Fascism is a political system in which the **state** has all the power. All **citizens** must work for the country and the government. A dictator or another powerful person is the **head** of such a state. He uses a strong army and a **police force** to keep **law and order**. He is often a strong, authoritarian leader who is, at the beginning, **admired** by many people.

Fascism first **appeared** after World War I when Benito Mussolini came to power in Italy. In Germany of the 1930s Adolf Hitler's National Socialism **rose** to power. Fascism also appeared in Japan, Spain and Argentina.

**LIFE IN A FASCIST REGIME**

Fascist governments control the way people live. Those who criticize the government or do not **obey** are **punished**. They must leave the country, go to prison or are often **executed**.

Fascist leaders want to make their state strong and powerful. They **claim** that only the strongest and **fittest** in the population can **survive**. With the help of a strong army they go to war and **expand** their territory.

School teachers show children that only the state is important. Pupils must **exercise** to stay healthy. Young organizations are often created in which children admire the state and learn slogans and songs. They are trained to march and follow the **beliefs** of the ruling party.

Fascist governments try to give all people work, **mainly** in the industries they need. They build roads, hospitals and industries which help them **rise** to power. In fascist countries no other political parties are allowed. The government controls newspapers, radio and television. There is no **freedom of speech**.

**RISE OF FASCISM**

Fascism became a strong movement during the first part of the 20th **century** for many reasons. Most states had no **experience** with democracy because they were **ruled** by a king or queen. After World War I many people were **disappointed** and angry because the war **destroyed** a lot of their country or because some of their land was taken away from them.

Italians were not **satisfied** with the way other countries treated them after World War I. Benito Mussolini **emerged** as a powerful leader who promised the people that he would bring back **pride** and make Italy a **well-respected** state again. He created his own private army with their own uniforms. Mussolini’s followers were aggressive and started fights with other **citizens** and **regular** soldiers in the streets. Finally, in 1922 Mussolini became dictator of Italy.
Fascism

Germany was one of the big losers of World War I. It lost a lot of its land. The winners of the war made Germany give up most of its weapons and the government had pay for the destruction that occurred during the war. The country was poor, its economy was ruined.

In the 1920s and 30s a new party emerged: the National Socialist Workers’ Party became powerful. By 1933 the Nazis were the strongest party in Germany. Their leader, Adolf Hitler, dissolved parliament, took over power and made Germany a fascist state. In the following years he built up a strong police force and the largest army in Europe.

Hitler was called the Fuhrer. He claimed that the German people were better, stronger and more intelligent than any other people. Other groups, especially Jews and Romanies were considered to be inferior. Hitler believed that Germany could survive only if it got rid of these weak people. In the course of the war the Nazis killed over 6 million Jews and invaded most countries in Europe. When Germany was defeated in 1945 the fascist government fell apart.

The situation in Japan was similar. The economy was in bad condition and people had little to eat. Many Japanese wanted the military to take over the government and Japan to be a strong country again. In the 1930s Japan started expanding its power. It hated other Asian countries and wanted all of Asia under Japanese control.

Fascism in other Countries

Spain was another fascist country in Europe. General Franco led a nationalist movement in the Spanish Civil War, in which he got help from Italy and Germany. After winning the war Franco became dictator of Spain and ruled the country until he died in 1975.

In Argentina Juan Peron led a fascist movement that lasted for a decade and in Chile a military group under the command of Augusto Pinochet held on to power for almost two decades.

Neo Fascism

Although fascist parties were forbidden in many countries after World War II fascism wasn’t completely dead. Neo-fascist groups have emerged throughout the world. Their members have different views of the values of society.

- They want strict anti-immigration laws. Foreigners should leave the country.
- The police should have more rights. There should be more law and order in a country.
- Neo-fascists do not want relations with other countries.

Neo-fascist movements perform acts of violence and are sometimes involved in terrorist attacks but they are too small to start a wide-scale rebellion in a state.