

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q13

" There arose a serious challenge to the Democratic State System between the two World Wars." Evaluate the statement.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · GS I · 15 marks · History of the World

History of the world will include events from the 18th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, redrawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization, political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc. - their forms and effect on the society.

Core demand of the question

- "There arose a serious challenge to the Democratic State System between the two World Wars." Evaluate the statement
- Keep a 15-mark length

Revision summary

Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Franco, and Japanese militarism attacked parliamentary systems.

The Depression and a weak League made dictators look effective.

The USSR offered a second non-democratic path.

Britain, the US, and some others held their elections.

The challenge was serious and regional, not the end of democracy as an idea.

Introduction

Between 1919 and 1939 parliamentary democracy lost ground to fascism, militarism, and one-party rule across much of Europe and parts of Asia. The challenge was serious. It was not total: Britain, France, the US, and some small states held, and 1945 reversed the map.

Body**The challenge**

- **Italy 1922** and **Germany 1933** replaced liberal constitutions with fascist dictatorships that used elections once, then killed them.
- **Spain's** civil war and Franco, **Portugal's** Salazar, and East European royal dictatorships showed a wider authoritarian fashion.
- **Japan's** military cabinets and the invasion of China abandoned Taisho-era party cabinets.
- **Stalin's** USSR was a different anti-liberal model: no fascist nation-myth, but no competitive democracy either.
- The **Great Depression** made unemployment a recruiter for those who promised order over parliaments.

Why democracies looked weak

- Versailles humiliation, weak Weimar coalitions, and fear of communism split the middle.

- **League of Nations** failure in Manchuria and Abyssinia taught that collective security would not save a small democracy.

Evaluation - not a total eclipse

- The UK, US, Sweden, and several dominions stayed electoral, even under strain.
- India saw dyarchy and 1935 provincial elections, a colonial limited democracy, while the same decades produced **Gandhi's** mass movement - a different democratic claim.
- 1939-45 then destroyed the fascist states. The statement is true as a crisis of the interwar years, not as the death of the democratic idea.

India link

- **For GS, note that Indian nationalists watched both:** some flirted with strong-state models; the Congress mainstream still wrote a democratic Constituent Assembly after the war.

Flow diagram

Depression Versailles -> Fascist militarist takeover
Fascist militarist takeover -> Challenge to democracy
UK US holdouts -> Survival
1945 defeat of Axis -> Survival

Conclusion

The interwar years did pose a serious challenge to the democratic state, above all in Europe and Japan, fed by depression and revenge. The system survived in the Atlantic core and was rebuilt after 1945. Evaluate as a grave crisis, not as democracy's funeral.

Facts & figures

March on Rome 1922

Mussolini's path from coalition to dictatorship.

Enabling Act 1933

Legal shell that ended Weimar democracy in Germany.

Great Depression

Mass unemployment that discredited many parliamentary cabinets.

Manchuria 1931

League failure that advertised the helplessness of collective security.

GOI Act 1935

Colonial provincial democracy in India in the same interwar window.

ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com

WRAP Exams