Fascism & Totalitarianism

World Wars Unit
• SSWH18 Examine the major political and economic factors that shaped world societies between World War I and World War II.
• 18b. Describe the rise of fascism in Europe and Asia by comparing the policies of Benito Mussolini in Italy, Adolf Hitler in Germany, and Hirohito in Japan.
• 18c. Describe the nature of totalitarianism and the police state that existed in the Soviet Union, Germany, and Italy and how they differ from authoritarian governments.
• 18d. Explain the aggression and conflict leading to World War II in Europe and Asia; include the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, the Spanish Civil War, the Rape of Nanjing in China, and the German violation of the Treaty of Versailles.
Fascism

• Fascism is a governmental system led by a dictator having complete power, forcibly suppressing opposition and criticism, regimenting all industry, commerce, etc., and emphasizing an aggressive nationalism and often racism.

• Began in Italy under Mussolini in 1919 & spread to Germany under Hitler & Japan under Tojo
CHARACTERISTICS OF FASCISM

**Cultural**
- censorship
- indoctrination
- secret police

**Social**
- supported by middle class, industrialists, and military

**Economic**
- economic functions controlled by state corporations or state

**Political**
- nationalist
- racist (Nazism)
- one-party rule
- supreme leader

**Basic Principles**
- authoritarianism
- state more important than the individual
- charismatic leader
- action oriented

**Chief Examples**
- Italy
- Spain
- Germany
Fascism

• In Italy, Germany, & Japan, fascist regimes came out of democratic states in economic crisis

• Democratic governments were unable to solve the economic issues

• Each nation was either humiliated by the Treaty of Versailles or did not receive land it thought it should resulting from the treaty
Fascism in Italy

• Social unrest in the 1920’s was caused by rising unemployment & inflation
• Socialist & Communist Parties gained influence causing fear among the middle & upper classes
• Mussolini’s fascist party won support from the middle & upper classes when his Black Shirts (thugs) attacked Communists & Socialists in the streets
• 1922: 30,000 fascists marched on Rome & forced the king to name Mussolini prime minister
Fascism in Italy

- Fascists were able to control Parliament & gave almost complete authority to Mussolini (who became known as “Il Duce” or “the leader”)
- He built a totalitarian regime which controlled all aspects of public & private life
Characteristics of Fascism in Italy

- Democracy abolished
- Opposition political parties banned
- Opponents jailed
- Limited speech
- Censorship of the press
- Outlawed strikes
- Intense propaganda to maintain obedience of citizens
- Improved infrastructure, industry, & literacy
Fascism in Germany

• Hitler hated the way Germany was treated by the Allies in the Treaty Versailles after WWI & formed the Nazi Party in 1919 then tried a coup (Beer Hall Putsch) to take over government which failed

• While in prison he wrote “Mein Kampf” about weakness of democracy & communism, restoring German pride/prosperity through an ultra-nationalist dictatorship, building a strong military, expanding territory, superiority of the “Aryan” race
Fascism in Germany

• Similar to Mussolini, Hitler’s Nazi “Brown Shirts” used threats/violence to win political influence
• Also, similar to Italy, middle & upper class citizens supported the Nazis for opposing communism
• Again, similar to Italy, Hitler was named chancellor & was able to gain a majority in the Reichstag (German legislature) which gave him complete control.
• The same characteristics of totalitarianism applied to Nazi Germany as in Italy under Mussolini
Fascism in Japan

• Oligarchy of military leaders (Tojo was the strongest) ruled Japan with support of the emperor

• Civil government did not have control over the military so military leaders were able to take over the civil government because of the poor economy in 1929

• 1931: military invaded Manchuria without civil government support & Tojo became prime minister in 1941
Fascism in Japan

• Militaristic nationalism like Germany & Italy supported the new regime
• Nationalism also supported by religious movement of State Shinto which gave the regime a race based political ideology similar to Germany—Japanese thought they were a master Asian race destined to rule Asia
• Regime was largely successful because of success in dealing with the Great Depression
Totalitarianism

• 18c. Describe the nature of totalitarianism and the police state that existed in the Soviet Union, Germany, and Italy and how they differ from authoritarian governments.
Totalitarianism

• Totalitarianism is a system of government that controls all aspects of public and private life
• Totalitarianism existed in Germany, Italy, & the Soviet Union
• 3 Main Characteristics:
• 1. extensive network of public & secret police
• 2. state run propaganda networks controlling flow of information & built powerful cults of personality around leaders
• 3. laws that allowed dictatorial rule & limited civil liberties
Totalitarian vs. Authoritarian

• While authoritarian regimes place all of the power into a single dictator or group, that power is only political.

• Within totalitarian regimes, the leadership controls nearly all aspects of the state from economical to political to social and cultural. Totalitarian regimes control science, education, art and private lives of residents to the degree of dictation proper morality. The reach of the government is limitless.