

---

# Nationalism, *Realpolitik*, and Realism: 1850-1871

---

## IV. The Unification of Italy

### A. The Situation in 1850

1. Repeated failures
  - The *Carbonari* had failed to incite a successful revolution.
  - Giuseppe Mazzini and the Young Italy Movement failed to rally support for a republic.
2. Continued obstacles
  - Austria continued to control Lombardy and Venetia while also dominating other small Italian states.
  - A reactionary Bourbon regime continued to control the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.
  - Pope Pius IX opposed the cause of Italian nationalism
3. Piedmont leadership
  - Italian nationalists looked to the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia for leadership. It was the only Italian state ruled by an Italian dynasty.
  - In 1852, Piedmont's King Victor Emmanuel II named Count Camillo di Cavour his prime minister.

### B. Cavour and the Practice of *Realpolitik*

1. *Realpolitik*
  - Early Italian nationalists such as Mazzini had been inspired by romantic ideals of nationalism.
  - Cavour was a realist guided by the dictates of political power. He believed that shrewd diplomacy and well-chosen alliances were more useful than grand proclamations and romantic rebellions.
  - Cavour's successful combination of power politics and secret diplomacy is called *Realpolitik*, "the politics of reality."
2. Strengthening Piedmont
  - Cavour launched an ambitious economic program that included building railroads and expanding commerce.
  - Cavour modernized Piedmont's army.
3. The Franco-Piedmont alliance

## Crash Course

---

- Cavour understood that Austria was the greatest obstacle to Italian unity.
- Cavour formed an alliance with Napoleon III to drive Austria out of northern Italy.

### C. War with Austria, 1859

1. The combined French and Piedmont armies defeated the Austrians. Meanwhile, Italian nationalists staged revolts across northern Italy.
2. Sardinia annexed all of northern Italy except Venetia.

### D. Giuseppe Garibaldi and the Red Shirts

1. The pragmatic Cavour and the romantic Garibaldi agreed that Italy should be freed from foreign control.
2. While Cavour was uniting the north, he also secretly supported Garibaldi in the south.
3. In May 1860, Garibaldi and his small but zealous force of so-called Red Shirts successfully invaded and liberated the kingdom of the Two Sicilies.
4. Garibaldi agreed to step aside and let Victor Emmanuel rule the areas he had conquered.

### E. Persistent Problems

1. In March 1861, an Italian parliament formally proclaimed the kingdom of Italy with Victor Emmanuel “as king “by the grace of God and the will of the nation.” Tragically, Cavour died just two months later.
2. The newly unified kingdom of Italy faced a number of persistent problems:
  - Unification was still not complete. Venetia remained under Austrian control and the papacy led by Pius IX remained hostile to the new Italian state.
  - Northern Italy was urban, sophisticated, and increasingly industrialized. Southern Italy remained rural, backward, and poor.
  - The new government was burdened by a heavy debt.

## V. The Unification of Germany

### A. The Situation in 1860

1. Obstacles to unity

- Germany remained politically divided into a number of small states that jealously guarded their independence.
  - The German Confederation remained a loose grouping of 39 states dominated by Austria.
  - French foreign policy continued to support German rivalries while opposing Germany unity.
2. Prussia's growing strength
    - Prussia's population increased from 11 million in 1815 to more than 18 million in 1850.
    - Led by Prussia, the Zollverein (see Chapter 15) promoted German economic growth while demonstrating the advantages of unity.

### **B. Otto Von Bismarck, Master of *Realpolitik***

1. In 1862, William I chose as his prime minister a Junker and staunch conservative named Otto von Bismarck.
2. A master of *Realpolitik*, Bismarck set out to strengthen Prussia.
3. Bismarck enlarged and reequipped the Prussian army so that he could take advantage of opportunities for further territorial expansion.
4. Disavowing liberalism as frivolous and misguided, Bismarck firmly declared, "The great questions of our day cannot be solved by speeches and majority votes—that was the great error of 1848 and 1849—but by blood and iron."

### **C. War with Denmark, 1864**

1. Bismarck led Prussia into war with Denmark to win two J > border provinces, Schleswig and Holstein.
2. The victory combined with shrewd diplomacy enabled J Bismarck to begin the process of eliminating Austria from German affairs.
3. It has been said that only three people truly understood the controversy over Schleswig and Holstein.

**NOTE:** APEURO test writers do not expect you to be the fourth person to master this topic. As you study Bismarck and the wars with Denmark, Austria, and France, avoid getting bogged down in the details. Instead, focus on the consequences of each war.

### **D. War with Austria, 1866**

1. The Seven Weeks' War

## Crash Course

---

- In 1866, Bismarck provoked Austria into declaring war on Prussia.
  - Prussia's revitalized army easily crushed the Austrians in a brief conflict known as the Seven Weeks' War.
2. Consequences
    - Austria agreed to the dissolution of the German Confederation.
    - With Austria excluded from German affairs, Bismarck organized a North German Confederation dominated by Prussia.
    - As Prussia's ally, Italy annexed Venetia.

### E. War with France, 1870

1. The causes
  - France feared the sudden emergence of a strong and aggressive Prussia. It is important to note that France had opposed German unity for centuries.
  - Bismarck adroitly exploited a minor dispute between France and Prussia over the search for a new Spanish monarch. By skillfully editing the Ems Dispatch, Bismarck inflamed relations between France and Prussia.
  - Napoleon III declared war on Prussia on July 19, 1870.
2. The war
  - The Prussians successfully invaded France and forced Napoleon III to surrender on September 2, 1870.
  - On January 18, 1871, King William I was proclaimed German emperor in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles.
3. The consequences
  - Bismarck imposed a harsh settlement. He forced France to pay a huge indemnity and cede Alsace and most of Lorraine to the German empire.
  - The loss of rich deposits of coal and iron was a severe blow to France's economy. The loss of these provinces was an even greater blow to French national pride.
  - The unification of Germany created a new European balance of power. As the German empire rapidly industrialized, it became the strongest state on the continent of Europe and a formidable rival to Great Britain.