BOOK SUMMARY

by Name

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The Rise of Fascism in Europe in the 1930s

The rise of Fascism in Europe in the 1930s can be explained as the emergence of a strong movement that was built around diverse ideologies in different countries. Notably, Fascism was born in Italy before it subsequently led to the emergence of other movements in Europe that were closely associated with it. The rise of Fascism in Europe can also be explained on the basis of the development of one-party dictatorial regimes under the Nazi Party in Germany and the rise of Benito Mussolini as a dictatorial leader in Italy. The rise of Fascism led to the emergence of severe attacks on minority populations and communities especially the Jewish population in Europe.

It is important to note that the emergence of Fascism was guided by different factors and influences in Italy, Spain, and Germany. In Italy, the rise of Fascism was guided by factors and influences relating to the disappointing loss in World War 1 and the need to reclaim the pride of Italy. Benito Mussolini came up as a powerful dictatorial leader and vowed to reclaim the pride of his country. Best, Hanhimäki, Maiolo, and Schulze (2008) affirmed that the rise of Fascism was guided by expansionist desires that were mainly focused on creating the New Roman Empire. It is worth noting that Benito Mussolini looked forward to the expansion of the Fascist ideology to many parts of the globe and ensuring that Italy regains its place as a strong world power. This points out on the main focus on building unity and ensuring Italy’s success over its enemies.

In Germany, the rise of Fascism was guided by factors and influences relating to racism and anti-Semitic ideology. The rise of Fascism in Germany under the control of Nazi party had a strong emphasis on racism in terms of both economic and social policies. This explains the reason for the attacks unleashed on innocent Jews who were considered a “weak” race not fit to live in Germany. Therefore, the rise of Fascism in Germany was
mainly guided by the factors and influences relating to the need to eliminate the weaker races and remain a strong nation ready to fight for the redemption of the humiliation that had been suffered after World War 1.

In Spain, the rise of Fascism was mainly guided by factors and influences built on internal matters. Fascism in Spain came about from the desire of General Franco’s success in the Spanish Civil War. Therefore, General Franco led a nationalist movement in the war, and he was supported by both Italy and Germany in his success in the Spanish Civil War. Therefore, the rise of Fascism in Spain was solely based on internal matters explaining the reason for Spain’s neutral position during World War II.

In light of the above explanations, it can be noted that the factors and influences associated with the rise of Fascism in Italy, Spain, and Germany were extremely different. These countries were guided by dissimilar objectives as they embraced Fascism. Italy wanted to build a strong and united nation, while Germany looked forward to eliminate weaker races such as Jews. On the other hand, the rise of Fascism in Spain was purely an internal matter.

Main Goals and Objectives of Countries after WW 1

The main goals and objectives of the French, British, Germans, and Americans were notable on the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, which created the Treaty of Versailles that came into place to facilitate the acquisition of peace among the fighting countries.

The French were led by Georges Clemenceau, and their main goal and objectives after the World War 1 were to permanently weaken their neighbour (Germany) both in economic and military terms. Clemenceau wanted to ensure that France is protected in the most effective way, and this could only be achieved by weakening the important systems of Germany that would assist it to remain a long-term threat. According to Best et al. (2008), the French were driven with the objective to ensure they return of Alsace-Lorraine that had been taken over by Germany during the Franco-Prussian War. In line with this objective,
Clemenceau was keen to emphasize the need for hefty war reparations from Germany and the separation of the Rhineland to create a buffer state between the two countries. More so, the French were driven by the goal to seek the assurance of aid from both Britain and America in instances of German attacks.

More so, the main goal of the British led by Lloyd George was to ensure the preservation of the British Empire. In line with the goal of protecting the British Empire, Lloyd George was focused on fulfilling key objectives including the settlement of territorial issues, the assurance of French security, and the removal of the threat of the German High Seas Fleet. All these objectives would help in achieving the main goal of the British Empire.

It is worth mentioning that Germany was not invited to the Paris Peace Conference given its position as a loser in the World War 1. The Paris Peace Conference required Germany to pay war reparation fees and engage in disarmament. Therefore, the main goals and objectives of the Germans after World War 1 were primarily determined by the Paris Peace Conference that demanded the payment of hefty war reparations and disarmament. Additionally, Germany looked forward to recover from the extensive economic damages that had occurred during World War 1.

The main goal of Americans after World War 1 was to create a new order in the world that would recognize peace and democracy in different countries. Americans were led by Woodrow Wilson who came up with his Fourteen Points that would have facilitated the achievement of peace around the world. Therefore, Americans were driven with the objectives to promote the equality of trade, eliminate threats from the seas, arms limitation, promote self-determination, and the formation of the League of Nations to promote future peace talks. All these were deemed to lead to the long-term goal of America to ensure that world peace was attained within the most appropriate time.
The U.S. Missed Opportunity in Stabilising International Order

America had a clear opportunity to secure world peace immediately after the World War 1 given that it had not incurred enormous losses in the war. It remained strong in terms of finances and trade, and replaced Britain in this respect. However, the U.S. missed the opportunity to stabilise the new international order. This is because it did not take its position as the remaining strongest country in the world after most countries, especially from Europe, had been destroyed by the devastating effects of the war. The U.S. could have played a more instrumental role in bringing these countries together with the aim of preserving long-term international order. It did not stamp its authority as a strong economy at the time, hence missing the opportunity to secure international order. In addition, it is crucial to note that the U.S. missed the opportunity to stabilise new world order because it was not able to prevent the new forms of armament and fascist ideologies that were coming in place in countries such as Germany and Italy. The U.S. had the opportunity as a strong country to avert these ideologies, but it did not take the opportunity to do so. America had a clear opportunity to put in place a strong plan of international order, since it was the most stable country after the war, but it missed this chance by coming up with ideas that tended to worsen the situation. This justifies the American missed opportunity in stabilising new international order that it has wished to promote through the adoption of the League of Nations.

The ideals of President Wilson in 1919 were rejected based on different grounds. Firstly, it is crucial to understand that President Wilson’s ideals were stated clearly in his Fourteen Points. Best et al. (2008) opined that the ideals were rejected on the ground that they shifted and hardened the attitudes of both the French and the British toward Germans. This change of the attitudes between these countries was not aimed at peace as the ideals of President Woodrow emphasized. However, they tended to increase the level of animosity between the French and Germans, as the French interpreted them to their own advantage,
hence requiring Germany to pay hefty war reparations. Additionally, Woodrow’s ideals in line with the formation of the League of Nations were rejected on the basis of its inability to foster international peace. Notably, the ideal to form the League of Nations was not solid enough to lead to the attainment of international order. This is because of the exclusion of some countries and the promotion of ideologies that could not be readily embraced by other states. The ideals would have only been fair in cases where they would have given each country involved in the war an equal opportunity instead of coming out in the favour of France. The most vital point to underscore is that Woodrow’s ideals were rejected because of their diverse effects on peace acquisition between the countries that had participated in World War I.
Reference List