



Cathedral of Light, Nuremberg, Germany, 1936

Tribute in Light, New York City, 2013

## **ARCH 497: "FASCIST" ARCHITECTURE, THEN AND NOW** **DENISE COSTANZO** **SPRING 2019**

What is "Fascist" architecture? Technically, this term describes building campaigns that served regimes that ruled Italy from 1922-1943, Germany from 1933-1945, and Spain from 1939-1975. But as the label "fascist" is used more often, and more broadly, to describe movements focused on nationalism, cultural unity, and authoritarian control, it raises an important question: can architecture be "fascist"? If so, what does this mean: design, politics, or a specific relationship between them?

The year 2019 marks the centennial of Mussolini's Fascist Manifesto of 1919 ("Il manifesto dei fasci del combattimento"). This seminar will observe this problematic anniversary by investigating the past century's architecture through a fascist lens: what have been the design, intellectual, professional, and political legacies of a movement that aestheticized modern power in built form? Where and how is architecture still following a "fascist" template?

Together, the class will explore how different fascist regimes deployed historicist and modernist architecture alike as a political tool. We will then trace the fate and reception of these buildings and their architects after fascism's (incomplete?) defeat in 1945. Which issues and themes would persist into the era of the Cold War, de-colonialization and neoliberalism? Which ones still echo through contemporary practice? Students will independently investigate recent cases in global practice that qualify as "neo-fascist" in varying ways, and use them to question how architecture engages with power today.