



# My Autobiography

*Benito Mussolini*

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**My Autobiography** Benito Mussolini  
Autobiography of Mussolini.

## My Autobiography Details

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Author : Benito Mussolini

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## Shaun Appleby says

Wrong edition.

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## TC says

This autobiography of Mussolini, written at the age of 45 some six years after he assumed power, is chock-a-block of minutia of the post-WWI Italian political scene, with many names and events now long forgotten, yet no doubt meaningful at the time to cementing his image as a decisive leader who ended the chaos of a discordant and weak democracy and "made the trains run on time." (The sycophantic forward by the then-US Ambassador to Italy is a great example of his cult of personality.) Despite it being called an autobiography, this really is more the story of his political life, with only a few moments at the beginning devoted to his childhood, and even then he discusses the politics of his parents. As such, then, it's more of a political treatise. The writing is crisp and strident and wholly unapologetic, exactly as you would expect.

Taking it out of the context of the things to come--such as his ignoble end being beaten to death and strung up by his legs by a crowd of the very communists and socialists he spends so much of this book lambasting--it's easy to see how people would be drawn to him and his clear vision for a strong Italy. Put into that context, though, I can't help wondering: "what's the real story behind these stories." (Of course he would say his opponents are just liars and exaggerators, but nearly a hundred years removed, history should act as clear-eyed judge, so maybe other books can answer that question for me.)

Unsurprisingly, there are only hints here at the oppressive side of Fascism, and he waves them away with rational-sounding justifications--the violence of the Black Shirts was really them just keeping the order that the weak democracy couldn't, fighting the violent anarchists; the shutting down of the opposition press was to rally the spirits of the Italian people and keep them from being depressed by discord; and so-forth. Yet despite his constant fist-shaking and chanting of the strength of Fascism for providing the best platform from which to grow a glorious Italian race, there is no real coherent political philosophy here. I'd hoped to better see the influence of the Italian Futurists, for example; but aside from Mussolini's love of aviation, I didn't. So I'm no clearer to understanding what Fascism was, really, other than a name for Mussolini's vision of how the country should be run. And maybe that's all it really was, and perhaps that explains why it died with him, unlike other forms of failed oppressive governments which still have adherents and sympathizers.

Still, it's fascinating to read, if you're at all interested in Twentieth Century history.

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