

The Napoleonic Wars and the Rise of Nationalism in Europe

Enduring Understanding: You need to understand that the global spread of democratic ideas and nationalist movements occurred during the nineteenth century. This reading will help you analyze the effects of the Napoleonic Wars on the development and spread of nationalism in Europe, and includes the Congress of Vienna, the revolutionary movements of 1830 and 1848, and the unification of Germany and Italy.



3. **The invasion of Russia**: Napoleon's armies could not handle the harsh Russian winters and perished.

In 1814, Napoleon surrendered his throne and was exiled to the island of Elba. He escaped from Elba in 1815, gathered his allies and in the **Hundred Days**, waged his final attempt at power. Napoleon's final defeat came at Waterloo, where he was defeated by an international force, after which he was exiled for the remainder of his life to the island of St. Helena.



The location of Napoleon's first exile was Elba, an island off the Italian coast. His second exile was on St. Helena, a smaller island off the coast of Africa in the Atlantic Ocean. Why do you think he was sent to St. Helena and not Elba the second time he was exiled?

The immediate effects of the Napoleonic Wars were the development and spread of nationalism and further revolutions in Europe. As Napoleon's armies were conquering other nations, his soldiers also began to spread ideas of the Enlightenment, changes in government, and revolution. These ideas indirectly led to Napoleon's defeat as people in Europe began learning about challenges to government as well as new systems of government.

Napoleon's armies, who had lived through the French Revolution, shared news of the causes and events of their own revolution, therefore spreading Enlightenment ideas about natural rights, social contract, and limited government. His armies even backed revolutionary governments or movements in the lands they conquered. At the same time, Napoleon tried to impose French customs and culture, and in response, the conquered people began feeling more loyal to their own nations and customs. Citizens of conquered lands such as Austria, Prussia, Italy, and Portugal therefore began.

Section Review:

- 5) What three mistakes did Napoleon make that led to his downfall?
- 6) What happened to Napoleon after he surrendered the throne in 1814?
- 7) What were the Hundred Days?
- 8) Where was Napoleon finally defeated and what was the consequence?
- 9) What was the immediate effect of the Napoleonic Wars?
- 10) How did Napoleon's soldiers indirectly cause his defeat?

Wanting to eliminate the French presence in order to gain self-rule, and the idea of nationalism developed and began to spread.

Nationalism is the belief that one's greatest loyalty is to a shared culture, including aspects of common history, language, religion, and nationality, rather than to a leader or border. As a result of Napoleon's conquest of Europe, nationalist sentiments were ignited. Enlightenment ideals, which manifested into the French slogan of "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite," or "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," became the rallying cry for the masses across Europe and throughout the world in the 1800s, contributing to the growth of nationalism, which in turn caused various revolutions across Europe and even into Latin America.



Section Review:

- 11) What ideas were spread by Napoleon's soldiers?
- 12) How did Napoleon try to change the people he conquered?
- 13) How did the people in conquered lands respond to Napoleon?
- 14) What is nationalism?
- 15) What sparked widespread nationalism across Europe?
- 16) What became the slogan for the French Revolution?

Former absolute monarchs who were defeated by Napoleon met after his exile in 1815 at the **Congress of Vienna**. There they reestablished the balance of power in Europe by reinstating absolute monarchies. Also, all lands taken by Napoleon were returned to the nations to which they belonged before Napoleon's rule.



The Congress of Vienna

Because of new ideas that had spread and growing feelings of nationalism, people in Europe wanted a change in government. These absolute monarchs therefore had to suppress the democratic movement encouraged by the French Revolution. Despite these moves to return **conservatives** (people who are against change and hold to traditional values and attitudes) to power, the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity spread, feeding the nationalist movements of the 1830s and 1840s. The two main aspects of nationalist movements in the 1800s were unification and separation.

Unification is when people of a common culture from different states joined together, and **separation** is when groups splintered off from their current government to form one that was more representative of their own interests. **Liberals**, those who are open to new ideas and are willing to move away from tradition, and **radicals**, those who want a total and complete change in social and political reform, led nationalist movements to create nation-states all across Europe after 1815.

Section Review:

17) What was the purpose of the Congress of Vienna?

18) What actions were taken to achieve this purpose?

19) Why did so many Europeans want to change their government?

20) Define:

A. Conservative:

B. Liberal:

C. Radical:

21) What were the two main aspects of nationalist movements in Europe in the 1800s?

22) Who led nationalist movements across Europe?

Nationalist movements within Europe began in the **Balkans** when the Greeks rebelled against the Ottoman Empire in 1821. Supported by Britain, France, and Russia, Greece became an independent nation in 1830.

Despite the arrangements of the Congress of Vienna, revolutions occurred in Belgium, Italy, and Russia. Led by the **liberals**, revolutions erupted across Europe in 1848. Most were suppressed or put down by conservative groups by 1849, except in France.

Charles X had attempted to establish an absolute monarchy in France in 1830 with no success. He was replaced by **Louis-Philippe**, who ruled until 1848 when he lost favor with the people and was overthrown in favor of a republic. Upon establishment of this republic, the radicals were divided as to what reforms should occur next. This uncertainty allowed the moderates to take control, elect a president, and establish a parliamentary system. **Louis-Napoleon** (Bonaparte's nephew) was then elected president. Four years later, Louis-Napoleon took the title of Emperor Napoleon III, taking advantage of the political instability of the country. During his reign, he stabilized and industrialized France.

Section Review:

23) What triggered nationalist movements in the Balkans?

24) Describe the changes in the Ottoman Empire between 1878 and 1914.

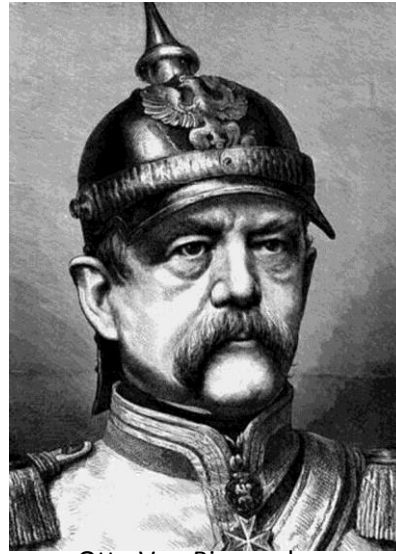
25) Who led revolutions across Europe in 1848?

26) What kind of government was established in France in 1848?

27) When the radicals could not agree on new reforms, who was allowed to take control?

28) Who was elected president of France and what changes did he bring to the country?

In Germany, leaders wanted to unify people that shared customs and cultures into one nation. The German Confederation was composed of thirty-nine loosely joined states, of which Austria and Prussia were the largest and most powerful. Prussia had a mainly Germanic population, a powerful army, and a liberal constitution. This gave Prussia the advantage in creating a unified German state. In Prussia, **Wilhelm I** was in power and was supported by the conservative **Junkers**, a group of nobles with political influence. Wilhelm appointed **Otto von Bismarck**, a Junker (pronounced yoon-ker), as his prime minister.



Otto Von Bismarck

Bismarck took full control of the country, ruling under a policy known as **realpolitik**, meaning "the politics of reality." Stating that the decisions of the day would be decided not by speeches but rather by "**blood and iron**," Bismarck practiced his realpolitik theory and embarked on a campaign of German unification.

Section Review

- 29) What was the motive behind the push to unify Germany?
- 30) Which two states were the largest and most powerful of the German confederation?
- 31) Why was Prussia the logical choice to lead the unification movement?
- 32) Who were the two most important leaders of Prussia?
- 33) Who took full control of Prussia?
- 34) What is realpolitik?
- 35) What method did Bismarck intend to use to unify Germany?

There were three wars of German unification from 1864 to 1871 in which Prussia fought Denmark, Austria, and France. In the first war, Austria and Prussia formed an alliance to take land from Denmark. Soon thereafter, Bismarck purposefully created border conflicts with Austria to provoke them into declaring war on Prussia, a war known as the **Seven Weeks War**.

In the final move for unification, Bismarck created an outside threat in an attempt to win the support of the remaining German states. After Bismarck changed the wording of the Ems Telegram to make it appear that Wilhelm I had insulted the French ambassador to Prussia, and published this forged version to media, the French were provoked to declare war, just as Bismarck had hoped. After the defeat of Napoleon III in the Franco-Prussian War, German unification was complete.

Section Review:

36) What three countries did Prussia go to war with?

37) What caused the Seven Weeks War?

38) How did Bismarck provoke France into war with Prussia?

39) What final event completed the unification of Germany?

In Italy, like in Germany, nationalism caused leaders to want to unify people that shared similar customs and cultures into one nation. **Count Camillo di Cavour** led the unification of the Northern Italian states. The kingdom of **Piedmont-Sardinia** was the largest and most powerful of the Italian states, with its liberal constitution, unification under this state appealed to many Italians of neighboring northern states. With French assistance, Cavour won the Austrian-occupied land of northern Italy.

At the same time, **Giuseppe Garibaldi**, leader of the Red Shirts, captured Sicily in the south. Cavour persuaded Garibaldi to unite the two sections, in 1860 allowing King Victor Emmanuel II to lead the united Italy with Rome as its capital. Soon thereafter, Venetia and the Papal States were added as well.

Four short wars fought between 1859 and 1871 redrew the map of Europe while addressing the questions of German and Italian nationalism. For the next four decades these Great Powers would remain at peace and territorial disputes ceased to divide most of their governments, despite the fact that nationalist grievances continued to fester in some places.

Section Review:

- 40) What caused leaders to want a unified Italy?**
- 41) Who was Count Camillo di Cavour?**
- 42) Why did most Italians want to unify under the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia?**
- 43) Which country helped Cavour win back Austrian-occupied land in Northern Italy?**
- 44) Who was Guiseppe Garibaldi?**
- 45) What deal did Cavour want to make with Garibaldi?**
- 46) Who became the leader of unified Italy?**
- 47) How many years did it take to unify Germany and Italy?**
- 48) How long did the Great Powers remain at peace?**
- 49) What was the driving force behind the unification of Germany and Italy?**

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