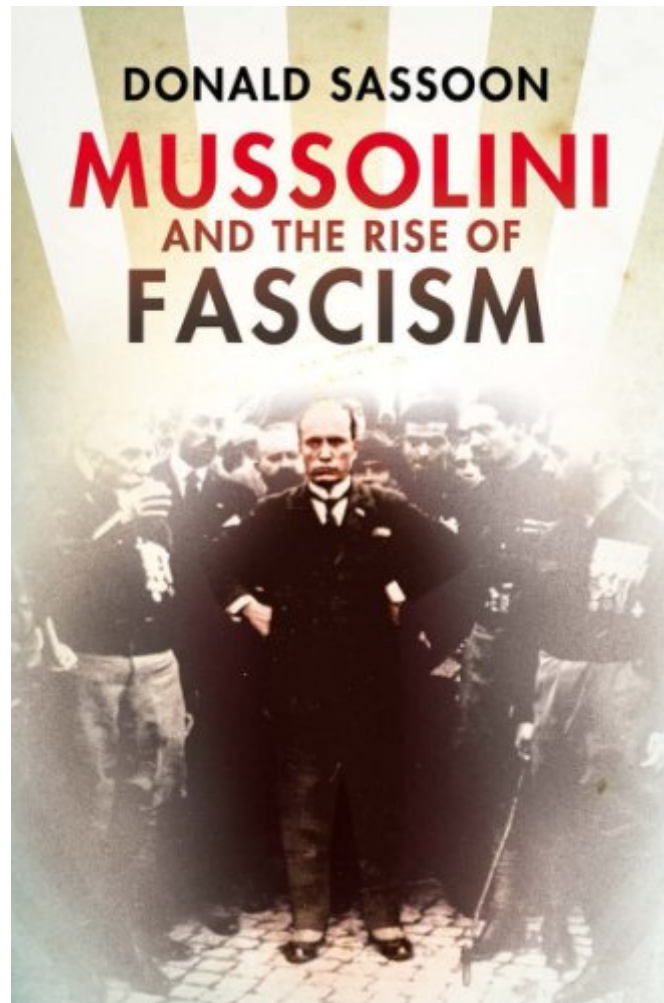




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Mussolini And The Rise Of Fascism (Text Only Edition)



Synopsis

In this fascinating look at the unique conjuncture of factors surrounding Il Duce's seizure of power, eminent historian Donald Sassoon traces the political circumstances that sent Italy on a collision course with the most destructive war of the century. On the morning of 30 October 1922, Mussolini arrived in Rome to accept the premiership of a constitutional, conservative government. Within five years, however, his regime would morph into a dictatorship that neither his fascist supporters nor the conservative old order could have predicted, and Mussolini himself would be transformed from figurehead to despot. A multiplicity of personalities and wider impersonal forces, including the social upheaval caused by the previous world war, combined to make possible the crisis of 1922 and the Fascist March on Rome. But in fact, Donald Sassoon argues, things could have gone very differently and the core focus of this illuminating study is not so much what happened, but how. How did Mussolini seize power so effectively that he maintained it for the next twenty years, until he dragged his country, disastrously, into World War II? Social fragmentation, unionization, inflation and nationalism all played a part in weakening the old political system, while Mussolini seemed to provide answers in a troubling new era. In the event, Il Duce's ruthless political ambition and cruel authoritarianism would surprise his supporters and opponents alike. Note that it has not been possible to include the same picture content that appeared in the original print version.

Book Information

File Size: 943 KB

Print Length: 224 pages

Publisher: HarperPress (September 27, 2012)

Publication Date: September 27, 2012

Sold by: HarperCollins Publishers

Language: English

ASIN: B0092HPZ66

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #358,183 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #131

inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Europe > Italy #137 inÂ Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Italy #301 inÂ Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Ideologies & Doctrines > Fascism

Customer Reviews

Well written book that adds pertinent information for this little understood period in Italian history.

Inspiring book on how unfortunate circumstance, foolishness and political opportunism leads to the fall of the Italian democratic institutions. Worth reading

Sassoon's "Mussolini and the Rise of Fascism" is pretty much summed up in its title. The book really is a focus on the rise of the Fascist Party in Italy. It has very little to do with Mussolini before or after. That being said, it is the best rendering of this subject that I have found to date. In many ways, the book challenges some of our fundamental assumptions about the Fascist take over of Italy. What most people learn in school of an ultra-populist movement caused by the Great Depression is only partially correct. In the end, it isn't Mussolini's populatiry that leads to his rise but the failure of his opponents to organize effectively against him and the lack of a true democratic culture in Italy that ultimately lead to his rise to power. Sassoon is wise to discount neither Mussolini's astuteness or the historical forces that surround him in his attempt to explain the events of 1921-1923. The failure of the book is in that it doesn't do much to make you care. You must already have an interest in the subject to wade through the text. Perhaps, the weaving of some personal narratives might have made the book more than just educational and might have also made it entertaining.

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