

AEAJ/AHIST 436 Fascism: Japan and Beyond

University at Albany, Spring 2019

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It is often said that the 1930s and 1940s were the age of fascism. At the same time, “fascism” itself is one of the most debated concepts in modern historiography. While it is quite common for general books on fascism in the English language to label the Japanese case as something resembling, but not quite, fascist, or even omit its discussion entirely, Japanese books on the history of Japan typically refer to the 1930s and 1940s as the age of fascism. This inconsistency is only one of many examples in which we can identify disagreements in what constitutes “fascism.” In this course we will be less interested in defining once and for all what we mean by fascism than examining the different ways in which fascism has been discussed and used as an analytical framework or a category worth engaging, both by writers contemporary to the “era of fascism” and those that came after. And so, while the approach of this course is “comparative” in the sense that we will be comparing situations in different geographical locales (i.e. Nazi Germany vs. Imperial Japan), we will also be comparing the different ways in which “fascism” has been employed as a lens through which the world and its history can be interpreted. Is “fascism” still a useful category in analyzing history and society? By the end of the semester you will have more than a few things to say in response to such a question.

Course Requirements & Policies

Attendance and Participation	20%
Occasional Assignments	10%
Reading Responses	20%
Short Essay Assignment	20%
Final Paper	30%

GRADING STANDARD:

100 – 93 = A; 92 – 90 = A-

89 – 87 = B+; 86 – 83 = B; 82 – 80 = B-

79 – 77 = C+; 76 – 73 = C; 72 – 70 = C-

69 – 67 = D+; 66 – 63 = D; 62 – 60 = D-

Under 60 = E

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY: Students must inform the instructor prior to class if they will miss a class. It goes without saying that “attendance” here implies attending to the course in a manner that involves more than mere physical presence; you must engage in class discussion. Your final grade will be lowered by a third

of a grade (i.e. from a B to a B-) after four unexcused absences, and another third of a grade for each absence thereafter.

CLASS PREPERATION: Students are expected to complete the reading assignments before coming to class. Please bring your reading assignments to class so that you can reference them during discussion. You are also expected to bring a writing utensil for in-class writing assignments and note-taking.

ASSIGNMENTS: There will be four types of assignments in this course:

1. Daily reading responses on the reading. A template for completing the assignment will be provided. You must bring a printed copy of your homework to class to assist you in discussion and to turn in at the end of the class period. You may choose to not turn in a response for three of the readings.
2. Occasional homework assignments, such as worksheets and essay drafts.
3. One short essay assignment of about 1000 words in length early in the semester.
4. Final research paper that is more substantial in length (10 – 12 pages). You will be asked to write a paper on a topic related to fascism of your choice in consultation with the instructor.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: I request that any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities should also contact the Disability Resource Center:
<http://www.albany.edu/disability/current.shtml>

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Any use of work produced by another person without proper citation is plagiarism, and is a violation of the academic code of honesty. The instructor reserves the right to dismiss from the course any student that is caught cheating on an assignment or plagiarizing the work of another person. Please see the university's policies for academic regulations for more info:
http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT: You may not use any electronic equipment in class for any purpose other than engaging in the course (i.e. note-taking, reading course materials, etc.). If you are expecting a call that you absolutely must take, please inform me prior to class. Violation will count against your participation grade.

GENERAL EDUCATION: This course fulfills the General Education category of "Challenges for the 21st Century." The General Education Program at UAlbany is designed to train students in understanding the procedures and practices of disciplines and interdisciplinary fields while exploring multiple perspectives on the given subject through an emphasis on methods of active learning and critical thinking. Courses in the category of "Challenges for the 21st Century" focus on challenges and opportunities in a variety of areas including cultural diversity and pluralism, science and technology, social interaction, ethics, global citizenship, among others. They are specifically designed to probe the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of challenges that students will encounter in the world beyond the University.

Required Texts

Kevin Passmore, *Fascism: A Very Short Introduction, 2nd Edition* (Do not buy 1st edition)

*All other readings will be provided as PDFs.

Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is provisional and may be adjusted throughout the semester

What Do We Mean by “Fascism”?

Week 1

Jan. 23 (W): Introduction: What is Fascism? What is Fascism not?

Week 2

Jan. 28 (M): Exploring theories and approaches to fascism

Passmore, *Fascism*, 1-43

Library Assignment

Jan. 30 (W): Hitler, Mussolini, and the “Emperor System”

MARUYAMA Masao, “The Theory and Psychology of Ultrationalism” (1946)

Passmore, *Fascism*, 44-67

Week 3

Feb. 4 (M): A Global Fascist Moment?

Schivelbusch, *Three New Deals: Reflections on Roosevelt’s America, Mussolini’s Italy, and Hitler’s Germany, 1933- 1939* (excerpts)

Feb. 6 (W): Grassroots Fascism

YOSHIMI Yoshiaki, *Grassroots Fascism* (excerpts)

Race, Nation, and Fascism

Week 4

Feb. 11 (M): Race Policies of the 1930s

James Witman, *Hitler’s American Model*, excerpts

Feb. 13 (W): Short Writing Assignment

Peer Review Session & Introductory Paragraph Due

Week 5

Feb. 18 (M): Race and the New Deal

Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White*, excerpts

Feb. 20 (W): Weimar Germany & Nazism

Alfred Rosenberg, “The Russian Jewish Revolution” (1919)

German Worker's Party, "The Twenty Five Points" (1920)
Adolf Hitler, "Address to the Industry Club" (1932)
Passmore, *Fascism*, 108-123.
Article Search Assignment

Short Essay Assignment Due Feb. 22: 1000-1400 word essay on readings. Send as an email attachment.

Week 6

Feb. 25 (M): Race, Populism, and Mobilization
John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, excerpts
Feb. 27 (W): Race and Biopolitics
Michel Foucault, "Society Must Be Defended," excerpts

Week 7

March 4 (M): Nationalism, Capitalism & Fascism
"The Rise of Revolutionary Nationalism" from *Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume 2* (2001)
Passmore, *Fascism*, 124-148.
March 6 (W): Democracy, Socialism, and Fascism
Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan* (1991), Chapters 1, 5, 11

The Feeling of Decline & the Project of Overcoming: Fascism & Modernity

Week 8

March 11 (M): Vitalism and Challenges to the Idea of "Civilization"
Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (1918) Excerpts
***Discuss final paper topic ideas**
March 13 (W): Mass Culture and Fascism
Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1935)

March 16 – March 24: Spring Break

Week 9

March 25 (M): MIZOGUCHI Kenji, Osaka Elegy (1936)
March 27 (W): Anxieties of the Showa 10s
AONO Suekichi, "The Salaryman's Time of Terror" (1930)

Week 10

April 1 (M): Final Paper Discussion
Peer Review Session
Bring brief outline & introductory paragraph
April 3 (W): Yasuda and the Japan Romantic School
YASUDA Yojūrō, "Japanese Bridges" (1936)

Week 11

April 8 (M): The Philosophical Task of Overcoming the Modern

Symposium on “Overcoming Modernity” Day One

April 10 (W): The Philosophical Task of Overcoming the Modern

Symposium on “Overcoming Modernity” Day Two

Week 12

April 15 (M): Theorizing Liberalism’s Relation to Japanese Fascism

TOSAKA Jun, “Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism: Against the Two Types of Liberalist Philosophy”
from *The Japanese Ideology* (1935)

April 17 (W): Carl Schmitt and Weimar Liberalism

Schmitt: *Concept of the Political* (1927), excerpts

First Draft of Final Paper Due: April 19 (Friday)

Immanent Fascisms

Week 13

April 22 (M): Anti-fascism as Ethics

Passmore, 92-107, 149-155.

Michel Foucault, “Preface to *Anti-Oedipus*”

April 24 (W): Populism and the Rightwing in Contemporary Japan

TAMOGAMI Toshio, “Was Japan an Aggressor Nation?”

KITADA Akihiro, “Japan’s Cynical Nationalism”

MIZOHATA Sachie, “Nippon Kaigi: Empire, Contradiction, and Japan’s Future”

Week 14

April 29 (M): 21st century Populism and the “F-word”

Readings TBD

May 1 (W): Can It Happen Here?

Readings TBD

Week 15

May 6 (M): Fascism Today, Day 1

Crowd-sourced articles

May 8 (W): Fascism Today, Day 2

Crowd-sourced articles

Final Paper Due May 12