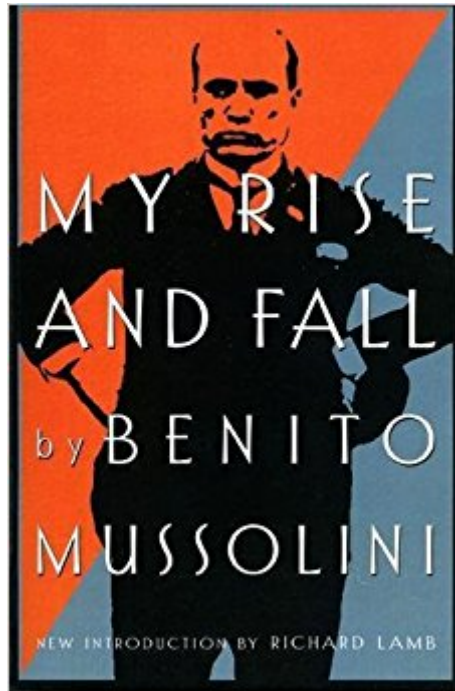




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My Rise And Fall



Synopsis

Here, for the first time in one volume, are two rare autobiographical works by Benito Mussolini (1883–1945), founder of Fascism and Italian dictator for twenty-one years. The first volume (published in English in 1928 as *My Autobiography*) describes Mussolini's youth, years as an agitator and journalist, experiences in World War I, the formation and revolutionary struggles of the Fascist Party, the March on Rome, and his early years in power. The second volume (published in English in 1948 as *The Fall of Mussolini*) was written during the brief period between his rescue by the Germans in September 1943 and his execution by Italian partisans in April 1945. Here the Duce recounts his last year in power and the coup d'état that deposed him. *My Rise and Fall* allows readers to view the dictator from two unique vantage points: Il Duce, eyes on the horizon, chin thrust forward, as he nears his political zenith; and Mussolini at his nadir, a desperate, powerless, sawdust Caesar, soon to be shot and hanged, head down, for all to scorn.

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Customer Reviews

Text: English (translation) Original Language: Italian

The Autobiography of Mussolini paints a vivid self justification by a reviled Fascist. Mussolini effectively portrays himself as a man of reason, reacting to the conditions of the day. He comes across as a man of bravery who cared about his country. Interestingly, he did not particularly like Hitler and would have preferred to work with the English. Readers of this book should realize that Mussolini was a skilled journalist and writer. He is powerful in the art of persuasion. For a balance

perspective, I would recommend reading "Mussolini and Fascism" at the same time as you read this book. It will keep the reader aware that this "reasonable man" was going out on weekends with the brown shirts beating up communists, unionists and anyone else he did not like. I do not choose to judge Mussolini (as about everyone has), but this book will provide the reader with an insight into the man's character and the reason why Fascism is very difficult to define. This book gets a higher rating than the other because it is better written.

This book is a combination of several primary sources related directly to Benito Mussolini. The first "My Rise" was Mussolini's account of how he came to power in Italy. It has its uses but the reader should be aware that it does omit several parts of his rise to power and it is worth keeping a good Mussolini biography close at hand to compare the account with. "My Fall" is a compilation of about a dozen articles penned by Mussolini about the time that occurred from the Grand Council meeting to the establishment of the Salò Republic. Overall these provide an interesting look into Mussolini's mind and a chance to understand what he considered important in his life. The accounts are well written and Mussolini does an excellent job of recounting the parts he feels are relevant. It is with an eye towards revisionist history but despite that the documents can still be useful. All of the preface and introductions are done by top notch historians and do an excellent job of putting things in perspective.

This book is actually a compilation of Benito Mussolini's memoirs set approximately 16 years apart: the first being dated c. 1928 only eight years after his Fascisti 'Black Shirts' had assumed power in Rome by plebescite; the second being dated c. 1944 when the Fascist party in Italy was able to retain power only with Germany's occupation and Mussolini's 'rescue' by German forces. When it comes to Mussolini, most modern readers immediately compare him to Adolf Hitler even though they understand little of what brought fascism to Italy or why Mussolini was so well received at home and abroad. Contrary to what many believe, Mussolini never had a very high opinion of Adolf Hitler and tried desperately to form a political pact with France/England with regards to Italy's future: Mussolini remained opposed to Hitler because Germany was unified with Italy's arch-enemy, Austria: Mussolini formed the ill-fated axis alliance only at the last minute when he was unable to get the concessions he wanted and Germany formally declared war against France in 1940. It would be his demise as Mussolini and his party would lose power in Italy by 1943 and, instead of the great empire they had promised to the Italian populace, Italy had become a vassal state occupied by the German military: Mussolini himself being nothing more than Hitler's puppet and mouthpiece. Thus,

through his memoirs, we can follow how he was a favorite defender of freedom against Boshevism in the 20s and 30s adored by the US and England, to becoming nothing more than Hitler's lapdog by 1943. This is a very important book where, by his own words, one can measure the man for who he was. Unlike Hitler's rambling anti-semitic diatribe in 'Mein Kampf', Mussolini's papers address purely political and social questions adding with his rather pompous flair that he and his Fascisti are an indispensable to the formation and prosperity of the state. He explains why he was motivated to act and describes the political environment he found himself in fighting the socialist, communist, and capitalist interests in Italy. His memoirs are not only interesting from a historical perspective, but also from a political one in that they provide a lot of insight as to the events that were responsible for the development of fascist doctrines in Europe in that period of time.

This is a wonderful book for anyone who is interested in fascism, and it's founder Benito musolini!

A very important piece of history

As an autobiography, you are already prepared for a biased version of events and that's certainly what you get here. But reading the history in diary form by the creator of fascism in his own words gives you a unique perspective as to his personality and inner thoughts. I found this book to be a must-have if you wish to understand Mussolini as a human being. He was completely vain and self-righteous at the height of his power, and yet became desperate during the last days of his regime. As with most deposed dictators, he could only blame everyone for everything that went wrong despite the fact that the real fault lies with no one but himself - particularly his decision to join the axis powers in the second world war. This is a great supplement to a historical understanding of "El Duche" and the rise of fascism in the early 20th century.

Interesting, in an odd way. Not a typical autobiography, more of a stream-of-consciousness recollection of specific events that defined his life choices.

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