

Mussolini's Propaganda Abroad: Subversion in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, 1935-1940 (Studies in Intelligence)

By Manuela Williams

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This is the first major study in English of Fascist Italy’s overseas propaganda. Using rare Italian and French captured documents, this is also the first investigation into the relationship between Mussolini’s regime and Arab nationalist movements

This new account covers propaganda and subversive activities engineered by the Italian government in the Mediterranean and the Middle East from 1935 until 1940, when Italy entered the war. It assesses the nature of the challenge brought by the Fascist regime to British security and colonial interests in the region.

Fascist propaganda, in particular in the Arab Middle East, must be regarded as an expression of Mussolini’s foreign policy and his attempts to build an Italian empire that would stretch beyond the Mediterranean, gaining control over the exits, Gibraltar and Suez, which were in the hands of the British and the French.

The activities of individual agents and organizations are carefully reconstructed and analyzed to highlight the seemingly contradictory objectives of the Italian government: on the one hand, Rome was courting the Arab nationalist movements in Egypt and Palestine, which were seeking the support of external forces capable of providing political, financial and military backing needed to overthrow foreign rulers; on the other, the regime was promoting further territorial expansion in Africa. These aspects build into an excellent picture of this fascinating period of modern history.

This book will be of great interest to all students and scholars of politics, media, Italian history and propaganda.

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Editorial Review

About the Author
Manuela Williams is Lecturer in Modern European History at the University of Strathclyde. Her current research interests lay in the fields of propaganda and political communications, the history and politics of modern Italy, and the history of the Middle East.

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