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The Triumph of the Duce?; 8 Electing a New People 1936-40; The Duce's Cultural Revolution; Economic Problems; Race and Religion; The Ciano Cabinet; A Warrior Race?; 9 The Approach of War 1936-40; The Spanish Civil War and the Axis; 1938: The Anschluss and Easter; From Munich to the Pact of Steel 1938-9; Keeping Out of War: Summer 1939; Joining After All: Spring 1940; Conclusion; 10 The Duce at War 1940-3; Italy's Campaigns; The Duce as War Leader; Arms and the Man; Morale and the Home Front; Decline and Fall of a Roman Empire  
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Sommario/riassunto

Benito Mussolini was a brilliant Socialist journalist who in 1914 declared war, put himself at the head of the anti-Socialist movement in Italy, manoeuvred himself into power by 1933 and ruled the country until overthrown in 1943. He was a dynamic but insecure personality, who appeared dictatorial but always had to share power with the military and bureaucratic establishment. Mussolini founded an Empire in Africa and tried to 'make Italians' in his own heroic, war like image, but in fact failed to even control his own family! In June 1940, when France fell, he could not resist joining in the Second World War on the German side, although Italy was not equipped for serious fighting. His rule ended in Military disaster and personal humiliation. This new biography focuses both on Mussolini's personality and on the way he exercised power, and regards these two issues as closely linked. It sees him as a man with all the talents needed to attain power but few of those needed to exercise it well. This book primarily focuses on how Mussolini had absolutely the wrong personality for a successful political leader.

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