

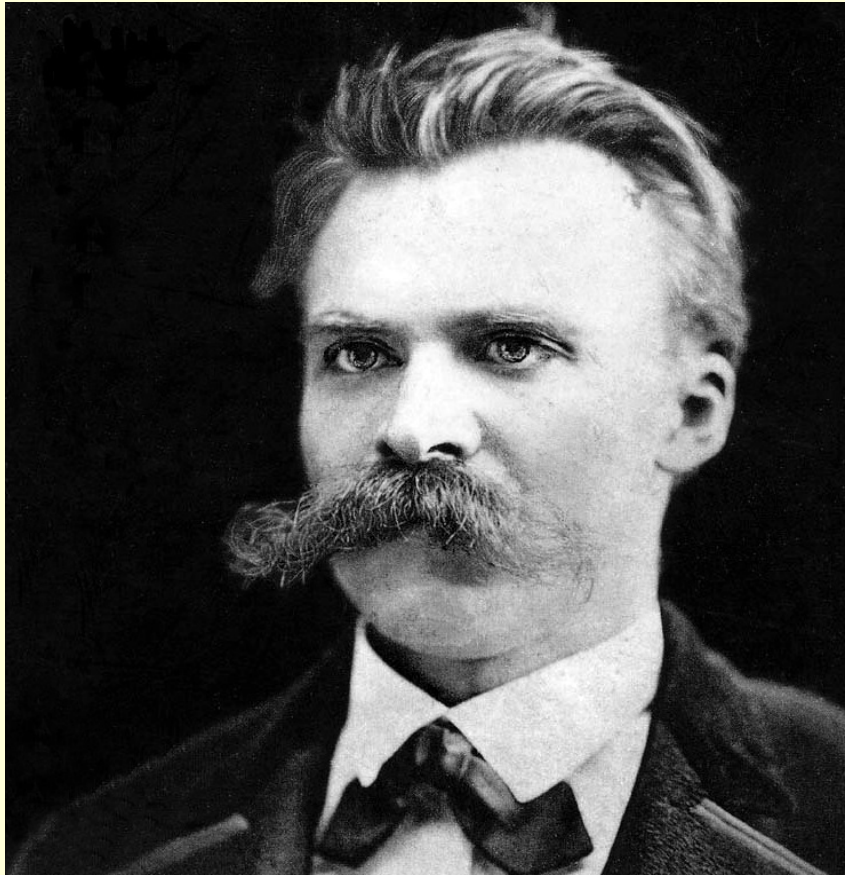
# Making of the Modern World 15

## Lecture #8: Fascism and the “Blond Beast”

# The Blond Beast



# Friedrich Nietzsche



- 1844-1900
- German Philosopher
- *Genealogy of Morals* (1887)
- Good/Evil vs Good/Bad
- Slave morality
- Priestly revenge
- The “Blond Beast”
- All men are not created equal

?





# US House of Representatives



# The Growth of European Fascism

- From “fasces,” Roman symbol of authority
  - Axe surrounded by wooden rods
- Originates with Benito Mussolini
- Influenced Europe, Asia, Latin America

# Fascism: Common Elements

1. Primacy of state over individual
  - strength through unity
2. Distrust of democracy: the *Führerprinzip*
3. Hostility to Communism
4. Chauvinistic/nationalistic
  1. Counteracting humiliation
  2. Strength through struggle
5. Militaristic

# Fascism in Italy

- Poor showing of post-WWI Italian government
  - Public disappointed with weak territorial gains
  - Economic and social turmoil
- Mussolini, former newspaper editor, electoral successes in 1921
- March on Rome October, King Emmanuel III offers him office of prime minister
- 1926 seizes power as *Il Duce*, “the leader”



# Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) and the Nazi Party

- 1921 becomes Chairman of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazis)
- Attempts to overthrow government in 1923
  - Writes autobiography *Mein Kampf* in jail, massively popular
- Capitalizes on public discontent with post-war era
  - War guilt clause
  - Reparation payments
  - Inability of major parties to come to consensus
  - Anti-Semitism

# “Triumph of the Will”



# Consolidation of Power

- Nazis become single largest party in parliament, 1930-1932
- Weak president Paul von Hindenburg (1847-1934) appoints Hitler as Chancellor
- Suppresses opposition, abrogates constitutional and civil rights
  - Makes the Nazis the sole legal party
  - Destroys trade unions
  - Purges judiciary, civil service of perceived enemies

# The Racial State

- Theories of racial superiority, racial purity
- Policies of eugenics
  - Compulsory sterilization of 30,000 Germans
  - Abortions illegal for healthy Germans, mandatory for “hereditary ill” and “racial aliens”
  - “Euthanasia” program kills 200,000 people with physical or mental handicaps between 1939-1945
- Precursors to massacres of Jews, gypsies

# Anti-Semitism

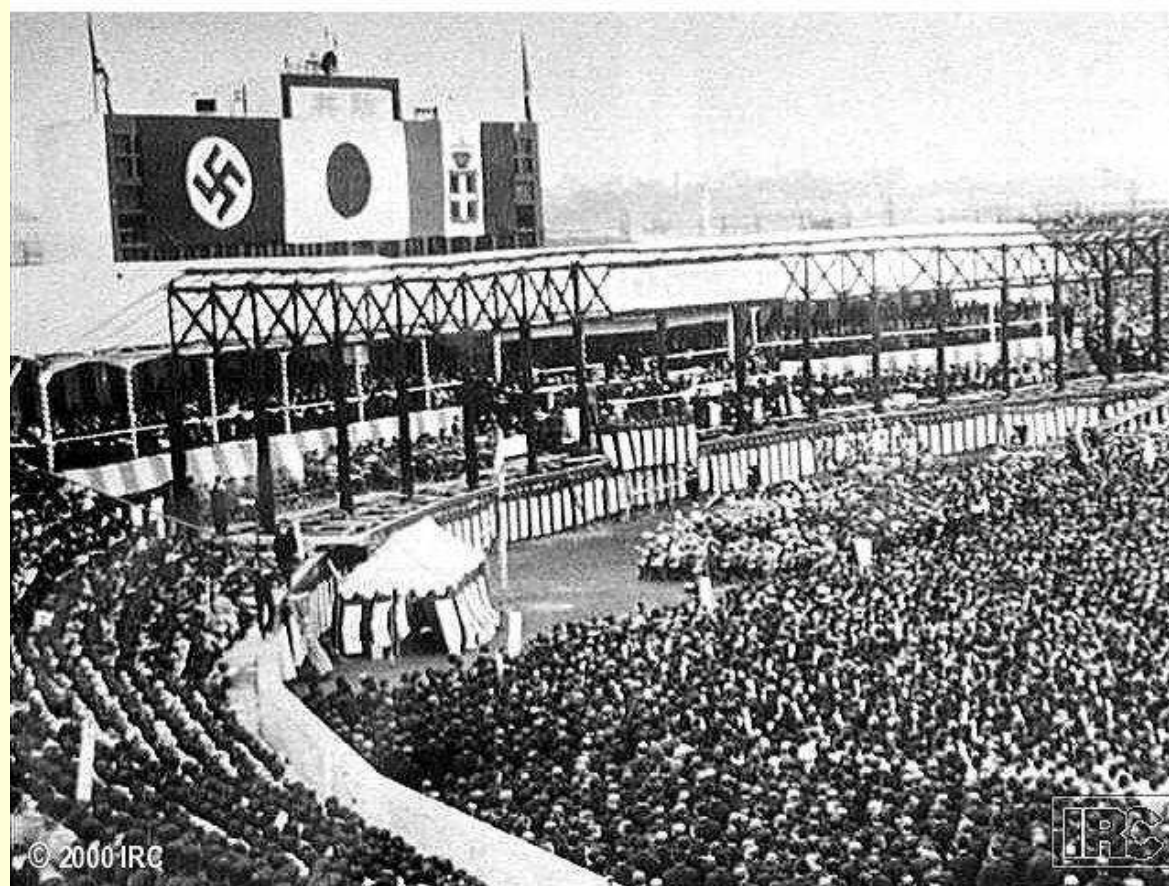
- Influence of 19<sup>th</sup>-century racism
- 1935 Nuremberg laws define Jew on racial basis
  - Prohibits marriages between Jews and non-Jews
  - Removal of Jews from civil service, schools
  - Liquidation of Jewish-owned businesses or purchase by non-Jews
- Kristallnacht: major country-wide *pogrom* on Jews, November 9-10, 1938
  - “night of broken glass”



# The Second World War

- Allies vs. Axis Powers
- Italy, Germany and Japan form Axis
- “Revisionists:” wished to revise post-World War I peace treaties
- Allies initially follow policy of appeasement
- War erupts 1939, global by 1941, over 1945

# Axis Rally in Tokyo



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An Axis rally in Tokyo

# Italian Aggression

- Benito Mussolini invades Ethiopia with overpowering force
  - 2,000 Italian troops killed, 275,000 Ethiopians killed
- Also takes Libya, Albania

# Germany

- Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) withdraws from League of Nations
- Remilitarizes Germany
- *Anschluss* (“Union”) with Austria, 1938
- Pressure on Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia)

# Do you agree with our leader?





# Munich Conference (1938)

- Italy, France, Great Britain, Germany meet
- Allies follow policy of appeasement
- Hitler promises to halt expansionist efforts
- British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940) promises “peace for our time”
- Hitler signs secret Russian-German Treaty of Non-Aggression (Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, August 1939)

# Invasion of Poland and France

- September 1, 1939
- *Blitzkrieg*: “lightning war” strategy
  - Air forces soften up target, armored divisions rush in
- German U-boats (submarines) patrol Atlantic, threaten British shipping

# The Fall of France

- 1940: Germany occupies Denmark, Norway, Belgium, France
- Hitler forces French to sign armistice agreement in same railroad car used for the armistice imposed on Germany in 1918

# The Battle of Britain

- Air war conducted by the German Luftwaffe
- “The Blitz”
- 40,000 British civilians killed in urban bombing raids
  - Especially London
- Royal Air Force prevents Germans from invading

# Operation Barbarossa

- *Lebensraum* (“living space”)
- June 22, 1941 Hitler double-crosses Stalin and invades USSR
- Stalin caught off-guard, rapid advance
- But severe winter, long supply lines weakened German efforts
- Soviets regroup and attack Spring 1942
- Turning point: Battle of Stalingrad (ends February 1943)



# High tide of Axis expansion in Europe and North Africa, 1942-1943

