

19th-Century Perspectives and Political Developments

AP European History

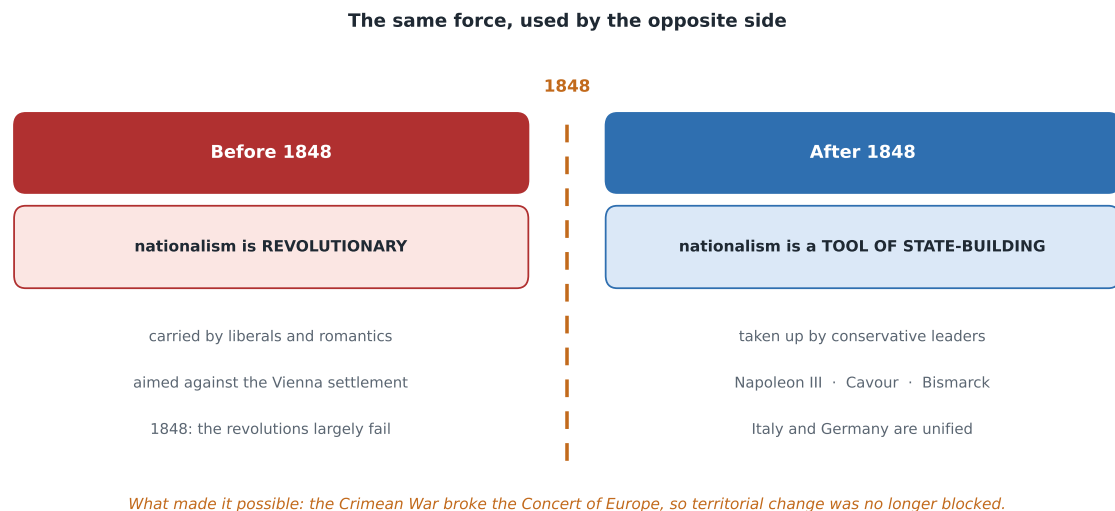
Contextualizing 19th-Century Perspectives

Unit 7 runs over the same years as Unit 6 - **c. 1815 to c. 1914** - but follows politics, empire, and ideas rather than industry. Three key concepts frame it:

- European states **struggled to maintain international stability in an age of nationalism and revolutions**.
- **A variety of motives and methods** led to the intensification of **European global control and increased tensions among the Great Powers** 列强.
- European ideas and culture expressed a **tension between objectivity and scientific realism** on one hand and **subjectivity and individual expression** 主观性与个人表达 on the other.

That third tension is the unit's cultural thread, and it explains why Romanticism, realism, positivism, and modern art all belong in the same unit rather than in a separate art history.

Nationalism



Before 1848 nationalism threatens the order; after 1848 conservatives build states with it

Nationalists encouraged **loyalty to the nation** in a variety of ways, including **romantic idealism** 浪漫主义理想, liberal reform, political unification, and racialism - so nationalism has no single political colour and can be attached to very different programmes.

The turn that matters most: a new generation of **conservative leaders**, including **Napoleon III** 拿破仑三世, **Cavour** 加富尔, and **Bismarck** 俾斯麦, **used popular nationalism to create or strengthen states** 借助民众民族主义建国. Before 1848 nationalism was mainly a revolutionary threat to the settlement of Vienna; after 1848 it became a tool of state-building in conservative hands. If you learn one thing from this unit, learn that reversal.

Two further points are examinable:

- While western European Jews became more socially and politically **acculturated** during the century, **Zionism** 犹太复国主义 - a form of Jewish nationalism - developed in response to continued exclusion.
- The creation of the **dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary** 奥匈二元帝国, which recognised the political power of the largest ethnic minority, was an attempt to manage nationalism within a multi-ethnic empire rather than to suppress it.

National Unification and Diplomatic Tensions

The **Crimean War** 克里米亚战争 demonstrated the weakness of the Ottoman Empire and contributed to the **breakdown of the Concert of Europe** 欧洲协调的瓦解 - which is what made unification possible, because the system designed to prevent territorial change no longer functioned.

- **Italy: Cavour's diplomatic strategies**, combined with **Garibaldi's** 加里波第 popular military campaigns, led to unification. Diplomacy plus popular movement - two mechanisms, and the CED names both.
- **Germany: Bismarck used Realpolitik** 现实政治, employing diplomacy, industrialised warfare and weaponry, and the manipulation of democratic mechanisms to achieve unification under Prussia.

Then the diplomatic consequences, which run directly into Unit 8:

- After 1871 Bismarck attempted to maintain the balance of power through a **complex system of alliances** 联盟体系 aimed at isolating France.
- **Bismarck's dismissal in 1890** eventually produced a system of **mutually antagonistic alliances** 彼此敌对的联盟 and heightened international tension.
- **Nationalist tensions in the Balkans** 巴尔干 drew the Great Powers into a series of crises leading up to the First World War.

Darwinism and Social Darwinism

Charles Darwin 达尔文 provided a **scientific and material account of biological change** and of the development of human beings as a species.

His theory was then applied well beyond biology. **Social Darwinism** 社会达尔文主义 took the language of competition and selection and used it to justify **racial, national, and class hierarchies** - and, in the next topic, imperial expansion. Keep the distinction sharp in an essay: Darwin's biology and Social Darwinism are not the same claim, and the second does not follow from the first.

The Age of Progress and Modernity

Positivism 实证主义 - the philosophy that **science alone provides knowledge** - emphasised the rational and scientific analysis of nature and human affairs, and represents the confident pole of the century's thinking.

Then, in the later nineteenth century, a **new relativism in values** 价值相对主义 and a **loss of confidence in the objectivity of knowledge** led to **modernism** 现代主义. The two together are the tension named in 7.1: the same culture produced both the belief that science would explain everything and the suspicion that objectivity itself was an illusion.

New Imperialism: Motivations and Methods

European nations were driven by **economic, political, and cultural motivations** 经济、政治与文化动机 in their new imperial ventures in Asia and Africa.

The CED then gives the **enabling technologies** separately, and there are exactly three:

- **Advanced weaponry** ensured European military advantage over colonised areas.
- **Communication and transportation technologies** 通信与运输技术 made empires possible to create and administer.
- **Advances in medicine** 医学进步 enabled European survival in Africa and Asia - the one students forget, and often the decisive factor.

Imperialism's Global Effects

Imperial endeavours significantly affected **society, diplomacy, and culture in Europe**, and **created resistance to foreign control abroad**.

Both directions matter. In Europe, empire fed nationalism, shaped popular culture, and turned colonial disputes into Great Power crises. Abroad, it produced organised resistance. An answer that treats imperialism as something Europe did *to* other places, with no return effect and no response, is incomplete on both counts.

19th-Century Culture and Arts

The century's art tracks its intellectual tension exactly:

- **Romanticism** broke with Neoclassical forms and with rationalism, emphasising **intuition, emotion, nature, individuality**, and the supernatural; Romantic writers expressed the same themes while responding to the Industrial Revolution and to political revolution.
- **Realist and materialist** 现实主义与唯物主义 themes influenced art and literature, as painters and writers depicted **the lives of ordinary people**.
- **Modern art - Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and Cubism** 印象派、后印象派与立体主义 - moved **beyond the representational to the subjective, abstract, and expressive**.

Causation in 19th-Century Developments

The unit's reasoning skill is **causation**.

Worked example (a real AP exam question). AP European History short-answer questions here ask, for example, to *"Explain one way in which nationalism contributed to the unification of Germany or Italy in the nineteenth century."* A full-mark answer names the mechanism rather than the sentiment: *"Bismarck used popular nationalist feeling as an instrument of Prussian state-building: by presenting wars against Denmark, Austria, and France as national causes, he made the smaller German states' rulers politically unable to resist unification under Prussia, and turned a dynastic expansion into a national one."* Notice the shape: nationalism is shown *doing something*, not merely existing.

Exam tips

- The reversal is the unit: **before 1848 nationalism threatens the order; after 1848 conservatives use it to build states.**
- The **breakdown of the Concert of Europe** after Crimea is what made unification possible. Name it as the enabling condition.
- Italy needed **both** Cavour's diplomacy and Garibaldi's campaigns. Germany needed Bismarck's **Realpolitik**. Different mechanisms, same outcome.
- Give **three enabling technologies** of imperialism - weaponry, transport and communication, and **medicine**.
- Keep **Darwin** and **Social Darwinism** apart. The second is a use of the first, not a consequence of it.
- Imperialism acted **on Europe as well as abroad**, and it produced **resistance**. Both are examinable.