Alice Heaps
The last of Mussolini’s main aims by which we can judge the success or failure of his foreign policies is his desire to establish an empire and spread Fascism (preferably by gaining dominance in the Balkans/Mediterranean. Abyssinia as mentioned above could be used as an example of where Mussolini succeeded in establishing an empire a little further as he succeeded for a time to occupy the country and had his troops and people there to forward this empire and spread Fascism. This would be a clear success if, as mentioned above, the country hadn’t been given back to its original leadership by the British eventually anyway, showing Mussolini’s success to, again, be temporary. Another example that could be used in reference to establishing an Empire would be the Spanish Civil War in 1936. Mussolini helped the rebels led by General Franco to overthrow their leader alongside Germany and while this was considered a success as Germany would hopefully allow Italy to further establish themselves as an empire, the civil war did not turn out how Mussolini hoped it would although Franco was triumphant – tensions were increased with Britain and France meaning that Italy’s previously ongoing and undecided approach to which power he supported was now at an end and he became more reliant on Germany which although he believed it would help get permission to establish himself in other places that Britain and France would not, it actually meant that he was more restricted as he became essentially Hitler’s puppet. In this respect it seems that Mussolini did not manage to establish and empire and by joining with Hitler he would not have been able to spread Fascism – he had failed to achieve this aim and so it seems his policies were a failure.

Overall it seems that although Mussolini may have had a few minor successes on his main foreign policies, these were only temporary and led to bigger failures for Italy and Mussolini himself. Not being able to build national prestige, increase domestic morale, establish an empire and spread Fascism to any stable or permanent level we can see Mussolini’s obvious mistakes. Through clearly failing to meet his three main aims despite minor, temporary successes, we can judge that Mussolini’s foreign policy was a failure and as these successes led to failures eventually we can say that his policies were a complete failure.