

Freshman Seminar
Fall 2017
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ITALIAN FASCISM

Fascism is back in the news today, with right-wing movements finding popularity in Europe and strongmen rulers finding favor. This interdisciplinary course gives us some history for our contemporary world by examining Benito Mussolini's dictatorship that ruled Italy between 1922 and 1943. We address Fascism's culture of violence; biopolitics and demographic policy; imperialism and war; Fascist ideology and visual culture; gender roles; anti-Fascism. We read Fascist speeches and anti-Fascist novels, watch newsreels and Fascist war films, and think more broadly about why dictators find support – and why they fail.

Course Materials

All course readings can be accessed on NYU Classes. All lectures and readings are in English, but Italian majors and minors are expected to read all primary sources in the original language when possible.

Note on Films

Films with an AF call number are available for viewing at Avery Fischer on the 2nd floor of Bobst Library.

Course Requirements and Grading

Students will write 2 short (5 pp.) papers (20% each), a 10-12 page final paper (45%) and an in-class presentation (5%). Papers may be written from any disciplinary perspective, but topics must be discussed first with me. Course participation (10%) includes attendance and intervention in class discussions. There are excellent academic resources available to you at NYU, such as the Writing Center and the Learning Center.

http://www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/writing_center.html

<http://learning.cas.nyu.edu/page/home>

Learning Outcomes

How to critically read primary and secondary texts; how to critically interpret visual propaganda; how to think about the relationship of the present and the past.

How to produce a research paper (a paper with a defined argument, interpretative thrust, and supporting evidence). How to assess the viability of a research topic for the exact assignment at hand.

Knowledge of critical debates regarding war, violence, fascism, propaganda, empire, resistance.

Schedule of Course Meetings and Readings

Sept 5: Introduction

Sept 12: Themes and Historiographies

Griffin, "The Fascist Quest to Regenerate Time," 3-12, 18-22
 Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, 1-15
 Horn, *Social Bodies*, 3-12
 Mussolini, "The Ascension Speech" (1927)

Sept 19: Backgrounds and Origins

De Grand, *Italian Fascism*, 14-37
 Marinetti, *Manifesto of Futurism*, intro and Chapter 1
 *Gentile, "The Myth of National Regeneration in Italy: From
 Modernist Avant-Garde to Fascism"
 Mussolini, "Program of the National Fascist Party," (1921)
 Mussolini, "Fascist Imperialism," (1921)

Sept 26: The 1920s: From Squadrist to the Police State

De Grand, 41-57, 71-77
 Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, 17-37
 Matteotti, "The Fascists Exposed" (1924)
 Mussolini, "Speech of 3 January 1925"
 Bottai, "Fascism as Intellectual Revolution (1924)

Oct 3: Fascist Biopolitics: Protecting and Regenerating the Race

Foucault, "Society Must be Defended," 239-263 (March 17 1976 lecture)
 Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle*, 120-125
 Horn, *Social Bodies*, 18-34, 42-65
 Mussolini, "Strength in Numbers" and review Ascension Day speech

Oct 10: The Fascist Man

Martin, "Football and Fascism" 80-89, 91-97, 103-104
 Landy, *Italian Film*, 309-314
 Benadusi, "Private Life and Public Morals"
 See Giornali Luce B0272 ("Gli allievi dell'Accademia fascista di
 educazione fisica...", 1933), at www.archivioluca.it

Oct 17: Anti-Fascism: the Silone Case

De Grand, *The Italian Left in the Twentieth Century*, 62-77
 Leake, *The Re-invention of Ignazio Silone*, 3-13, 117-142
 Silone, *Bread and Wine*
 optional: Canali, "Ignazio Silone and the Fascist Political Police"

- Oct 24: The Fascist Woman**
 Horn, *Social Bodies*, 66-94
 Lombardi-Diop, "Pioneering Female Modernity"
 Paulicelli, *Fashion under Fascism*, 17-27
 *De Grazia, "Nationalizing Women"
The Conformist (Bertolucci, 1970)
 B0638 ("La mostra dei lavori femminili," 1935), and B1371 "Le attività al campeggio pre-coloniale.." 1938), at www.archivioluca.it
- Oct 31: Fascist Imperialism: Fantasies and Realities**
 Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, 123-135
 Atkinson, "Embodied Resistance"
 Barrera, "Mussolini's Colonial Race Laws"
 See Fascist imperial documentaries
- Nov 7: Axis culture: Autarchy and Anti-Semitism**
 Morgan, *Italian Fascism*, 179-187, 193-208
 Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, 135-141, 148-157
 Ipsen, *Dictating Demography*, 184-194
 "Manifesto of Race" (1938)
 Helstosky, "Fascist Food Politics"
- Nov 14: Generation F**
 Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, 157-159, 162-165, 187-203
 Vittorini, *Conversations in Sicily*
- Nov 21: World War II and Defeat**
 De Grand, 123-137
 Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*, Chapter 6
 Slaughter, *Women in the Italian Resistance*
 Ellwood, *Italy-1943-45*, 149-164 11-16, 49-67, 149-164
 See Giornali LUCE Co169 "Autarchia alimentare. Orti di guerra," 1941,
- Nov 28: Class Presentations**
- Dec 5: Class Presentations**
- Dec 15: Papers due in my box by 5pm (4th floor Casa Italiana)**