Authoritarian / Totalitarian Regimes (Fascism) - OVERVIEW:

A world economic depression intensified political instability and ideological extremism. Demagogues used these times of economic distress to preach a variety of solutions that were generally anti-democratic. Single party totalitarian states emerged in Italy, Spain, the USSR, Germany, Brazil, Argentina, China, and Japan.

⇒ The ideology of fascism originated in **Italy** to glorify the state and its leaders and was expansionist in nature.

⇒ In **Germany**, Nazism also featured the racist philosophy of Aryan supremacy and the subjugation of other ethnic groups.

⇒ In the **USSR**, Stalin adopted rigid communist policies including collectivization of agriculture and state ownership of industry.

⇒ **Spain** and **Brazil** used the threat of local Communist parties to gain support from their people.

⇒ **Japan**'s need for resources fostered the development of militaristic and expansionist policies toward its neighbors.

*The western democracies, for a variety of economic and political reasons, relied upon a policy of appeasement in dealing with the totalitarian states.*

**Characteristics of Fascism:**

A. Personal Dictatorship
   1. All power is vested in one individual.
   2. The dictatorship has a religious quality.

B. Intense Nationalism
   1. Patriotism for a relatively new, modern nation
   2. Militant, aggressive, and intolerant

C. Forcible Suppression of Dissent
   1. censorship of the press
   2. exclusion of foreign journalists
   3. propaganda about how wonderful life is under the dictator
   4. secret police and severe treatment of political prisoners
   5. book burning
   6. government surveillance of citizens’ activities, including religion, culture, family

**Challenges to the liberal order**

A. Italian fascism
   1. Benito Mussolini, founder of Italian fascism, 1919
      a. Armed fascist squads called Blackshirts terrorized socialists
      b. After march on Rome, Mussolini invited by king to be prime minister
   2. The fascist state in Italy
      a. All other political parties banned, Italy became a one-party dictatorship
      b. Supported by business, the party crushed labor unions, prohibited strikes
      c. Not aggressively anti-Semitic until after alliance with Hitler in 1938
B. Germany's national socialism

1. Adolf Hitler (1889-1945)
   a. Born in Austria, schooled in Vienna; hated Jews and Marxists
   b. Moved to Munich and fought in German army in WWI
   c. 1921, joined obscure group, [National Socialist] German Workers Party

2. The emergence of the Nazi party
   a. 1923: attempt to take over Weimar Republic failed; Hitler jailed
   b. Released in 1924, he organized party for a legal takeover, through elections

3. The struggle for power after 1929
   a. National socialism enjoyed broad appeal, especially from lower-middle class
   b. Public lost faith in democracy: associated with defeat, depression, inflation
   c. 1930-1932, Nazi party became the largest in parliament
   d. 1932, President Hindenburg offered Hitler the chancellorship

4. Rapid consolidation of power, 1933-1935
   a. Nazis created one-party dictatorship; outlawed all other political parties
   b. Took over judiciary, civil service, military

5. Nazi ideology emphasized purity of race
   a. Women praised as wives and mothers; were discouraged from working
   b. Cult of motherhood: propaganda campaign to increase births was unsuccessful

6. Nazi eugenics: deliberate policies to improve the quality of the German "race"
   a. Compulsory sterilization of undesirables: mentally ill, disabled
   b. State-sponsored euthanasia of physically and mentally handicapped

7. Anti-Semitism central to Nazi ideology
   a. 1935, Nuremberg Laws deprived Jews of citizenship, outlawed intermarriage
   b. Jews economically isolated, lost jobs, assets, businesses
   c. 1938, Kristallnacht: official attacks on synagogues and Jewish businesses
   d. 250,000 Jews fled to other countries; many others trapped