Summer Examinations 2016

HIS302116N

Module Title: Movements and Regimes: A Century of Fascism
Level: Six
Time Allowed: One hour and thirty minutes

Instructions to students:

- Enter your student number **not** your name on all answer books.
- Answer two questions: **one** from Section A and comment on **one** from Section B.
- The same material should not constitute a substantial part of more than one question.
- Section A carries 67% of the overall marks.
- Section B carries 33% of the overall marks.
- Begin each question in a separate answer book; label each answer book clearly with the number of the question you are answering.
- Neither books nor notes may be taken into the examination.

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Section A

Answer one of the following questions.

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the definitions of fascism currently used by historians? Discuss with examples drawn from the history of fascism both before and after 1945.

2. Why was the period from 1919 to 1945 more favourable for the growth of fascist movements in Europe when compared to the period between 1945 and 2000?

3. How typical was British fascism in the twentieth century when compared to other variants of fascism?

End of Section A
Section B follows overleaf
Section B

Comment on one of the following:

4. Benito Mussolini and Giovani Gentile, 'What is Fascism’, (1932)

The foundation of Fascism is the conception of the State, its character, its duty, and its aim. Fascism conceives of the State as an absolute, in comparison with which all individuals or groups are relative, only to be conceived of in their relation to the State. The conception of the Liberal State is not that of a directing force, guiding the play and development, both material and spiritual, of a collective body, but merely a force limited to the function of recording results: on the other hand, the Fascist State is itself conscious and has itself a will and a personality – thus it may be called the ‘ethic’ State ...

For Fascism, the growth of empire, that is to say the expansion of the nation, is an essential manifestation of vitality, and its opposite a sign of decadence ... Fascism is the doctrine best adapted to represent the tendencies and the aspirations of a people, like the people of Italy, who are rising again after many centuries of abasement and foreign servitude ...


The purpose of the fascist state is to shape men according to a particular model. Unlike democratic states, fascist states do not hesitate to teach morals ... They make it their highest priority to encourage the collective qualities that shape and preserve the national energy...

The defeat of fascism should not make us forget that the image exists, that it still remains grand, and that others may find it again under new names. The very term fascism will no doubt founder, because it is too freighted with calumnies, because it is lost in a sea of shadows under a malignant mist. But what does the word matter? We all know that Spartan order, Spartan man, is the sole shield that will remain when the shadow of death rises before the West ... Under a different name, a different face, and no doubt without any projections of the past, in the form of a child we do not recognize ... the Spartan order will be reborn ...