

COMPARISON ITALIAN STATES – GERMAN STATES 1815-1848

1. French influence / French occupation (Napoleon)

Similarities: The legal system ("Code Napoleon"); Administration; Improved communication; Reduction of States; Ban on feudal habits/privileges; Improved opportunities for the Middle Class

Differences: Germany - made into a Confederation under France; Italy made into a Kingdom under France

2. Vienna Congress – Congress System

Similarities: The Austrian influence (Metternich); Many states in both areas returned to the previous rulers (before the French occupation); The French amalgamation of states remained; An attempt to return to the situation before the French Revolution (1789) - ignoring the new ideas of liberalism and nationalism...

Differences: German States still in a Confederation (German Confederation - "Bund") but this time under Austrian influence (Always an Austrian President who decided the Agenda for the Confederation); Prussia was becoming a strong European State within the Confederation and its strength would challenge the Austrian leadership; Italy remained divided in several different areas with a more direct - and indirect relationship to Austria. In some states the rulers were directly connected to the Austrian Royal House; Austrian censorship and an Austrian Minister in most Italian States made sure the different states followed the Austrian intentions; Austria received a "blank check" of intervention in states that did not follow the order through the agreements at the Conference of Troppau

3. Political Development 1815-1848

Similarities: Spread of Liberalism and Nationalism in both areas; the Austrian control and repression in both areas; the reaction and the frustration among the "Italian" and "German" professional Middle Class against the Austrian repression; revolt attempts among some states in both areas - especially around the 1830's (and later of course around 1848); the forming of secret societies in both areas

Differences: Several important individuals in the Italian states that expressed some nationalistic and some liberal ideas - Giuseppe Mazzini, Charles Albert (king of Piedmont-Sardinia), Pope Pius IX (ruler of the Papal States); the ideas of unification as a pre-dominantly student movement in the German states; the importance of Prussia in the German Confederation - a strong dominant state that challenged Austria

4. Economic Development 1815-1848

Similarities: Both areas were pre-dominantly agricultural; Both countries had a dominant landowning aristocracy; certain states within both areas had feudal practices; some cities within both areas had guilds that controlled parts of the local economy; both areas saw a fairly big population increase during the early half of the 19th century; the growing working-class (still a small group) in both areas suffered from both bad working and living conditions

Differences: Industrialization came to the Western part of Germany (Rhineland - Prussia) first - no feudalism, lots of natural resources and social advances that followed the French occupation; Prussia a leading state in Germany - reforms: serfdom abolished, guilds lost power, education system improved and the government supported the changes; railroad construction more extensive in the German states

compared to the Italian states; Prussian Customs Union (Zollverein) -> GERMAN CUSTOMS UNION 1834! Very important step towards a German unification under Prussia (Austria was not a member). Nothing like this existed in the Italian states but Piedmont-Sardinia under Charles Albert takes a certain political initiative towards a north Italian unification in the 1840's...

SUMMARY 1848:

SIMILARITIES: The French occupation left certain tracks in both areas (the strive of the Middle Class: Nationalism and Liberalism); the Austrian Empire influenced and dominated the political development in both areas; revolts against the old style rulers (certain autocracy) and the Austrian repression occurred in both areas; small secret societies that strive towards a certain unification were formed in both areas; both areas were predominantly agriculture with a strong landowning aristocracy; certain industrialization in the 1840's - still very few industrial workers; strong population increase and certain urbanization

DIFFERENCES: In Germany a Confederation was formed (under Austrian presidency) - in the Italian States the Austrian Royal House had more direct influence through the rulers (and an "Austrian Minister" at the court); The Italian states saw more revolts than the German states before 1848; Industrialization came earlier and more strongly to the German states - especially western Prussia (the Rhineland); Prussia was a strong state within the German Confederation - no such strong state really existed within the Italian states; Prussia created a Custom Union (in 1834 - the "Deutscher Zollverein" - the German Customs Union) which was a first step towards an economic unification of the German states - no such Customs Union was created in the Italian states; Church - Catholicism dominated the Italian states while Protestantism (both Lutheranism and Calvinism) and Catholicism existed in different German states