

# What historical circumstances led to the unification of Germany and Italy?

Objective:

- **Explain** the historical circumstances that led to the unification of Germany and Italy.

## Introduction

➔ **Directions:** Examine the two maps below, then answer the questions that accompany them.

### Map A



Map of Europe after the Congress of Vienna, 1815.

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons

1. In 1815, what two empires existed in Europe?

2. The German Confederation was an association of 39 German states in Central Europe, created by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The Congress of Vienna coordinated the economies of separate German-speaking countries and replaced the former Holy Roman Empire. **According to the map, how would the establishment of the German Confederation impact existing empires and states?**

3. Locate the Italian peninsula. It looks like a boot that juts into the Mediterranean Sea. **How many different states/kingdoms control sections of the Italian peninsula?**

## Map B



Map of Language Groups in Europe, 1910  
[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons and is in the public domain

4. What is the purpose of Map B?

5. Based on both maps, which language(s) were spoken in France? Spain? Why do you think this was?

6. Which languages were spoken in the Austrian Empire?

7. Which languages were spoken in the Ottoman Empire?

8. Which states (empires, countries, kingdoms, etc) controlled land where people spoke German the most?

9. Which states controlled land where people spoke Italian the most?

10. Based on both maps, which areas are most likely to be pulled together by nationalism? Why?

11. Which states are most likely to be pulled apart by nationalism? Why?



Contextualize



Connect Cause and Effect

## The Impact of the French Revolution and Napoleon on European Nationalism

➔Directions: Examine the two maps below, then answer the questions that accompany them.

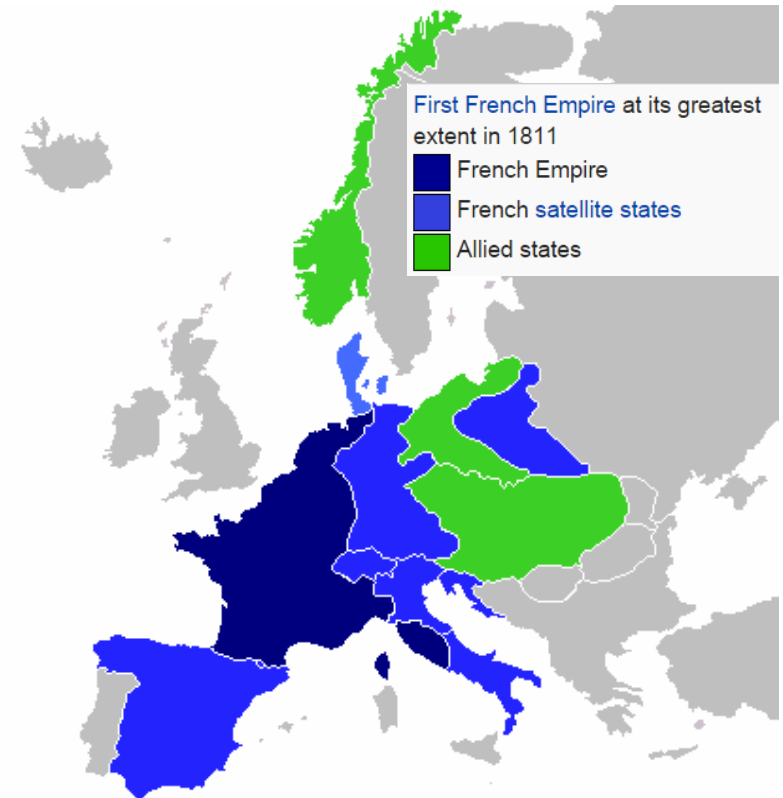
The **French Revolution** (1789–1799) was a period of political and social upheaval in France and Europe, during which the French government, previously an absolute monarchy, underwent radical changes based on **Enlightenment principles** of republic, citizenship, and inalienable rights.

This revolution sparked five wars between the well-trained armies of **Napoleon Bonaparte**, emperor of France, and neighbors including Prussia and Austria called the **Napoleonic Wars**. From 1803 to 1814, Napoleon ruled over a large section of Europe. During that time he and the ideals of the French Revolution greatly affected the regions he controlled. The revolution’s nationalistic call for “liberty, equality, and fraternity” and a government ruled by the will of the French people, instead of a royal family with connections outside of France, inspired similar feelings in regions occupied by Napoleon’s troops.

In central Europe, for example, Napoleon created the **German Confederation**, an association of German speaking states that were previously part of the Holy Roman Empire, Prussia, and the Austrian empire. Soon after Napoleon was defeated, the German Confederation was dismantled. At the **Congress of Vienna** (1815) the major European powers decided to give the land back to Prussia and the Austrian Empire, but the idea of unity for German speaking people remained.

The French Revolution and Napoleon affected people living on the Italian peninsula as well. Napoleon ruled the entire area as the **Napoleonic Kingdom of Italy**. His reign inspired nationalistic feelings in the Italians. As happened to the German Confederation, the Kingdom of Italy was broken up after Napoleon’s defeat. The representatives at the Congress of Vienna divided Italy up into small independent governments and gave the Austrian Empire control of Northern Italy. Austrian Chancellor Franz Metternich, an influential diplomat at the Congress of Vienna, stated that the word *Italy* was nothing more than "a geographic expression."

Though Napoleon was defeated, the **nationalism** that he and the French Revolution inspired lingered in German and Italian speaking regions, threatening the Austrian Empire.



[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons

**What effects did the French Revolution and Napoleon's rule have on the German and Italian speaking people in Europe?**





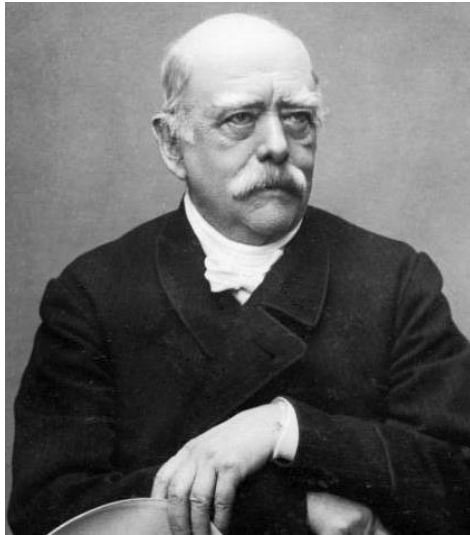
Contextualize



Connect Cause and Effect

## German Unification (1861-1871)

**Directions:** Watch this [video from Simple History](#) entitled “[Otto von Bismarck \(1815-1890/German Unification\)](#)” and read through the text and examine the image below, then answer the questions that follow.



Photograph of Otto von Bismarck in 1881

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons

By the mid-1800s, **Prussia** had been a force in politics in Northern Europe for centuries. Like most of Europe, it was conquered by Napoleon in the early 1800s and was a part of the coalition of countries who defeated him in 1814.

In 1861, **King Wilhelm I**, a supporter of German unity, came to power. In 1862, he appointed **Otto von Bismarck** (1815–1898) the new Prime Minister of Prussia. Bismarck became known for his style of diplomacy known as *realpolitik*. *Realpolitik* is also known as “pragmatism” and is a way of making political decisions based on being practical instead of based on ideals. Bismarck argued that Germany could only unify through a **foreign policy called “blood and iron,”** meaning through war and military strength.

Through a series of wars against Denmark, Austria, and France, Prussia led by Wilhelm I and Otto von Bismarck conquered most of the German speaking areas of Europe. On January 18, 1871, the German princes assembled in the Hall of Mirrors of the Palace of Versailles after defeating France and proclaimed the Prussian King Wilhelm I as the “German Emperor” on January 18, 1871. The **German Empire** was thus founded.

Source: “Germany.” New World Encyclopedia. <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Germany>

### Questions

1. Who were the two leaders of Prussia that led the unification of Germany?

2. Describe Otto von Bismarck’s policy called *realpolitik*. How was *realpolitik* different from the way Maximilien Robespierre led during the French Revolution?

3. According to Bismarck’s “blood and iron” policy, how was Prussia going to unite the German-speaking people?

4. Which countries did Prussia go to war with to gain control of the German speaking areas in Europe?

### Timeline of German Unification

1861 King Wilhelm I of Prussia comes to power

1862 Wilhelm I appoints **Otto von Bismarck** as Minister-President of Prussia

1864 Danish War-

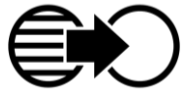
1866 Austro-Prussian War

1870-1871 Franco-Prussian War

1/18/1871 German Empire is proclaimed,  
unifying Germany



Contextualize



Connect Cause and  
Effect

## Italian Unification (1849-1878)

Directions: Watch this [video from Knowledgeia](#) entitled, “Italian Unification Explained as Short as Possible,” and read through the text and examine the images and maps below, then answer the questions that follow.

### Timeline of Italian Unification

1849 Victor Emmanuel II becomes king of Sardinia

1852 Count Cavour becomes prime minister of Piedmont

1860 Giuseppe Garibaldi’s invasion of the Two Sicilies

3/17/1861 Kingdom of Italy is proclaimed

1866 Italy annexes Venetia

1870 Italy annexes Rome, uniting all of the Italian peninsula

## The Soul, The Brain, and the Sword of Italian Unification



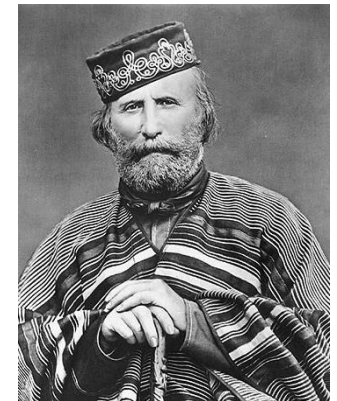
Giuseppe Mazzini, “The Soul”

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons



Camillo Cavour, “The Brain”

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons



Giuseppe Garibaldi, “The Sword”

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons

After Napoleon Bonaparte’s empire crumbled, the representatives at the Congress of Vienna decided to award most of northern Italy to the Austrian Empire and to give several monarchs control over the rest of the Italian peninsula, instead of unifying them. Despite the Austrian Empire’s attempts to suppress it, nationalism inspired by the French Revolution took hold of the Italians.

Revolutionary groups formed in Italy and tried to organize the people into revolt. **Giuseppe Mazzini**, who was later known as “the soul” of Italian unification, was a part of one of the most influential groups, known as the Carbonari, that created a secret organization called **Young Italy** in 1831. In southern Italy, another member of the Carbonari, a general named **Giuseppe Garibaldi** gathered nationalistic volunteers called **red shirts** to fight with him against the Austrian Empire and those Italian monarchs who did not want to unify Italy. Between 1814 and 1849, the rebellions started by nationalist organizations like those led by Mazzini and Garibaldi were stamped down by local forces or Austrian troops.

As a result, both Mazzini and Garibaldi were exiled for their revolutionary actions. They returned when leaders in northern Italy started a campaign that eventually brought Italy together.

In 1849, **Victor Emmanuel II**, a supporter of Italian unification, became the King of Sardinia in the Piedmont region of northern Italy. **Camillo di Cavour**, an experienced and savvy diplomat, became Emmanuel's president of the Council of Ministers in 1852. Emmanuel and Cavour, with the help of Napoleon III of France, used Piedmontese and French troops to successfully push the Austrians out of Northern and Central Italy, expanding the Kingdom of Sardinia to a large amount of the Italian peninsula by 1859.

Garibaldi, who had returned to Italy to aid in the unification, was convinced by Cavour in May of 1860 to concentrate his forces on Sicily where recent rebellions demonstrated that there was support for their cause. Garibaldi and about a thousand red shirts conquered Sicily in three days. Garibaldi went on to attack several other cities and invaded Naples, gaining support from the inhabitants and becoming a national hero in the process.

Meanwhile, Victor Emmanuel commanded the Sardinian army to march south, defeating the Papal states, and coming to Garibaldi's aid. Garibaldi gave over his command to Emmanuel and they defeated the king of Naples. Only Rome and Venetia remained. On February 18, 1861, Victor Emmanuel assembled the deputies of the first Italian Parliament in Turin. On March 17 1861, the Parliament **proclaimed Victor Emmanuel II King of Italy**.

Three months later, Cavour, having seen his life's work nearly complete, died. When he was given the last rites, Cavour purportedly said: "Italy is made. All is safe."

By 1871 both Venetia and Rome came under the control of the Italian government. Venetia was won because the Italians sided with the Prussians in the Prusso-Austrian War in 1866 and Rome was taken by force when French troops left the city to defend France against Prussia in 1870.

Source: Adapted from "Italian Unification." New World Encyclopedia. [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Italian\\_unification](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Italian_unification)



[Image](#) created by Artemka is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

1. Identify the four most important leaders of Italian unification.

2. Which countries/empires did the Italians have to fight or make deals with to gain control of the entire Italian peninsula?

FA

**SQ 16. What historical circumstances led to the unification of Germany and Italy?**



Connect Cause and Effect

**Directions:** Based on what you have learned, complete the task below to describe how the Tokugawa Shogunate (1600-1868) gained, consolidated, and maintained power in Japan.

**Example:** *The Mongol Empire gained, consolidated, and maintained power throughout Asia during the 13th century.*



Contextualize

**Who?**

*individuals, groups of people, regions, nations involved*

Mongol Empire

**When?**

*date, year, era, "before \_\_," "after \_\_"*

13th century

**Where?**

*continents, regions, countries, geographic features nearby, describe the geography if relevant*

Asia and Eastern Europe

**How?**

*describe the process that took place*

Repeated military campaigns, superior weaponry, religious toleration for conquered people

**Combined Contextualization:**  
Example 1

**Why** did it happen **when** and **where** it happened?

Throughout the 13th century, the Mongol Empire which stretched across Eastern Europe and most of Asia gained, consolidated, and maintained power by using repeated military campaigns, superior weaponry, and implementing religious toleration for conquered people.

**Writing Strategies Used:**

Prepositional phrase (*Throughout the 13th century,*)  
Conjunctions (*by, and*)

**Combined Contextualization:**  
Example 2

**Why** did it happen **when** and **where** it happened?

The Mongol Empire, a state that stretched across Eastern Europe and most of Asia in the 13th century, maintained power by using repeated military campaigns, superior weaponry, and implementing religious toleration for conquered people.

**Writing Strategies Used:**

Appositives (*..., a state that stretched across Eastern Europe and most of Asia in the 13th century...*)

**Content and Vocabulary Checklist**

Use the checklist below to assess the use of important content and vocabulary in the unit.

Self Yes/No	Teacher Yes/No	Did you use the content and vocabulary below in your response?
		language
		Napoleon
		nation, nationalism
		unify
		war

**Event:** The Unification of Italy **OR** Germany

**Who?**

*individuals, groups of people, regions, nations involved*

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**When?**

*date, year, era, "before \_\_" "after \_\_"*

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**Where?**

*continents, regions, countries, geographic features nearby, describe the geography if relevant*

---

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**How?**

*describe the process that took place*

---

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**Why?**

*use words and phrases like "led to," because, and so to show connections between events and to explain why*

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**Combined Contextualization**

**Why** did it happen **when** and **where** it happened?

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