

The Unification of Germany

I. Why Many Germans Desired Unity

A. Common Language

B. Common Heritage

1. "Germany" had defended Europe for centuries against the barbarian and pagan peoples of the East.
2. Holy Roman Empire was centered in "Germany" and was led by German Emperors
3. The Protestant Reformation began in "Germany"
4. Significant contributions to western science, music, literature and philosophy had been made by Germans during the 17th - 19th centuries.

C. Conviction that significant contributions of the past indicated the promise of an even greater destiny for the German people once they were united in a single German nation.

II. Obstacles to Unity

A. Multiple, totally independent German states each jealous of its independenceB. Lack of Religious Unity

1. North -- Protestant
2. South -- Catholic

C. Existence of Two Potential Leaders of "Germany"

1. Prussia -- leader of the Protestant states
2. Austria -- leader of the Catholic states

III. How Unity Was Achieved

A. Napoleon greatly reduced the number of independent German states (from over 300 to 38)B. Customs Union (Zollverein) helped integrate the economies of all the North German States

C. Rise of Prussia as the Dominant German State

1. Austro-Prussian War (1866)
 - a. Prussia increased her territory in northern Germany
 - b. Austria excluded from the German Confederation
2. Reorganization of German Confederation (1866)
 - a. Included all but four south German states
 - b. Federal system allowed each state to preserve own ruler and government
 - c. King of Prussia was President of Confederation
 - d. President of Confederation controlled army and foreign affairs of entire Confederation
3. South German Confederation Joins North German Confederation in a Customs Union (1867)
4. Franco-Prussian War (1870-71)

South German Confederation united with North German Confederation to form a federal Empire with King of Prussia as Emperor as result of:

- a. Upsurge in patriotic feeling unleashed by the war
 - b. Recognition that the four states of the South German Confederation were too weak to face an "expansionist" France on their own
- D. Leadership of Otto von Bismarck

The rise of Prussia to its new position as head of a united Germany was largely the work of this one man

IV. Consequences of German Unification

- A. End product was an essentially autocratic monarchy rather than a parliamentary democracy on the British pattern
 1. Although individual German states preserved local rule and lower house of Parliament elected by universal manhood suffrage, the Chancellor (Prime Minister) was responsible only to the Emperor and not to Parliament

2. Emperor had absolute control over army and conduct of foreign affairs
3. Efforts to create a true parliamentary democracy were swept away in a sea of patriotic fervor

B. Most Germans were so proud of their success, they sought greater gains for the new German Empire and were highly supportive of Emperor's aggressive military and foreign policy which created many of the tensions which led to World War I

The Unification of Italy

- I. Why many Italians Desired Unity
 - A. Common Language
 - B. Pride in a Common Heritage
 1. Italy had been the center of the ancient Roman Empire
 2. Birthplace of the Renaissance
 - C. Conviction that glorious past was an indication of future greatness if they were united in one Italian nation

- II. Obstacles to Unity
 - A. Multiple, independent Italian states had been endorsed by the Congress of Vienna
 - B. Opposition of the Pope since Italian unification would mean loss of his Kingdom (Papal States)
 - C. Opposition of France and Austria
 1. A strong, united Italy would be a potential threat to them
 2. Austria would have to give up Italian territory
 3. France would experience Catholic protest over loss of political independence of the Pope

- III. How Unity was Achieved
 - A. Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont served as a rallying-point for those desiring a united Italy:
 1. Nationalists -- only state ruled by an ethnic Italian
 2. Political Liberals -- only constitutional monarchy within Italy
 3. Businessmen -- government policies supported business interests

(over)

- B. Leadership of Count Cavour (Prime Minister of Sardinia-Piedmont)
- C. Austro-Italian War (1859):
 - 1. Supported by France
 - a. Device to weaken France's rival - Austria
 - b. Goal of a united North Italian State would not affect the Pope's territory nor create a truly strong Italy
 - 2. Territory of Lombardy ceded by Austria to Sardinia-Piedmont
 - 3. Northern Italian states joined to Sardinia-Piedmont
- D. Garibaldi's invasion of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies
 - 1. Forced Sardinia-Piedmont's occupation of the Papal States (minus Rome)
 - 2. Unified the northern and southern Italians
- E. Austro - Prussian War (1866)
Allowed Italy to seize Venetia from Austria
- F. Franco - Prussian War (1870)
Removal of French troops from Rome allowed Italy to occupy Rome and declare Rome the capital of Italy

IV. Consequences of Italian Unification

- A. End product was a parliamentary monarchy as the King of Sardinia-Piedmont became King of Italy
- B. Social and economic gap between the progressive, industrializing north and the stagnant, agricultural south severely weakened Italy