

Demolition, Archeology, and Building: Mussolini and the Rhetoric of Destruction

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Imbeciles, I forgive you; but this time remember that without the senses there is no memory, and without memory there is no mind.

— Mnemosyne to the People, Voltaire,
Memory's Adventure, 1774).

INTRODUCTION

In this paper I examine archeology, demolition, and construction as rhetorical devices employed by Mussolini's Italian Fascist Government in an effort to express its world view and establish settings for the realization of its vision. In deciding what would be conserved, revealed, demolished, or built, Mussolini determined what was worth remembering, what should be forgotten, and what would form new memories. In so doing, Mussolini attempted to alter, erase, and construct cultural memory for Italians and visitors to Italy.

Agreement is key to formation of cultural memory¹ and Mussolini was allotted his share, thus this period of Italian history has been called the *years of consensus*.² during which Fascist ideology formed a cosmology that affected most aspects of social and private life in Italy.³ Credibility of the regime depended upon Fascist ability to manipulate cultural memory relative to past, present, and future. It could not have established either consensus or been influential if a majority of Italy's citizens had not found something that suited them in the offerings of the regime.⁴

In this study the city is proposed as the field of cultural memories. By examining three sites in Rome, the Mausoleum of Augustus, the Via Della Conciliazione, and the Vicolo della Moretta, I will attempt to demonstrate how each has been made to embody and transmit the values of Italian Fascism, thereby re-rendering them as rhetorical devices.

Although I have chosen three sites in Rome forever altered during the Fascist period, this discussion could be applied to other times and places.⁵ Each of the sites to be examined was altered by demolition, two by construction, and one by archeology. Cultural memory, owing to its public nature, is partially embodied in and communicated through a society's constructions. Of the three kinds of operations to be discussed, building is the most recognizable as rhetorical — though this aspect often remains unexplored. As a collective action, construction is *always* the result of common beliefs, through conscious consensus or by passive agreement.

Those constructions a culture allows to stand from one generation to the next communicate what is valued by the society conserving them.⁶ What that same society selects for demolition communicates much about what it values, as well. Demolition, though, appears to be the most elusive of the operations I am studying. Nothing *useful* is demolished, so it seems — or, so it is ever presented. But how is usefulness determined? Whatever the deter-

mination, it is bound to the mythos of the culture constructing or demolishing. In this resides a danger; determination of value is often transitory — shifting along with the ebb and flow of prevailing, though non-permanent, beliefs. Because of this, *all* demolition is portentous, requiring careful consideration before action. Cities as accretions of lived cultural memory render demolition an assault on memory — on how it is formed and conserved. Demolition is a kind of cultural forgetting.⁷

Finally, those aspects of a society's buried past that it determines to bring to light also express its convictions and beliefs about itself. Archeology can be among the most rhetorical of devices. What is exhumed and conserved appears to confirm what is valued by those doing the digging as well as by those who sponsor the dig. The fate of what is uncovered during the find is also an expression of value, as is the manner in which the dig is conducted — was the work rushed, or accomplished with care and respect for the remains exhumed? Conservation of such discoveries can alter the way a culture conceptualizes its past and envisions its purpose. What is brought up is considered valuable and worth bringing to light, entering, altering, and forming, at least in part, a society's cultural memory. What is demolished during exhumation of the buried and desired find is thought better forgotten than remembered. It is in these ways that archeology, along with construction and demolition, is an intentional meaningful action and an embodiment of common values.

ARCHITECTURE AND MEMORY

Cultural memory, then, is constituted in part by the constructed environment that forms the city and is defined by it.⁸ The existing city as analogous to memory suggests that memory is constitutive in that place identity is formed by what persists, while demolition is analogous to forgetting, and can be thought of as pathological in that forgetting can include the dissolution of identity (as in amnesia). Charles Rycroft describes the process by which existence in the present is informed by the past: "Memory fulfills the biological function of enabling organisms to respond to present circumstances in the light of past experiences and thereby replace simple, automatic, 'instinctual' reactions by complex, selective, learned responses."⁹ In this sense, culture learns by being able to draw upon its past experience. This past experience is conserved and made present by the persisting city.

As suggested above, the city is a topos of cultural memory. Construction creates sites of memory (or replaces others), and demolition is forgetting, or, a kind of amnesia. Freud, so preoccupied with remembering and forgetting, posed Rome as an analogy of the mind and memory.¹⁰ That the city is a site of cultural memory seems reasonable enough but it also *becomes* a part of the self. Rycroft makes this connection in the following: "[T]here is a two-way

imaginative traffic between our own body and its activities on the one hand and objects in the outside world on the other, so that each provides metaphors to describe the other."¹¹

If Rycroft is correct (and I think that he is) the analogy of body and building and building and world relates to the comprehensibility of the city. The transactions that occur via the two-way traffic Rycroft describes above collect in the formation of memory and self. The city locates remembrance and memory makes the city. This dialogue results in locations of cultural memory that persist in continued existence and dissipate when demolished. The relationship between individual memory and group identity is recognized by Joseph Rykwert when he writes:

Memory is to a person what history is to a group. As memory conditions perception and is in turn modified by it, so the history of design and of architecture contains everything that has been designed or built and is continually modified by new work. There is no humanity without memory and there is no architecture without historical reference. In a critical situation such as ours where collective memory is continually being denied and its relevance to the contemporary situation questioned, we approach (collectively) the malaise of the psychologist's patient who represses his past in order to justify his irrational behaviour in the present.¹²

The constructed realm, then, is recognizable as crucial in the formation of cultural memory. Alteration of that realm is bound to a process of remembering and forgetting that is common to both culture and the individual and either dissolves or constitutes individual and cultural identity.

FASCISM: MUSSOLINI AS AUGUSTUS?¹³

All of Mussolini's plans to embody the Fascist state were motivated by his desire for control. Power was for him an abstract end in itself, absent of any conviction deeper than a desire to dominate the Italian people. The shallowness of conviction and the intensity of his hunger for authority are as present in his oratory as in his *public works* projects.¹⁴ Mussolini's cynicism and media savvy were cultivated during his years as a journalist. This experience had helped him to become adept at using powerful images, in both word and deed, as a means of seducing the Italian people (he said *the crowd was like a woman*) and consolidating power.¹⁵

What made Fascist mythology real to the Italian people was that it pandered to conventional desires. Fascism was an explicit attempt to make of the state a religion that people could worship, filling the void formed by secularization and the open society.¹⁶ It appeared to address the disruptions of post-Enlightenment existence, including the legacy of the Industrial Revolution, the institutionalized doubt of scientific thought, the corrosive aspects of urbanization, and the rise of secular mass society. Mussolini saw Fascism as a way of reforming corrupt Italian civilization by modeling its present after the golden age of ancient Rome — thus establishing a direct link between Fascism and the last great Italic epoch.¹⁷

Between the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD and the *Risorgimento*, unification of the Italian peninsula remained a millennial dream of many Italians. This led Mussolini to associate Fascism with ancient Rome and the *Risorgimento*. The re-unification movement of the 19th-century gave rise to popular desire for an Italian nation state, encouraging nationalistic longings that included the wish for a resurrected Roman empire.¹⁸ Between the naming of Rome, in 1870, as capital of re-unified Italy and Fascist takeover in 1922, stable national political institutions were unable to develop. By the time Mussolini had determined to rule Italy and redeem it by giving birth to a new Roman Empire, the nation was disorganized and weak, exhausted by harsh national conditions, and frustrated with its low standing internationally. Mussolini exploited this condition of collective vulnerability and desire by promising the people

a strong nation, international respect, empire, and resurrection of the values that had made the Italian peninsula great during the Roman Empire.¹⁹ This promise of strength, destiny, and self respect came at a price — submission of self to the will of a totalizing State.

Fascism charted its destiny by appealing to an historical model fashioned upon the reign of Augustus Caesar (Octavian), Julius Caesar's adopted son who was made emperor by the senate in 27 BC. Augustus remained in power until 14 AD. Among other accomplishments, he is remembered for bringing peace to the empire after years of civil strife. This was the role Mussolini fancied for himself and Fascism in the 20th-Century. Augustus, like Mussolini, sought to connect his empire to the past while embracing the future. Each transformed Rome in his image through extensive building programs. Augustus was selected as an historical model of redemption that could image for Italians self-respect, empire, and a world capital in Rome. Mussolini, like Augustus, recognized the necessity of artifice, both attempted to manage the tension between image and reality constantly at play in state craft. They also shared the desire to focus attention on those parts of Rome that they had manipulated.²⁰ By making building a means to establish the legitimacy of his claims to power, Mussolini was following Augustus. Mussolini and Augustus were also extremely sensitive to the rhetorical possibilities of planning and architecture. Augustan values included tradition, continuity, steady progress, and the family — all of which Mussolini *said* were important Fascist values.

Mussolini made explicit the connection between himself and Augustus and that between Fascism and Imperial Rome. In 1925 he wrote: "In five years Rome must appear marvelous to all the people of the world: vast ordered, powerful as it was in the time of the first emperor Augustus."²¹

MUSSOLINI AND THE MAUSOLEUM OF AUGUSTUS

The connection between Mussolini's and Augustus was made manifest by his decision to excavate the Mausoleum of Augustus and to reconstruct and *protect* the Altar of Augustan Peace. It is rumored that Mussolini had intended on being buried in the tomb of Augustus. If he had been, he might have guaranteed his eternal comparison to the benevolent emperor with whom he shared nothing beyond a common preoccupation with the use and perception of appearances. An archeologist of the regime describes the urgency of the project in the following: "We have every faith that on September 23, 1938 the Duce of the new Italy could, on the bimillennial of the birth of Augustus, admire the great ruin [of the mausoleum], completely isolated."²²

In 29 BC, Augustus built his Mausoleum as his family tomb. It was constructed in honor of his recent foreign victories including over Spain. The Mausoleum is circular and has a diameter of 87 meters and is 44 meters tall. Early on it lost its upper levels. During the Renaissance it became a garden, then an amphitheater for spectacles including the torment of animals, and finally in 1908, a concert hall. The concert hall is said to have had exceptional acoustics. The tomb of Augustus is located at one of the base angles of a triangle that it forms with Piazza di Spagna at the other base angle and Piazza del Popolo at the apex. By the time Mussolini determined to isolate the Mausoleum it had become part of a vital residential quarter including grand *palazzi*, simple dwellings, and the concert hall contained within it.

The primary aim of Fascist urbanism was to disengage monuments of Roman antiquity from the dense texture of the city of which they had become an integral part. This texture was generally considered to be of little or no cultural, artistic, or memorial value by Fascist planners. Whatever was to be demolished was said to represent a period of Italian timidity and decadence. The regime called such actions the *liberation* and *redemption* of the monument, while destruction of the surroundings were called, among other things, the

organization of the quarter. The ideal condition for any monument was proposed as splendid or sublime isolation. Mussolini explained it best when he wrote:

Here then, Fascism finds itself confronted with the problem of the Capital. I would like to divide the problems of Rome in the XXth century into two categories: the problems of necessity and the problems of grandeur. It is not possible to confront the latter if the former have not been solved. The problems of necessity rise from the development of Rome, and are encompassed by this pair: houses and accessibility. The problems of grandeur are of another kind: We must liberate all of ancient Rome from the mediocre construction that disfigures it, but next to the ancient and the medieval, we must create a monumental Rome for the XXth century. Rome cannot, must not, be merely a modern city in the most banal sense of the word: it must be a city worthy of its glory and this glory must be renewed forever and handed down to generations to come as the heritage of the Fascist era.²³

The ancient monuments to be *liberated* were said to be the spiritual force behind the Fascist monuments of the 20th-century. In fact many were reduced to degraded center pieces removed from the accumulation of centuries of urban history that had contained them. The *liberated* monuments have become fragile isolated jewels dominated by the Fascist constructions surrounding them. Worse yet, all of the major sites of demolition justified by Mussolini have become, or were planned to become, major traffic arteries (or traffic circles) adapted to the speed of the automobile or the pomp of military parades. In this, Fascism demonstrates its affinity with *Futurist* theory. Thousands of people were dislocated from the homes to be demolished and relocated to isolated Fascist new towns at the periphery of the city. The objective of these dislocations, suspended by the outbreak of war, was to transform Rome into a setting of state grandeur. Criticism of this policy of *sventramento* (literally; disemboweling) of the city was answered with claims that Rome is a place of the living and not a museum. Yet, removal of population and buildings showed this to be a contradictory retort. The silence of growing emptiness, added to dissociation of monuments from a living city, would have, if completed, rendered the city a museum of precious gallery pieces. Such is the fate of the Mausoleum of Augustus.

Demolition of the surrounding quarter began 22 October 1934, in part to open celebrations of the twelfth anniversary of the Fascist takeover (28 October 1922). The last concert in the auditorium was held on 13 May 1936. Demolition work was complete 23 September 1937, in time for celebrations commemorating the 2,000th anniversary of the birth of Augustus, all intended to associate the birth of the first Roman emperor with the birth of Fascist rule in Italy. These celebrations came just months after the conquest of Ethiopia and the proclamation of the Italian empire which occurred on 9 May 1936. By 1940 the Mausoleum was located in a bland piazza surrounded by stiff Fascist buildings. The whole complex, including Mausoleum, bus turnaround, new construction, and Altar of Augustan Peace encased in its Fascist jewel box, has been made an urban space of such peculiar banality that the great exhumed monument is little visited except by the buses that circle it and those who dump garbage around it, or sleep by it. When plans were made to isolate the Mausoleum none of the archeologists had considered that the street level from Augustan times would be considerably lower than that of Fascist times. This oversight has left the uncovered monument partially below street level resting within a ditch. The standards of archeological practice for the whole endeavor are considered to have been exceptionally low, leading some to remark that it is as if no archeological work and documentation had actually occurred at the site.

The indiscriminate demolition of the existing city (particularly those sections constructed between the fall of the Roman empire and

the Renaissance), the shoddiness of the archeological work, and the construction of single note buildings at the Mausoleum of Augustus site emphasize the contradictory nature of Fascist explanation of itself as linked to the ancient past of Rome. Fascist demolition, archeology, and building in Rome was pursued single-mindedly with an all or nothing approach representing a rigid, distorting ideology, absent of any thought of the consequences of its actions—all in the name of tradition. The results reveal that motivation for the project was a show of absolute and abstract will on the part of the regime demonstrated by its ability to subjugate history, memory, and time to its immediate desire.²⁴

The procedures employed at the Mausoleum of Augustus site were either applied or intended for application elsewhere but not carried out. The program to demolish great swaths of Rome with no regard for the people displaced or the constructions canceled out from the collective field of experience is outlined by Mussolini in the following:

You will continue to free the trunk of the great oak from everything that still clutters it. You will create spaces around the Theater of Marcellus, the Capitol, the Pantheon. Everything that has grown up around these buildings during the centuries of decadence must be removed. Within five years the mass of the Pantheon must be visible from the Piazza Colonna through a large space. You will also free from parasitic and profane architectural accretions the majestic temples of Christian Rome. The millenary monuments of our history must loom larger in requisite isolation.²⁵

VIA DELLA CONCILIAZIONE

A second historical model, after Augustus, that influenced Mussolini was Garibaldi the popular hero of Italian unification who reclaimed Rome as capital of Italy. Although Mussolini shared little with Garibaldi beyond the desire for a resurgent nation, it was necessary for him to locate Fascism on a line of continuity extending from Antiquity to the present, skipping the medieval. Because re-unification did not fulfill its promises, it was appropriated as a disembodied event and unfinished project. A further reason for this is that Garibaldi was a republican who supported a parliamentary government, which Mussolini vehemently opposed and Fascism replaced. Therefore, it is the figure of Garibaldi *out of context*, and an abstract notion of *Risorgimento* that Mussolini utilized for the purposes of his regime. The *Risorgimento*, because it was republican and unfinished, did not provide models for the physical embodiment of Fascism. In fact, some buildings constructed after unification were demolished because they were considered examples of post-Antique and pre-Fascist decadence.²⁶

One of the achievements of the *Risorgimento* was to end temporal powers for the pope in Italy. Mussolini betrayed this achievement of re-unification (believed to have been necessary for the establishment of republican institutions) in his expedient reconciliation between church and state.²⁷ This further example of the distance between Garibaldi and Mussolini has been made manifest at the Via Della Conciliazione.

The Via Della Conciliazione is a straight road that runs from near the Tiber River to near the edge of Bernini's Colonnades. The street is set upon the site of a demolished residential quarter and was intended to celebrate the concordant of 1929 between the Fascist state and the Vatican. This agreement gave the Vatican extra-territoriality that is still honored. The new street entailed demolition and construction, requiring the displacement of inhabitants to the periphery. Demolition began in 1937, it was suspended during the war, and completed between 1945 and 1950. It is a monumental way with a broad central artery, a sidewalk area and two smaller side roads, one on either side, flanked by unremarkable Fascist buildings and some fine preexisting structures. The most distinguishing feature of the road are the peculiar combination obelisk/lampposts that

line the way. Saddest of all is deprivation of the earlier experience of emerging from the tight streets of the demolished quarter into the release provided by the embracing arms of Bernini's Piazza San Pietro, set before the Basilica that is surmounted by Michelangelo's inspiring dome.

Although said to commemorate establishment of better relations between church and state, the Via Della Conciliazione appears intended to make clear to all who move along it toward San Pietro that the way to the church is at the pleasure of the state. Although the basilica is visible from further away than previously, this visual accessibility serves the state in its appropriation of the church within its physical domain. Whereas the colonnaded arms of Bernini's Piazza embrace the visitor, gathering him in, providing him with comfort, and space for reflection, while protecting him from rain and extreme sun, the Via della Conciliazione is an uncomfortable place emphasizing individual vulnerability and existence at the pleasure of the state. This is communicated by the lack of protection, emotional and physical, provided by the street. It is hot and polluted with no shelter from the elements, and it is often clogged with traffic; when not, it is desolate. The site shares with Fascist works, generally, an insensitivity to the human body and mind, existing surroundings, history and the value of experience and memory.²⁸

CONCLUSION

The Vicolo della Moretta site is included here because its demolition was left incomplete. What remains was saved by Italy's declaration of war. This site was not to be demolished for archeological purposes but rather for the purposes of traffic. It was to become an artery connecting a major road nearby (that had been cut through the historic center of Rome not long after re-unification) with a bridge crossing the Tiber River. The site contains partially demolished buildings, including a church that testify to the destructive force of the Fascist regime, wielded in its attempt to make the city in its image. This site is less desolate than those previously discussed, because it has remained only partially demolished and cleared. What continues to exist ties it tenuously to the city before Fascism, yet it is also no longer a part of the accumulating city from which it has been in part separated — it stands in a time between — a record of obsession with speed, movement, industry and social theories of mass manipulation, then still not revealed as inimical to individual and group experience and to community. The excesses of those days make decision more difficult nowadays, and that is why the Vicolo della Moretta remains neither demolished nor rebuilt — it stands as a testament to a kind of cultural purgatory. On the one hand, dreams of order have now been shown to be potentially dangerous and destructive. On the other, life without such dreams tends toward chaos and poverty of meaning.

What Mussolini did to the city he supposedly loved, but actually mystified, was akin to a severe blow to the collective head. Memory of the place gone is not intact, but even in the emptiness, traces remain, enough so, as to bring about melancholy in remembrance of things erased. Yet, standing in those places, it feels as if the absent presence of those old locations is still there somehow, and that is where the longing begins, and where the anger starts. Those empty spaces are like lost or vanishing memories; they are clearly no longer a part of the City's accreting and unfolding history — these absent parts were *surgically* removed. The anger is at the destruction of those parts of the City that would have given it cohesion. Rome is part of cultural memory and Mussolini tampered with it. In acknowledging this, there comes a feeling of terrible betrayal, helplessness, disorientation, and finally frustration — is this what amnesia feels like?

NOTES

¹ I use the term "cultural memory" instead of "collective memory" because the latter implies something universal held in common by *all*, akin to the term "collective unconscious," on the other

hand, the former implies, I believe, something situational and communal that is place bound and can apply to members of a particular society without applying to all people. Additionally, cultural memory allows for, I think, the possibility of partial agreement or belief whereas collective memory seems more a matter of species inheritance.

² "[S]ocial peace at home and respect abroad [as apparently secured by Mussolini's regime] were agreeable novelties to politically conscious Italians previously accustomed to social uncertainty and international humiliation. This widespread if largely passive acceptance of the regime during the early 1930s has inspired the leading Italian historian of fascism, Renzo De Felice, to call these the 'years of consensus'." Martin Blinkhorn, *Mussolini and Fascist Italy* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 39.

³ For an outline of Italian Fascist mythology, see the statement that originally appeared in the fourteenth volume of the *Enciclopedia Italiana*. It is an official presentation of Fascist Doctrine credited to Mussolini but written in part by philosopher Giovanni Gentile. The document was officially presented by Mussolini during June 1932. It is included on in William S. Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1964), pp. 146-153.

⁴ The following were especially useful for an overview of Italian Fascism (with the exception of its material culture): 1) Barzini does a fine job of locating Mussolini and Fascism within the broader context of Italian history, Luigi Barzini, *The Italians* (New York: Atheneum, 1964); 2) Blinkhorn summarizes the pre-history of Italian Fascism (from 1870) until its fall (1945) and includes a succinct interpretation of the movement, Martin Blinkhorn, *Mussolini and Fascist Italy* (London: Routledge, 1994); 3) Cunsolo's book does as its title says, charting a path beginning with the ethnic and linguistic background of the peoples occupying the peninsula known as "Italy" and who are called "Italian", Ronald S. Cunsolo, *Italian Nationalism: From Its Origins to World War II* (Florida: Krieger, 1990); 3) Halperin charts the rise of Mussolini from obscurity through his dictatorship to his fall, the emphasis of the book is on Fascism being in fact *Mussolinianism*, S. William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964).

⁵ Examples include the former Penn Station in New York, or the former community on the present site of the Boston City Hall, or the demolished district that once occupied the present Independence Mall in Philadelphia, among others. Each of these State Side examples share striking characteristics with the three sites I've selected from Rome. What unifies these three examples is that they each entailed the demolition of urban fabric that, in part, defined the city. Each site was cleared for ideological reasons and was replaced by constructions that represent that ideology. These examples are useful in that it is too easy to imagine that that which occurred under Fascism is indicative of behavior somehow more nefarious than takes place in cities all over the world.

⁶ For an interesting recognition of the significance of buildings for man see Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), pp. 239-240.

⁷ For an interesting and relevant discussion of two cases made up in part, or in whole, of ideological expressions of archeology, demolition, and construction see Peter Van Der Veer, "Ayodya and Somnath: Eternal Shrines, Contested Histories" *Social research* 59/1 (Spring 1992), pp. 85-109.

⁸ For a discussion of the emotional charge that the environment carries see Joseph Rykwert, "The Sitting Position—A Question of Method (1958)", *The Necessity of Artifice* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), p. 32.

⁹ Charles Rycroft *A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 102.

¹⁰ For Freud's discussion of *The Eternal City* from its earliest times to its present remains see Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 1961), pp. 17-19.

- ¹¹ Charles Rycroft, "Symbolism and Biological Destiny," *Rycroft on Analysis and Creativity* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), p. 122. For additional discussions in this vein see also, Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 1961), p. 43; Bruno Bettelheim, "Mental Health and Urban Design" (1971), *Surviving: And Other Essays* (New York: Vintage, 1980), p. 220, and Joseph Rykwert, "One Way of Thinking about a House (1974)," *Necessity of Artifice* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), p. 86.
- ¹² Joseph Rykwert "The Sitting Position — A Question of Method (1958)," *The Necessity of Artifice* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), p. 31. See also Aldo Rossi who addresses the same in a somewhat formalist manner, Aldo Rossi *The Architecture of the City*, Trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984), p. 131. On the topic of architecture and memory, see also John Ruskin (1819-1900), "The Lamp of Memory" in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1880) (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1989), pp. 176-198.
- ¹³ When Mussolini came to power he was mostly loved, once he had plunged Italy into the Second World War, for which the country was not ready, he began to slip from popularity. When he became a serious liability for the survival of the nation he was voted out of power. At this moment wild expressions of anti-Fascism erupted (1943) concluding two years later with Mussolini's execution and the defiling of his corpse.
- ¹⁴ Halperin writes: "Mussolini wanted power. This craving was a constant in a career marked by a succession of about faces... His character like his career, abounded in contradictions... [L]ate in his life he became so sure of his own infallibility that he rarely heeded the counsel of others." S. William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), pp. 3-4; Roger Absalom writes: "Mussolini's trajectory from maximalist Socialism to right-wing totalitarianism was no more than the natural progression of a strong, if erratic, personality able to follow and exploit the deep trends of an imperfectly modernised nation-state." Roger Absalom, *Italy Since 1800: A Nation in the Balance?* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 110-111.
- ¹⁵ Halperin writes: "Then [c. 1909] and throughout the rest of his life, he [Mussolini] viewed the masses with ill-concealed contempt; in his eyes they were putty, to be shaped at will by a purposeful elite." S. William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 20; Denis Mack Smith writes: "Where he [Mussolini] seldom went wrong was as a propagandist communicating with the masses... Mussolini spent a great deal of time trying to mould popular beliefs, because he had discovered that he had the capacity for making his listeners believe anything he liked. He was by training and profession a journalist, and through editorship of several newspapers had first— as he himself put it— felt the pulse of the Italian people. No sooner had he succeeded in identifying an audience through his leading articles, than he proceeded to them as a lever for attaining political power... [I]t can be claimed that journalism and public relations were the most essential of all professional activities under fascism." Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini's Roman Empire* (New York: Viking Press, 1975), pp. vii- viii. And, Mussolini as *primal father* "In the interests of hierarchy and mass integration, Nationalists, as well as Fascists, publicized Mussolini as the personification of the leadership principle essential to a sound state and a well-ordered society." Ronald S. Cunsolo *Italian Nationalism: from Its Origin to World War II* (Florida: Krieger, 1990), p. 140.
- ¹⁶ Halperin writes: "Panegyrics virtually deifying Mussolini appeared constantly... Fascism itself was depicted as a marvelously fertile civilization... From every point of view— spiritual, political, or socio-economic— it surpassed such earlier and contemporary systems as liberalism, socialism, and democracy; to it alone belonged the future." S. William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 47. Also, Blinkhorn writes: "The Mussolini cult with its liturgical slogans— 'Mussolini is always right', 'Believe, Obey, Fight!' — was inescapable.", Martin Blinkhorn, *Mussolini and Italy* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 37. And Halperin again, writes "His [Mussolini's] fierce antipathy to Catholicism, the religion of the overwhelming majority of Italians, was shared by many of the men around him. Complete with rites that accompanied its adherents to the grave, and claiming not just the citizen but the whole man, Mussolini's fascism insisted that it alone was the "true" church. It thus loomed as the natural adversary of the Roman church. The Papacy for its part disliked the glorification of the nation and the concept of the all-embracing, totalitarian, omnipotent state that occupied so large a place in the Fascist ideology." S. William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 65
- ¹⁷ Bondenella writes: "As Mussolini's political power and skill as a propagandist grew... the ancient Roman connotation of the word *fascio* would become increasingly useful to him. And the symbolic power of the word gave to the Fascist party its permanent identification and character— a revolutionary group with antecedents in ancient Rome." Peter E. Bondenella, *The Eternal City: Roman Images in the Modern World* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1987), p. 175.
- ¹⁸ See the many documents reproduced at the back of R. Cunsolo, *Italian Nationalism* (Florida: Krieger, 1990), pp. 167-261, for evidence of this as it developed between the 19th and 20th centuries.
- ¹⁹ Halperin describes Mussolini/Fascism as follows: "He (Mussolini) glorified the nation, but despised his own compatriots. he declared himself the friend of the many, but conferred favors on the few— those already entrenched in positions of economic power and influence. He proclaimed the advent of a new society, but left intact Italy's traditional class structure with all its inequities. He declared a corporative state, but prevented it from becoming more than a façade. He promised the country dazzling, unparalleled successes abroad, but authored some of its most humiliating disasters." S. William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), p. 4. Barzini suggests that duplicity ran in both directions; from leader to people and back again; regarding this he writes: "He [Mussolini] had deluded the people, that was his crime. But his fatal error was that he had not known that the people were also deluding him. They led him to the catastrophe which was the only way they knew to get rid of him." Luigi Barzini, "The Limits of Showmanship," *The Italians* (New York: Atheneum, 1964), p. 156. Mussolini was removed from power in 1943. He was arrested and then rescued by the Germans who installed him as puppet leader of the Fascist Republic of Salò in the north of Italy, he was finally executed on April 28, 1945.
- ²⁰ For a discussion of the Augustan city see John E. Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1988), pp. 48-66. For images of the Augustan Rome see Heinz Kähler, *The Art of Rome and Her Empire* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1965) pp. 41-81. For comparisons between Mussolini and Augustus see P. Bondenella, *The Eternal City: Roman Images in the Modern World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), pp. 173-206; Spiro Kostof, *The Third Rome: 1870-1950. Traffic and Glory* (Berkeley: University Art Museum, 1973), pp. 32, 35; and Christopher Hibbert, *Rome: A Biography of A City* (New York: Norton, 1985), pp. 34-36, for Augustus, and p. 290, for Mussolini and Augustus; and finally, A. Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), pp. 1-7.
- ²¹ Spiro Kostof, *The Third Rome: 1870- 1950. Traffic and Glory* (Berkeley: University Art Museum, 1973), p. 35, Mussolini quoted.

²² Ibid., p. 32.

²³ D. Manacorda and R. Tamassia, *Il piccone del regime* (Roma: Armando Curcio Editore, 1985), p. 70. (Mussolini quoted, translation mine).

²⁴ For discussions relevant to the Mausoleum of Augustus see: Manacorda & Tamassia, *Il piccone del regime* (Roma: Armando Curcio Editore, 1985), pp. 52- 77, 166- 205. Also see Antonio Cederna, *Mussolini Urbanista: Lo Sventramento di Roma negli anni del consenso* (Roma: Laterza, 1980), pp. v- xiv, 209- 218. See also Kostof, *The Third Rome: 1870- 1950. Traffic and Glory* (Berkeley: University Art Museum, 1973), pp. 29-39, 68-69.

²⁵ A. Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), p. 9.

²⁶ For a discussion of Mussolini's urbanistic efforts, including demolition, archeology and building, that supports my own interpretation of Fascism proposed in this paper see Daniele Manacorda and Renato Tamassia, "Sventramento e ideologie," *Il*

Piccone Del Regime (Armando Curcio Editore: Rome, 1985), esp. pp. 52- 77.

²⁷ Halperin notes: "To strengthen his dictatorship, Mussolini placed expediency before all else and courted the good will of the church... he realized that he could never crush the church even if he tried, whereas its enormous moral influence, if exerted on his behalf, would make his position impregnable." Halperin continues, quoting Mussolini, after the Church/State agreement, as saying: "The Fascist state fully revindicates its ethical character: it is Catholic, to be sure, but it is above all Fascist—exclusively, essentially Fascist." S. William Halperin, *Mussolini and Italian Fascism* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964), pp. 65-66, 70.

²⁸ For The Via della Conciliazione see: Kostof, *The Third Rome: 1870- 1950. Traffic and Glory* (Berkeley: University Art Museum, 1973), pp. 70- 71. And Cederna, *Mussolini Urbanista: Lo Sventramento di Roma negli anni del Consenso* (Roma: Laterza, 1980), pp. 233- 245.