

Emergence of authoritarian states essay

'Military and war background are the most important factors for the rise of authoritarianism' To what extent do you agree with this statement?

General Statement

Basic argument evident

Authoritarian regimes require specific conditions in their nation or state for them to be exploited in favour of such regimes' emergence into power. Although a nation's military and war background were important in assisting these regimes' emergence, other factors, such as socio-political and socio-economic conditions were arguably also essential for this emergence. This can be illustrated by the emergence of two authoritarian leaders- Hitler in 1933 Germany and Mao in 1949 China- and the years prior to their rise. **Two appropriate case studies but limited context.**

Unsupported assertion + factually incorrect

Unclear

Military conflicts were important for the emergence of authoritarianism in both states considering both had suffered defeats from international interventions, leaving their military forces humiliated. Belgium's invasion of the Ruhr in 1923 serves as an example considering Germany was seen by its population as much bigger and more powerful than Belgium, but the smaller nation's invasion was still successful in seizing German industrial resources in the Ruhr, making Germans feel as if their military forces had dishonoured them. Similarly, China was also invaded by a smaller nation, Japan, in several instances prior to Mao's emergence into power. The invasion of Manchuria as well as the infamous Rape of Nanjing both made it clear to the Chinese that their current military force was not capable of defending them (even against a smaller nation), prompting them to seek change

Vague

Another unsupported incorrect assertion

and turn to parties who promised stronger military force- like Mao's Red Army. Hence, in both states, defeats in military conflicts made their populations more willing to accept and support authoritarian regimes who promised stronger, more victorious military development.

Evaluation evident but not supported by accurate historical evidence

Analysis attempted

Yet, there are some key differences in terms of the German and the Chinese military backgrounds. Germany had arguably a sentiment of nostalgia from their military victories in the 1871 Franco-Prussian War, and this meant military weaknesses made the population support Hitler, who promised to restore the former military glory in Germany. The Chinese, though, had long dealt with military defeats and, instead of trying to restore military honour, they fought a Civil War prior to Mao's emergence to power, which polarized the population, hence causing more people to support Mao's extremist regime, but for a different reason than in Germany.

Some validity but not linked to 1871. Should be WWI

Factually incorrect

Irrelevant

Despite the military backgrounds being quite important, the socio-political instability and unrest in both states were also essential for both Hitler's and Mao's emergence in 1933 and 1949 into power respectively. This instability is clearly evidenced by the change of 15 chancellors in 14 years during the Weimar government period as no chancellor lasted

enough time to sustain any significant policies, the German population became more willing to accept an authoritarian ruler, who would, most likely, not be easily removed from government after only a short period of time. In China, both the warlord period, the Nationalist party and the Civil War that followed it also serve to exemplify how the Chinese arguably longed for a government that would last long enough to make significant changes to China's outdated, feudal system. Therefore, both states' political instabilities endured major unrest in their populations who, in turn, became more willing to support authoritarian leaders simply with the promise that they would stay in power a durable period.

Unsupported assertion

Unclear what is being referred to

Unsupported assertion

Still, socio-political factors can be contrasted in both states regarding what exact kind of authoritarian regimes each prompted their populations to support. China suffered immense inequality; with 90% of their population consisting of peasants, the majority began to seek revolutionary change that would potentially re-define this socio-political structure altogether. Mao took advantage of this popular sentiment and, with some changed to Marxist ideology, widely appealed to Chinese peasants, yielding their support. In Germany, though communism was ultimately rejected since the failed coalition of the Weimar state caused Germany to look upon their more successful past nostalgically, when the Kaiser had been in power. This led the population to willingly support a new party, the Nazis, who resembled the old political system, rather than Mao, who proposed an entirely new one. Thus, contrasts in socio-political conditions explain how each state led to the emergence of authoritarian regimes with divergent ideologies and structures.

Communists were always a minority

Lacks relevance

Evaluation is attempted but not based on accurate historical evidence

Nazis presented themselves as modern

Finally, socio-economic conditions in Germany and China also led to the emergence of authoritarianism, specifically in how both states' governments preceding authoritarian regimes managed economic crises quite poorly. Following Japan's invasion of China and Belgium's invasion of Germany, both the Nationalists and the Weimar government saw printing more money as a solution to the loss of resources caused by these invasions. In hindsight, it is known that this measure led to hyperinflation, which only worsened the strain on both states' already damaged economic landscapes. As a result, both German and Chinese citizens became increasingly desperate, especially with rising unemployment in Germany (only temporarily solved by the Dawes plan) and famine in China, causing these populations to become more susceptible to extreme, authoritarian leaders who offered any possibility of change to their dire conditions.

Economics over simplified.

Irrelevant

No evidence for China

Repetition

Hyperinflation not relevant in 1933

Still, socio-economic issues were more punctual and shocking in Germany, Following the Daws plan and its period of apparent prosperity, the Great Depression's sudden effect on the German economy totally shocked the population as this socio-economic strain came mostly from outside Germany (entailed by the American Wall Street Crash). This sudden

Irrelevant

Superficial

despair explains how the Nazis were able to emerge into power in the span of only 3 years after the start of the Great Depression. In China, though, it's arguable that economic issues caused the international disputed merely exacerbated the Chinese already backwards, agrarian economy, which led to more deep-rooted issues, causing dissatisfaction in the peasant demographic for decades leading to Mao's emergence.

In conclusion, it was a combination of military and socio-economic, socio-political and military factors which were most important for the emergence of authoritarian states.

Without widespread despair in both populations, military defeats alone could not have caused them to support such extremist, authoritarian regimes.

Unclear what is being referred to

No link to the question

General argument, but linked back to the question.

Lack of focus on the question. They failed to understand how the CCW and WWI contributed to the respective regimes. Structure is clear. Examples are vague or lack relevance. Some concepts are identified but limited understanding about wars specifically. Analysis attempted but rarely supported. Evaluation attempted but perspectives not explained with clarity. Conclusion evident argument is present but undeveloped.

9/15

