Fascism as totalitarian nationalism
-term 'totalitarianism' invented by Italian fascists when trying to 'nationalise' the masses; used heavily in the 50s and 60s to discredit communism by linking it with fascism
-fascism an attempt to create an ideal world according to absolute principles; attempt to restore pre-modern Utopia
-totalitarianism initially used in fascist propaganda as an aspiration to propel politics into popularist politics that touched all areas of life
-argument that fascism restructures society in accordance with modern ideological blueprint, as replacement for religion
-post-modernists emphasise importance of internal structures of ideas
-Griffin sees nationalism and national rebirth as core to fascism, ultranationalism like religious fundamentalism
-totalitarian theorists see fascist ideas as revolutionary and the implementation of Utopianism by force
-however, totalitarian theory’s emphasis on ideas makes it weak on the causes of fascism
-argues generally that crises of traditional ideas, a sense of disorientation and search for substitute religions caused fascism; ignores diversity of reactions by different groups to post 1918 crisis
-exaggerates revolutionary side of fascism; prejudices and assumptions shaped fascist vision of dystopia, not all aspects of society needed to be restructured
-they respond to this criticism by arguing that conservative compromises were tactical, and emphasise ‘fundamental ideology’, rather than the surface of things’ (Burleigh)
-totalitarianism refers to structure of regimes and less to ideology
-important to distinguish between fascism and mere liberal collapse and military dictatorship

Passmore’s definition
-definition must incorporate Marxist, Weberian and totalitarian theories; not neglecting ideas or their relationships with social groups, radical or reactionary aspects
-all aspects of fascism are indispensible; Griffin incorrect to argue that ‘inter-war’ specific elements (eg. the cult leader, paramilitarism, corporatist economics) are non-essential
-some authoritarian conservative dictatorships, or parties such as the British National Party and the French National Front, espouse some features of fascism and not others
-fascism is inherently contradictory
-accepts ‘new consensus’ that fascism is a form of ultranationalist ideology and practice, although nationalism is not the core from which other aspects can be derived

-fascism places the national, defined biologically, culturally or historically, above all other sources of loyalty, creating a mobilised national community