THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY AND OF GERMANY 1815–71

Among the most important developments in 19th-century Europe was the unification of Italy and Germany as nation-states—a process that fundamentally altered the balance of power in the continent. Although nationalist feeling had been stimulated by the French Revolution of 1789, and was originally associated with liberal ideas, unification was actually the result of diplomacy, war, and the efforts of conservative elites rather than popular action. German unification was promoted by Prussia, the most powerful German state, in order to protect its own domestic political stability; in Italy, Piedmont played this role for similar reasons.

ATTEMPTS TO UNIFY ITALY

The Napoleonic Wars (pages 166–67) had a dramatic effect on Italy. Napoleon redrew boundaries and introduced French political and legal ideas. At the Congress of Vienna, the idealist Giuseppe Mazzini, who hoped to overthrow their existing rulers, both Italian and Austrian, failed to win support from the congress. Restoration of the Bourbons in France and the Congress’s decision to return Italy to its pre-Napoleonic borders had left Italy divided and impoverished.

THE RISE OF PIEDMONT

Moderate nationalists concluded that the Italian unification lay with Piedmont, which was economically advanced and had introduced a constitution. The Piedmontese prime minister, Camillo di Cavour, had already decided that Austria would be needed to remove Austrian influence, and reached a secret agreement with the Austrian emperor at Plombières in 1858. A Cavour embarked on a war with Austria, which Austria was defeated and Austria was defeated and Lombardy to Piedmont (map 2).

Piedmont’s subsequent role in uniting response to the actions of Giuseppe Garibaldi, who had crossed the Reno River with other Italian patriots to begin the unification of Italy.
World War I Divides Europe

By 1916, what major battles were fought in France? Through what countries did the western front extend?

Bayeux for power and complex alliances drew most European nations into war by 1916. Soldiers dug a vast network of trenches for hundreds of miles across France, between the opposing lines lay, "no man's land," a wasteland of barbed wire, mine, torn earth, and shattered trees. Attacking soldiers had to climb out of their trenches and race across no man's land. An observer described the horrors of trench warfare.

The enemy sent down an enormous shower of concentrated machine-gun fire. It hummed and whined through the air around the lines of steady advance.