



Mussolini: The Last 600 Days of IL Duce

By Ray Moseley

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In his last days, Mussolini, the tyrant, was in the grip of anger, shame, and depression. The German armed forces that had sustained his puppet government since its creation in September 1943 were being inexorably driven out of Italy, the frontiers of his Fascist republic were shrinking daily and Mussolini was aware that German military leaders were negotiating with the Allies behind his back in neutral Switzerland. Moseley's well-researched and highly engaging tome throws light on the last twenty months of the despot's life and culminates with the dramatic capture and execution of Mussolini (and his mistress Claretta Petacci) by partisans of the Italian resistance on April 28, 1945.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

With a lucid style and a well-paced narrative, Moseley chronicles how, while Hitler and Nazi Germany became more radical, Mussolini and Fascist Italy degenerated into chaos. Moseley, former chief European correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune* and author of a highly regarded biography of Mussolini's foreign minister and son-in-law, Galeazzo Ciano (*Mussolini's Shadow*), has written a welcome synthesis of the final months of the fascist regime, beginning in 1943. In doing so, he uncovers the venality, intrigue, corruption, treachery and barbarism of the Fascist and Nazi regimes. The day after the Allies invaded Sicily and made preparations for an invasion of the mainland while their planes were bombing Rome, Turin and Milan, Mussolini was deposed by King Victor Emmanuel III in a (for the time being) bloodless coup d'état. Moseley shows how Ciano was instrumental in this development and the tragic fate that awaited him. Mussolini is portrayed (accurately) as deflated, depressed and having come late to the realization that he had "ruined Italy." Moseley devotes chapters to the fate of the Roman Jews; the partisan underground; and wartime atrocities, (most of which are attributed to the Germans, thereby giving the false impression that Italian Fascists committed no war crimes). Moseley's telling of the theft of Mussolini's corpse and the return of a fragment of his brain reads like the plot of a bad horror film.

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Review

Moseley has a crack journalist's nose for the evocative quotation or the vivid fact that encapsulates a larger truth. (Thomas Simpson *Chicago Tribune*)

A welcome synthesis of the final months of the facist regime, beginning in 1943. He uncovers the venality, intrigue, corruption, treachery and barbarism of the Facist and Nazi regimes. (*Publishers Weekly*)

Moseley discusses in remarkable detail, but with great readability and a swift narrative pace, the last 15 months of Italy's war. (R. J. Stone, *The American Conservative*)

Has elements of melodrama, of swashbuckling adventure, of tragedy and of comic opera. (Ap)

...his life, so splendidly captured, by Mosely... (Mario Szichman *Goldsboro New-Argus*)

About the Author

Ray Moseley was the chief European correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* and in 1981 was runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize in international reporting. During four decades as a foreign correspondent, he spent five years in Rome and was also based in Moscow, London, Nairobi, Berlin, Belgrade, Cairo, and Brussels. He is author of the widely acclaimed *Mussolini's Shadow: The Double Life of Count Galeazzo Ciano*. He lives in England.

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