I. Social Construction of Fascist Utopia

A. Fascist movements

1. 1920s and 1930s

a. Germany: Nazi

b. Italy: Fascist

c. other European countries

i. Portugal: Clerical Fascism

ii. Spain: Falange

iii. Hungary: Arrow Cross

iv. England, Ireland, Norway

d. Japan

e. U.S.

i. Father Coughlin

i. National Union of Social Justice

ii. Christian Front

iii. groups: Black Legion, Defense of

Christian Faith, Silver Legion, Silver Shirts

iv. German American Bund

v. “It Can’t Happen Here” by Sinclair Lewis

2. Characteristics of movement

a. nationalism

i. unique

ii. sacred

iii. “holy mission”: ordained by god

iv. highest “calling”: patriotism

b. charismatic leader

c. nostalgia

i. idealized/romanticized past

ii. recovery and renewal

d. racist

i. superior racial groups

ii. superior races need to rule

iii. threat: mongrelization

e. social construction of “fascist reality”

i. appeal: emotions, dreams, fantasies

ii. means: images, symbols, slogans, repetition

iii. destruction of critical thinking

iv. moral responsibility: obey, act, don’t reflect

f. “populist”

i. glorifying the people: “Das Volk” “Il Popolod’Italia”

i. obedience to country: Italy: “Believe, obey, fight.”

iv. elite-driven, or coopted by elite

g. violent

i. paramilitary

ii. Brown shirts, Black Shirts, Christian Front, Blue Shirts

iii. against: political opponents, socialists, communists, intellectuals

iv. anyone who criticizes

B. Fascist Utopia: Third Reich

1.political and judicial system

a.political system

i. National Socialist German Workers Party.

ii. dictator/ Fuhrer

b. legal system: Nazi judges, exclusionary laws, harsh penalties

c. police: internal security system

2. economy dominated by large corporations

a. highly centralized

b. production tied to the “divine mission”

c. workers subordinate

3. military

4. education

a. mythical history

b. racism

5. media(propaganda)

a. radio

b. film

6. family was nuclear

7. Church

8. culture, literature, music, film, philosophy, religion, sports were shaped by ideology

which included “cleansing”

9. civil society was eliminated accept as a site for mass rallies and events.

10. ideology

a. Third Reich

i. 1000 year utopia

ii. fulfillment of historical promise of domination ofAryan race

iii. German nation and its people on divine mission

b. Fuhrer Principle

i. Leader embodies the mission, messianic figure

ii. savior of the people

iii. recover past and renew future

c. Lebensraum

i. master race needs living space

ii. justifiedtaking it from inferior races

d. enemies: the “Other”

i. mentally and physically disabled weaken the master race

ii. evil: Jews and Roma necessarily will destroy it.

iii. racial anti-Semitism

iv. violence is justifiable

C. Historical Context

1. WWI and the Treaty of Versailles

2. Great Depression

3. History of religious anti-Semitism

a. Judaism refused to accept the divinity of Jesus and had been labeled Christ-killers

b. segregated socially and economically

c. targets of pogroms

d. conversion was an option

e. as early as middle nineteenth: racial antisemitism

D. Social Factors: Fascist Social theory (Le Bon, Nietzsche, Pareto)

1. natural hierarchy

a. individuals

i. natural elite

ii. nobles

b. races

b. r

c. Social Darwinism

d. Biological Determinism

e. racial anti-Semitism

2. life force

a. works through natural elite

b. will to power

c. works through leaders: actions based upon will

d. works through specific races

3. democracy contradicts nature/ undermines life force

a. leveling

i. undermines natural hierarchy

i. constrains their power to act

b. masses motivated by sentiments/emotions

c. masses fear life force

d. inferior races take advantage create morality

4. morality is life denying

a.denies life force

b. constrains natural elite, limits power to act

c. givespower to the weak: slave morality (Jews)

d. leaders should not be limited by morality

E. Image and the Social Construction of “Pseudo-Reality”

1. Saturation of cultural space

a. symbols

i. Swastika

ii. Nazi Eagle

b. architecture

i. Nuremberg, Nazi Party Rally Ground

ii. New Reich Chancellery

iii. traditional Teutonic

c. events

i. sporting events

ii. 1936 Olympics

2. Domination of civil society

a. mass rallies

b. rituals

3. Visual media

a. propaganda films/cartoons

b. Triumph of the Will