



THE FASCIST MOVEMENT



POSTWAR ITALY

- The Italian army had won little glory on the battlefield.
- After the War, Italy's economic and social problems grew up. So between 1919-1921 workers seized factories and peasants occupied land of the great landlords.
- The socialist party and the "Populari" offered possible alternative leadership for the government. But the internal disagreements didn't let them create a solid administration.



BENITO MUSSOLINI



- Born in Romagna, the young Mussolini followed the example of his father and became a socialist.
- In 1912, he was named editor of "Avanti", the chief newspaper of the Italian Socialist Party.
- Mussolini, who was more a lover of action than a truly committed Socialist, called for Italian participation in the war on the side of the Allies, so he was expelled from the Socialist party.
- He founded a new pro-interventist newspaper, "Il Popolo d'Italia", that became the official newspaper of the Fascist movement.
- He was more interested in power than in principles.



THE FASCISM

- In 1919, Mussolini established the “Fasci di combattimento”, from the Latin word *fascis* (a symbol of authority).
- Fascism was intensely nationalistic, militaristic and anti-Marxist.
- The obligation of the individual to serve the state was more important than the freedom of the individual.
- After the social and economic unrest from 1919 to 1921, and the financial support of landowners and industrialists, Fascism made great headway obtaining followers among disillusioned and frustrated italians.
- IN May 1921 Mussolini and 34 Fascists won election to the Chamber of deputies.



THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE POWER

- After the march on Rome in 1922, King Victor Emmanuel III appointed Mussolini to the premiership.
- Mussolini used his authority to install Fascists in government posts.
- **The Acerbo Law** provided that 2/3 of the seats on the Chamber of Deputies would be allotted to the party that obtained the majority in the election.
- In the April 1924 Fascists won the election.
- On June 10, 1924 Matteotti that had challenged the legitimacy of the Fascist majority, was murdered by a group of fascists.
- The secret police, OVRA, cracked down on political opponents of the fascist regime.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mussolini had pledged to restore order to Italy's economic and social life with four plans of action:

- **The Battle of Lira:** Increasing the value of the Lira.
- **The Battle of Wheat:** Improving the agricultural production.
- **Land-Reclamations.**
- **Demographic Campaign.**





THE CORPORATE STATE

- Mussolini tried to create a new system superior to both *laissez-faire* capitalism and socialism.
- In 1926, the Italian government organized a series of syndicates for producers and workers.
- The old labor unions were abolished, and strikes and lockouts were banned.
- In 1934, Italian economic life came under further regulation with the establishment of a system of corporation.
- The system of syndicates became the basis for a reorganized Chamber of Deputies.
- The Italian electorate could vote yes or no on the entire list of candidates and could not reject individual candidates

THE LATERAN ACCORD

In 1929 Mussolini found a solution to the Roman Question, the long conflict between the papacy and the Italian state;

The Lateran Accords:

- **Political treaty:** both of them recognized the power of the other one;
- **Financial convention:** Italy agreed to pay the papacy a substantial sum of money for Rome's seizure;
- **The Concordate:** the roman catholic religion was recognized as the official religion of the state.



FOREIGN POLICY

- Mussolini's dream was to establish Italian dominance in the Mediterranean area, which he termed *mare nostrum*.
- In 1923 Italia bombarded The Greek Island of Corfu, which was then occupied by the troops.
- For the next several years, Mussolini obtained only useless victories
- The record of Mussolini's dictatorship was a record of failure. In domestic affairs his success was the Lateran accord, which resolved the Roman Question;
- But He failed both in foreign policy and in providing Italy with a solid government



