**RUTH BEN-GHIAT**

**Departments of History and Italian Studies, New York University**

[**rb68@nyu.edu**](mailto:rb68@nyu.edu)**,** [**www.ruthbenghiat.com**](http://www.ruthbenghiat.com)**, @ruthbenghiat**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Professor of History and Italian Studies, New York University. Author. Commentator. Board and academic administrator experience. Historical Consultant for Film & Television (Pinocchio, Guillermo del Toro, 2022). Advisor, Protect Democracy. Publisher: [Lucid](https://lucid.substack.com/about?utm_source=menu-dropdown): A Newsletter about Threats to Democracy. Literary Agent: Sarah Burnes, The Gernert Co. Speaking Agent: Billy Hallock, CAA.

**FIELDS OF EXPERTISE**

Fascism; Authoritarianism and Democracy Protection; Propaganda; World War Two; Empire; Modern and Contemporary Europe and Italy; Historical Consulting for Film and Television.

**EDUCATION**

PhD, Comparative History, Brandeis University.

BA, History, *magna cum laude*, University of California, Los Angeles.

**GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS**, **AWARDS**

Perry World House Visiting Fellow, 2024-2025.

Franklin Henry King Stanford Distinguished Professor, University of Miami, September 2023.

Dan and Maggie Inouye Distinguished Chair of Democratic Ideals, University of Hawai'i, 2023.

Resident (Director's Invitation), American Academy in Rome, Spring 2022.

Institute for Advanced Study, Andrew W. Mellon Member,

School of Historical Studies, Spring 2020.

Edinburgh Gadda Prize for Best Book on 20th Century Italian Culture, 2019.

Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Award for Best Unpublished Manuscript in Italian Studies.

Modern Language Association, 2014 (for *Italian Fascism’s Empire Cinema)*.

University Research Challenge Fund Grant, NYU, 2013-2014.

Outstanding Service Award, Institute of International Education (for work with

Scholar Rescue Fund), 2013.

Modern Italian Studies Fellowship, Collegio Carlo Alberto, Turin, 2011-2012.

John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, 2004-2005.

National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, 2004-2005.

**APPOINTMENTS**

Franklin Henry King Stanford Distinguished Professor, University of Miami,

September 2023.

Dan and Maggie Inouye Distinguished Chair of Democratic Ideals,

University of Hawai'i, 2023.

Member, Mi Vecino Pro-Democracy Coalition, 2022-present.

Board of Advisors, Protect Democracy, 2017-present.

Board of Directors, World Mental Health Coalition, 2019-2021.

Visiting Scholar, Center for Media at Risk, Annenberg School of Communications,

University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2019.

### CONSULTING AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Hitler and the Nazis: Evil on Trial, Netflix (Joe Berlinger, 2024). Historical Consultant.

Pinocchio (Guillermo del Toro, 2022). Historical Consultant.

Story Partners, "What is Fascism" 2023.

### Advisor, House Select Jan. 6 Committee (two interviews and wrote a report), 2022.

### Member, Mi Vecino Pro-Democracy Coalition, 2022-present.

Advisor, Protect Democracy, 2017-present.

Board of Directors, World Mental Health Coalition, 2017-2021.

Consultant, Mother Ad Agency. Research and Concepts for Campaigns, 2014-2015.

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Authored Books**

*Strongmen: From Mussolini to the Present*

(New York, 2020; paperback, with new epilogue, 2021)

UK Edition: *Strongmen: How They Rise, Why They Succeed, How They Fall* (London, 2020).

*Italian Fascism’s Empire Cinema* (Bloomington, 2015). *Choice* Outstanding Academic

Title, 2015, Edinburgh Gadda Prize for 20th Century Italian Culture.

*Fascist Modernities: Italy, 1922-45* (Berkeley, 2001, 2004). Trans. *La cultura fascista*

(Bologna, 2000, 2004).

**Edited Books**

*Italian Mobilities,* co-edited with Stephanie Malia Hom (New York, 2015, 2019).

*Gli imperi: dall’antichità all’età contemporanea* (Bologna, 2009).

Editor, Italian section, *A Historical Companion to Postcolonial Literature,* general eds.

Prem Poddar et. al. (Edinburgh, 2008).

*Italian Colonialism,* co-edited with Mia Fuller (New York, 2005, 2008).

**Book Chapters**

“What is Fascism?” In Did It Happen Here? Perspectives on Fascism and America, ed. Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins (New York: Norton, 2024.)

“Epilogue,” Fascism in America, eds. Janet Ward and Gavriel Rosenfeld (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024.)

“Faschismus,” in Sprach Gewalt: Missbrauchte Wörter und andere politische

Kampfbegriffe, ed. David Ranan (Bonn: Dietz Verlag, 2021), 233-245.

“Five Faces of Fascism,” in Visualizing Fascism, eds. Geoff Eley and Julia Adeney

Thomas (Durham, 2020), 94-110.

“Narrating War in Italian Fascist Cinema,” in M. Mondini – M. Rospocher (eds.),

Narrating War. Perspectives from the XVI – XX centuries, (Berlin and Bologna, 2013), pp.249-268.

“A Lesser Evil? Italian Fascism in/and the Totalitarian Equation,” in The Lesser Evil:

Moral Approaches to Genocide Practices, eds. Helmut Dubiel and Gabriel Motzkin (New York, 2004), pp.137-153.

**OPINION PIECES AND ESSAYS**

**“**Tulsi Gabbard Fits Right Into Trump’s Vision for America,” New York Times, January 30, 2025.

“Trump’s elevation of Charles Kushner has eerie historical parallels,” MSNBC, December 6, 2024.

“Opinion: Authoritarianism and hatred are no match for a politics of love,” Los Angeles Times, September 17, 2024.

“Would Trump stop free and fair elections? Hitler and Mussolini’s paths could be a clue,” with Benjamin Carter Hett, Boulder Daily Camera, August 11, 2024.

“Trump can’t take a joke. Democrats need to use that,” MSNBC, August 7, 2024.

“Mussolini, Trump and What Assassination Attempts Really Do,”Politico, August 3, 2024.

“Opinion: Would Trump stop free and fair elections? Hitler and Mussolini’s paths could be a clue,” Los Angeles Times, Ruth Ben-Ghiat and Benjamin Carter Hett, July 31, 2024.

“The scariest thing dictators are doing now: Working together,”, The Washington Post, July 14, 2024.

“Denial about Donald Trump is deeper than ever,” MSNBC, May 26, 2024.

“Trump’s video referencing Nazi Germany isn’t exactly a surprise,” CNN, May 23, 2024.

“The Permanent Counterrevolution: On Politics and Government in Fascist America,” The New Republic, May 16, 2024.

"How Netanyahu is Following the Authoritarian Playbook," Haaretz, August 14, 2023.

"Trump's Plans for 2025 sound like a vengeful disaster," MSNBC, July 19, 2023.

"Before Trump or Orban, there was Italy's Berlusconi," CNN, June 13, 2023.

"Why Trump is so eager to run under indictment," MSNBC, March 7, 2023.

“Florida Becomes a Dangerous Laboratory of Autocracy,” Sun Sentinel, March 20, 2022.

“Putin Thinks He’s the Hero of Russia’s Story. He Couldn’t Be More Wrong,”

MSNBC, Feb 25, 2022.

"Ruth Ben-Ghiat on the danger of strongmen leaders and how to rein them in,"

The Economist, July 2, 2021.

“An American Authoritarian,” Atlantic, August 10, 2016.

**SELECTED RECENT INTERVIEWS**

**TELEVISION**

Isa Soares Tonight, CNN, March 19, 2025.

Nicolle Wallace, MSNBC, December 30, 2024

PBS Newshour, October 28, 2024.

Chris Hayes, MSNBC, October 25, 2024.

PBS Newshour, October 14, 2024.

Ayman Mohyeldin, MSNBC, September 22, 2024.

Nicolle Wallace, MSNBC, August 14, 2024.

Nicolle Wallace, MSNBC, July 5, 2024.

Katie Phang, MSNBC, July 3, 2024.

Ali Velshi, MSNBC, June 29, 2024.

Nicolle Wallace, MSNBC, June 28, 2024.

Becky Anderson, CNN International, June 14, 2024.

Jim Sciutto, CNN, June 10, 2024.

Joy Reid, MSNBC, June 6, 2024.

Nicolle Wallace, MSNBC, June 6, 2024.

Symone Sanders, MSNBC, June 2, 2024.

Ali Velshi, MSNBC, June 1, 2024.

Charles Coleman Jr., MSNBC, May 25, 2024.

Jim Acosta, CNN, April 1, 2024.

Jonathan Capehart, MSNBC, March 31, 2024.

Ali Velshi, MSNBC, March 31, 2024.

Ayman Mohyeldin, MSNBC, March 30, 2024.

Alisyn Camerota, CNN, March 30, 2024.

Ari Melber, MSNBC, March 28, 2024.

Jim Acosta, CNN, March 20, 2024.

**RADIO & PODCASTS**

“Trump’s 100 Days, with Ruth Ben-Ghiat,” The Prospect Podcast, April 29, 2025.

“How Donald Trump’s Authoritarianism is Creating Instability Around the World,” Katie Couric Media, April 10, 2025.

History Professor Answers Dictator Questions | Tech Support , WIRED, March 18, 2025.

The Tent Podcast, Center for American Progress, “Ruth Ben-Ghiat on Rising Authoritarianism,” January 23, 2025.

The Back Room with Andy Ostroy Podcast, October 19, 2024.

Strict Scrutiny, “Project 2025 Will Turn the Courts and the Department of Justice Into Trump’s Personal Weapons,” August 26, 2024.

“Ruth Ben-Ghiat: Understanding autocracy,” You Decide with Errol Louis, August 8, 2024.

The Daily Blast with Greg Sargent, “Trump’s Mental State Suddenly Takes a Darker Turn: “I’ve Gotten Worse,” July 29, 2024.

PoliticsGirl, July 17th, 2024.

Fast Politics with Molly Jong-Fast, July 10, 2024.

Here and Now, NPR, July 3, 2024.

On Point, NPR, June 5, 2024.

Pivot, Kara Swisher and Scott Galloway, April 9, 2024.

The Bulwark Podcast, April 4, 2024.

The Just Security Podcast, “[Attack from Within: How Disinformation is Sabotaging America](https://www.sevenstories.com/books/4577-attack-from-within)”, March 7, 2024.

“Is Donald Trump a Fascist?”, WDET, February 23, 2024.

“Masochism and Ritual Humiliation”, The Lincoln Project, February 4, 2024.

The Back Room with Andy Ostroy Podcast, January 28, 2024.

Here and Now, NPR, January 22, 2024.

All Things Considered, NPR, January 4, 2024.

The Influence Continuum with Dr. Steven Hassan, December 11, 2023.

Here and Now, NPR, December 11, 2023.

Press Play, KCRW, November 22, 2023.

On Point, NPR, October 5, 2023.

The Lincoln Project Podcast, September 6, 2023.

The New Abnormal Podcast, September 5, 2023.

Laura Coates Show, Sirius XM Progress, Aug 25, 2023.

Defending Democracy with Malcolm Turnbull, August 15, 2023.

### RECENT LECTURES

“Authoritarianism and How to Defend Against It,” World Council of United Methodist Bishops, Charlotte, NC, April 24, 2024.

“What Fuels Far-Right Populism?” Columbia University, April 17, 2024.

“Strongmen and the Assault on Democracy,” Arizona State University, May 2, 2024.

Vote Vets Florida, November 11, 2023.

Amerikahaus, Munich, October 19, 2022.

American Academy in Berlin, October 20, 2022.

Festival della Storia, Forli, October 27-28, 2022.

Festival of Dangerous Ideas, Sydney, September 17-18, 2022.

**LANGUAGES**

English, native; Italian, excellent; French, very good; Spanish (speaking, fair;

reading, excellent); Portuguese, good reading knowledge.