

2021 AP European History DBQ

Setup and Sample Response Essay



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PROMPT: Evaluate whether or not British imperial rule in India during the 1800s was primarily influenced by liberalism.

STEP ONE: DEFINE LIBERALISM (Historically Defensible - Does your definition reflect an understanding of *European* ideas about liberalism?)

MY DEFINITION: Economic Freedom (*laissez-faire*), civil liberties, protection of property

CONTEXTUALIZATION: John Locke and the Glorious Revolution, the Second Industrial Revolution, and British Imperialism in India

DOC 1	USE or STRIKE
Brief Summary of Document: <i>A British judge rules in favor of a poor man in India whose property was allegedly destroyed by a British soldier (all subjects are entitled to the protection of property)</i>	
Argument Supported: <i>YES (protection of property) YES (equality under the law)</i>	HIPP/POV/CAP/OE: <i>John Locke (Natural Rights) - overall contextualization?</i>

DOC 2	USE or STRIKE
Brief Summary of Document: <i>William Cobbett, a British political commentator, describes the constant conquest warfare going on in India, with news of British soldiers dying</i>	
Argument Supported: <i>NO (Conquest is not liberal)</i>	HIPP/POV/CAP/OE: <i>Self-determination of Peoples (14 Points)</i>

40 YEAR GAP BETWEEN DOC 2 & DOC 3 - It's always worth noting gaps because there could be some outside evidence hidden in the gap and/or the documents following the gap could show change over time.

DOC 3	USE or STRIKE
Brief Summary of Document: <i>Hyde Clark, a British economist, argues for greater investment in the modernization of the Indian economy so it will produce raw materials</i>	

Argument Supported: <i>NO (PLANNED ECONOMY)</i> <i>YES (supports modernization & industrialization)</i>	HIPP/POV/CAP/OE: <i>This sounds a bit more like mercantilism (How can India, a colony, serve the British Empire's economic interests?)</i>
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DOC 4	USE or STRIKE
Brief Summary of Document: <i>An Indian businessman and reformer complains about high taxes (without receiving anything back for it), unequal treatment, and a lack of information regarding what the laws are</i>	
Argument Supported: <i>NO (High Taxes, Unequal Treatment with the English as a privileged class, and an ignorance about what exactly the laws are)</i> <i>YES (Political pamphlets like this could be distributed)</i>	HIPP/POV/CAP/OE: <i>Indian POV - shows firsthand how Indians see themselves being treated</i> <i>Reform Leader POV - could be exaggerating or misrepresenting the facts in order to make his point and persuade people</i>

DOC 5	USE or STRIKE
Brief Summary of Document: <i>Queen Victoria proclaims that she wishes for all religions to be respected and that Christianity is not imposed on any British subject in India</i>	
Argument Supported: <i>YES (advocating religious freedom and denouncing any effort to force Christianity on the population of British India)</i> <i>YES (Equality under the law)</i> <i>Possibly NO (she is proclaiming something as a monarch)</i>	HIPP/POV/CAP/OE: <i>POV - The queen doesn't necessarily know what is going on on the ground. We don't know what she is doing in order to enforce the wishes she expresses here.</i>

DOC 6	USE or STRIKE
Brief Summary of Document: <i>Drawing of an Indian prince presenting a ceremonial gift in honor of Queen Victoria</i>	
Argument Supported: <i>NO (the prince looks very deferential and the English representative is sitting on a throne-like chair)</i>	HIPP/POV/CAP/OE: <i>HC - "Empress of India" title the result of fierce advocacy of imperialism by Benjamin Disraeli's Conservative Party / Title meant to put Queen Victoria on par with other European rulers</i>

DOC 7	USE or STRIKE
Brief Summary of Document: <i>Indian journalists, who have received an English education, write in an English-language newspaper how Europeans may get away with killing and harming Indians, but an Indian who does the slightest injury to a European is going to be punished severely because the British control all of the courts.</i>	
Argument Supported: <i>NO (unequal treatment in the courts)</i> <i>YES (British were clearly not censoring the newspapers)</i> <i>YES (expanding access to education)</i>	HIPP/POV/CAP/OE: <i>POV - Since these journalists were part of the educated, English-speaking Indian elite, this is reliable because they come from the group most likely to benefit from collaboration with the British.</i> <i>HC - This is the same group (the native bourgeoisie) that would take a leading role in ending British rule after World War II.</i> <i>POV - Since the newspaper is an English-language newspaper, if the British were censoring newspapers for critical content, this article would not have been allowed to be published.</i>

CONTEXTUALIZATION: John Locke and the Glorious Revolution, Classical Liberalism, the Second Industrial Revolution, and British Imperialism in Africa

NO - Conquest and Unequal Treatment of Indians by the British	NO - High Taxes and Economic Meddling	YES - Protection of Property and Religious Toleration
Doc 2 - Military Conquest Doc 7 - Journalists Doc 6 - Deference toward the British OE - Darwinism and Social Darwinism influencing cultural superiority	Doc 3 - Hyde Clark (Economist) Doc 4 - Indian complains about high taxes	Doc 1 - Protection of Property Doc 5 - QV orders religious toleration

SAMPLE THESIS: Although British rule in India had liberal elements, such as the protection of property and religious toleration, British rule in India was not primarily influenced by liberalism, as can be seen by the poor treatment of Indians and attempts to exploit India economically for British benefit.

SAMPLE RESPONSE (Full Credit)

In 1688, the British Parliament invited William of Orange to invade England, expelling James II. William and Mary signed the English Bill of Rights, which guaranteed the rights of Parliament as a lawmaking body. John Locke, the “father of liberalism,” defended the Glorious Revolution on the basis of natural rights of life, liberty, and property. After the British were the first to industrialize, they built a massive empire in Africa and India that was so large that it was said that “the sun never sets on the British Empire.” **British imperial rule in India in the nineteenth century was not primarily influenced by liberalism because India was taken by conquest and the British did not treat their Indian subjects equally. Additionally, they imposed high taxes and tried to manipulate the Indian economy on a mercantilist model to serve British interests, which goes against economic liberalism. However, the British government did make an effort to protect property rights and respect the religious beliefs of their indigenous subjects.**

The British conquest of India by force was not in accordance with liberalism, nor was the British government’s unequal treatment of their Indian subjects. William Cobbett, a British political commentator, noted that he constantly read in the papers about British soldiers dying during the conquest of India (Doc 2). One of the key beliefs of liberals is self-determination of peoples and opposition to government by conquest or force. This is why Woodrow Wilson, in the Fourteen Points, included self-determination of peoples so that everyone in Europe would live under a government of their own choice. The British certainly weren’t applying this principle in India in the nineteenth century. Even later in the century, English-speaking Indian journalists complained about how Indian subjects would be punished severely if they did the slightest injury to a European, but if a European were to kill an Indian, they could get away with it (Doc 7). As educated English-speakers, these journalists should have been the most likely to sympathize with the British, but after World War II, this same class of people helped to peacefully end British rule in India. In an illustration in a British magazine, Indian princes are seen offering gifts to the British governor, who sits on a throne-like chair and has a superior air about him (Doc 6). The prince’s subservient posture goes against the liberal principle of equality and the dignity of every individual; in addition, the whole scene looks a bit racist. This was a time when Europeans generally considered themselves to be superior to other races, given the influence of Darwinism, which led Europeans to believe that they were more evolved than other races. In addition, Social Darwinism was used as a justification for European cultural superiority (Outside Evidence).

CONTEXTUALIZATION

focuses of the origins of British liberalism, with specific mention of the Glorious Revolution and the influence of John Locke’s ideas. A reference to British industrialization and its causal influence on imperialism strengthens this contextualization.

*This three-sentence **THESIS STATEMENT** is acceptable because all three sentences appear together in the opening paragraph. The first sentence, in light green, would be sufficient for the thesis point, with the additional sentences adding complexity to the argument.*

*A **TOPIC SENTENCE** makes clear that this paragraph’s argument will focus on force and inequality as illiberal.*

***DOC 2** is clearly understood and supports the argument.*

*The explanation of self-determination as a feature of liberalism, supported by the Fourteen Points, adds useful **HISTORICAL CONTEXT** to the document.*

***DOC 7** is clearly understood and supports the argument.*

*Additional analysis incorporates both **POINT OF VIEW** and **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**.*

***DOC 6** is clearly understood and supports the argument.*

*The analysis of the document in relation to liberal principles provides useful **HISTORICAL CONTEXT** for the document.*

*The influence of Darwinism and Social Darwinism on imperialism are referenced as **OUTSIDE EVIDENCE** to support the argument.*

The British also failed to apply the principles of economic liberalism, which advocate for a *laissez-faire* economy with low taxes, low regulation, and free trade. Hyde Clark, a British economist, argued in favor of cultivating land in India to promote agriculture and the production of raw materials to be used by the British to manufacture goods (Doc 3). This applies the principle of mercantilism, which says that colonies should support the economy of the mother country rather than to freely develop in their own economic interest. An Indian complained about paying high taxes, which is something that violates the principle of economic liberalism, and unequal access to the justice system, undermining the liberal principle of equality under the law (Doc 4).

A **TOPIC SENTENCE** makes clear that this paragraph's argument will focus on economic liberalism.

DOC 3 is clearly understood and supports the argument.

The analysis of mercantilism provides useful **HISTORICAL CONTEXT** for the document.

DOC 4 is clearly understood and supports the argument.

Although the British government did not primarily rule based on liberalism, there were some efforts to apply liberal principles to British colonial rule. In a court case between an Indian peasant and a British soldier who was accused of burning down his house, the judge wrote that property rights should be maintained for everyone - especially for the poor (Doc 1). Property rights are a key cornerstone to classical liberalism. Additionally, Queen Victoria entered the chat with a POC moment, in which she proclaimed that all religions should be accepted and that British Christians should not try to impose the Christian religion on indigenous subjects (Doc 5). This upheld the liberal principle of religious toleration. However, the situation on the ground rarely reflected these lofty, liberal proclamations by British authorities.

A **TOPIC SENTENCE** makes clear that this paragraph's **counter-argument** will focus on applications of liberalism in British India.

DOC 1 is clearly understood and supports the argument.

DOC 5 is clearly understood and supports the argument.

Additional analysis is offered after each document in this paragraph, but not necessarily with the intention of earning more analysis points, but to build more complexity.

Overall, the British did not rule in India based on liberalism because they tried to regulate the economy and they did not treat the Indian population equally under the law. However, there were moments when the British attempted to respect property rights and religious freedom, which are in accordance with liberalism.

The **THESIS** is re-stated here as insurance just in case the reader was not convinced by the thesis in the opening paragraph.

No "conclusion" is necessary for a full-credit DBQ.