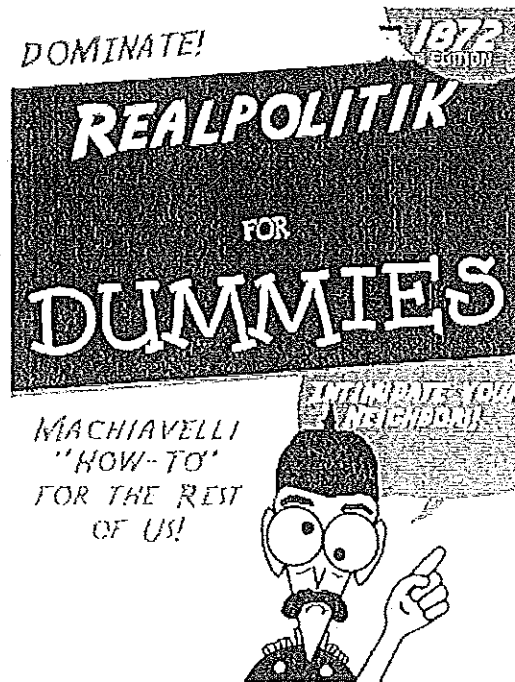
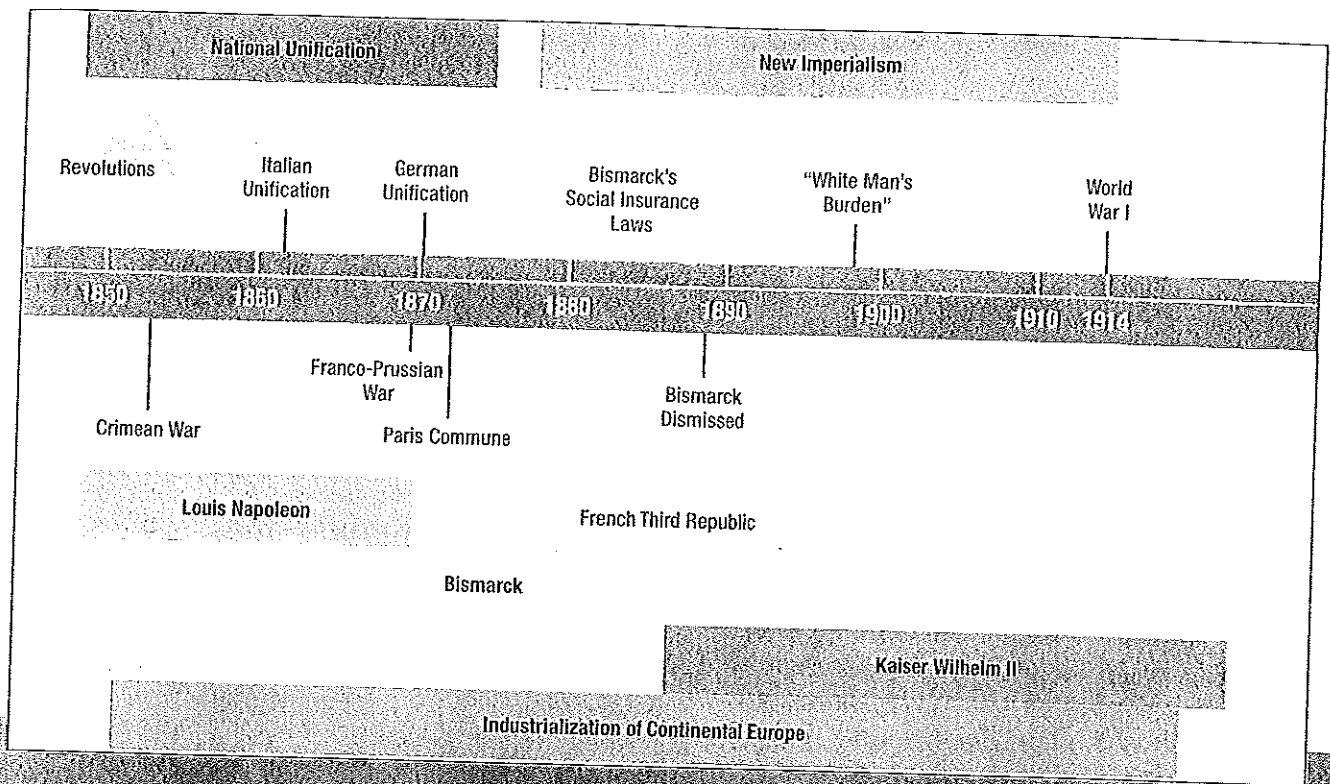


CHAPTER 14 READINGS
THE AGE OF NATION-STATES AND *REALPOLITIK*

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13 The National State, Nationalism, and Imperialism: 1850-1914

Between 1850 and 1914 Europe was characterized politically by the development of the national state, the spread of nationalism, and the rise of the "new imperialism." The development of the national state took place after 1848. Governments, responding to economic and social pressures, increased their involvement in the economic and social life of their countries. This was apparent both in liberal England and in more conservative France under Louis Napoleon. There were similar trends during the national unification movements in Italy and particularly in Germany, where the state took on a wide range of new functions.

Nationalism had deep roots, notably in the experience of and reactions to the French Revolution and the Napoleonic invasions. Nationalism also played a central

role in the revolutions of 1848. During the second half of the nineteenth century, nationalism continued to grow and to be capitalized upon by national governments. The most striking manifestations of nationalism came in the successful unification movements in Italy and Germany.

The rise of the new imperialism occurred in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. The European powers engaged in a sudden quest for control over new territories in Asia and Africa. Explorers, missionaries, traders, troops, and government officials quickly followed one another into these lands and established direct political control. In this process the West greatly increased its dominance over much of the rest of the world, bringing Western culture and institutions to the indigenous societies whether they wanted it or not.

The sources in this chapter explore each of these three developments. Some of the documents concentrate on the growth of the national state, particularly in Germany, where the authoritarian government expanded in an effort to adapt to the social and economic pressures of the times. Some of the questions addressed are: How did the government in Germany react to demands for social legislation? What was the role of conservative forces in the German unification process, and how did other powers deal with Prussia's drive to unify Germany? Other documents concern nationalism, particularly its meaning, its appeal, and its connections to liberalism and conservatism. What role did nationalism play in the unification movements in Germany and Italy? How was nationalism tied to the new imperialism of the period? Finally, most of the selections deal with imperialism, for not only was imperialism of far-reaching significance for much of the world, it has been a topic of considerable

debate among historians. What were the nationalistic and economic motives for imperialism? What were some of the attitudes toward imperialism, particularly as reflected in materials glorifying it as a Christian and humanitarian movement? What roles did women play in colonial societies?

Throughout these selections there is evidence for an increasing competitiveness among European states and political strains within those states. As will be seen in Chapter 26, these contributed to the outbreak of World War I and the revolutions that accompanied it.

For Classroom Discussion

What caused nineteenth-century imperialism? Use the selections by Fabri, Hobsbawm, and Hayes to debate this question.



Primary Sources

Speeches on Pragmatism and State Socialism

Otto von Bismarck

The revolutions of 1848 were ultimately a blow to idealistic reform. Thereafter, governments pursued more limited goals. They tended to resort to more authoritarian measures, to avoid doctrinaire policies, and even to adopt certain programs of opposing groups in the hopes of weakening determined opposition to the government. Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) did this in Germany. Born into a noble Prussian family, Bismarck rose to the position of chief minister under the king in 1862. The first selection below is from an 1862 speech to the Reichstag, in which he argues that the idealism of 1848 must be replaced by a conservative realism.

Bismarck remained in power until 1890. During this time he and his conservative supporters faced opposition from some liberals and from a growing number of socialists representing the working class. In the 1880s Bismarck supported some of the workers' demands for social insurance

and pushed through such legislation as the German Workers' Insurance Laws. The remaining excerpts below Bismarck's speeches indicate the rationale behind these policies.

CONSIDER: *What Bismarck means when he says the great questions of the day will be decided by iron and blood; how Bismarck justifies his support of "socialist" policies; why Bismarck would support such policies; what conservatives have to gain and who stands to lose by enactment of these policies.*

IRON AND BLOOD

... It is true that we can hardly escape complications in Germany, although we do not seek them. Germany does not look to Prussia's liberalism, but to her power. The south German States—Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden—would like to indulge in liberalism, and because of that no one will assign Prussia's role to them! Prussia must collect her forces and hold them in reserve for an opportune moment, which has already come and gone several times. Since the Treaty of Vienna, our frontiers have not been favorably designed for a healthy body politic. Not by speeches and majorities will the great questions of the day be decided—that was the mistake of 1848 and 1849—but by iron and blood.

SOURCE: Louis L. Snyder, ed., *Documents of German History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1958), p. 202; William H. Dawson, *Bismarck and State Socialism* (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., 1890), pp. 29, 34–35, 63–64, 118–119.

STATE SOCIALISM

Herr Richter has called attention to the responsibility of the State for what it does. But it is my opinion that the State can also be responsible for what it does not do. I do not think that doctrines like those of "*Laissez-faire*, *laissez-aller*," "Pure Manchesterdom in politics," "He who is not strong enough to stand must be knocked down and trodden to the ground," "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath,"—that doctrines like these should be applied in the State, and especially in a monarchically, paternally governed State. On the other hand, I believe that those who profess horror at the intervention of the State for the protection of the weak lay themselves open to the suspicion that they are desirous of using their strength—be it that of capital, that of rhetoric, or whatever it be—for the benefit of a section, for the oppression of the rest, for the introduction of party domination, and that they will be chagrined as soon as this design is disturbed by any action of the Government.

✎

Give the working-man the right to work as long as he is healthy; assure him care when he is sick; assure him maintenance when he is old. If you do that, and do not fear the sacrifice, or cry out at State Socialism directly the words "provision for old age" are uttered,—if the State will show a little more Christian solicitude for the working-man, then I believe that the gentlemen of the Wyden (Social-Democratic) programme will sound their bird-call in vain, and that the thronging to them will cease as soon as working-men see that the Government and legislative bodies are earnestly concerned for their welfare.

Yes, I acknowledge unconditionally a right to work, and I will stand up for it as long as I am in this place. But here I do not stand upon the ground of Socialism, which is said to have only begun with the Bismarck Ministry, but on that of the Prussian common law.

✎

Many measures which we have adopted to the great blessing of the country are Socialistic, and the State will have to accustom itself to a little more Socialism yet. We must meet our needs in the domain of Socialism by reformatory measures if we would display the wisdom shown in Prussia by the Stein-Hardenberg legislation respecting the emancipation of the peasantry. That was Socialism, to take land from one person and give it to another—a much stronger form of Socialism than a monopoly. But I am glad that this Socialism was

adopted, for we have as a consequence secured a free and very well-to-do peasantry, and I hope that we shall in time do something of the sort for the labouring classes. Whether I, however, shall live to see it—with the general opposition which is, as a matter of principle, offered to me on all sides, and which is wearying me—I cannot say. But you will be compelled to put a few drops of social oil into the recipe which you give to the State—how much I do not know. . . . The establishment of the freedom of the peasantry was Socialistic; Socialistic, too, is every expropriation in favour of railways; Socialistic to the utmost extent is the aggregation of estates—the law exists in many provinces—taking from one and giving to another, simply because this other can cultivate the land more conveniently; Socialistic is expropriation under the Water Legislation, on account of irrigation, etc., where a man's land is taken away from him because another can farm it better; Socialistic is our entire poor relief, compulsory school attendance, compulsory construction of roads, so that I am bound to maintain a road upon my lands for travellers. That is all Socialistic, and I could extend the register further; but if you believe that you can frighten any one or call up specters with the word "Socialism," you take a standpoint which I abandoned long ago, and the abandonment of which is absolutely necessary for our entire imperial legislation.

✎

The whole matter centres in the question, Is it the duty of the State, or is it not, to provide for its helpless citizens? I maintain that it is its duty, that it is the duty not only of the "Christian State," as I ventured once to call it when speaking of "practical Christianity," but of every State. It would be foolish for a corporation to undertake matters which the individual can attend to alone; and similarly the purposes which the parish can fulfill with justice and with advantage are left to the parish. But there are purposes which only the State as a whole can fulfill. To these belong national defence, the general system of communications, and, indeed, everything spoken of in article 4 of the constitution. To these, too, belong the help of the necessitous and the removal of those just complaints which provide Social Democracy with really effective material for agitation. This is a duty of the State, a duty which the State cannot permanently disregard. . . . As soon as the State takes this matter [of insurance] in hand—and I believe it is its duty to take it in hand—it must seek the cheapest form of insurance, and, not aiming at profit for itself, must keep primarily in view the benefit of the poor and needy. Otherwise we might leave the fulfillment of certain State duties—such as poor relief, in the widest

sense of the words, is amongst others—like education and national defence with more right to share companies, only asking ourselves, Who will do it most cheaply? who will do it most effectively? If provision for the necessitous in a greater degree than is possible with the present poor relief legislation is a State duty, the State must take the matter in hand; it cannot rest content with the thought that a share company will undertake it.

If an establishment employing twenty thousand or more workpeople were to be ruined . . . we could not allow these men to hunger. We should have to resort to real State Socialism and find work for them, and this is what we do in every case of distress. If the objection were right that we should shun State Socialism as we would an infectious disease, how do we come to organise works in one province and another in case of distress—works which we should not undertake if the labourers had employment and wages? In such cases we build railways whose profitableness is questionable; we carry out improvements which otherwise would be left to private initiative. If that is Communism, I have no objection at all to it; though with such catchwords we really get no further.

The Duties of Man

Giuseppe Mazzini

Nationalism, a growing force since the French Revolution, tended to be associated with liberal and humanitarian ideals during the first half of the nineteenth century. After 1848 it became more pragmatic and conservative, as illustrated by the unification of Germany and Italy. Yet it was still based on some of the earlier ideals. These ideals are illustrated in both the life and writings of the Italian patriot Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872). Mazzini was a revolutionary for most of his life and strove continuously for an independent and united Italian Republic. His revolutionary efforts in the 1830s and 1840s failed; unification was ultimately accomplished under the more pragmatic leadership of Cavour in the 1860s. But his ideas represented a strong strain of mid-nineteenth-century nationalism both in Italy and in other countries. The following is an excerpt from Mazzini's most famous essay, The Duties of Man, addressed to Italian workingmen.

CONSIDER: *The bases for Mazzini's nationalism; why these ideas might be appealing to the Italian working class; why Bismarck might approve of these ideas and whether there is anything he might reject.*

Source: Emilie Ashurst Venturi, *Joseph Mazzini: A Memoir* (London: Alexander & Shephard, 1875), pp. 312–315.

Your first duties—first as regards importance—are, as I have already told you, towards Humanity. You are men before you are either citizens or fathers. If you do not embrace the whole human family in your affection, if you do not bear witness to your belief in the Unity of that family, consequent upon the Unity of God, and in that fraternity among the peoples which is destined to reduce that unity to action; if, wheresoever a fellow-creature suffers, or the dignity of human nature is violated by falsehood or tyranny—you are not ready, if able, to aid the unhappy, and do not feel called upon to combat, if able, for the redemption of the betrayed or oppressed—you violate your law of life, you comprehend not that Religion which will be the guide and blessing of the future.

But what can each of you, singly, do for the moral improvement and progress of Humanity? You can from time to time give sterile utterance to your belief; you may, on some rare occasions, perform some act of charity towards a brother man not belonging to your own land;—no more. But charity is not the watchword of the Faith of the Future. The watchword of the faith of the future is Association, and fraternal co-operation of all towards a common aim; and this is as far superior to all charity, as the edifice which all of you should unite to raise would be superior to the humble hut each one of you might build alone, or with the mere assistance of lending and borrowing stone, mortar, and tools.

But, you tell me, you cannot attempt united action, distinct and divided as you are in language, customs, tendencies, and capacity. The individual is too insignificant, and Humanity too vast. The mariner of Brittany prays to God as he puts to sea: *Help me, my God! my boat is so small and thy ocean so wide!* And this prayer is the true expression of the condition of each one of you, until you find the means of infinitely multiplying your forces and powers of action.

This means was provided for you by God when he gave you a country; when, even as a wise overseer of labour distributes the various branches of employment according to the different capacities of the workmen, he divided Humanity into distinct groups or nuclei upon the face of the earth, thus creating the germ of Nationalities. Evil governments have disfigured the divine design. Nevertheless you may still trace it, distinctly marked out—at least as far as Europe is concerned—by the course of the great rivers, the direction of the higher mountains, and other geographical conditions. They have disfigured it by their conquests, their greed, and their jealousy even of the righteous power of others; disfigured it so far that if we except England and France—there is not perhaps a single country whose present boundaries correspond to that design.

These governments did not, and do not, recognise any country save their own families or dynasty, the egoism of caste. But the Divine design will infallibly be realized. Natural divisions, and the spontaneous, innate tendencies of the peoples, will take the place of the arbitrary divisions sanctioned by evil governments. The map of Europe will be redrawn. The countries of the Peoples, defined by the vote of free men, will arise upon the ruins of the countries of kings and privileged castes, and between these countries harmony and fraternity will exist. And the common work of Humanity, of general amelioration and the gradual discovery and application of its Law of life, being distributed according to local and general capacities, will be wrought out in peaceful and progressive development and advance. Then may each one of you, fortified by the power and the affection of many millions, all speaking the same language, gifted with the same tendencies, and educated by the same historical tradition, hope, even by your own single effort, to be able to benefit all Humanity.

O my brothers, love your Country! Our country is our Home, the house that God has given us, placing therein a numerous family that loves us, and whom we love; a family with whom we sympathise more readily, and whom we understand more quickly than we do others; and which, from its being centred round a given spot, and from the homogeneous nature of its elements, is adapted to a special branch of activity. Our country is our common workshop, whence the products of our activity are sent forth for the benefit of the whole world; wherein the tools and implements of labour we can most usefully employ are gathered together: nor may we reject them without disobeying the plan of the Almighty, and diminishing our own strength.

Militant Nationalism

Heinrich von Treitschke

The idea of nationalism and nationalistic movements gained great power throughout the nineteenth century. While favored by a variety of liberal and conservative thinkers and groups during the first half of the century, nationalism became more militant, extreme, and racist in the second half of the century, particularly in central Europe. One of the most influential proponents of this militant nationalism in Germany was Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896), a historian at the University of Berlin. In

the following selections from his works, Treitschke puts forth his views on national character, the state, war, and Jews.

CONSIDER: *What might be appealing about these views; possible reasons for Treitschke's views of the English and Jews; what policies might logically flow from these ideas.*

ON THE GERMAN CHARACTER

Depth of thought, idealism, cosmopolitan views; a transcendent philosophy which boldly oversteps (or freely looks over) the separating barriers of finite existence; familiarity with every human thought and feeling, the desire to traverse the worldwide realm of ideas in common with the foremost intellects of all nations and all times. All that has at all times been held to be characteristic of the Germans and has always been praised as the essence of German character and breeding. . . .

ON THE STATE

The state is a moral community, which is called upon to educate the human race by positive achievement. Its ultimate object is that a nation should develop in it, a nation distinguished by a real national character. To achieve this state is the highest moral duty for nation and individual alike. All private quarrels must be forgotten when the state is in danger.

At the moment when the state cries out that its very life is at stake, social selfishness must cease and party hatred be hushed. The individual must forget his egoism, and feel that he is a member of the whole body.

The most important possession of a state, its be-all and end-all, is power. He who is not man enough to look this truth in the face should not meddle in politics. The state is not physical power as an end in itself, it is power to protect and promote the higher interests. Power must justify itself by being applied for the greatest good of mankind. It is the highest moral duty of the state to increase its power.

The true greatness of the state is that it links the past with the present and future; consequently, the individual has no right to regard the state as a means for attaining his own ambitions in life. Every extension of the activities of the state is beneficial and wise if it arouses, promotes, and purifies the independence of free and reasoning men; it is evil when it kills and stunts the independence of free men. It is men who make history. . . .

Only the truly great and powerful states ought to exist. Small states are unable to protect their subjects against external enemies; moreover, they are incapable

of *Kultar* in great dimensions. Weimar produced a Goethe and a Schiller; still these poets would have been greater had they been citizens of a German national state. . . .

ON WAR

The idea of perpetual peace is an illusion supported only by those of weak character. It has always been the weary, spiritless, and exhausted ages which have played with the dream of perpetual peace. A thousand touching portraits testify to the sacred power of the love which a righteous war awakes in noble nations. It is altogether impossible that peace be maintained in a world bristling with arms, and even God will see to it that war always recurs as a drastic medicine for the human race. Among great states the greatest political sin and the most contemptible is feebleness. It is the political sin against the Holy Ghost.

War is elevating because the individual disappears before the great conception of the state. The devotion of the members of a community to each other is nowhere so splendidly conspicuous as in war.

Modern wars are not waged for the sake of goods and chattels. What is at stake is the sublime moral good of national honor, which has something in the nature of unconditional sanctity, and compels the individual to sacrifice himself for it.

ON THE ENGLISH

The hypocritical Englishman, with the Bible in one hand and a pipe of opium in the other, possesses no redeeming qualities. The nation was an ancient robber-knight, in full armor, lance in hand, on every one of the world's trade routes.

The English possess a commercial spirit, a love of money which has killed every sentiment of honor and every distinction of right and wrong. English cowardice and sensuality are hidden behind unctuous, theological fine talk which is to us free-thinking German heretics among all the sins of English nature the most repugnant. In England all notions of honor and class prejudices vanish before the power of money, whereas the German nobility has remained poor but chivalrous. That last indispensable bulwark against the brutalization of society—the duel—has gone out of fashion in England and soon disappeared, to be supplanted by the riding whip. This was a triumph of vulgarity. The newspapers, in their accounts of aristocratic weddings, record in exact detail how much each wedding guest has contributed in the form of presents or in cash; even the youth of the nation have turned

their sports into a business, and contend for valuable prizes, whereas the German students wrought havoc on their countenances for the sake of a real or imaginary honor.

ON JEWS

The Jews at one time played a necessary role in German history, because of their ability in the management of money. But now that the Aryans have become accustomed to the idiosyncrasies of finance, the Jews are no longer necessary. The international Jew, hidden in the mask of different nationalities, is a disintegrating influence; he can be of no further use to the world. It is necessary to speak openly about the Jews, undisturbed by the fact that the Jewish press befouls what is purely historical truth.

Does Germany Need Colonies?

Friedrich Fabri

Imperialism swept through Europe with extraordinary force in the late nineteenth century. Probably the most apparent motive for the new imperialism was economic. With each conquest, people expected to develop new commerce and particularly new markets for manufactured goods. But there was another, perhaps even more important motive: nationalism. The step between the increasingly assertive nationalism of the time and the new imperialism was a short one. Both of these views are reflected by Friedrich Fabri in his 1879 pamphlet, "Does Germany Need Colonies?" A former inspector of a German missionary association in South West Africa, Fabri emphasizes Germany's "cultural mission" in becoming an imperial power.

CONSIDER: *What arguments Fabri mounts to justify Germany's acquisition of colonies; what Fabri means by Germany's "cultural mission" and how that relates to imperialism.*

Should not the German nation, so seaworthy, so industrially and commercially minded, more than other peoples geared to agricultural colonization, and possessing a rich and available supply of labor, all these to a greater extent than other modern culture-peoples, should not this nation successfully hew a new path on the road of imperialism? We are convinced beyond doubt that the colonial question has become a matter of life-or-death for the

SOURCE: Louis L. Snyder, *The Imperialism Reader* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1962), pp. 18–20 as excerpted.

The Ems Telegram

Primary Documents: Ems Telegram, 1870

The Ems Telegram was ostensibly a telegram from the Prussian Kaiser, Wilhelm I, to his Prime Minister Otto von Bismarck which, when published (and as anticipated by Bismarck) precipitated the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. The telegram's contents outlined the details of a disagreement between Wilhelm and the French ambassador concerning the succession to the Spanish throne. Bismarck subtly doctored the telegram to give the impression that each side had insulted the other.

Text of the Ems Telegram, sent by Heinrich Abeken of the Foreign Office under Kaiser Wilhelm's Instruction to Bismarck

First, the Unedited Version...

His Majesty the King has written to me:

"Count Benedetti intercepted me on the promenade and ended by demanding of me in a very importunate manner that I should authorize him to telegraph at once that I bound myself in perpetuity never again to give my consent if the Hohenzollerns renewed their candidature.

I rejected this demand somewhat sternly as it is neither right nor possible to undertake engagements of this kind [for ever and ever]. Naturally I told him that I had not yet received any news and since he had been better informed via Paris and Madrid than I was, he must surely see that my government was not concerned in the matter."

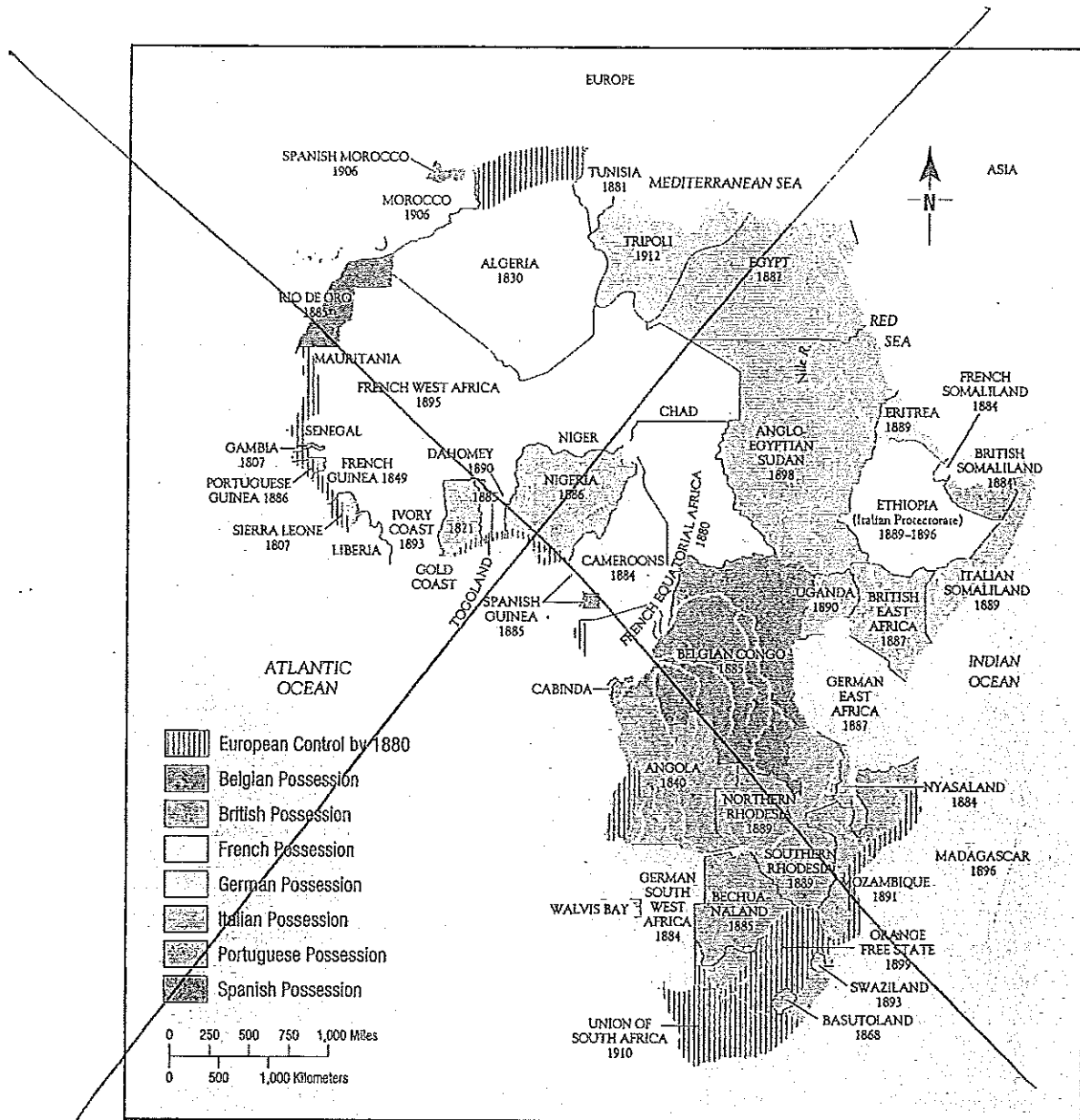
[The King, on the advice of one of his ministers] "decided in view of the above-mentioned demands not to receive Count Benedetti any more, but to have him informed by an adjutant that His Majesty had now received from [Leopold] confirmation of the news which Benedetti had already had from Paris and had nothing further to say to the ambassador.

His Majesty suggests to Your Excellency that Benedetti's new demand and its rejection might well be communicated both to our ambassadors and to the Press."

Next, Bismarck's Published, Doctored Version

"After the news of the renunciation of the Prince von Hohenzollern had been communicated to the Imperial French government by the Royal Spanish government, the French Ambassador in Ems made a further demand on His Majesty the King that he should authorize him to telegraph to Paris that His Majesty the King undertook for all time never again to give his assent should the Hohenzollerns once more take up their candidature.

His Majesty the King thereupon refused to receive the Ambassador again and had the latter informed by the adjutant of the day that His Majesty had no further communication to make to the Ambassador."



MAP 13.3 European Control of Africa

Secondary Sources

A Sterner Plan for Italian Unity: Nationalism, Liberalism, and Conservatism

Raymond Grew

During the first half of the nineteenth century, nationalism was most often connected to liberalism. After the revolu-

tions of 1848 there were increasing ties between nationalism and conservatism, particularly in the movements for national unification. In the following selection Raymond Grew, an advocate of comparative history from the University of Michigan, analyzes the relationships among nationalism, liberalism, and conservatism in a comparative context.

SOURCE: Raymond Grew, *A Sterner Plan for Italian Unity*. Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press (Princeton, N.J., 1963), pp. 465-466. Copyright © 1963 by Princeton University Press.

CONSIDER: How nationalism could appeal to both liberals and conservatives; why, during the second half of the nineteenth century, liberal ideals were often sacrificed in the name of nationalism.

8

Insofar as politics was the public battle of ideas and interests, then nationalism was a denial of politics. For in stressing the values of unity, loyalty, and duty, nationalism saw political dispute as a source of weakness. It denied that there was conflict in the true interests of classes, groups or regions. The effect of nationalism was therefore inherently conservative in that it provided reason for supporting anyone thought to wield the power of the state effectively in behalf of national unity and strength, Disraeli or Gladstone, Napoleon III or Bismarck. Since order and unity, the cry of the political conservative, are essential to a strong state, and since, to the nationalist, most worthy ends required that strength, the nationalist was always tempted under pressure to move toward the political right, to sacrifice liberty to unity, discussion to authority, ends to means.

Yet the origins of nationalism were usually liberal and reformist; for everywhere it was a demand for change, the doctrine of the modernizers who, while they had too much to lose to want a social revolution, were self-consciously aware that theirs was an "underdeveloped" country. Nationalism could make its denial of politics effective because its ends were so clear, so easily defined in the model of the modern state. For the French that model had been England; for the Italians it was England and France. Italian nationalists were usually liberals, but their liberalism was primarily an admiration for the achievements of the liberal state. Because their model already existed, they looked directly to it, anxious to achieve an efficient bureaucracy, a responsible government, a progressive economic structure, all based on accepted and universally applied laws. Nationalism was a program to obtain these things quickly, not to evolve toward them but, if necessary, to superimpose them. The hurry to achieve these goals where nationalism itself was seriously opposed made a doctrinaire concern for means appear pedantic and unrealistic. Italian nationalists needed nothing so brutal as cynicism to justify "postponement" of controversy or the choice of practical means, though often this meant whittling away at the practices necessary to viable liberalism.

German Unification

David Blackbourn

As in the case of Italy, nationalism in Germany during the first half of the nineteenth century was closely connected to liberalism. This was particularly so in the early stages of the revolutions of 1848. But with the failure of liberal

nationalists to gain the concrete changes they strove for, steps toward unification over the next two decades followed a path blazed by Bismarck and the conservatives, who used three wars to help achieve unity in 1871. In the following selection, David Blackbourn analyzes the international environment that allowed the drive for German unification to succeed.

CONSIDER: *Why the great powers allowed Prussia to unify Germany without intervening; why Russia and Great Britain were "distracted"; what the other powers might have done to counter Prussia.*

Germany was unified as a result of three wars that created a new power in the centre of Europe. Why did the other great powers allow this to come about? An important part of the answer is obviously the success of Prussian arms when put to the test. It cannot be emphasized too much that unification was, in the last resort, achieved on the battlefield. But other elements smoothed the Prussian path to success. Russia had suffered military humiliation in the Crimean war, and was absorbed during the 1860s in a bout of internal reforms. Early Russian industrialization also depended on Russo-German trade, and placed a premium on good relations with the emerging German power. . . . Britain had pressing colonial problems; it was primarily suspicious of French ambitions on the Continent, and viewed the emerging Germany as a power that neither threatened fundamental British interests nor possessed a significant navy. Add to this the general British approval of national self-determination (as in Italy), the high regard for German culture, and Gladstone's concern with domestic issues, and it is clear why British sympathizers comfortably outnumbered those suspicious of Prussian "militarism." If we turn to the two powers directly defeated by Prussia on the road to unification, it is their weakness rather than their benevolent neutrality that requires emphasis. Austria was desperately isolated in this period. Vienna had failed to repair the alliance with Russia, broken by the Crimean war; and the great irony of the Austrian position, as well as the central weakness, was the fact that its principal ally, Prussia, was also its archrival in German affairs. Compounding these problems were the perpetual difficulties created by the subject nationalities of the far-flung Habsburg monarchy, Hungarians, Italians and Slavs. This was an important part of the background to 1866; then, during the Franco-Prussian war, the restlessness of the Czechs and Poles pushed Vienna into a more pro-"German" stance. Last, but not least, France under Napoleon III was the loose cannon in European affairs, an adventurist power that excited universal suspicion and found none to mourn its fate in 1870.

SOURCE: David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 247-248.

From fourteen upwards I would recommend that no individual should, under any circumstances, work more than twelve hours a day; although if practicable, as a physician, I would prefer the limitation of ten hours, for all persons who earn their bread by their industry."

TESTIMONY OF JOHN WRIGHT

How long have you been employed in a silk-mill?—More than thirty years.

Did you enter it as a child?—Yes, betwixt five and six.

How many hours a day did you work then?—The same thirty years ago as now.

What are those hours?—Eleven hours per day and two over-hours: over-hours are working after six in the evening till eight. The regular hours are from six in the morning to six in the evening, and two others are two over-hours: about fifty years ago they began working over-hours. . . .

Why, then, are those employed in them said to be in such a wretched condition?—In the first place, the great number of hands congregated together, in some rooms forty, in some fifty, in some sixty, and I have known some as many as 100, which must be injurious to both health and growing. In the second place, the privy is in the factory, which frequently emits an unwholesome smell; and it would be worth while to notice in the future erection of mills, that there be betwixt the privy door and the factory wall a kind of a lobby of cage-work. 3rdly, The tediousness and the everlasting sameness in the first process preys much on the spirits, and makes the hands spiritless. 4thly, The extravagant number of hours a child is compelled to labour and confinement, which for one week is seventy-six hours. . . . 5thly, About six months in the year we are obliged to use either gas, candles, or lamps, for the longest portion of that time, nearly six hours a day, being obliged to work amid the smoke and soot of the same; and also a large portion of oil and grease is used in the mills.

What are the effects of the present system of labour?—From my earliest recollections, I have found the effects to be awfully detrimental to the well-being of the operative; I have observed frequently children carried to factories, unable to walk, and that entirely owing to excessive labour and confinement. The degradation of the workpeople baffles all description: frequently have two of my sisters been obliged to be assisted to the factory and home again, until by-and-by they could go no longer, being totally crippled in their legs. And in the next place, I remember some ten or twelve years ago working in one of the largest firms in Macclesfield, (Messrs. Baker and Pearson,) with about twenty-five men, where they were scarce one half fit for His Majesty's service. Those that are straight in their limbs are stunted in their growth; much inferior to their fathers in point of strength. 3dly, Through excessive labour and confinement there is often a total loss of appetite; a kind of

langour steals over the whole frame—enters to the very core—saps the foundation of the best constitution—and lays our strength prostrate in the dust. In the 4th place, by protracted labour there is an alarming increase of cripples in various parts of this town, which has come under my own observation and knowledge. . . .

Are all these cripples made in the silk factories?—Yes, they are, I believe. . . .

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM HARTER

What effect would it have on your manufacture to reduce the hours of labour to ten?—It would instantly much reduce the value of my mill and machinery, and consequently of far prejudice my manufacture.

How so?—They are calculated to produce a certain quantity of work in a given time. Every machine is valuable in proportion to the quantity of work which it will turn off in a given time. It is impossible that the machinery could produce as much work in ten hours as in twelve. If the tending of the machines were a laborious occupation, the difference in the quantity of work might not always be in exact proportion to the difference of working time; but in my mill, and silk-mills in general, the work requires the least imaginable labour; therefore it is perfectly impossible that the machines could produce as much work in ten hours as in twelve. The produce would vary in about the same ratio as the working time.

Sybil, or the Two Nations: Mining Towns

Benjamin Disraeli

Nineteenth-century novels contain some of the most effective descriptions of industrial life. In addition to providing such description, Sybil, or the Two Nations (1845), written by Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881), a novelist and politician who also served as prime minister of England (1867–1868, 1874–1880), illustrates the thinking of a group of reforming Tory aristocrats, sometimes referred to as Young England. They hoped to gain working-class support against their political competitors, the liberal Whigs. In the following selection from this novel, Disraeli describes Marney, a rural mining town.

CONSIDER: *The physical consequences of industrialization for the land and the town; the worst aspects of industrial labor, according to Disraeli; how this description compares with Engels' views in the following excerpt; who, if anyone, Disraeli would blame for all this.*

SOURCE: Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil, or the Two Nations* (New York: M. Walter Dunne, 1904), pp. 198–200.

Tory = conservative
Whig = liberal

The last rays of the sun contending with clouds of smoke that drifted across the country, partially illumined a peculiar landscape. Far as the eye could reach, and the region was level, except where a range of limestone hills formed its distant limit, a wilderness of cottages, or tenements that were hardly entitled to a higher name, were scattered for many miles over the land; some detached, some connected in little rows, some clustering in groups, yet rarely forming continuous streets, but interspersed with blazing furnaces, heaps of burning coal, and piles of smouldering ironstone; while forges and engine chimneys roared and puffed in all directions, and indicated the frequent presence of the mouth of the mine, and the bank of the coal-pit. Notwithstanding the whole country might be compared to a vast rabbit warren, it was nevertheless intersected with canals, crossing each other at various levels; and though the subterranean operations were prosecuted with so much avidity that it was not uncommon to observe whole rows of houses awry, from the shifting and hollow nature of the land, still, intermingled with heaps of mineral refuse, or of metallic dross, patches of the surface might here and there be recognised, covered, as if in mockery, with grass and corn, looking very much like those gentlemen's sons that we used to read of in our youth, stolen by the chimneysweeps, and giving some intimations of their breeding beneath their grimy livery. But a tree or a shrub, such an existence was unknown in this dingy rather than dreary region.

It was the twilight hour; the hour at which in southern climes the peasant kneels before the sunset image of the blessed Hebrew maiden; when caravans halt in their long course over vast deserts, and the turbaned traveller, bending in the sand, pays his homage to the sacred stone and the sacred city; the hour, not less holy, that announces the cessation of English toil, and sends forth the miner and the collier to breathe the air of earth, and gaze on the light of heaven.

They come forth: the mine delivers its gang and the pit its bondsmen; the forge is silent and the engine is still. The plain is covered with the swarming multitude: bands of stalwart men, broad-chested and muscular, wet with toil, and black as the children of the tropics; troops of youth, alas! of both sexes, though neither their raiment nor their language indicates the difference; all are clad in male attire; and oaths that men might shudder at issue from lips born to breathe words of sweetness. Yet these are to be, some are, the mothers of England! But can we wonder at the hideous coarseness of their language, when we remember the savage rudeness of their lives? Naked to the waist, an iron chain fastened to a belt of leather runs between their legs clad in canvas trousers, while on hands and feet an English girl, for twelve, sometimes for sixteen hours a day, hauls and hurries tubs of coals up subterranean roads, dark, precipitous, and plashy; circumstances that seem to have

escaped the notice of the Society for the Abolition of Negro Slavery. Those worthy gentlemen, too, appear to have been singularly unconscious of the sufferings of the little trappers, which was remarkable, as many of them were in their own employ.

See, too, these emerge from the bowels of the earth! Infants of four and five years of age, many of them girls, pretty and still soft and timid; entrusted with the fulfilment of responsible duties, the very nature of which entails on them the necessity of being the earliest to enter the mine and the latest to leave it. Their labour indeed is not severe, for that would be impossible, but it is passed in darkness and in solitude. They endure that punishment which philosophical philanthropy has invented for the direst criminals, and which those criminals deem more terrible than the death for which it is substituted. Hour after hour elapses, and all that reminds the infant trappers of the world they have quitted, and that which they have joined, is the passage of the coal-waggons for which they open the air-doors of the galleries, and on keeping which doors constantly closed, except at this moment of passage, the safety of the mine and the lives of the persons employed in it entirely depend.

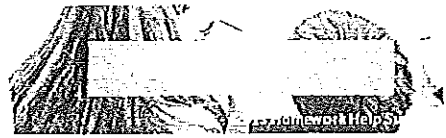
The Condition of the Working Class in England

Friedrich Engels

*To many contemporaries, child labor in factories and mines under harsh conditions was the most shocking change in working conditions brought on by industrialization. However, several investigators documented a whole range of problems facing England's industrial working class. One of the most famous of these investigators was Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), the son of a German textile manufacturer. Engels moved to England in the 1840s, where in addition to learning about business he traveled through cities visiting working-class areas and interviewing people. He would soon become a collaborator with his friend, Karl Marx, and one of the founders of modern socialism. The following excerpt is from the book that arose from his studies, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, first published in 1845. Here Engels focuses on worker's living environment in England's industrial cities.*

CONSIDER: *What Engels considers the worst health conditions facing the poor; Engels' analysis of how the environment affects the poor mentally as well as physically; how this description adds to the testimony before the commission on child labor (in a previous excerpt).*

SOURCE: Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, trans. and ed. by W. O. Henderson and W. H. Chaloner. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), pp. 110–111.



EXPRESS

British Press

Florence Nightingale, Sebastapol, the Charge of the Light Brigade: The first Crimean War

AS the Russians defy world opinion to seize control of the Crimea, why a similar confrontation involving Britain more than 160 years ago makes this a very familiar sounding war



For every generation the names of faraway places where soldiers are engaged in battle become part of national life.

Nowadays it's Helmand or Fallujah, while 30 years ago it was Bluff Cove and Goose Green. As the conflicts resolve and the names drop out of daily parlance we forget them - unless they have left a lasting impact on the collective psyche.

That's certainly the case with the war you'd be reading about if you opened a newspaper 160 years ago. The conflict between France, Britain and the Ottoman Turks on one side and Russia on the other was on the face of it triggered by a dispute over access to the Christian holy sites in Palestine.

In reality this was a pretext for a fight about influence, territory and trade routes. Each participant had its own agenda and you would be hard-pressed to find a just cause.

The first Crimean War (as we may soon start calling it) left its mark on our language and culture, on our health policy (thanks to pioneering nurses Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole) and the conduct of the media, on the street names of our Victorian towns and cities, and even the way we dress.

It cost a tsar his life and a British prime minister his job but it gave us the cardigan, the balaclava, and the raglan sleeve. Roads such as Sebastopol Terrace (home of Eric and Hattie in the 1970s sitcom Sykes) are a reminder of the biggest siege of the two-and-a-half-year campaign.

Lord Tennyson's poem The Charge Of The Light Brigade with its haunting couplets "Into the valley of Death/Rode the six hundred" immortalised the most famous human catastrophe on the British side.

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the Great Powers of Europe - Russia, Prussia, Austria, Britain and France - existed in a delicate equilibrium. Midway through the 19th century the weakness of the Ottoman empire, based in Constantinople (today's Istanbul) and controlling the Levant, gave the European powers an excuse to intervene in the Holy Land in support of the Christian population.

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French president Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte (soon to become Emperor Napoleon III) secured concessions for the Catholic Church in Palestine, prompting Tsar Nicholas I of Russia to try to recover Greek Orthodox rights. When the Turks backed down under pressure the Tsar decided to take on a tired empire he called "the sick man of Europe".

He moved his army into the Danubian Principalities - roughly corresponding to present-day Romania and Moldavia - assuming the other Great Powers would help him carve up the European part of Turkey. It was a miscalculation.

Neither Britain nor Austria wanted to see Russia controlling the Danube estuary or the Dardanelles, at the entrance to the Black Sea, while the French were itching for revenge after Napoleon's failed invasion in 1812.



In October 1853 Turkey declared war on the Russian occupiers.

When the Russian fleet annihilated a Turkish squadron at the port of Sinope the British and French public sided with the Ottomans and London and Paris told Russia to pull out of the Danubian Principalities.

As previous invaders of the Crimea we need to be careful of getting on our moral high horse

(13)

Nicholas complied but the allies landed in the Crimea, a peninsula about the size of Belgium on Russia's Black Sea coast, where they planned to destroy the naval base at Sevastopol (anglicised to Sebastopol because the Russian V looks like a B to us).

The first victory for the British and French was the Battle of the Alma in September 1854. A month later came the Battle of Balaclava, ending with the infamous charge of the Light Brigade in which nearly 700 British cavalrymen armed only with sabres and lances were ordered to ride up a mile-long valley while enemy guns picked them off from either side.

The order was given by Lord Raglan, commander-in-chief of the British Army of the East, who had lost an arm at Waterloo (hence the sleeve that bears his name).

But the commander of the brigade was the Earl of Cardigan, pioneer of knitted waistcoats for his officers. The carnage was witnessed by William Russell, war correspondent of The Times, who sent the news home via telegraph - and Cardigan got most of the blame.

History has been unfair. It may surprise anyone who has read Tennyson's account of the horrors but more than 80 per cent of the brigade survived and it was actually a very successful military operation.

Sevastopol fell and the war ended in February 1856 with the Russians ceding the territory they had occupied and accepting a demilitarisation treaty in the Black Sea. The death toll was huge: 25,000 British, 100,000 French and up to a million Russians. With a cholera epidemic raging, five times more British soldiers died from disease than from wounds.

It would have been worse had it not been for an upper-middle-class woman in her mid-30s called Florence Nightingale. She led a party of nurses to the hastily converted British hospital at Scutari, in Constantinople.

Improving basic conditions with an appeal to the public for funds to buy scrubbing brushes, blankets and bedpans, she became a massive media celebrity and was canny enough to turn the publicity to her advantage, devoting the rest of her life to driving through her reforms.

Politically neither side emerged unscathed. Public outrage after Balaclava led the coalition government under Lord Aberdeen to resign midway through the war, to be replaced by Lord Palmerston.

In Russia, Nicholas I died when a chill turned to pneumonia under the strain of directing the conflict. His son Alexander II was left with a huge war debt. One of his solutions was to sell the Russian territory of Alaska to the United States.

With Russia weakened, the other big loser was Austria which had stayed neutral. The shift of power facilitated the unification of Germany under Prussian control, and the new system of Great Powers proved less stable than its predecessor, with Europe returning to war in 1914.

It's a messy, complicated history whose lessons may not be obvious now Crimea is part of Ukraine and the majority Russian population seems to have welcomed President Putin's invasion. But as previous invaders of the Crimea we need to be careful of getting on our moral high horse, whether we're wearing cardies or balaclavas.

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- 1.) Why was the Crimean War really fought?
- 2.) How did this affect French relations in Ottoman territories such as Palestine?
- 3.) How did this war affect Russian military developments?
- 4.) What did the Crimean War reveal about public health and disease, as well as soldier casualties?
- 5.) How was the United States affected?
- 6.) How was Austria affected?
- 7.) What lessons can we take from the original Crimean War?