Introduction

Fascism was the most consequential political invention of the twentieth century. Its challenge to the liberal, capitalist order of Europe was more momentous – and murderous – than that of communism. The terror and destruction unleashed by the major fascist regimes have left an indelible mark on the course of modern history and our collective memory. The symbols and imagery of fascism remain instantly recognizable, while its ideas have seen a remarkable renaissance in the past twenty years. Despite this enormous impact, fascism has proved strangely elusive as an object of historical analysis. Since 1945, it has been frequently explained away as a political pathology: a horrific, but fleeting deviation from Europe’s path to modernity. Marxist commentators in particular have downplayed its significance by reducing it to a mere reflection of the ‘disintegrating bourgeois state’. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, German (as well as Italian) historians insisted that ‘their’ brand of fascism was so much more (or less) extreme than other variants that comparative interpretations were morally reprehensible (or lacking in heuristic value). Today, after a decade of renewed academic interest in ‘generic fascism’, prompted by the works of Roger Griffin, Stanley Payne and Zeev Sternhell, there is still considerable scholarly hostility to the notion that fascism represented a serious alternative to parliamentary democracy and the free market on the one hand and communism on the other.

Paper 20 takes fascism seriously. It provides a sober, scrupulous recharting of the fascist ‘third way’, beyond the *ira et studium* of the anti-fascists and the pieties of the *Sonderweg* theorists. The goal is to explain fascism’s powerful appeal as well as its tremendous destructive potential. The paper approaches fascism not as a temporary aberration from, but as an integral part of modernization and a defining feature of the ‘dark continent’ (M. Mazower) that was Europe in the first half of the twentieth century. It traces the history of fascism in a roughly chronological manner, from its intellectual origins in the Fin de Siècle to the resurgence of the Radical Right in the 1980s and 1990s. While focusing on the ‘classic cases’ of Italian Fascism and German National Socialism, Paper 20 also examines less familiar movements and regimes such as the Iron Guard in Romania, the Arrow Cross in Hungary, the British Union of Fascists and the Croix de Feu in France. What were the central tenets and principles uniting these movements? Under what social and economic conditions did they arise? Was World War I the cause of their emergence or merely a catalyst? Who were the supporters, who were the beneficiaries of fascism? Why did fascist parties ‘seize power’ in Italy and Germany, but not in France or Britain? How was power exercised in the two fascist dictatorships? What made German fascism so much more genocidal than Italian fascism? What are the continuities between inter-war and post-war fascism? Do neo-fascist groups pose a serious threat to the political stability of a rapidly expanding European Union?

These questions will be tackled in a rigorously comparative and conceptual framework. Students will investigate the similarities as well as the differences between Italian Fascism, Nazism and other European fascisms in order to test the relative merit of the various competing attempts to define and interpret ‘generic fascism’. After having studied a wealth of primary sources (e.g. the philosophical writings of Nietzsche, Futurist art, Mussolini’s war-time journalism, the neoclassical architecture of Fascist Rome, the films of Leni Riefenstahl, Hitler’s ‘Political Testament’, transcripts of the Nuremberg Trial, neo-fascist websites) and the secondary literature, including contemporary Marxist assessments (Togliatti, Neumann, Adorno and Horkheimer), sociological analyses (Lipset, Linz, Michael Mann) as well as the most recent conceptualizations of the ‘nature of fascism’ (Sternhell, Payne, Gentile, Paxton), students will be in a position to evaluate for themselves the viability of the so-called ‘new consensus’ in fascism studies, recently
proclaimed by Roger Griffin and Roger Eatwell. Though concentrating largely on the actual causes, experience and impact of fascism ‘in its epoch’ (E. Nolte), Paper 20 thus also has a strong theoretical dimension, which should generate some spin-off value for HAP. In contrast to the Modern Europe paper in Part I (Paper 18), which approaches Italian Fascism and Nazism from a predominantly political historical angle, this paper pays particular attention to the ideological bases and the various cultural manifestations of fascism, such as its emphasis on virility, its representations of the national community and the (often biologically defined) ‘Other’, its appropriations of the past and its ‘sacralization of politics’. This cultural historical approach will enable students to explore the fascist mentalité in its own terms and to see the fascists, to some extent at least, as they saw themselves. As one of the seminal scholars in the field, George Mosse, remarked: ‘Only when we have grasped fascism from the inside out, can we truly judge its appeal and its power.’

Teaching
Lectures (16 in Michaelmas and 16 in Lent Term), supervisions (7) and revision seminars (4 in Easter Term) will be provided by a circus of teachers, including Dr Pollard, Dr Ruehl, Prof. Evans, Dr Villis, Dr Tooze, and Dr Thom. Each student will have three supervisions on the following compulsory topics: (1) the intellectual origins of fascism, (2) Italian Fascism, (3) German National Socialism; and four more supervisions on a selection of optional topics, including fascist economics, fascism and gender, fascist aesthetics, fascist cinema, fascism in Central and Eastern Europe, the British Union of Fascists, French fascism and Vichy, fascist genocides, the resurgence of fascism after World War II and interpretations of fascism. All students need to confirm their choices of supervision topics in the first week of Michaelmas. Throughout Michaelmas and Lent, there will be weekly screenings of fascist films. In Lent, a specialist from outside Cambridge will give a guest lecture on his or her current research in the field.

Reading suggestions
This is a very selective list of English-speaking publications. It is organized thematically as well as chronologically, each section beginning with the most recently published (or re-edited) books and articles. The most important titles are marked with an asterisk (*). Students wishing to prepare for Paper 20 over the summer holidays should read M. Mazower, Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century (New York 1999), chs 1-5, M. Blinkhorn, Fascism and the Right in Europe, 1919-1945 (London 2000) and R. Paxton, The Anatomy of Fascism (New York 2004) – in that order. The best single book on European fascism is still S. Payne, A History of Fascism, 1914-1945 (Madison 1995).

I. Introductions
* A. Lyttelton, ‘What was Fascism?’, New York Review of Books (October 21, 2004).

**II. Readers/Bibliographies**
D. Beetham (ed.), *Marxists in Face of Fascism: Writings by Marxists on Fascism from the Inter-War Period*, Totowa 1984.
A. Lyttelton (ed.), *Italian Fascisms: From Pareto to Gentile (Roots of the Right: Readings in Fascist, Racist, and Elitist Ideology)*, New York 1973

**III. General background**
IV. Theories of Fascism


D. Beetham (ed.), *Marxists in Face of Fascism: Writings by Marxists on Fascism from the Inter-War Period*, Totowa 1984.


**V. General Histories of Fascism**
* R. Bessel (ed.), *Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: Comparisons and Contrasts*, Cambridge 1996.
V.1. General Histories of Fascist Italy

V.2. General Histories of Nazi Germany
* W. Benz, A Concise History of the Third Reich, Berkeley and Los Angeles 2006.

VI. Roots of the Radical Right: Intellectual Origins of Fascism/Fascist Ideologies/Fascist Intellectuals


**VII. The Rise of Fascism: Social, Economic and Political Factors**


W.S. Allen, ‘Farewell to Class Analysis in the Rise of Nazism: Comment’, *Central European History* 17, 1 (March 1984), pp. 54-63.


VII.1. The Crisis of Bourgeois Society


* J. Linz and A. Stepan (eds), The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Europe, Baltimore 1978.


VII.2. The Impact of World War I


VII.3. Who Were the Fascists? Members, Voters and Supporters of the Fascist Parties
* S.U. Larsen, *Who were the Fascists? Social Roots of European Fascism*, Bergen 1980.


VIII. Seizing Power: The Triumph of Fascism in Italy and Germany


* R. Evans, The Coming of the Third Reich, London 2003, chs 4-6, pp. 231-462.


* H. Ashby Turner, Jr., Hitler’s Thirty Days to Power, Reading/Mass. 1996.


IX. Exercising Power: The Fascist Style of Rule


**IX.1. Fascist Italy**

* P. Corner, ‘Italian Fascism: Whatever Happened to Dictatorship?’, *Journal of Modern History* 74 (June 2002), pp. 325-351.

**IX.2. Nazi Germany**


IX.3. Fascist Leaders: The Politics of Charisma

**IX.4. The Social and Economic Bases of the Fascist Regimes**

IX.5. The Cultures of Fascism
IX.5.a. Fascism and Religion


D.A. Binchy, Church and State in Fascist Italy [1941], new edn, New York 1970.


IX.5.b. Fascism and Gender

* K. Passmore (ed.), Women, Gender and Fascism in Europe, 1919-1945, Manchester 2003, esp. chs 1, 2, 3 and 14.


K. Theweleit, Male Fantasies, 2 vols, Minneapolis 1987-89.

U. Frevert, Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation, Oxford 1989, ch. 4 (‘Between Tradition and Modernity: Women in the Third Reich’), pp. 217-


**IX.5.c. Fascist Aesthetics**


J. Tambling, Opera and the Culture of Fascism, Oxford 1996.
* Journal of Contemporary History 31, 2 (April 1996), special issue on ‘The Aesthetics of Fascism’.
Modernism/Modernity 3, 1 (January 1996) and Modernism/Modernity 2, 3 (September 1995), special issues on ‘Fascism and Culture’.
Stanford Italian Review 8, 1-2 (1990), special issue on ‘Fascism and Culture’.

IX.5.d. Fascist Cinema
* Richard Etlin (ed.), Art, Culture and Media under the Third Reich, Chicago 2002, chs 4-6.


S. Lowry, ‘Fascist Film or Unpolitical Entertainment?’, *New German Critique* 74 (Spring-Summer 1998), pp. 125-49.


D.S. Hull, Film in the Third Reich, Berkeley 1969.

X. Other Fascist Movements in Inter-War Europe

X.1. Central and Eastern European Fascisms

X.1.a. Austria
G. Bischof et al. (eds), The Dollfuss-Schuschnigg Era in Austria: A Reassessment, New Brunswick and London 2003.
J. Boyer, Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Austria, Chicago 1981.


X.1.b. The Balkans

X.1.c. The Baltic States

X.1.d. Czechoslovakia
Y. Jelinek, ‘Slovakia’s Internal Policy and the Third Reich, August 1940-February 1941’, Central European History (September 1971), pp. 242-270.

X.1.e. Greece


X.1.f. Hungary


X.1.g. Poland


X.1.h. Romania


X.1.i. Scandinavia


X.2.Western European Fascisms


X.2.a. Belgium


X.2.b. France

X.2.c. Great Britain and Ireland
X.2.d. Portugal

X.2.e. Spain

XI. Radicalization I: World War II and the Fascist ‘New Orders’
* D. Rodogno, Fascism’s European Empire: Italian Occupation during the Second World War, Cambridge 2006.
* M. Knox, Common Destiny: Dictatorship, Foreign Policy, and War in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, Cambridge 2000.

**XII. Radicalization II: Terror, Persecution and Genocide under the Fascist Regimes**


XIII. The Resurgence of Fascism after World War II


* Parliamentary Affairs* 53, 3 (July 2000), special issue on the rebirth of the extreme right in Europe.


S.P. Ramet (ed.), *The Radical Right in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989*, University Park 1999.

* P. Ignazi, *Parliamentary Affairs* 45, 3 (July 1992), special issue on the extreme right.

XIV. Fascism in Historiography and Memory: Interpretations, Representations, Controversies
A. Lyttelton, ‘What was Fascism?’, New York Review of Books (October 21, 2004); see also the ensuing exchange between Lyttelton and Zeev Sternhell, New York Review of Books 52, 8 (May 12, 2005).
* G. Bartram et al. (eds), Reconstructing the Past: Representations of the Fascist Era in Post-War European Culture, Keele 1996.
M. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History*, London 1987

XV. Web resources
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook42.html
http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/dpf/Fascism/Home.html
http://eserver.org/history/fighting-fascism/
http://www.dhm.de/ENGLISH/sammlungen/
http://www.h-net.msu.edu/~german/gtext/index.html
http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/
http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/
http://www.warwick.ac.uk/~poscv/F&N/Studnotes1/index.htm
http://www.searchlightmagazine.com
http://www.adl.org/main_Extremism/default.htm

XV.I. Neo-fascist websites (visit responsibly)
http://www.skrewdriver.net/
http://www.aryanunity.com/
http://www.bpp.org.uk/
http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/estate/xcv71/
http://www.politicalsoldier.net/
http://www.national-socialism.us/
http://www.bloodandhonour.org/
http://www.stormfront.org/default.htm

33