

Impersonal forces as the driving force for italy's historical events from 1919- 19...

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Some historians believe that the major force driving historical change is the action of great leaders; other feels that impersonal forces—political, social & economic—are the driving force. Consider the development of Italy from 1919 to 1926, and explain which theory you believe best applies—was it Mussolini who drove events, or was he merely driven by greater forces outside his control? Here too there is no “right” answer, but your history must be plausible and well worked out, taking into account Mussolini’s character and the conditions in Italy.

Impersonal Forces as the Driving Force for Italy’s Historical Events from 1919-1926
Introduction
The rise of leaders such as Mussolini and Hitler have been used as a means to defend the proposition that great are the driving force of change; however, this paper argues that it is the impersonal or systemic forces such as political, social and economic factors that drives change in a society and in modern Italy. While indeed, leaders such as Mussolini had been crucial in shaping Italy’s political and socio-economic path, he can be considered as merely an instrument of society’s overall condition at the time. Hence, great leaders emerge in the forefront of changes but it is impersonal forces that drove, influenced and sustained changes in modern Italy. Indeed, different countries face various historical changes throughout the years and in Italy arose a domineering and arguably a great leader in the person of Mussolini. On one hand, it is argued that historical changes are caused by the action of great leaders while some believes that historical changes are driven by impersonal or external forces such as the political, social and economic forces. This paper argues that it is impersonal forces of systemic forces that primarily drives change- the role of

great leaders is therefore to reinforce and strengthen these changes. Hence, Mussolini is merely an instrument in the wider context of Italy's complex dynamic structure which experienced a nationwide slump in the period 1919-1926.

Great Leaders vs Impersonal Forces: The Debate Before proceeding with the discussion, let us first set the parameters: first, we agree that Mussolini as a great leader has been instrumental in the change in Italy's history from 1919-1926; and second, great leaders whether they have brought about positive or negative changes are necessary in order to create changes in a society. First, it is political, economic and social forces that catapulted the change because of the potent impact on the rate of unemployment and prevalence of poverty. It can be remembered that the period from 1919-1926 represents one of the lowest points in Italy's history in terms of economic and political order: Italy is reeking with poverty, unemployment and the lack of economic activity. In the history of Italy, the years from 1919 to 1926 is considered as a period of tragic and profound crisis which is closely intertwined with the entire history of the nation and most especially the origins of the so-called fascism. For one, it is considered that such crisis brought about many changes in the internal history of Italy and the Socialist Party, in which in January 1921, finally divided, and gave birth to the Italian Communist Party.

The crisis was also brought by the internal political disintegration and with a devastated economic status because of war. In 1919, most of the people have been frustrated and disappointed that Italy had gained few in spite of

having a victorious battle in World War I, with this situation, a politician named Benito Mussolini has initiated a movement which called for the refurbishment of Italy as a great power. Because of the slow movement of the electoral politics in 1922, Mussolini led his followers who are known as Fascists on a march on Rome to takeover the power directly through a coup.

The king has allowed Mussolini to be the supreme ruler of Italy. The political party of Mussolini (Fascist) began in March 1919, as an activist movement, of conflicting and vague meanings. In November 1921, it became a political party, however, still remained without a clear program except as a gradual objective was defined, to conquer power. And lastly, they have the fascist state, dating from the March on Rome of October 1922. Second, it is the impersonal forces that drove political opportunists such as Mussolini to assume power.

Hence, Mussolini's rise to power was primarily driven by the people's present resentment of the government and the need for a hero at a time when Italian society is disintegrating. For instance, the elections of November, 1919, failed to elucidate the political environment. Francesco Nitti remained premier despite Socialist gains until ousted by Giolitti in June, 1920. The Italian leader Mussolini took advantage of Giolitti's hesitancy to advise a more drastic course of battle upon Fascist squads. The role of leading the 6th largest groups among the dozen in the chamber has made Benito Mussolini cognizant of the need of converting the Fascist movement into a political party.

Being prepared with the plan of Mussolini, driven by the current situation of Italy, Fascism was born. The Fascism's circumstances as well as its conception and birth-the Intervention Crisis of 1915 and the mutilated victory of 1919, also shown that Fascism came to power that offers a strongly nationalistic foreign and international policy that would reassert Italy's international obligations and wipe out the shape of previous diplomatic and military defeats. In this regard, to offset such deficiency, Italian leaders like Mussolini always have to exercise diplomatic skills of a positively Cavourian subtlety to be able to exploit the Italian situations which presented themselves to Italy's advantage (Pollard, 1998). Consequently, this type of political exploitation of Mussolini reflects an Italian citizenry that is looking and struggling for better political and economic situation of which the answer had come in the form of Fascism and a leader in Mussolini. Hence, by virtue of which came first, it is the impersonal forces that catapulted Mussolini to power.

Thus, Mussolini did not change the society of Italy- it is the people who did it using Mussolini as merely an instrument to achieve its end. Third, a revolution and a change are unsustainable unless initiated and supported by the people. Contrary to popular belief that it is Mussolini who had inspired the change, it was the people who worked for that change. The result however, was contrary to what they have expected- a country that was left with more social, economic and political problems than when Mussolini had assumed power. Fourth, the primary reason for Mussolini's inability to use his role as a great leader is because he was consumed with the need for power and hence, changes were made not in order to benefit the people but

himself. In an occasional manner, if they are mindful of a genuine revolutionary mission of the need of rooting out the old regime, Fascists with the leadership of Mussolini are likely to strike with force.

If, as more often happens, the importance of the occasion is lost to the Mussolini as the leader of Italy during that period, his eyes are turned, not to revolution, but to power in order to surpass the impersonal forces that pushes Italy to its downturn. Mussolini knows that his contemplated action is treasonable, and Mussolini secretly distrusts the allegiance of his cohorts and the loyalty of his own ringleaders. From these doubts exists the decision to take power, yes, but within the forms of the constitution if possible and that was the main objective of Mussolini as he took the leadership and power on March 1919. To this end, Mussolini believed that a display of force may be useful (Steiner, 1938). In this regard, the main goal of Mussolini is to make Italy a great power. The Italian leader has spent his next twenty years combining and strengthening power and establishing and generating the economy of Italy, but he never gave up his main goal of making the country a great power. In the history of Italy with Mussolini as the leader, it can be said that the rise to power of the ideology of Fascism has been the true merit of the Mussolini reign. The birth of Fascism under Mussolini's leadership can be attributed to the general discontent with the economic and social conditions of the country as well as the disillusionment at the political results of high taxation, unification, the growth of socialism, repulsion of the inefficiency of parliamentary inefficiency as well as the widespread of political corruption, agrarian and industrial disturbances and the failure of

Italy to achieve prominent position in terms of international politics and colonial expansion (Zamagni, 1993).

Fifth, Fascism emerged out of the social, political and economic discontent and it bore ideals that would change these ideals- hence, fascism is bigger than Mussolini- because it is the primary driving force not on Mussolini himself. It can be said that the leadership of Mussolini has been lead by objective of Fascism concept because of the deep social divisions as well as the long history of traditional patrimonial politics in the period of transition to mass democracy (Tarrow, 1995). As mentioned, in March 1919, Mussolini took over the power and gave birth to the Fascism movement.

With the historical events of Italy, it can be argued that Mussolini has been driven by impersonal forces to lead Italy for transformation and reformation. Accordingly, there are four reasons why Mussolini has become a successful leader of Italy by the end of 1922. First, the nation itself had experienced prolonged problems and crisis before 1914, and again more accurately when 1919 comes, in which the traditional economic and political solutions no longer worked for Italy.

Secondly, with that same period, a modern ideology has grown over the crisis which provides Mussolini with a substitute route to power. Such new development attracted the support of a cross-section society thoroughly disenchanted with the current establishment and lastly, Mussolini's leadership and approach gave to this movement vitality and versatility which contrasted with a dull and tired movement (Lee, 2000). AnalysisThe economic depression that struck the country as it did other nations, was

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accompanied by the usual quota of economic failure and industrial crashes, war industries and firms were closed and railroad and other means of communication has be interrupted by military contingencies. It is very hard to deny that negative conditions exist, but Mussolini laid the blame for them at the door of liberalism and democracy. Nonetheless, Italian economy was actually unstable. Historians have clearly demonstrated how great the time lags between the general public perception and economic upturn of Italy. In this regard, it can be said that Mussolini was too intelligent to believe that the approach which served the end of achieving power could be used in the continued exercise of it; not if the state were to be strong and life within it orderly.

Mussolini proceeded therefore with relative moderation, perhaps not fully appreciating, his leadership, and the real nature of the forces which had been unleashed. Hence, we find that, in 1923, in an attempt to curb the more unruly elements of the other party, those who saw in its triumph little more than a pretext for personal gain or the venting of private revenge without fear of the law, there was organized the Fascist Militia, whose role in the service of the state (hence of order) was emphasized, a role further stressed by the outward symbol of an oath of allegiance to the Crown. The success of the attempt was definitely qualified; there were many, among them, local bosses-rases, as they came to be known, from the name of local Ethiopian chieftains-whose understanding of statesman. The argument of this essay lies on the notion that Mussolini's actions have been driven by the impersonal forces. Accordingly, in a period of stress and discomfort,

Mussolini has thought that Italy needs a leader that would organized Italy

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and stimulates agitation. Because of the support of the fascists, in 1919, the established regime of Mussolini subjects itself to hypnosis, which closes their eyes to what they call “ fanciful dangers.” Having been able to find their counsel of no avail, more alert adherents of the established order are likely to scuttle the ship and take refuge with the revolutionaries, thereby supplying it with an indispensable reservoir of informed and able leadership in a persona of Mussolini.

Much has been said and is now being said for or against this complex political and social and economical phenomenon that in the brief period of seven years (1919-1926) years has taken complete hold of Italian life and, spreading beyond the boundaries of the state has made itself felt in varying levels of intensity all over the world. But people have been much more eager to extol or to deplore than to understand which is natural enough in a period of tumultuous fervour and of political passion. The time has not yet arrived for a dispassionate judgment in the development of Italy for this period (Schnapp, Sears & Stampino, 2000). Conclusion Looking closely at Mussolini’s life, we see him as the child who had lived in an Italy that had been reeking with poverty and unemployment. His ideology of socialism was based on the idea of people’s poverty and the lack of political power to change it.

The changes in his political ideology of that time arose not from his personal principles but rather from the political, social and economic forces in that era. Similar to this, the events in 1919-1926 represents a dramatic change in Italy’s political, economic and social condition which drove the Italian citizenry to look for alternatives and hence, changes to which Benito

Mussolini was merely an instrument. Concurrently, it can be said that the events that happened during 1919-1926 has been driven by political, economical and social condition during that time. Through this reasons, Mussolini has been pushed to develop the ideology of Fascism.

The movements of the fascists under the reign of Mussolini create and established policy in accordance to the needs of Italy during those periods, which include the economic, social and political needs. By and large, it can be concluded that historical changes happens not only because of the leader but because of the underlying impersonal reasons that pushes the leaders like Mussolini to decide on what changes should be made. References Lee, S. J. 2000. *European Dictatorships, 1918-1945*. Routledge. Schnapp, JT, Sears, OE and Stampino MG (2000).

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