Fall 2009  
History 114: Fascism

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Course Description:

Over sixty years after the defeat of Nazi Germany, fascism remains a source of fascination for everyone from academic historians to History Channel devotees. In recent years, Americans of various political stripes have used fascism to refer to everything from “Islamofascists” to George W. Bush’s “war on terror” to plans for reforming the American health care system. In this seminar, we will seek to disentangle the historical experience of fascism in early twentieth century Europe from these later attributions. We will examine the ideology and practices of the fascist state as developed in Italy and Germany, focusing in particular on an examination of life under fascist regimes. We will then explore the policies of occupation and extermination practiced during the Second World War, including the creation of fascist regimes in occupied Europe. Finally, we will discuss neo-fascism and the potential for a fascist revival.

This course is intended to introduce second year students to both the study of fascism specifically and the issues and methodologies involved in the study of European history more generally. As a small colloquium, the success of this class depends on your engaged and informed participation.

Prerequisites and Requirements:

There are no prerequisites for this class, although it will be helpful if you have a basic background in the major events and issues of European History. If you do not possess this background, let me know and I can suggest some outside readings.

Your grade in this class will be determined as follows:

35%  Participation & Attendance  
20%  Primary Source Critique (5pp.)  
20%  Monograph Review (5pp.)  
25%  Final Paper (5pp.)

All written work must be turned in to receive credit for this class.

All written work should be double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font on paper with 1” margins. Unless otherwise directed, you MAY NOT turn in papers online but rather, must drop them off at my office or in class on the day it is due. Papers must be stapled. Also, while your
grade for any paper is primarily based on its content, errors in grammar or citation style can figure into the grade, especially if such errors are egregious. The page limits for these papers should be taken as relatively strict. While I don’t want you to cut off a thought in mid-sentence to fit the limit, I will not read more than one page past the assignment limit (i.e. for a 5 page paper, I will not read past the 6th page).

ALL late papers will be downgraded 1/3 of a grade for every day that they are late. If you are late or do not attend class on the day a paper is due, that paper is automatically an additional one day late. If you turn in a paper draft late, the lateness penalty will be assigned to the final paper.

You will have a total of four “screw-ups” to use over the course of the semester. A “screw-up” can allow you to take a 24 hour extension for a paper (this applies to either the actual paper or, in the case of the first paper, the draft) or it can be used to take an unexcused absence from class. So, for example, you could take a 48 hour extension on a paper and miss two classes. If you wish for one or several “screw-ups” to apply to a late paper, please indicate that on the first page of the paper when you (finally) turn it in. Due to the sacrosanct nature of the Oberlin final project/final exam schedule, you cannot use screw-ups for the final paper.

All work for this class is governed by the honor code. You must write and sign the honor code pledge at the end of each paper.

Readings/Films:

The following required books are available for purchase at the Oberlin College Bookstore:


These books are also on reserve at the Oberlin College Library.

Readings marked with an * are available on ERes.

The films we are viewing for this class have also been placed on reserve.
Schedule of Readings & Discussion Topics

September 1  Introduction: What is Fascism?

The Origins of Fascism

September 3  Nineteenth Century: Nationalism & Socialism
   * Stefan Berger, Germany (London: Hodder Arnold, 2004), 77-110

September 8  World War I and the Birth of Fascism

September 10  The Great Depression and the Rise of Nazism
   Allen, The Nazi Seizure of Power, Part I (pp. 1-147)

Fascist Ideology & Society

September 15  The Consolidation of the Fascist State
   * Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, Fascist Spectacle (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1997), 42-88

September 17  Fascist Ideology and Aesthetics
   Carl Orff, Carmina Burana (1936)—on ERes and reserve at con library
   * Alessandro Pavolini from Critica Fascista (1926) in A Primer of Italian Fascism, 212-218
   * Massimo Bontempelli (1926) in A Primer of Italian Fascism, 218-220

September 22  Fascist Society: Atomization, Consent & Control
   Allen, Nazi Seizure of Power, Part II (pp. 152-303)

September 24  Fascist Society: Atomization, Consent & Control, pt. 2

September 29  Fascist Society: Gender

Primary Source Critique DRAFT Due at the Start of Class

September 30  Meetings about Primary Source Critique (schedule to be posted)
October 1      Fascist Society: Youth
              Film: *Hitlerjunge Quex* (1933), screening, September 29, location tba
October 6     Life Under Fascism
              Silone, *Bread and Wine*
October 8     NO CLASS

**Primary Source Critique FINAL Due At Start of Class**

October 13    Eugenics & the *Volkskörper* in Nazi Germany

*Detlev Peukert, “The Genesis of the "Final Solution" from the Spirit of Science,” in
*Nazism and German Society*, 274-299

October 15    Anti-Semitism and the Jews in Nazi Germany
              Film Screening: *Jud Süss* (1940), October 13, 7-9pm, location tba

**FALL BREAK**

October 27    Anti-Semitism and the Jews, pt. 2
              Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair*, 9-72; 94-145

**Fascism During Wartime: Mobilization, Occupation and Extermination**

October 29    Road to War
November 3    Resistance & Collaboration in France


November 5    Occupation & Race in Eastern Europe

**Monograph Critique DRAFT Due at the Start of Class (Optional)**

November 10   Everyday Life in Occupied Prague
              Demetz, *Prague in Danger*
November 12  
Fascism in Occupied Europe: The Case of the Ustashe


November 17  
Operation Barbarossa

**Monograph Critique FINAL Due at the Start of Class**

November 19  
The Holocaust—Perpetrators

*Christopher Browning, "One Day in Jozefow: Initiation to Mass Murder" in *Nazism and German Society, 1933-1945*, 300-315

November 24  
The Holocaust—Victims

Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*

November 26  
THANKSGIVING

After Fascism

December 1  
1945


Film: *Die Mörder sind unter Uns* (1946), screening November 30, 7-9pm, location tba

December 3  
The Radical Right in Europe


December 8  
Could it happen here?

Roth, *The Plot Against America*

December 10  
Final Discussion

**Final Paper Due, Wednesday, December 16th, 2pm, Rice 311**