

Fascism in European History
Society and Dictatorship between the Two World Wars
(1914-1945)

Professor Angelo M. Caglioti

What was Fascism? What kind of appeal did authoritarianism and dictatorship have in interwar Europe? How did the Fascist “New Order” challenge liberal democracies and why did it fail in World War II? What was the common denominator of Fascist movements across Europe, and in particular in Mussolini’s Italy, Salazar’s Portugal, Franco’s Spain, culminating in Nazi Germany?

This class examines the history of Fascism as an ideology, constellation of political movements, and authoritarian regimes that aimed at controlling the modernization of European societies in the interwar period. Thus, the course focuses on the relationship between politics, science and society to investigate how Fascism envisioned the modernity of new technologies, new social norms, and new political norms. The class will also explore Fascism’s imperialist goals, such as the calls for national renewal, the engineering of a new race, and the creation of a new world order.

Learning Objectives

- Students will gain a deep understanding of the history Fascism as a complex political, economic, cultural, and social phenomenon in European history and political theory, beyond the role of individual characters, such as Hitler and Mussolini.
- Students will learn how the notions of “race” was constructed and deployed as a political tool by Fascist movements, politicians, and scientific experts.
- Students will examine Fascism as a trans-national movement by comparing a wide range of national and disciplinary contexts.
- Students will learn how to analyze historical arguments based on sources, historiography, and research questions. As a reading intensive lecture course, students will gain a broad bibliographical preparation to conduct further research on a wide range of topics in European history (e.g. authoritarianism, Fascism, Nazism, anti-Semitism).

CLASS SCHEDULE

Class: Tuesday and Thursday, 4:10 – 5:25 pm EST

Office hours: Wednesday, 2:00-4:00 pm or by appointment: acagliot@barnard.edu

Teaching Assistant: Lucy Sharp lrs2204@columbia.edu

Office hours: Thursday 1:00-3:00 pm on Zoom at:
<https://columbiauniversity.zoom.us/j/91770164355>

Preceptor: Elaine Wei

1. Introduction

September 9

- Federico Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism in History*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017, Prologue and Introduction, pp. ix-xx & 1-30. (<https://california-degruyter-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/view/title/556269>).

2. The Origins of Fascism: Key concepts and the Seizure of Power

September 14 & 16:

Readings:

- Robert Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, Introduction, Chapters 2 “Creating Fascist Movements” – 3 “Taking Root” – 4 “Getting Power”)
- Optional reading: M. Mazower, "Dark Continent. Europe's Twentieth Century", Chapter 1 (The Deserted Temple: Democracy's Rise and Fall), pp. 3-40 and 2 (“Empires, Nations, Minorities), pp. 41-75.
- Primary sources:
The Platform of the National Fascist Party (November 7-10, 1921)
B. Mussolini “Proclamation of Open Dictatorship: Speech to Parliament” January 3, 1925.

3. Fascism and Society: How Totalitarian was Fascism?

September 21 & 23

Readings:

- Robert Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, Chapter 5 “Exercising Power”
- E. Gentile, “Fascism as Political Religion.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 25, no. 2/3 (1990): 229–51. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/260731>
- V. De Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, Chapter 1 “The Organization of Consent”, pp. 1-23 or *How Fascism Ruled Women*, Chapter 4 “The Family Versus the State”, pp. 115.

Primary Source: Film “*Triumph of the Will*” – on course reserves

4. Race, Demography, Society

September 28 & 30

Readings

- Robert S.C. Gordon, "Race", from "The Oxford Handbook of Fascism", pp. 296-316.
<https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/13081679>
- Mark Mazower, Chapter 3 "Healthy Bodies, Sick Bodies", pp. 76-103.
- Carl Ipsen, *Dictating Demography. The Problem of Population in Fascist Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, Chapters 3 ("The realization of totalitarian demography I: Spatial population management"), pp. 1-32;
<https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/sq87bt72z>
- Burleigh, Michael. *The Racial State: Germany, 1933-1945*. Cambridge University Press, 1991, Introduction and Chapters 1 ("How Modern, German and Totalitarian was the Third Reich?"), pp.7-22 3 ("Barbarism institutionalized: racism as state policy", 4 "The persecution of the Jews" & 6 "The Persecution of the 'hereditary hill', the 'asocial', and homosexuals").

Primary source: Nazi posters in M. Burleigh "The Racial State"

5. Fascist Economics: Corporatism, Autarky, and the Rejection of Capitalism

October 5 & 7

- M. Mazower, "Dark Continent. Europe's Twentieth Century", Chapter 4 ("The Crisis of Capitalism"), pp. 104-137.
- T. Saraiva, "Fascist Pigs: Techno-scientific Organisms and the History of Fascism", Chapters 1, 2 and 3 (Wheat, wheat, & potatoes <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/48402/>).

Primary Source: B. Mussolini, *On the Corporate State* (1933)

October 12: Deadline to drop fall classes

6. Draining the Swamp: Fascism and Environment

October 12 & 14

- Frank Snowden, *The Conquest of Malaria. Italy 1900-1962*, Yale University Press, Chapter 6 ("Fascism, Racism, and Littoria"), pp. 142-180.
<https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/10699779>
- From "*How Green were the Nazis? Nature, Environment and the Nation in the Third Reich*" please read chapters 1-2-5 Scanned copies will be made available by the instructor. Chapter 5 should be easy to skim and read quickly if you read Saraiva.

Primary source: Mussolini harvesting in the Pontine Marshes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GjVfzBERv8E>

Mid-term assignment due

7. Fascism and Religion

October 19 & 21

- J.F. Pollard, Fascism and Catholicism, in the Oxford Handbook of Fascism:
<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199594788.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199594788-e-10>
- David Kertzer, *The Pope and Mussolini: The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe* (New York: Random House, 2014), chapters 15, 19, 20, 21.
- Primary sources:

“The Lateran Pacts”, February 11, 1929;
“The Concordat between the Holy See and the German Reich (1933)” & “Comments on the Meaning of the Concordat” in *The National Socialist State and Christianity in the Third Reich Sourcebook* edited by Anson Rabinbach and Sander Gilman (2013):
https://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/ZTAyNXhuYV9fNTk3MjczX19BTg2?sid=dd09fa9f-5188-4044-96be-f05be8d01b8d@sessionmgr4006&vid=0&format=EB&lpid=lp_409&rid=0

8. Antisemitism and Racial Science

October 26 & 28

- Sheila Faith Weiss, *The Nazi Symbiosis: Human Genetics and Politics in the Third Reich*, University of Chicago Press, 2010, Introduction, Chapters 2, 3, 5 and conclusion.
<https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/10416554>
- Robert Proctor, *Racial Hygiene. Medicine under the Nazis*, Harvard University Press, 1988 (Chapts. 4, 6, 7). <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000950577?urlappend=%3B>
- Franklin Adler, “Why Mussolini Turned on the Jews.” *Patterns of Prejudice* 39, no. 3 (September 2005): 285–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220500198235>.

Primary sources:

The Manifesto on Race and the Racial Laws (1938)
Chart of the Nuremberg Laws: <https://www.ushmm.org/information/exhibitions/online-exhibitions/special-focus/nuremberg-race-laws-defining-the-nation/documents/chart-explaining-nuremberg-race-laws>

The Wannsee conference, in the Nazi Germany Sourcebook:

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780203463925/nazi-germany-sourcebook-roderick-stackelberg-sally-winkle>

9. The Spanish Civil War

No class on November 2; November 4

Readings:

- Mary Vincent, “Spain” in “The Oxford Handbook of Fascism”
<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199594788.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199594788-e-20>
- Stanley Payne, *The Spanish Civil War*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, Chapter 3 ("The breakdown of Democracy" and "A Revolution in Spain", not "Alternatives?"), Chapter 5 (Franco's Counterrevolution, not the Role of Spanish Morocco) and or Chapter 10 (Foreign Intervention and Nonintervention")

Primary Sources: *Guernica*; excerpts from *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *Homage to Catalonia*

10. Empire and the Making of the Axis

November 9 & 11

- Paxton, Chapter 6: *The long term: radicalization or Entropy?*
- Bernhard, Patrick. “Blueprints of Totalitarianism: How Racist Policies in Fascist Italy Inspired and Informed Nazi Germany.” *Fascism* 6, no. 2 (December 8, 2017): 127–62.
<https://doi.org/10.1163/22116257-00602001>.
- Hedinger, Daniel. “The Imperial Nexus: The Second World War and the Axis in Global Perspective.” *Journal of Global History* 12, no. 2 (July 2017): 184–205.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022817000043>.
- Primary Sources: B. Mussolini, *The Discourse on Empire; Orders for the use of poison gas against the Ethiopians*.

11. World War II

November 16 & 18

- Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000, Chapter 5 “Hitler’s New Order”, pp. 138-181.
- Christopher Browning, The Nazi Empire, in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*:
<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199232116.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199232116-e-21>
- Claudio Pavone, *Civil War*.

Research Paper Due

12. The New Order and Fascist Internationalism

November 23; No class on November 25: HAPPY THANKSGIVING

- Jens Steffek, “Fascist Internationalism.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 44, no. 1 (September 1, 2015): 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829815581870>.
- Hofmann, Reto. “The Fascist New–Old Order.” *Journal of Global History* 12, no. 02 (July 2017): 166–83. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022817000031>.

13. Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust

November 30 – December 2

- Aly, Götz, and Susanne Heim. *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002, Chapters 2-3-4-7-8-11-12.

Primary Source: Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, excerpts.

14. End of World War II

December 7

- Peter Bowler, Excerpt “World War II” from “Science and War” in “Making Modern Science” pp. 468-479.
- Alan Beyerchen, *Scientists under Hitler. Politics and the Physics Community in the Third Reich*, Yale University Press, 1977, Chapters 3, 7 & 9 (“The Toll of the Dismissal Policy” pp. 40-50 & “Aryan Physics” pp. 123-140; “The War Years”, pp. 168-198). Scanned copies will be made available by the instructor.
- Mark Walker, *German National Socialism and the Quest for Nuclear Power 1939-1949*, Cambridge, 1989, Chapter 3 (“The War Comes Home” pp. 88-128) & 7 (“The Myth of the German Atomic Bomb” pp. 222-228. <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/9451755>

15. Conclusions – Is Fascism a European Phenomenon?

December 9

- R. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism*, Chapters 7-8.
- F. Finchelstein, What is Fascism in History? <https://california-degruyter-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/view/title/556269>

EVALUATION

Midterm Assignment: 25%
Research paper: 30%
Participation (Weekly response posts): 15%

Final Exam: 30%

- Participation consists of contributions to class discussions and weekly responses (about one paragraph) to the primary sources. The responses should be posted on Courseworks.
- The midterm assignment consists of a three pages (double-spaced) proposal for the research paper. It can examine either a specific aspect of fascism or forms of fascist regimes in different countries. The assignment should include an annotated bibliography.
- The research paper (about 7-8 pages long double spaced) will be an opportunity for students to examine fascism and authoritarianism in a specific geographical and cultural context. While based on research on secondary sources, the use of primary sources is encouraged depending on students' language skills.
- The final exam will cover the materials throughout the semester. It is going to include 4 ID questions of choice and 2 short essay questions.

POLICIES

- **Academic Integrity and Honor Code:**

Please make sure to familiarize yourself with Barnard's Honor Code and respect it at all times. Approved by the student body in 1912 and updated in 2016, the Code states:

"We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake."

For more information, please visit: <https://barnard.edu/honor-code>

A crucial part of academic integrity consists of avoiding plagiarism. Plagiarism includes using other people's work without acknowledgment, for example by copying or paraphrasing ideas, concepts and metaphors taken from others or the internet without appropriate reference. It is also forbidden to submit papers or assignments produced for other classes. Many of the themes discussed in class deal with sensitive issues of the politics of race, class, and gender. Please be always respectful of other participants to the seminar and their reactions to the readings.

- **Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services Statement:**

If you believe you may encounter barriers to the academic environment in an off campus course due to a documented disability or emerging health challenges, please feel free to contact me and/or the Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services (CARDS). Any student with approved academic accommodations for an off campus course is encouraged to contact me during office hours or via email. Please be advised that disability accommodations available for on campus courses may not be available for off campus courses in every instance, so please contact CARDS to discuss the particulars of the course location and how it may impact the availability of particular accommodations. If you have questions regarding registering a disability or receiving accommodations for the semester, please contact CARDS at (212) 854-4634, cards@barnard.edu, or learn more at barnard.edu/disabilityservices. CARDS is located in 101 Altschul Hall.

- **Wellness Statement:**

Your personal, emotional, physical, financial and mental well-being is of paramount importance for your academic success, especially during the current Covid-19 pandemic. The Barnard community urges you to make yourself - your own health, sanity, and wellness - your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- <https://barnard.edu/primarycare>
- <https://barnard.edu/about-counseling>
- <https://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about>
- <https://barnard.edu/events/Stressbuster>

As instructor, I am committed to support you in any way to achieve your best results and enhance your learning experience. Please feel free to communicate with me about any circumstances that may impact your wellness during the semester.

- **Affordable Access to Course Texts Statement**

All students deserve to be able to study and make use of course texts and materials regardless of cost. Barnard librarians have partnered with students, faculty, and staff to find ways to increase student access to textbooks. By the first day of advance registration for each term, faculty will have provided information about required texts for each course on CourseWorks (including ISBN or author, title, publisher, copyright date, and price), which can be viewed by students. A number of cost-free or low-cost methods for accessing some types of courses texts are detailed on the Barnard Library Textbook Affordability guide (library.barnard.edu/textbook-affordability). Undergraduate students who identify as first-generation and/or low-income students may check out items from the FLIP lending libraries in the Barnard Library

(library.barnard.edu/flip) and in Butler Library for an entire semester. Students may also consult with their professors, the Dean of Studies, and the Financial Aid Office about additional affordable alternatives for having access to course texts. Visit the guide and talk to your professors and your librarian for more details.

- **Class Attendance Policy**

Be punctual: Class discussion and participation are a fundamental component of this class. Do not miss class! If needed, please justify your absence in advance.

- **Late Assignments Policy**

Assignments that are overdue will not be accepted. Exceptions can be granted based on previous communication with the instructor. If you have any specific concern about meeting a deadline for an assignment, you should contact me in advance for an extension.

- **Email policy**: please allow about 24 hours for email responses. Make sure to start early on your assignments. Emails with requests of extensions on deadlines and communication on short notice ahead of submission cannot be satisfied.

- **Covid Protocols**: Please always wear a mask correctly on your nose and mouth when we will be in class. You are allowed to drink but not to eat in class. If you need to eat something, please leave the room briefly.

HAVE A GREAT SEMESTER!

Professor Angelo M. Caglioti