- Italy and WW1
- B.M. + Fascist Party
- 1922 March on Rome
- Establishing a dictatorship 1922-1926
- Dealing with opposition
- Propaganda
- Church-State Relations
- Economic and Social Policy
- Corporate State
- Foreign Policy
- WWII/Demise of BM/Fascism
Italy in WWI

• Joined on side of Allies in 1915 (promised land in Austria under Treaty of London)
• Defeated at Caporetto (1917) and other battles by Austria
• Treaty of San Germain (1919): Italy given South Tyrol, Istria and Trieste
• But failed to obtain colonies in Africa or more territory in Dalmatia (Croatia)
Problems and political instability in Italy after WWI

• Unemployment
• Inflation/taxes
• Poverty
• Strikes
• Weak coalition govts.
• Growth of communist and right-wing paramilitary groups
L'Italia dopo la Guerra 1915-1918
Benito Mussolini
Benito Mussolini

- Born 1883
- Served in WWI
- Worked as a journalist
- Initially a socialist
- Later changed ideas
The Fascist Party

- BM set up ‘Fascio di Combattimento’ in Milan (1919)
- Anti-communist
- Nationalistic
- Black-shirt uniform
- Strong leader
- Militaristic
- Imperialistic
Characteristics of Fascism

• Strong leader with absolute control (dictator)
• Very nationalistic
• Anti-communist
• Anti-democracy (felt it led to weak unstable governments)
• Racism
• Anti-semitism
• Willing to use violence to achieve aims
• Only Fascist party allowed in Fascist states
Growth of Fascist Party (1919-1922)

• Fights between Communists/Fascists
• Fascists used to break strikes
• Several unstable govt.s.
• Fascists won no seats in 1919 election
• Fascists won 35 out of 535 seats in 1921 election
• Gained some respectability when brought into govt. by Giolitti
• Fascists helped break general strike 1922
Key words

• Dictatorship
  • Where a leader or dictator has absolute power
  • E.g. Hitler, Franco, Mussolini, Stalin

• Totalitarian(ism)
  • Where no rival political parties are allowed
  • A one-party state
  • E.g. Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Communist Russia
Lemml, ridiculed and threatened by the fascist squads in Rome.
March on Rome 1922

• 50,000 Fascists planned March on Rome (October 1922)
• Fascists threatened to seize power
• PM Facta wanted to use army against Fascists
• King Victor Emmanuel II refused to allow PM to act against Fascists
• (perhaps scared of civil war/army refusing to obey/felt he could defuse crisis)
• King dismissed Facta as PM & makes Mussolini new PM
Mussolini made Prime Minister by King Victor Emmanuel III
Establishing a Fascist dictatorship

1 Mussolini’s first government

- Initially Mussolini included many non-fascists in govt.
- Liberals & nationalists along with 4 fascist ministers in cabinet
- Nationalists and some right-wing liberals merge with Fascists (1923)
- Govt. got rid of PR voting system
- Acerbo Law meant party with majority of votes would get 2/3 of seats in parliament
- Blackshirts intimidate opposition in elections
- Fascist party win majority in election
- BM becomes PM but also Foreign Minister & Interior Minister
- Blackshirts made into a militia with oath of loyalty to BM not king
Establishing a Fascist dictatorship

2 murder of Matteotti and Aventine Secession

• Socialist Matteotti murdered after challenged election results (1924)
• Many politicians outraged and walk out of parliament (Aventine Secession)
• King did not dismiss BM
• April 1924 election Fascists win 4.3m votes, opposition win 2.6m votes
• Jan 1925 Mussolini makes speech promising strong govt.
• In 1926 three attempts to assassinate BM (one in 1925)
• Used as an excuse to ban opposition and set up ‘Special Tribunal’ to repress opposition
• 1926 BM closes parliament and begins rule by decree
• Only Fascist Party allowed
Repression of the opposition

- Parliament shut down & replaced by Fascist Council
- Censorship
- Violence/intimidation by blackshirt squads
- Secret Police: OVRA
- Arrest of opponents
- Prison: communist leader Gramsci for 20 years
- Internal exile: eg Carlo Levi (author of ‘Christ stopped at Eboli’)
Cult of leader-Propaganda-Youth Groups- ‘Bread & Circuses’

- Glorification of ‘il Duce’ (the leader) and Fascism in newspapers, radio, cinema, statues, posters
- School textbooks/curriculum changed to promote Fascism
- Youth Groups eg ‘Sons of the She-Wolf’ (6-8yrs), Balilla (boys 8-14), Avanguardisti (boys 14-18), Piccole Italiane (girls 8-14), Giovane Italiane (girls 14-18)
- Dopolavoro- (After work)- bars, libraries, sports grounds, trips, dancing, social clubs
- Italy hosted World Cup 1934
- Welfare provided in poor areas
- Big audiences for car racing, cycling, skiing
- Cinecittà set up for cinema industry
Fascist Youth Groups
GIOVENTU' FASCISTA

A.I X
ERA FASCISTA
ANNO 11 - M: 28
27 SETTEMBRE

IL FASCISMO NON VI PROMETTE NE ONORI NE CARICHE NE GUADAGNI MA IL DOVERE E IL COMBATTIMENTO MUSOLINI
Fascist Youth Group Poster
Economic Policy

• ‘Self sufficiency’: eg Battle for Grain (1925)
• Protectionism (putting tariffs/taxes on imports in order to 'protect' industries from competition
• Revaluation of lira made exports more expensive- damaged economy
• Pension & welfare benefits introduced
• No trade unions & unemployment increased in late 1920s & early 1930s
• Public Works: eg draining of Pontine Marshes near Rome
• Increased electricity and car production
• Infrastructure: motorways built, railways improved
Corporate State & industrial relations

• Fascist believed in Corporations of workers and employers and govt. representatives
• No trade unions/strikes allowed & corporations often more favourable to employers
• Ministry of Corporations set up 1926
• 22 corporations (eg agriculture, industry, professions)
• Corporations elected Fascist Council
Church-State relations in Italy

- After the unification of Italy and loss of papal states the Vatican refused to recognise the Italian state
- Most Italians were catholic and BM sought good relations with church
- Mussolini saw benefit to good relations with Roman Catholic church
- Both Mussolini and Catholic church opposed to communism
Fascist government made changes supported by the Catholic Church

- Religious instruction introduced in schools in 1922
- 'Battle of Births' supported by the Catholic Church
- Ban on sale of contraceptives and limits placed on abortions
- Ban on obscene publications
The Lateran Treaty and Concordat 1929

- Catholic church had lost land during the unification of Italy (Risorgimento) in 1860s
- Vatican refused to recognise legitimacy of Italian state
- Negotiations on 'Roman Question' began in 1926
- In 1929 Lateran Treaty signed by Vatican and the fascist government
Mussolini signs Lateran Treaty 1929
The Lateran Treaty & Concordat

• Agreement between Italian state and Vatican signed in 1929
• Pope Pius XI agreed to recognise Italian state
• Italy paid compensation for loss of papal states (750m lire)
• Catholicism made official religion of Italy
• Catholic church given control of religious education in state schools
• Independence of Vatican City recognised by state
• Government agreed to pay salaries to bishops & priests
• Italian government formally recognised by Vatican (gave it more legitimacy?)
Tensions between Church and State in Italy

- Church angry at attempts to suppress Catholic Action youth movement (1931)
- Pope criticised invasion of Abyssinia in 1935/6
- Anti-jewish laws introduced by fascist government in Manifesto della Razza (1938)
- Pope Pius XI condemned these racial laws
- Pius XII replaced him after his death in 1939
- Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano published articles critical of government
- In 1940 Papal Nuncio warned paper that it would be banned if articles continued
Mussolini’s Foreign Policy up to 1935

- Mussolini was nationalistic, imperialistic and militaristic
- Corfu incident (1923) 4 Italians killed redrawing Greek-Albanian border for League of Nations, Italy invaded corfu, later withdrew after Greece paid compensation
- Italy got Fiume from Yugoslavia after negotiation (1924)
- Locarno Pact (1925) guaranteed existing borders
- Italy signed Kellog-Briand Pact (1928) outlawing war 'as an instrument of National Policy'
- Sent troops to Italian-Austrian border after murder of Austrian PM Dolfuss (1934)
- BM joins GB/France in Stresa Front to prevent German expansion (1935)
LA SOLA AUTENTICA FILM DI GUERRA GIUNTA DALL'ITALIA TUTTA PARLATA IN ITALIANO

ITALIA VITTORIOSA

CON MUSICA E CANTO DELLA POPOLARE CANZONE

FACCETTA NERA

E L'ENTRATA TRIONFALE IN

ADDIS ABEBA

DEL

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9 MAGGIO 1937

LA CELEBRAZIONE DEL PRIMO ANNUALE DEL IMPERO ITALIANO

L'ITALIA HA FINALMENTE IL SUO IMPERO
Invasion of Abyssinia 1935-1936

- Invades Abyssinia (Ethiopia) 1935
- Tanks, planes, poison gas & 400,000 troops used in invasion
- Halie Selassie asked League of Nations for help
- League of Nations imposed sanctions on Italy
- Sanctions which did not include oil had little effect
- Italians capture Addis Adaba in May 1936
- Stresa Front collapses as GB/France support League of Nations
Italian Foreign Policy 1936-1939

• Mussolini sends help to Franco & Nationalists in Spanish Civil War
• Fascist Italy allies itself to Nazi Germany in Rome-Berlin Axis (1936)
• Germany, Italy, Japan sign Anti-Comintern Pact (1937)
• Italy did not intervene in Anschluss (1938)
• Supported Germany on Sudetenland at Munich Conference 1938
• Italy and Germany sign Pact of Steel (1939) agree to support each other in war
Italy in World War II up to 1943

- Italy stayed neutral in 1939
- BM felt Italy not ready for war
- Joined on side of Germany 1940
- Defeats in Greece and N. Africa
- Allies landed in Sicily (1943) and then southern Italy
Allies land in Italy 1943
Mussolini removed as leader

-Mussolini removed by the Grand Fascist Council as leader in Italy

-Badoglio replaced Mussolini as prime minister in 1943

-Mussolini put under house arrest in the mountains

-Italian government began to negotiate for peace with Allies
Mussolini Ousted with Fascist Cabinet; Badoglio, His Foe, Made Premier by King; Shift Believed First Step Toward Peace
The Italian Social Republic set up 1943

-North of Italy controlled by Germans and Fascists

-Italian Social Republic or the Republic of Salo set up in North (a 'puppet-state' really controlled by the Germans)

-Southern Italy controlled by the Allies
LA GERMANIA È VERAMENTE
VOstra AMICA

DIFENDÌLO!

PER ARRUOLARSI NELLA LEGIONE
ITALIANA

ONORE
FEDELTA
CORAGGIO
Mussolini rescued by Germans

-Mussolini rescued by German commandos so he can be used as the leader of the Italian Social Republic

(but he is a 'puppet' leader, the Germans are really in charge in Northern Italy)
The Partisans form the Resistance in Northern Italy

- Anti-fascist groups of 'partisans' begin guerilla war in Northern Italy
- They launch an insurgency of sabotage, assassinations, ambushes to weaken the German and Fascist forces in Italy
During the war special fascist army units called ‘Black Brigades’ were set up to fight with the Germans against the Allies and Italian partisans.

The Germans and Fascists used the tactic of 'reprisals' where a number of prisoners or civilians would be killed if a German or Fascist was killed (sometimes 10 for 1).
Member of the Black Brigades welcomed by supporters
Fascist Poster: shows anti-fascist partisans being crushed

BANDITI e RIBELLI

ecco la vostra fine!
Allied advance in Italy

- Allies try to push north but blocked by German defensive lines

- Huge battle at Monte Cassino (Benedictine Abbey used a fortress by Germans)
The Allies gradually advanced North through Italy

- The Allies slowly pushed northwards through Italy getting close to Austrian border in April 1945
- Allies get control of all of Italy
Mussolini's death

-Mussolini (along with his girlfriend, Clara Petacci) was captured and killed by partisans in April 1945 while trying to flee northwards

-Their bodies were mutilated and hung up on the street