

# The Doctrine of Fascism

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"**The Doctrine of Fascism**" ("*La dottrina del fascismo*") is a seminal essay signed by Benito Mussolini and officially attributed to him, although it was most likely written by Giovanni Gentile. It was first published in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* of 1932, as the first section of a lengthy entry on "*Fascismo*" (Fascism). The entire entry on Fascism spans pages 847-884 of the *Enciclopedia Italiana*, and includes numerous photographs and graphic images.

The Mussolini essay leads off the entry:

**FASCISMO** - Movimento politico italiano creato da Benito Mussolini (v.).  
**DOTTRINA**  
Idee Fondamentali. (the first section of the essay)

A second section of the essay is titled: "Dottrina Politica e sociale."

The Mussolini entry starts on page 847 and ends on 851 with the credit line "Benito Mussolini." All subsequent translations of "The Doctrine of Fascism" are from this work.

A key concept of the Mussolini essay was that fascism was a rejection of previous models: "Granted that the XIXth century was the century of socialism, liberalism, democracy, this does not mean that the XXth century must also be the century of socialism, liberalism, democracy. Political doctrines pass; nations remain. We are free to believe that this is the century of authority, a century tending to the 'right', a Fascist century. If the 19th century was the century of the individual (liberalism implies individualism) we are free to believe that this is the 'collective' century, and therefore the century of the State."

Mussolini recalled and destroyed all available copies of "The Doctrine of Fascism "in April 1940 after he had second thoughts about certain phrases in it. (O'Sullivan, 1983) However copies in Italian and English survived, and are available in many libraries around the world.

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## Quotations

The Fascist conception of the State is all-embracing; outside of it no human or spiritual values can exist, much less have value. Thus understood, Fascism is totalitarian, and the Fascist State—a synthesis and a unit inclusive of all values—interprets, develops, and potentiates the whole life of a people. (p. 14)

Fascism is therefore opposed to Socialism to which unity within the State (which amalgamates classes into a single economic and ethical reality) is unknown, and which sees in history nothing but the class struggle. Fascism is likewise opposed to trade unionism as a class weapon. But when brought within the orbit of the State, Fascism recognises the real needs which gave rise to socialism and trade-unionism, giving them due weight in the guild or corporative system in which divergent interests are coordinated and harmonised in the unity of the State. (p.15)

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## Fascism



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Yet if anyone cares to read over the now crumbling minutes giving an account of the meetings at which the Italian Fasci di Combattimento were founded, he will find not a doctrine but a series of pointers... (p. 23)

It may be objected that this program implies a return to the guilds (corporazioni). No matter!... I therefore hope this assembly will accept the economic claims advanced by national syndicalism. (p. 24)

Fascism [is] the precise negation of that doctrine which formed the basis of the so-called Scientific or Marxian Socialism. (p. 30)

After Socialism, Fascism attacks the whole complex of democratic ideologies and rejects them both in their theoretical premises and in their applications or practical manifestations. Fascism denies that the majority, through the mere fact of being a majority, can rule human societies; it denies that this majority can govern by means of a periodical consultation; it affirms the irremediable, fruitful and beneficent inequality of men, who cannot be levelled by such a mechanical and extrinsic fact as universal suffrage. (p. 31)

Fascism is definitely and absolutely opposed to the doctrines of liberalism, both in the political and economic sphere. (p. 32)

The Fascist State lays claim to rule in the economic field no less than in others; it makes its action felt throughout the length and breadth of the country by means of its corporate, social, and educational institutions, and all the political, economic, and spiritual forces of the nation, organised in their respective associations, circulate within the State. (p. 41).

—Benito Mussolini, 1935, "The Doctrine of Fascism", Firenze: Vallecchi Editore.

The Labour Charter (Promulgated by the Grand Council for Fascism on April 21, 1927)—(published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale, April 3, 1927) [sic] (p. 133)

The Corporate State and its Organization (p. 133)

The corporate State considers that private enterprise in the sphere of production is the most effective and useful [sic] instrument in the interest of the nation. In view of the fact that private organisation of production is a function of national concern, the organiser of the enterprise is responsible to the State for the direction given to production.

State intervention in economic production arises only when private initiative is lacking or insufficient, or when the political interests of the State are involved. This intervention may take the form of control, assistance or direct management. (pp. 135-136)

—Benito Mussolini, 1935, "Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions", Rome: 'Ardita' Publishers.

## **Edition and translation differences**

### **"The Doctrine of Fascism"**

"Fascism, the more it considers and observes the future and the development of humanity quite apart from political considerations of the moment, believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace. It thus repudiates the doctrine of Pacifism – born of a renunciation of the struggle and an act of cowardice in the face of sacrifice. War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have courage to meet it." —Mussolini

### **"Fascism Doctrine and Institutions"**

"First of all, as regards the future development of mankind, and quite apart from all present political considerations. Fascism does not, generally speaking, believe in the possibility or utility of perpetual peace. It therefore discards pacifism as a cloak for cowardly supine renunciation in contradistinction to self-sacrifice. War alone keys up all human energies to their maximum tension and sets the seal of nobility on those peoples who have the courage to face it." —Mussolini

## **See also**

- Fascism
- Constitution of Fiume
- The Manifesto of the Fascist Struggle
- Corporatism
- Definitions of fascism

## References

1. *Fascism*, Noel O'Sullivan, 1983 pg 138: referencing; *Mussolini's Roman Empire*, by Mack Smith Penguin, ed., 1979, first published in 1976, pg 247.
2. *The Doctrine of Fascism*, by Benito Mussolini, 1935, Firenze: Vallecchi Editore.
3. *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions*, by Benito Mussolini, 1935, 'Ardita' Publishers, Rome.
4. Translation of the 1932 Enciclopedia Italiana essay "Doctrines" by Mussolini. This translation is by Mr. I. S. Munro, from "Fascism to World-Power" (Alexander Maclehose, London, 1933). It is part of a 1984 compilation book: *Readings on Fascism and National Socialism*; Swallow Press, Athens, Ohio, 1984. [1]
5. *A Primer of Italian Fascism*. Book by Jeffrey T. Schnapp, Olivia E. Sears, Maria G. Stampino; University of Nebraska Press, 2000. [2]
6. *My Autobiography*. Book by Benito Mussolini; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928. [3]

## External links

- The Doctrine of Fascism by Benito Mussolini Complete text of the essay "*Dottrina*" (Doctrines). A translation of the Benito Mussolini "Doctrines" section of the "Fascism" entry in the 1932 edition of the Enciclopedia Italiana. From the publication *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions*, by Benito Mussolini, 1935, 'Ardita' Publishers, Rome. Footnote numbers inserted in the text, and a footnote appendix (both not found in the 1932 encyclopedia article), are found in this 1935 publication. The footnotes contain excerpts from his speeches.
- Italian text.
- What is Fascism? Quotes from Mussolini and Hitler. English. Includes a few excerpts from another translation into English of the Mussolini essay on "Doctrines" in the 1932 edition of the Enciclopedia Italiana. From *The Doctrine of Fascism*, by Benito Mussolini, 1935, Firenze: Vallecchi Editore.
- 2 Mussolini autobiographies in one book. English. Searchable. Click on the result titled "My Rise and Fall" (usually the top result). Then use the search form in the left column titled "search within this book."

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