

Reading and viewing list for the Tegeder-Berg Society event

“Fascism: Past and Present”

March 31, 2022

Introductory and overview readings

Roger Griffin. *The Nature of Fascism*. New York: Routledge, 1993.

Griffin offers a widely acknowledged “concise definition” of fascism, also understood to be a definition of generic fascism: “Fascism is a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultranationalism.” Palingenesis (from “palin” meaning again or anew, and “genesis” meaning creation or birth) refers to rebirth after a period of crisis and decline. (See chapter 2)

Available at CSBSJU libraries as an e-book.

Robert O. Paxton. *The Anatomy of Fascism*. New York: Knopf, 2004.

Paxton emphasizes paying attention to what fascists did as well what they said. He examines fascism in a “cycle of five stages”: 1) creation of movements, 2) rooting of movements in the political system, 3) the seizure of power, 4) the exercise of power, and 5) the long duration of the regime and the choice of radicalization or entropy. Paxton’s book is very readable and an excellent introduction to the topic.

Available at the CSBSJU libraries as a print book.

Stanley G. Payne. *A History of Fascism: 1914-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1995.

Payne’s study is a comprehensive overview of fascism as a broadly European phenomenon, offering discussions across the spectrum from the fascist regimes in Italy and Germany to small fascist parties in Iceland and Belgium. Also very useful is Payne’s in-depth presentation of the historical context in which fascism emerged, for which he considers cultural transformation in Europe at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, nationalism in the late 19th century, and the impact of the Great War.

Available at CSBSJU libraries as an e-book.

Primary source collections:

Roger Griffin, ed. *Fascism*. Oxford Readers. New York: Oxford University, 1995.

This collection includes a wide array of readings, including excerpts from fascist sources, responses to fascism, and scholarly analyses. Readings on Italian and German fascism constitute the first two parts of the volume, followed by Part 3 devoted to “Abortive fascisms, 1922-1945,” that is, nearly all the other variants, including some non-European examples. Part 4 offers a finely differentiated set of “Theories of Fascism,” including Marxist and democratic critiques, analysis from the perspectives of psycho-history and modernization theory, and attempts to define the “fascist minimum.” Part 5 covers “Postwar fascisms.” Griffin provides an introduction for the entire volume and a detailed introduction for each source. This collection is invaluable for students of fascism, especially those seeking a broader, international perspective and an extended timeframe.

Available at CSBSJU libraries as a print book.

Robert G. Moeller, ed. *The Nazi State and German Society: A Brief History with Documents*. Bedford Series in History and Culture. New York: Bedford St. Martin’s, 2010.

Marla Stone, ed. *The Fascist Revolution in Italy: A Brief History with Documents*. Bedford Series in History and Culture. New York: Bedford St. Martin’s, 2013.

The volumes by Moeller and Stone are part of the Bedford Series in History and Culture, each of which features an introduction by the editor and a collection of primary sources. Each primary source is anchored in the introduction and is preceded by its own introduction for specific context. The volumes are very readable and excellent for individual or college-level study.

Documentaries

The following documentaries from *Frontline* investigate fascism in Germany and the United States. They address recent events and ongoing concerns that inform our understanding of fascism and fascist potential in the present. They also provide insights into digital fascism.

Frontline, “Documenting Hate: Charlottesville,” August 7, 2018

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPLvWO_SOGM&t=2404s

Frontline, “Documenting Hate: New American Nazis,” November 20, 2018

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XFBVAAzXjc&t=53s>

Frontline, “Germany’s Neo-Nazis and the Far Right,” June 29, 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6bH2fHbt2w>