

# Ideology

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Fascism emphasizes violence for its own sake

Payne also notes that Trump lacks a connection to the pro-violence philosophy at the heart of fascism. This dates back to Georges Sorel, a French syndicalist philosopher who was revered by Mussolini and the Italian fascists. Sorel praised violence as a necessary tool of the class struggle. "Proletarian violence ... appears thus as a very fine and heroic thing," he writes. "It is at the service of the immemorial interests of civilization; it is not perhaps the most appropriate method of obtaining immediate material advantages, but it may save the world from barbarism." King's College London's Jeremy Jennings, in an introduction to a recent edition of Sorel's [Reflections on Violence](#), writes that Sorel is "prepared to equate [violence] with life, creativity, and virtue."

While fascists obviously don't share Sorel's interest in the class struggle, this valorization of violence carried over. Fascism, Payne says, requires "a philosophical valuing of violence, of Sorelian violence. [Fascists believe] that violence is really good for you, that it's the sort of thing that makes you a vital, alive, dedicated person, that it creates commitment. You make violence not just a political strategy but a philosophical principle. That's unique to fascism."

Re: Greece's Golden Dawn "There's a racial purity myth, a rebirth myth, the political ritual, the cryptic symbols.

I asked 5 fascism experts whether Donald Trump is a fascist. Here's what they said. By Dylan Matthews, [Dylan@vox.com](mailto:Dylan@vox.com) May 19, 2016

Mussolini's transformation away from Marxism into what eventually became fascism began prior to World War I, as Mussolini had grown increasingly pessimistic about Marxism and egalitarianism while becoming increasingly supportive of figures who opposed egalitarianism, such as [Friedrich Nietzsche](#).<sup>[224]</sup> By 1902, Mussolini was studying [Georges Sorel](#), Nietzsche, and [Vilfredo Pareto](#).<sup>[225]</sup> Sorel's emphasis on the need for overthrowing decadent [liberal democracy](#) and [capitalism](#) by the use of violence, [direct action](#), [general strikes](#) and [neo-Machiavellian](#) appeals to emotion impressed Mussolini deeply.<sup>[226]</sup> His <sup>[who?]</sup> use of Nietzsche made him a highly unorthodox socialist, due to Nietzsche's promotion of elitism and anti-egalitarian views.<sup>[224]</sup> Prior to World War I, Mussolini's writings over time indicated that he had abandoned the Marxism and egalitarianism that he had previously supported, in favour of Nietzsche's *übermensch* concept and anti-egalitarianism.<sup>[224]</sup>

In 1908, Mussolini wrote a short essay called "Philosophy of Strength" based on his Nietzschean influence, in which Mussolini openly spoke fondly of the ramifications of an impending war in Europe in challenging both religion and [nihilism](#): "a new kind of free spirit will come, strengthened by the war, ... a spirit equipped with a kind of sublime perversity, ... a new free spirit will triumph over God and over Nothing."<sup>[89]</sup>

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The ideological roots of fascism have been traced back to the 1880s, and in particular to the [fin de siècle](#) theme of that time.<sup>[64][65]</sup> ...The *fin-de-siècle* mindset saw civilization as being in a crisis that required a massive and total solution.<sup>[66]</sup> The *fin-de-siècle* intellectual school considered the individual only one part of the larger collectivity, which should not be viewed as an atomized numerical sum of individuals.<sup>[66]</sup> They condemned the rationalistic individualism of liberal society and the dissolution of social links in bourgeois society.<sup>[66]</sup>

The *fin-de-siècle* outlook was influenced by various intellectual developments. ...[Social Darwinism](#), which gained widespread acceptance, made no distinction between physical and social life, and viewed the human condition as being an unceasing struggle to achieve the [survival of the fittest](#).<sup>[68]</sup> Social Darwinism challenged positivism's claim of deliberate and rational choice as the determining behaviour of humans, with social Darwinism focusing on heredity, race, and environment.<sup>[68]</sup> Social Darwinism's emphasis on biogroup identity and the role of organic relations within societies fostered legitimacy and appeal for nationalism.<sup>[69]</sup> New theories of social and political psychology also rejected the notion of human behaviour being governed by rational choice, and instead claimed that emotion was more influential in political issues than reason.<sup>[68]</sup> Nietzsche's argument that "God is dead" coincided with his attack on the "herd mentality" of [Christianity](#), democracy and modern collectivism; his concept of the [übermensch](#); and his advocacy of the [will to power](#) as a primordial instinct, were major influences upon many of the *fin-de-siècle* generation.<sup>[70]</sup> Bergson's claim of the existence of an "élan vital" or vital instinct centred upon free choice and rejected the processes of materialism and determinism; this challenged Marxism.<sup>[71]</sup>

[Gaetano Mosca](#) in his work *The Ruling Class* (1896) developed the theory that claims that in all societies an "organized minority" will dominate and rule over the "disorganized majority".<sup>[72][73]</sup> Mosca claims that there are only two classes in society, "the governing" (the organized minority) and "the governed" (the disorganized majority).<sup>[74]</sup> He claims that the organized nature of the organized minority makes it irresistible to any individual of the disorganized majority.<sup>[74]</sup>

The anarchist [Mikhail Bakunin](#)'s concept of [propaganda of the deed](#), which stressed the importance of [direct action](#) as the primary means of politics, including revolutionary violence, became popular amongst fascists who admired the concept and adopted it as a part of fascism.<sup>[75]</sup>

Italian, [Enrico Corradini](#) merged French philosophers, Maurras and Sorel

Italian national syndicalists held a common set of principles: the rejection of [bourgeois](#) values, [democracy](#), liberalism, [Marxism](#), [internationalism](#), and [pacifism](#); and the promotion of [heroism](#), [vitalism](#), and violence.<sup>[86]</sup> The ANI claimed that liberal democracy was no longer compatible with the modern world, and advocated a strong state and imperialism, claiming that humans are naturally predatory and that nations were in a constant struggle, in which only the strongest could survive.<sup>[87]</sup>

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In 1920, militant strike activity by industrial workers reached its peak in Italy; 1919 and 1920 were known as the "[Red Years](#)".<sup>[111]</sup> Mussolini and the Fascists took advantage of the situation by allying with industrial businesses and attacking workers and peasants in the name of preserving order and internal peace in Italy.<sup>[112]</sup>

Fascists identified their primary opponents as the majority of socialists on the left who had opposed intervention in World War I.<sup>[110]</sup> The Fascists and the Italian political right held common ground: both held Marxism in contempt, discounted class consciousness and believed in the rule of elites.<sup>[113]</sup> The Fascists assisted the anti-socialist campaign by allying with the other parties and the conservative right in a mutual effort to destroy the Italian Socialist Party and labour organizations committed to class identity above national identity.<sup>[113]</sup>

Fascism sought to accommodate Italian conservatives by making major alterations to its political agenda;— abandoning its previous [populism](#), [republicanism](#), and [anticlericalism](#), adopting policies in support of [free enterprise](#), and accepting the [Roman Catholic Church](#) and the monarchy as institutions in Italy.<sup>[114]</sup> To appeal to Italian conservatives, Fascism adopted policies such as promoting family values, including promotion policies designed to reduce the number of women in the workforce limiting the woman's role to that of a mother. The fascists banned literature on birth control and increased penalties for abortion in 1926, declaring both crimes against the state.<sup>[115]</sup>

Fascism from Wikipedia the free dictionary.

The conditions of economic hardship caused by the [Great Depression](#) brought about an international surge of social unrest. According to historian Philip Morgan, "*the onset of the Great Depression...was the greatest stimulus yet to the diffusion and expansion of fascism outside Italy*".<sup>[135]</sup> Fascist propaganda blamed the problems of the long depression of the 1930s on minorities and [scapegoats](#): "[Judeo-Masonic-bolshevik](#)" conspiracies, [left-wing internationalism](#), and the presence of [immigrants](#).

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