The Unification of Germany and Italy (mid 1800s)

You Mean Germany and Italy Just Recently Became Countries?

Nationalism

Nationalism is a feeling of unity of a group of people. There are many factors that can contribute to the shared unity. For example, a common language, culture, ethnicity, history, religion, or belief system, as well as other factors, can form this bond. In the early 1800s, about 300 German states existed in central Europe. They had formed a loose union together. The leaders of the different regions held most of the power. Many people in these German states, though, felt a shared identity with each other. By 1871, under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck, the smaller states formed a single nation called Germany.

Italy went through a similar experience. Smaller regions existed on the Italian peninsula. By 1870, strong leaders took about twelve years to unite these regions into a single country. By unifying, Germany and Italy each became a nation-state. On the other hand, nationalism can also tear people apart. For example, the Austrian Empire (which became Austria-Hungary in 1867) and the Ottoman Empire each had many separate groups of people, or nations, in their borders. A lot of these groups of people wanted to be free. These empires slowly lost power as people in separate regions tried to break away and create smaller, separate nations.

Germany: 1865-1871

Otto von Bismarck led the large German state of Prussia. He used a policy called realpolitik, in which he used tactics to achieve and hold power and influence. In other words, if Bismarck needed to be nice to another country, he was nice; if he needed to be aggressive, he was aggressive. Bismarck went to war against Denmark, Austria, and France to gain land to add to his state. He appealed to nationalistic feelings and identity of the German people to get support for his wars. Bismarck said that the regions he conquered were home to lots of Germans and should unite with Prussia. In 1871, he won the Franco-Prussian War. The land that he gained from France added the last section to the new country of Germany.

Italy: 1858-1870

Count Cavour led the Italian state of Sardinia. He made a pact (agreement) with France in 1858. Cavour promised two of the regions he controlled in France in exchange for help with taking provinces from Austria. Sardinia and France then went to war against Austria. Cavour gained a lot of land and unified most of northern Italy by 1860. By the end of 1860, another Italian leader, Giuseppe Garibaldi, united southern Italy with the island of Sicily. After doing this, Garibaldi agreed to a union of southern and northern Italy. In 1870, the Papal States (including Rome) became the last area to join a united Italy.
Unification of Germany and Italy (cont.) WHII 8c and 8d

Key Vocabulary
Nationalism: a feeling of unity of a group of people, often based on a common language, culture, ethnicity, history, religion, or belief system
Nation-state: geographic area in which the political borders match those of a group of people that feels a strong sense of unity

Quick Review
1. Who likely made the following speech?
   A. Otto von Bismarck
   B. Napoleon Bonaparte
   C. Count Cavour
   D. Giuseppe Garibaldi

2. What is the correct order of events?
   A. 1, 3, 2, 4
   B. 2, 4, 3, 1
   C. 3, 1, 4, 2
   D. 4, 2, 1, 3

3. In what two nations did nationalism impact unification?
   A. Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire
   B. Germany and Italy
   C. Austria-Hungary and Germany
   D. Italy and the Ottoman Empire

4. Explain two-three reasons why nationalism can help to unify a country.

Connection to Today
The US Civil War unified the United States around the same time as Germany and Italy did. Identify three ways the US would be different if it were divided into two separate nations

Resources
Gale: World History in Context
- Otto von Bismarck: http://goo.gl/Syb2lt
- Camillo Di Cavour: http://tinyurl.com/nppuqsd
- Giuseppe Garibaldi: http://tinyurl.com/ljpmflf

Franco-Prussian War: 1870-1871 war that Prussia won against France, leading to the creation of the German state
Papal States: region under control of the Pope in the central Italian peninsula that became the last to join Italy
Rome: located in the Papal States, this city became the last to join Italy

“The position of Prussia in Germany will not be determined by its liberalism but by its power...Prussia must concentrate its strength and hold it for the favorable moment, which has already come and gone several times...Not through speeches and majority decisions will the great questions of the day be decided - that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 - but by iron and blood.”

1. Papal States (including Rome) joined Italy.
2. Count Cavour became leader of Sardinia.
3. Giuseppe Garibaldi joined southern Italy to northern Italy.
4. Count Cavour unified northern Italy.