### Italian Unification

#### Focus Points

- Why was Italy not unified in 1848–49?
- How important was Garibaldi’s contribution to unifying Italy?
- Did Cavour help or hinder the unification of Italy?
- How important for other European countries were moves towards Italian unification?

#### Specified Content

- Austrian influence over Italy
- Italian nationalism and the role of Mazzini
- Events of 1848–49
- Victor Emmanuel II and Cavour: Plombières, war with Austria in 1859
- Garibaldi and the invasion of Sicily and Naples
- The creation of the Kingdom of Italy, completion of unification by 1870

#### Key terms, people, events

- Risorgimento
- Mazzini
- Cavour
- Garibaldi

Thousands of ordinary people flocked to see Giuseppe Garibaldi at Trafalgar Square on his visit to England in 1864.

Giuseppe Garibaldi was welcomed as a hero. “Women, more or less in full dress, flew upon him, seized his hands, touched his beard, his poncho, his trousers, any part of him that they could reach. [...] They were delirious with excitement and behaved in [a] barbaric manner” (The Scotsman Newspaper)

Yes, he was known as a brave fighter and a tactical genius but that doesn’t explain why he was celebrated like a rock star?

The British public had a passionate interest in ‘foreign affairs’ and had a great distrust of foreign autocratic empires, and often supported national groups who attempted to gain their freedom from such empires in order to become independent countries, as was the case in Italy.
Garibaldi’s fame had begun in 1849 when he led the forces defending the radical Roman republic against the French army that had been sent to crush it. In the War of 1859 his leadership gave the Piedmontese Italians their only victory against the Austrians. Then in 1860 Garibaldi, with only a few thousand badly armed and untrained troops, conquered first Sicily and then the rest of the Kingdom of Naples and handed both of them over to the new King of Italy. This was a key moment in Italian History. Without Garibaldi, the new Kingdom might have only covered the north of the peninsula.

However, Garibaldi was popular in Britain not just because of his fight against the Austrians but also because his struggle for Italian unity and independence brought him into conflict with the Pope. In Britain, there had been a long tradition of anti-Papal feeling since the Reformation and Garibaldi was a potent symbol of brave resistance to the power not only of the Austrian Empire but to the Pope in Rome.

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**Essentials up to 1848**

1. Italy was divided into different states before and after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815
2. The Vienna peace settlement of 1815 gave Austria dominance over the Italian peninsula
3. Some people wanted to see Italy get her independence from Austria, but few saw the need for unification
4. Austria’s power meant that the attempts to bring change to Italy met with failure
**Why was Italian unification so unlikely before 1848?**

- At the peace negotiations in Vienna in 1815, following the Napoleonic Wars it became clear that Italy was expected to remain divided.

- “For Metternich, the Italian peninsula represented a passive object of European diplomacy: Italy’s importance lay in its territorial divisions, essential for the maintenance of the balance of power.”

- Italy’s divisions were seen as vitally important in maintaining the balance of power, particularly ensuring that France could not again threaten Europe by dominating Italy and then using Italy’s resources.

- To achieve this the great powers insisted that the thrones and titles of the different Italian states, their armies, trades, taxes and resources should be split up amid the different Italian states, and Austria given the job of guarding them.

- ‘Italian affairs do not exist’ – Metternich 1815

- Confident that Italy would not be making its way towards any form of political self-awareness, and none of the Great Powers had any intention that Italy should be formed into one country.

- ‘Italy is merely a geographical expression’ – Metternich 1847

- Reflects anxiety that idea of the Italian nation might be threatening the balance of power.

The old ruling families – the Austrian emperor and the pope now dominated Italy. This Ancien Régime was determined to resist change. Restoring the European situation and conditions from before Napoleon and the revolutions was impossible – too much had happened and Europeans were reluctant to return to the ways of the old regime.
By 1815, the idea existed among Piedmont’s ruling class that Piedmont could become a strong Italian state in northern Italy and fill the power vacuum left by France. There was no organized and effective movement for Italian Unification.

Many merchants, administrators and landowners had benefited from the more unified rule imposed by France and access to wider markets in the French empire. In this way they had experienced the material benefits of change. The peasantry were conservative, so they were not enthusiastic for change. They were traditionally loyal to their local rulers and to the Church. The ideas of the French Revolution appealed far more to the urban population and to the middle classes.

Changes during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period meant that Europeans and Italians in particular, were reluctant to return to the ways of the old regime. The monarchs of Europe preferred to rule Italy as a series of independent states – and had the power to maintain this system.

There was a rise in the number of secret societies that wanted a more united Italy. There remained deep divisions in Italy. Regional identity was far stronger than any desire to be a united nation. Differences in language and history between the various parts of Italy were a serious barrier to revolutionary change.

**Why was Italian unification so unlikely before 1848?**
- Geographical divisions
- Differences in language and culture
- The Vienna Settlement of 1815: Italy’s role in the peace of Europe
- Class divisions
- Political and social divisions between the Italian states
- The role of the Catholic Church

Although the people of the Italian peninsula spoke the same language, they had not experienced political unity since Roman times. By the early 1800s, though, Italian patriots—including Mazzini, who would become a revolutionary—were determined to build a new, united Italy. As in Germany, unification was brought about by the efforts of a strong state and furthered by a shrewd, ruthless politician—Count Camillo Cavour.
Obstacles to Italian Unity

For centuries, Italy had been a battleground for ambitious foreign and local princes. Frequent warfare and foreign rule had led people to identify with local regions. The people of Florence considered themselves Tuscans, those of Venice Venetians, the people of Naples Neapolitans, and so on. But as in Germany, the invasions of Napoleon had sparked dreams of national unity.

The Congress of Vienna, however, ignored the nationalists who hoped to end centuries of foreign rule and achieve unity. To Prince Metternich of Austria, the idea of a unified Italy was laughable. At Vienna, Austria took control of much of northern Italy, while Hapsburg monarchs ruled various other Italian states. In the south, a French Bourbon ruler was put in charge of Naples and Sicily.

In response, nationalists organized secret patriotic societies and focused their efforts on expelling Austrian forces from northern Italy. Between 1820 and 1848, nationalist revolts exploded across the region. Each time, Austria sent in troops to crush the rebels.

Mazzini establishes Young Italy -

In the 1830s, the nationalist leader Giuseppe Mazzini founded Young Italy. The goal of this secret society was “to constitute Italy, one, free, independent, republican nation.” In 1849, Mazzini helped set up a revolutionary republic in Rome, but French forces soon toppled it. Like many other nationalists, Mazzini spent much of his life in exile, plotting and dreaming of a united Italy.

Nationalism Takes Root

“Ideas grow quickly,” Mazzini once said, “when watered by the blood of martyrs.” Although revolution had failed, nationalist agitation had planted seeds for future harvests.

To nationalists like Mazzini, a united Italy made sense not only because of geography, but also because of a common language and history. Nationalists reminded Italians of the glories of ancient Rome and the medieval papacy. To others, unity made practical economic sense. It would end trade barriers among the Italian states and stimulate industry.

Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-72)

Mazzini came from a middle-class family in Genoa. He was inspired by the sight of the revolutionaries of 1821 waiting to go into exile in Spain. He joined the Carbonari and went into hiding, forming the underground group Young Italy in 1831 and taking part in whatever unrest occurred in Italy subsequently. Through his passionate writings, Mazzini became an inspirational figure for many Italians who wanted freedom from Austrian rule and a new unified Italy. He is considered to be the ‘heart’ of Italian unification and the ‘Soul of Italy’.
Why did the 1848 revolutions fail and how important were they?

By 1848, Italian unification remained a remote possibility:

- most Italian peasants had little interest in the nationalist ideas of Mazzini and the secret societies
- Italy’s rulers, supported by Austria, were strong enough to suppress the revolts
- the secret societies were not organized effectively and sometimes their aims were not very clear
- the educated middle classes, who were most attracted to the new ideas, were a minority.

Despite this, in 1848 there were major disturbances and significant unrest with the aim of achieving change and greater Italian unity.

New ideas

There was a considerable growth in radical literature after 1815. Various ideas for change were written about and discussed. Young Italy and Mazzini produced numerous articles and books urging change, which were not fully censored. There was also a growth of more moderate writing.

The most famous of these moderate writers was a Piedmontese churchman, Vincenzo Gioberti, who anticipated changes in Europe and Italy under a reformed papacy, and envisioned a confederation of Italian rulers under the pope’s guidance. In this new Italian union, Piedmont would supply the military power and Rome the spiritual leadership.

The new pope

While ideas were spreading about a papal-led federation, Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti was elected pope in June 1846, taking the title Pius IX (‘Pio Nono’ in Italian). Pius had a reputation as a liberal who favored change. This reputation seemed justified when he released some political prisoners in the Papal States. He also made changes in the way the states were ruled, so that some people who were not churchmen were allowed to participate in government.

The papacy had previously resisted change. The Church had lost power under the French Revolution and so, after 1815, it supported the Ancien Régime in suppressing nationalism. Furthermore, as an international organization, the Church had little to gain from the rise of nation states. It also considered liberalism to be ungodly.

Between 1815 and 1846, a succession of popes spoke out against political change, and the Papal States was ruled as an absolute monarchy.

- Pius VII (1800–23) had been imprisoned by Napoleon. After 1815, he reintroduced the index (a list of banned books) and the Inquisition (a sort of religious police to investigate and punish opposition to Catholicism). He also restored the Jesuits, a powerful religious order that promoted strict discipline in religion and education.
• Leo XII (1823–29) was even more backward-looking, and restored both the powers of the landed aristocracy in the Papal States and the restrictions on Jews. He also increased the authority of the police in his lands.

• Following a decade of rule under Pius VIII (1820–30), Gregory XVI (1831–46) used Austrian military forces to suppress opposition in central Italy. He opposed the building of railways because he thought they would spread dangerous new ideas and undermine traditional rural life.

It is somewhat surprising that writers such as Gioberti could hope that the papacy might actually lead a movement for Italian unification. The popes had dominated large areas of central Italy and prevented change; they had spoken out publicly against change and nationalism; they had allied with Austria as well as backing the efforts of other rulers to stifle new ideas.

So, when a more liberal and modern pope – Pius IX – was elected in 1846, many nationalists hoped that the Church might use its moral authority and influence over rural Italy and Catholic Austria to work for greater national unity.

However, Pius IX was under great pressure from the cardinals within the Church to avoid revolution. Ultimately, he reverted to the attitudes of his predecessors by failing to support nationalism:

• in 1866, he condemned liberalism and democracy in the so-called Syllabus of Errors

• in 1870, he strengthened the authority of the papacy by introducing a decree on papal infallibility that made the pope’s ‘pronouncements unchallengeable’; this effectively stated that the pope’s opinion could never be wrong.

Reforming states

In Piedmont and Tuscany, there was some interest in modernization. For example, Piedmont’s king, Carlo Alberto, introduced more liberal press laws that reduced censorship of newspapers and journals.

Then, in November 1847, the grand duke of Tuscany, Alberto, agreed a customs union with the pope that ended all taxes on trade between the two states. Shortly afterwards, in January 1848, demonstrations and unrest in Palermo forced the king of Naples to agree to a constitution for Sicily.
**Peasant discontent**

Economic changes also caused unrest and contributed to the revolution in 1848. There had been a continuing fall in agricultural prices since 1815. A pamphlet of 1847 outlined the woes of the peasants.

*The condition of the peasants is appalling. They dig all day for just enough to obtain bread and oil and make a soup of wild herbs. In the winter hunger forces them to ask the landlords for food; he gives it but only if they repay him twice as much or even more at harvest time and only if they let him make love to their wives and daughters. The peasant has to sell his honor for bread.*

- Extract from a pamphlet issued in 1847 by the Neapolitan liberal Settembrini, published anonymously.

There was also an increase in the number of day laborers, as opposed to peasants who rented or owned land. These casual workers were without work when times were hard, and this increased poverty in the countryside.

With food prices falling, landowners needed to maximize profits. To increase revenues from wheat, common pasture land was converted to cereal crops and there was more deforestation. These measures put pressure on rural workers, who relied on their traditional rights to use common land for their livestock and had little to fall back on in times of bad harvests. When their wages fell, famine and starvation led to unrest. In February and March 1848, there were food riots in Lombardy and some land seizures in Tuscany. There were also outbreaks of machine-breaking on some estates, along with rural strikes.

Agrarian unrest made the problems of keeping order more difficult for Italian governments at a time when they were also facing political discontent. For example, rural unrest in Lombardy in early 1848 coincided with political activity against the Austrian tax on tobacco. Those involved in rural unrest did not seek Italian unification, but the revolts undermined the authority of Italy’s rulers.

**Discontent among the middle classes**

Economic development in the first half of the 19th century led to the rise of a larger and more prosperous middle class, and better communication between regions. In the 1840s, railways linking key cities in the north – Turin and Genoa, Milan and Venice, Florence and Pisa – were a symbol of this modernization and change, and generated profits for investors. Banking and finance also prospered in the north, with new banks in Genoa and Turin. There was also an expansion in the textile industry.

Greater economic development created a demand for free trade. It also increased the confidence of Italy’s middle classes and their desire for self-rule. There developed a belief that Italy would grow and prosper if it were not controlled by Austria and its allies. The effect of this was to encourage demands for an end to Austrian domination and a more united Italy.
1848: The Main Events of the Revolution

The events of 1848 began as small uprisings and built into a wider revolution.

- A revolt in Sicily gathered enough support to make Ferdinand II of Naples agree to a constitution.

- This in turn led to moves towards constitutional rule in Florence for the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, in Turin for Piedmont-Sardinia, and in Rome for the Papal States.

- There was revolution in France in February 1848.

- Unrest spread to Austria, and the Austrian foreign minister Klemens von Metternich, responsible for Austrian repression, was forced to resign.

- Revolts broke out in Hungary.

- In March 1848, a revolution in Milan was supported by the neighboring provinces, and the Austrian army was forced into retreat.

- Venice was the next to revolt: on 22 March, Austrian forces surrendered and the Venetian Republic was restored under the patriot Daniele Manin

1848 was a key year for Italian revolutionary movements. The high point was the invasion of Austrian territory by Carlo Alberto of Piedmont, supported by volunteers from Naples, the Papal States and Tuscany.

There were now provisional popular governments in Venice and Milan. The king of Piedmont sought an end to foreign rule and some sort of greater Italian union. There was growing enthusiasm for greater national unity and freedom from Austrian rule. Volunteers from different parts of the Italian peninsula came to the north. Passionate ideological feeling was spread by those influenced by Mazzini, and revolutionary leaders such as Manin were emerging. France and Austria were too distracted by their own revolutions to intervene, and Britain was sympathetic to Italian nationalism.
The Failure of the Revolutions

However, the revolts of 1848 were not a decisive turning point. Pope Pius IX was deeply concerned by the unrest and, on 29 April, he issued a formal declaration (an ‘allocution’) against change. This destroyed any hope that the pope would throw his spiritual authority behind Italian union and mobilize Italy’s Catholic peasant masses.

The pope’s declaration was followed by the end of the revolution in Naples. The divisions between Sicilians and the mainland, and the king of Piedmont’s inability to maintain control of his armed forces, resulted in the restoration of royal control on 15 May. This marked the beginning of the end for the revolutions in the south of Italy.

Strong leadership by Piedmont might have resulted in Austria’s defeat and the creation of some unity in the north. However, Carlo Alberto was no Napoleon. His armies let the Austrians retreat into their stronghold – the famous ‘Quadrilateral’, which consisted of four major Austrian fortresses at Verona, Mantua, Peschiera and Legnago – that dominated Lombardy. This made it difficult for any army to effectively challenge Austrian power.

On 25 July 1848, Piedmont’s army was defeated by the Austrian army at Custoza, and Carlo Alberto signed a ceasefire with Austria.

If Carlo Alberto was not going to lead a movement for Italian unity, there was always the possibility of a popular democratic assembly. Mazzini pushed for this and, in October 1848, a nationalist government was elected in Tuscany that was ready to support an Italian parliament in resisting Austrian rule. The grand duke fled and on 15 November 1848 the pope’s minister, Rossi, was murdered during an uprising in Rome. The pope also fled the city, and the revolutionaries declared a Roman republic. In February 1849, Carlo Alberto broke his truce and resumed the war against Austria.

By now, however, there was less chance of unification than there had been in March 1848:

- the Roman and Florentine republics were too extreme for many Italians – they were too democratic, too opposed to the pope and too hostile to traditional authority; the language used by Mazzini was too revolutionary
- in Piedmont, there were divisions within the government and the ruling classes about whether to support Italian unity
- Naples was once again under the king’s control
- the revolutions in France, Germany, Hungary and Austria were clearly failing.
A decisive military victory might have turned the situation in the nationalists’ favor. However, once again the Piedmont army was defeated by the Austrians, at Novara on 23 March 1849. After the defeat, Carlo Alberto abdicated in favor of his son, Vittore Emanuele II.

Following the defeat of Piedmont’s army:

- Austria occupied Lombardy and the Venetian mainland
- Ferdinand II of Naples took control of Sicily, in March 1849
- the grand duke of Tuscany was restored by Austrian forces, in May 1849
- the Roman republic, led by Mazzini and defended by his idealistic commander Giuseppe Garibaldi, was attacked by French troops sent in by the new president Louis Napoleon (a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte who would become Emperor Napoleon III in 1851)
- French Catholics were anxious to restore the pope to Rome and ensure his protection; although the French forces were fiercely resisted, the Roman republic fell on 3 July 1849
- the last revolutionary stronghold, Venice, was forced to surrender to Austria on 24 August 1849.

The Reasons for Failure

The most obvious reason for the failure of the revolutions of 1848–49 was the strength of the Austrian army under its military leader Josef Radetzky. Although the Austrian government was forced out, its army could rely on the effective defense provided by the Quadrilateral and the discipline of its soldiers, who were drawn from across the empire and were unsympathetic to revolutionary nationalism. Against these forces, Piedmont’s army was ineffective.

Had Piedmont’s army been supported by a national uprising, then the outcome might have been different. However, the papal allocution and the flight of Pope Pius IX from Rome reduced Catholic support for Italian unification. Furthermore, the majority of Italian peasants did not seek political change. Although rural discontent had contributed to the initial unrest in early 1848, this was not the same as popular mass support for a united Italy. There was also little backing for an Italian assembly and, with the exception of Piedmont’s ruling élite, little interest in greater rule by Piedmont.

The various forces for change of the previous 50 years did not come together effectively enough for the revolutions of 1848 to succeed.

- Most Italians did not share the desire of Piedmont’s military and aristocracy for dynastic expansion, and there was insufficient military power and diplomatic influence to gain control of Lombardy.

- The Mazzinians were admired by some for their heroic defense of Rome, yet many others were appalled by these ‘extreme republicans’, who reminded them of the terrors of the French Revolution. Rome and Venice remained isolated centers of resistance.
• Many northern liberal Italians saw the Sicilian revolt as simply an expression of the island’s restlessness and desire for independence.

• Furthermore, the foreign powers were too strong. Although threatened by revolution, Austria remained powerful enough to reassert its authority over Italy, Germany and Hungary – at least for the time being. Austria had a strong army and its opponents in all three areas were divided.

• The French were no longer the liberal bringers of revolution; instead, they protected the pope against it.

• The tsarist monarchy in Russia was untouched by revolution and encouraged the restoration of reactionary regimes.

‘The 1848 Revolutions failed because Italians were too divided.’ How far do you agree with this view?

A) The defeat of the 1848 movement was certainly a grave blow to the cause of Italian independence and liberty; but this had by now gone too far on its way to be stopped.


B) As the revolutionary movement collapsed, everywhere in Italy except in Piedmont the clocks were turned back. The liberal reforms had not brought the princes respect and support. Instead the floodgates had been opened and a dangerous tide of social and political unrest unleashed. In Piedmont the new king was eager after his father’s defeat to revoke the constitution, but the Austrians made him keep it.


Some historians believe that after 1848, unification was assured (Source A). However, other historians take an opposing view (Source B). Which view do you agree with and why?
The Struggle for Italy

After 1848, leadership of the Risorgimento, or Italian nationalist movement, passed to the kingdom of Sardinia, which included Piedmont, Nice, and Savoy as well as the island of Sardinia. Its constitutional monarch, Victor Emmanuel II, hoped to join other states to his own, thereby increasing his power.

Cavour Becomes Prime Minister

In 1852, Victor Emmanuel made Count Camillo Cavour his prime minister. Cavour came from a noble family but favored liberal goals. He was a flexible, practical, crafty politician, willing to use almost any means to achieve his goals. Like Bismarck in Prussia, Cavour was a monarchist who believed in Realpolitik.

Realpolitik

is defined as a set of activities that help organize individuals, systematically resolve disputes, and maintain order in society with the use of power. These actions include passing and enforcing laws governing individual behavior, mobilizing and channeling mass participation, and socializing individuals to support the political system and the values on which it is based. If politics involves “who gets what, when, and how,” then when and how people get what they want depends to a large extent on their power.

Realpolitik refers to politics or diplomacy based primarily on power and on practical and material factors and considerations. It is a power as influence and a power as capabilities. Power is influence: getting people to do what you want them to do. The concept of power as influence includes the idea that one person in a power relationship can overcome the resistance of another. Power is capabilities that focus on the characteristics that would give one the ability to influence important outcomes.

Once in office, Cavour moved first to reform Sardinia’s economy. He improved agriculture, had railroads built, and encouraged commerce by supporting free trade. Cavour’s long-term goal, however, was to end Austrian power in Italy and annex the provinces of Lombardy and Venetia.

Intrigue with France

In 1855, led by Cavour, Sardinia joined Britain and France against Russia in the Crimean War. Sardinia did not win territory, but it did have a voice at the peace conference. Sardinia also gained the attention of Napoleon III.
The Men of Italian Unification

Cavour is referred to as “The Brain” of Italian unification, whereas Garibaldi is considered to be the “The Sword” of it.

In 1858, Cavour negotiated a secret deal with Napoleon, who promised to aid Sardinia in case it faced a war with Austria (making Austria the aggressor). A year later, the shrewd Cavour provoked that war. (Austro-French War) With help from Napoleon III and France, who invaded northern Italy, which was controlled by Austria, Sardinia defeated Austria and annexed Lombardy. Meanwhile, nationalist groups overthrew Austrian-backed rulers in several other northern Italian states. These states then joined with Sardinia.

Garibaldi’s “Red Shirts”

Next, attention shifted to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in southern Italy. There, Giuseppe Garibaldi, a longtime nationalist and an ally of Mazzini, was ready for action. Like Mazzini, Garibaldi wanted to create an Italian republic. He did not hesitate, however, to accept aid from the monarchist Cavour. By 1860, Garibaldi had recruited a force of 1,000 red-shirted volunteers. Cavour provided weapons and allowed two ships to take Garibaldi and his “Red Shirts” south to Sicily. With surprising speed, Garibaldi’s forces won control of Sicily, crossed to the mainland, and marched triumphantly north to Naples.

Unity at Last

Garibaldi’s success alarmed Cavour, who feared that the nationalist hero would set up his own republic in the south. To prevent this, Cavour urged Victor Emmanuel to send Sardinian troops to deal with Garibaldi. Instead, the Sardinians overran the Papal States and linked up with Garibaldi and his forces in Naples.

In a patriotic move, Garibaldi turned over Naples and Sicily to Victor Emmanuel. Shortly afterward, southern Italy voted to approve the move, and in 1861, Victor Emmanuel II was crowned King of Italy.
Victor Emmanuel II (1820-1878), first King of Italy from February 1861, shaking Leopold II, Grand Duke of Tuscany (Habsburg)
**Results towards Italy:**

- Tuscany, Parma and Modena united with Piedmont-Sardinia
- France is given Lombardy to give to Sardinia
- France receives Savoy and Nice

Two areas remained outside the new Italian nation: Rome and Venetia. Cavour died in 1861, but his successors completed his dream. Garibaldi manages to shrink the size of the Papal States. In a deal negotiated with Bismarck after the Austro-Prussian War (Prussia sought to unite and dominate the German states), Italy acquired Venetia as a war trophy. Then, during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, France was forced to withdraw its troops from Rome. Rome had voted to merge with Italy and after that became the capital in July 1871. For the first time since the fall of the Roman Empire, Italy was a united land.
Challenges Facing the New Nation

Italy faced a host of problems. Like the German empire that Bismarck cemented together out of many states, Italy had no tradition of unity. Few Italians felt ties to the new nation. Strong regional rivalries left Italy unable to solve critical national issues.

Divisions

The greatest regional differences were between the north and the south. The north was richer and had more cities than the south. For centuries, northern Italian cities had flourished as centers of business and culture. The south, on the other hand, was rural and poor. Its population was booming, but illiterate peasants could extract only a meager existence from the exhausted farmland.

This is still very clear today as the North-South Divide in Italy.

Hostility between Italy and the Roman Catholic Church further divided the nation. Popes bitterly resented the seizure of the Papal and urged Italian Catholics—almost all Italians—not to cooperate with their new government.

Turmoil

Under Victor Emmanuel, Italy was a constitutional monarchy with a two-house legislature. The king appointed members to the upper house, which could veto bills passed by the lower house. Although the lower house consisted of elected representatives, only a small number of men had the right to vote.

In the late 1800s, unrest increased as radicals on the left struggled against a conservative government. Socialists organized strikes while anarchists, people who want to abolish all government, turned to sabotage and violence. Slowly, the government extended suffrage to more men and passed laws to improve social conditions. Still, the turmoil continued. To distract attention from troubles at home, the government set out to win an overseas empire in Ethiopia.

Economic Progress

Despite its problems, Italy did develop economically, especially after 1900. Although the nation lacked important natural resources such as coal, industries did sprout up in northern regions. Industrialization, of course, brought urbanization as peasants flocked to the cities to find jobs in factories. As in other countries, reformers campaigned to improve education and working conditions.

The population explosion of this period created tensions. One important safety valve for many people was emigration, or movement away from their homeland. Many Italians left for the United States, Canada, and Latin American nations. By 1914, the country was significantly better off than it had been in 1861. But, it was hardly prepared for the great war that broke out in that year.
Results

- Italy itself was not a major player in European politics
- Since the Congress of Vienna, Austria had been at the center of conflict and desire. The treaties of the late 19th century introduced the politics of Europe which led to World War I.

Essentials 1848-1870

1. 1848-49 Revolts – The ‘First War of Independence’ – hopes of removing Austria from Italy, culminated in the 1848-49 revolts. These were defeated by Austria and France. Italy remained a dominated and divided peninsula
2. Despite large scale revolts like those in 1848-49 Austria’s position in Italy seemed very strong
3. Piedmont’s development in the 1850s (industry and economy) made her the ‘leading state’ of Italy, and made better diplomatic links with Britain and France. It also attracted liberals and radicals
4. The Crimean War created new alliances and isolated Austria
5. Napoleon, Cavour and Garibaldi all took opportunities to change the situation. Unification took place in several stages
6. When Italy was unified, many Italians resisted control from Piedmont

Task

1. Assess the causes and results of the 1848 revolutions in Italy.

For this question, you will need to cover the following aspects:

- the long-term influences behind the events of 1848: the growth of anti-foreign feeling, including resentment of foreign rule; the revolts and risings, and the influence of Young Italy and Mazzini
- the changes in the 1840s: the hopes encouraged by the accession of Pius IX and ideas of a papal-led Italian confederation
- the short-term economic crisis: how this led to popular discontent
- the Sicilian rebellion: why Sicily was particularly restless
- the European context: the effects of unrest in France and the spread of revolution to Austria
- the importance of Piedmont: the decision of Carlo Alberto to lead the movement for change
- the short-term results: the failures and the restoration of foreign and monarchical rule, and the presence of French troops in Rome
- the longer-term results: the example of a Piedmontese-led movement for expansion; the emergence of heroic figures such as Manin and Garibaldi; the rise of moderate nationalism and modernization such as that typified by Cavour’s modernization in Piedmont; the understanding that Italy was unlikely to be able to be unified by its own efforts alone and needed foreign support.

2. How did Cavour further nationalist aims?
The Italian peninsula had been divided into small independent states since the fall of the Roman empire in 476. Political unification seemed impossible. However, rebellion, nationalism, and unity slowly took hold with the help of four individuals: a revolutionary, a statesman, a soldier, and a king.

1. **Giuseppe Mazzini**
   Giuseppe Mazzini, founder of Young Italy, helps set up a revolutionary republic in Rome in 1849. French troops soon topple it.

2. **Camillo Cavour**
   In 1859, prime minister Camillo Cavour provokes a war with Austria after secret negotiations with Napoleon III, who promised aid to Sardinia.

3. **Nationalist Revolts**
   Italian nationalists overthrow Austrian-backed rulers in several northern states.

4. **Giuseppe Garibaldi**
   In 1860, Cavour provides weapons to Giuseppe Garibaldi, who invades Sicily with 1,000 Red Shirt volunteers (below). Garibaldi then captures Naples.

5. **Victor Emmanuel II**
   In a patriotic move, Garibaldi turns over Naples and Sicily to Victor Emmanuel, who is crowned king. In 1870, Italians conquer Rome, which becomes the capital city of a unified Italy.

**Thinking Critically**
1. Map Skills
   What route did Garibaldi's expedition take?
2. Draw Conclusions
   Why was Italian unification difficult to achieve?