# 3 | The Spring of Nations

**In this chapter you will answer:**

◎ What revolutions took place during the 19th century in Europe that made historians talk about 'revolutionary waves'?

◎ What is the difference between nation and state? What is a nation-state?

◎ How did Germany and Italy become nation-states?

◎ Who were the leaders of the German unification and of the Italian unification?

## 3.1 The Vienna Settlement and the revolutionary waves

After defeating Napoleon, European countries met at the **Congress of Vienna** (1815). The objective of the Congress was to redraw the continent's political map and create a framework for European international politics. The **Vienna Settlement** established what is called the **Concert of Europe**. This is a tradition established by the great powers of Europe of meeting from time to time in an international conference, or congress, in order to propose a solution by mutual agreement or "concert".

This would take place whenever a problem arose that threatened the peace between European nations. The main objectives of the Concert of Europe were to:

◎ Achieve a balance of power between Europe's great powers.

◎ Prevent another continent-wide war.

◎ Maintain **absolute monarchies** in their thrones crushing all revolts against their power.

◎ Uphold the territorial arrangements made at the Congress of Vienna.



**3.1** The Congress of Vienna

### KEY WORDS

**Congress** formal gathering, assembly or conference held to discuss or decide on a specific question

**Absolute monarchy** form of government in which the king or queen has unlimited power

### Talking points

What other famous mutual agreements do you know of? How often do international leaders meet today? What are some of these meetings called?

Work with a partner to research these questions and present your findings to the class.

The Concert of Europe established a surveillance system by which the absolute monarchies would prevent and repress any liberal revolt that took place in Europe. However, ideas from the French revolution and new political philosophies such as liberalism, nationalism and romanticism, had spread throughout the continent, causing increasing anger among the middle and the lower classes. This led to a series of revolts in different countries during the years 1820, 1830 and 1848.

> Look out for words ending in 'ism' in history! An 'ism' is a distinctive doctrine, system, or theory. Talk to your classmates about any other isms you can think of in religion, art and politics.

The Revolutions of 1848, known as the **Spring of Nations**, were a series of political upheavals that took place throughout the European continent. **Liberalism** and **nationalism** had spread throughout Europe, industrial change had started to revolutionize the life of the working classes, and **socialism** had begun to emerge. Nevertheless the spark for the revolutions came from an economic crisis and a series of crop failures, which produced famines among peasants and the urban working poor. Both the lower middle classes and the working classes wanted liberal reform. But while much of the philosophy came from the middle classes, most of the fight came from the lower classes.

In most of the countries the revolts failed. However, the results were significant. A democratic republic was established in France, servitude was abolished everywhere in Eastern Europe, except in Russia, universal male suffrage was established in several countries and the **bourgeoisie** obtained better conditions, holding the most important positions in society, politics and the economy. Although the Concert of Europe helped preserve Europe's monarchies for a time, by the middle of the 19th century, these political and ideological currents led to the founding of the new **nation-states** such as Germany and Italy during the second half of the century.

**Exercise**

**1** **Link the terms below with their correct definition. Use the information in the text above and the glossary at the end of the book.**

| Terms | Definitions |
|---|---|
| Congress of Vienna | Ideology that proposes that the people is the nation, and as a result only nation-states founded on the principle of national self-determination are legitimate. |
| Concert of Europe | Political uprisings that spread throughout the European continent fostered by nationalism, liberalism, social changes, and economic crisis. |
| Nationalism | International conference called in order to redraw the lines of Europe's political map and create a framework for European international politics. |
| Liberalism | Agreement by the great powers of Europe meet from time to time, in order to prevent the outbreak of liberal revolts and to uphold the agreements outlined at the Congress of Vienna. |

| Romanticism | Intellectual movement that emphasises the importance of emotion and passions instead of rationalism. |
|---|---|
| Revolutions of 1848 | Political entity (a state) that coincides with the cultural and ethnic entity of its citizens (a nation). |
| Nation-state | Political philosophy that considers individual liberty and equality to be the most important political goals, achieved by a constitutional government that respects individual's right to private property and supports the idea of a market economy. |

**Exercise**

**2** **Copy and complete the following sentences with the correct answer below. Compare and discuss your choices with a partner.**

**1** After defeating Napoleon, the most important European countries met at the _____ to redraw the European political map.
   **a** Concert of Europe   **b** Congress of Vienna

**2** To maintain the Congress of Vienna agreements and preserve the balance of power, European countries decided to meet in an international conference whenever some problem arose. This system was called the _____.
   **a** Concert of Europe   **b** Congress of Vienna

**Exercise**

**3** **Which of the following were objectives of the Concert of Europe? Indicate whether the following statements are true or false. If a statement is incorrect, write the correct sentence into your notebook.**

**a** Preserve peace in Europe
**b** Maintain absolute monarchies in their thrones
**c** Spread liberalism throughout the continent
**d** Maintain the Congress of Vienna agreements
**e** Crush all revolts against absolute monarchies
**f** Promote liberalism and nationalism

## 3.2 Unification of Germany

Before 1806, German lands were comprised of more than 300 political entities within the **Holy Roman Empire**. With only a few exceptions, the head of the House of Habsburg had constantly held the title of Holy Roman Emperor since the 14th century. Under Napoleon, popular German nationalism grew within the German states. After Napoleon's defeat, the Congress of Vienna gave more territory to Prussia while the 38 other states consolidated their territories under the Austrian Empire's sphere of influence. The Congress also established a **German**

**Confederation** headed by Austria, with a Federal "**Diet**" as a Parliament and the king of Austria as its president. The scene was set for a real rivalry between Austria and Prussia.

At the same time, the northern German states created the "**Zollverein**" or Customs Union. It linked Prussia and other German states economically by reducing protectionist barriers, and improving the transport of raw materials and manufactured goods. This union largely improved German industrialization and promoted greater political unity between the German states. By 1840, the Zollverein included most German states, with the exception of Austria, thus increasing Prussia's status within the German Confederation.

The goal of the Revolution of 1848 was German unification. The German revolutionaries hoped to establish a German federation, governed by a national parliament and a federal constitution. They also wanted to unify Germany, possibly under the leadership of the Prussian king, since Prussia was the largest and the strongest state. In 1849, the diet offered the title of "Kaiser" or emperor to the Prussian king, but he refused it because he feared opposition from the other German princes and military intervention from Austria and Russia. In the end, the Revolution of 1848 did not achieve unification but it weakened Austria.

The unification process started again when Otto von Bismarck was appointed Minister-President of Prussia in 1862. Bismarck strengthened the Prussian army and made Prussia the leading German economic with the most efficient government. Bismarck, the "man of blood and iron", realised the best way to unite all the German states was to incite one foreign country to declare war on one of the German states so that the rest of the states would be forced to defend the German state, thus unifying and further strengthening it. This idea was put into action when Prussia was involved in a war against Denmark (1864), to recover the territories of Schleswig and Holstein. The mixture of Prussian military might and Bismarck's leadership led to the incorporation of Schleswig into Prussia, establishing Prussia as the leader of German nationalism.

The Austro-Prussian rivalry had been growing for decades, but Bismarck's diplomacy ensured Austria was now isolated diplomatically. Prussia obtained Russian and French neutrality while Italians were persuaded to threaten the Austrian possessions in northern Italy. This led to increasing tensions between Austria and Prussia over Schleswig-Holstein and the Austro-Prussian War broke out in 1866. Austria was defeated at Sadowa. In the Treaty of Prague Prussia acquired more territory and the **North German Confederation** was set up under the leadership of Prussia.
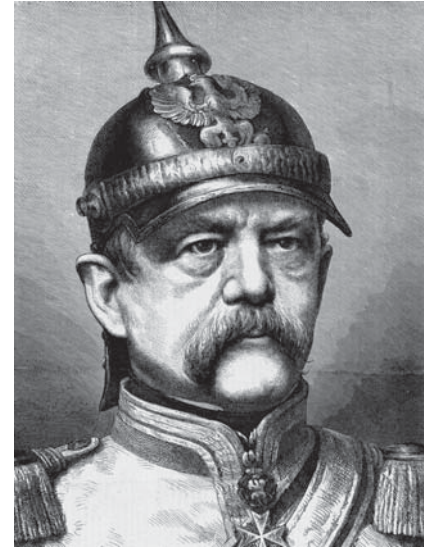
**3.2** Portrait of Otto von Bismarck
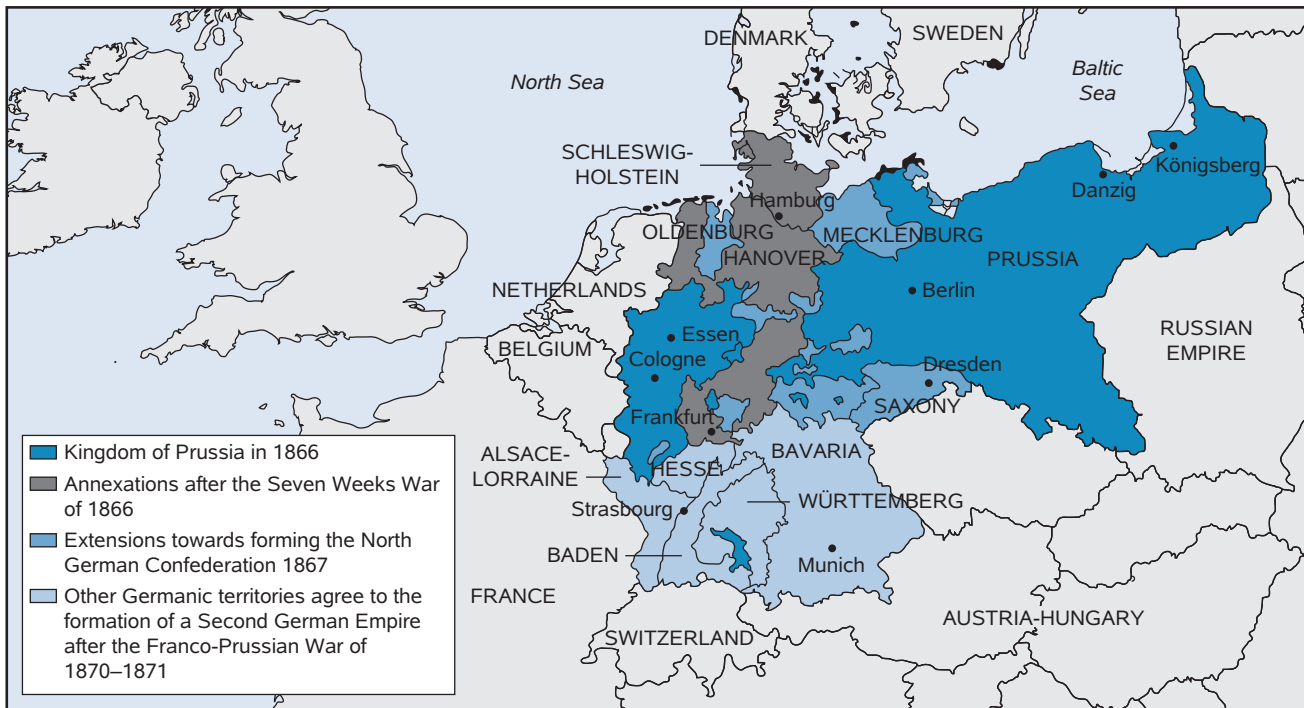
**3.3** Map of German unification

As France would not allow Prussia to become the dominant force in Europe, Bismarck provoked Napoleon into declaring war on Prussia. Again Bismarck's diplomacy ensured France was isolated diplomatically. The Prussian army defeated France in 1871. This finally proved to the other German states, and indeed all of Europe, that Prussia was able to protect the interests of the various German states better than Austria. The **Treaty of Frankfurt** in 1871 contains perhaps some of the key causes of the First World War. France became the Third Republic while the German states were unified in the **German Empire** or **Reich.** King William I and Bismarck, the first chancellor of a unified Germany, transformed Germany from being a loose confederation into a federal nation-state.

The new German Empire included 25 states. This meant that they had achieved the "lesser German solution" with the exclusion of Austria, as opposed to the "greater German solution", which would have included Austria.

**Exercise**

**4** **Read the following definitions and select the correct one. Copy the terms and the definitions into your notebook.**

   **a** Holy Roman Empire
   - ◎ Political entity which included a lot of territories in Central Europe during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age, especially those of current Germany.
   - ◎ Political entity which included the territories ruled by the Congress of Vienna.
   - ◎ Political entity which included the territories governed by the Romans after the end of the Republic.

   **b** German Confederation
   - ◎ Parliament of the German Empire.
   - ◎ Organisation of German states created by the Congress of Vienna.

   **c** Kaiser
   - ◎ Legislative assembly of the German Empire.

◎ Formal meeting of representatives from the German states.

◎ German title meaning emperor.

**d** Bismarck

◎ Minister-President of Prussia under King William I, leading figure in the movement towards German unification, and first chancellor of the II German Empire.

◎ Last monarch of France and first president of the French Republic, elected by popular vote after the Franco-Prussian War.

◎ German-Austrian politician and a major figure in the negotiations during the Congress of Vienna, who consolidated Austrian leadership within the German Confederation.

**e** Treaty of Prague

◎ Peace treaty which ended the Franco-Prussian War.

◎ Peace treaty which ended the Austro-Prussian War.

**f** Treaty of Frankfurt

◎ Peace treaty which ended the Franco-Prussian War.

◎ Peace treaty which ended the Austro-Prussian War.

**g** II German Empire

◎ Political entity which included a lot of territories in Central Europe during the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age, especially those of current Germany.

◎ Nation-state founded in 1871 under the leadership of Prussia, which concluded the unification of Germany.

**Exercise**

**5 Examine and discuss the events below with a partner. Copy them into your notebook in the correct order in which these events happened.**

**a** The Revolution of 1848 does not achieve unification as the Prussian king rejects the title of Kaiser.

**b** The Austro-Prussian War breaks out in 1866.

**c** Prussia defeats France in 1871 and the II German Empire is created excluding Austria.

**d** The northern German states create the Zollverein reducing protectionist barriers between them.

**e** Napoleon is defeated.

**f** Prussia annexes Schleswig after defeating Denmark.

**g** The Congress of Vienna creates a German Confederation of 38 states from the previous 300 of the Holy Roman Empire.

**h** The Holy Roman Empire comprises more than 300 political states led by the Austrian House of Habsburg.

**i** The Franco-Prussian War breaks out in 1870.

**j** William I is proclaimed German emperor, and Bismarck is elected first chancellor of the unified Germany.

**k** Napoleon conquers most of the German states.

**l** Otto von Bismarck, minister-president of Prussia, stimulates Prussian economy, reorganises the army and makes Prussia the leading German power.

**m** Prussia defeats Austria and organises the North German Confederation under its leadership.

## SOURCE ANALYSIS

### Working with Primary Sources

**Otto von Bismarck's speech before the Prussian Lower Parliamentary House, 29 September 1862**

Bismarck gave this speech when the Prussian lower parliamentary house refused to approve an increase in military spending. In the speech, Bismarck expresses his regret at the deputies' refusal and his desire to strengthen the position of Prussia in Germany.

> ''The members [of the House], however, have the task of standing over public sentiment, and of guiding it. Our blood is too hot, we prefer armor too great for our small body to carry, but we should put it to service. Germany does not look to Prussia's liberalism, but to its power. Bavaria, Wurttemberg, and Baden [German states] would like to turn to liberalism, but they shall not assume Prussia's role. Prussia must collect its forces for the favorable occasion, which has several times been neglected; Prussia's borders are not favorable to a healthy national life. Not by speeches and decisions of majorities will the greatest problems of the time be decided – that was the mistake of 1848-49 – but by iron and blood.''
>
> *Famous speeches and speech topics. 24 September 2009*
> *http://www.famous-speeches-and-speech-topics.info/famous-short-speeches/otto-von-bismarck-speech-blood-and-iron.htm*

**6** **Read the document above and answer the following questions in your notebook.**

  **a** According to the speech, what role does Bismarck think Prussia should play in German unification?
   ◎ Prussia should lead German unification.
   ◎ Prussia should work together with other German states such as Bavaria, Wurttemberg and Baden to achieve unification.
   ◎ Prussia should leave the leading role of unification to Bavaria, Wurttemberg and Baden.

  **b** According to the text, why did the Parliament refuse the military budget increase?
   ◎ Because they preferred to use the money to develop the railway network.
   ◎ Because public opinion did not support the military budget increase.

  **c** What is the parliamentary deputies' main obligation according to Bismarck?
   ◎ To take unpopular measures if necessary to strengthen Prussia's position.
   ◎ To listen to the citizens opinion when taking decisions.
   ◎ To sanction the king's decisions.

  **d** Why should Prussia lead German unification?
   ◎ Because liberalism was stronger in Prussia than in the rest of the German states.
   ◎ Because Prussia was the most powerful German state.

**e** According to Bismarck, why was an increase in the military expenses necessary?
  - ◎ To be ready to expand Prussia's borders when they had the opportunity.
  - ◎ To improve Prussian soldiers quality of life.
  - ◎ To foster Prussian industrialization.

**f** What does "by iron and blood" mean?
  - ◎ That German unification should be obtained by a war.
  - ◎ That German unification should be obtained by industrial development.

**7 Critical Thinking: interpreting historical sources.**

Documents sometimes include biased descriptions, interpretations, or opinions about events. Evaluate the source and decide whether it is accurate or reveals the author's bias by answering the following questions.

**a** According to the document, what biases, if any, does Bismarck have?

**b** Why did Bismarck write such a speech? Was it to be shown to the public?

**c** According to what you have learned during the lesson, do you think Otto von Bismarck was right to defend the increase of Prussia's military budget? Write a paragraph explaining your answer.

**d** After analysing Source A, write a paragraph explaining whether this source is useful or not in understanding Prussia's role in the unification of Germany.

## 3.3 Italian Unification

In the year 1816, Italy was divided into different monarchies and duchies, but liberal and nationalists' ideals emerged under Napoleon's rule. Between 1820 and 1848, small groups of liberals, called **carbonari**, led the Italian nationalist movement and revolts. The carbonari wanted to unify and create a single Italian nation-state, but they did not agree about what type of government should be established: monarchy, republic or papal rule. The Revolt of 1830 failed when the Austrian army began its march across the Italian Peninsula, slowly crushing resistance in each province. Many radical leaders were arrested. In 1848, revolution broke out again with more uniform **demands** but unification also failed.

Unification began under the leadership of Victor Emmanuel II of Saboya, king of Sardinia-Piedmont, who was considered a liberal monarch. Cavour helped him. Cavour was the prime minister of Sardinia-Piedmont and the man responsible for strengthening Piedmont's army and diplomacy. After Piedmont's involvement in the Crimean War, the French helped Cavour drive the Austrians out of northern Italy by signing the Pact of Plombières in 1858. Although Austria was not completely defeated, Piedmont gained Lombardy and Italian independence was closer.

**KEY WORD**

**Demand** an urgent claim or request for something
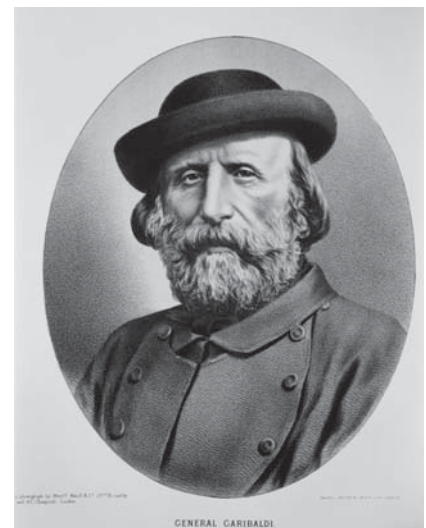


**3.4** Portrait of Giuseppe Garibaldi

At the same time, a republican soldier, Garibaldi, accepted Piedmontese leadership and **constitutional monarchy** and, after uniting the states in the south of Italy, he gave them to King Victor Emmanuel. In 1861, the kingdom of Italy was created, unifying all the Italian states except the Papal States, protected by France, and the kingdom Lombardo-Veneto, which was protected by Austria.

**3.5** Map of Italian unification

When Austria was defeated in the Austro-Prussian War, Lombardo-Veneto's territories became part of the kingdom of Italy. After the Franco-Prussian War, the Pope no longer received French protection. Finally, the Italian government peacefully entered the city of Rome. The Pope declared himself a prisoner in the Vatican. Church and state were separated and Rome became the Italian capital. Unification had been achieved but the differences between the northern and the southern states persisted. Gradually, Piedmontese ideas dominated the country and a constitutional monarchy was created.

In the end, some territories remained outside the borders of the kingdom of Italy. This situation led to the creation of the Italia **irredentism,** an Italian nationalist movement which claimed that Italy had to settle within its natural borders. Italians heavily supported this idea during the First World War.

**Exercise**

**8** **Write a brief but accurate definition of each of the following terms that relate to the unification of Italy.**

- ◎ Carbonari:
- ◎ Victor Emmanuel II:
- ◎ Cavour:
- ◎ Garibaldi:
- ◎ Italian irredentism:

**Exercise**

**9** **Read the text and decide which preposition fits in each space.**

**Select the prepositions from the box below and copy into your notebook.**

_____ the Congress of Vienna settlement had maintained the division of Italy in different states, nationalists and liberal ideas had spread _____ them fostering revolution. The revolutions of 1820, 1830 and 1848 had failed _____ the lack of agreement _____ the carbonari. Unification began _____ the leadership of Piedmont. Its prime minister, Cavour, strengthened Piedmont's army and diplomacy _____ weaken Austria. _____, Garibaldi was leading a revolution in the south of Italy.

_____ unifying the states in the south of Italy, Garibaldi accepted the leadership of King Victor Emmanuelle of Piedmont _____ the creation _____ the Kingdom of Italy _____ 1861. This kingdom of Italy included all of the Italian states _____ the Papal States and the kingdom Lombardo-Veneto. _____ Austria's defeat in the Austro-Prussian War, the kingdom of Italy annexed the Veneto's territories. And when France was not able to protect the Papal States, they were occupied _____ the kingdom of Italy. _____ the differences between the north and the south, unification was achieved and a constitutional monarchy was created.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Among | Although | Among | At the same time |
| Because of | Under | In | Towards |
| To | After | Except for | Of |
| By | Despite | | |

**10** A map is a representation of part of the earth. Maps can be an important source of primary information for historic investigation.

**Below is a thematic map which shows historical information related with Italian unification. Look at the map in the text and follow the steps.**
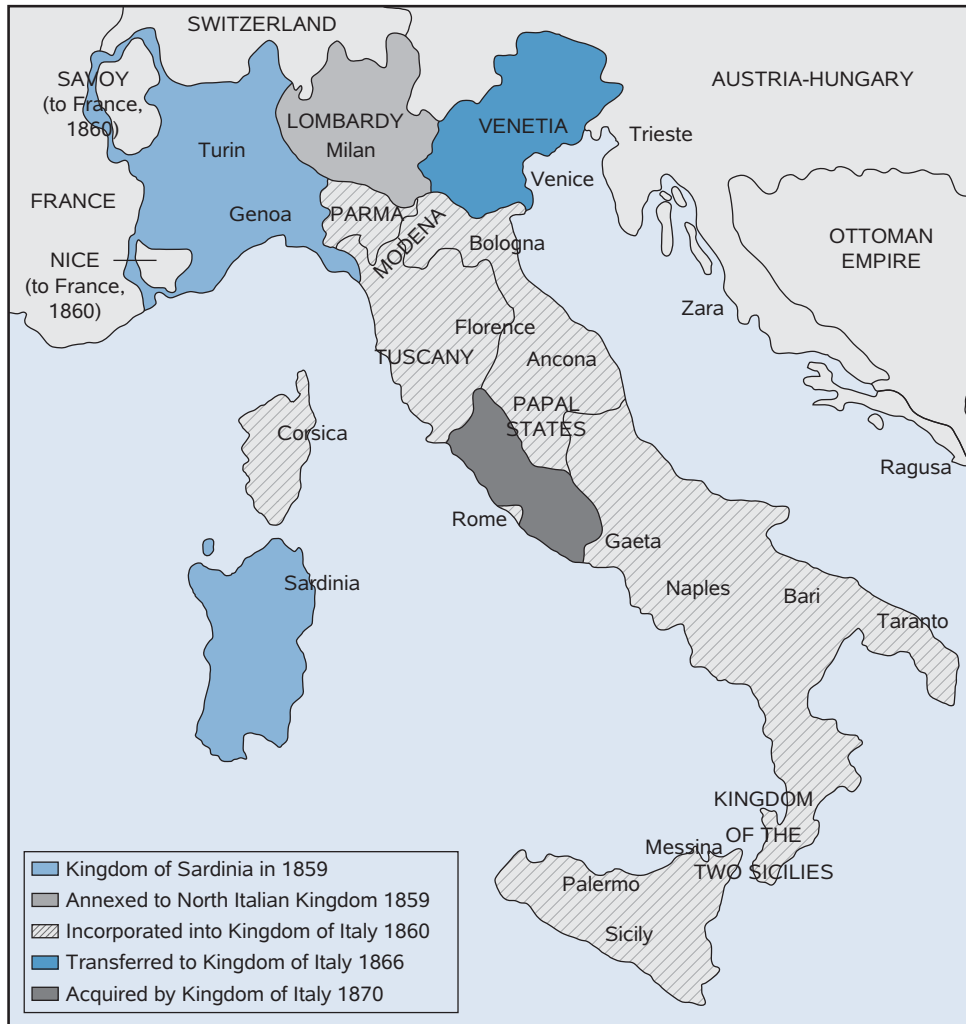


**3.6** Map of Italian unification

**a Analysing the map: Before you answer questions on the map above, you need to fully understand what the map is about. Answer the questions below in your notebook and discuss your answers with a partner.**

◎ Look at the title. What is the map about?
◎ Look at the legend. What is the meaning of each colour?

**b Organising the information: Using what you see in the map, copy and complete the table below.**

| The unification of Italy: addition of the Italian states to the kingdom of Italy | |
|---|---|
| | **State added or occupied** |
| **1859** | |
| **1860** | |

| 1866 | |
|---|---|
| 1870 | |

**c** **Understanding the information: Relate the information you see in the map with the things you have learned about the Italian unification. One entry has been done for you.**

| The unification of Italy: addition of the Italian states to the kingdom of Italy | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **State added or occupied** | **Event that causes the addition** |
| **1859** | Kingdom of Sardinia | The kingdom of Piedmont leads unification |
| **1860** | | |
| **1866** | | |
| **1870** | | |

**Extension**

According to what you have learned in this chapter and what you have seen in the map, write an essay explaining the unification of Italy. Make sure you explain how certain events led to the addition of the different Italian states.

**Talking points**

Discuss which characteristics, common features and similarities a population should have to begin a process of independence to become a nation-state.

Think about the questions from the start of the chapter.
Can you answer these now?

- ◎ What revolutions took place during the 19th century in Europe that made historians talk about revolutionary waves?
- ◎ What is the difference between nation and state? What is a nation-state?
- ◎ How did Germany and Italy become nation-states?
- ◎ Who were the leaders of German unification and of Italian unification?