GLOBAL FASCISM

LEGITIMIZING STATE VIOLENCE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC FALL 2019

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ITALIAN 422 / INTNLSTD 470/ HISTORY 445

MONDAY & WEDNESDAY 11:30 - 1:00

How can an ideology that seems to fit so perfectly the needs of a particular national experience adapt to many different historical, social, and economic contexts? In its global approach to fascism, this course aims to show that since its theorization in the early twentieth century, this ideology has produced similar trends in state violence in disparate geographical spaces. This class studies not only fascist violence but also the discursive practices employed by military personnel and far-right politicians in their efforts to legitimize the security apparatus of the fascist state. We will begin the class by defining fascism and looking at how it was precisely through a set of cultural practices that it was able to implement its powerful ideology in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and across the Atlantic in Brazil, Argentina, and the US. We will read two novels and we will watch films that show the conditions under which fascism was developed. We will also visit the University of Michigan Special Collections to look at the actual propagandistic fascist material. Ultimately, if fascism has been able to re-appear throughout the 20th and 21st century it is because of its capacity to distort reality in convincing ways. We will look closely at how fascism frequently succeeds in making political repression and state violence seem necessary and legitimate.

Please email gricco@umich.edu for more information