

CHAPTER 25

The Age of Nationalism, 1850-1914

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading and studying this chapter you should be able to:

1. explain how and why nationalism became an almost universal faith in Europe and the United States.
2. describe the unifications of both Germany and Italy in terms of cause, process, result.
3. describe how Napoleon III used nationalism to create his “Second Empire” in France, and how and why nationalism in Russia was linked to “modernization.”

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Early nationalism, which was generally liberal, idealistic, democratic, and radical, came to be, by the end of the nineteenth century, the basic organizing principle in Western society. The idea of “nation” had arrived in its modern form. Between 1850 and 1914, strong nation-states developed which won the enthusiastic support of all the social classes. This caused a shift in the balance of international political power, and pulled the masses away from the socialist doctrine of class war. Napoleon III of France played a pioneering role in this triumph of nationalism. His mild dictatorship, which came into being illegally and which lasted from 1852 to 1870, showed how the national state and its programs could appeal to rich and poor, conservative and radical. In this way, the national state became a way of coping with the challenge of rapid political and economic change.

In Italy, Count Cavour, the moderate nationalist leader of the kingdom of Sardinia, managed to unify most of Italy in 1860 into a single political state that was far from radical in social and economic matters. Shortly thereafter, in 1862, Otto von Bismarck became chief minister of Prussia. A master of power politics, Bismarck skillfully fought three wars to unify the states of Germany into a single nation under Prussian leadership. In doing so, Bismarck strengthened German nationalism and gave it a conservative and antiliberal thrust.

In the United States, competing national aspirations led to bitter civil war. In the South, a slave-based cotton economy, rapidly expanding as new land was opened and industrialization generated new demands for cotton, came into conflict with the urban culture and family-farm agriculture of the North. A Northern victory meant the end of slavery, but it did not mean land reform or the end of discrimination against blacks.

Nationalism was also important in Russia. There it led to major reforms after the Crimean War: in 1861 the serfs were freed, and the government encouraged the development of railroads and modern industry. Frustrated nationalism was an important factor in the Russian revolution of 1905, after defeat in a war with Japan.

Nationalism continued to be appealing to the masses because national governments and politicians responded effectively to many of their political demands and social needs. Throughout most of Europe, socialists and socialist political parties looked increasingly toward unions and parliaments for continued gradual improvement. They paid only lip service to the idea of radical, violent revolution and class war. The growing moderation of European socialists reflected the great appeal of nationalism for the masses. Only in multinational states, most notably the Austro-Hungarian Empire, did the growth of competing nationalisms promote fragmentation as opposed to unity.

STUDY OUTLINE

Use this outline to preview the chapter before you read a particular section in your textbook and then as a self-check to test your reading comprehension after you have read the chapter section.

I. Napoleon III in France

- A. While early nationalism was liberal and democratic in goals, Napoleon III in France used it for authoritarian purposes.
- B. The Second Republic and Louis Napoleon
 1. The reasons for Napoleon’s election include middle-class and peasant fears of socialism and a disgust with class politics.

2. Many people wanted a strong national leader who would serve all the people and help them economically.
 - a. Louis Napoleon wrote popular pamphlets on this subject.
 - b. He was elected president of France in 1848.
 3. Louis Napoleon believed the state had an obligation to provide jobs and stimulate the economy and to represent both rich and poor.
 4. He believed that parliaments and political parties simply represented middle-class interest groups, not the people.
 5. Napoleon cooperated with the conservative National Assembly, but it refused to change the constitution so he could run for another term.
 6. Therefore, he seized power in a *coup d'etat* in 1851 and dismissed the Assembly; these actions were approved by the voters.
- C. Napoleon III's Second Empire
1. Napoleon III's greatest success was improving the economy of France.
 - a. His government encouraged new investment banks and massive railroad construction.
 - b. The government also sponsored an ambitious program of public works, including the rebuilding of Paris.
 - c. He granted workers the right to form unions and to strike.
 2. His political system allowed only limited opposition.
 - a. He restricted the Assembly and tied reform to support of his candidates.
 - b. In the 1860s, he allowed the Assembly greater power and gave the opposition more freedom.

II. Nation building in Italy and Germany

- A. Napoleon's success demonstrated that the urban classes would rally to a strong and conservative national state.
- B. Italy to 1850: a battleground for great powers
1. Italy prior to 1860 was divided; much of it was under the control of Austria and the pope.
 2. Between 1815 and 1848, the goal of national unity began to appeal to Italians.
 3. Sardinia was the logical leader in the nationalist movement.
 4. Pope Pius IX opposed nationalism and other modern ideas.
- C. Cavour and Garibaldi in Italy
1. Count Cavour, the liberal minister of Sardinia, built Sardinia into a liberal and economically sound state.
 - a. He was a moderate nationalist who sought unity only for the northern and perhaps central areas of Italy.
 - b. He worked in the 1850s to consolidate Sardinia as a liberal state capable of leading northern Italy.
 2. Cavour used France to engineer a war with Austria to further his plans for unification.
 3. Central Italy joined with Sardinia in 1860 to form a united northern Italian state under Cavour.
 4. Garibaldi "liberated" southern Italy and Sicily, and Italy was further unified.
 - a. Garibaldi was a romantic revolutionary fighter with a private army called the "Red Shirts."
 - b. He introduced educational and social reforms in the south and took the property of the Jesuits.
 - c. Cavour got the south to join Sardinia to form the Kingdom of Italy, a parliamentary monarchy.

5. This new kingdom expanded to include Rome and Venice in 1870.
 - a. However, there were strong class divisions and only a few men had the vote.
 - b. There was also a strong cultural-economic gap between the northern and southern areas.

D. Germany before Bismarck

1. In the aftermath of 1848, the German states were locked in a political stalemate.
2. The Zollverein became a crucial factor in the Austro-Prussian rivalry.
3. William I of Prussia wanted to double the size of the army, but he was opposed by the parliament, which rejected the military budget in 1862.

E. Bismarck and the Austro-Prussian War, 1866.

1. Bismarck was a Junker politician whose goal was to secure power for himself and Prussia.
2. He became the chief minister of Prussia in 1862.
 - a. He was opposed to middle-class parliamentary opposition, and argued that “blood and iron” would be the way to solve Germany’s questions.
 - b. Prussian voters opposed him by sending large liberal majorities to the parliament.
 - c. Prussia’s attempted annexation of Schleswig-Holstein led first to an alliance with Austria in a war against Denmark (1864) and then to a war with Austria in 1866.
 - d. He skillfully neutralized Russia and France.
 - e. The German Confederation was dissolved and a new North German Confederation, led by Prussia, formed.
 - f. Austria withdrew from German affairs.
 - g. As a result, Bismarck’s goal of Prussian expansion was being realized.

F. The taming of Parliament

1. Bismarck believed the liberal middle class could be led to prefer national unity to liberal institutions.
2. He created a constitution for North Germany that allowed for some local controls but with the king in control of the army and foreign affairs.
 - a. Members of the lower house were elected by universal male suffrage.
 - b. Ultimate power was in the hands of the king of Prussia and his army.
3. Bismarck outmaneuvered the liberals in the parliament, and the middle class ended up supporting monarchical authority.

G. The Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871)

1. Bismarck used a patriotic war against France to bring southern Germany into the union.
 - a. Louis Napoleon was captured and France was forced to accept harsh peace terms.
 - b. William I was declared emperor of Germany-in the palace of Versailles.
2. As a result of military success, semi-authoritarian nationalism in Germany won out over liberalism.

III. Nation building in the United States

A. The United States experienced both separatist nationalism and bloody nation building.

1. The purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803 opened another enormous area for settlement.
 - a. In the North, white settlers extended the pattern of family-farm agriculture and began the process of industrialization.

- b. In the South, industry and cities did not develop, and slave-owning plantation farmers dominated the economy and society.
- 2. The growth of a slave-based cotton economy meant great profits and encouraged the defense of slavery in the South.
- 3. New territory in 1848 led to a national debate over slavery and a “house divided” by conflicting values.
- 4. Lincoln’s election led to Southern agitation for independence-as eleven states left the union.
- 5. The long Civil War (1861-1865) was the bloodiest conflict in American history.
- 6. The Northern victory was due to superior resources, to the disillusionment of ordinary whites in the South.
- 7. In the North, many people prospered during the war years.
 - a. Powerful business corporations emerged, supported by the Republican party.
 - b. The Homestead Act (1862) and the Thirteenth Amendment (1865) reinforced the concept of free labor.
 - c. A new American nationalism, based on the concept of “manifest destiny,” emerged from the war.
- 8. With Northern victory, Congress guaranteed the freedom of blacks but did not institute land reform, so blacks continued as poor sharecroppers.

IV. The modernization of Russia

- A. Russia’s rulers saw nationalism as a potential danger to the Empire but realized that Russia’s survival depended upon adoption of “modernization.”
- B. The “Great Reforms”
 - 1. The open-field system of agriculture still existed, and serfdom was still the basic social institution of nineteenth-century Russia.
 - a. Serfs were virtually slaves who could be sold with or without land.
 - b. The lord could force serfs into long military service, and severe punishment and sexual exploitation were common.
 - 2. The Crimean War (1853-1856) speeded up the modernization of Russia.
 - a. Russia’s defeat showed how badly the country had fallen behind the industrializing West.
 - b. The war also created the need for reforms because its hardships led to the threat of peasant uprisings.
 - 3. Serfdom was abolished in 1861, collective ownership of the land established, and other reforms undertaken.
 - a. Local assemblies (*zemstvos*) were established.
 - b. The legal system was reformed.
- C. The industrialization of Russia
 - 1. Railroad construction stimulated the economy and inspired nationalism and imperialism.
 - 2. The assassination of Alexander III (1881) brought political reform to an end.
 - 3. Economic reform was carried out by Sergei Witte, the minister of finance from 1892 to 1903.
 - a. More railroads were built, notably the trans-Siberian line.
 - b. Protective tariffs were raised.

- c. Foreign ideas and money were used to build factories and create modern coal, steel, and petroleum industries.

D. The revolution of 1905

1. Imperialist ambitions brought defeat at the hands of Japan in 1905 and political upheaval at home.
 - a. The “Bloody Sunday” massacre, when the tsar’s troops fired on a crowd of protesting workers, produced a wave of indignation.
 - b. By the summer of 1905, strikes, uprisings, revolts, and mutinies were sweeping the country.
2. A general strike in October forced Nicholas II to issue the October Manifesto, which granted full civil liberties and promised a popularly elected parliament (Duma).
3. The Social Democrats rejected the manifesto and led a bloody workers’ uprising in Moscow in December.
4. Middle-class moderates helped the government repress the uprising and survive as a constitutional monarchy.

V. The responsive national state, 1871-1914

A. Characteristics of the new national state

1. Ordinary people felt increasing loyalty to their governments.
2. By 1914, universal male suffrage was the rule, and women were beginning to demand the right to vote, too.
3. Nationalism (and militaristic policies) was a way that governments (mainly the elites) could create a sense of unity and divert attention away from class conflicts.
4. Extreme nationalist politicians (“demagogues”) found imaginary enemies, often Jews, as a way to whip up popular support for themselves.

B. The German Empire

1. The German Empire was a union of twenty-five German states in 1871, governed by a chancellor (Bismarck) and a parliament (the Reichstag).
2. Bismarck and the liberals attacked the Catholic church (the *Kulturkampf*) in an effort to maintain the superiority of state over church, but abandoned the attack in 1878.
3. Worldwide agricultural depression after 1873 resulted in the policy of economic protectionism in Germany.
4. Bismarck outlawed socialist parties in 1878.
5. Bismarck gave Germany an impressive system of social-welfare legislation, partly to weaken socialism’s appeal to the workers.
6. William II dismissed Bismarck in 1890 to try to win the support of the workers, but he couldn’t stem the rising tide of socialism.
7. The Social Democratic party was a socialist party.
 - a. In the elections of 1912, it became the largest party in the Reichstag.
 - b. It was strongly nationalistic and patriotic, not revolutionary.

C. Republican France (the Third Republic)

1. The defeat of France in 1871 led to revolution in Paris (the Commune).
2. The Paris Commune was brutally crushed by the National Assembly.
3. A new Third Republic was established and led by skilled men such as Gambetta and Ferry.

4. The Third Republic passed considerable reforms, including legalizing trade unions and creating state schools, and it built a colonial empire.
5. The Dreyfus affair (1898-1899) weakened France and caused anti-Catholic reaction.
 - a. Between 1901 and 1905, the government severed all ties between the state and the Catholic church.
 - b. Catholic schools were put on their own financially and lost many students.

D. Great Britain and Ireland

1. Britain is seen as the model country as it became a full democracy; all middle-class males won the right to vote in 1832.
2. The reform bills of 1867 and 1884 further extended the franchise in Britain, and political views and the party system became more democratic.
 - a. Nevertheless, some, like John Stuart Mill, explored the problem of safeguarding individual differences and unpopular opinions.
 - b. The conservative leader Disraeli supported extending the vote.
 - c. The Third Reform Bill of 1884 gave the vote to almost every adult male.
3. Led by David Lloyd George, the Liberal party ushered in social-welfare legislation between 1906 and 1914 by taxing the rich.
4. The issue of home rule (self-government) divided Ireland into the northern Protestant Ulsterites, who opposed it, and the southern Catholic nationalists, who favored it.
 - a. Gladstone supported home rule for Ireland in 1886 and 1893, but the bills failed to pass.
 - b. The question of home rule was postponed because of war in 1914.

E. The Austro-Hungarian Empire

1. After 1866, the empire was divided in two but shared a common emperor and central ministries for finance, defense, and foreign affairs.
 - a. The nationalistic Magyars were allowed to rule Hungary.
 - b. In Austria, the ethnic Germans were only one-third of the population; the rest were Czechs, Poles, and other Slavs-and so the question of a national language was an emotional issue.
2. Austria suffered from competing nationalisms, which pitted ethnic groups against one another and weakened the state.
 - a. In Hungary, the Magyar nobility used the constitution to dominate the peasants and ethnic minorities.
 - b. Unlike in other countries, the Austro-Hungarian leaders could not use nationalism to strengthen the state.

F. Jewish emancipation and modern anti-Semitism

1. In France in 1791, Jews began to gain equal civil rights.
2. German Jews were given increased rights after 1848; the constitution of the new German empire abolished many of the age-old restrictions on Jews and Jewish life.
3. Some discrimination remained, but anti-Jewish prejudice was on the decline by 1871.
4. By 1871 most Jewish people had improved their economic and occupational situations.
5. But anti-Semitism reappeared in times of economic trouble-and was whipped up by conservatives and extremist nationalists.

6. Anti-Semites created political parties to attack and degrade Jews.
 - a. In Vienna, the anti-Semite Karl Lueger and his “Christian socialists” won striking victories.
 - b. As a response, Theodore Herzl advocated “Zionism”-the creation of a Jewish state.
 - c. Lueger appealed to lower middle-class people, like the young Adolf Hitler.
 - d. But before 1914, anti-Semitism was most oppressive in eastern Europe-where there was no Jewish emancipation and 4 million of Europe’s 7 million Jews.
 - e. Governments channeled popular discontent into violent attacks (“pogroms”) on Jewish people.
 - f. Millions of Jewish people left Europe as a result-many going to America.

VI. Marxism and the socialist movement

A. The Socialist International

1. A rapid growth of socialist parties occurred throughout Europe after 1871.
2. With Marx’s help, socialists united in 1864 to form an international socialist organization known as the First International; it was short-lived but had a great psychological impact.
3. The Second International-a federation of national socialist parties-last-ed until 1914.

B. Unions and revisionism

1. There was a general rise in the standard of living and quality of life for workers in the late nineteenth century, so they became less revolutionary.
2. Unions were gradually legalized in Europe, and they were another factor in the trend toward moderation.
3. Revisionist socialists believed in working within capitalism (through labor unions, for example) and no longer saw the future in terms of capitalist-worker warfare.
4. In the late nineteenth century, the socialist movements within each nation became different from one another and thereby more and more nationalistic.