

Fascist Europe, 1918-1945

The term “fascism” has existed for less than a century, yet draws up innumerable and contradictory images. What was fascism, how did it operate, and does it belong in the dustbin of history? This course examines fascism in the time and place of its most crucial, and arguably its only, historical expression: interwar Europe. Much of this course is devoted to Mussolini’s Italy and Nazi Germany, the two most significant fascist states in history. Attention is also paid to other states and movements, largely as test cases for the boundaries between fascism and conservative authoritarianism.

A survey of domestic concerns including political mobilization, social engineering, racism/anti-Semitism, and gender policies will be combined with the study of foreign policy, Imperial aims, and mass violence. This course will be both *comparative* and *international*: fascist states and movements will be examined for their similarities and for their interactions with one another and with non-fascist states. Beyond mere comparison, this course also addresses the cumulative fascist challenge to European democracy which swept the continent and which nearly achieved victory in World War II.

The requirements for the course are:

- *Attendance & Participation* (15%): Regular attendance in lecture and participation in weekly discussion sections.
- *Blog entries* (15%): Nearly every week (you are allowed two exceptions) you must post your thoughts on the readings (1-2 paragraphs) to the course blog *ahead* of discussion section. You are also expected to keep up with reading the blog.
- *In-class midterm* (10%): Mar. 9. It will consist of identifications and one essay prompt.
- *Two papers*: A paper of 4-6 pp. is due Feb. 28 (10% of final grade) and a paper of 10-12 pp. (20% of final grade) on Apr. 20. The former will be an analytic essay from pre-distributed prompts, while the latter may cover any topic germane to the course. For your final paper, you will be required to submit an abstract of 1-2 pp. on Mar. 28.
- *Final exam* (30%): A 3-hour final exam of identifications and essay prompts.

The following books are available for purchase at the COOP, or on reserve at Lamont:

- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*
- Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle*
- Caplan, ed., *Nazi Germany (The Short Oxford History of Germany)*
- Griffin, ed., *Fascism* (Primary Source Reader)
- Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

All other readings, marked with a (*) on the syllabus, will be available through the course website. There will also be two mandatory evening film screenings, which are listed on the syllabus.

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in referral to the Harvard Administrative Board.

All written work must be your own and submitted originally for this course (i.e. no double submissions.) A handout on paper guidelines will be distributed in class.

Week 1 – Defining Fascism and Its Origins

1/24: What is Fascism?

1/26: European Politics before World War I

- * Mazower, *Dark Continent*, Ch. 1
- * Paxton, *Anatomy of Fascism*, Introduction
- * Payne, *History of Fascism*, Chs. 1-2
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 46-48

Week 2 – The Great War and Its Aftermath

1/31: Total War and Imperial Ambitions

2/2: Revolutions and Defeated States

- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*, Ch. 1
- * Liulevicius, *German Myth of East*, Ch. 6
- * Bessel, “Mobilization and Demobilization in Germany, 1916-1919” in Horne, *State, Society, and Mobilization...*
- * Hanebrink, “Transnational Culture War,” *Journal Modern History* 80 (Mar. 2008)
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 3, 4, 5, 7

Week 3 – Early Fascisms: Successes and Failures

2/7: The Social Basis of Early Fascism

2/9: Italian Fascism’s Rise to Power

- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*, Chs. 2-3
- Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, Ch. 1
- * Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, Ch. 3
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 9-15, 17-19, 54, 56, 58, 59, 126-129

Week 4 – Fascist Politics and Spectacle

2/14: Mussolini as Ruler and Myth

2/16: Style and Substance in Fascist Italy

- DeGrand, Chs. 4, 6
- Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle*, Introduction, Chs. 2-4
- Griffin, *Fascism*, 20, 22, 24, 28, 32

Week 5 – The Fateful Years, 1929-1933

2/21 – NO CLASS (Presidents’ Day)

2/23 – The Depression and the Rise of Nazism

- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*, Ch. 5
- Fritzsche in Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, Ch. 2
- * Peukert, *Weimar Republic*, Chs. 13-14

- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 60, 63, 131, 132, 135
- * Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Excerpts

Week 6 – The Nazi State and Economy

2/28: Working Towards the *Führer*

3/2: An Economy Tuned for War

- Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, Chs. 3, 4, 7
- * Kershaw, “Working Towards the Führer” *Contemporary European History* 2:2 (1993)
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 68, 69, 72, 73

Paper 1 due 2/28 in class.

Week 7 – Nazi Society: Terror and Acceptance

3/7: Victims, Perpetrators, and the German Masses

3/9: **Midterm in Class**

- Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, Chs. 5-6
- * Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich*, Ch. 2
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 65, 66, 76, 77

SPRING BREAK

Week 8 – Gender and Social Policies in Comparison

3/21: Women, Production, and Reproduction

3/23: Youth, Leisure, and the Environment

- * DeGrazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women*, Chs. 3-4 (Ebook)
- * Herzog, *Sex After Fascism*, Ch. 1 (Ebook)
- * Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, Ch. 8
- * Lekan, “It Shall Be the Whole Landscape!” in *How Green Were the Nazis?*
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 30, 33, 71, 75, 79
- * *Der Giftpilz* (The Toadstool)

Film: Leni Riefenstahl, *Olympia* (excerpts)

Week 9 – Fascism: Europe’s Future?

3/28: Nazi Germany and Europe

3/30: Fascism’s Limits in 1930s Europe

- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*, Ch. 6
- Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, Ch. 8
- * Payne, *History of Fascism*, Chs. 8-9
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 29, 34, 78, 92, 102, 110, 115, 134, 142, 144

Paper abstract due 3/28 in class.

Week 10 – The Late 1930s and the Drive to War

4/4: The Spanish Civil War

4/6: Italian and German Imperial Visions

- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*, Chs. 7-8
- Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle*, Ch. 5
- * Salvadó, *The Spanish Civil War*, Chs. 3, 7
- * Overy, “Germany, ‘Domestic Crisis’ and War in 1939” *Past & Present* Vol. 116, 1987
- Griffin, *Fascism*, Docs. 35, 36, 98-101

Week 11 – A Fascist Continent?

4/11 – Hitler’s Empire and the New Europe

4/13 – Vichy France

- * Mazower, *Hitler’s Empire*, Ch. 7
- * Harvey, *Women and the Nazi East*, Ch. 6
- * Paxton, *Vichy France*, Ch. II (pp. 136-168, 210-233)
- * Jackson, *France: The Dark Years*, Ch. 15

Film: *The Sorrow and the Pity* (excerpts)

Week 12 – Destruction, Total War, and Genocide

4/18 – The Final Solution and Other Nazi Crimes

4/20 – Fascism, Collaboration, and the European Holocaust

- Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, Ch. 9
- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*, Ch. 9
- * J. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, Ch. 7
- * Case, “The Holocaust and the Transylvanian Question” in *Holocaust in Hungary*
- Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, Chs. 1-7, 15-17

Paper 2 due 4/20 in class.

Week 13 – After Fascism

4/25 – Postwar Legacies of Fascism

4/27 – Fascism’s Time and Place

- DeGrand, *Italian Fascism*, Ch. 11
- Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, Ch. 10
- * Mazower, *Dark Continent*, Chs. 6-7
- * Paxton, *Anatomy of Fascism*, Ch. 7
- Griffin, *Fascism*, 176, 181, 188, 189, 202, 205, 207, 209