

Reading Essentials and Study Guide



Mass Society and Democracy, 1870–1914

Lesson 3 The National State and Democracy

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How are political and social structures influenced by economic changes?

Reading HELPDESK

Academic Vocabulary

insecure uncertain, shaky; not adequately covered or sustained

controversy a dispute or quarrel

Content Vocabulary

ministerial responsibility the idea that the prime minister is responsible to the popularly elected legislative body and not to the king or president

Duma the Russian legislative assembly

TAKING NOTES: *Identifying*

ACTIVITY As you read, use a table like the one below to list the different forms of European governments.

Nation	Leader of Government
Great Britain	
France	
Germany	
Austria-Hungary	
Russia	

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The logo for 'networks' features the word 'networks' in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic consisting of several thin, intersecting lines that form a starburst or network-like pattern.

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IT MATTERS BECAUSE

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, democracy expanded in Western Europe. At the same time, the old order kept authoritarianism, or a government in which the ruler has unlimited power, in central and eastern Europe. The United States recovered from the Civil War and became the world's richest nation. Meanwhile, international rivalries resulted in disagreements and fights that would lead to World War I.

Western Europe: Political Democracy

Guiding Question *What happened with democracy in Western Europe in the late nineteenth century?*

By the late nineteenth century the modern shape of political democracy was taking form in Western Europe. First, universal male suffrage laws were passed. This gave all males the right to vote in elections. Second, the prime minister was responsible to the legislative body, which was elected by the people, not to a king or president. This principle is called **ministerial responsibility**. It is crucial, or necessary, for democracy. Third, mass political parties formed.

Great Britain had a working two-party parliamentary system for a long time. In a parliamentary system, the party with the most members in parliament forms the government. The leader of that party is the prime minister. The two parties—the Liberals and Conservatives—competed to pass laws that expanded the right to vote. Reform acts in 1867 and 1884 increased the number of adult male voters. By 1918, all males over 21 and women over age 30 could vote.

Political democracy was becoming well established in Britain by the beginning of the twentieth century. Social reforms for the working class soon followed. In 1900, a new Labour Party was formed. Its members fought for the interests of workers. To keep the workers' support, the Liberals voted for such reforms as unemployment benefits and old age pensions.

The collapse of Louis-Napoleon's Second Empire left France in confusion. Finally, in 1875, the Third Republic gained a republican constitution. In a republican system, representatives are elected by the people to govern them. The new government had a president and a legislature made up of two houses. The upper house, or Senate, was conservative. Its members were elected by high-ranking officials. All adult males voted for members of the lower house, the Chamber of Deputies. A premier (prime minister) led the government. He was responsible to the Chamber of Deputies, not to the president.

France failed to develop a strong parliamentary system. Dozens of political parties were formed. As a result, the premier had to depend on a coalition, or temporary union, of parties to stay in power. Despite the weakness of the system, the Third Republic had the loyalty of most voters by 1914.

By 1870, Italy had become a united national state. However, there was little national unity because of the separation between the poverty-stricken south and the industrialized north. The feeling of national unity was further weakened as a result of the fighting between representatives of labor and of industry. Even when universal male suffrage was granted in 1912, widespread government corruption and weakness continued.

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Reading Progress Check

Comparing How did Italy's government in the 1870s compare to Great Britain's?

Central and Eastern Europe: The Old Order

Guiding Question *What political developments did Central and Eastern Europe experience in the late nineteenth century?*

Central and Eastern Europe had more conservative governments than Western Europe. In Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Russia the old ruling groups continued to control politics.

The minister Otto von Bismarck led the new government of imperial Germany in 1871. Germany's new constitution established a two-house legislature, or law-making body. The lower house, the Reichstag, was elected by universal male suffrage. Unlike Britain and France, ministers of government were responsible not to the parliament, but to the emperor. The emperor controlled the armed forces, foreign policy, and the bureaucracy. As chancellor (prime minister), Bismarck worked to keep Germany from becoming a democracy.

By the reign (1888–1918) of William II, Germany had become the strongest military and industrial power in Europe. As industry and cities grew, so did demands for democracy.

Conservative forces—especially the landowning nobility and big industrialists—supported a strong foreign policy in an attempt to thwart the movement for democracy. They believed that expansion abroad would increase their profits. They hoped it would also distract people from pursuing democratic reforms.

After the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary was created in 1867, Austria adopted a constitution that established a parliamentary system with ministers. In reality, however, Emperor Francis Joseph largely ignored this system. He appointed and dismissed his own ministers. He issued decrees, or orders, when the parliament was not in session.

The empire was still troubled by ethnic conflicts. A German minority governed Austria. This minority felt increasingly threatened by Czechs, Poles, and other Slavic groups within the empire. Representatives of these groups in the parliament tried to rouse support for their freedom. Their actions encouraged the emperor to ignore the parliament and govern by imperial decrees, which were not approved by parliament.

Unlike Austria, Hungary had a parliament that worked. It was controlled by landowners who dominated the peasants and ethnic groups.

In Russia, Nicholas II began his rule in 1894. He believed that the absolute power of the czars (Russian rulers) should be preserved. He claimed that he would rule as an autocrat (ruler with unlimited power) just as his father did. Conditions were changing, however. By 1900, Russia had become the fourth-largest steel producer in the world. The growth of industry gave rise to factories, an industrial working class, and poor working and living conditions. Socialist parties developed, but government repression forced them underground.

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Opposition to the czarist regime and discontent with conditions finally exploded. On January 22, 1905, a massive procession of workers went to the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. They presented a petition (list) of grievances, or formal complaints, to the czar. Troops opened fire on the peaceful demonstration, killing hundreds. This “Bloody Sunday” caused workers throughout Russia to strike.

Nicholas II was eventually forced to grant civil liberties, or basic rights, to the citizens. He created a legislative assembly, called the **Duma**. By 1907, however, the czar had already limited the power of the Duma and again used the army and bureaucracy to rule Russia.



Reading Progress Check

Identifying Central Issues Did the government of Germany, Austria-Hungary, or Russia adhere to the principle of ministerial responsibility?

The United States

Guiding Question *How did the Second Industrial Revolution affect the United States?*

Four years of civil war had preserved the American nation, but the old South had been destroyed.

Slavery was abolished in 1865 with the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Later, the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments gave citizenship to African Americans and the right to vote to African American males. New state laws in the South, however, soon took this right away from African Americans. By 1880, supporters of white supremacy were back in power everywhere in the South.

Between 1860 and 1914, the United States changed from a farm-based economy to an industrial economy. American steel and iron production was the best in the world in 1900. As in Europe, industrialization in the United States led to urbanization (growth of cities). By 1900, the United States had three cities with populations over 1 million. New York City’s population reached 4 million.

In 1900 the United States was the world’s richest nation. However, the richest 9 percent of Americans owned 71 percent of the wealth. Many workers labored in unsafe factories. Periods of unemployment made workers **insecure**, constantly afraid of losing their jobs and being unable to support themselves. Many workers tried to organize unions, but the American Federation of Labor represented only 8.4 percent of the labor force.

In the late 1800s, the United States began to expand abroad. The Samoan Islands in the Pacific were the first important U.S. colony. By 1887, Americans controlled the sugar industry on the Hawaiian Islands. The American population grew in Hawaii, and as a result, they wanted political power. In response, Queen Liliuokalani (lih •LEE• uh • woh • kuh • LAH•nee) tried to strengthen the monarchy to keep the islands under her people’s control. The United States then sent military forces to the islands. The queen was deposed, and the United States annexed, or took over, Hawaii in 1898. In that same year, the United States defeated Spain in the Spanish-American War. As a result, the United States acquired the former Spanish possessions of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

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Reading Progress Check

Analyzing How did the U.S. Civil War affect African Americans?

International Rivalries

Guiding Question *How did international rivalries push Europe close to war?*

In 1815, after the Napoleonic wars, the Congress of Vienna attempted to establish a balance of power in Europe. It wanted to keep any one nation from dominating others. Otto von Bismarck realized Germany's emergence in 1871 as the most powerful state in continental Europe had upset that balance of power. Bismarck feared that France intended to create an anti-German alliance, so he made a defensive alliance with Austria-Hungary in 1879. In 1882 Italy joined this alliance. It was called the Triple Alliance. At the same time, Bismarck maintained a separate treaty with Russia

New Directions: William II

In 1890 Emperor William II fired Bismarck as his chancellor. William took control of Germany's foreign policy, and he actively worked to increase German power. He believed Germany had a rightful claim to dominance.

William dropped the treaty with Russia. Almost immediately, in 1894, France formed an alliance with Russia. This left Germany with hostile powers on its western and eastern borders. William created the situation Bismarck had feared.

Over the next decade, German policies abroad caused the British to get closer to France. By 1907, Great Britain, France, and Russia had allied to form the Triple Entente. The Triple Entente stood opposed to the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. Europe was now dangerously divided into two opposing camps that became more and more unwilling to compromise.

Crises in the Balkans

The Ottoman Empire had once been strong enough to threaten Europe. During the nineteenth century, it began to fall apart. Most of its Balkan provinces gained freedom. Austria-Hungary and Russia saw these events as a chance to gain influence there. Their rivalry over the Balkans was one of the causes of World War I.

By 1878, Greece, Serbia, Romania, and Montenegro were independent. Bulgaria was not totally independent but was allowed to operate autonomously, or freely, under Russian protection. The Balkan territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina were placed under the protection of Austria-Hungary.

In 1908 Austria-Hungary annexed, or took over, Bosnia and Herzegovina, two Slavic-speaking territories. The Serbians were outraged. This act led to an international **controversy**. In addition, it ended the Serbians' hopes of creating a large Serbian kingdom that would include most of the southern Slavs.

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The Russians were self-appointed protectors of their fellow Slavs. They supported the Serbs and opposed the annexation by Austria-Hungary. Backed by the Russians, the Serbs prepared for war against Austria-Hungary. At this point, Emperor William II of Germany became involved. He demanded that the Russians accept Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. If the Russians refused, they would face war with Germany.

The Russians were weakened from their defeat in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, so they backed down. However, they vowed revenge. Two wars between Balkan states in 1912 and 1913 further embittered the inhabitants of those states. These conflicts created even more tension among the Great Powers.

The Serbs were disappointed in their failure to create a large Serbian kingdom. They blamed Austria-Hungary. At the same time, Austria-Hungary was convinced that Serbia and Serbian nationalism were mortal threats to its empire and must be crushed at some point.

The Russians were Serbia's chief supporters. They were determined not to back down again in the event of another confrontation with Austria-Hungary or Germany in the Balkans. Also, the allies of Austria-Hungary and Russia became involved. Their determination to support their respective allies in another crisis strengthened. By the beginning of 1914, these countries viewed each other with suspicion. Europe was close to war.



Reading Progress Check

Sequencing Describe the events in the Balkans up through 1914.
