



# **Mussolini and his Generals: The Armed Forces and Fascist Foreign Policy, 1922-1940 (Cambridge Military Histories)**

*John Gooch*

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This is the first authoritative study of the Italian armed forces and the relationship between the military and foreign policies of Fascist Italy from Mussolini's rise to power in 1922 to the catastrophic defeat of 1940. Using extensive new research, John Gooch explores the nature and development of the three armed forces, their relationships with Mussolini and the impact of his policies and command, the development of operational and strategic thought, and the deployment and use of force in Libya, Abyssinia and Spain. He emphasizes Mussolini's long-term expansionist goals and explains how he responded to the structural pressures of the international system and the contingent pressures of events. This compelling account shows that while Mussolini bore ultimate responsibility for Italy's fateful entry into the Second World War, his generals and admirals bore a share of the blame for defeat through policies that all too often rested on irrationality and incompetence.

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