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Discuss the main developments in the unification of Germany and Italy, respectively, noting significant similarities and important contrasts. What implications did the growing force of nationalism have for the Habsburg Empire?

The nineteenth century saw the forces of nationalism surge to victory in the unifications of Germany and Italy, while the Habsburg Empire of Central-Eastern Europe barely held on to the cohesion of their realm under the strain of countless squabbling nationalities. The two unifications – first of the Italian peninsula under the stewardship of Sardinia-Piedmont, then of Germany by Prussian arms – had many notable effects outside of their new national borders, including in the immensely diverse Habsburg realms to their east. As Europe transitioned from a continent of multiethnic empires to one of national states, the integrity of the Habsburg Empire, later Austria-Hungary, came under siege, and eventually crumbled under the pressure in the waning days of the First World War.

The stage for German Unification in the nineteenth century was set in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. As part of the settlement of the war, a new German Confederation was erected to take the place of the dissolved Holy Roman Empire. The German Confederation comprised of nearly forty sovereign states, though the Confederation was dominated by the Prussians and the Austrians. The first lunge towards German unification came in 1848. Bourgeois German liberals convened in a congress in Frankfurt-am-Main. They offered the

crown of a unified German kingdom to the king of Prussia, but he denied it out of hand. King Frederick William IV dismissed the offer because he believed that, if he was going to accept the crown of unified Germany, it would come from the aristocracy, not "from the gutter." After this setback, the unification process ceased to be driven by liberal nationalist revolutionaries, with conservative Prussian militarists taking the leading role. Prussia was one of the two leading states of the German Confederation, along with Austria. In the 1860s, they embarked on a rapid and aggressive series of wars against their neighbors in pursuit of German unification. The main mover of Prussia's new dynamism in foreign policy was Minister President Otto von Bismarck, appointed in 1862, who vowed to expand Prussia by "iron and blood." First, in 1864, the Prussians and their allies swept over Denmark in a war sparked by a proposed Danish administrative reform in Schleswig-Holstein. The Prussians prevailed and established their authority over that ethnically mixed region. The settlement of the Second Schleswig War granted territory in the region to Austria, who partook in the war on the Prussian side. However, Bismarck accused the Austrians of violating the terms of the peace and declared war on their southern neighbors in 1866. The general mood at the outbreak of the conflict was that the Austrians would prevail, but the Prussians shocked the world by decimating their foes in a lightning six-week campaign, culminating with the decisive Prussian victory at the Battle of Sadowa. With their total, resounding victory in the war, the Prussians assured their dominance over the German Confederation as well as the exclusion of the Austrians from the remainder of the unification process. The final step towards German unification was taken in 1870, when Emperor Napoleon III of France took Bismarck's bait and was lured into declaring war upon the Prussians. The German Confederation rallied to the Prussian banner and offensive operations began. The German allies decisively defeated the French on the field of Sedan, even capturing

the French emperor. The rest of the French armies were beaten back west in a nearly one-sided slugfest, with the Prussians laying siege to Paris by the end of the year. Paris fell in early 1871, winning the war for the German allies. With victory secured, the Prussians declared the formation of a unified German Empire, in which they would be the dominant state, in the Hall of Mirrors at the resplendent Palace of Versailles, a major insult to the defeated French.

The revolutionary wave of 1848 swept over Italy, as it did most of Europe. This spurt of revolutionary republican activity was quickly contained and reversed, with the last holdouts remaining in the Roman Republic until 1849. Giuseppe Mazzini was the most important voice for Italian unification before 1848. He founded Young Italy in the 1830s, which was the first modern political party, as it was organized around an ideological platform, not a charismatic individual. The most famous Italian revolutionary general was Giuseppe Garibaldi. Garibaldi was a member of Young Italy and spent time in exile fighting in revolutions in South America. He returned to Europe in 1848 to become part of the ruling triumvirate of the Roman Republic before it was toppled by force of French arms in 1849. The primary vehicle for Italian unification after 1848 was the state of Sardinia-Piedmont in northwestern Italy. King Carlo Alberto passed a liberal constitution in 1848 and, after the failure of that year's revolutions, Sardinia-Piedmont took preeminence in the movement for Italian unification, sidelining Mazzini. The "Bismarck" of Italian unification was the Count of Cavour, a moderate liberal former newspaper editor, who entered the Sardinian cabinet in 1850. Cavour became the Prime Minister in 1858 and, throughout his time in the cabinet, engaged in extensive modernizing and reform projects that put Sardinia-Piedmont on solid enough footing to pursue unification. He embraced free trade, invested in infrastructure, implemented a direct tax system, and modernized the Sardinian army. King Vittorio Emanuele and Cavour involved Sardinia-Piedmont in the Crimean War in the

middle 1850s. French Emperor Napoleon III was impressed by Sardinia-Piedmont's conduct in the war, and threw in his lot with them in their quest to expel the Austrians from Italy. In exchange for some mountain passes in the Alps, the French sent in an army to help the Sardinians sweep the Austrians out of Lombardy in 1859. This victory set off revolts all down the peninsula. The French were wary of triggering a wider crisis and backed off, leaving the Austrians in control of northeastern Italy. Cavour pressed ahead nonetheless but, without the support of French arms, turned to civil means. Cavour held plebiscite votes in the various Italian states asking whether they wished to annex themselves to Sardinia-Piedmont. Every state voted aye. Giuseppe Garibaldi who, unlike Mazzini, was still a visible character in the unification struggle, embarked with his *Camicie Rosse* for Sicily on his renowned Expedition of the Thousand. He landed in and seized Palermo, before marching on Naples with an ever-growing revolutionary host. After he seized Naples, the Kingdom of Two Sicilies voted by plebiscite to join Sardinia-Piedmont. Garibaldi wanted to continue on to Rome, but Cavour ordered him to halt. The unified Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed in 1861, but Rome and Venice still remained in foreign hands. Italy fought a war against the Austrians at the same time as the latter's disastrous conflict with Prussia, allowing Italy to wrest Venice from the distracted Habsburgs in 1866. The final step towards unification was the liberation of Rome. Italy saw her chance in 1870, when the French were distracted by the eruption of the Franco-Prussian War. The French garrison evacuated Rome to fight in the war, leaving the city open for the Italians to seize it. They did so quickly, thereafter moving their capital to Rome and completing the *Risorgimento*.

The unification struggles of Germany and Italy bore many similarities. In both, a first wave of radical mass movements failed to achieve their goals, thereafter to be replaced by moderate to conservative top-down unification efforts directed by militarist monarchies. Warfare

played a major role in the territorial expansion of the predecessors of the unified states, and the Austrians were a common punching bag. While there were many similarities between the two unification processes, there also existed numerous meaningful differences. In the Italian case, plebiscites – though limited to large landowners – gave the unification process a popular mandate and some democratic aspects. The Prussian-led German unification efforts consciously spurned democracy and let the force of arms be legitimation enough for their rule.

The triumph of nationalism and national unification in Italy and Germany had a profound effect on the Habsburg Empire. Beginning this period as Austria, the empire suffered blow after blow in the nineteenth century. The French chased them out of Italy in the 1850s, then the Prussians shut them out of German affairs after 1866. This greatly weakened Vienna's prestige in the eyes of the empire's nationalistic minorities, especially the Hungarians, who had launched an unsuccessful war of independence in 1848-9. With Vienna on the back foot, the Hungarians forced a reorganization of the empire into that of Austria-Hungary, a dual monarchy with a greatly expanded role for the Hungarians, the empire's second largest ethno-linguistic grouping. However, the Compromise of 1867 did not settle the national question. Although most Hungarians were sated with the new arrangements, the various other nationalities – Croats, Serbs, Slovenes, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenians, Italians, and Rumanians – began to agitate for greater autonomy – such as the Austroslav movement in modern Czechia – for annexation to a foreign power – such as the Serbs and Italians desired – or for independence in their own right. The Austro-Hungarians were able to stamp out these fires, so to speak, during the second half of the nineteenth century, but the examples of successful national liberation presented by Italy and Germany were insurmountable. Many leaders of Austria-Hungary feared Serbia in particular becoming a "Sardinia of the Balkans" and leading a unification of the South Slavs. In 1914, the

Serb nationalist Gavrilo Princip assassinated the heir to the dual thrones, Franz Ferdinand, in Bosnia, setting into motion the First World War, a conflict that would see the Empire disintegrate into new national states in its waning days.

The nineteenth-century unifications of Italy and Germany served as inspiration and as models for the numerous national minorities with aspirations of statehood that existed within Austria-Hungary. After the defeat of liberal nationalists, the conservative and militarist state of Prussia embarked on a series of successful military campaigns that culminated in the proclamation of the German Empire at Versailles in 1871. In Italy, a joint effort of military campaigns and plebiscites expanded the borders of Sardinia-Piedmont to incorporate almost the whole of the Italian peninsula before the state was reorganized into the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. The multiethnic empire of Austria-Hungary weathered the storm of nationalism in the nineteenth century but was ultimately rent asunder by national tensions in the dying days of the First World War.

Multiple crises racked Great Britain on the eve of World War One. Why did this quintessential liberal state and society, long the site of equipoise and relative cohesion, appear to be on the verge of coming apart at the seams?

In the nineteenth century, the United Kingdom experienced a long period of international preeminence abroad, and relative tranquility in the domestic sphere. However, this period of "splendid isolation" was increasingly under siege by the turn of the century, putting the United Kingdom on the verge of several major crises on the eve of the Great War. The most prominent of the United Kingdom's domestic crises were the Irish question, labor conflict, and the struggle for women's suffrage.

The British had, in one form or another, exercised political authority over Ireland for some eight hundred years by the twentieth century. A major uprising had been crushed in 1798, but efforts towards independence continued unabated throughout the nineteenth century. The crisis that wracked the United Kingdom on the eve of the Great War was over the question of Home Rule for Ireland. In 1910, the Liberal and Conservative parties were in an electoral deadlock. To achieve a parliamentary majority, Liberal leaders made overtures to John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party, which represented Irish interests at Westminster. The Liberals promised to support the IPP's push for Home Rule in exchange for an alliance in parliament. Redmond accepted these terms, and a Home Rule bill was passed shortly thereafter. In response to this, however, protestant unionists organized militias in Ulster to resist the implementation of Home Rule, numbering some ten thousand men at arms. The Catholics, who comprised the vast majority of the population and who generally supported Home Rule, organized militias of their own, bringing Ireland to an armed standoff and the brink of civil war in 1913-14. Many within the Conservative party supported the unionist militias, and there was a mutiny of British army

officers who refused to enforce Home Rule in Ireland. The arrival of war postponed the resolution of the Irish question, but the conflict did not prevent uprisings from setting off during and after the war.

Organized labor had been relatively politically moderate for most of the nineteenth century, with most politically conscious workers voting for the Liberals after they gained their suffrage in 1867 or 1884. However, after about 1890, a new generation of labor activists took a harder line politically and rejected the Liberal party and liberalism more broadly. This led to the establishment by trade unionists and socialists of the Labour Party in 1900. Deep class divides were already extant in British society, but the rise of class consciousness among the British workers brought these divisions to the fore like never before. The radicalized labor movement took part in a strike wave from 1910 to 1913. In this period, there averaged over nine hundred strikes *per annum*. These strikes occurred in every industry and in every region of the United Kingdom. These labor actions were marked by the intransigence of the striking workers and, in many cases, the fact that they were wildcat strikes. Wildcat strikes are not authorized by union officials, but rather generate spontaneously on the shop floor among the rank and file. Revolutionary syndicalism, the idea that industrial unions – rather than, say, a vanguard party – would be the primary vehicle for a socialist revolution and that the economy should be democratically organized and ran, gained much currency in this period. The outbreak of general conflict in 1914 took attention away from labor issues. Wartime production and the fact that millions of workers were shipped over to Flanders to fight sucked much of the air out of the labor movement, but the material conditions that led to the strike wave were not ameliorated and class antagonism came roaring back to the forefront after the war.

The struggle for women's suffrage dominated much of the discourse in the United Kingdom in the years leading up to the Great War. Before 1903, the suffragist movement was rather moderate, and was primarily the province of well-to-do, often aristocratic women. The tenor of the movement altered dramatically in 1903 with the foundation of the Women's Social and Political Union by Emmeline Pankhurst. The terminology also shifted with the foundation of the Women's Social and Political Union. Formerly known as woman suffragists, the new radicals referred to themselves as suffragettes. This movement was far more militant and rejected the incrementalism of their forebears. They demanded suffrage immediately, not ten or twenty years in the future. Pankhurst and her compatriots would disrupt the meetings of MP's who opposed them, chain themselves to the railing of the public section of the House of Commons, smash windows, and commit arson against businesses owned by opponents of women's suffrage. The most striking episode in the struggle for suffrage occurred at the 1913 Derby Day. A young radical named Emily Davison cast herself under the wheels of the King's carriage, crushing her to death in front of hundreds of horrified onlookers to bring attention to women's suffrage through her martyrdom. Suffragettes would, when imprisoned for their actions, routinely go on hunger strikes to continue their protest from behind bars. The British public was appalled by repeated instances in which prison guards would force feed imprisoned suffragettes. The Great War took the nation's focus away from the question of suffrage, but the invaluable contributions of women to war industry and continued militancy from women's organizations led to the extension of suffrage to women over the age of thirty in 1918.

The years immediately preceding the First World War saw numerous contemporaneous crises wrack the United Kingdom. The relative domestic peace and safe distance from European affairs that had characterized the nineteenth century were steadily eroded as crises mounted in

the first years of the twentieth. The most trying of these crises were the Irish question, industrial labor conflict, and the fight for women's suffrage. Ultimately, the Great War would postpone these crises as the fight against Germany took center stage, but ignoring the problems did not equate to settling them. The Irish would strive – unsuccessfully in 1916, then more successfully in 1919 – to achieve their national independence; women would win the right to vote in 1918; labor conflicts would continue, but would be somewhat abated by wartime industry and the increased presence of the Labour party in government. On the eve of the Great War, in numerous meaningful ways, the United Kingdom wasn't.

In The Descent of Man (1871), Charles Darwin wrote "At some future period not very distant as measured in centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races." Discuss the evolution of this perspective, drawing closely on the contributions made by specific scientists and anthropologists (or others). How did racialist thought and the belief in the seeming inevitability of extermination become so prevalent? Is Lindqvist describing the culture of genocide in Europe? Explain and assess.

Though the scale, rapidity, and industrialization of murder were unique, the Holocaust did not emerge out of nowhere. Sven Lindqvist argues in his book *Exterminate All the Brutes* that the Holocaust represented the apotheosis of a shared European culture of genocide that had been developed over the course of Europe's nineteenth century colonization of Africa and elsewhere. The intellectual justifications were rooted in a perversion of biological science and elaborated by numerous European thinkers, ultimately seeping into and inundating the collective culture of Europe, justifying a wide array of massacres and abuses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, culminating in the Holocaust.

Notions of race predate the nineteenth century, but they took a form that is very different from the modern understanding of the term. Early modern authors might discuss the English, Irish, French, or Dutch 'races,' but they do not mean race like we do when we say white, black, or Asian. The contemporary term that fits better with the old understanding of race is cultural group, or perhaps ethnicity. Race as an immutable, biological reality was not developed until after the promulgation of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. This theory of evolution, Darwinism for short, stressed the idea of "survival of the fittest." What this meant was that, in any given environment, the organism with more favorable traits and adaptations will tend to survive and reproduce more successfully than those with less or without.

Survival of the fittest is often distorted into survival of the strongest, but this is misleading. Strength is not the only meaningful aspect to consider, and strong organisms with a low birth rate will tend to be outcompeted by physically weaker organisms with higher fecundity and hardier offspring. In scientific Darwinism, the focus of survival of the fittest is on viable reproductive success. In social Darwinism, the emphasis is wrongly placed on organismal survival itself, specifically the survival of the current cohort of a nation, rather than on the transmission of genes to the next generation.

The temporal scales of scientific and social Darwinism are also vastly different. Scientific Darwinism concerns itself with gradual, incremental, and almost inscrutable change over the course of many generations, whereas social Darwinism deals with time on a human scale, one in which significant changes can occur within the lifetime of one organism. In this sense, social Darwinism would be more aptly named as social Lamarckianism. Furthermore, scientific Darwinism is highly contextual. This is where the difference between survival of the strongest vs of the fittest becomes most important. Survival of the fittest means that an organism is most fit to survive and reproduce in its circumstances – that is, it "fits" into its environment. Social Darwinism and survival of the strongest make the mistake of casting themselves as universal. A polar bear is much stronger than an iguana, for example, but the iguana is immensely more fit to survive in its tropical climate, the same as how the polar bear is more fit to survive in its arctic climate.

Europeans' – more accurately, European culture, institutions, and lifeways – were indeed superior to African lifeways – in Europe. This is because these practices and institutions were developed in Europe in response to the particular conditions of that place. The logic holds the same that, in Africa, African cultures tended to be more fit. The lifeways of a nomadic Herero

hunter-gatherer, for example, are more fit for arid South West Africa than those of a Rhenish wheat farmer because they are directly responsive to the conditions under which they live. The social Darwinists, in large part due to their incomplete and often wholly incorrect understanding of Darwinian science, did not realize or otherwise ignored the contextuality of fitness. Social Darwinism is incompatible with scientific Darwinism for the reasons outlined above and cannot be held to have any biological basis or scientific validity.

The theory of scientific Darwinism found currency over the course of the nineteenth century, first in scientific circles, then in society at large. However, as the idea disseminated, it mutated and warped into something quite different, like a game of *Telephone* at a societal scale. Social Darwinism was the application of certain cherrypicked Darwinian principles to human society. One of the major exponents of social Darwinism was Francis Galton. Galton was a professor who was made a university chair in eugenics. Galton was a major elaborator of scientific racism, specifically of eugenics. Eugenics is the idea that "good" genes ought to be passed down to the next generation by the bearers of such, and that the bearers of "bad" genes ought not to reproduce. Those unfortunate enough to have what Galton and other eugenicists deemed "bad" genes were often prevented from reproducing via involuntary or coerced sterilizations. The use of quotations here is to undermine the validity of the idea of "good" and "bad" genes. Whether a trait is beneficial, the preferred terminology, is often contextual and sometimes contradictory. Sickle-cell anemia, for example, causes circulatory problems in the body, but it is also a natural prophylactic against malaria. In short, there are no "good" genes, nor are there "bad" genes.

Georges Cuvier was a French scientist most famous for his work on woolly mammoths. Cuvier gave a lecture that explained how a species could, for a variety of reasons, be driven to

extinction. That the roster of species on Earth could be dynamic, rather than static, was a major innovation. It was previously held that, since God created the Earth and all species on it, and God was perfect, that therefore the structure of species on Earth was perfect and immutable. Cuvier's discovery of the principle of extinction emerged around the same time that the doctrine of survival of the fittest began to gain currency, and the two theories dovetailed well for the purposes of social Darwinism. Cuvier showed that inferior races could be driven to extinction, and social Darwinism showed that they *should* be driven so.

Robert Knox was a physician who laid much of the anatomical groundwork for scientific racism. Knox famously conducted a comparative autopsy of a European and an African corpse. Although he only examined one specimen from each group, he used the phenotypical differences he observed to explain a wide array of differences in culture, intellect, and dominance. It was through this comparative autopsy that our modern biological conception of racism came to be. This autopsy was used to show that the dominance of the European over the African was natural and, therefore, both desirable and good.

Another key contributor to the development of modern racism was German anthropologist Friedrich Rätzel. Rätzel believed that if a people-group was not expanding and growing, then it must be withering away. Rätzel also coined the German term *lebensraum*, or living space, to refer to the new areas that a growing people-group required to fuel their expansion. Rätzel's ideas were put into practice in the first decade of the twentieth century in the German colony of South West Africa, now the nation of Namibia. Nomadic people-groups such as the Herero grazed upon the land of German South West Africa, but the Germans wanted to exploit the land for their own purposes. To achieve this end, and to secure their *lebensraum*, the German colonial authorities undertook an organized and intentional program of extermination

against the indigenous population, drastically reducing their number and clearing the way for unobstructed German exploitation of the land. It is also known that Adolf Hitler, future *Fuhrer* of Nazi Germany, read and was inspired by Rätzel before penning his manifesto, *Mein Kampf.* Knox's autopsy laid the pseudoscientific basis for modern racism, while authors like Rätzel elaborated a social Darwinian vision of what ought to be done with this increasingly accepted belief.

The contributions of men such as Galton, Cuvier, Knox, and Rätzel contributed to what could reasonably be called a "culture of genocide" in Europe. Since Aristotle, that which is natural was assumed to be inherently good. Nature is good, so things that are natural must also be good. It was upon this fundamental assumption that social Darwinism was based. If the domination of the weak by the strong was natural and therefore good, humans would be justified in "helping along" nature by exterminating the lesser races. This justification was supported over the course of the nineteenth century, contributing to a generally shared view that there were cases where the extermination of a people group was seen not only as justified, but as necessary and even a cleansing of the Earth.

As Sven Lindqvist discusses in his book, *Exterminate All the Brutes*, there developed a culture of genocide in Europe during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This culture was rooted in the perversion of Darwinian biological theories, elaborated by scientists and anthropologists, and internalized by European colonizers as a natural justification for their imperial conquests in Africa and beyond. Lindqvist provides a compelling argument that the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany and their collaborators represented the highest development of this European culture of genocide.