

# Rise of Fascism in Europe

## Fascism

- Origins
  - Grew out of World War I
    - Dissatisfied
  - Wanted to undo Treaty of Versailles
- Ideology
  - Reflected the values of the middle class
  - No single ideology
  - Middle class turning to the right
    - Conservative
  - No parliamentary rule
    - Dictatorships
  - Strong state
    - Charismatic leader
      - Cult of personality
  - Big business
    - Private property protected
    - Capitalistic
  - Individual served the state
  - Highly nationalistic
    - State more important than social/economic problems
  - Expanding borders
  - Use of violence
- Comparisons to communism
  - Similarities
    - Use of propaganda
    - Blame outsiders
    - One party
    - **Police State**
      - Censorship
      - Control of Education
      - Against religion
      - Secret police
    - Youth movements
  - Differences
    - Allowed private property
    - Racism
    - Role of class
      - Communist pushing for classless society
      - Fascism pushing for powerful business



## Totalitarianism

- Complete and total control of a country by one party
  - Germany - Nazis
  - Russia - Communists
  - Italy - Fascists
- Heavily Nationalistic
  - Used Propaganda to spread ideas
  - Unified under single, all powerful (normally very charismatic) leader

## Eugenics

- Belief that selective breeding could improve the general characteristics of a nation
  - o Popular in the US and Europe in 1920s and 1930s
  - o Tried using science to prove racial superiority
  - o Used as measure of social planning and nationalism
  - o Breed out “impurities”

## Italian Fascism

- Italy’s problems had been intensified by World War I
  - o High cost of the war
    - 148 billion lire
      - Twice the government expenditures from before the war
    - o 1861-1913
  - o Cost 700,000 lives
- Felt cheated by the Allies
  - o Did not get all the land they were promised by the Treaty of London
    - Got the South Tyrol and Trieste
    - Were refused Fiume and Dalmatia
      - Territories not Italian enough
- Inflation hurt the middle class
- Demobilized soldiers were unemployed
- Politicians only cared about staying in power

## Benito Mussolini

- Originally was a socialist
  - o Editor of the socialist paper *Avanti*
  - o Gradually became an interventionist and wanted to participate in World War I
    - expelled from the party
- Started his own political group **Fascio di Combattimento**
  - o Failed to win any seats in the parliament
    - Parliament split between the socialists (largest party), liberals, and popolari (Christian Democrats)
      - Other parties were so split that the government was not effective
  - o Socialists called for “revolution” and strikes in both industry and agriculture
    - Scared the middle and upper classes
      - “Red Scare”
      - Class warfare
  - o Mussolini became a “rightist”
    - Anti-communist, anti-strike, nationalistic, willing to use physical force
      - **Squadristi**- Mussolini’s gang that went around and attacked socialist offices and newspapers, and strikers
- Temporarily allied with the liberal Prime Minister Giovanni Giolitti
  - o Giolitti naively expected to “use” Mussolini to overpower the socialists
  - o Alliance gave Mussolini “respectability” and a tolerance of the squadristi
- Use of force
  - o ☑ 1921 Mussolini had 200,000 squadristi (veterans and “students”) who he dressed in **black shirts**.
    - They deliberately created disorder to create a fear of “disorder”
    - Squadristi were seen as “bringers of order” by panic stricken middle/upper classes
- October of 1922 Mussolini demanded control of the



## government

- Or he would march on Rome
- Victor Emmanuel III made Mussolini Prime Minister
  - Next day: black shirts marched into Rome
    - Created a myth that the Fascists took power by armed insurrection after a civil war
      - In reality Mussolini just having a victory parade in Rome
- Mussolini gains Power
  - At first Fascists had only a few seats in parliament
    - Moved slowly to consolidate power
  - Split in Fascists supporters
    - Rural fascists wanted to seize complete power
    - Industrial, church, and landowning fascists followed Mussolini because they wanted order
  - New elections
    - 1923 Acerbo Law- any party that got 25% of the votes got 2/3 seats in Parliament
      - De-facto rule of the country
      - April 1924 Fascists won 65% of the vote
        - Lots of fraud and force and intimidation

## Consolidated power

- Mussolini wanted to intimidate the opposition
  - Giacomo Matteotti (socialist)
    - Assassinated
    - People figured Mussolini was behind the assassination
      - Would therefore have to quit
    - Mussolini took responsibility for the violence of the Fascists
      - Said he would make Italy peaceful, "by force if necessary"
- 1926 New laws that made Italy a Fascists dictatorship
  - Controlled on the press
    - Suspended publications that did not respect the Church, the king, and the state
  - Prime Minister was officially defined as the head of state
    - Replaced the king
    - Could rule by decree
      - No need for parliament
  - Police can arrest and imprison anyone for political or non-political crimes
    - No due process
  - Government had to ability to dissolve any political or cultural group it did not like
    - All anti-Fascist political parties were outlawed
    - Authorized secret police
- Limits of Fascist power
  - Education was still not entirely under state control
    - There were youth organizations
      - Were not so appealing
  - Attempt to make everyone go to public schools
    - The upper and middle classes still sent their children to private schools
  - Military and monarchy not under Fascist control
  - Industrialists and large landowners stayed in control
- **Lateran Accords of 1929**
  - For the Church
  - Sovereign control of Vatican City
  - A lot of money



- Catholicism is the “sole religion of the state”
  - For Mussolini/ state
- Papal recognition of the Italian state
  - Church will encourage support for the fascists
- Social policy- traditional
  - Women were bound to the home
    - Discouraged employment of women outside of the home
      - It formed habits contrary to child bearing
    - Bonuses for large families
- Attitudes
  - Pro-war
  - Life is duty, struggle, and conquest
  - Proud that Fascism is the opposite of socialism
    - Opposed democracy and equality
  - State is absolute
    - People exist to serve the state
  - Imperialism is a sign of strength
- **The corporate state**
  - Workers and employers are forced to work together under the direction of the state
  - Private ownership controlled for the interest/benefit of the state
  - Syndicates
    - Nationwide organizations
    - One for each industry and includes workers and professionals
    - Decided how much and where the products went
  - “Corporations”
    - Administrative agencies that united and controlled workers and employers
    - They basically did whatever Mussolini said
  - No strikes or lockouts

## Spain

- 1923 General Miguel Primo de Rivera coup
  - A royally approved dictatorship
- 1931 depression and fall of the dictatorship
  - King Flees
  - Creation of a Republic
- Republic unstable (left/right)
- 1936 Popular Front included democrats, socialists, and communists
  - Rejection by army
- 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War
  - Popular Front
    - Got help from the Soviet Union
  - Fascists led by **General Francisco Franco**
    - Got help from Italy and Germany
  - Franco won and was dictator until he died in 1975
    - Not a “Fascist” government
      - Falange official fascist party and did not play a big part



## Portugal

- 1910 monarchy was overthrown
  - Established a republic
- Inflation after World War I
  - Instability
- 1926 army took over
- 1930-1970 Antonio Salazar

## Germany

- Problems of Weimar Republic
  - o Uprisings and attacks from the left (socialists and communists) and the right (Nazi followers)
  - o Leadership- there wasn't any real leadership
- Von Hindenburg was elected President
  - o Monarchist
  - o Did not support democracy
- Army was not under government control
- Anti-democratic people had influence
  - o Teachers were still monarchists
    - Taught how bad democracy was
  - o Judges and bureaucrats also undermined the democracy
  - o Aristocrats and heads of businesses did not want to give up power
- Inflation hurt many people
  - o Middle class pushed towards the right
- Social discontent and growth of extremist parties

## Adolf Hitler

- Early failure
  - o Not a spectacular background
    - *Austrian*
    - Wanted to be a painter, but he was rejected from school
    - Served in World War I
      - Part of German Army
      - Only got as high as a corporal
- Claimed that his experiences in Vienna made him an anti-Semite
  - o Extreme nationalist- wanted to unite all Germans
    - Hitler met Georg von Schonerer led the Pan-German movement
      - Extreme nationalist
      - Wanted to unite all the Germans in one state
        - including Austrians
    - Karl Luger was the anti-Semitic mayor of Vienna
    - Adolf Lanz monk who preached superiority of Aryans
      - Inferior races should be eliminated
    - Saw more religious Jews that looked different
      - Thought they were polluting cultural life
- Munich
  - o Joined German Worker's Party
    - Took it over and renamed it the National Socialist German Workers' Party
      - "Nazi" for short
    - Made it a mass movement
      - Oratory, flags, badges, uniforms, newspapers
      - **Storm Troops**- like the *squadristi*, but in brown shirts
  - o **1923- Beer Hall Putsch**
    - Failed attempt at taking over the government
    - Hitler was tried for treason, convicted and sentenced for 5 years
      - Judge supported rightists



- In prison writes ***Mein Kampf***
  - Lebensraum- room to live
    - Superior individuals have the right to expand
  - Regional organization
  - Extreme nationalism, anti-communism, anti-Semitism, social Darwinism
- Reorganization of the party
  - Fuhrerprinzip
- 1930 elections Nazis got 18%
  - Chancellor Bruning could not get a working majority in Parliament
    - Too many parties
    - President von Hindenburg ruled “by decree”
      - Had the power to issue laws as if they were passed by Parliament
  - 1931: unemployment = 4.35 million
    - 1932 = 6 million
  - Rapid growth of Nazi party
    - Sept 1930- 289,000 Nazis
    - 1932- 800,000 Nazis and SA had 500,000 thugs
    - Modern election techniques + lies 230 seats in July 1932 (largest party)
      - “Hitler over Germany”- slogan in 1932
      - Hitler flew and spoke in 50 cities in 15 days
      - Von Hindenburg still won president
  - Right wing upper class hoped to use Nazi mass support to create a right wing authoritarian government
    - Wanted to “use” Hitler, just like the Italians did with Mussolini
    - Von Hindenburg was pressured to make Hitler Chancellor
      - January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1933
- Nazis take control
  - Hermann Goring- Minister of the Interior
    - Control of police
      - Got non Nazis out of the police
      - Established auxiliary police SA
      - Storm Troopers, like the black shirts of Italy
  - Fire in the Reichstag February 27<sup>th</sup>
    - Still unknown who did it
    - Von Hindenburg gave the government “emergency” powers
      - Hitler blamed the communists
      - To Hitler, communists are Jews
      - Suspended all basic rights of citizens
      - Nazis can arrest and imprison anyone for no reason
      - March 5th election- Nazis used the emergency decree to limit the opponents from campaigning
      - Thugs got 288 seats
        - Still not a majority
  - **Enabling Act**
    - Changed the constitution
    - Hitler made a deal with the Catholic Center Party for them to vote for the act
    - Made Hitler a dictator
      - Abolished the Reichstag and von Hindenburg
      - Hitler had the ability to rule by decree
      - Reich cabinet can do anything it wants
      - Cabinet did anything Hitler said



- Gleichschaltung
  - Coordination of all institutions under the Nazis
  - Trade unions were replaced by a Nazi controlled national labor front

## Ruling the Nazi State

- Mass participation
  - Wanted to get everyone involved in the state to dominate Europe or even the world for 1,000 years
  - Spectacle
    - Parades, mass speeches, and music all to arouse passion among the citizens
    - Tried to promote unity by combining aspects of a religious ceremony and amusement
- Authoritarian anarchy
  - Parallel government and party bureaucracies compete for influence over foreign policy, education, and the economy
    - Created fighting between government and party
      - Hitler swooped in and ended chaos
- Economic control
  - Business was in private hands but government controlled it
  - Goal: end unemployment
    - Private construction could get government grants
  - Public works
  - Rearmament
  - Unemployment dropped
    - Public acceptance
  - German Labor Front
    - A national union controlled by the government
  - Entertainment for workers
    - Trips, sports, etc...
- Force and Terror
  - Until '34, mostly SA was involved in the use of force
    - June- purge
      - *Ernst Rohm executed*
    - Leader had wanted SA to serve as Army
  - SS- originally Hitler's bodyguards
    - Indoctrinated in racism
    - Became the new SA
    - Terror
      - Concentration camps, death camps, death squads
- Perversion of "normal" groups
  - Catholic and Protestant Churches
  - Schools and Universities
  - Doctors, women, lawyer, etc...
    - All these groups were turned to be pro-Nazi
  - Youth
    - Hitler Youth and Girls Groups were taught to give all their energy to the state
- Anti-Semitism
  - Joseph Goebbels
    - Propaganda director



- Gradual growth of anti-Semitic policies
  - April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1933 boycott
  - Exclusion of Jews from influential positions
  - 1935 Nuremberg Laws
    - Jews lost citizenship
    - Defines “Jews” racially
- Hassle
- Kristallnacht
  - turned to violence
- Women
  - Women should be wives and mothers
  - Could work in heavy industry
    - “Could harm them producing strong children”
  - Women could be social workers or nurses
    - Men had the big prominent jobs
    - Women had limited job opportunities
- Nazi Eugenics
  - Needed to “purify” Germany
  - Idea of Aryan super race
    - Scientists dispatched around world searching for Aryan culture
  - Segregate and eliminate
    - Groups Targeted
      - Gypsies
      - Jews
      - Homosexuals
      - Mentally and Physically Disabled

