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Researching Ideologies of Race in Historiographical Narratives of Rome

I set out to explore potential relationships (similarities and differences) between Nazi ideology during the Third Reich and American neo-Nazi ideology concerning ancient Rome. Through my research, utilizing a mix of JSTOR, OBIS, requesting primary source translations from storage, ILLs, OhioLinks, Internet Archive's Web Archive, and the physical desktop computers in Mary Church Terrell library, I explored how important ideological precursors to Nazi racial ideology, some influential Nazi ideology, and neo-Nazi websites all used Rome as an element in the narrative they wove of societies in decline due to 'racial degeneration.'

I began with a survey of related literature which broadly covered the connection between Classics and the Third Reich. Two of my most important secondary sources while I explored various angles of the appropriation of Classics by the Third Reich and its ideological predecessors was an interlibrary loan of *Brill's Companion to the Classics, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany* and an OhioLink of *The Uses and Abuses of Antiquity*. The essays within both gave a great introduction to various fascists' appropriations of ancient antiquity, pointed me towards various scholars' other works, and aided me in specifically discovering that I was interested in conceptions of race and Rome. Additionally, amidst my initial survey, I found Christopher Krebs's *A Most Dangerous Book* via OBIS, which specifically addressed ideas of race and Rome and solidified my conviction that the connection between the Third Reich's racial ideology and appropriations of ancient Rome were, in fact, significant.

The most challenging aspect of my research concerned my use of neo-Nazi and white supremacist websites to compare and contrast with ideologues of or influential to the Third Reich. After exploring secondary sources found through OBIS, there was simply not enough information about American neo-Nazis' beliefs about Rome. The interviews conducted in the books about American neo-Nazis and white supremacists that I surveyed were important research, but as my research question was specific in the scope of American white extremism, it simply isn't the focus of these books. Since contacting neo-Nazis to interview them posed significant safety concerns and since the subject matter I aimed to explore was so specific, websites, with all their flaws, were the primary sources most accessible to me as a researcher. Although a treasure-trove for one researching fascism, they were not without their own problems. Primarily, I needed a way to safeguard any identifying information from these sites and avoid bringing them traffic and ad revenue as much as possible. In order to keep my information secure, I utilized the desktop computers in the Mary Church Terrell Library to use the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine to archive a total of 49 neo-Nazi articles. This allowed me to revisit them without endangering identifiable information about myself or giving the websites repeated traffic from my research.

As I began to dig deeper into thinkers influential to neo-Nazis as well as to Nazis, one of my best sources was Michael Biddiss's article "History as Destiny: Gobineau, H. S. Chamberlain and Spengler," which I found via JSTOR. This was the only source I found that specifically addressed all three of these ideologues, and it was crucial in my decision to focus on these figures specifically. I not only agreed with Biddiss's assessment of their influence but also saw elements of their ideologies reflected in the articles I read by American neo-Nazis. After I settled

on focusing my research on Gobineau, H. S. Chamberlain and Spengler, I was then able to do additional research about each racist ideologue individually and compare their narrative and meaning of Rome's 'decline and fall' both each other and to neo-Nazi articles I found. The Mary Church Terrell library was able to provide many of the sources I needed in my research of their works, such as the multi-volume set of Chamberlain's *Grundlagen des XIX Jahrhunderts (The Foundations of the Twentieth Century)* in translation which I found via OBIS and requested from storage. In utilizing this diverse set of sources from various research tools, I hope to have synthesized a paper which brings a new perspective to studies of Classical reception, European intellectual history, and fascism studies.