

Italian Fascism

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
(Redirected from Italian fascism)

The term **Italian Fascism** denotes the totalitarian *Fascismo* political movement that ruled Italy from 1922 until 1943 under leader Benito Mussolini. The English *fascism* derives from the Italian fascio ("league"). Italian Fascism is considered a proper noun, and thus is capitalised; generic fascism is lower-case. Italian Fascism is considered the model for the other fascisms, yet there is no agreement about which aspects of structure, tactics, culture, and ideology represent the "fascist minimum" core. Like political movements appeared world-wide, including German Nazism, under Adolf Hitler, other movements in Europe, Japan, and Latin America between World War I and World War II. Although Fascism denotes only Italian fascism, the word often is used to describe like ideologies and political movements.

Contents

- 1 Early years
- 2 Rise to power
- 3 Doctrine of fascism
- 4 Nationalism and Empire building
- 5 Influence outside Italy
- 6 Fascist mottos and sayings
- 7 See also
- 8 Notes
- 9 Further reading
 - 9.1 References
 - 9.2 General
 - 9.3 Fascist ideology
 - 9.4 International fascism
- 10 External links

Early years

Fascism was born during a period of social and political unrest following the First World War. The war had seen Italy, born from the Italian unification less than a century earlier begin to appreciate a sense of nationalism, rather than the historic regionalism.^[1] Despite the Kingdom of Italy being a fully fledged Allied Power during the war against the Central Powers, Italy was given what nationalists considered an unfair deal at the Treaty of Versailles; which they saw as the other allies "blocking" Italy from progressing to a major power.^[1] A significant example of this was when the other allies told Italy to hand over the city of Fiume at the Paris Peace Conference, this saw war veteran Gabriele d'Annunzio declaring the independent state Italian Regency of Carnaro.^[2] He positioned himself as *Duce* of the nation and declared a constitution, the *Charter of Carnaro* which was highly influential to early Fascism, though he himself never became a fascist.^[2]

Rise to power



Blackshirts and Mussolini 1922

The war had left Italy with inflation, large debts, unemployment aggravated by demobilisation of thousands of soldiers and social unrest with strikes,^[1] attempts at insurrection by anarchists, socialists and communists,^[3] as well as a breeding ground for organised crime. The democratically elected Liberal government had no means to control the unrest, so when Benito Mussolini took matters into his own hands to combat the social unrest by organising the paramilitary blackshirts, made up of former socialists and war veterans, Prime Ministers such as Giovanni Giolitti allowed them to continue.^[4] The government preferred this class collaboration orientated movement, to the prospect of a greatly feared bloody class war coming to Italy by the hand of the communists, following the recent Russian Revolution.^[4]

Part of the Politics series on

Fascism



Definitions of fascism

Fascism as an international phenomenon

Varieties

People

Related topics

Fascism portal

Politics portal

Within *The Manifesto of the Fascist Struggle* the initial stances of Fascism were outlined, requesting amongst other things voting rights for women, insertion of a minimum wage, insertion of an eight-hour workday for all workers and reorganisation of public transport such as railways.^[5]

By the early 1920s, popular support for the fascist's fight against "Bolshevism" had increased to around 250,000. The *Fascisti* were transformed into the National Fascist Party in 1921, with Mussolini being elected to the Chamber of Deputies the same year, entering legitimate politics.^[1] The Liberals retained power but Prime Ministers came and went at a fast pace, Luigi Facta's government was particularly unstable and dithering.^[1] The fascists had enough of what they considered a weak parliamentary democracy process and organised the March on Rome in an effort to take power, with promises of restoring Italian pride, reviving the economy, increasing productivity, ending harmful government controls and furthering law and order.^[1] Whilst the march was taking place King Victor Emmanuel III made Mussolini Prime Minister and thus the march turned into a victory parade, the Fascists believed their success was both revolutionary and traditionalist.^{[6][7]}



Mussolini giving a speech and performing the Roman salute towards his gathered audience.

Mussolini and the Fascists followed through domestically with elaborate public works programmes such as the taming of the Pontine Marshes, developing hydroelectricity, improving the railways which in the process improved job opportunities.^[8] Economically Italy improved with the GNP growing at 2% a year; automobile production was increasing especially those owned by Fiat,^[9] its aeronautical industry was making advances.^[1] Mussolini also championed agrarianism as part of what he called battles for *Land, Lira and Grain*; he physically took part in these activities alongside the workers creating a strong public image.^{[10][11]} Due to this government-directed economic policy, Italy was able to avoid the Great Depression which hit more industrial nations.^[11] Through various outlets including everything from stamps to monumental architectural and sculptural works, the Fascists made Italians of every social class aware of the country's rich cultural heritage, including Roman, medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods through to the modern age.^[12] Fascism declared war on the Mafia and organised crime, to defeat it the fascists did so on the terms which the Mafia itself had used for so long – violence and honour.^[13] Mussolini received plaudits from a wide range of figures, such as Winston Churchill,^[14] Sigmund Freud,^[15] Mahatma Gandhi,^[16] George Bernard Shaw^[17] and Thomas Edison.^[16] It was under Mussolini that the long standing Roman Question was concluded with the Lateran Treaty between the Kingdom of Italy and the Holy See, this allowed the Holy See to have a tiny microstate within the city of Rome; the move was brought about due to most Italians being religiously Catholic.^[18]

“ *The Fascist accepts life and loves it, knowing nothing of and despising suicide; he rather conceives of life as duty and struggle and conquest, life which should be high and full, lived for oneself, but not above all for others – those who are at hand and those who are far distant, contemporaries, and those who will come after.* ”

—Giovanni Gentile in the *The Doctrine of Fascism*, signed by Benito Mussolini, 1933.^[19]

Doctrine of fascism



Giovanni Gentile – *The Philosopher of Fascism*.

The Doctrine of Fascism is the official presentation of the Fascist ideology; authored by Giovanni Gentile, approved by Mussolini and presented to the public in 1933.^[20] Gentile was a Sicilian who was influenced by the likes of Hegel, Plato, Croce and Vico; he introduced the idea of Actual Idealism.^[20] The Doctrine presented that the Fascist viewed the world quite apart from the mere constricts of currently political trends, but rather the wider picture of humankind.^[20] It rejected ideas of "perpetual peace" as fantasy and accepted man as a species constantly at war and those who met it achieved the stamp of nobility. It

accepted that in general men who had made the most significant impact in history were conquerors such as Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great,



Fascist propaganda of 1933 depicting a number of slogans and themes of the Fascist regime. The popular Fascist militarist slogan "Book and Musket make the Perfect Fascist" is displayed. The connection of a crucifix to the fasces

Charlemagne and Napoleon Bonaparte; the Roman Empire was of particular inspiration.^[20] It looked at Italy and saw that life for the state and by product the everyday person was of a better standard, under a single party fascist system than it had been in 1920 under a democratic liberal party.^[18] Mussolini thus spoke of democracy as "beautiful in theory, in practice it is a fallacy"^[21] and spoke in speeches of celebrating burying the "putrid corpse of liberty" to rapturous Italian applause.^[18]

represents the link the Fascists promoted after 1929 of Christianity being naturally connected to Fascism.

It was the Acerbo Law of 1922, which had allowed Italy to become a single party system. The National Fascist Party had won the election with 65% of the votes, giving them 2/3 of the parliamentary seats.^[22] The socialists were bitter with this defeat and couldn't accept it, especially socialist Giacomo Matteotti who accused the Fascists of fraud.^[22] He was killed by Amerigo Dumini, for this Mussolini had Dumini tried and imprisoned but some socialists accused him of foul play, they protested by quitting parliament leaving the Fascists as the sole representatives.^[1] The means which Mussolini generally dealt with political dissenters was placing them under arrest and sending them to small Italian islands.^[23] Mussolini declared himself *Duce* from the Roman title *dux* meaning leader in 1925; though regarded a dictator by most popular historians, the Grand Council of Fascism was still in place and the king had the power to fire Mussolini, as would eventually happen.^[24]

Nationalism and Empire building

Influenced by the concepts of the Roman Empire, with Mussolini viewing himself as a modern day Roman Emperor Italy set out to build the Italian Empire.^[25] With an expansionist and militarist agenda, their colonialism reached further into Africa in an attempt to compete with British and French colonial empires.^[26] Italy had long owned Libya and parts of East Africa but took Ethiopia under Mussolini.^[26] The means in which the fascists kept power was sometimes with a strong hand, especially in regards to guerrillas and rebels who attempted to overthrow them; Omar Mukhtar was a notable Libyan example. However, Italian fascism did not directly discriminate in regards to race or religion, so long as the



The Italian Empire in 1939.

peoples swore fealty to a cultural "Italianisation" and Mussolini.^[25] Just as the Italian Jews were permitted to join the NFP back in Italy,^{[27][28]} Libyan Muslims had their own section of the party called the Muslim Association of the Lictor in the colony.^[29] In a ceremony of unity regardless of religion, Mussolini was awarded the ancient Yemeni artifact the *Sword of Islam* by a Libyan cheifton.^[30] In East Africa too the natives had opportunities to serve with the fascists in the MVSN Colonial Militia.^[31] However the expansionist ideology did not stop there, the *Italia irredenta* stance, desired the returning of lands which previous belonged to older states now incorporated inside of Italy, to complete the Italian unification.^[32] This included Nice which was part of the Kingdom of Sardinia until 1860 as well as Savoy,^[33] Corsica which was part of the Republic of Genoa until 1768,^[34] Dalmatia which was part of the Republic of Venice until 1797 and Malta which was part of the Kingdom of Sicily until 1530.^[35]

Some have compared Adolf Hitler's nationalistic domestic and foreign policies in Germany as being inspired by Benito Mussolini. Others have noticed major differences in the two leaders' view on race. Hitler believed in a racist concept that the so-called Aryan race (basically a caucasian race) was a biologically pure and superior race to other races. Mussolini rejected the idea of superiority of races as being fictitious such as in 1933 when he said the following:

“ *"Race! It is a feeling, not a reality: ninety-five percent, at least, is a feeling. Nothing will ever make me believe that biologically pure races can be shown to exist today. [...] National pride has no need of the delirium of race."* ”

—Benito Mussolini, 1933.^[36]

Influence outside Italy

The Italian model of fascism was influential outside of Italy in the inter-war period and a number of groups and thinkers looked directly to Italy for their inspiration rather than developing an indigenous form of the ideology. Groups that sought to copy the Italian model of fascism included the Russian Fascist Organization, the Romanian National Fascist Movement (an amalgam of the National Romanian Fascia and the National Italo-Romanian Cultural and Economic Movement) and

the Dutch group based on the *Verbond van Actualisten* journal of H. A. Sinclair de Rochemont and Alfred Haighton and, to some extent, Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party.

In Switzerland Colonel Arthur Fonjallaz, who had previously been associated with the more pro-Nazi National Front, became an ardent admirer of Mussolini after visiting Italy in 1932. He came to advocate the annexation of Switzerland by his idol, whilst also receiving some financial aid from the Italian leader.^[37] The country also hosted the International Centre for Fascist Studies (CINEF) and the 1934 congress of the Action Committee for the Universality of Rome (CAUR), two Italian-led initiatives.^[38]

In Spain early fascist writer Ernesto Giménez Caballero called for Italy to annex Spain in his 1932 book *Genio de España*, with Mussolini at the head of an international Latin Roman Catholic empire. He would later become more closely associated with Falangism, leading to his ideas of Italian annexation being put aside.^[39]

Fascist mottos and sayings

- *Me ne frego*, "I don't give a damn": the Italian Fascist motto
- *Libro e moschetto - fascista perfetto*, "The book and the musket - make the perfect Fascist."
- *Viva la Morte*, "Long live death (sacrifice)."
- The above mentioned *Tutto nello Stato, niente al di fuori dello Stato, nulla contro lo Stato*, "Everything in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State."
- *Credero, Obbedire, Combattere* ("Believe, Obey, Fight")
- *Se avanzo, seguitemi. Se indietreggio, uccidetemi. Se muoio, vendicatemi*, ("If I advance, follow me. If I retreat, kill me. If I die, avenge me")
- *Viva Il Duce*, "Long live the Duce (Leader)"
- "War is to man as motherhood is to woman."^[40]

See also

- Fascism
- Definitions of fascism
- National Fascist Party
- Italian fascist states:
 - Kingdom of Italy (1861–1946) (1922-1943, as a fascist state)
 - Italian Social Republic (1943-1945)

Notes

- ¹ [^] ^{**a b c d e f g h**} "Mussolini and Fascism in Italy", FSmitha.com (8 January 2008).
- ² [^] ^{**a b**} Macdonald, Hamish. *Mussolini and Italian Fascism*. Nelson Thornes. ISBN 0748733868.
- ³ [^] "March on Rome", Encyclopedia Britannica (8 January 2008).
- ⁴ [^] ^{**a b**} De Grand, Alexander J. *The Hunchback's Tailor: Giovanni Giolitti and Liberal Italy from the Challenge of Mass Politics to the Rise of Fascism, 1882-1922*. Greenwood Publishing Group. ISBN 027596874X.
- ⁵ [^] "Flunking Fascism 101", WND.com (8 January 2008).
- ⁶ [^] "Fascist Modernization in Italy: Traditional or Revolutionary", Roland Sarti (8 January 2008).
- ⁷ [^] "Mussolini's Italy", Appstate.edu (8 January 2008).
- ⁸ [^] Warwick Palmer, Alan. *Who's Who in World Politics: From 1860 to the Present Day*. Routledge. ISBN 0415131618.
- ⁹ [^] Tolliday, Steven. *The Power to Manage?: Employers and Industrial Relations in Comparative*. Routledge. ISBN 0415026253.
- ¹⁰ [^] "Anno 1925", Cronologia.it (8 January 2008).
- ¹¹ [^] ^{**a b**} "The Economy in Fascist Italy", HistoryLearningSite.co.uk (8 January 2008).
- ¹² [^] "Donatello Among the Blackshirts", CornellPress.edu (8 January 2008).
- ¹³ [^] "Mussolini Takes On the Mafia", AmericanMafia.com (8 January 2008).
- ¹⁴ [^] "Top Ten Facts About Mussolini", RonterPening.com (27 January 2008).
- ¹⁵ [^] Falasca-Zamponi, Simonetta. *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy*. University of California Press. ISBN 0520226771.
- ¹⁶ [^] ^{**a b**} "Pound in Purgatory", Leon Surette (27 January 2008).
- ¹⁷ [^] Matthews Gibbs, Anthony. *A Bernard Shaw Chronology*. Palgrave. ISBN 0312231636.
- ¹⁸ [^] ^{**a b c**} Heater, Derek Benjamin. *Our World this Century*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0199133247.
- ¹⁹ [^] "The Doctrine of Fascism - Benito Mussolini (1932)", WorldFutureFund.org (8 January 2008).
- ²⁰ [^] ^{**a b c d**} Gregor, A. James. *Giovanni Gentile: Philosopher Of Fascism*. Transaction Pub. ISBN 0765805936.
- ²¹ [^] Spignesi, Stephen J. *The Italian 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential, Cultural, Scientific, and Political Figures, Past and Present*. CITADEL PR. ISBN 0806523999.
- ²² [^] ^{**a b**} "So Long Ago". Time.com (8 January 2008).

23. ^ Farrell, Nicholas Burgess. *Mussolini: A New Life*. Orion Publishing Group. ISBN 1842121235.
24. ^ Moseley, Ray. *Mussolini: The Last 600 Days of Il Duce*. Taylor Trade. ISBN 1589790952.
25. ^ ^{a b} "Mussolini's Cultural Revolution: Fascist or Nationalist?", jch.sagepub.com (8 January 2008).
26. ^ ^{a b} Copinger, Stewart. *The rise and fall of Western colonialism*. F.A.Praeger.
27. ^ "The Italian Holocaust: The Story of an Assimilated Jewish Community", ACJNA.org (8 January 2008).
28. ^ Hollander, Ethan J. *Italian Fascism and the Jews*. University of California. ISBN 0803946481.
29. ^ Segrè, Claudio G. *Italo Balbo a fascist life: a Fascist life*. University of California Press. ISBN 0520071999.
30. ^ Galaty, Michael L. *Archaeology under dictatorship*. Springer. ISBN 0306485087.
31. ^ Jowett, Philip S. *The Italian Army 1940-45 (2): Africa 1940-43*. Nelson Thornes. ISBN 1855328658.
32. ^ Lowe, CJ. *Italian Foreign Policy 1870-1940*. Routledge. ISBN 0415265975.
33. ^ "Kingdom of Sardinia", Britannica.com (8 January 2008).
34. ^ "Pasquale Paoli & Corsican Independence from Genoa", Age-of-the-Sage.org (8 January 2008).
35. ^ "The Order of Saint John and the Kingdom of Sicily", Regalis.com (8 January 2008).
36. ^ Montagu, Ashley. *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race*. Rowman Altamira. ISBN 0803946481.
37. ^ Alan Morris Schom, A Survey of Nazi and Pro-Nazi Groups in Switzerland: 1930-1945 for the Simon Wiesenthal Center
38. ^ R. Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, London: Routledge, 1993, p. 129
39. ^ Philip Rees, *Biographical Dictionary of the Extreme Right Since 1890*, p. 148
40. ^ Sarti, Roland. 1974. *The Ax Within: Italian Fascism in Action*. New York: New Viewpoints. p187.

Further reading

References

- "Labor Charter" (1927-1934)
- Mussolini, Benito. *Doctrine of Fascism* which was published as part of the entry for *fascismo* in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* 1932.
- Sorel, Georges. *Reflections on Violence*.

General

- De Felice, Renzo *Interpretations of Fascism*, translated by Brenda Huff Everett, Cambridge ; London : Harvard University Press, 1977 ISBN 0-674-45962-8.
- Eatwell, Roger. 1996. *Fascism: A History*. New York: Allen Lane.
- Hughes, H. Stuart. 1953. *The United States and Italy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mises, Ludwig von. 1944. *Omnipotent Government: The Rise of the Total State and Total War*. Grove City: Libertarian Press.
- Paxton, Robert O. 2004. *The Anatomy of Fascism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, ISBN 1-4000-4094-9
- Payne, Stanley G. 1995. *A History of Fascism, 1914-45*. Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press ISBN 0-299-14874-2
- Reich, Wilhelm. 1970. *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Seldes, George. 1935. *Sawdust Caesar: The Untold History of Mussolini and Fascism*. New York and London: Harper and Brothers.
- Alfred Sohn-Rethel *Economy and Class Structure of German Fascism*, London, CSE Bks, 1978 ISBN 0-906336-00-7
- Adler, Frank, and Danilo Breschi, eds., *Special Issue on Italian Fascism, TELOS 133* (Winter 2005).

Fascist ideology

- De Felice, Renzo *Fascism : an informal introduction to its theory and practice, an interview with Michael Ledeen*, New Brunswick, N.J. : Transaction Books, 1976 ISBN 0-87855-190-5.
- Fritzsche, Peter. 1990. *Rehearsals for Fascism: Populism and Political Mobilization in Weimar Germany*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-505780-5
- Griffin, Roger. 2000. "Revolution from the Right: Fascism," chapter in David Parker (ed.) *Revolutions and the Revolutionary Tradition in the West 1560-1991*, Routledge, London.
- Laqueur, Walter. 1966. *Fascism: Past, Present, Future*, New York: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Schapiro, J. Salwyn. 1949. *Liberalism and The Challenge of Fascism, Social Forces in England and France (1815-1870)*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Laclau, Ernesto. 1977. *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory: Capitalism, Fascism, Populism*. London: NLB/Atlantic Highlands Humanities Press.
- Sternhell, Zeev with Mario Sznajder and Maia Asheri. [1989] 1994. *The Birth of Fascist Ideology, From Cultural Rebellion to Political Revolution.*, Trans. David Maisei. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

International fascism

- Coogan, Kevin. 1999. *Dreamer of the Day: Francis Parker Yockey and the Postwar Fascist International*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Autonomedia.
- Griffin, Roger. 1991. *The Nature of Fascism*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Paxton, Robert O. 2004. *The Anatomy of Fascism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Weber, Eugen. [1964] 1985. *Varieties of Fascism: Doctrines of Revolution in the Twentieth Century*, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, (Contains chapters on fascist movements in different countries.)
- Wallace, Henry. "The Dangers of American Fascism". *The New York Times*, Sunday, 9 April 1944.
- Trotsky, Leon. 1944 "Fascism, What it is and how to fight it" Pioneer Publishers (pamphlet)

External links

- Fascism and Zionism - From The Hagshama Department - World Zionist Organization
- Fascism Part I - Understanding Fascism and Anti-Semitism
- The Functions of Fascism a radio lecture by Michael Parenti

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Fascism"

Categories: Fascism | Italian fascism | Politics of Italy | Political movements

- This page was last modified on 20 September 2008, at 01:06.
- All text is available under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License. (See **Copyrights** for details.)
Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a U.S. registered 501(c)(3) tax-deductible nonprofit charity.