
Nationalism, *Realpolitik*, and Realism: 1850-1871

VI. The Austrian Empire

A. Defeat and Discontent

1. Austria suffered humiliating military defeats at the hands of first France and Piedmont and then Prussia.
2. The empire's biggest problem was the discontent of the many nationalities living under Habsburg rule.
3. The Magyars were the largest and most restive national group.

B. The Dual Monarchy

1. In 1867, Austria agreed to satisfy the Magyars' demands for independence by creating a dual monarchy.
2. Austria and Hungary became independent and equal states under a common Habsburg ruler. The two states still had a united army and a common foreign policy. The new empire was known as Austria-Hungary.

C. Continued Slavic Discontent

1. The dual monarchy satisfied the Magyars but failed to solve the empire's nationality problem.
2. The Slavic regions called for but failed to receive a triple monarchy.
3. Slavic discontent posed a significant threat to the future of Austria-Hungary and the peace of Europe.

III. Russia: Reaction and Reform

A. Tsarist Russia in the 1850s

1. Tsar Alexander II was an autocrat whose will was law
2. Russia's aristocracy continued to own almost all the land and be exempt from taxes.
3. Russia had a very small middle class. Ninety-five percent of the people were peasants, most of whom were serfs.

B. Alexander's Reforms

1. The emancipation of the serfs, 1861

Crash Course

- In 1861, Alexander II issued an Emancipation Edict freeing the serfs.
 - Although they were free, the peasants still did not own the land.
2. The creation of *zemstvos*
- In 1864, Alexander introduced a system of local and regional self-government through elected assemblies called *zemstvos*.
 - Although the *zemstvos* did provide some opportunity for public discussion, they did not lead to the creation of a national assembly.