

Similarities in the Aims of Fascism and Nazism :

The identical nature of politico-economic problems of Italy and Germany, the almost similar manner of coming into power of Mussolini and Hitler who established Facist and Nazi dictatorships in their respective countries, both had almost similar aims and characteristics which are given below :

1. Totalitarianism and Opposition of Democracy : Both were against Democracy. Mussolini has written : *"We vehemently oppose the world of democracy, a world which still wants to cling to the radical principles of 1789"*. The Fascist political philosophy does not agree that the majority has the right to rule. Democracy raises the public to a divine status. In place of this, Fascism puts the Duce or the Fuhrer before the public. He is their god and gives weightage to quality over numbers. Both Nazism and Fascism were sworn enemies of liberalism, democracy and Multiparty system. Hitler asserted that country should be governed by those whom "Nature has endowed with special gifts".

Both the Fascist and the Nazi rulers did not allow anyone other than their own party to operate in the country. Their order was that life should be made impossible for their opponents.

2. Aggressive Nationalism and imperialistic policies : Both Nazism and Fascism believed in the principle of the 'survival of the fittest' which is the law of life. The strongest alone have the right to survive and rule. Both believed in the principle of expansion. Hitler believed that nation became great only by defeating other nations in war. Both Hitler and Mussolini pursued an **expansionist policy** abroad. In May, 1936 Italian troops captured Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia. Hitler also captured Austria, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Luxemburg, Holland and Belgium and Paris too, fell to the Nazis.

3. Racial superiority : Racial superiority is the most important element in the Fascism concept of **nation – state**. According to Hitler Nordic (Aryan race) civilization of Germany reared the world's best race. And it is a natural law that it is entitled to rule all the races in the world. He believed that all the people of the Aryan race in Europe must be united in the German empire. In the name of the 'Aryan Principle', lakhs of Jews were mercilessly killed by the Nazis. In 1938 Mussolini also adopted an *anti-Jewish policy* under the Nazi influence. The Jews were expelled from the party and denied government jobs.

4. Opposition of Individualism : Both opposed individualism. The state is not for the individual, but the individual is for the state. Fascism claims that the **state is omnipresent**, hence, there is no scope for the individual or groups to work independently. An individual has a place in the state only when the interests of the two are the same and the individual works in conformity with the state.

5. Anti-Communism : Fascism claimed to be *neither capitalistic nor socialistic*. It protected private property but placed it under state control. Strikes and lockouts were forbidden. Rapid rearmament and industrial growth were placed in the hands of

the government as the country had been placed under perpetual war economy.

6. Anti-Intellectualism : Mussolini believed that "*it is faith that moves mountains, not reason*". His motto to his countrymen was "to behave, to obey, to fight". The Fascists and Nazis sought to create a society based on myths, example (a) Leader is ever right (b) international peace is a coward's dream (c) Imperialism is the eternal law of life (d) extolled war and militarism.

Hitler and Mussolini believed that a strong state was necessary to take the nation forward. They glorified the use of *force and brutality*.

Differences between Nazism and Fascism

- Though Fascism originated in Italy, it did not become as strong as Nazism in Germany.
- Fascism in Italy was not as efficient as Nazism in Germany. The system failed in creating self-sufficiency or eliminating unemployment.
- The Nazis were more ruthless as compared to the fascists. The Italian system didn't indulge in mass atrocities as Hitler did with the Jews in Germany.
- Though the fascists were in absolute control of state, the monarchy still remained in Italy. The Nazis, on the other hand, had ruthlessly crushed and eliminated any opposition to their rule.

Hitler's and Mussolini's Domestic and Foreign Policies

After coming into power, both Hitler and Mussolini followed a vigorous domestic and foreign policies.

The following points may be mentioned in this regard :

Hitler's Domestic Policy

1. Setting up of a strong national State in Germany : (Reign of Terror) Hitler worked for the unity and strength of Germany. He abolished all the provincial governments and Germany was totally centralized. She became a **dictatorship**, with all powers in the hands of her leader, all opposition parties eliminated, criticism disallowed, rights

denied to the people, democracy crushed, and a secret police under the name of **Gestapo** established to spy over everyone. The Germans were told that *Hitler was Germany and Germany was Hitler*. He established the rule of one man, one leader and one party i.e., the Nazi Party. In this way, national unity was brought about in Germany. The Radio, the Press and all other means of propaganda were controlled by the State. Even education was re-planned so as to promote **Nazism, German nationalism** and her unity. In 1934, Hitler became the supreme commander of Army. He replaced German flag by the old imperial insignia. He dissolved the Catholic Youth League and closed down Catholic schools. He arrested thousands of priests and nuns and sent them to concentration camps.

2. Economic Reforms and Development Work :

- He followed the policy of Five Year Plan.
- To increase production and to provide more employment opportunities stress was laid on manufacturing.
- To increase agricultural production large state controlled farms were set up.
- Under the plan to modernize the defense forces Germany started manufacturing naval and airships.
- Prices of essential items were kept under control.
- Imports and exports were also controlled to maintain a favourable Balance of trade.

3. Anti-Jews Policies (Anti-Semitic Propaganda) : The Nazi Party and Hitler showed a great dislike for the Jews, Christians and Communists. They held them responsible for the German defeat in the First World War, due to their betrayal.

- Hitler put a large number of Jews in the concentration camps.
- They were denied German citizenship, dismissed from government jobs and prohibited from practising medicine, law and many other professions.

- The Jews were forced to live in Ghettos, in isolation. No Jew could marry a German.
- Hitler wanted to eliminate the Jewish race completely. According to an estimate, he put to death about six million of them, including men, women and children.

Hitler's Foreign Policy

1. Disregarded the Treaty of Versailles : Hitler had started the rearmament and compulsory military service in gross violation of the Treaty of Versailles. He preached the gospel of 'Victorious sword'. He said, '*he who does not wish to fight has not the right to exist in the world.*' He not only stopped the payment of War Indemnity, but also took back the territory of Saar from France in 1934 A.D. In 1936 A.D., German troops re-entered Rhineland and fortified it, while it had been demilitarised by the Treaty of Versailles.



Jewish children, fenced in like animals at a Nazi concentration camp somewhere in Germany. Hitler wanted to remove what he called all 'non-Aryan' people from his new German state, to ensure racial purity. He aimed to exterminate all gypsies and Jews. In this Holocaust, 5.7 million Jewish men, women and children died.

2. An Imperialist and Expansionist Foreign Policy :

- Hitler had imperialist designs and wanted to establish the rule of the *Swastika* over the world.
- He wanted to unite all German speaking people in one country under the policy called *Deutschland*.
- To acquire more territories Hitler made use of force and rejected all international treaties.



Europe before the Second World War

- In 1934 he entered into a non-aggression treaty with Poland for a period of ten years for the safety of his eastern frontiers.
- He reclaimed the territory of Saar and Rhineland from France.
- In 1936 A.D., he made a treaty with Italy, known as the Rome-Berlin Axis. Later, when Japan also joined them in 1937 A.D., it was known as Rome-Berlin Tokyo Axis. He also concluded the Non-aggression Pact with Russia.
- He attacked Sudetenland and Austria in 1938. He acquired Czechoslovakia with the connivance of Britain and France due to the Munich Pact. Both Britain and France adopted a policy of appeasement towards

Germany under Hitler. They did not oppose him, when attacked the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 A.D. He also conquered Denmark, Norway, Luxemburg and Belgium.

3. Pan-German Unity: Hitler believed that all the people of the Aryan race must be united in the German Empire. It meant that Germany, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia and few other territories in Eastern Europe should be unified through conquest.

4. Hatred For Jews: Hitler followed an anti-Jewish policy. The Nazi Party and

Hitler showed a great dislike for the Jews. They held them responsible for German defeat in the First World War, due to their betrayal. He put large number of Jews in the concentration camps. They were denied German citizenship, dismissed from government jobs and prohibited from practising medicine, law and many other professions.

Fall of Hitler

It was only when Hitler attacked Poland on 1st September, 1939 that Britain and France issued an ultimatum to Germany, which Hitler ignored. Thus began the Second World War in which Germany was totally defeated by the *Allied Powers*. She surrendered in 1945 A.D. Hitler is said to have committed suicide. With his death, Nazism and Nazi dictatorial regime also came to an end.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

1. State any two differences between Nazism and Fascism.
- ~~2. Why Hitler~~
2. What steps were taken by Hitler against the Jews?
3. Regarding the rule of Hitler, answer the following:
 - i) Treaty of Versailles.
 - ii) Hitler's domestic policy.
 - iii) Hitler's foreign policy.