

Course title:	Fascism without Borders. Fascist Movements in Comparative Perspective
Instructor:	Dr. Marcus Funck
Email address:	m.funck@tu-berlin.de
Language of instruction:	English
Contact hours:	48 (6 per day)
ECTS credits:	5
Prerequisites:	Students should be able to speak and read English at the upper intermediate level (B2) or higher. Prerequisites are interest, curiosity, and the will to actively contribute to the seminar.

Course description

This course addresses the question of what Fascism is, how it developed and changed over time, and how it unfolds in different regional contexts. We will compare various Fascist movements and regimes that existed in different times and spaces with a focus on Europe. The course will start with a discussion of a wide range of theories and definitions of Fascism, both contemporary and scholarly. From there, we are going to analyse distinct key aspects of historical Fascism in the first half of the 20th century (ideology, organisation, practices). The second half of the course deepens the comparative aspect when we look at very different movements and regimes across the globe that have been labelled as either “Authoritarian”, “Populist”, or “Fascist”. Relating and comparing such different political systems to each other as well as to the historical Fascist regimes helps us to get a better understanding of what exactly might be “Fascist” about them.

Learning Objectives

In this course, students develop an understanding how conceptual terms like “Fascism” are always politically framed and loaded and at the same time can still be very useful analytical tools. They will acquire basic knowledge of various Fascist regimes across the globe and how they relate to each other, i.e. learn about similarities and differences, entanglement and dissociation. In addition to introducing students to historical and contemporary debates of Fascism, this course uses guided readings, discussions, and frequent writing to help students discover and pursue their own intellectual interests. Finally, the course emphasizes how to formulate productive critical questions, how to draft concise analytical summaries of the issues raised by texts, and how to develop and push forward own research interests.

Student profile

We welcome students from all disciplines who are interested in gaining an insight into the ideological foundations, the belief system, and the political practices of Fascism in its various expressions. Prerequisites are interest, curiosity, and the will to actively contribute to the seminar.

Course requirements

Attendance in class, the careful reading of the assigned course materials, participation in the field trip, the discussion of the material in class, the completion of two short assignments (2-4 pages), and the research paper. Guidelines for the papers as well as suggested topics will be provided during the first session.

Required language skills

The language of instruction is English. Language proficiency on an advanced intermediate level (B2) is a prerequisite for participation. For orientation purposes, you can assess your language skills here (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168045bb52>)

Grading

Class participation	30%
Two Course Assignments: 1) session protocol; 2) research abstract	15% each
Research Paper (~ 8 pages or 3.000 words)	40%

Reading

A digital course reader will be provided.

Course schedule

Date	Program*
Friday, January 5, 2024	<p>Conceptualising Fascism</p> <p>Session 1: Introduction</p> <p>Session 2: What is Fascism? Contemporary Definitions and Discussions (1920s/1930s)</p> <p>Since the advent of Fascism as a political movement, commentators from all political strands tried to understand and interpret this new phenomenon. We will read short clippings of contemporary texts by a wide range of authors, e.g. Ludwig von Mises, Leon Trotzky, George Orwell, or Hermann Schuschnigg.</p> <p>Session 3: What is Fascism? Scholarly Definitions and Discussions</p> <p>Academics from various disciplines have developed different theories and interpretations of Fascism as a historical and political phenomenon. We will read some of the most important scholarly accounts to this debate, among them texts by Hannah Arendt, Umberto Eco, Roger Griffin, Robert Paxton, Stanley Payne.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts from selected contemporary definitions • Excerpts from selected scholarly definitions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Umberto Eco, <i>Eternal Fascism</i> (1995) • Robert Paxton, <i>The Anatomy of Fascism</i> (2005)
<p>Monday, January 8, 2024</p>	<p>Comparing European Fascism, 1920s to 1940s</p> <p>Session 1: Fascist Ideology</p> <p>Rather than providing a coherent ideology in its own right, Fascism borrowed ideological elements from various political movements and radicalised them. In this meeting we are going to identify and analyse core elements of Fascist ideology in a comparative perspective.</p> <p>Session 2: Fascist Organisation</p> <p>Fascist movements share specific patterns of organisation that are characterised by a strict hierarchy, the cult of the (charismatic) leader by the masses, and elements of political religion. We will take a close comparative look at these aspects and their aesthetic representation in the public sphere.</p> <p>Session 3: Fascist Practices</p> <p>Fascist movements emphasise the politics of will and action. They perceive violence, including murder, as a legitimate means to fight the enemy. Studying Fascist practices therefore means to analyse violence as a tool of destruction directed against real or imagined “Others”, but also as a tool of internal (male) bonding.</p> <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roger Griffin, <i>The Nature of Fascism</i> (1991) • Emilio Gentile, <i>Fascism as Political Religion</i> (1990) • Sven Reichardt, <i>Fascist Marches in Italy and Germany</i> (2007) • Anson Rabinbach, <i>Staging the Third Reich</i> (2020)
<p>Thursday, January 11, 2024</p>	<p>Another Sonderweg? German National Socialism and Fascism</p> <p>Sessions 1 to 3: Full-day excursion to the House of the Wannsee Conference</p> <p>Wherever in power, Fascism unfolded its violent and destructive force. But nowhere else but in National Socialist Germany did this lead to such unprecedented crimes against humanity. In this session we are going to identify the peculiarities of German National Socialism in comparison to other Fascist regimes and ask if the concept of “Fascism” is appropriate to fully understand National Socialism.</p>

	<p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Diner, <i>Beyond the Conceivable</i> (2000) • Geoff Eley, <i>Nazism as Fascism</i> (2013) • Richard Evans, <i>The Third Reich at War. How the Nazis Led Germany from Conquest to Disaster</i> (2008) • Ian Kershaw, <i>To Hell and Back. Europe 1914-49</i> (2015)
<p>Monday, January 15, 2024</p>	<p>Fascism and Fascist Movements in Europe after 1945 I</p> <p>Session 1 & 2: Iberian Fascism or Right-Wing (Catholic) Authoritarianism? The Regimes of Franco (Spain) and Salazar (Portugal)</p> <p>The regimes of Franco in Spain and Salazar in Portugal lasted until the mid-1970s and have been described as either proto-Fascist or clerical-Fascist. In this meeting we will focus on authoritarian political Catholicism, its ideological roots, and in particular its relation to “pure” Fascism.</p> <p>Session 3: Fascist Traditions and the “New Right” in Europe</p> <p>Across Europe, a so-called “New Right” that has redefined its relation to historical Fascism has emerged since the 1970s. Today, very different exponents of the “New Right” have either come to power in countries like Hungary, Poland, and the UK, or have strong general support in countries like France and Italy. Acknowledging the sometimes fundamental differences, we will look what these regimes and movements might have in common and how past experiences with Fascism resonate with them in theory and practice.</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul H. Lewis, <i>Latin Fascist Elites</i> (2002) • Stanley Payne, <i>Fascism in Spain</i> (2000) • Jean-Yves Camus/Nicolas Lebourg, <i>Far-Right Politics in Europe</i> (2017) • Cas Mudde, <i>The Populist Radical Right</i> (2017) • Wiebke Keim, <i>Postfascists. Putting the so-called “Populist Right” in historical context</i> (2021) • Eric Langenbacher, <i>Germany’s Memory Culture and the Alternative for Germany</i> (2021) • Michelle Lynn Kahn, <i>Antisemitism, Holocaust Denial, and Germany’s Far Right</i> (2022)
<p>Thursday, January 18, 2024</p>	<p>Fascism and Fascist Movements in Europe after 1945 II</p> <p>Session 1: Fascist Traditions and the “New Right” in Europe (Continued)</p> <p>Session 2 & 3: Germany’s “New Right” and the Nazi Past</p>

	<p>Like in other European countries a new party on the radical right grew out of wide-spread dissatisfaction with liberal democracy. However, unlike in many other European countries the <i>Alternative für Deutschland</i> is closely observed through the lens of Germany's past. We will read texts and speeches of important party figures that touch on this issue and discuss how the "New Right" relates itself to Germany's past.</p>
<p>Friday, January 19, 2024</p>	<p>Fascism Transnational: Cooperation and Competition I</p> <p>In the logic of Fascism, international cooperation is impossible as the defined in-group (whether on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality etc.) is at constant war with "Them", the outsiders. However, Fascist Realpolitik has always created and until today still creates transnational networks, exchanges, and entanglements. We are going to look at some of these international networks in past and present and will assess the chances but also limitations of these forms of Fascist cooperation.</p> <p>Session 1 & 2: Atlantic Crossings. Europe and the American Far Right</p> <p>Session 3: A Fascist "Internationale" in Europe (against Europe)?</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angel Alcalde, <i>The Transnational Consensus: Fascism and Nazism in Current Research</i> (2020) • Arnd Bauerkämper/Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe (ed.), <i>Fascism without Borders</i> (2018) • Sven Reichardt, <i>Fascism's Stages: Imperial Violence, Entanglement, and Processualization</i> (2017)
<p>Monday, January 22, 2024</p>	<p>Fascism Transnational: Cooperation and Competition II</p> <p>Session 1: A Fascist "Internationale" in Europe (against Europe)? (Continued)</p> <p>Session 2 & 3: Beyond Europe: How Global is Fascism?</p>
<p>Thursday, January 25, 2024</p>	<p>Fascism (and Antifascism) Revisited: Useful Concept or Ideological Term?</p> <p>The last decade has seen the rise of right-wing authoritarian and populist movements and regimes all over the globe that sometimes are being labelled as "Fascist". At the end of this course, we are going to assess if the term and concept of "Fascism" are still appropriate to fully understand the character of these movements. At the same time "antifascism" as both a concept and a movement</p>

	<p>seem to have regained a new attraction globally. All the more it is important to clarify what exactly is meant and who is included / excluded by “antifascism”.</p> <p>Session 1: Authoritarianism, Populism, Fascism. Separate regimes or close relatives?</p> <p>Session 2: “Antifascism” as ideology, concept, and political movement</p> <p>Session 3: Fighting Fascism in Liberal Democracies</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert Eatwell, Populism and Fascism (2017) • Mark Bray, The Antifascist Handbook (2017) • Enzo Traverso, Intellectuals and Anti-Fascism: For a Critical Historization (2008) • Paul Gottfried, The Uses and Misuses of “Fascism” (2020) • Timothy Snyder, On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century (2017) • Jason Stanley, How Fascism Works (2017) <p>FUBiS Farewell Ceremony</p>
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*Field trips are subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days, class hours may be adjusted.