Midterm Handout

HSTEU 276/ Winter 2019

Essay. Read the following sets of passages carefully, and select ONE PAIR of quotations (i.e. 1A and 1B OR 2A and 2B). Write a coherent, well-organized analytic essay in which you identify a common theme of the two passages you have chosen, compare and contrast the authors’ approaches to this theme, and discuss the specific historical context for their approaches. 60 points.

1A) “We must find the means and the method of working together not only in times of war and mortal anguish but in times of peace with all its bewilderment and clamour and clatter of tongues. It is in the years of peace that wars are prevented and that those foundations are laid upon which the noble structures of the future can be built. But peace will not be preserved without the virtues that make victory possible in war … It will not be preserved by casting aside in dangerous years the panoply of warlike strength.”

 --Winston Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace” (1946)

1B) “The lawyer described me to the public not as an Italian Jew, but as an Italian political prisoner. I asked him why, amazed and almost offended. He replied, embarrassed: ‘*C’est mieux pour vous. La guerre n’est pas finie*’ [It’s better for you. The war isn’t over]. The words of the Greek. I felt my sense of freedom, my sense of being a man among men, of being alive, like a warm tide ebb from me. I found myself suddenly old, lifeless, tired beyond human measure; the war was not over, there was always war. My listeners began to steal away; they must have understood. I had dreamed, we had always dreamed, of something like this, in the nights at Auschwitz: of speaking and not being listened to, of finding liberty and remaining alone.”

 --Primo Levi, *The Reawakening* (1963 – Eng. 1965)

2A) “… the State is or can be master of money, but in a free society it is master of very little else. The making of a good society depends not on the State but on the citizens, acting individually or in free association with one another, acting on motives of various kinds, some selfish, others unselfish, some narrow and material, others inspired by love of man and love of God. The happiness or unhappiness of the society in which we live depends upon ourselves as citizens, not on the instrument of political power which we call the State.”

 --William Beveridge, “The Case for Voluntary Action” (1948)

2B) “… despite all income equalization for children, despite all of society’s solicitude for mothers and children, the whole population program might fail because women are fundamentally dissatisfied with the status defined for them … Summarizing what may be expected from these women themselves in regard to the future of Swedish population, it is believed that the reforms called into being in Sweden will help them better to combine motherhood and remunerative work. The practical difficulties are so numerous, however, that there will probably be a long transitional period when women will either have to shun too heavy maternal responsibilities or give up their gainful work. The risk is great that society will proceed so slowly in solving these problems of women’s existence that new and even more desperate crises may invade the whole field of women, family, and population.”

 --Alva Myrdal, *Nation and Family* (1941)