Unification of Germany
World History

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Unification of Germany

1848-1914

No event in Europe was as important as the unification of Germany
Nationalism

Nationalism is a feeling of belonging and loyalty that causes people to think of themselves as a nation.

- During the 19th and 20th centuries, nationalism was a powerful force that could:
  - Create one nation from many separate countries
  - Break one nation up into many countries
  - Cause for Independence
Before the campaigns of Napoleon, Germany was divided into hundreds of independent states and cities. Although the people were Germanic, they had little sense of national identity.

**The Napoleonic Wars**

- In the last decade of the 18th century, war broke out between France and the rest of Europe.
- French Emperor Napoleon’s forces were strong enough to conquer and control the whole of mainland Europe, including the numerous German states.
- Napoleon reorganised Germany into 39 larger states. He also established the **Confederation of the Rhine**, a league of 16 German states. This brought further unification to Germany.
- Napoleon was defeated firstly at Leipzig in 1813 and then at Waterloo in 1815, bringing an end to the Confederation of Rhine.
Effects of the Napoleonic Wars

Following Napoleon’s subjugation of Europe and the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine, the German states realised that being small and politically divided meant being vulnerable to strong aggressors. The states realised they needed each other for common defence.

The German princes stirred up nationalistic feelings in the German population to help raise armies to drive Napoleon's forces out of German territory. This was aided by the development of nationalist societies within the German universities.

Allied victory at the Battle of Leipzig in 1813 was partially a result of successful political and military cooperation between the German states.

The lessons learned by the defeat of Napoleon and the strong nationalism that was stirred up to finally drive him out, helped strengthen the sense of a common German identity.
Johann Gottlieb Fichte

The first, original, and truly natural boundaries of states are beyond doubt their internal boundaries. Those who speak the same language are joined to each other by a multitude of invisible bonds by nature herself, long before any human art begins; they understand each other and have the power of continuing to make themselves understood more and more clearly; they belong together and are by nature one and an inseparable whole.
Congress of Vienna
The German Confederation

• At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the allied forces decided to dissolve the Confederation of the Rhine. They wanted to eradicate the memory of French occupation. The German states now formed the German Confederation, also known as the Bund.

• It aimed to protect its members and give them a stronger voice in Europe. It had a Diet (Parliament) but it did not achieve much as decisions had to be unanimous.
Congress of Vienna

Established

AUSTRIA

As MAIN

GERMAN STATE
German Unification

- Prior to the French Revolution, there were more than 300 German states.
- Prussia and Austria were the largest.
- The smaller number of German states encouraged feelings of nationalism and patriotism among these German states.
Barriers to German Unification

- Austria Vs Prussia
- Rulers of smaller states feared loss of power in a united Germany.
- Economic differences between western industrial states and agricultural eastern states.
Catholic v Protestant

German states had once shared the Catholic religion but this changed after the Reformation.

Germany became divided between Catholic and Protestant.

30 Years War
Catholics reject the doctrine of *sola scriptura* and do not believe that the Bible alone is sufficient. They believe that both the Bible and sacred Roman Catholic tradition are equally binding upon the Christian. Many Roman Catholics doctrines, such as purgatory, praying to the saints, worship or veneration of Mary, etc., have little or no basis in Scripture but are based solely on Roman Catholic traditions.

Authority of the Pope = . According to Catholicism the Pope is the “Vicar of Christ”, the Pope has the ability to speak *ex cathedra* (with authority on matters of faith and practice), making his teachings infallible and binding upon all Christians. On the other hand, Protestants believe that no human being is infallible and that Christ alone is the Head of the Church.
North v South

- **Northern states** tended to be Protestant (and support Prussia)
- **Southern states** tended to be Catholic (and support Austria)
Prussian Ascendancy

- Modern Industrialised
- Militarised State
Opposing Ideas

Grossdeutschland – The greater Germany
A Germany including the Austrian Empire

Kleindeutschland – The Little Germany
A Germany excluding the Austrian Empire
ZOLLVERIN

GERMAN - Free Trade Agreement

ECONOMIC ++++

POLITICAL xxxxxxxx
ZOLLVERIN

Most existing trade was conducted within and between the 39 states. But it was hampered by tariff barriers.

With growing production and improved transportation, businesses looked to maximise profits by increasing the markets available for their goods. A single Germany without so many taxes and tariffs would increase prosperity.

In 1818, Prussia scrapped trade tariffs within its own territories and lowered import rates. Throughout the 1820s and early 1830s, other German states joined this voluntary customs union. This became known as the Zollverein.
ZOLLVERIN

By 1836, 25 of the 39 German states had joined this economic alliance. This indicated that a more permanent, political union could be beneficial.

The historian William Carr referred to the Zollverin as the Mighty lever of German unification.
The Wanderer above the Sea of Fog, 1818 by Caspar David Friedrich
The French occupation of German lands before 1815 resulted in a growth of resentment towards the occupying forces.

These feelings led people to react against French ideas and culture. Instead of French Rationalism, **German Romanticism** flourished.

Artists and writers looked to the inner life of individuals. Others evoked the idea of a national spirit or "volk" - something that had existed in the past but been suppressed under Napoleon's rule.

A culture emerged that encouraged people of the subjugated states to consider their identity and their roots.
Interest in folklore was growing at the time. The Brothers Grimm conducted research and published a collection of folk tales. They presented these as specifically German in origin – removing tales and changing details that suggested different origins, particularly French influence.
In 1841, the poet Hoffmann von Fallersleben wrote the words to what was to become the German national anthem. The lyrics talked of **“Deutschland über alles”**

– Germany above everything.

Plea for leaders to give priority to Germany as a whole, rather than their individual states.
Revolutions of 1848

Nationalism reaches ascendancy

German revolutions result in Frankfurt Parliament

Pan-GERMAN parliament (1st)
Revolutions of 1848

CONSTITUTION

Liberalism

Liberal thinkers promoted the idea of an elected parliament to pass laws and run the country, rather than power held solely by an absolute monarch. They also championed freedom of speech and an end to censorship.
CROWN

STAATENHEUS – The house of the state

VOLKSHAUS – The house of the people
Austria said it would oppose a centralized government in Germany
Prussian king — FREDRICK WILLIAM IV offered the crown of the unified German Empire
DECLINED THE OFFER
Proposed German Unification

• Proposed country was one in which the parliament would have considerable power
  – With limitation of the royal prerogative, Frederick William IV of Prussia turns down the offer of the throne
• Was opposed to any limitations on royal power
Major difference in Ideologies

Prussia → Liberal - Frederick William IV

Austria → Conservative - Klemens von Metternich 1821-1848—Called Liberalism “EVIL”
FAILURE
1859
France and Piedmont defeat Austria in the Northern Italian War
Maintenance of authoritarian regime in Vienna relied upon respect for military prowess
Shaken by defeat
Popular unrest grows throughout the empire
To hold back unrest Franz Josef agrees to a constitution that establishes a parliament
• Frederick William IV of Prussia suffers a breakdown
• Brother, William takes the regency
  —Announces reforms
William I
Appoints Otto Von Bismarck as Prime Minister
Otto Von Bismarck wanted a UNIFIED GERMANY but with PRUSSIAN DOMINANCE
Conservative
REALPOLITIK

NO IDEALS
NO PRINCIPLES

POLITICS BASED
ON POWER
Realpolitik in Prussia

Change in attitude of liberals

Fatal mistake was assumption that enthusiasm and selflessness could be translated into power and substituted for statesmanship
Theory and rhetoric would not work

BEING IDEALISTIC = UNREALISTIC

Socrates X
“GERMANY DOES NOT LOOK TO PRUSSIA’S LIBERALISM BUT TO HER POWER... NOT BY SPEECHES AND MAJORITIES WILL THE GREAT QUESTIONS OF THE DAY BE DECIDED — BUT BY IRON AND BLOOD”

~Otto von Bismarck
Challenges before BISMARCK

Army Reforms
Socialism – Banned Social Democratic Party

BUT

Started Europe’s first Social Welfare Programmes
Health Insurance
Accident Insurance
Old Age Pensions
HOW TO COUNTER LIBERALS?

Kulturkampf (German for “culture struggle”) was the name given to a period in German history (1871 to approximately 1887) where the German chancellor Otto von Bismarck sought to subject the Roman Catholic Church in Germany to state controls and governance.
Zwischen Berlin und Rom.

Der letzte Zug war mir allerdings unangenehm; aber die Partie ist deshalb noch nicht verloren. Ich habe noch einen sehr schönen Zug in petto!

Das wird auch der letzte sein, und dann sind Sie in wenigen Jahren macht — wenigstens für Deutschland.
Anti-Church, Anti-Catholic Policies
Made LIBERALS happy
LIBERALS - Supported INDUSTRIALISATION - So did BISMARCK
“GERMANY DOES NOT LOOK TO PRUSSIA’S LIBERALISM BUT TO HER POWER...NOT BY SPEECHES AND MAJORITIES WILL THE GREAT QUESTIONS OF THE DAY BE DECIDED

— BUT BY IRON AND BLOOD”

~Otto von Bismarck
Otto von Bismarck

Sought a government that would be parliamentary but at the same time allow authoritarian policies

Parliament refused to approve budget until their army reforms were approved by the king

— Bismarck and government continues to collect taxes and fund the army as before
Otto Von Bismarck

Bourgeoisie would obtain the benefits of economic consolidation

King retained the advantages of political domination
Russian defeat in Crimean War keeps them out of continental politics

Britain concerned about internal reform

Napoleon III hopes that an internal German Civil War might let him expand the French Empire across the Rhine
SCHLESWEGIN WARS
1864 – War with Denmark

- Danish king rules over Schleswig and Holstein as a duke
  - These provinces were ethnically German
- Denmark annexes Schleswig into the country
  - Nationalist sentiment in Germany was outraged
  - William I proposes joint action to Franz Josef
1864 – War with Denmark

- Austria wanted them to become an independent country in the German Confederation
- Prussia sought outright annexation
Schleswig-Holstein Compromise

• 1865 Compromise
  – Holstein
    • Governed by Austria
  – Schleswig
    • Governed by Prussia
  – Joint sovereignty reaffirmed

• Tension between Austria and Prussia continued to grow
NORTH GERMAN CONFEDERATION
Southern states sided with Austria
Austro-Prussian War 1866
France and Austria

Bismarck knew French leader Napoleon III from his time as Ambassador to France.

Bismarck persuaded Napoleon to not intervene in the Austro-Prussian War, in exchange for more French land.
7-WEEKS WAR

Austrian Army destroyed at the Battle of Königgrätz
Destroyed the balance of power achieved at the Congress of Vienna, 50 years before
7-WEEKS WAR

France – Scared due to short duration
They had hoped long war would weaken PRUSSIA and AUSTRIA
MORE

BISMARCK REFUSED TO GIVE
them the land after war
FRANCO – PRUSSIAN WAR

Bismarck believed that a war with France would allow him to unite all German states.
Spanish Candidature

In July 1870 it was proposed that a Prussian prince, Leopold of Hohenzollern, become Spanish king.

France feared being surround by enemies and was outraged by this plan. Leopold eventually turned down the proposal.
Ems Telegram

France’s Ambassador to Prussia, Count Benedetti protested to King William I about the Spanish plan.

Bismarck edited a telegram about this to suggest the Kaiser had insulted the Ambassador. Bismarck leaked it to newspapers and France was outraged.
French defeat

France were defeated by the united armies of the north and south German confederations.

Bismarck heavily punished France, including taking land such as Alsace-Lorraine and also money too.

5 Billion Franc
Bismarck’s role

Bismarck was the man who engineered most French actions, and so provoked the war.

He persuaded France to not help Austria, and then created the situation where southern German states wanted his protection.
"I always considered that a war with France would naturally follow a war against Austria... I was convinced that the gulf which was created over time between the north and the south of Germany could not be better overcome than by a national war against the neighboring people who were aggressive against us. I did not doubt that it was necessary to make a French-German war before the general reorganization of Germany could be realized."
Otto von Bismarck is known as the founder of the German Empire. Germany’s first chancellor from 1871 to 1890.
Franco-Prussian War

France loses

Alsace-Lorraine
The German Empire

January 18, 1871

—William I proclaimed Emperor of the Germans at Versailles
Proclamation of the German Empire -

VERSAILLES
L’esperance (HOPE) by PUVIS DE CHAVANNES
The Black Spot – La Tache Noir – Albert Bettanièr
WORLD WAR 1

Britain, France, Russia, Italy, USA

Vs

Germany, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria.