the fascists' improved ties to the papacy and the recognition of the importance of their religion. [audience] The newspaper cover is intended to convey a positive turning point in relations between the fascist state and a major force for conservatism in Italian society. [purpose] |
| 4. Persico article on fascist art, 1932 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praises the fascist government's support for avant-garde art and architecture Claims that other countries support outdated art and architecture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since he is writing to fellow-artists and architects, Persico praises fascism in terms of its artistic achievements. [audience] Although the fascists have been in power for ten years, Persico seeks to emphasize that they have not become conservative or backward-looking. [situation] |
| 5. Starace book on recreational clubs, 1933 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes some of the outdoor activities organized by the clubs Claims these activities improve the psychological outlook of working people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starace employs Romantic language about the spiritual power of nature that was traditional and mainstream by the early twentieth century. [situation] As a party member, Starace wants to promote activities that create greater contentment with life under fascism. [purpose] |
| 6. Magazine article on Mother and Child Day, 1935 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cites Mussolini on the central role of mothers and children Claims motherhood is key to national survival | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By employing images of struggle and slavery, the article ties the role of mothers in Italy to the increasingly aggressive expansionist foreign policy of fascist Italy at the time. [situation] The article is aimed at women, who tended to preserve religious traditions in families, so it reminds them of the link between the new celebration and Catholic holidays. [audience] |
| 7. Pochino discussion of Fascist Women's uniform, 1938 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes the mixture of new and traditional symbolism in the women's uniform Claims the uniform expresses the traditional and forward-looking aspects of fascism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing at a time when Italian society was increasingly militarized under fascist rule, Pochino extols a uniform for women. [situation] As a woman leading an organization in a male-dominated society, Pochino is possibly seeking to outdo her male counterparts in expressing loyalty to fascist ideas and to Mussolini. [purpose] |

Sample 1A:

Post World War 1 Italy was in a bad position. They hadn't received anything from the Treaty of Versailles and were viewed as one of the weaker countries in Europe. The Socialist government was slow to react and was conservative in its policies. So Mussolini using his black shirts as an intimidation force was able to garner popular support and force the prime minister to abdicate which gave Mussolini total power. This resulted in the establishment of Italian Fascism. Although one might argue that Italian fascism was a traditional movement due to its restoration of traditional ideals, in reality Italian fascism was a revolutionary movement due to it overthrowing old government ideologies, creating new cultural ideas, and updating traditional values.

One way in which the Italian Fascism was revolutionary was because it fought against old government ideologies. Document 1 is a speech by Benito Mussolini in which he says that they declare war against socialism because it opposes nationalism and the socialist party has been conservative and reactionary. He also states they will fight to improve technology and morals which could take years. Since this document is written by Benito Mussolini who was the leader of the Fascist Party, he would most likely use strong negative language to disparage his opponents (the Italian Socialist Party). This shows that Italian Fascism under Mussolini is revolutionary because it is going against the conservative and old socialism and trying to fight against old ideologies about technology and morals. Document 2 is an editorial by a member of the Fascist Party which states that the fascist spirit will overcome old ideologies and establish a government in which the state prevails over parliamentary parties and this will happen under Mussolini's current government. Since this is a public article written by a member of the fascist party, they might use language that would glorify the image of the fascists so that they increase support for Mussolini. This shows that the Italian Fascism under Mussolini was a revolutionary movement because it sought to overcome all old ideologies and establish a new strong state that controls the government. Another piece of information is that when Mussolini came into power he established a secret police to get rid of dissidents and controlled all parts of the government. This shows that Mussolini's fascism was revolutionary because the control over the government he had was unheard of in any other previous government ideology.

Another way the Italian Fascism government was revolutionary was by creating new cultural ideas. Document 4 is an article which states that the national government supports new artistic and architectural styles in their exhibitions compared to other governments who adopt backward and bourgeois art. Since this is written in a newspaper, the author might use positive language about the party to show his support. This shows that the new fascist government is revolutionary because it is adopting new creative styles of art and not returning to traditional styles. This shows that the Italian Fascist government is revolutionary because they are supporting a new cultural idea by creating new cultural ideas through new artistic and architectural styles for their events compared to the traditional art used by other governments. Document 5 is an excerpt from a book written by the secretary of the Italian Fascist Party which states that workers have gained a new happiness because they are allowed to use the National Recreational clubs to do new excursions in nature on the weekends. Since this book was written by the secretary of the Italian Fascist Party, she might use biased language that praises and overexaggerates the effects that the National

Recreational Clubs have in order to support her party. The document shows that the new Fascist government has established a new culture concept of allowing workers to explore nature on the weekends instead of the traditional dullness.

The final way Italian fascism was revolutionary was by updating old ideals. Document 6 is an article which talks about a national ritual that honors motherhood and celebrates childhood because they are the backbone of the nation and have the best values. Since this article was published in a Fascist magazine, it would most likely contain the most accurate information about fascist traditions. This shows that the Fascist government is taking the old ideal of motherhood and is updating it by creating an entire national tradition that highlights their values and how it upholds Fascist ideals. Document 3 shows an image from a newspaper which depicts Mussolini and the Pope signing a treaty which recognizes the pope's control over Vatican City and declares Roman Catholicism the official religion of Italy. This shows that the Fascist government is taking the traditional ideas of the Pope and updating it by giving them sovereignty over Vatican City and updating Italy's religious ideals by declaring Italy a Roman Catholic country. Document 7 is an article that discusses the Fascist organization's uniform stating that it represents the best things such as the blackshirts, martyrs, imperial Rome of the past present and future. It also has the word DUCE repeated to acclaim the leader who has returned Italy to its glory. Since this is published by an official in the Italian Fascist Women Organization, they would be able to tell the most accurate information on what the outfit looked like for women due to their involvement in the Fascist Women Organization. This shows that Italy's fascism is taking their past but also updating its ideals and will continue to take it to the future shown by the past icons on the outfit but also adding new fascist ideals by repeating DUCE.

Sample 1B:

The Italian Renaissance of the late 15th and 16th centuries was a time of greatly significant cultural impact- it was a time in which Italian Therefore, Italian fascism was more of a traditional movement rather than a revolutionary one, as it not only emphasized cultural norms of traditional values but also aimed to politically restore Italy back to its traditional and greater heights.

Some may argue that Italian fascism was a more revolutionary movement, citing the fact that it was trying to overturn the regime that preceded them, the Italian Socialist Party. For instance, Benito Mussolini, in a speech announcing the formation of the Fascist fighting squads in Milan in 1919, described the former party as being backward and assuring that Fascist ideals would fight against both technological and moral backwardness. This implies a revolutionary movement is in play as it aims to overturn the old regime to create a nation bigger and better than what was present before them (Document 1). This idea is further emphasized in an editorial publication by Enrico Corradini, a senator and member of the Fascist party, who proclaimed in 1925 the Fascist party's goal to overcome old liberalism, democratism, and socialism to carry out their revolutionary fascist program to build a stronger Italian state (Document 2). This can serve as evidence that they want to overthrow the old regime and thus revolutionize against the governmental bodies or body that have preceded them. One may also argue that they are revolutionary upon the mention of Edoardo Pesico's magazine article on new Italian fascist architecture, claiming that Italian fascism was to create a new-age or avant-garde architectural style, signifying further the radically changing revolution as even encompassing aspects of former Italian culture.

However, the true policies and implementation of the Italian fascist movement instead point to an even bigger amount of evidence that Italian fascism was a movement that wanted to revert the state back to tradition, past the numerous regimes of whom he had deemed backwards.

Italian fascism was thus ultimately and at its core a traditional movement due to its emphasis on return to traditional cultural ideals and a return to the traditional imperial Italy of the many years before. It is of crucial importance in this argument to recognize the fact that while Italian fascist movement wished to counteract and revolutionize against only the socialist and radical ideas of the Socialist Party that had come before them, leaders of Italian fascism wished truly to revert to more traditional values and policies modified to fit the political climate of their time. For one, the Italian fascist movement aimed to politically revive Italy, as Alba Pochino in a magazine article in description of their uniform in 1938 described their clothing to represent the power of the Imperial Rome of before, and even mentioned their goal to return Italy to its imperial heights (Document 7). Here, it is evidenced that the Italian fascist party aims to free their nation from its overly radical ideals of socialism and to instead return to its former and greater state through the use of fascism in the modern day political climate. Another example demonstrates this in a more domestic diplomatic manner, as one can take into account an illustration from a major Italian news paper, depicting the signing of a treaty which recognized the pope's sovereignty over Vatican city and furthermore Roman Catholicism the official religion of Italy (Document 3). This evidences another the way in which the Italian fascist movement demonstrated a traditional movement as Italian fascism brought with it Catholic ideals and influence back into the Italian political sphere.

This argument is only further proved when one takes into account the importance of sociocultural factors into the Italian fascist movement. Achille Starace, in a book published in 1933 on the National Recreational Clubs organized by the Fascist party, describes how free the working masses are able to feel as the fascist system allows them to return to what Starace describes as the majesty of nature (Document 5). This demonstrates Italian fascism as a traditional movement as it explains its desire and policies which allow the working class to enjoy nature and their surroundings again, as one would be able to do before the advent of the factory system or offices. The historical context of the situation amplifies this idea even further as one takes into account the period of which the piece was published: in a time where industrialization and thus wage labor was of utmost importance or prominence, the Italian fascist party stressed a return to more traditional ways of living when workers met the weekend. This is further seen in light of another article regarding Italian fascism's celebration of Mother and Child Day in a fascist party magazine for women in 1935. The article describes the national ritual as a celebration of motherhood, as it represented the supreme values of the race (Document 6). This shows Italian fascism as a traditional movement because it reinforces traditional ideas of domesticity and motherhood as the prime role of a woman. The historical situation of the article furthers this argument as the 1930s, otherwise the Great Depression, were a time in which many women began to actually join the workforce as maids or seamstresses, stressing a resistance against the more progressive tides of the time and instead going back to more traditional values.

Sample 1C:

Italian fascism was a revolutionary movement. For context, it should be noted that Italy is the country that the Pope resides in. Centuries ago, the Catholic Church was the group responsible for distributing information as well as the word of God. This meant that the church had full control of the nation's knowledge, alongside other things. Many of which included how the nation was run all the way to how households should be.

According to Document 1, Benito Mussolini states how they will "fight against technological and moral backwardness". By stating this, it can be assumed that the fascist movement was working towards a future where older ways of thinking and traditions long gone are being pushed out. That a new ways of doing things should be brought so that construction of new things are being put together. Mussolini then states how destruction is easily done, but that "construction may take years or centuries". By saying this, he is demonstrating that the fascist movement is prepared to do whatever it takes, for however long, the sake of their future.

Document 2 further supports how Italian fascism was a revolutionary movement. It states, "The fascist program consists in overcoming the old liberalism, the old democratism, the old socialism, to reach a regime in which the sovereignty of the State... returns to prevail over the parliamentary parties." The fascist party wished to renovate the Italian government so it would not fall behind other parties. The fascist party wanted to overcome the setbacks placed by society to carry out a revolutionary program.

Document 4 demonstrates another way the fascist movement was revolutionary. Unlike the other two mentioned documents, Document 4 demonstrates how the fascist movement challenged art styles. It is stated that, "The support of the national government for the forms of the avant-garde [new artistic and architectural styles] is another sign of the exceptional atmosphere that is developing in Italy..." Art is a way of expression that is constantly changing according to the times. By demonstrating how art was changing, the fascist movement was showing how they can further influence the people.

Traditional movement can often be described as keeping old traditions alive and not letting new changes happen. Contesting that is Document 5, describing how the people can benefit from having a break at least once a week. It is described how once monotonous workers, now get excited for the weekend to come so they can have fun. What was once considered normal, would be changed for new exciting times. The fascist movement supported this, as it would bring about change in Italy.

Question 1—Document-Based Question

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

Overview

The Document-Based Question (DBQ) is designed to evaluate the degree to which students can analyze various types of historical documents in constructing an essay that responds to the tasks required by the prompt. Responses are assessed on the extent to which they meet seven requirements specified in the generic rubric and the scoring guideline.

The 2024 DBQ asked students to evaluate whether Italian fascism was a revolutionary or a traditional movement. Students were provided with seven documents (one of which was an image) on which to base their responses. To answer this question, students had to possess an understanding of fascism and the rise of totalitarianism.

Students were asked to write an essay containing a historically defensible thesis that takes a position and establishes a line of reasoning about whether Italian fascism was more a revolutionary or a traditionalist movement. The responses were expected to provide context by situating Italian fascism within a broader historical context relevant to the prompt (e.g., economic and political instability and the Italian people's discontent about World War I).

To earn one point for evidence, students were required to use the content of at least three documents to address whether Italian fascism was a revolutionary or a traditional movement. To earn two evidence points, students had to accurately use the content of at least four documents to support an argument or arguments related to the type of movement Italian fascism was. To earn a third evidence point, students were required to use one additional relevant piece of specific historical evidence beyond that found in the documents relevant to an argument concerning Italian fascism.

Students were expected to identify and explain the significance of the audience, purpose, point of view, or historical situation for at least two documents, including how the chosen feature is relevant to an argument concerning whether Italian fascism was more a revolutionary or a traditionalist movement. Finally, responses were required to demonstrate a complex understanding of the nature of Italian fascism by analyzing multiple themes or perspectives, multiple causes or effects, comparing multiple similarities and differences, linking arguments to change and continuity over time, or making relevant and insightful connections within and across time periods and geographic areas or themes. In addition, they could demonstrate complex understanding through an effective use of evidence by correctly using seven documents to support an argument about Italian fascism, explaining how the sourcing of the document, audience, purpose, point of view, or historical situation is relevant to an argument about Italian fascism for four documents, or by using evidence beyond the documents to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of different perspectives about the nature of Italian fascism.

Question 1—Document-Based Question (continued)

Sample: 1A

Thesis Score: 1

Contextualization Score: 1

Evidence Score: 3

Analysis and Reasoning Score: 2

Total Score: 7

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis. The introduction offers a historically defensible argument that, while it could be argued that Italian fascism was traditional, it was really a revolutionary movement because it overthrew old governments and created new cultural ideas, in addition to reinforcing traditional values.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization by situating Mussolini and Italian fascism in the aftermath of World War I and the Treaty of Versailles. The overstatement that “Italy hadn’t received anything” from the Treaty was considered a minor error that did not detract from the argument.

C. Evidence (0–3 points): 3

Uses the content of at least three documents to address the topic of the prompt: 1

The response earned 1 evidence point for correctly using the content of Documents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Supports an argument in response to the prompt using at least four documents: 1

The response earned 1 evidence point for using Documents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 to support an argument. It uses Documents 1 and 2 to support an argument about Italian fascism was revolutionary for fighting against old ideologies, and Documents 4, 5, 6, and 7 to support an argument about new cultural and social ideas. It uses Document 3 to talk about religious changes.

Uses at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt: 1

The response earned 1 evidence point for Evidence Beyond the Documents for its assertion in the second paragraph that Mussolini created the secret police (OVRA) to deal with dissidents.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 2

Sourcing for at least two documents: 1

The response earned 1 point for sourcing. It provides sourcing for Documents 1 (POV), 2 (Purpose), 4 (POV), 5 (POV), and 7 (POV). There is an unsuccessful attempt to provide POV for Document 6.

Question 1—Document-Based Question (continued)

Demonstrating Complex Understanding: 1

The response earned 1 point for demonstrating complex understanding by effectively using all seven documents to support an argument and by successfully sourcing five documents to support an argument.

Sample: 1B

Thesis Score: 1

Contextualization Score: 0

Evidence Score: 2

Analysis and Reasoning Score: 1

Total Score: 4

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for providing a historically defensible claim in the first paragraph, that Italian fascism was a traditional movement that emphasized cultural values to restore Italy to its former glory.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn this point because its mention of the Italian Renaissance in the first paragraph is not adequately connected to the prompt.

C. Evidence (0–3 points): 2

Uses the content of at least three documents to address the topic of the prompt: 1

The response earned 1 evidence point for correctly using the content of Documents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 to address the prompt.

Supports an argument in response to the prompt using at least four documents: 1

The response earned 1 evidence point for correctly using six documents to support an argument. It uses Documents 1 and 2 to support an argument that Italian fascism appears revolutionary; Document 3 to argue that at its core it was a traditional movement because it wanted to revert to former Imperialism, Document 4 to argue that fascist architecture was used to create a new age, and Documents 5 and 6 to argue for the impact of traditional sociocultural factors. Document 7's mention of freeing Italy from radical socialism is historically inaccurate, and thus it does not rise to the level of supporting an argument.

Uses at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt: 0

The response did not earn this evidence point because it does not provide an additional piece of historical evidence not found in the documents that was relevant to an argument about the prompt.

Question 1—Document-Based Question (continued)

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 1

Sourcing for at least two documents: 1

The response earned 1 point for sourcing. It provides sourcing for Documents 5 (Historical Situation), 6 (Historical Situation), and 7 (Purpose).

Demonstrating Complex Understanding: 0

The response did not earn this point because it uses only six documents successfully in support of an argument, only sources three documents, does not offer multiple perspectives or nuance, or explain connections relevant to the prompt.

Sample: 1C

Thesis Score: 0

Contextualization Score: 0

Evidence Score: 2

Analysis and Reasoning Score: 0

Total Score: 2

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn a point for thesis because, while it states that Italian fascism was a revolutionary movement, it does not offer a line of reasoning.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 0

The response did not earn a point for contextualization because its discussion in the introduction about the Catholic Church controlling information is not connected to an argument relevant to the prompt.

C. Evidence (0–3 points): 2

Uses the content of at least three documents to address the topic of the prompt: 1

The response earned 1 evidence point for correctly using the content of Documents 1, 2, 4, and 5 to address the prompt.

Supports an argument in response to the prompt using at least four documents: 1

The response earned 1 evidence point for using four documents to support an argument in response to the prompt. It uses Documents 1 and 5 to argue that Italian fascism worked against tradition, and it uses Documents 2 and 4 to argue that Italian fascists deployed art to influence popular support for their revolutionary aims.

Question 1—Document-Based Question (continued)

Uses at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt: 0

The response did not earn a point for use of at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence because it did not attempt to provide one.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 0

Sourcing for at least two documents: 0

The response did not earn a point for sourcing because there was no discernible attempt to do so.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding: 0

The response did not earn this point because it uses only four documents in support of an argument, does not source any documents, does not offer multiple perspectives or nuance, or explain connections relevant to the prompt.