COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Fascism, so one recent history has argued, posed the greatest challenge to liberal democracy during the 20th century. Fascism offered new answers to the problems arising from mass politics, industrialization, technology, and imperialism, and in doing so it sought to remake society, the continent of Europe, and the world. Our goal will be to develop a critical understanding of fascism as a product of the problems arising from modernity, and to understand how and why much of Europe took a violent path that ended in world war and genocide.

This course will study the development of fascism in interwar Europe in a comparative perspective, looking at it as an ideology, as a series of social movements, and eventually as a set of regimes that governed people’s lives. The primary focus will lie on National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy, but several weeks will be devoted both to Eastern European movements and the Spanish Civil War. Beginning with the intellectual origins of fascism in 19th century bourgeois Europe and World War I, we will move on to examine why fascist movements seized power in certain states but not others. We will then study how fascist regimes, once in power, cultivated popular support and legitimacy; how they developed their own systems of economics, aesthetics, science, and race; how these regimes shaped the everyday lives of their subjects; and how they radicalized with the onset of war. We will conclude by trying to understand how these illiberal regimes can best be interpreted—totalitarian, fascist, racist, or as unique phenomena—and how they have been remembered. By the end of this course you will produce a substantial final paper.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia.*
- Vladimir Tismaneanu, *The Devil in History: Communism, Fascism, and Some Lessons of the Twentieth Century.*
- *Articles, chapters, or primary sources marked with an asterix are available on Blackboard*

GRADING:
1. Class participation 35 percent
2. Rant paper (due before Spring Break) 25 percent
3. Topic proposal and bibliography for Historiographical paper 10 percent
4. Historiographical paper 40 percent
See page 4 for a description of the assignments.
WEEK 1  The Intellectual Origins of Fascism
- Robert Paxton, Anatomy of Fascism. CH. 1 and 2.
  - *Carl Schorske, “Politics in a New Key” in Fin de Siecle Vienna.
  - *Zeev Sternhell, “National Socialism and Antisemitism: The Case of Maurice Barres,” JCH.
  - *F.T. Marinetti, “The Futurist Manifesto”.

WEEK 2  Fascism Coming to Power: Italy
- Alexander de Grand, Italian Fascism. Parts I and II.

WEEK 3  Fascism Coming to Power: Germany
- *Joseph Goebbels, “National Socialism or Bolshevism” (1925).

WEEK 4  Fascism in Power: Italy
- Robert Paxton, Anatomy of Fascism. CH. 5.
- Victoria De Grazia, How Fascism Ruled Women.

WEEK 5  Fascism in Power: Germany
- Detlev Peukert, Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life.

WEEK 6  The Right in France
- *Kevin Passmore, “The Construction of Crisis in Interwar France,” in France in the Era of Fascism
  - *Primary documents from Croix-de-Feu.

WEEK 7  The Spanish Civil War
- George Orwell, Homage to Catalonia.
- *Shlomo Ben-Ami, “The Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera: A Political Reassessment.”

WEEK 8  Fascism in Eastern Europe
  - *Corneliu Codreanu, “A Few Remarks on Democracy”
    http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/eehistory/H200Readings/Topic5-R3.html
WEEK 9  The Aesthetics of Purity
  - Screening of Leni Riefenstahl’s 1938 film *Olympia*.
  - *Susan Sontag, “Fascinating Fascism.”*

WEEK 10  The Science of Purity
  - http://www.csustan.edu/history/faculty/weikart/gerhist.htm

WEEK 11  The Economics of Purity
- Gotz Aly, *Hitler’s Beneficiaries*.

WEEK 12  Fascism at War: Radicalization and the Holocaust

WEEK 13  Remembering Fascism and its Crimes
- Charles Maier, *The Unmasterable Past*.
  - *Tony Judt, “From the House of the Dead: An Essay on Modern European Memory”.*

WEEK 14  Making Sense of Fascism
- Vladimir Tismaneanu, *The Devil in History*.
GRADING DETAILS:

1. Class Participation: 30 percent

This is a discussion seminar. Come to class ready to actively criticize the weekly readings with your colleagues. The historians we read, in general, provide a focused interpretation of a particular aspect of European Fascism. Yet these are interpretations. It is our job as students of history not only to learn the facts, but also to criticize, dissect, and analyze various historical interpretations for their relative merit.

In addition, each person will help lead discussion once or twice during the semester. You can sign up for this on the first day of class. When it’s your turn to help lead discussion, you should prepare a set of 10–15 questions that will steer us toward the important themes of that week’s readings. Please feel free to relate our readings both to larger historiographical questions and what we’ve read in the previous weeks. Come see me in office hours the week before you lead discussion and we will come up with a plan of attack.

2. The Rant (4–6 pages): 25 percent  Due any time before Spring Break

Choose one of the historians that we have read (i.e no primary sources like Goebbels or Mussolini) and find a particular aspect of their interpretation that you disagree with and argue why the author is wrong in some form or another. The idea is for you to formulate a bold, provocative, and clear thesis and support it with logic and evidence. You do NOT have to consult other historical works, but it may help you build your case to read what other historians who have written on your subject. I do not want you reading too much for this first paper outside of our assigned readings.

3. Historiography Review (15–20 pages): 45 percent  Due one week after the last day of class.

Choose 4 or 5 historical works—books or articles—that cover a similar theme about Fascism and write a review essay that analyzes the current state of historical interpretation. What are the big questions that historians have asked about your theme? Why were these questions raised and what are their stakes? What are the dominant ways of answering these questions and how has this changed with time? Where does the controversy lay? What research still needs to be carried out to give us a better understanding of this theme? If you plan on completing a research seminar in the future, this is your opportunity to do preparatory reading for a potential research topic, to stake out the important questions, and to find out what has already been said about the topic and where you might make a new contribution.