Iron Crown

What if France Won the Napoleonic Wars?

An Alternate History Scenario by Daniel A. Levy

OTL = Our TimeLine (the one we all live in today)

TTL = This TimeLine (the alternate history timeline detailed in this scenario)

BTL = Both TimeLines

NTL = Neither TimeLine

Named after the Iron Crown of Lombardy, the crown used in Napoleon I’s coronation ceremony

# Emperors of the French

## Napoleon I

Napoleon I is one of the most studied and most controversial figures in history. This document will spare lots of information about him- it is widely known already, and the desire for meaningless repetition of facts here is small- but will talk about certain aspects.

As a brief summary, Napoleon- in BTL- was a man of extreme personal magnetism, intelligence, vigour, willpower, and ambition. He had an immensely acute memory, was a genius in utilising the resources he had at hand (i.e. the resources of France), and had extraordinary gifts for both remembering many things at once and foresight. He was supremely grandiose, and his victories gave him a certainty of his own destiny and invincibility.

He was also an extremely troubled individual. Growing up, he was bullied by his classmates and neglected by his parents, and it left him with a host of complexes, most notably an inferiority complex. His family were nobility, but extremely poor and marginal- he thus also suffered from feelings of money insecurity. He undeniably had narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), most likely developed as a defence mechanism for the bullying he received. He also felt sexual anxiety, was often awkward, and was hypersensitive to criticism.

It is important to emphasise the role of Napoleon’s psychology in his decision-making. He constantly, throughout his life, felt driven to do *more*. To extend his expectations, to advance in power, to go from aim to aim and constantly move the goalposts so he never felt satisfied. Nothing was ever enough.

This explains many of the [decisions he takes in TTL](#_1813_|_Napoleon’s): even if Napoleon had not conducted the 1812 Russian Campaign- or had succeeded in it- he would have inevitably undergone another one. His inferiority complex- to name but one of the many psychological issues that befell him, elaborated on [here](#_Napoleon_II)- compelled him to overcompensate for his powerful personal feelings of inadequacy. Without resolving this complex, he felt continually compelled to do more and more and more, and hence in TTL in 1813 undergoes the [Swedish Campaign](#_1813-1818_|_War).

Because Napoleon II is a central figure in TTL, his upbringing is important as it affects his future character, and therefore how he rules. Napoleon I’s upbringing of him is the same in BTL- there is no reason why it should be different. Details are provided below.

Napoleon I doted on his son, and loved being with him. He was very physically affectionate with him, and often embraced and held him. Sometimes, whilst working, he would ‘lie down on the floor beside his cherished son, playing with him [as if Napoleon were] another child’, according to Claude Francois de Meneval, Napoleon’s secretary and friend. According to Louis Etienne Saint-Denis, Napoleon’s valet and librarian, Napoleon ‘never stopped kissing and caressing his beloved son.’ Napoleon undoubtedly did not neglect his child, and gave him a very lavish life.

Sometimes, though, his idea of play was not so benevolent. He would often tease his son and play tricks on him, for example throwing him down, upsetting his toys, or harshly thrusting his that on his head. However, it is safe to assume that Napoleon’s love and care for his child was great. It is likely that he would not have wanted his child to develop the same mental disorders and insecurities that he did, and in BTL took care not to take it too far with his son.

## Napoleon II

Napoleon II had a very different upbringing to his father, but inherited aspects of his psychology.

Napoleon I imparted some of his character on his son because he groomed him for ruling extensively. Napoleon I saw his son as the future of his dynasty and a strong France, and recognised the need to create an intelligent, educated successor. Napoleon I’s early life was a constant series of lessons. By teaching him that his destiny was to rule all of Europe, Napoleon I instilled in his son some of the ambition and megalomania that he felt.

But Napoleon I and Napoleon II had crucial differences in their upbringing: Napoleon I faced adversity, bullying, financial insecurity, and more, leaving him with a host of complexes. Napoleon I had an inferiority complex, financial insecurity complex, class inferiority complex, suffered from sexual anxiety, awkwardness, intellectual envy, and had an extreme sensitivity to criticism. Napoleon II avoids a lot of this because his upbringing is so different. He is constantly respected, admired, and adored without even trying. Of course, Napoleon I takes care to keep him humble, and Napoleon II inherits some of his father’s natural tendency towards insecurity in the form of feeling inadequate compared to his father. But without these crippling mental issues, Napoleon II is very different.

Napoleon II is more emotionally stable, able to take criticism, and internally self-confident than his predecessor. He was still ambitious, and felt (as a result of his father’s teaching) that he was entitled to Europe, but this megalomania didn’t reach the obsessive levels that it did in Napoleon I. Napoleon I was infamous for his psychological drive to keep going, to never have ‘enough’, to constantly raise his standards so that none of his gains would ever satisfy him. He instilled this in Napoleon II to some extent, but died when his son wasn’t even a teenager, and the influences of Marie Louise and Armand de Caulaincourt meant that Napoleon II was not at all comparable to his father in this regard.

Marie Louise and Caulaincourt were in fact the main influences on Napoleon II in his teenage years, and generally advised moderation and contentment with what one already has. These efforts proved to be successful, and, though reluctant, Napoleon II would later seek peace in 1829 despite really needing to, something which Napoleon I couldn’t bring himself to do in 1812.

Napoleon I was, in his first few years of age, described by his parents as having a ‘gentle and sweet disposition’. Later experiences made him defensive and argumentative. As Napoleon II is given a relatively sheltered upbringing owing to the seniority of his position, there are no stimuli that cause him to become ‘ill-tempered and quarrelsome’. Napoleon II was also strongly influenced by Marie Louise, who was somewhat ‘shy and timid’. The result was that Napoleon II was far more quiet, reserved, and gentle than his fiery, passionate father. Many historians see Napoleon II as more ‘benevolent’ than his father, less unwilling to lose power, and more empathetic to others. Indeed, in the 1830s when the French Empire began demanding a greater degree of democracy, Napoleon’s willingness to do so surprised many and probably went a long way in convincing the Imperial populations that Napoleon II genuinely cared about them.

Napoleon II was actually viewed positively by his people throughout almost his entire reign. He was posthumously referred to by the French people as ‘Le Doux Roi’- The Gentle King- as Marie would affectionately call him this in private correspondence with close relatives. The French Empire was already ecstatic at his birth in 1811, and although this great enthusiasm ebbed away, it was replaced with a general contentment regarding the young emperor. This is, of course, a generalisation: unrest was still present in various parts of the Empire for different reasons, and riots/rebellions still sporadically broke out. Not everyone felt warmly towards Napoleon II. But this was certainly the legacy that remained after his death. It is fair to say that, overall, Napoleon II was a good person.

He was not without flaws, of course. In later years, the feelings of inadequacy compared to his father that began to haunt him made him a more bitter and irritable person. Throughout his life, Napoleon II was somewhat spoilt and didn’t like not getting his way- probably a result of his pampered, indulgent upbringing. His father constantly gave him lessons in statesmanship, governance, and warfare in the first 12 years of life, and imparted a lot of his personal ideology to him. The result was that Napoleon II, although undeniably better than his father in this regard, was still somewhat greedy, overly ambitious, and megalomaniacal. Marie noted that in his younger years he was prone to tantrums, and Caulaincourt remarked that Napoleon II had a knack for being stubborn. However, he learned to mask these flaws better with age, and although British propaganda mentioned them severely and often, it was always a vast overstatement.

Napoleon II inherited his father’s intelligence but not his brilliance. He was not an amazing general, nor a powerful personal force. He did not have the immense, binding charisma that Napoleon I had. Napoleon II was a good general, a good statesman, and a good diplomat: but not outstanding in any of these areas. This is not to say he was a moderate, ‘B+’ ruler. He was still incredibly intelligent and an astute ruler, capable of conceptualising the ideal policies to pass and then often writing the laws for them himself (or at least partially). He excelled in strategy in a way that his father did not. Napoleon II could never achieve the astounding, against-all-odds victories his father did. But he was remarkably adept in somehow discovering the best decisions to take, mostly by thinking outside-the-box. The War of the Eighth Coalition, for example, would not have been a French victory had it not been for Napoleon’s decision-making, and the decisions to industrialise, democratise, attack India, and invest in a light, mobile navy were supremely important in ensuring long-term French power.

Napoleon was not a perfect ruler in terms of his personality or decisions. He did make mistakes, and he did have flaws. But, in general, though he lacked the shining greatness of his father, he was still a very good emperor.

## Napoleon III

In OTL, Napoleon III refers to Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, Napoleon I’s nephew. However, even in OTL, according to Napoleon I’s own succession laws, which he wrote in 1804 when he became emperor, Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was the rightful heir by 1855 (when Napoleon II dies ITL) anyway. In BTL, all of the other viable successors are dead by this point. After Napoleon II died in OTL, by the time 1855 arrives Napoleon III is genuinely the rightful heir according to Napoleon’s succession laws. He is included here because inserting a historical character into an alternate history scenario is far more interesting than fabricating a personality, and thus the idea of him being a legitimate successor is too intriguing to miss.

Napoleon III in OTL is sometimes dismissed as a failure for the Franco-Prussian War and failures in Mexico and Italy. Admittedly, these are major blunders. But Napoleon III’s situation in TTL is extremely different, and thus his actions and decisions would be different. It is important to try and get an idea of his personality.

Napoleon’s personality would likely be different to some degree in TTL because of his different upbringing: he is not brought up in Switzerland/Italy and does not become involved with the Carbonari there. The Carbonari were a resistance organisation in Italy fighting Austrian domination there. Involvement with them would later shape his foreign policy in OTL. But in TTL, he is born and raised in France, and after Louis Napoleon’s other children die in the 1830s it is obvious that Charles Louis Napoleon would succeed him. In the 1840s, Napoleon II would almost definitely decide to groom Charles Louis Napoleon for succession. Being at war at the time, he takes him with on a few campaigns in the [War of the Eighth Coalition](#_War_of_the). He eventually stops doing this due to Charles Louis Napoleon’s ill health, and sends him to a chateau in Ile-de-France to be taught in statesmanship and governance by Napoleon II’s senior advisors. Considering the changes in Napoleon III’s upbringing, we can conclude two things: firstly, Napoleon would have been much more accepting of Austrian domination of Italy as he never fought with the Carbonari. Secondly, he would have probably been a more competent statesman.

In OTL, Napoleon III strongly believed in autocracy- this would probably remain in TTL. Whilst it is true that Napoleon probably believed in it so strongly because in OTL France as a republic was unstable, the presence of a stable monarchy in TTL would probably still show to Napoleon III that autocracy = stability. Napoleon III in BTL is thus a firm believer in autocracy and reluctant to make democratic concessions. In OTL, however, he *did* in the end make these concessions, even against the advice of his advisors. In TTL, he doesn’t as political reform occurs earlier however, in 1852-3.

In BTL, however, Napoleon III has a genuine interest in bettering the lives of the French people. In OTL, Napoleon’s domestic policies were decidedly liberal- arguably even socialist. Napoleon spent his entire reign renovating Paris and launching other major public works projects all over the country. He massively expanded France’s railway system and modernising banking and agriculture- in OTL this ended famines in France and made her a grain exporter. He even gave French workers the rights to strike *and to unionise*. Educational opportunities for women were massively improved, and the first public school libraries were opened. During Napoleon III’s reign, France’s industrial production increased by 73% and agricultural production by 60%. Whilst not all of this can be attributed to Napoleon III alone, his policies undeniably helped. Napoleon III, in OTL, was anything but a failure in domestic policy.

In TTL, he passes the same policies and has the same political beliefs. The fact that France had industrialised earlier in TTL means that France’s industrial growth from ~1850-~1870 is considerably greater, because industrial growth is exponential. France does well under him. The lack of disastrous foreign policy decisions in TTL means that Napoleon III is primarily remembered for his progressive, left wing domestic policies, and his renovation of Paris. He is fondly remembered by the French people, although academics are more critical. His foreign policy wasn’t disastrous, but was uninspired, and his economic policies did cause bitterness and opposition. France accumulated considerable debt under him, and many businessmen were unhappy at him reducing tariffs on British products. Regardless, even by 1870 one of strongest critics said ‘We were crushed. The Emperor is more popular then ever.’ With no disastrous Franco-Prussian War to change this in TTL, this popularity endures.

Napoleon III, like Napoleon II, was an unhealthy person, and by his forties he suffered from various ailments. In OTL these were compounded by long years of imprisonment in northern France for launching a coup there in 1840- although in TTL Napoleon III never does this. Regardless, his lifestyle and diet still caused him health issues. He had gout, obesity, bladder stones, kidney disease, and erectile dysfunction- which, to the womanising Napoleon III, would have stung. In OTL, Napoleon III died of illness in 1873, with the illness that killed him coming as a result of two operations to remove his gallstones. In TTL, he dies earlier, in 1869, because he joins Napoleon II on a few campaigns during the War of the Eighth Coalition.

In OTL, Napoleon III has a son: Napoleon Eugene Louis Jean Joseph Bonaparte. Had Napoleon III remained as the French Emperor and the Empire was still a hereditary monarchy, his son would have inherited the throne as Napoleon IV. This does not change in TTL.

## Napoleon IV

In OTL, Napoleon III had a son, Napoleon Eugene Louis Jean Joseph Bonaparte. After Napoleon III died in 1873, Bonapartists in France (people who wanted to restore the House of Bonaparte) proclaimed him to be Napoleon IV. In TTL, once Napoleon III dies in 1869, his son takes over, and is crowned Napoleon IV.

In OTL, Napoleon IV dies young, at 23. He is killed in a skirmish with some Zulus as he was actually serving with *British* forces at the time. He actually forced the British military to let him take part. In TTL, he never serves with Britain and never gets involved with any Zulus. So how would he die? Napoleon IV had no chronic health problems; indeed, his life of soldiering (and thus a life of physical activity) probably would have increased his lifespan, as the soldiering he did was never too strenuous as to be detrimental. He could have died of old age after a long life, or he could have just as easily caught an illness like tuberculosis or cholera and died.

His lifestyle and diet would have made him less vulnerable to conditions, however: unlike Napoleon III, he was in good shape. It is safe to assume that Napoleon IV would not have suffered from any conditions relating to cholesterol or obesity. Whilst Napoleon could have at any point arbitrarily caught a lethal illness- which, in the 19th century, was a very real risk- this document assumes he doesn’t and lives to about 60. The average age of death for noblemen at the time was approximately this. Born in 1856, this document assumes he dies in 1923, living to an age of 67 (due to access to the world’s finest medical care, doctors, etc).

With his birth and death dates established, it is important to now examine his personality and traits. However, as Napoléon Eugène Louis Jean Joseph never ruled in OTL, information about how he ruled is, of course, non-existent. It is very clear that he enjoyed soldiering, even seeing action in the Franco-Prussian War. As early as 4 years old, he was wearing a child-size grenadier uniform. He was very proud of Napoleon I and III. He was in excellent shape and skilled in physical arts- he attended the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and came top of the class in riding and fencing. He was also intelligent: he attended physics lectures (albeit elementary physics) at King’s College London. He was an enthusiastic, sometimes brash person. He was a religious man and lived a strict life, showing self-discipline.

In TTL, there is no glaring reason for these personality traits to change. Napoleon is intelligent, self-disciplined, and a generally enthusiastic, vivacious person. His love of soldiering is well known- although he realises that it would be selfish to declare a war just for his own entertainment, he often acts as an observer in other wars. This has some form of precedent in OTL, where he was acting as an observer in Africa fighting the Zulus.

Napoleon IV is interested in ruling in OTL, but not greatly, and never makes a severe attempt to seize power in France. He is far more interested in soldiering. In TTL, this doesn’t really change. Napoleon IV wants to rule and is reluctant to relinquish power- but he does. He is able to willingly release countries like the Batavian Republic, for example, because he’s not a megalomaniac like Napoleon I. Napoleon’s personal enthusiasm and self-discipline, as well as his absence of megalomania, endears him to his subjects and mollifies foreign rulers. Napoleon’s reign sees France’s relations with Britain and Sweden get warmer, although nothing like the Entente occurs in TTL- relations are not *that* warm.

In TTL, Napoleon IV is liked by his subjects, although he isn’t a great reformer like his father. He admires Napoleon III a lot and attempts to emulate his achievements by renovating the French cities further and patronising the arts and architecture. However, the quasi-socialist views of his father aren’t shared, and Napoleon IV doesn’t pass any more major workers’ rights laws. He doesn’t care much for economics and largely maintains his father’s economic policies, although he increases tariffs due to popular demand.

Napoleon IV is seen as a good ruler by his subjects and academics, but with none of the brilliance of Napoleon I or even Napoleon II. Nonetheless, he is considerably well-liked as a person.

## Napoleon V

In OTL, a Napoleon V did exist- Napoleon Victor Jerome Frederic Bonaparte, a pretender to the French throne from 1879 until 1926- the year of his death. Bonapartists in France proclaimed him to be ‘Napoleon V’ after Napoleon IV’s death. Napoleon IV (in OTL) had appointed him as his heir before his death; he had skipped Napoleon Victor’s father, Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul Bonaparte, who was genealogically senior. However, according to Napoleon I’s own succession laws, written in 1804, neither of these people could inherit the throne.

Napoleon Victor and his father Napoleon Joseph were both descendants of Jerome Bonaparte, the youngest brother of Napoleon I. But Napoleon I’s 1804 succession law explicitly omitted Jerome and his descendants from the succession. This was because Jerome had defied Napoleon I politically, and Napoleon had omitted him from the succession law as an act of vengeance. It is difficult to predict whether this law would have been amended had Napoleon I remained in power until the 1820s. It is possible that Napoleon and Jerome may have reconciled, and Napoleon may have subsequently amended the law. It is also possible that this would have never happened. However, it doesn’t actually *matter* which scenario would be the case.

In OTL, Jerome was still omitted from the succession, but that didn’t stop Bonapartists from proclaiming a descendant of Jerome, Napoleon Victor, to be Napoleon V. Even if in TTL Napoleon IV died childless, and he declared a descendant of Jerome to be his heir, the idea of the French Empire simply collapsing is somewhat difficult to believe. Napoleon V would have faced some consequences regarding his illegitimacy, but Napoleon IV simply proclaiming him to be his heir would have sufficed. However, this is all assuming that, in TTL, Napoleon IV does not have a child.

Napoleon IV does not have a child in OTL because he had died at 23 years of age. However, assuming that he survives into (according to contemporary standards) old age, it is overwhelmingly likely that he would have married a suitable noblewomen and had a child. Napoleon was not infertile, and the importance of procuring an heir would have been apparent to him. It is therefore appropriate to conclude that TTL’s Napoleon V would have been the son of Napoleon IV.

Napoleon V in TTL is therefore an entirely fictitious character. All of the previous Emperors of the French have actually existed in the real world. By studying their upbringing, behaviour, and actions, an idea of their personalities can be pieced together. This helps determine how these figures would have responded to the events in TTL. But TTL’s Napoleon V is completely fictitious. Therefore, to get an idea of his personality, the personalities of his close relatives must be examined. This is, of course, not an optimum way of deducing a figure’s personality, but given the circumstances it is the best method available.

We can deduce a few things from Napoleon V’s father, Napoleon IV. It is extremely likely that Napoleon IV would induce in his son a passion for soldiering and war. Moreover, as Napoleon IV was not especially megalomaniacal nor concerning with procuring power, Napoleon V would also retain these characteristics. Napoleon V’s mother is unknown during this scenario as napoleon IV could have married any woman in the future. We can only deduce things from Napoleon V’s relatives in OTL: this includes Napoleon V’s grandmother, Eugenie de Montijo. She was Napoleon III’s wife in BTL. Eugenie was athletic, good, generous, active, and firm (according to her school reports). She grew up into a daring and headstrong young woman. Being Napoleon IV’s mother, this was likely where the Emperor got it from. Napoleon V would most likely also be plucky, audacious, firm, and headstrong.

When would Napoleon V be born? In the Victorian Era, it was common for middle-/upper- class women to marry in around their mid-20s. Finding a suitable bride for Napoleon IV probably wouldn’t be too hard- in OTL, Queen Victoria managed to find a myriad of suitors for her relatives. Assuming Napoleon IV is a few years older than his wide, he’d probably get married at around 30 years old, and have a kid at around 30-35. This document assumes that Napoleon IV has his son in 1889.

Napoleon V is thus born in 1889. Assuming he lives to his early sixties like his father (as this was the average lifespan for the upper class at this time), he would therefore die in 1954. There is no guarantee that he would not die prematurely of, for example illness. It is significantly likely that Napoleon would die before this time. This document assumes he lives a long and healthy life because it is extremely arbitrary trying to come up with a random year of death caused by a random illness or assassination. It is a more simple solution to just say he dies of old age, and this simplicity makes it the most logical one to pursue here.

There is no point in killing off a fictional character early due to some random illness. Unlike Napoleon II and III, who are consistently unhealthy and sickly in OTL, there is also no obvious reason why Napoleon V should be susceptible to a premature death from illness. Whilst it is absolutely a possibility, unlike with Napoleon II and III it would not be unrealistic for Napoleon V to just die of old age- i.e., there is no obvious reason why he shouldn’t. Finally, as an additional point, due to the difficulty in gauging the personality of fictitious characters, it would be preferable to minimise the number of fictitious characters present. Napoleon V dying in 1954 eliminates the need of an estimation of the personality of a Napoleon VI, and therefore Napoleon V dying in 1954 is more preferable anyway. This document thus assumes that Napoleon is born in 1889 and dies in 1954 of old age.

# Napoleonic Era | 1803-1823

## 1793 | Siege of Toulon

In OTL, counter-revolutionary forces in France turned Toulon over to Britain and France during the Federalist revolts. Napoleon Bonaparte is present here and he is instrumental in the siege and recapture of the city. As British and Spanish troops leave the city, they blow up the arsenal and burn 42 French ships. In TTL, the destruction they wreak is far greater. They still leave the city as the ships were needed to evacuate Toulonnais citizens, and they had to leave with the ships lest they lose their means of escape, but they destroy as many houses as they can and burn all the supplies they can. As Republican forces enter the city, Napoleon is surprised by the viciousness of the Spanish troops, and decides that someday the entire Franco-Spanish border will need to be secured as protection. This contributes to his decision in 1808 to occupy Aragon, causing the [Tumult of Aragon](#_1808_|_Tumult).

## 1804 | Armand de Caulaincourt

Armand de Caulaincourt was a French diplomat and, after a diplomatic mission to Saint Petersburg, an aide-de-camp to Napoleon.

In OTL, Napoleon sent Caulaincourt across the Rhine to seize some aristocrats in Baden- who were later put to death. Caulaincourt, an aristocrat himself, felt furious and disillusioned at being used against a fellow nobleman like this. His attitude towards Napoleon changed markedly, and although he was still courteous he was often rudely frank, and he no longer regarded Napoleon with any idealism.

In TTL, another diplomat is sent to Baden who isn’t an aristocrat. Caulaincourt continues to admire Napoleon and treats him with a modest reverence. The two grow very close and Napoleon listens to Caulaincourt more as a result of their stronger relationship.

## 1808 | Tumult of Aragon

Just as in OTL, French troops move through Spain to reach Portugal. Whilst doing this, they seize Spanish fortresses and occupy Navarre and Catalonia. This outrages the Spanish people, causing their long-standing hatred for Charles IV of Spain and his minister Godoy to erupt into open rebellion. The Mutiny of Aranjuez forced Charles VI to abdicate in favour of his popular son, Ferdinand VII. In TTL, however, things are different. The French *also* occupy Aragon and lay siege to Huesca, resulting in a bloody assault there. This results in anti-French feeling in the country skyrocketing, and because Charles VI was friendly was France, hatred for him also skyrockets. The result is that instead of the mutiny being at Aranjuez, it spreads throughout all of Aragon. Support for Ferdinand is far greater and, with a greater scope of French action, the violence of the tumult is far greater. Peasant attacks on the French are minimal at this stage (just as in OTL with the Tumult of Aranjuez) as the focus of rioters is to place Ferdinand on the throne, but the massive surge of violence makes Napoleon seriously reconsider the docility of the Spanish people.

## 1808 | Franco-Spanish Alliance

In OTL, Charles IV is persuaded to protest his abdication to Napoleon, who sees an immense opportunity and summons the two kings to an arbitration at Bayonne. They arrive on May 5 and are forced to renounce their claims. Napoleon places Joseph Bonaparte on the Spanish throne, the Dos De Mayo Uprising occurs, and the Peninsular War begins. In TTL, the increased French presence in Spain causes increased anti-Charles feeling, and the violence of the Tumult of Aragon means Charles cannot be persuaded to protest his abdication, believing it a futile waste of dignity. Napoleon could, at this stage, simply seize Spain and install Joseph without the Bayonne-deception: there were around 80,000 French troops in Spain. But the vehemency with which the Spanish peasantry had supported their king convinced him that having Ferdinand on the throne would be vital for Spain’s cooperation. Napoleon therefore tries an alternate strategy for Spain.

In OTL and TTL, Napoleon renounces the 1807 Treaty of Fontainebleau when he invades Spain. The treaty agreed to divide Portugal into three kingdoms, with the ruling House of Braganza to be driven out. However, with the adoption of Napoleon’s new strategy, he decided to renegotiate. Napoleon could treat the Spanish government however he wished: he was concerned about the violence of the people, but the Spanish Royal Army was laughable. However, he decided on a new treaty: the 1808 Treaty of Fontainebleau. This treaty would cause southern Portugal (the same portion of land that would have been made into the Principality of the Algarves under the 1807 treaty) to be annexed into Spain, and the northern half to become a French puppet. Moreover, France and Spain would enter an alliance, and Spain would provide troops for the Grande Armee. Ferdinand VII signed it and was grateful not to have been overthrown and imprisoned by French troops there.

This was a clever move from Napoleon, and most of his advisors lauded it. Spain had been secured as an extra ally. Their loyalty was secured by promising them southern Portugal, and their involvement there meant they’d continually be fighting the Portuguese and, by extension, the British forces stationed there. The Spanish and Portuguese had been allies for centuries, and now they’d permanently be against each other. Finally, the Grandee Armee had secured extra troops from Spain. All the 80,000 or so troops- plus 25,000 Spaniards- currently in Spain could move out to Europe. The ‘Spanish ulcer’ would never materialise in this timeline.

## 1812 | Russian Campaign

The Russian Campaign in TTL is the exact same as in OTL: same motivation, same battles, same Fire of Moscow. However, when Napoleon arrives in Moscow, he stays for 10 days instead of 35.

In OTL, Caulaincourt consistently advised Napoleon to leave Moscow, but the latter stayed, waiting for a reply from Alexander I that never came. Tsar Alexander deliberately refused to reply to Napoleon’s peace offer, waiting for Napoleon to starve in Moscow and have to march home in winter.

In TTL, Napoleon is far closer to Caulaincourt as a result of a divergence in 1804. He decides to listen to Caulaincourt’s advice to leave Moscow, and does so soon. He avoids the worst of the Russian winter and doesn’t burn through all the supplies he forages in Russia so quickly. The Grandee Armee is indisputably diminished: 150,000 casualties. However, in our timeline, this is 450,000. No Sixth Coalition forms because the European powers do not smell blood in the water.

The Russian Campaign did convince Napoleon that the Continental System could not be enforced, however, and he effectively abandoned it. He did not formally decree its end, but he ceased enforcing it, and many countries soon caught on and began brazenly breaking the system. Napoleon himself lifted the blockade to export French goods: he did this before in 1810 to export greatcoats to Britain, but did so again with increased frequency.

The phasing out of the Continental System was gradual, however, meaning that the British economy followed the same trends in TTL than OTL. Just as in OTL, Britain in 1812 is on the verge of a political and economic crisis.

It is also worth noting that as the Russian Campaign is the same until Napoleon reaches Moscow, Napoleon also alienates Sweden by seizing Swedish Pomerania in January 1812. Bernadotte of Sweden formally ends the wars with Britain and Russia in the July 1812 Treaty of Orebro. This becomes significant later.

## 1813 | Napoleon’s Next Move

Napoleon is in an immensely better position in TTL 1813 than OTL 1813. The Grande Armee is diminished but still well-stocked: the powers of Europe see no opening to form a Sixth Coalition. The comparative abundance of French manpower means Napoleon does not have to introduce harsher conscription laws at home, increasing his domestic popularity and lowering war-weariness. The Confederation of the Rhine also remains loyal to France, with its member states having no real opportunity to defect. Rhenish troops are used to replenish the Grande Armee, and soldiers that would have otherwise been tied up in Spain were garrisoned there to keep their loyalty.

The lack of the ‘Spanish ulcer’ is an immense help to Napoleon, freeing up thousands and thousands of soldiers. Spain is allied to France, and although Ferdinand’s conflicts with Sweden and Russia are nominal, he still contributes some troops to the French cause and takes care of Portugal for Napoleon. The situation is going well for France, and now would be an excellent time to make peace.

But Napoleon does not do this because it is not in his nature to. In OTL, Napoleon refused peace even after the Battle of Leipzig. Metternich offered him the French throne and France’s 1801 borders, and he refused even after the disasters in Russia, Spain, and Germany.

Napoleon did not accept peace in both OTL and TTL because he *could* not. Napoleon was driven to conquer Europe by the simple desire to rule, and for him there could be no end because his own mind would not allow it. He constantly raised his expectations and changed his standards so that no conquest could be good enough. He drove himself to take more and more, to refuse to give up, to keep fighting. The ambition that took Napoleon from a Corsican village to French emperor did not suddenly cease. The inferiority complex within him that developed from his bullying in childhood years did not suddenly give way. He was driven by *himself* to keep fighting.

So Napoleon does not make peace in 1813. Instead, he moves to tackle the next major obstacle standing between him and European domination. Britain is still untouchable by Napoleon: the French, Spanish, and Danish navies have all been destroyed by the British Navy. Russia, as far as Napoleon is concerned, is also untouchable: the scorched-Earth-and-retreat policy is something that Napoleon doesn’t know how to counter right now. Besides, the Russians wrecking their own cities does a lot to neutralise them as a threat. Spain, Germany, and Italy are pacified. However, there is one country which still poses a threat: Sweden.

Sweden defied Napoleon by signing the Treaty of Orebro with Britain and Russia, making peace with them. Sweden hasn’t yet made an alliance with them, but Bernadotte openly violates the Continental System, and everyone can see that an alliance is inevitable. Sweden’s alignment with Russia means that she no longer seeks to reclaim Finland, which Russia took from Sweden after the 1808-9 Finnish War between them. The Grand Duchy of Finland was established as an autonomous location within the Russian Empire. Sweden therefore turned its ambitions to Norway, seeking in the long-term to unite Scandinavia. Norway was currently in a real union with Denmark, however, and the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway was allied with Napoleon. War was coming.

But Sweden hadn’t declared war yet. The TTL Russian Campaign wasn’t a disaster, and the Grande Armee was still powerful enough to deter a Sixth Coalition. If there was to be another war, it would be Napoleon who started it. And start it he did.

Napoleon was driven to keep fighting, and Sweden was the next obvious target. After six months of peace for France to recover, Napoleon declared war in March 1813. Britain, Portugal, and Russia declared an alliance with Sweden in a move everyone expected. Prussia also declared an alliance: fewer expected this at this time, but in hindsight Napoleon found it inevitable. It was impossible that Prussia would accept the harsh Treaties of Tilsit, which saw it lose about 50% of its land. Prussia was technically an ally of Napoleon after Tilsit, but it was obvious to everyone that Prussia would abandon this at the first chance. In TTL- exactly like OTL- Prussia joins the Sixth Coalition. Austria strongly considers joining, but the lack of a ‘Spanish ulcer’ means that French troops are currently in Austria, and the French are currently on the offensive rather than the defensive. Austria, unlike in OTL, does not join. Britain's occupied state, the Kingdom of Sicily, also joined.

On Napoleon’s side are the Confederation of the Rhine, Warsaw, the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, the Italian client states, Switzerland, and Spain.

The war for Europe continues.

## 1813-1818 | War of the Sixth Coalition

Napoleon’s situation was mixed. On the one hand, he had many advantages.

Napoleon had immense manpower: the Grandee Armee, limited to 480,000 or so just after the Russian Campaign, was now around 580,000. Spanish and Rhenish manpower had been instrumental in replenishing the losses. Denmark-Norway could be counted on as a valuable ally: Denmark and Sweden had been warring for centuries, and Sweden’s first act was to invade Norway. Britain's land forces were reliable but small in number, and shifting them from Portugal to Sweden would free up more Spanish manpower. Russia’s army certainly wasn’t destroyed, but the scorched earth policy had severely weakened them. Sweden also wasn’t particularly strong, and although Bernadotte was to be taken seriously, Sweden itself- in Napoleon’s eyes- was not.

But the war would be far from easy, and despite Napoleon’s brilliance it was entirely possible that he could lose.

Navally, the coalition was utterly dominant, meaning that to get to Sweden, Napoleon would have to go through Russia and Finland. The Russians would inevitably implement a scorched-earth policy, and thus to reach Sweden Napoleon would need to use supply trains, which would slow him down. France had always gotten supplies from allies before- Warsaw’s supplies were important in the Russian Campaign. But in this war, Napoleon would be far more dependent on his supply trains. Moreover, Bernadotte was a genuinely good general who would very likely want to engage Napoleon himself.

The course of the war went as follows:

Napoleon needed to first subdue Prussia before moving through Russia. Prussia itself had grain and gunpowder, provisions which could be seized. Prussia could become the origin point for various supply trains through Russia. In any case, for Denmark-Norway to distract Sweden until Napoleon arrived, Prussia would have to be destroyed. This wasn’t the difficult part, however. The War of the Fourth Coalition had seen Napoleon conquer Prussia with relative ease, and although the Prussian Army had considerably reformed since then, French might could simply overwhelm it. That was exactly what they did, although there were some major battles in the area as Russian troops flooded in. Russia did not want to have to scorch their earth again, and therefore sought to engage Napoleon in Germany. Russian and Prussian forces engaged the Grande Armee in Leipzig in a major battle. However, bolstered with the great numbers of the Grande Armee, Napoleon won. The remainder of the Russian army were partially destroyed in subsequent battles, and the Russians fled to their homeland. Napoleon had carte blanche over Prussia.

This time, however, in 1814, Napoleon was not willing to simply subjugate Prussia. Prussia was too proud, too militaristic, too opportunistic to simply humiliate and leave. It had to be dismantled. The ‘Vanquishing of Prussia’ was the Coalition name for Napoleon’s policy. Prussia was divided into the Duchies of Pomerania and Gothia, which were added to the Confederation, and the remainder was to be given to both Austria and Poland. The gift of Silesia to Austria did much to improve their relations, and it convinced Austria that Napoleon actually had some stake in their interests. Austria and France arrange an alliance- it is nominal, for now, but the transfer of Silesia sets the stage for this to change. The Prussian monarchy fled to Sweden on a British ship. Napoleon could now go after Russia.

Napoleon first moved his troops to the Duchy of Warsaw and used the arsenals and grain silos to reprovision his army. In the Russian Campaign, Napoleon had actually taken extensive steps to ensure his army was supplied. He’d arranged for 20 train battalions, each 7,848 vehicles, and built various supply bases in Poland and Germany. Danzig alone held enough provisions to feed 400,000 men for 50 days. Magdeburg contained a siege artillery train with 462 cannons and 135 tonnes of gunpowder. In Russia, he’d established supply depots at various steps. Napoleon *had* prepared logistically, just not enough. His logistical approach broke down when faced with the vast distances covered, the rainstorms turning roads in mud, waterborne diseases due to troops drinking from puddles, and cold weather.

This time, however, it was spring, the distance would be less, and Napoleon was far more prepared. He had learned a lot from his first invasion of Russia, and recognised that he would have to sacrifice mobility for adequate supplying. He created 34 train battalions, established massive arsenals and bases in Germany and Poland, and established a greater number of supply depots in Russia. He also divided his army into smaller units, which were to travel to the Finno-Swedish border separately, avoid conflict (although remain close enough to each other to give battle together if needed) and then regroup. Instead of nine sapper and six miner companies, he deployed fourteen and seven. He minimised using mules and horses, using wagons extensively. Napoleon reached the Finno-Swedish border in six months’ time in September, and rapidly moved south.

Napoleon was able to take advantage of the fertility and road density of southern Sweden and left his supplies secured in fortified depots in the Russian and Finnish interiors, with Polish troops guarding them. Many of these depots were raided, and the Grandee Armee could not have safely returned to France by that same route during winter as a result. However, the army was able to winter in southern Norway. Napoleon was greatly challenged by Bernadotte, but his ultimately superior skill and considerable numerical advantage allowed him to triumph. Victory had come at a heavy price, however. France had lost 65,000 men in Germany fighting the Prussians and Russians, 100,000 in Russia itself as although Napoleon’s army was far more well-supplied than last time it still suffered, and 30,000 in Sweden. Around 200,000 men had been lost. But they had been lost for a reason. Napoleon had managed to beat Prussia, Russia, and Sweden. But there was one more enemy to face.

In 1816, Napoleon’s empire was beginning to crack. Continuous war had made the French people weary and the Rhenish people resentful. The Confederation was growing sick and tired of having their men dying as soldiers in a Frenchman’s war. The result was wide-spread rebellions there in the summer. Napoleon was forced to march back through Russia extremely quickly before the separate rebellions coordinated. Napoleon was aided in this by the supply depots he had established throughout, guarded mainly by Poles and in fortified locations which skirmish troops and Cossacks couldn’t breach. Napoleon outpaced his supply lines and marched his troops from depot to depot, finally reached Poland and fully resupplying. Now in Europe, he could live off the land once more, and the Grande Armee thundered back to the Confederation, where a degree of organisation had already begun.

The ‘Model States’ ruled by Napoleon’s relatives continued to be loyal as they were satellite states incapable of independent action. Rebellion was almost non-existent here. Bavaria, Wurttemberg, Baden, and Hesse were real allies of Napoleon who were themselves reformists and arguably revolutionaries. They agreed with Napoleon’s policies and thus wanted to negotiate lesser troop contributions than seek full independence. The problem was mainly with the states that had joined after 1806 which were not the aforementioned ‘reform states’. The states of Saxony, Mecklenburg, Berg, and the Hohenzollern realms were in open rebellion, however, having declared independence. Napoleon negotiated with the ‘reform states’ and reduced their expected troop contributions, and moved to crush the remaining rebellions. He succeeded, dissolving the rebellious states and forming new ones. Napoleon had become even more dominant in Europe than in 1812.

The issue now was France itself. The War of the Sixth Coalition had seen just under 250,000 men die. France had lost well over a million men during the Revolutionary period. The losses were keenly felt. The losses during the recent war had also led to deeply unpopular new conscription laws. Napoleon’s support in France was beginning to erode; and he knew it. This was the one thing that could have compelled Napoleon to surrender. Firstly, all of Napoleon’s actions throughout the continent depended on France itself being stable. An invasion of Russia, for example, would be impossible if France itself went up in arms. Militarily, France had to be kept placid at all costs.

Secondly, Napoleon had grown to love the French people’s love for him. Napoleon had grown up an outcast, having to defend himself against bullies by throwing sticks and rocks at them. Having now seen what it was like to be adored by a whole nation, he had grown extremely fond of it. The magnitude of the psychological reasons that kept Napoleon at war in 1813 were now nearly counter-balanced by the magnitude of the psychological reasons that made him want to pursue peace to avoid being loathed by France. Add this to the fact that all his advisors- including Caulaincourt- told him strongly that France would have another revolution if war continued, and Napoleon now decided to pursue peace.

In 1818, he approached the Coalition members to ask for a lasting peace. This shocked them: nobody had expected Napoleon to actually pursue peace. But they were grateful. After spending a year crushing the Rhenish rebellions, Napoleon had moved back north, and was raiding Swedish and Russian towns with impunity. The Coalition itself had dissolved in 1816. Napoleon therefore was able to negotiate terms that were considerably favourable to him, although to implement the terms he wanted he knew he would have to make some minor concessions. Nonetheless, it was clear to France that her gains were secured. France had won the Napoleonic Wars.

## 1818 | Treaty of Copenhagen

The Treaty of Copenhagen ended the War of the Sixth Coalition. Its terms were as follows:

* The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway to annex Swedish Pomerania, Skane, Blekinge, Bohuslan, Halland, and Gotland from the Kingdom of Sweden
* The Kingdom of Prussia divided into the Duchy of Pomerania and the Duchy of Gothia, which are to be absorbed into the Confederation of the Rhine
* The Duchy of Warsaw to annex eastern Prussia and the lands surrounding Bialystok
* The Empire of Austria to annex Silesia from the Kingdom of Prussia
* The Coalition members to accept the Empire of Spain’s annexation of the Principality of the Algarves from the Empire of Portugal
* Napoleon to formally end the Continental System
* Napoleon to renounce all further claims on European lands

## 1818-1823 | The Five Year Peace

The Treaty of Copenhagen established a brief period of peace. Neither the Revolutionary nor Monarchist countries were satisfied: Napoleon would not feel safe until Britain had been conquered, and Britain would not feel safe until Napoleon had been imprisoned or destroyed. Nonetheless, peace had been established. Britain was on the verge of total domestic collapse and revolution- as was France. Russia was so torn up from destroying her own country that she was close to collapse too. Germany, Italy, Spain, Scandinavia, and Switzerland just wanted peace. It seemed that whilst no country wanted to compromise, they all had to.

There was a brief five year peace. France continued to garrison soldiers in the Confederation of the Rhine, the Swiss Confederation, and the Austrian Empire. Napoleon focused on integrating these possessions. Britain ended its repressive wartime stance to unrest and passed a wealth of factory reforms in the post-war years, fearing a revolution that government repression could not stifle. In the end, the presence of a liberal revolutionary regime next-door to England, and the renewed war five years later, forced the British government to pass the Great Reform Act seven years early in 1825. Indeed, the presence of a powerful country with Revolutionary principles caused a surge of liberalism in Europe.

Europe became divided between ‘Revolutionary’ countries, where the Napoleonic Code held sway and the principles of the Revolution- except democracy- were enforced, and the ‘Royalist’ countries, still ruled by monarchies. The two countries of Denmark-Norway and Sweden were exceptions: each monarchies ruled according to many liberal principles, but more Ancien in nature than Revolutionary. Almost all of these countries vigorously suppressed Revolutionary activity in their countries and stifled liberals. The exceptions were Britain, and to a lesser extent Spain, who passed some minor reforms. The other Royalist countries censored and suppressed agitation for reform. Liberalism came to refer to the Revolutionary principles of egalitarianism, anti-feudalism, the rights of man, and general reform. Russia and Austria were the most dedicated to suppressing liberal activity- in OTL they and Prussia were part of the ‘Holy Alliance’, a multinational organisation aiming to restrain liberalism and secularism. In TTL, with Prussia dismantled and Austria prevented by France from joining any alliances with Russia, this does not occur. Regardless, the Austrian nobility has the same desire in TTL to curb liberalism, as does Russia.

## 1823 | Death of Napoleon

At the age of 53, Napoleon I dies of stomach cancer, just as in OTL. He dies 2 years later in TTL, not because the British poisoned Napoleon on St Helena, but because languishing in a small island where he was unhappy did affect Napoleon’s health. Not by a huge amount, because stomach cancer is stomach cancer, but in France, Napoleon has access to the world’s best medical care, abundant attention, and is much happier and less resigned to just die. The news is generally greeted with horror, jubilation, and plain interest in different parts of the world. Universally, there is an extremely prevalent feeling that the end of an era has come.

Napoleon’s son succeeds him.

# War of the Seventh Coalition | 1823-1829

## 1823 | Napoleon II inherits France and Austria

[Napoleon II](#_Napoleon_II), born in 1811, inherits the throne at 12 years of age, inheriting the French Empire from his father and the heir apparent of the Austrian Empire from his mother, to take over after Francis I’s death. Napoleon II held all of Europe apart from the British Isles, Iberia, the Balkans, and Russia. This terrified the Royalist powers. The idea of a single country- and a Revolutionary country, no less- potentially becoming a global hegemon was not something they could tolerate.

To make matters infinitely worse for France, Napoleon II is a child. He is a very promising child, and it would have been reasonable to assume even then that he would grow up to be a good ruler. But he is still a child. Napoleon I was feared by the Royalist powers. He had gained this aura of invincibility, and it created a myth around him. Napoleon’s reputation was even more potent than Napoleon. As Wellington said, his mere presence was worth 40,000 soldiers. Had Napoleon I somehow inherited Austria, there would be some chance that the Royalist powers would, at least temporarily and except for Britain, have been cowed into inaction. But with Napoleon II, the Royalist powers had the exact opposite reaction. They did not see a threat, they saw easy prey. Even if Napoleon II had inherited Switzerland alone, they still would have attacked him. Besides, Napoleon II by his very existence glorified and represented the Revolution, and the Royalist powers needed to defeat him in order to erase the existing traces of the Revolution.

A seventh coalition formed very quickly. It consisted of Britain and Russia (by now implacable enemies), Sweden (still outraged and wronged by the 1813 Swedish Campaign), Portugal (bound into enmity with Napoleon by their alliance to British and their war with Spain), and- eventually- Prussia. The Duchies of Pomerania and Gothia were encouraged to revolt by the Royalist powers and funded by Britain, and the Hohenzollern monarchy returned to Central Europe and reformed the Kingdom of Prussia in November 1823.

On Napoleon’s side were the French Empire and the Austrian Empire (although in reality French troops were tied up in Austria keeping her loyal; Marie Louise’s influence went a long way towards Austria joining the Seventh Coalition). Moreover, the Rhine, Warsaw, Spain, and Denmark-Norway were French allies, contributing troops to the Grandee Armee and coordinating their own military movements.

War had resumed, and Europe smelled blood in the water. They would not be satisfied until the new Napoleon was either exiled or killed.

## 1823 | War of the Seventh Coalition begins

Napoleon was not concerned about Prussia and Portugal. The former could be overwhelmed easily as long as the French generals were competent (they were), and the latter would be taken care of by Spain.

He was somewhat concerned about the Rhine and Sweden. The Rhine had been pacified in 1816-7 by Napoleon I, but now he was dead there were further issues. The ‘Model States’ which were dependent on France continued to be pliant- this included the new Kingdom of Gotha, created from western Saxony and the other minor states that rebelled in 1816. The ‘reform states’ were either demanding greater autonomy or, like Baden and Wurttemberg, had joined Saxony in rebellion. Like the Royalist powers, they sensed opportunity. Bavaria remained loyal purely because Maximillian I Joseph because he agreed more with the Revolutionary ideology than the Russian ultra-royalist ideology.

Sweden was weak relative to France, despite Bernadotte’s skilful leadership. The issue was *getting to Sweden*, and this ties into Napoleon was really concerned about: what to do about Britain and Russia.

Napoleon’s Second Russian Campaign had worked because in 1813, the Russian Army was too battered and the Russian countryside too scorched for Russia to do much about it. Russia had had a decade to cover since then, and Tsar Alexander had worked vigorously to make Russia a threat again. Of course, it was difficult to rebuild a country after two scorched-earth campaigns and a decade. France could beat Russia in Europe- but moving through Russia to get to Sweden was sort of possible, but very far from ideal. The Russians had fortified their cities and destroyed their roads. Things were different from a decade before.

Britain was another major issue. Napoleon II was not in a position to enforce another Continental System, and it would be unfeasible anyway. The British navy was superior to anything France could muster. Since the War of the Sixth Coalition, Britain had been garrisoning troops in Sweden, but would also land an expeditionary force elsewhere. The French, Spanish, and Rhenish coasts were untenable, and they probably wouldn’t land in Central or Eastern Europe as other Coalition troops would already be there. Napoleon was unsure; where would Britain open the new front?

In the end, it was in Italy. The Kingdom of Sicily had been a British base for over a decade now, and Britain landed a large expeditionary force there. The British force, led by Wellington, would push up into Italy. Italy received less of France’s attention than the Low Countries and Germany- so would have less troops- and Wellington hoped to stir up rebellion in the Italian possessions.

In 1823, Swedish and Russian troops (as well as the British force garrisoned in Sweden) moved into Prussia to ‘liberate’ it, and British troops were transported into the Kingdom of Sicily. The war had begun

## 1823-1829 | War of the Seventh Coalition

Napoleon II split his forces. 20% of the Grande Armee moved into Italy to match the British invasion. 20% went to the Rhine to put down the rebellions there. 60% moved into Central Europe. Napoleon’s Grande Armee was large, bolstered by five years of peace- it numbered 600,000.

The first thing Napoleon did was to move his Central European forces into Austria. He needed Austria to stay loyal, and he did not believe that Marie Louise’s influence would be enough. French troops were already garrisoned there. He decided to requisition the majority of the Austrian Army into the Grandee Armee, forcibly doing this by placing hundreds of thousands of soldiers in Austria. The Austrian nobility came very close to not doing this. Napoleon’s move was bold and could have spawned a massive rebellion and thus a new front. The Austrian nobility took orders from Metternich at this stage, who Napoleon thought it very unwise to dismiss: being able to control Metternich meant being able to control Austria- for now.

Metternich in OTL actually supported an alliance with France until the 1812 Russian Campaign, and he saw the inevitability of France’s defeat and advised Austria to switch sides. This doesn’t happen in TTL. Metternich continues to see an alliance with France as advantageous throughout the 1810s. In 1823, he seriously considers switching sides. But he decides not to. Around 350,000 French troops thunder into Austria and began surrounding fortresses with cannon at this time. The Austrian economy has recovered somewhat, but is still not doing well, and the outbreak of war is making Hungary get agitated. Besides, Austria is determined to keep Silesia, making cooperating with Prussia awkward. Napoleon assures Austria that she will be awarded land after the war should France won. So the Austrian nobility cooperates.

Central Europe sees some major battles in the first few years of the war. France, with the support of Austrian troops, manages to win some major battles against Russian and Swedish troops, but fails to eradicate the Russian Army, who falls back into western Russia. Napoleon II follows them, occupying his generals personally, but the Army falls back. He takes *everything* of value from western Russia and takes it back to his supply depots in Warsaw. Swedish troops retreat back to Sweden to engage the Danes, who have occupied the south by now. France moves into Prussia, but doesn’t occupy it- Napoleon II realises it would be a useless waste of manpower, becoming a ‘Prussian ulcer’. He takes everything of value from it- livestock, grain, gunpowder, metal- and stores it in Poland.

Napoleon decides to tackle Britain now, not Russia. He re-declares the Continental System, recognising that it can be enforced only with great difficulty but needing to pressure Britain somehow. Napoleon realises he cannot engage Britain in Europe- but with Britain's ships all near the British Isles, he realises he *can* engage them elsewhere. Napoleon I had been rebuilding the French navy during the Five Year Peace and Napoleon II has some wealth in the treasury. He decides to build a fleet of light corvettes from his allies’ ships and France’s own and to hire corsairs- Muslim pirates in the Mediterranean. The new fleet is sent to India and begins destroying British port cities and commercial ships. The fleet spreads out so that the more powerful British Navy can’t destroy it in one fell swoop, and France harasses Britain in India. He also sends diplomatic missions to various Indian sultans and princes, warning them of Britain's aims to annex the whole subcontinent- which many of them are now beginning to see. He encourages the Indian princes to declare war on Britain, and many do. Britain diverts ships and troops from Europe to put down the threat in India. In the long term, Britain largely succeeds, losing some territory, but the Indian response is too half-hearted and the British response (and previous entrenchment) too powerful for Britain to be repelled. However, in the short term, Britain has to withdraw troops from Italy.

The Italian theatre doesn’t see Britain make major gains beforehand. Wellington excels at being a defensive commander, and is outnumbered in Italy. In OTL, Wellington is able to succeed in Iberia because Spain turns on Napoleon, but in TTL Italy generally stays solid. Many Italians are pleased with Napoleonic rule so far: they are far more unified than they have ever been before- and are beginning to get used to it- and are appreciative of the Napoleonic Code. In later decades, the Italians will begin to demand an end to foreign domination of their peninsula, and already some discontent is growing under the surface. But this is by far counterbalanced by the Italians’ distrust of the Royalist powers. They see French, liberal domination with the Napoleonic Code as far preferable to British, reactionary domination with feudalism. The French troops are personally instructed by Napoleon II to be courteous to the Italians and to avoid violence. The result is that the Italian front sees limited British gains, and after many British troops leave for India, French troops there are freed up and consolidate in Central Europe. Napoleon is planning something.

By now it is late 1826, and Napoleon is, surprisingly, still alive. France, surprisingly, is safe. There are some troops still engaged in the Rhine, but the war is beginning to turn there. Few expected Napoleon to withstand the Seventh Coalition, and, in truth, he has been relying excessively on his generals and advisors. But he has managed to cope against the Coalition armies. However, Russia is still an obstacle. There’s little Napoleon can do: the Grandee Armee has taken a lot of casualties by this stage and simply does not have the manpower to march into Russia. The Russian Army also has the strength to destroy Napoleon’s supply lines, making a logistically near-impossible situation impossible. Napoleon can’t move into Russia, but he needs to destroy the Russian Army. His solution is to bring the Russians to him.

Alexander I, just as in OTL, dies of typhus in 1825, and is succeeded by Nicholas I. Nicholas I in our timeline was intensely reactionary, militaristic, and aggressively expansionist. In TTL, the prolonged presence of a powerful liberal empire amplifies all of these traits. In OTL, Nicholas’ biographer Nicholas V. Riasanovsky later says that he displayed ‘determination, singleness of purpose, an iron will, along with a powerful sense of duty.’ This doesn’t change in TTL. Indeed, Nicholas I finds his single purpose in destroying France. As a reactionary and a Tsar, he found his ‘duty’ in erasing the liberal empire. But in 1825 and 1826, Napoleon makes it clear that he will not invade Russia. Napoleon II’s strategy towards Russia is very different from that of his father. He organises hit-and-run raids on Russian cities, destroying the Russian countryside and driving the peasantry east. East of Moscow is mainly wasteland, and Nicholas I is now faced with thousands of hungry serfs. Moreover, in the 1820s, the Russian state in OTL- and even more so in TTL due to the increased war- was beginning to decay. The empire was poor, the army was poorly equipped and trained, it was technologically backwards, and administratively incapable. In OTL, this backwardness is masked by an outwards pretence of strength, and everyone else only realises this weakness in the Crimean War. But in TTL, this weakness is apparent. Russia is starting to lose its great power status. Nicholas I recognises the need for a quick victory that showcases French strength. He moves the Russian Army, which still numbers several hundred thousand soldiers, back west.

In 1827-8, the Russian Army is neutralised as a threat. Napoleon destroys all the roads leading to Russia and occupies all the forts and cities nearby with at least a few thousand troops, forming a defensive line and ‘trapping’ Russian forces in Central Europe. It works because moving large armies through countryside without any settlement/fort to resupply is different- and it is conspicuous. The ruined roads made retreat slow, intensifying the need for resupply. The enemy army can be spotted from nearby lookout spots, and soldiers in a nearby city can then cut the enemy army off and engage them.

The French Army- better trained, better equipped, better led, better motivated- captures or kills the Russians in a series of battles. Some Russians are able to retreat back east, as the Polish-Austrian forces were unable to watch every place at once, but large armies could not pass. 185,000 or so Russian troops straggle back to Russia, with hundreds of thousands more in jail or the afterlife. Napoleon II spends a year or so more consolidating his position in Europe: he engages a few more Coalition armies and consolidates his position in the Rhine. A few scattered revolts take place in France, the Low Countries, and Italy, and Napoleon II sends troops to put them down.

Prussia continues to be a site for rebellion, especially as Britain keeps subsidising new Prussian armies. In fact, Prussia is starting to become one of Napoleon’s biggest problems. Moreover, France itself is growing agitated. Five years was not enough to fully recover, and another five (plus) years of war is starting to take its toll. Unrest is growing. But, most importantly, Napoleon II is different to his father- this is explored in more detail [here](#_Napoleon_II), but the main point is Napoleon II is able to stop. Unlike Napoleon I, who kept on going in 1812 in OTL and TTL because what he had just wasn’t enough, Napoleon II is grateful- and somewhat shocked- for his gains and, recognising that his position now is relatively strong (although acknowledging that he will need to make a concession with Prussia) wants to make peace.

Napoleon II approaches the Seventh Coalition in 1829. Napoleon, by now 18, is an adult. He has spent his teenage years on campaign with his generals and closely advised by Caulaincourt, and is more mature now than perhaps any other 18-year-old on the planet. Many people thought he would lead France to failure- instead (though heavily advised by Caulaincourt) he had conceptualised and implemented many extremely clever strategic policies that had lead to victory. Europe did not underestimate him anymore. It was now extremely clear that Napoleon II was his father’s son. The Royalist powers were dismayed to see that Napoleon I hadn’t been erased from existence after all- he lived on in his son, who, like his father, imposed harsh treaties.

## 1829 | Treaty of Linz

The Treaty of Linz ended the War of the Seventh Coalition. Its terms were as follows:

* The Duchy of Warsaw to annex parts of western Russia, and to be acknowledged as the Grand Duchy of Warsaw
* The Empire of Austria to annex parts of western Russia
* The Kingdom of Prussia to be re-established from the Duchies of Pomerania and Gothia as the Grand Duchy of Prussia

# The Rise of Liberalism | 1829-1840

## 1830s | Liberalism in Europe

What is liberalism? Liberalism- in this context- is a set of principles championed and spread by the French Revolution and codified in the Napoleonic Code, a set of civil laws created by Napoleon and enforced in all French client states (and France itself).

These include the principles of equality before the law, civil liberties, religious freedom, secular governance and education, property rights, meritocracy, equality, an end to feudalism, the abolition of guilds, and the ending of Inquisitions.

These are the ideas that underpin our modern world but in the 19th century they were anything but a given. These were new, revolutionary, and Revolutionary ideas. Europe, for the first time, became divided *ideologically*. All previous wars in the continent had been between monarchs and dynasties vying for land. The idea of countries fighting for ideology was new and dangerous.

Although Europe was divided politically between Revolutionary and Royalist countries, ideologically things were more nuanced.

France and Italy were undeniably the most liberal countries because not only was the Napoleonic Code enforced, but it was also adored by both the people and enforced by Napoleon/his relatives. The Rhine was also bound by the Napoleonic Code and adhered to it, but it could be said to be slightly less liberal. Many of the Rhenish ‘Model States’ were ruled by Napoleon’s relatives, but several were not. The rulers of the ‘reform states’ were themselves liberal, but not as much as Napoleon. Still, the Rhine was still ruled by liberals and- most importantly- the Napoleonic Code. It was a liberalist state. Same with Switzerland. The Grand Duchy of Warsaw wasn’t ruled by a Napoleonic relative, but was bound to the Napoleonic Code. In any case, they were so loyal to France that, regardless, they would have been considered liberalist by association.

The next most liberalist state was, surprisingly, Britain. In OTL, Britain was also one of the most liberalist states in Europe at this time. In TTL, it is even more liberal due to increased domestic unrest forcing reform. It had passed the Great Reform Act in 1825 and reform factory reforms in the 1820s. Britain was more conservative than liberalist, but it wasn’t reactionary. Spain and Denmark-Norway were also fairly liberalist. They weren’t bound by the Napoleonic Code, but were allied to Napoleon and thus weren’t reactionary for the sake of opposing France. They pursued a sort of middle path between reform and reactionaryism, making changes when necessary but not going as far as a Napoleonic Code. Sweden was ruled by Bernadotte, an old French Marshall, but upon ascending the throne he had become far more conservative, a process accelerated by the war with his former ruler. He was an autocrat, undoubtedly. But he still imposed a rule that was more liberal than the old Ancien regimes, even if only slightly.

The other countries were more reactionary. Austria was technically allied to France, and truthfully the addition of extra lands in the [Treaty of Linz](#_1829_|_Treaty) had warmed relations between them. But Napoleon II knew that enforcing the Napoleonic Code there would be impossible- Austria had always been conservative and that wasn’t going to change. Austria rejected change and rejected liberalism. In OTL, Austria was more devoted to crushing liberalism in Europe, forming the Holly Alliance with Prussia and Russia. In TTL, France prevents her from taking any action outside her borders, and the alliance to France makes Austria less scared of liberalism. However, Austria is still extremely conservative. Prussia was positively reactionary, and her treatment at the hands of Napoleon made her terrified of liberalism. Russia was even *more* reactionary. Prussia and Russia form the Holy Alliance in this timeline as well in 1829, dedicating themselves to vanquishing liberalism in Europe.

But liberalism cannot be vanquished. In OTL, France is crushed in 1815 and Napoleon’s system of liberalist client states collapses. But in TTL, the peasantries of Europe are inspired to emigrate or rebel by the presence of powerful, liberalist states nearby. Liberalist agitation in Europe is much more severe and early in this timeline. The 1830s sees peasants across the continent radicalised into liberals and to rebel. A miniature, more prolonged form of the Revolutions of 1848 sweeps Europe in this timeline. Revolutionaries aren’t just peasants- they often form coalitions with middle-class reformers, just as in OTL in 1848. Though there aren’t any ‘revolutions’ as such, many changes occur. These include changes which, in OTL, occur in 1848. The abolition of serfdom in Austria and absolute monarchy in Denmark are examples. Other changes include increased freedom of the press and expression in Sweden, the introduction of constitutional monarchies in Bavaria and Wurttemberg, and various liberalist reforms in Spain, Britain, and Portugal. The serfs in Russia are too disorganised and weak to force social change, however, and Russia remains reactionary.

A spectre was haunting Europe, but in TTL it was not the spectre of communism. It was the spectre of liberalism.

## 1830s | Napoleon II begins industrialisation

Britain was starting to become very wealthy. In TTL, the war lasts longer, and until the mid-1820s Britain's economy is stuck in a post-war economic depression. But, just as in OTL, industrialisation is starting to change that. In OTL, Britain translated the economic power it gained from industrialisation into global power, building the British Empire. In TTL, with the presence of a hostile, Revolutionary France right next door, Britain is even more expansionist and has an even larger navy.

For Napoleon to invade Britain was pretty much impossible in the 1810s, by now it is a fantasy. Napoleon has realised that the impetus behind Britain's consistent wealth and strength is industrialisation. If France doesn’t industrialise, the gap between Britain and France will grow more and more until France cannot hope to win. Napoleon thus sees industrialisation as a mechanism to counter British strength.

In OTL, a few things prevent France from industrialising at this time. Firstly, France is extremely rural, and industrialisation requires a large urban workforce to provide factory labour. Secondly, they lack iron and coal, two materials needed for industrialisation at this time. Finally, there were political reasons: France in the early 19th century was ruled either by inept Bourbon kings or was undergoing revolutions and turmoil. There was no strong ruler with foresight to start an economic revolution.

In TTL, things are different. France is still a very rural country- that hasn’t changed. But, with some new agricultural laws, it could- Britain was (comparatively) extremely urban at this time in both timelines because of the 18th century Enclosure Acts which expelled smallholders from the countryside. Importantly, France had coal from the Low Countries and iron from the Rhine. She was not undergoing any revolutions, and if Napoleon II wanted to implement drastic new policies nobody could really stop him.

Britain in TTL is much more worker-friendly than in our timeline because the prolonged war and the continent-wide rise of liberalism means that the domestic threat of revolution forced them into passing many factory reforms. Even so, Napoleon is determined to introduce even more worker-friendly legislation, doing so both to quell unrest at home and to increase worker agitation in England. Napoleon was fully aware that the liberal France inspired the poor in other countries to agitate for better conditions, and he wanted to capitalise on this. Besides, he personally disapproved of the dehumanising factory labour lifestyle and wanted to pass legislation to ease its hardship. This included laws like a ten-hour workday, limits to how factory owners could punish workers, conditions for factory sanitation, temperature, and safety, etc. Napoleon still outlawed striking and trade unions though- he was a liberal, not a socialist or a social democrat.

Regardless, industrialisation had begun.

## 1830s | Industrialisation in France vs Britain

The industrialisation of France begins in the 1830s, similarly to how it began in Britain in the 1770s. It had the same economic effects in France as it did in Britain, and as the century went on France grew considerably richer. France had a higher population than Britain, which meant a greater workforce and more money generated. But Britain had other major advantages. They had a 60 year head-start, a much higher urban population percentage, and a vast empire to supply them with raw materials.

In OTL, Britain was only eclipsed economically at the turn of the 20th century, when the USA and Germany threatened their supremacy. In TTL, both of these countries are weaker due to Mexico keeping much of North America, and Prussia unable to unify Germany. Britain is overtaken not by Germany/the USA, but France- but it takes until around 1900. In both timelines, Britain becomes increasingly conscious of the risk of being overtaken at around 1870 or so.

However, France still takes around 70 years to catch up to Britain: 10 more years than the head-start. This is because, despite having a high population and a centralised empire, France is very rural and is hampered by worker-friendly legislation. Besides, Britain is still industrialising and is still wealthy. In both timelines, Britain translate its economic power into global power. The difference is where she applies this power. In OTL, without a threat in Europe, Britain turns her attention on Africa and Asia. In TTL, the threat of a powerful Revolutionary France changes her situation. Britain still focusses on India, recognising it as a source of great wealth and needing to consolidate her position after the War. But this time, instead of targeting Africa, she targets Europe. Britain subsidises her allies, builds extensive bases in Malta and Sicily, and funnels wealth into a gargantuan fleet of warships. The Admiralty, willing to try new technologies due to the magnitude of the threat from France, also invests heavily into steam-engines. Napoleon eventually follows suit, but for the 1830s and early 1840s Britain has by far the most modernised navy.

## 1830s | Napoleon II makes Republican concessions

The situation of total autocracy in France was not sustainable. Although the French people had a positive opinion of Napoleon I and II, and were pacified by the liberalism of the French Empire, they would not tolerate absolutism forever. In OTL, the 1830s and 1840s were rife with republican and/or generally anti-Bourbon insurrections. 1830, 1832, and 1848 are prime examples. Things are different in this timeline: Napoleon is not the Bourbons. Napoleon, though an autocrat, is far more adherent to Revolutionary principles than the Bourbons. The Napoleonic Code reigns supreme, and France is decidedly liberal. There is therefore much less democratic agitation in TTL- nothing on the scale of the July Revolution.

But agitation is still present, and is expected to grow. The 1830s sees the beginning of this agitation. An increasing proportion of the populace begins to seek democratisation as Revolutionary principles emphasise democracy. This is important: Napoleon cannot be seen as anti-Revolutionary. His reputation rests on being the legitimate protector of the Revolution’s ideas. So far, nobody is even thinking of these accusations. But that is the logical next step in the unrest.

Napoleon sensed the writing on the wall here. The unrest was low now, but it would grow. Napoleon decided that he could either let his reputation decay, or pre-empt the calls for democracy and make himself a hero by allowing some limited reforms whilst people still didn’t expect it. This is exactly what Napoleon did. He both lowered censorship on certain newspapers (the ones most supportive of himself) and re-introduced Napoleon I’s old system of ‘dictatorship by plebiscite’- issuing referenda on major decisions in policy that were of course rigged- although the French people did not know this. He gave the Corps legislatif, a part of the French legislature in this period, some power but not much. Napoleon thus preserved pretty much all of his powers but made himself look like a genuine republican.

This quelled unrest for now- in the Revolutions of 1852 further concessions would have to be made. That was in the future, however. Right now, Napoleon II was more popular than ever.

## 1835 | Francis I dies; Napoleon II rules Austria

Until this point, Napoleon II has been the heir to Austria- not the ruler. Francis I of Austria has been the Emperor of Austria and its head of state for several decades now. In BTL, he dies of a sudden fever in 1835. Napoleon II now becomes the Emperor of Austria. Immediately, he passes major reforms regarding both the Austrian army and the peasantry. The Napoleonic Code is enforced in Austria, bringing an end to feudalism and the old monarchical order. Metternich resigns. The Austrian nobility launches a revolt- the Royalist powers of Europe are extremely tempted to join their cause and try to liberate Austria. However, they are exhausted from years of war, and Napoleon crushes the Austrian revolts very quickly, in a matter of weeks: he does this by negotiating with them. In return for Austrian acquiescence and docility, Napoleon will share power in Austria with the nobility. But he is still its ruler. The Franco-Austrian Empire is born.

## 1830s | Franco-British rivalry in India

Whilst Britain's attention is divided evenly between Europe and India, France’s attention is mainly focused on the former. Napoleon I had cared little for colonisation, evidenced by his sale of Louisiana in OTL and TTL. Napoleon II, like his father, only actually cares about Europe. But he begins to see the value in India as a strategic tool to aid his plans in Europe. Many of Napoleon’s policies- just like his father- were aimed at counteracting Britain, because he could not do this militarily. The War of the Seventh Coalition proved the value of India in distracting Britain. By harassing British ports there and encouraging the Indian princes to rebel, Napoleon had increased his chances in Europe by causing British troops to be diverted there. Napoleon thought that he would intensify this approach. He didn’t really care about actually owning India, but he recognised its use as a way to cripple Britain.

Establishing a foothold in India wasn’t too difficult. France had managed it in the 1700s when she was weaker and the Indian princes were stronger. The British approach to India for over a century had been to divide and conquer. The French could do the same. During the War, a few Indian princes had declared war on Britain at once due to promises of French naval support and some well-chosen rhetoric- but they didn’t collaborate with each other, and after the British won a few battles the effort collapsed. The native princes could not resist French colonisation, and they established a foothold in 1832.

It was the British who offered the real resistance. During the 1700s, conflicts often occurred in India between Britain and France at the same time as Anglo-French peace in Europe. Neither country were quite ready for another full-blown war in Europe, so despite the undeniably increased tension between them, they maintained peace in Europe. In India, however, the situation is anything but peaceful. The 1830s sees an ongoing rivalry in India. Each side makes alliances with the Indian princes, sends ships and troops there, builds fortifications and supply depots. France initially makes gains because more Indian princes ally with her than Britain, wary of Britain's growing power in the region and grateful for a counterweight. But by the late 1830s, although France manages to hold land in Gujarat and Korala, her previous advantage is gone as the Indian princes realise France is just as expansionist. The situation stabilises, with Britain still holding the majority of land. Regardless, low-level conflicts and skirmishes are constant.

## 1840 | Invasion of Bengal

By the late 1830s, both Britain and France felt more ready to go to war again, and Prussia/Russia would declare war on France the second Britain did because of sheer hatred. Britain had not learned to accept Revolutionary France’s existence. Revolutionary France had not learned to accept Britain's existence. A long-lasting peace was not yet possible. War was coming, and it looked like India was going to be the spark.

Now that each country had gotten stronger, they were less willing to separate conflict in India from conflict in Europe. The catalyst came when France, with the support of various Indian princes, launched an invasion of Bengal in 1840. Previously, they had been gaining land in India by attacking the Hindu states in Gujarat. Now, running out of remaining territory to take from them, they sought to attack British land. Britain could not tolerate a direct attack, and declared war. The War of the Eighth Coalition had begun.

# War of the Eighth Coalition | 1840-1851

## 1840 | War of the Eighth Coalition begins

The British was still considerably superior to France in India. There was no doubt that Britain would eventually win. Napoleon just wanted to distract Britain from Europe in the opening stages of the war to secure his position there.

The Eighth Coalition consisted of Russia, Prussia, Britain, Portugal, Sardinia, Sweden, and Sicily. With the exception of Britain, none of these opponents were very formidable. In fact, Britain was really the only major threat to Napoleon here- but Britain was a *major* threat. Britain in 1840 was formidable indeed. In OTL, in 1850-1870 or so Britain was the undisputed world power and industrial power, manufacturing over 40% of the world’s manufacturing goods. In TTL, the industrialisation of France has slightly changed this monopoly, but by 1840 not by much. In fact, the threat of France in TTL causes Britain to stimulate industry even more due to immense demand for armaments and loans to manufacturers. Britain is *wealthy*, and much of this wealth is funnelled into a powerful navy and well-trained army.

The British navy is large enough to defend the British Isles, have a presence in the Mediterranean, and attack India. In the 1810s, Wellington is given 67,000 troops as an expeditionary force, and he complains about them frequently (in BTL). In the 1840s in TTL, Britain has very heavily invested in a larger, more well-trained army. The British population in BTL is over 20,000,000 at this point, with Indian manpower also available to bolster the army. The British army consists of 118,000 people. They are well-trained, well-drilled, well-equipped, well-commanded, and well-led. France’s army is far larger, and also well-trained. But Britain isn’t France’s only adversary. Regardless, Britain's army moves to consolidate India first, giving Napoleon almost a year of breathing space.

France’s continental enemies aren’t that formidable. Granted, Prussia has the largest army-to-population ratio of any European country by far, and the Prussian Army is extremely formidable by now, having been extensively reformed. But Prussia is not very large, and the Grandee Armee is 700,000 strong. Russia has a large army, but Nicholas I has done little to fix the growing cracks in the Russian state. The Empire is hindered by backwardness, inefficiency, and general weakness. Napoleon is fairly confident he can beat both Prussia and Russia. Portugal is small and poor- Spain, as usual, can take care of it. Sardinia and Sicily are minor states. Sweden is more of a threat- Bernadotte facilitated a period of economic recovery and demographic growth. The national debt had been entirely paid off, commerce prospered, and the state did well. The Swedish Army was well-trained and well-equipped, and Bernadotte- though now old- is still a good commander. France would need to deal with Sweden soon.

But Napoleon’s first move was Sicily. It was right next door to his Italian client states, and vulnerable. The first thing he did after requisitioning troops from his client states and Austria was to invade Sicily, which was largely successful. By this time, Russia and Sweden had grown invasion and had moved soldiers into Central Europe: exactly what Napoleon wanted. He didn’t want to invade Russia to reach Sweden right now. Napoleon then moved to engage the Prussian, Russian, and Swedish armies. The results were mixed. Napoleon didn’t suffer any serious reverses, but the Prussian and Swedish armies were formidable, and the Russians provided manpower. The Danish-Norwegian Army had been beaten by Sweden’s in 1840, so by late 1841 Sweden was largely free to move into Central Europe. Napoleon, massively helped by the Confederation of the Rhine being too scared to rebel (and having lost too much manpower due to Napoleon requisitioning troops), managed to inflict enough damage for the Russian and Swedish armies to return to their homelands. Portugal had been captured. Sardinia was kept alive by the protection of British troops. Prussia was, after much effort, subdued in 1843. But now Britain had triumphed in India, and over 100,000 troops were entering Europe.

Wellington took over command here, and landed his army in Russia. Portugal had been overrun by Spain at this point, and whilst landing troops in Prussia would have likely inspired more resistance there, Napoleon fought best in Central Europe where roads and food were abundant. Wellington wanted to provoke Napoleon into invading Russia, where he could be defeated by gradually wearing him down. Wellington launched hit-and-run raids on Poland whilst Britain pressured Austria into rebellion. Napoleon placed much of the army in Austria to keep her placid, and resolved that he would have to defend Poland. However, he did not lead a vast invasion force into Russia: he saw through Wellington’s strategy easily. He garrisoned all of Poland and led his own hit-and-run attacks into Russia. The war seemed to grind to a halt. And then the Great Famine happened.

## 1845 | Great Irish Famine

Anglo-Irish relations are much worse in TTL. In BTL, French forces against land in Ireland in 1798, though not enough arrive for a revolution to occur. The Society of United Irishmen was an Irish organisation active in this time until 1799 (when they were outlawed) which advocated independence. Its leader, Wolffe Tone, cooperated with the French to facilitate them landing there, forming a Franco-Irish alliance. In OTL, Napoleon is defeated and all hopes of such an alliance evaporate. Unrest continues in Ireland, although the majority of agitation there is for issues like Catholic emancipation rather than full independence.

In TTL, France continues to survive even after 1818, making Britain extremely concerned about rebel activity in Ireland leading to a Franco-Irish alliance. Britain is even more harsh and suppressive towards the Irish, which amplifies rebel activity even more. The result is great enmity between Ireland and England and the widespread belief in the latter that Ireland needed to be put down harshly rather than pacified with reforms. There is *no* 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act and British military presence in Ireland is much greater. Underground Irish rebel societies attempt to cooperate with France to secure independence in the 1820s and 1830s, but martial law in Ireland and a harsh British policy prevents this.

But it means that the political effects of the Great Irish Famine are very different. The famine still happens, caused by *Phytophora infestans*, and the British response is even more harsh towards the Irish people. With millions of Irishmen starving, evicted from their land (which they leased from Anglo-Irish landlords, who evicted them once no more potatoes could be produced), and with nothing to do but die, a revolution erupted. The time was perfect for Napoleon to step in.

Napoleon proclaimed his unconditional support for not just the Irish rebels but for an independent Republic of Ireland. Emboldened by this, the Irish rebels declared an independent Republic. But British troops were already flooding in. The situation in Ireland was extremely violent, but few believed that Irish peasants could actually withstand British soldiers. They would need to be supported by French troops. But how to get them there?

The British navy was large- very large. It could easily surround the British Isles in a defensive line. Even if Napoleon were to somehow concentrate all of his ships somewhere north of Ireland and press at the line in a point, British naval strength might still be able to throw him back. But if Britain's navy was spread out? Maybe it could be done.

France had invested in a navy of light, mobile ships, and had hired many privateers from corsairs in the Mediterranean. France, a century ago, had lost the Seven Years’ War because she had spread her forces too thin. Now she would do the same to Britain.

## 1847 | Invasion of Ireland; Republic of Ireland declared

Napoleon II decided to use his fleets to raid British ports in India, Canada, and Australia- three different fronts, plus one for Europe itself. He took the whole fleet to Canada, wreaking chaos there, and left a small hit-and-run skirmish force behind. The fleet then went to Australia as fast as they could and did the same- again, leaving a small skirmishing force. Finally, he did the same in India. Communications between the colonies and Britain at this time were slow and scattered. Napoleon temporarily blockaded the Canadian coast to delay the news that a fleet had attacked Canada, and did the in Australia for a shorter duration of time. When news reached the British of attacks on the colonies, the separate dispatches from each colony came relatively close together. Each told of a massive fleet attacking each colony. The impression was that the French had somehow procured three large fleets, which had each conducted a massive raid and were now skirmishing.

The frightened British immediately dispatched ships to each of the locations. They decided to maintain their naval presence in the Mediterranean: it was imperative that France could not raid Russia through the Black Sea or attack Sardinia. Sicily had already been captured by the French, and Britain wanted at least one ally in the Mediterranean left. Moving ships from the English channel or western France was out of the question. But they could move ships from the north of the British Isles. Ships surrounding the north of Ireland and the north of Scotland hadn’t seen conflict in the whole war, nor any previous wars. It was a quiet area, and stationing ships there was more of a precaution. The ships there was organised into a small fleet, which would take care of Canada. The ships stationed in India would check out Australia.

Whilst the British navy was occupied, Napoleon would sneak all his troop transports to Greenland, owned by his ally Denmark-Norway, then Iceland, and then to the north of Ireland. Britain would expect an invasion from the English Channel- but not from Iceland.

Napoleon had built troop transports himself in the 1830s and Denmark, Spain, and Austria had been building up their fleets. Napoleon requisitioned all these ships and hired every corsair in the Mediterranean, borrowing heavily to do this. Anti-piracy operations had been ongoing in the past fifty years, although Napoleon II actually prevented his allies from partaking in these because he anticipated their use in a future war. Therefore, in TTL there are still some pirates in the Mediterranean left.

The French fleet managed to sneak to Greenland primarily due to luck. They deployed from northern Spain, went west to the Azores (owned by Spain, France’s ally), and then went straight north. British ships were engaging corsairs and French mariners in southern Canada, leaving a wide berth for the French fleet to pass through. Still, it would have taken only a single British ship to detect the French and report back for the entire French plan to be ruined. A few British ships *did* happen to see the fleet, but these were all sunk. Regardless, it was a result of extreme fortune that a British flotilla didn’t happen upon the fleet on their journey to the colonies: not entirely implausible, however, considering the vastness of the Atlantic.

Regardless, the French landed an army of 100,000 troops in northern Ireland in 1847. The British army immediately pulled back from Russia to deal with the threat, harassed by French forces for part of the way. They were defeated in Ireland, however. Outnumbered in an extremely hostile territory, they faced a similar situation to Napoleon I in Spain in OTL in 1814. They were, of course, defeated, although British ships surrounded Ireland. This left 120,000 troops stranded on a starving island. The British exported any bit of grain they could find to starve the Frenchmen out. They also considered the Irish to be enemies by now, so they didn’t left any Irishmen leave. The result was that millions of Irishmen starved to death- and the French troops too- before the famine subsided. The Anglo-Irish nobility fled or were massacred. Ireland had won its independence- at the cost of millions upon millions of lives.

## 1848 | The War in the East

Just as in 1798 when Napoleon I abandoned his soldiers in Egypt, Napoleon II had abandoned them in Ireland. But Britain had undeniably felt the loss. True, the British navy had managed to destroy French forces in India, Canada, and Australia. The French navy would require decades of rebuilding. But that didn’t matter. Napoleon II had wanted to cripple Britain, and he had. They were so demoralised by the loss of Ireland that they wanted to make peace. But there were two countries which consistently urged them not to: Russia and Sweden. They had to be taken care of.

But how? Beating Britain's navy was out of the question. French didn’t even *have* a navy. Napoleon had managed to deceive Britain into thinking he was invading three colonies at once. But they’d seen through the ruse by now and Europe was currently congested with British warships. To take care of Russia and Sweden, Napoleon would have to invade through land. Russia, at this point, was relatively weak. The Russians would inflict damage on Napoleon’s troops as he moved through Russia, and would try to sever his supply lines. That would be an issue- but Russia was still weak (even more so than it OTL, and their weakness in our timeline was considerable), and most of its troops were peasants. Napoleon was actually more concerned about the Swedish army, which was still intact. The well-trained Swedes would work with the Cossacks to attack the army, whilst the Russian serfs could swarm the supply lines. In Napoleon I’s Second Russian Campaign, he had been able to establish dozens of supply trains and supply depots in the Russian interior, backed by vast quantities of supplies held in Poland. For Napoleon II in this war, many of his stockpiles had been used up as a result of various campaigns and battles in Central Europe, not to mention those used up in the long voyage from France to Ireland.

The result was that Napoleon couldn’t really achieve a decisive victory here. The war in the east slows and halts. There’s no trenches or ‘front’, so to speak, just a series of raids, skirmishes, and minor battles. Nicholas I and Bernadotte realise that a decisive battle probably wouldn’t be a good idea, but occasionally they launch destructive raids on Poland and Austria. Western Russia becomes devastated by continuous warfare, but the French can’t penetrate to Moscow or to Sweden. The Coalition occasionally raids Poland and Austria, but they can’t penetrate to Germany and Italy. Nothing really *happens*, but neither Russia nor Sweden want to make peace, such is their hate for Napoleon. Something else needs to happen.

There is another country in Europe who has still provisions and manpower: the Ottomans. They are undoubtedly weaker than any other European nation, but they still have *an* army. They could tip the balance. But so far, the Ottoman Empire has kept out of the war.

This state of affairs does not consider Nicholas I of Russia, however. In OTL, Nicholas is widely considered by historians to have been a failure. His personality was that of a nervous, aggressive reactionary with a singleness of purpose. This is a dangerous combination in a head of government. Nicholas was determined to defeat Napoleon, but infuriated- and panicked- at the failure to do so and the inconclusive war in the east. Nervous by nature, he felt that Russia needed a win *now* or the peasants would start to revolt in protest of stagnant, brutal war. Aggressive by nature, he felt that Russia needed to do this in any way possible. But eastern Poland was too well defended. The eastern Balkans, however…

In 1850, Russia moves troops through the Balkans in a surprise attack. He explains to the Ottoman sultan extensively that he is not invading, but asking for permission would take time and the French could have been alerted to the idea of a Russian invasion there. But the Ottomans are furious, and attack the Russians. This doesn’t pose an existential threat in itself, but it diverts Russian forces from where it matters: Austria. The Franco-Austrian army pushes deeper into Russia. The Russians naturally use scorched earth tactics, but Austria has enough supplies to provision the invading armies, and although progress is slow, the Austro-French forces reach Moscow: *and decide to keep going*.

Nicholas had not accounted for this. In practice, keeping on going was a terrible decision. The Austro-French armies had brought winter clothes this time around, but wintering in Russia would still be dangerous. But Nicholas was *terrified*. Napoleon actually following him to the east made him extremely paranoid. Russia would finally accept a peace.

With Britain and Russia both seeking peace, Sweden couldn’t really go on. Sweden certainly couldn’t fight by itself, and couldn’t stop Britain or Russia from seeking peace. Nonetheless, Sweden had made gains in Scandinavia, as it was certainly superior to Denmark-Norway. It was now occupied all of its 1817 territory, as well as southern Norway. Any peace settlement Sweden would accept would need to result in her gaining land.

The real development here was the fact that the Austrians and the French had had a legitimate alliance, something which nobody really saw coming. France couldn’t simply force Austria to bend to her will because France was doing the exact same thing in the Low Countries, Germany, and Italy already. The two empires had achieved a lot together. Relations warmed between the two countries- there was the potential for further improvement. A true Austro-French Empire would rule the world.

Napoleon realised that a simple peace treaty between France and the Coalition would not give a lasting peace. Already he was wary of increasing agitation in the Rhine and the Low Countries for peace and greater autonomy, which could- if not granted- spill over into actual rebellion. Nationalism was beginning to rise in Western Europe. Peace was needed- a lasting peace. Napoleon decided that the various nations needed to sit down and reconcile. Each needed to accept the existence of the other. Something more than a treaty was required.

## 1851 | Congress of Constantinople

The post-war Congress does not take place in Vienna because Austria is not a neutral country, and Napoleon wants reconciliation. That would not be accomplished by forcing the Coalition to come to a French-allied city. At the same time, this is an important Congress, and should occur in a suitably prestigious city. There is one city in Europe that is both neutral and prestigious: Constantinople.

The Ottoman Empire, in BTL, has been struggling for a while, slowly becoming weaker and more backwards. The Ottomans have been losing land in the Balkans for the past few decades, and resent Europe for backing rebel movements. But they lacked the strength nor the daring to refuse Napoleon’s ‘request’. They knew that he wanted to expand the Illyrian Provinces and/or Austria by annexing more territory, most likely Bosnia- a reason to invade. They knew they wouldn’t be able to stop him. The Shah decided it was wise to keep Napoleon as a friend, and Napoleon was very clear that it had to be Constantinople- it was the only European city that would work. So the Congress meets there.

In OTL, the Congress of Vienna was a conference to reconstitute the European political order. It intended to re-introduce a balance of power in Europe to facilitate long-lasting peace, and to restrain and eliminate liberalism and republicanism. It was a movement which worked in providing international peace, but its reactionaryism caused domestic unrest in the form of liberal agitation in many countries. The Congress of Constantinople is considerably different- in fact, it has much more in common with OTL’s Peace of Westphalia. The Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years’ War in the 17th century, a religious conflict arising over Catholicism vs Protestantism. The overarching theme of the Peace of Westphalia was tolerance. Countries could determine their own ideology (i.e. religion) and their sovereignty in this regard had to be respected. The Congress of Constantinople’s had obvious similarities.

The Congress’ overarching theme was also tolerance- ideological tolerance, but the ideology is liberalism rather than Protestantism. The Congress establishes that each country has the right to be Royalist, Revolutionary, or any ideology in between- *and no other country has the right to intervene*. Each country’s sovereignty must be respected in this regard. Like the Peace of Westphalia, there are also numerous territorial adjustments. A major aim of the Congress is to restore a sort of balance of power in Europe, particularly in regards to Britain and France, which are meant to balance each other out. France had an advantageous position in the war and Napoleon got his way in some regards, but his bargaining position wasn’t strong enough to enforce European hegemony. He needed long-term peace and reconciliation to maintain his position. Frankly, at this stage, he *wanted* peace. Therefore, whilst the Congress is slightly more beneficial to France than detrimental (she did win the war, after all), but she is forced to make concessions both because of her weakened, precarious position, and Napoleon’s desire for long-term peace and reconciliation.

The provisions of the Congress of Constantinople are as follows:

* The Empire of France to annex the Kingdom of Sardinia
* The Empire of France to annex Malta and Gibraltar
* The Empire of France to own the fleets of Sardinia and Sicily
* Britain to annex French Gujarat
* Britain, Sweden, and Russia to be forbidden from engaging in any alliance or coalition for another 20 years
* The Kingdom of Naples to annex the Kingdom of Sicily and form the Kingdom of Two Sicilies
* The Empire of Austria to annex Podolia and Volhynia
* The Grand Duchy of Prussia to remain independent with no territorial changes, but to remain neutral for 50 years
* The Kingdom of Sweden to annex Skane, Blekinge, Bohuslan, Halland, Gotland, and Mordland, Finnmark, and Troms.
* France to cease any recognition, support, or alliance with the Republic of Ireland

Although France seems to make some large concessions here, the fact that these were trivial to Napoleon. The loss of Gujarat was irrelevant to Napoleon as India had always been a bargaining chip; Napoleon never meant to keep it, merely to trade it. Ireland would inevitably be suppressed by Britain, but whilst it would have been beneficial for France to have an ally in the British Isles, Napoleon never really *cared* about Ireland. Not as he did for France. Ireland was a marginal loss. As for Sweden gaining land, Denmark-Norway’s only purpose to Napoleon had been to provide some troops and distract the Swedes, which they had. Napoleon predicted that Denmark-Norway would break with France because of their humiliation, but he didn’t much care. They were weak regardless. The Congress of Constantinople was greatly beneficial to him. He had withstood yet another major European war, and had gained from it- he had just about won, and Napoleon worried that in a future war France would not be able to. But for now, he was safe. His position had been confirmed.

And then came a wave of revolutions which completely unconfirmed it.

# Revolutions of 1852 | 1852-1856

## 1852 | Origins of the Revolutions

In OTL, there is a wave of revolutions that sweeps Europe in 1848. It is referred to as the Revolutions of 1848, or the Springtime of Nations. It is the most widespread revolutionary wave in European history. The uprisings consisted of coalitions of working-class and middle-class revolutionaries aiming to overthrow the old monarchical order and to replace it with democratic, liberal nation-states. The Congress of Vienna in OTL rejected any of the ideological changes brought by the Revolutions and insisted a return to the status quo. But as Europe changed, this became increasingly unacceptable. People wanted more participation in government, more freedom of the press, and more rights. They demand things like universal suffrage, freedom of expression, and the liberation of the peasantry from serfdom. Nationalism, a growing force on the continent, motivated people to have their own ethnic nation-states: currently, empires like Austria and Russia ruled over greatly different groups.

Initially, in 1848, the revolutions were extremely successful, but divisions amongst the revolutionaries formed and 1849-1851 saw the aristocracy and their allies overthrow revolutionary regimes. But some gains *were* made. Austria and Hungary abolished serfdom. Denmark ended absolute monarchy. The Netherlands gained democracy. France gained a republic. Various monarchs abdicated- including the King of Bavaria.

In TTL, the circumstances of Europe are wildly different. There is no Congress of Vienna. The powers of Europe have not been stifling liberalism for three decades. [In the 1830s, people rebelled all over Europe to force liberalist reforms](#_1830s_|_Liberalism). However, the scale of the unrest was lower than in 1848: there were no ‘revolutions’ as such, just consistent unrest. This meant that whilst many regimes made concessions, like reforms and constitutions, none were toppled. No democracies were established. Nonetheless, at least the ideas of liberalism were not stifled and suppressed as in OTL. However, a wave of revolutions still occurs in TTL for several reasons.

The main reasons are war and nationalism. People are tired of endlessly marching into parts of Europe they’ve never been to nor ever cared about. For example, Germans are sick of fighting a Frenchman’s war, freezing in Russia, being blockaded by Britain. Hungarians are tired of fighting for the Austrians, being ruled by the French, and fighting the Swedes. Different ethnic groups want their own state, their own *independent* state, and they want that state to act on its *own* behalf, not on the behalf of another country. Another major thing people want is democracy. Even in the liberal, Revolutionary states, there is no democracy- at best constitutional monarchy. People want to run their own affairs. People also want liberalism; although the reforms of the 1830s mollified many, people didn’t really think they were *enough*. Indeed, all the revolutionaries in the 1850s were liberals.

The first revolution occurs in the Confederation of the Rhine. The Germans there are tired of being puppets of the French- especially as France has been a historic enemy of the Holy Roman Empire. The Germans are revolting primarily for independence, and secondarily for democracy. This is secondary because due to the Napoleonic Code and the reformist leaders of many of these states, there isn’t much unrest regarding liberalism. The Rhine is decidedly already liberal. By the 1850s, all the reactionary rulers of the Rhenish states have been overthrown by Napoleon. So whilst the revolutionaries in the Rhine want more reform and they want democracy, the primary aim is independence. A peaceful independence. The [War of the Eighth Coalition](#_War_of_the) saw a lot of Rhenish casualties, and as soon as it ended they erupted in first rebellion, and then revolution. But the revolution in the Rhine is the catalyst for revolutions elsewhere- and the next revolution is in France.

## 1852 | The Revolutions Begin

France was one of the main countries to be hit by the Revolutions of 1848 in OTL, and in TTL although the level of agitation isn’t *as* high, it is still high.

France, currently, is not a democracy. There were legislative bodies in France other than the Emperor, but they have no real power. Democratic agitation hasn’t been as high in France in TTL because of the competence of France’s emperors. Many people contrast this to the tumultuous days of the First French Republic, where little got done and there was great instability. In TTL there is no July Revolution or June Rebellion. Napoleon II is well-liked as a person and a political leader, and his concessions in the 1830s appeased much of the populace. But democratic unrest increased over the next twenty years, and by 1852 the French people were once again angry. They did not want to overthrow Napoleon: but they wanted to have some share of political power. They wanted to change the imperial constitution.

Both Napoleons were tight on censorship, and calls for democracy and greater press freedoms were limited to underground, subversive channels. This wasn’t all: the French were also tired of war and conscription. They wanted peace, and security from the infamous conscription laws. This discontent had been mounting throughout the War of the Eighth Coalition. When the Confederation of the Rhine explodes in 1852, France joins.

Next comes the Dutch. In OTL, Napoleon faced more agitation and anger from Belgium (known then as the Austrian Netherlands) than from the Netherlands, who were relatively quiescent. In TTL, to maintain control over Belgium, some reforms were needed: over the next few decades France lowered conscription there, passed economic reforms, tolerated Catholics, and (although Dutch was not used for any state institutions) permitted them to speak Dutch. Regardless, in TTL, the Flemings and Dutch revolt after Napoleon I dies, sensing weakness in the accession of a boy-emperor. Napoleon II puts down these revolts. However, the War of the Eighth Coalition causes further unrest there due to losing men to conscription, and they revolt again, this time agitating for greater independence as well. Napoleon decides to put down the revolts but then make concessions, giving the regions greater autonomy within France. But now they were starting to agitate again. The Dutch were erupting for greater autonomy and self-determination. The Flemings were determined to get genuine independence (this is because in BTL before 1813 the Flemings disliked the French Empire much more than the Dutch did, and this dislike continues). Neighbouring France and the Confederation exploding into revolution stimulates the same amongst them. The Flemings and Dutch unite and declare an independent Republic of the Netherlands.

Italy revolted too. Italy hadn’t been a major source of unrest under Napoleon. There were a few sporadic outbreaks of discontent due to frequent war and harsh conscription laws. But Italians had grown fond of unification- there were two Italian states but it was far fewer than before- and appreciated the Napoleonic Code. Napoleon had been forced to grant some concessions to the Italian states, however. The Italians were starting to grow tired of foreign domination and a lack of democracy. Both the Austrians and French had lands that they saw as rightfully theirs, and the Italians resented their influence in the region. By the 1840s, many Italians saw the Austrians and the French as foreign occupiers. They also had grown used to the idea of unification and now sought a single Italian state. When the revolutions struck Europe, Italy also revolted, and proclaimed a unified, independent, democratic Italy.

Scandinavia sees unrest too. This is more significant in Denmark-Norway, where revolutionaries demanded an end to absolute monarchy and a parliament. In OTL, unrest in Sweden is present, but soon suppressed. In TTL, agitation for political reform and an end to autocracy are much higher. The war had a harsh impact on Sweden, and many Swedes felt dragged into wars they didn’t care about for reasons only relevant to an autocrat. Unrest is much higher in TTL here.

The Austrian Empire is struck in BTL (although in TTL the Illyrian Provinces see many of these revolts) by nearly a dozen nationalist movements to achieve autonomy or independence- 10 such revolutions, in fact. It is also struck by Austrian revolutionaries seeking political reform. The Hungarians demand the recognition of their ’12 points’, including freedom of press, an independent Hungarian ministry responsible to a democratic parliament, total civil/religious equality, trial by jury, national bank, National Guard, Hungarian Army, withdrawal of Austrian troops from Hungary, union with Transylvania, and the freeing of political prisoners. The Austrians themselves also demand democracy, peace, and the end of French influence.

Prussia faces heavy unrest as she has been suppressing any form of liberalism and rejecting any kind of reform for decades. The revolutionaries demand liberal reforms and a democratic process.

Switzerland in BTL undergoes a civil war wherein seven Catholic cantons try to secede and form an alliance.

The Poles revolt to gain greater independence from France, whom they like as an ally but despise being a puppet state of. Some seek full independence. Many revolutionaries also demand democracy and freedom of the press- the same demands as in France.

In the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, Romanian liberals and nationalists revolt (in BTL), seeking independence, the end of feudalism, and general liberalism.

Ireland, having not yet been fully suppressed by Britain, erupted in a new wave of revolutionary fervour, with many claiming that death would be preferable to subjugation.

Britain, Portugal, and the Ottoman Empire saw comparatively little unrest in BTL. In OTL, Russia is relatively stable due to divisions amongst revolutionaries. In this timeline, constant war, devastation of their homeland, and crushing conscription laws make the serfs extremely angry. Though they hate France far more than Russia, they are still deeply resentful of the reactionary Russian aristocracy, which has periodically crushed any demands for liberalism for the past few decades. A vast proportion of the peasantry revolts, demanding liberal reforms and an end to serfdom.

## 1852-6 | Revolutions in the Austro-French Empire

In OTL, the Revolutions of 1848 in various countries followed similar trends. In spring 1848, the revolutionaries achieved astonishing successes. Many demands were actually either willingly met by various governments, or enforced by them. But by summer 1848, divisions appeared. The revolutionaries were coalitions of people united by a single short-term aim, but who in reality had many differences in class, nationality, and specific beliefs. In autumn 1848, the reactionaries- initially caught off-guard- plotted a return to power, starting to organise a counter-revolution. 1849 to 1851 saw this counter-revolution generally succeed. The revolutions *did* have some effects in some countries. Some social reforms were permanent, and the French Republic was formed. But in general, reactionaries returned to power, leaders of the revolution were exiled, and many aspects of the old order were restored.

Things are sort of similar in TTL, but with differences. There is the same general pattern of initial successes; divisions amongst revolutionaries; counter-revolution begins to succeed. But various differences arise in TTL that result in more concessions being made, and more demands of the revolutionaries being met. The Revolutions of 1848 in OTL were, overall, a failure. The Revolutions of 1852 in TTL were, overall a success. The reasons for this are elaborated on below.

A major reason is Napoleon II himself. Napoleon’s willingness to either compromise or just capitulate to various revolutionary groups made the Revolutions in 1852 relatively successful. Napoleon had five major regions that were subject to revolution: Germany, France, the Low Countries, Poland, and Italy. They are listed in descending order of Napoleon’s cooperativeness with revolutionaries.

Napoleon is faced with an issue. He couldn’t put down five revolutions at once. He would have to give ground. Moreover, Napoleon is considerably ill at this time, hindering his ability to campaign against revolutionaries. In fact, Napoleon himself realises he is close to death. He is concerned about his legacy. He does not want his last acts- the ones he will be remembered by- to be brutal suppression. Or worse; brutal suppression *that ends up in failure*. Napoleon at this point is most willing to give ground in Germany.

The Confederation of the Rhine has been a constant hotbed for rebellion and unrest for decades. In both of Napoleon II’s last wars, he has had to move troops there to suppress rebellions. Napoleon I constructed the Confederation of the Rhine to gain extra manpower, and Napoleon II was now expending manpower to quell dissent there. It wasn’t a sustainable situation. Napoleon II realised that there were two effective strategies to deal with Germany: either impose total martial law and uproot all traces of dissent, or fully capitulate to rebel demands and build good relations with the resulting state. A middle path of mild concessions coupled with martial law would work in the short-term, but in Napoleon’s next war they’d just rebel enough. Napoleon would pre-empt the revolutionaries by proposing an independent state *himself*. He could then establish it with a constitution of his choosing. In 1852, he proposed the [German Confederation](#_1852_|_German).

Napoleon’s next issue is France. Napoleon doesn’t want to suppress French revolts with military force. Again, he is concerned with his legacy, and he has a genuine affection and care for the French people. Napoleon decided that if were to capitulate anywhere else, it would be France. He wouldn’t go to the extent he did in Germany, however- he still wanted to maintain power for himself and his successor. He decided on some reforms which would noticeably detract from his political power, but leave ultimate authority with him. In France, censorship was generally ended; the Corps legislatif would have more frequent elections; parties could form in the Corps legislatif and could comment/critique imperial policy, and the Senate members would not be elected for life.

Napoleon decided to compromise in the Low Countries. He could not countenance the Flemings gaining independence and France losing even a part of Belgium. But he could reconcile himself to the idea of an independent Netherlands aligned with France. He waited for the revolutionaries to become divided and for the strength of the revolution to ebb before moving in in early 1853. At the same time, he proposed a plan for a wholly independent Republic of the Netherlands (although a French ally)- consisting *only* of the Dutch. The Dutch accept.

Napoleon is not willing to compromise in Poland. It was extremely important to Napoleon that he could manipulate Poland at will, as it provided a military base of operations near Russia and Sweden. Allowing the Poles to make their own decisions could endanger this. French strategic interests depended on Poland being a pliant puppet. Napoleon waited until 1854 to launch an invasion of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, by which time revolutionaries in the region had largely split on class lines, leading to great instability. Unrest there was put down.

Napoleon’s response was equally harsh towards Italy. In 1852, the Italians had declared a single republic for the entire peninsula, and Italians in French-held Rome had revolted. But, as was the case in many places elsewhere, the fragile coalition of revolutionaries soon began to break down. Starting in 1853, Napoleon began suppressing the Italians there. Napoleon was only willing to tolerate so many concessions, and with him compromising in France, Germany, and the Low Countries, he did not want to *also* compromise in Italy. He also wanted to keep it separated into two republics, concerned that a single client state would be too powerful. In fact, he considered partitioning the north. Napoleon refused to relinquish French lands in Italy, and still held what was formerly the Papal States.

Napoleon II was also the Emperor of Austria. He hadn’t been able to treat this possession with impunity, and had been cautious in previous wars not to push the Austrian nobility to rebellion. But his position in Austria was much stronger now, and he was still its ruling monarch. He felt like he needed to deal with the rebels himself. The first issue was Hungary. In OTL, Ferdinand I (the Austrian Emperor at the time) actually accepted Hungary’s demands, after the resignation of Metternich. A constitutional government was actually meant to be established in Hungary, which would be held in personal union with Austria. The Hungarians overplayed their hand, however, and launched a full war of independence. They lost, and were placed under brutal martial law. The Austrian people gained some concessions, like the abolition of serfdom, but no democracy and little else in the way of liberal reform.

In TTL, Napoleon II has passed lots of liberal reforms in the Austrian Empire already, reducing the level of agitation amongst the Austrians significantly. There are some protests for democracy and an end to French domination, but these are not too widespread and are easily suppressed. Unrest in Hungary is only marginally affected, however: they still demand all of the 12 points in TTL, and two more: the withdrawal of all French troops from Hungary, and the complete disinvolvement of French officials in government. In TTL, Hungary thus demands 14 points. Napoleon, as with Germany, recognises that Hungary is not going to stop. Napoleon will either have to ferociously repress them for the next half a century or capitulate and create a friendly Hungarian state. Napoleon agrees to the first 12 of these points: he will allow the Hungarians to create their own democratic constitutional monarchy with all of their demands.

They would be completely separate from Austria, their own political entity. *However*, Napoleon II and his descendants would be the rulers of this Hungarian state, French troops could be moved in and out with impunity, and Hungarian troops would have to be part of the Grandee Armee. Initially, the Hungarians refused. Hungary was in an unusually strong position as the revolutionaries were united on many issues- the degree of unity amongst them was far greater than revolutionaries in other countries. But after French counter-revolutionary efforts, weakening their position, they eventually accepted. After all, all of their demands for democracy and civil freedoms were met. Hungary becomes an independent state ruled by the Bonaparte dynasties. The other rebelling groups in the Austrian Empire and Illyrian Provinces, for example the Croats and Serbs, were put down. Napoleon was not willing to compromise on that.

## 1852-6 | Revolutions in other nations

The Kingdom of Denmark-Norway in BTL sees the end of absolute monarchy and the establishment of a bicameral parliament called the Riksdag. This arrangement was maintained by reactionaries, arguably because King Frederick VII willingly met the liberals’ demands and actually invited them to his new Cabinet. In Sweden, unrest there is much greater than in OTL. Swedish liberals initially make considerable gains, and demand democracy, civil liberties, and an end to censorship. However, starting from 1853, the aristocracy and its allies succeeds in their counter-revolutionary aims.

Prussia is the same in BTL. Though reformers initially see some success, the Prussian aristocracy eventually overpowers them as the revolutionaries grow divided and fight amongst themselves. Many Prussians emigrate to America.

Switzerland is the same in BTL. The Protestant cantons defeat the seceding Catholic ones, and reunify the Swiss Confederation.

In Russia, the peasants are also generally crushed. Though there are many of them, they are disorganised and poorly educated, with few middle-class liberals actually in the country to organise them effectively. Communications between different revolting groups is low, decreasing organisation. However, in TTL the strength of the Russian state is greatly diminished after years of devastating war. Though the lack of a major economic crisis akin to OTL’s WWI prevents the Russian Army from mutinying, the Tsar can’t afford to pay large numbers of troops at this moment, and the result is that the Tsar is forced to put down the revolts with a small core of Cossack cavalry. The sheer numbers of revolting peasants prevents the Tsar from being able to totally stifle liberal reforms. With extreme reluctance, serfdom in Russia is abolished.

Ireland actually wins independence from Britain. The Irish people, having been significantly mistreated by the British over the past few decades, demand democracy and liberal reforms, similar to the Hungarians’ 12 points. Having been given a taste of independence by the French landing there, they refuse to give it up. The Irish wage a guerrilla war against the British, although at the time the concept of a guerrilla war is unheard of and it therefore isn’t called that. In 1856, the British are forced to concede Irish independence. As per the [Congress of Constantinople](#_1851_|_Congress), the French do not arrange an alliance with the Irish, but the two countries develop strong ties.

Romania in OTL actually nearly wins independence. In June 1848, Romanian liberals and nationalists make extraordinary gains, toppling the ruling prince there and passing a series of major liberal reforms. Russia in OTL invades in 1848 and puts the revolution down. However, in TTL, Russia is not strong enough to do this. Romania becomes an independent, democratic state.

## 1852 | German Confederation established

The Rhenish rebels were extremely surprised by Napoleon offering to create an independent German state. It did not satisfy all their demands: they wanted a unified, federal state. But Napoleon didn’t want a powerful neighbour to France’s east. In OTL, the Revolutions of 1848 saw German liberals and nationalists rebel and try to establish a unified federal state- Austria and Prussia crush this as they feel a German nation-state would be too powerful a counterweight to their interests. France does the same thing here. He was willing to have an independent German state, which was the limit of the most of the revolutionaries’ demands. However, after 1852, the expectations of the Germans soon switched from weak confederation to powerful empire. Napoleon massed French troops near the border to signify that wouldn’t happen. There was a tense stalemate.

It was a confederation consisting of the Rhenish states and the German-speaking parts of Austria. Each member is- theoretically- equal, and the Confederation has a single legislative body, the Confederate Diet, whose law is superior to those of individual states. The Confederation is kept weak by being decentralised, however- just as in OTL. Also in BTL, two dominant German states were included so as to keep the Confederation weak and divided. By far the most powerful German states at the time were Bavaria and Austria. In OTL, Austria and Prussia have a rivalry for the same reasons, and the period of ‘German dualism’ caused by it saw territorial conflicts and politico-cultural struggles over leadership of Germany. TTL has this dualism between Bavaria and Austria, though to a lesser extent. Bavaria is the strongest German state bar Austria, and many see Bavaria as the natural unifier of Germany. Napoleon just uses Austria as a counterbalance to Bavaria, preventing much getting done. However, there is one extra variable in Napoleon’s German strategy which he doesn’t account for: Napoleon III.

## 1855 | Napoleon II dies; The Issue of Succession

In OTL, Napoleon II dies in 1832 of tuberculosis. After Napoleon I’s abdication, Napoleon II is brought up by his grandfather, Francis I of Austria. Francis named him Franz, and raised him to regard his father as a mercenary who ravaged Europe and ruined France. However, he realised from a young age that his father had been one of the greatest generals of all time. He dies at 21 with no children, and Napoleon I’s nephew seizes power in France and establishes the Second French Empire, styling himself as Napoleon III.

In TTL, Napoleon II grows up in France, loves and admires his father, and never catches tuberculosis because the circumstances and location of his upbringing is totally different. What doesn’t change is Napoleon II’s poor health. In OTL, Napoleon II had health issues as early as 1827- this couldn’t have been TB as it would have killed him before then. In 1832, he also gets pneumonia. Napoleon II has the same genes in TTL and is still an unhealthy person. Not enough to kill him as prematurely as 1832 as there are no lethal issues, but enough that Napoleon suffers from ill health his whole life to some degree and dies in 1855. This would be worsened by accompanying his generals on campaign- which we can assume he would do as in OTL Napoleon was interested in soldiering at as early as 8 years old. On campaign in TTL- it is safe to assume that Napoleon II would undergo accidents like being thrown from his horse several time, and that the wet and windy weather of Eastern Europe (which in OTL Napoleon’s doctor tells him to avoid) would damage his health. Napoleon doesn’t die at 21, but his ill health deprives him of all virility, and he does not have children. France has no heir. Who takes over now?

In OTL, it is Charles Louis Napoleon-Bonaparte, Napoleon I’s nephew. He is elected the President of the Second French Republic in 1848, and later launches a coop and establishes the Second French Empire. But, in TTL, there are other options. In OTL, Napoleon I has some illegitimate children during his lifetime, and even acknowledges one. But in TTL, it is unlikely that he would ever acknowledge more due to his considerable love for his son and desire for him to have no competitors. After all, he wanted Napoleon II to succeed him, and acknowledging potentially rival claimants would have complicated this. However, the son who Napoleon *did* acknowledge, Charles (the Count of Leon) actually died in 1881, so he could have taken the throne had Napoleon’s empire remained intact.

Would things be different had Napoleon won? Napoleon I actually established his own law of succession when he became Emperor of the French in 1804. The imperial throne would pass through his legitimate male descendants to the *perpetual exclusion of women*. If Napoleon’s direct line died out, the claim passed first to Joseph Bonaparte and his descendants. If Joseph had no more legitimate male descendants, the throne passed to Napoleon’s younger brother Louis Bonaparte and his legitimate male descendants.

Joseph Bonaparte died in OTL in 1844. He married Marie Julie Clary- but they had only daughters. Joseph had a son, Giulio, with Maria Giulia Colonna, Countess of Atri- but *he* died in 1838. So, the claim passes to Louis Bonaparte. Louis died in OTL in 1844. His oldest son, Napoleon Louis Charles Bonaparte, died in 1807 of croup. His middle son, Napoleon Louis Bonaparte, died in 1831. His youngest son was alive by 1855. His name was Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte.

Charles Louis Napoleonic Bonaparte, in OTL, was Napoleon III of France.

Which means that in TTL, because there are no obvious reasons why the aforementioned family members should have not died when they did (of course, Louis’ eldest son may not have died of croup, but I’ve made an exception here because I think inserting a historical character into TTL is far more interesting than fabricating a personality for a deceased 5 year old), [Napoleon III](#_Napoleon_III) is invited to take the throne in 1855. Napoleon III is exactly the same in BTL.

# Napoleon III | 1856-1869

## 1856 | Napoleon III and Germany

[Napoleon III](#_Napoleon_III) is the same figure in BTL for reasons explained [here](#_1855_|_Napoleon). In OTL, Napoleon III is known for his shortcomings in foreign policy, but some of the principles guiding this policy were sound. In OTL, Napoleon III actually wanted to reassert French influence in Europe by being the champion of nationalism and popular sovereignty. For example, in OTL, he assisted Italian unification by fighting with the Kingdom of Sardinia. Napoleon III believed that nation-states (opposed to old multinational empires like Austria) would naturally become allies of France.

The same principle applies in TTL. By the time Napoleon III comes to power, the German Confederation is already an independent nation, but Napoleon II has been preventing it from becoming a unified federal state. The rationale behind this was to avoid a powerful new state in Europe- which is a reasonable policy. But Napoleon III has a different policy: a powerful new state in Europe *allied to France* would be very advantageous indeed. The demand for unification was *certainly* there. After Napoleon II died, the Germans had revolted yet again, resulting in a new revolutionary wave sweeping the Confederation in a scale similar to the Revolutions of 1848 in OTL (although as big as the Revolutions of 1852 in TTL).

Napoleon decides to approach Bavaria. Bavaria, in BTL, is ruled by Maximilian II. In OTL, Maximilian II is very popular. He is known affectionately by his people as ‘King Max’, and he brought stability and prosperity to Bavaria. Though he was an absolute monarch, he was a moderate, and was willing to invite celebrated German liberal scholars (e.g. Geibel, Liebig, and Sybel) to Munich with the aim of making Bavaria a cultural and scientific centre. This is the same in TTL. Maximilian is an adept statesman. He is also advised, in TTL, by Bismarck.

Bismarck had not yet taken office in Prussia- he never would. In OTL, Bismarck was born in 1815 in Saxony. This doesn’t change in TTL- but in TTL Saxony is in the Confederation of the Rhine. It is *not* a Prussian province. Bismarck was still incredibly gifted and ambitious, however, and later moved country to Bavaria, which he sensed would be pivotal in events to come. His political career was spent serving the Kings of Bavaria- not Prussia. He was loyal to Maximilian II.

Napoleon proposes the creation of a federal constitutional monarchy ruled by the Bavarian kings. With the truncation of Prussia, Bavaria is by far the most dominant German state (except from Austria). Many Germans have looked to Bavaria for German leadership since 1813. The proposed German Empire would be wholly independent- but a defensive ally of France- and exclude Prussia and Austria. Prussia was an irreconcilable enemy of Napoleon, and he knew that if Prussia were in the German Empire, they would steer German policy away from France. Maximilian II was fine with this: he recognised Prussia and Austria as rivals to Bavarian hegemony. Maximilian wanted to be the indisputable leader of the German nation and people- Prussia and Austria, the two other states which could challenge him, would have to be marginalised.

In OTL, Prussia and Austria go to war in 1866 over who would have leadership over the German people- the concept of a rivalry between Bavaria and Prussia/Austria in TTL is extremely plausible. Bismarck advises Maximilian to take the deal as well. Bismarck in OTL was characterised by an ultra-pragmatist political philosophy called Realpolitik. Neither does Bismarck despise France: he actually wanted to not annex Alsace-Lorraine, but was pressured into doing so. In TTL, his foreign policy is the same. He senses an opportunity here: Napoleon is willing to establish a German Empire just like that. Maximilian II also has reasons for taking the deal. Although in OTL Maximilian supports the idea of ‘moderate unionism’ (i.e. a union of the German princes, but in the form of the loose German Confederation), in TTL the temptation of Bavaria- and Maximilian himself- actually leading a new German Empire is too much to overlook. Maximilian accepts. He is crowned Emperor of Germany in Munich.

The people of the German Empire are ecstatic, and many Germans are starting to see France more favourably. Although their opinion of France is soured by centuries of historical rivalry and the decades of subjugation as the Confederation of the Rhine, the fact that Napoleon simply steps aside speaks volumes. Napoleon pressures Maximilian to emphasise Napoleon’s generosity and benevolence here, and the German people believe these words as they come in the form of speeches from an idolised figure. The Germans thus accept the stipulation of a defensive alliance to France.

Napoleon’s move in Germany is thus a success. France gets an alliance. Bavaria gets an empire. Prussia has by now generally bounced back from its weakness in previous decades but doesn’t feel comfortable challenging Bavaria. Britain is concerned about the Franco-German alliance, but the German Empire is genuinely independent and Maximilian II is interesting in developing relations with Britain. The Prime Minister does not intervene.

However, there is one nation who hasn’t been accounted for, and who seriously opposes everything which has happened so far. The opposing nation mobilises for war. It is, of course, Austria.

## 1856-1857 | German War

Napoleon III is the head of state of Austria at the time, having inherited it from Napoleon II, his father. However, both the German-speaking Austrians *and* the Austrian nobility are furious at being excluded from the German Empire. Even in OTL, the Austrian Empire wanted to establish a German state consisting of all German-speaking peoples, including Austria itself. The idea of such a state has been dubbed ‘Grossdeutschland’ (lit. ‘Big Germany’) as it included Germany and Austria.

Austria was excluded from Germany in OTL because she competed with Prussia over leadership of the German state. They fought a war in 1866 which Austria lost in around seven weeks, and Austria accepted exclusion. In TTL, the Austrian Empire also seeks a Grossdeutschland arrangement, and are- just like in OTL- not willing to let another German state claim leadership over all Germans and exclude them from the German state. At least- not without a war.

The Austrian nobility and people share the same aim here, and as a result Napoleon can’t move troops in there to suppress the unrest without risking a full-blown war of independence. They clamour for war with Bavaria, and Napoleon allows them to do it. Napoleon is still the Austrian head of state and, if he chooses, head of government, but the Habsburgs are still members of the Austrian court. Napoleon II never exiled or killed them, they were simply no longer monarchs. The living Habsburg in the Austrian court was currently Franz Joseph I. The previous Minister-President, Felix of Schwarzenburg, had died in 1852 in BTL of a stroke, and in OTL Franz Joseph I effectively took over as nobody of Schwarzenburg’s stature was there to replace him. Napoleon consents to Franz Joseph I conducting an Austrian war with Bavaria, recognising that Austria was going to do it anyway and if Napoleon tried to stop the Austrians, they’d call for independence.

Austria declares war on Bavaria. It’s not entirely clear who will win. In OTL, Austria was very easily defeated by Prussia. Whilst in TTL, Bavaria isn’t as strong as OTL’s Prussia, Bavaria is still wealthy and powerful. Importantly, Austria is considerably weaker in OTL as she lacks both Illyria and Hungary. However, the Austro-Bavarian War soon becomes the German War, because Prussia joins the war as a separate belligerent allied to neither Bavaria nor Austria. Prussia in BTL believes she has the right to leadership over the German people, and like Austria she is outraged that Bavaria should have the right to do it. Prussia did not previously intend to fight Bavaria, being significantly weaker in TTL. But Austria declaring war inspires Prussia to do the same. Besides, the Prussian army has been extensively reformed over the past few decades, and is now one of the best fighting forces in Europe. The various states of the German Empire generally stay neutral or align with Bavaria, although a few declare support for Prussia or Austria in the hope of gaining greater autonomy from Bavaria.

The war ends in 1857 with a Bavarian victory. Just as in OTL, Maximilian II tries to play Prussia and Austria off of each other, and in TTL succeeds. Prussia attacks Austria, both sides lose manpower and become weak, and then Bavarian forces march in and ‘finish the job’ with both. Although France stays neutral, it is undoubtedly in Napoleon’s interests for Bavaria to win, and he covertly funds the German Empire. They are victorious. Bavaria does not annex land from either state, however: Maximilian doesn’t want to close off the possibility of an alliance with either state. After all, in OTL Austria lost against Germany but allied with her later down the line. Maximilian also forgives all the German states that supported other powers, on the advice of Bismarck. Napoleon and Maximilian’s gains have been consolidated.

But Austria is furious- at France. Austria was already displeased with France staying neutral, but now that they have lost, they are angry. Austria sees France as a leech: unwilling to actually support Austria but more than content to siphon off manpower in wartime and tax revenue in peacetime. This underlying resentment will prove to be significant in later years.

## 1859-1863 | Illyrian War

In OTL, Napoleon III has an expansionist foreign policy. He enthusiastically led his troops to war personally in Italy and foreign visitors noted Napoleon’s expansion of the navy and the nation’s general gearing towards war. In TTL, Napoleon’s foreign policy principles are the same. The difference is *where* Napoleon chooses to expand.

In OTL, Napoleon III sends soldiers to Mexico to establish a Second Mexican Empire ruled by an Austrian Archduke. The strategy is a failure- Napoleon eventually withdraws troops from there, facing heavy resistance from the USA and Mexican Republicans. In TTL, Napoleon doesn’t do this because the political situation in the Americas is so different. Though he still seeks to expand, Mexico is not a viable target. There *is* a viable- in fact, an obvious- target for Napoleon, however: the Balkans.

Napoleon I annexed the Illyrian Provinces from Austria in BTL, although in TTL he maintains control over them. In BTL, Napoleon upholds the Napoleonic Code, massively expands infrastructure, introduced various political reforms, and introduces a greater national self-confidence and identity. French rule gives the Illyrians equality before the law, a separate of church and state, a modern administrative system, and more reforms that led to the Illyrians being treated completely differently than under Austrian rule. In BTL, Napoleon’s presence leads to the creation of the Illyrian Movement, a pan-South-Slavist politico-cultural movement seeking to give Croatians a national identity and increased autonomy in the Austrian Empire. However, because in TTL Napoleon maintains his presence, the Illyrian Movement changes in nature, further emphasising the need for a unified South Slav state. Continued French presence makes the Illyrian Movement extremely strong, and by the 1850s (after French soldiers crushed desires for independence), people there at least want a unified South Slav state. Napoleon III can give it to them.

The Balkans were at this time generally held by the Ottoman Empire. Greece was by now independent, as were Romania and Montenegro. Serbia was semi-independent but still under Ottoman suzerainty, and Ottoman troops still held the area. The rest was under Ottoman control. But France could easily beat the Ottoman Empire. The Empire, though starting to modernise, was still weak and backwards. In BTL, the Ottoman Empire is known as the ‘Sick Man of Europe’ for this weakness. Napoleon decides to ‘liberate’ both Bosnia and the semi-independent Principality of Serbia, and goes to war with the Ottomans. Britain is focussed on imperial expansion abroad, and the Russians are happy to let the French weaken the Ottomans so they can step in and gain land later. France fights and wins after four or so years.

Napoleon renames the Illyrian Provinces to the Kingdom of Illyria, deciding to make them a French puppet instead of a part of France. This is partially to ease unrest there- the Slavs have wanted greater autonomy since the 1830s, and now that the Illyrian Provinces are three times the size, making them a direct part of France isn’t really feasible. It is also because he wants to give the crown to his son, [Napoleon IV](#_Napoleon_IV)- who is the same in BTL, being the son of Napoleon III, who is the same in BTL (for reasons explained [here](#_1855_|_Napoleon)). Napoleon III uses Illyria as a mechanism to help groom his son into succession. The Kingdom is a federation, wherein each South Slav ethnic group is given their own state with equal rights.

The Ottoman Empire is greatly weakened, and much less able to suppress other nationalist movements in the Balkans. Long-term unrest and insurrections emerge amongst the Albanians, Kurds, and Montenegrins. Bulgaria peacefully struggles for cultural and religious autonomy, and gains it. In TTL, the Bulgarian Exarchate in established in 1864, not 1870. Nonetheless, a large-scale armed struggle movement begins to develop. It seemed to Napoleon that France would soon have plenty of opportunities to expand. Napoleon planned to go to war with the Ottomans again less than a decade later in order to ‘liberate’ the Albanians and Bulgarians.

The main issue with this situation was Russia. In OTL, Russia frequently went to war with the Ottomans to liberate Slavic nations there. Russia saw itself, ideologically, as a protector of the Slavic people, and politically Russia had a major interest in gaining land and influence in the Balkans. The Ottomans in BTL suppressed many independence movements and uprisings amongst the Balkan Slavs in the first half of the 19th century. In BTL they eventually fail. The extra variable in TTL is France.

Russia and France have despised each other since the [War of the Sixth Coalition](#_1813-1818_|_War), and Russia is extremely unlikely to tolerate another empire- especially one she hates- consolidating influence in the Balkans. In TTL, Russia is weaker than in OTL, so would probably welcome France waging a war against the Ottomans to weaken them, but would undoubtedly intervene after that. With Romania resisting any Russian attempts to fall into the Russian sphere of influence, Russia seeks to annex the Tartar-inhabited regions of the Empire (see a contemporary ethnic map of the Balkans [here](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cf/Balkans-ethnic_%281861%29.jpg)), support independent Bulgarian and Albanian states, and ‘liberate’ Serbia and Croatia from the French. The Russians also wanted Constantinople. Essentially, they want to consolidate the Balkans under their control.

Russia decides to wait for now. It is no secret that Napoleon III is greatly ill and likely to die soon, and Tsar Alexander II wants to seize the opportunity then. In OTL, Alexander II has a relatively pacifistic foreign policy and avoids going to war with France. Whilst in TTL the circumstances are different, Alexander’s reluctance is not, and he wants to wait for a new, untested emperor to take power before attacking. Alexander II in BTL is a relatively good ruler, passing various reforms to make Russia more stable and prosperous. Russia stands at least a chance of victory. Alexander takes around six years to ready the country for war, and when Napoleon III dies, he seizes his opportunity.

## 1869 | Napoleon III dies; Napoleon IV succeeds him

Napoleon III in BTL suffers from very poor health. He dies in OTL in 1873 from his conditions- in TTL he dies in 1869. His health is worse by having been taken on military campaigns by [Napoleon II](#_Napoleon_II) in the [War of the Seventh Coalition](#_War_of_the_1). In BTL, he has a son, [Napoleon IV](#_Napoleon_IV). In TTL, Napoleon IV succeeds Napoleon III as Emperor of the French.

Napoleon IV immediately faces three major issues. Italy, which has seen sporadic revolts and unrest since the 1850s, is now up in arms. Austria has formally declared itself independent, ruled by Habsburgs yet again. Russia has declared war on France to assert its presence and influence in the Balkans. The new emperor has some experience in ruling, having been the King of Illyria for a few years. But he is a child. He’s 13 years old, born in BTL in 1856. Just as when Napoleon II took power as a boy-king in 1823 and the various components of the French Empire saw an opportunity, the same thing happens here.

Napoleon IV has his work cut out for him.

# Nation-States in Europe | 1869-1880

## 1869 | Napoleon IV’s approach; Austrian Independence

Napoleon IV’s biographers say that as a ruler, Napoleon IV is far more interested in soldiering than actually ruling. Their point isn’t that Napoleon ruled either poorly or absent-mindedly. They mean to say that Napoleon’s foreign policy was guided by what he saw as best for France- not his personal desires to gain power. In the engagements with Austria, Italy, and Russia, he based his response on what he genuinely thought would be good for France. He wasn’t interested in holding these regions because he was a megalomaniac. He is often favourably compared to Napoleon I- who decidedly did seek power for power’s sake- by British biographers because of this. Applying Napoleon IV’s philosophy to the various rebelling regions of the Empire, his responses were greatly different.

Napoleon III, before he died, was beginning to stop seeing the usefulness of Austria, and he’d been telling his son about this in his final years. Napoleon III had a foreign policy in mind, and he wanted his son to carry it on. He spent a lot of time bedridden and lecturing his son about all kinds of state matters. Napoleon IV, being young and impressionable, therefore absorbed a lot of what Napoleon III had told him. This advice was combined with that of his advisors, which was based on the current geopolitical situation.

Napoleon IV decided to let Austria go. He did this for a number of reasons. Firstly, Austria wasn’t that useful of an ally anyway. Without Hungary or Illyria, it was considerably weaker, and in BTL Austria wasn’t industrialised nor particularly wealthy. Secondly, Austria was relatively far from France, but next to Illyria. There was no defensive need to keep Austria on side- they weren’t neighbours- and Illyria provided Napoleon with a presence in Eastern Europe. Finally and foremost, Austria was just too difficult to keep pacified. It was a great power, and had a long, prestigious history. If Austria wouldn’t cooperate, then forcing Austria to do so would render France unable to fight anywhere else. But Napoleon sensed that he could gain something from the situation.

Napoleon massed the Grandee Armee at the Austrian border as if to invade, but this was just leverage for the Treaty of Venice. The 1869 Treaty of Venice stipulated the terms of Austria returning to Habsburg rule. They were that Venice would be given to the Kingdom of Italy; Austria would be forbidden to release state secrets about France learned up until point to any other country; Austria and France would have a truce for the next 15 years. Franz Joseph I was back in power.

## 1869-1872 | The Franco-Russian War; Events in the Balkans

Napoleon was *not* willing to compromise in the Balkans. He saw France as the natural creator of a Pan-South-Slavic state in the region. In Napoleon’s eyes, France had liberated Illyria from oppressive reactionary rule, and therefore had the moral right to be the one to unite the South Slavs. Moreover, France was the most powerful country in the region and thus the most likely country to forge a South Slav state. Of course, Napoleon was also interested in the Balkans as he sensed opportunity. France had land and influence there, and could have more. Besides, if France didn’t step in, Russia would, and Napoleon couldn’t allow that.

Napoleon sent troops into Russia through the Kingdom of Illyria and the Ottoman Empire- he negotiated a military access agreement with them as soon as he came into power. France was still superior to Russia, but Tsar Alexander II had been enacting major reforms to the army and it now had some chance of taking victory- especially as France was distracted by Italy. Alexander didn’t count on the French navy, however, which napoleon III in BTL put a lot of effort and resources in building up. Napoleon landed an invasion force in the Black Sea and moved upwards from there. Alexander II was eventually forced to surrender.

Napoleon forced the Treaty of Laybach in 1872 (Laybach being Ljubljana in modern Slovenia, the capital of the Illyrian Provinces). Laybach did a lot to curb Russian influence in the Balkans. The provisions of Laybach were that the Russians could not intervene in Illyria or Romania’s affairs nor threaten their independence/existence; Russia could not own any land in the Balkans either directly or in the form of a puppet state; Russia could not move troops into the Balkans; Russia could not support the independence movements of any South Slavic peoples. Just as how, in OTL, the Austro-Prussian War generally excluded Austria from leadership/influence in Germany, in TTL the Franco-Russian War generally excludes Russia from leadership/influence in the Balkans. Russia, for the time being, turns its attention to the Caucasus, Central Asia, and China, with Alexander developing ambitions for Manchuria. He also decides to improve relations with Romania, which bears fruit later.

Events in the Balkans continued in similar ways as to OTL. In BTL, a major Bulgarian uprising occurs in the 1870s (1876 in OTL, 1874 in TTL as revolutionary organisations in Bulgaria were founded earlier), and in BTL the Ottoman Empire brutally crushes it. The atrocities committed draw continent-wide disgust and massively increases Bulgarians’ desire for independence. In BTL, European great powers hold a conference in Constantinople to agree on political reforms in Ottoman areas with a majority-Bulgarian population. In BTL, the Constantinople Conference decides on two Bulgarians autonomous provinces to be established: east and west.

In OTL, the Ottoman Empire refuses to accept this deal, and the Russians declare war on them. This leads to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8, which is a decisive victory and leads to the European great powers carving up the Balkans. In TTL, however, cowed by France’s earlier victory in the [Illyrian War](#_1859-1863_|_Illyrian), the Ottomans accept. Russia is forced by the Treaty of Laybach to accept this state of affairs, and Austria (with the expansion of the Kingdom of Illyria) is now completely cut off from the Balkans and lacks the interest or the strength to go to war themselves. Britain and Germany, pleased by Ottoman acquiescence to Western decisions, maintain their support for the Ottoman Empire. The state of affairs established by the 1874-5 Constantinople Conference remains.

## 1869-1880 | The Parabellum in Italy

The ‘parabellum’ refers to a guerrilla war waged by Italians seeking independence against French authorities. It is a bastardised portmanteau of the Latin words ‘parum’, meaning little, and ‘bella’, meaning war- it also, in BTL, translates to ‘prepare for war’. This is because the word ‘parabellum’ is a bastardisation of ‘parumbellum’. The term is retrospective and came into usage by historians in the early 1880s.

In OTL, the Italian unification movement (otherwise known as the Risorgimento) begins in the 1820s with the operation of the Carbonari, a secret political revolutionary group seeking Italian unification. Insurrections began as early as 1820 in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Agitation and unrest increased over time, and eventually the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont wages and leads three Italian Wars of Independence against Austria. After the collapse of Napoleon III’s Second French Empire, Italian troops moved into Rome, which France had previously been protecting. Italy was unified.

The history of Italy is radically different in TTL. Firstly, the Risorgimento begins in the 1830s, but insurrections are rare and weak until the 1850s. This is because Italy is *extremely* different in the aftermath of a Napoleonic victory. It is not wholly united, but for the first time in centuries it is partially unified into three states- after the [Congress of Constantinople](#_1851_|_Congress), only two. The liberal Napoleonic Code is extremely popular amongst Italians. With Napoleon in power, Risorgimento supporters and organisations in Italy are very different.

Firstly, the Carbonari simply do not exist. This is because they arose as an alternative to Freemasonry in Italy. In OTL, Freemasonry in Italy is repressed after 1815 because of its association with Napoleon and his government. The Carbonari filled the resulting void, but emphasised a commitment to Italian nationalism and disowned Napoleon. In TTL, this doesn’t happen. Freemasonry, and its pro-French stance, remains dominant.

Moreover, the Risorgimento in OTL was fuelled by intellectual and political discussion that is absent in TTL in the 1820s. Ideas concerning liberalism and unification are already a reality in TTL. Moreover, in OTL, many of the key Risorgimento leaders in the 1820s are exiles, and the fact that they were in exile was very important, being a central theme in the arguments of the Risorgimento. But in TTL, far fewer of these leaders are exiled.

In OTL, insurrections in Italy in the 1830s were caused by the Duke of Modena declaring indirect support for unification, and were suppressed by Austrian troops, who stifle further insurrection and insurrection until the 1840s. In TTL, the degree of Italian unrest is much lower, so fewer insurrections and revolts occur in the 1830s. The Austrians do not arrest radical leaders. However, by the 1830s Italians have grown used to partial unification and want more. They want a total unification, and they want an end to French and Austrian influence. The 1840s see these sentiments grow even more popular as the British invade Italy during the [War of the Eighth Coalition](#_War_of_the), reinforcing (in the eyes of many Italians) the need for a strong, unified, independent Italy.

In the Revolutions of 1852, these sentiments break out into widespread revolts. In OTL, insurrections across Italy occur in the early 1830s, and these initially successful revolutions are crushed by Austria. But in TTL they aren’t crushed by the Austrians as the Austrians are in revolution as well. The French eventually get round to it, but by this point the insurrected provinces, unlike in OTL wherein they simply planned to do this, have united as the United Italian Provinces and declared independence. Napoleon II eventually destroys this nation, but it gives Italians a much-desired taste of independence and insurrections/underground political activities persist in the 1850s and 1860s. As a half-measure, Napoleon gives more autonomy to the directly-held territories in the peninsula, but these aren’t enough.

The problem is that the Italians can’t wage a war because in TTL, there is no independent Italian state. There is no Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont to declare war on Austria. Italians can’t wage wars of independence as the French crush any attempts to form a provisional government. Therefore, as popular revolts increase in the 1850s and 1860s, the conflict escalates into a full-blown guerrilla war in 1869.

This occurs in a series of events very similar to those of OTL in 1808 in Spain. In 1869, the Italians sense weakness as a boy-king, Napoleon IV, comes into power. They once again declare the United Italian Provinces. French forces put this down with extreme brutality, similar to the Ottoman response to the Bulgarians in 1874, and similar to the Dos de Mayo Uprising. This only strengthens the Italians’ desire for independence, and a guerrilla war breaks out. Rebels have more time to organise themselves as the French are distracted by the [Franco-Russian War](#_1869-1872_|_The), and once the majority of French troops return in 1872 they reach a very unstable peninsula.

The British and the Russians covertly fund the rebels, and as French harshness escalates the Italians are given endless motivation. The French are also distracted, after the war with Russia, by colonisation efforts in Asia. Napoleon III was an eager colonist, and passed down this priority to his son, Napoleon IV. By the time the inexperienced king realises the severity of the Italian situation and withdraws soldiers from abroad, it is too late. In 1880, France is forced to concede the independence of the Free Republic of Italy.

# Great Balkan War | 1880-1883

## 1880 | Bulgarian Spring; Great Balkan War begins

The Bulgarians had not been truly satisfied with the 1874-5 Constantinople Conference, wherein the European powers had forced the Ottomans to grant the Bulgarians greater autonomy. They had reluctantly tolerated the arrangement, mollified by Ottoman concessions and wanting to keep the Western powers friendly, but resentment was still very much there. The success of the [Italian Parabellum](#_1869-1880_|_The) and subsequent independence of Italy inspired a new wave of Bulgarian secessionism. Bulgarians declared themselves independent, and again the Ottomans moved in to brutally suppress the rebels.

Napoleon IV decides to intervene on the basis that the Ottomans were violating the spirit of the Constantinople Conference by doing the same thing over again. Napoleon wanted a war because he could use this to expand French influence in the Balkans. Indeed, in OTL Russia uses Bulgarian unrest as an excuse to launch the Russo-Turkish War, which massively increases their influence there. Napoleon also wanted to distract the French people from the failure in Italy, and to try to negate the image of weakness that the failure in Italy projected. Napoleon therefore invades the Ottoman Empire and proclaims support for Bulgarian independence. He plans to create an independent Bulgarian state allied to France, and to annex Albania and Macedonia from the Ottomans. In both of these ethnic groups, nationalism is developing but not high enough that Napoleon will be forced to grant them independence. It seems a solid plan.

Except that in OTL, Russia is able to declare war on Turkey because the Western powers don’t intervene. Russia’s ambitions could have been easily foiled had Britain, France, or Germany gotten involved. Indeed, in OTL the Crimean War was an exact example of the Western powers foiling Russian ambitions and defending the Ottoman Empire. In OTL, they don’t defend the Ottomans because the Ottomans ignore the decisions taken in the Constantinople Conference. But in TTL, the Ottomans accept these decisions, and keep the West on side, meaning that the Western powers are willing to defend the Ottomans in TTL.

In TTL, the Western powers involved in the Constantinople Conference are Austria, France, Germany, Britain, and Russia.

Britain declares its support for the Ottoman Empire. Russia, sensing opportunity, defies the Treaty of Laybach and joins Britain, declaring war on France. The Austrians, resentful of French ambitions in the Balkans, join the Anglo-Russian side. The Ottomans naturally side with the West. The Italians proclaim support for the Ottomans and formally declare war, but in reality are too weak to do anything.

France, of course, is on its own side- and because Russia has just declared war on France, Germany is bound by its alliance to come to France’s aid. Hungary, still an ally of France, joins Napoleon. Ireland, still an irreconcilable enemy of Britain, joins Napoleon as well. Napoleon’s ally Poland joins, but the Netherlands stays neutral, to Napoleon’s outrage. Romania is torn between Russian influence and the desire to support South Slav independence. They stay neutral. Scandinavia also stays neutral.

With all the European great powers choosing sides, a new, massive war had begun in the Balkans. The Great Balkan War was here.

## 1880-1883 | Great Balkan War

It is important to note that the Great Balkan War in TTL is not called the Great War. It does not reach the scale, severity, and hatred of the Great War in OTL. Actual military operations are almost exclusively confined to the Balkans and areas nearby in Austria and Russia. The nature of the war resembles the OTL Crimean War as much as OTL WWI, but its intensity and scale are high enough to merit the adjective ‘Great’.

The nature of the war is similar to the OTL American Civil War- which is a combination of Napoleonic and WWI tactics and technology. The same applies to the Great Balkan War. Tactics are influenced by technology, so an examination of latter is necessarily first, In BTL, the first effective machine gun wasn’t invented in 1884, by Hiram Maxim. The Great Balkan War is thus fought without these. It *is* fought with rifled, breech-loading, cartridge-firing, lever-action repeating rifles. In BTL, this technology was feasible and used in the 1880s. This means that firearms are semi-automatic: several rounds can be discharged before the rifle must be reloaded. The rifling also gives the guns high accuracy and range.

The new firearms drastically change infantry tactics. In the War of the Sixth Coalition (and in the Napoleonic Wars in OTL), infantrymen use muskets, which are extremely inaccurate. Infantry tactics thus involved large lines of soldiers forming and firing volleys. Cavalry would then charge at infantry lines (or infantrymen with bayonets) to try and break them- this worked because muskets were inaccurate and had a low rate of fire, so the charging soldiers could avoid being hit. Rifling proliferated in the mid-19th century, and in OTL’s American Civil War, American generals had to drastically change tactics because rifling, and semi-automatic weapons, meant that charging at an enemy got you slaughtered. In TTL, major wars break out in Europe in the mid-19th century, and there is thus a greater impetus for technologies like rifling to be invented and implemented. The [War of the Eighth Coalition](#_War_of_the) is the first major war where rifles are widely used, for example. In the [Franco-Russian War](#_1869-1872_|_The), the Grande Armee is the first to use repeating rifles.

These new technologies give defenders a considerable advantage. If a defender sets up behind a river, a trench, or on top of a hill, they can pick off attacking troops with relative ease. Indeed, in OTL, this was a major reason why the South lasted so long: new military technology gives the defenders an advantage. In TTL, the War of the Eighth Coalition sees rifling being used and tactics adapting accordingly, meaning that the old Napoleonic tactics of massing in lines and charging were altered. Trenches in OTL were actually used before WWI, for example in the Crimean War and American Civil War, just not as extensively as in WWI.

In TTL, trenches are relatively widely used, but the absence of machine guns means that the Great Balkan War utilises manoeuvre warfare more than trench warfare, although unlike in previous major European wars something resembling a front does begin to stabilise. Nonetheless, the Great Balkan War is still characterised as a series of battles rather than a serious of offensives. Unlike in the Crimean War, the Great Balkan War sees armies transition to camouflaged uniforms, coordinate armies and use them in joint manoeuvres, and build large numbers of fortifications and trenches. The Great Balkan War, again, is *not* trench warfare however, it is a sort of precursor.

The Great Balkan War can be characterised as having all the military-industrial effects of OTL’s Crimean War, but just amplified. A military-industrial complex starts to develop, armies use mass-produced repeater rifles, exploding shells, sea mines, steam-powered ironclads, steel artillery, etc. Both were ‘industrial wars’- the advantage lay with the side with the strongest industry to support the war effort.

The war starts with French troops moving into Bulgaria to support the rebels there, and they declare the Kingdom of Bulgaria. Russia and Austria sent troops to Bulgaria to meet the French soldiers: the Russians declare that they support South Slav independence, but are waging war on the French as they seek to annex the South Slavs. Germany engages Austria, diverting the majority of Austrian resources west. Ireland is unable to navally invade Britain, and she focusses her resources on the Balkans, landing a large army of 160,000 there. French troops withdraw into the Kingdom of Illyria, and the other involved countries send troops in.

The war becomes a stalemate soon. In some regions, trench lines are drawn: for example, the border between Illyria and Austria. In other regions, manoeuvre warfare continues. Combat resembles that of OTL’s American Civil War: it saw trench systems used near Richmond in the east and manoeuvre warfare used in the West at the same time in 1864-5. Many major Illyrian, Austrian, and Russian cities are sieged. The defenders construct elaborate trench lines around the cities, and the battles here turn into an OTL Siege of Sevastopol kind of situation. Just like in OTL’s Crimean war, the combatants soon became exhausted. Industrial strength on each side was also pretty much even: Britain had a vast industry, but by the 1880s those of both France and Germany combined reached around the same levels. Battles still occur and are won and lost, but no side appears to be dominating. Offensives are launched to try and cut off supply lines, capture cities, and destroy armies, and military forces are able to move across the Balkans only partially impeded by trench networks. But no side seems to be winning. Britain and her allies have an edge, but the war is 60-40 or so in their favour. The real variable that changes the course of war is nationalism.

In OTL, the British attack the Ottoman Empire in WWI by sending T.E. Lawrence there to spark nationalist revolts. In TTL, the French do the exact same thing. However, instead of trying to stimulate Arab nationalism, the French whips up nationalist agitation amongst the Albanians and Macedonians. In OTL, these ethnic groups only get their own states after WWI, but nationalist agitation for independence amongst them can be traced back to the early 19th century. The Ottoman Empire tries to put down these revolts. Their allies try to do so too. Britain in TTL decides to support the Ottoman Empire, and believes that a strong Ottoman Empire would be a natural counterweight to France (and to a lesser extent Austria and Russia) in the region. Britain is afraid that an independent Albania and Macedonia would be easy prey for the French Empire in the region. The Ottomans’ allies are able to put the revolts down, but the diversion of troops allows France to gain an advantage. Britain is still in a slightly better position, but by 1883 she is willing to negotiate. All the powers are actually relatively exhausted by now. Sweden proposes mediating a peace. The belligerents accept.

## 1883 | Congress of Stockholm

The Congress of Stockholm is similar to OTL’s Congress of Berlin, which deals with dividing up the Balkans after the Russo-Turkish War. OTL’s Congress of Berlin seeks to find a solution which maintains the balance of power in the region, stabilises the Balkans, and recognises the weakness of the Ottoman Empire. OTL’s Congress of Stockholm has the same aims. Because neither side conclusively wins, the focus of the Congress is not to exert one coalition’s victory but to introduce a long-term peace.

It is also to repress Pan-Slavism as much as possible. The Congresses of both Stockholm and Berlin have this in common. The reasons are the same in BTL. Austria is concerned about the presence of ethnic minorities within its own empire, and the rest of the Congress powers are concerned about expanding French and Russian influence, which a South Slavic state could fall under. These Congress powers wanted the Ottoman Empire to be intact, as a weak, manipulatable state which would maintain the status quo.

The Congress’ effects are to weaken France’s standing in the region, maintain some Ottoman strength, and balance power between France and Russia, leaning towards the latter. The provisions are:

* Britain to annex Cyprus
* The Kingdom of Illyria to maintain its current borders
* The Empire of France to swear to maintain total neutrality in all future Balkan events and insurrections, and to declare a 25 year truce with the Ottoman Empire
* The Empire of Russia to swear to enter no alliance with the Kingdom of Bulgaria or the Principality of Romania, and to declare a 10 year truce with the Ottoman Empire
* The Empire of Russia to swear to never guarantee the independence or militarily intervene in the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Principality of Romania
* The Kingdom of Bulgaria to be an independent nation, consisting of the territories that were in OTL the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia
* The Kingdom of Montenegro to be a fully independent nation
* Territorial adjustments to be made between Russia and Bulgaria

Just like OTL’s Congress of Berlin, the provisions were initially believed to be a suitable way of maintaining peace in Europe. The war wasn’t so bitter or brutal that each side demanded total victory, and so an acceptable compromise was to simply create the most suitable situation there for stability. The problem was that the underlying issues in the Balkans were not solved. There were still ethnic minorities in the Ottoman Empire clamouring for independence, most notably the Albanians and Macedonians. Russia still had ambitions there, and wanted to annex Constantinople (in BTL Russia has wanted to annex Constantinople for centuries). Serbia and Bulgaria had wanted more land, and Greece was resentful about it staying neutral and receiving no land. War would eventually return to the region: but it would take some time.

## 1883 | Political Effects in Europe

The Great Balkan War exhausted the countries of Europe. A similar phenomenon occurred after OTL’s Crimean War, but this feeling is amplified in TTL due to the increased scale of the war. There was a universally felt feeling that it was time for peace. Indeed, in the following decade the system of alliances that had brought so many countries into the war broke down.

France faced [a period of imperial disintegration](#_Imperial_Disintegration_|) which separated Poland and Illyria from France’s sphere of influence. After the war, a jaded Germany immediately dissolved the alliance with France. Napoleon IV, still hoping to maintain friendly relations between the two countries, accepted. Hungary later pursued an end to French rule and alliance as well. Ireland and Britain gradually moved from a period of heated hatred to a cold curtness, and Ireland was poor and ceased being interested in opposing Britain for the sake of it.

In the British Coalition of the Great Balkan War, any hope of a more permanent association dissolved. The Italians had nothing against Britain and relations between them were warm, but they shared few interests and neither wanted to be entangled in an alliance. The same holds true for Austria. Russia in BTL is unsatisfied by the Congress and wants more: although the degree of dissatisfaction is less in TTL, they are still somewhat cold towards the British. Besides, although the common enemy of France has kept the two empires together until now, their overlapping ambitions is beginning to complicate this. In OTL, Britain and Russia were engaged in a long political/diplomatic confrontation called the Great Game since around 1830. The two countries competed for influence in Central and South Asia, and there was frequent talk of war between them. In TTL, the Great Game begins to develop in the 1880s. Russia and Britain are unlikely to cooperate for a while.

This has major ramifications for long term peace in the region. In OTL, WWI occurred precisely because Europe had organised itself into two multinational alliances. This transformed what could have been a regional Balkan conflict into a worldwide conflict that drew in Western Europe. In TTL, the opposite process occurs: Europe disorganises itself from multinational alliances. Whilst, of course, the long-term causes of WWI still remain, and a great war still inevitably occurs, these political changes are essential in delaying such a war. For now, European countries become much more willing to host congresses and meetings to resolve major international issues rather than war. The cooperation between European nations here ushers in [a period of European supremacy](#_European_Supremacy_|) as European powers carve up the world between them.

# Imperial Disintegration | 1883-1893

## 1883 | German Empire Renounces Alliance

The German Empire had lost over a hundred thousand soldiers, and had nothing to show for it. There were widespread feelings of disillusionment and anger that the Germans had been dragged into a war irrelevant to them by an alliance with the French. Germany was weakened by war and did not seek to engage in further conflict, and therefore no politico-diplomatic confrontations occurred, unlike between Britain and Russia in this period. Germany moved into slightly more isolationist politics, and King Ludwig II of Bavaria sensed the mood of his people and immediately renounced his alliance with France.

Napoleon IV decided to accept the renunciation. France needed Germany as a friend. Britain was a hostile neighbour to the north and, with her superior navy, the west. Napoleon could not afford a hostile neighbour to the east too. Even Spain, though Franco-Spanish relations were positive now, did hadn’t the loyalty to remain a French ally if Britain and Germany strongarmed her into cooperation. If Germany wouldn’t be an ally, she had to be at least counted on to not be an enemy.

Napoleon would try various mechanisms to improve Franco-German relations in the coming decades. He would support the German position in international congresses, engage in extensive trade with Germany and reduce tariffs, and tacitly permit the build-up of the German industry, army, and navy. These actions would have long term ramifications in determining the future of European alliances.

## 1885-1891 | War of Illyrian Independence; The Strategic Situation in the Balkans

Ethnic nationalism and pan-Slavism amongst the South Slavs was a strong, growing force in OTL- in TTL, the [Great Balkan War](#_Great_Balkan_War) amplifies these to a much larger extent.

The former is amplified by a few things. Firstly, the Ottoman Empire had been severely weakened, facilitating independence movements there as insurrectionists sensed opportunity. Secondly, the French during the war had not just given military backing and strategic advice to ethnic groups like the Albanians, but they helped bring about major ideological changes amongst the ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire. A foreign power actively helping a minority ethnic group secede inspired many other groups to try and to do the same. Moreover, the French- to support their aims- had embarked on a major cultural and ideological campaign promoting ethnic nationalism amongst the Empire.

The idea of pan-Slavism is also massively legitimised by the Great Balkan War. It is argued that a strong pan-Slavic state is needed to resist foreign powers entering and fighting in the Balkans will impunity. Coupled with the Illyrian Movement that began in the 19th century, pan-Slavism is far stronger in TTL than OTL.

The Kingdom of Illyria was profoundly affected by both of these ideas. Although they had their own federated state, they were not independent, and they only encompassed a portion of all the South Slavs. The [Congress of Stockholm](#_1883_|_Congress) fixed Illyria’s borders, however. Illyrians thus felt that French leadership was at a ‘dead end’- besides, the War had made France weak, and if the Illyrians were to revolt now would be the time.

Nationalism had been growing throughout the century, and with it some scattered revolts against French rule in the mid-19th century. None of these revolts were strong enough to threaten France’s presence in the Balkans however, even in [1852](#_Revolutions_of_1852). The Great Balkan War had intensified nationalism amongst South Slavs tenfold, however. The central premises of the War *were* nationalism and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. The ongoing nature of the war, three years, simply meant that nationalism amongst the South Slavs was abnormally high for three years. After the War, the ideological effects were too powerful to be temporary. Nationalism amongst the South Slavs was higher than ever before, and the Illyrians weren’t going to tolerate foreign rule- be it Ottoman or French.

Napoleon IV was not especially power-hungry, but he was determined to maintain a presence in the Balkans. He had fought a hard war in the Balkans, and after years of fighting had managed to preserve a stake in the Balkans. To release the stake now would be like spitting on all the French soldiers who had died to preserve it.

The Illyrian Revolution occurred in 1885. French troops moved in to crush the revolts: they eventually failed, and in 1891 the Kingdom of Illyria became an independent Federation of Illyria. It is not as inconceivable as it may seem that France pulled out here. In OTL, France lost two twice to both Mexico and Korea, neither of which were great powers, at around this point in history. The French abandoned Mexico because Napoleon III wanted to preserve Franco-American relations, but no US troops had been yet deployed. The French had already lost their grip on the region due to Mexican republican guerrillas actually won various victories. Napoleon III probably wouldn’t have abandoned Mexico if his monarchy ambitions were actually a reality. Napoleon also lost in Korea in 1866, although this was admittedly more of a failed punitive expedition than a failed war. The military in Kores was actually ordered to leave because of the heavy losses from France intervening in Mexico.

Therefore, considering at this point in time France has just fought a major, exhausting war, it is entirely possible that determined Illyrian guerrilla (although in TTL it would be called parabellum) resistance could force France to leave. In NTL would guerrilla resistance be enough to force France to leave, but this resistance coupled with foreign pressure would be in BTL. In OTL, pressure came from the Americans. In TTL, a prolonged, brutal suppression of unrest in Illyria would probably draw attention from the Austrians and the Russians, two powers which also had an interest in the Balkans.

Russia, who in BTL claimed itself to be the protector of South Slavs and the guarantor of their independence, would almost definitely take action if France (its main rival) threatened the South Slavs here. Granted, in TTL Russia is already weak from war, but by five years since the Illyrian Revolution Russia (accompanied by Austria) would likely be strong enough for a threat of war to have some credibility. Moreover, Russia would probably have been covertly supporting the rebels throughout, to both increase their chances of victory and build relations between them. Therefore, just as in OTL Mexico, where France was pressured to leave because of the USA, in TTL, France is pressured to leave Illyria because of Austria and Russia.

Another factor would be Romania and Bulgaria. Pan-Slavism is popular throughout the whole Balkans: the Romanians and Bulgarians would want an independent South Slavic state as well. They declare war on France. Although these countries aren’t particularly strong by themselves, and the Grande Armee defeats them in the early stages of the war, they divert troops there and provide even more difficulty for France. The subsequent increased weakness of the Grandee Armee makes France more susceptible to Austrian/Russian pressure. Napoleon caves.

The Illyrian Revolution heralded the beginning of the multinational, multiethnic French Empire begin to break down. The growing forces of nationalism in the 19th century and the rise of nation-states were incompatible with it. France could have maintained such an empire in previous centuries. The Ottomans and Austrians did without much unrest. But now, the same process of imperial disintegration was being mirrored in their empires. It was also impossible for the French to support South Slav nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, and oppose South Slav nationalism in the Kingdom of Illyria. Illyria was just the beginning. Others would follow.

The strategic situation in the Balkans was drastically altered by France being expelled from it. Austria was still cut off from the Balkans by Illyria, and with few Slavs remaining in the empire Austria had no real legitimacy in the Balkans. Russia had almost a free hand here. The Congress of Constantinople prevented Russia from allying with Bulgaria/Romania, or to guarantee their independence or militarily intervene. However, Russia could now- just as in OTL- create a sphere of influence in the Balkans. Moreover, they could guarantee the independence of the new Federation of Illyria. The European powers, particularly Britain, noticed this and grew increasingly concerned. Anglo-Russian tension began to increase.

## 1889 | Grand Duchy of Warsaw declares independence

By 1889, the [War of Illyrian Independence](#_1885-1891_|_War) was beginning to turn against France. With Napoleon committing more and more troops to Illyria, Poland began to see an opportunity for independence.

Poland had been relatively quiet in the past. They revered [Napoleon I](#_Napoleon_I) for granting them their own state. Although they disliked being a French puppet, they felt it to be a necessary evil for protection against Russia, which would surely recapture them if they shook off France. The Poles infinitely preferred France to Russia because of the liberal Napoleonic Code and because the French never tried to stamp out the Polish culture or language. The [Treaty of Copenhagen](#_1818_|_Treaty) and the [Treaty of Linz](#_1829_|_Treaty) had also given the Poles land. The hardships of war caused a few ethnic groups in the French Empire, for example the Germans, to rebel during the [War of the Eighth Coalition](#_War_of_the). However, the conflict against Russia simply strengthened the Poles’ adherence to France as their protector. Thus, when the [Revolutions of 1852](#_Revolutions_of_1852) struck, the Polish revolution was comparatively small and [Napoleon II](#_Napoleon_II) could contain it.

But nationalism was a growing force on the continent in BTL. The Poles, just like the Germans before them, were sick and tired of being used as pawns to fight in a foreigner’s wars. Increasingly, multi-ethnic empires became difficult to maintain. It was possible: in OTL, for example, Austria made no concessions to the Czechs living within the empire, and although Archduke Ferdinand planned to make concessions to the South Slavs, these plans were never implemented. It took an event like WWI to actually cause the breakdown of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But in TTL in 1889, France has not only been weakened by a [somewhat comparably exhausting war](#_Great_Balkan_War), but is *still* at war with Illyria. Russia had also been similarly weakened by the war, and her attention was focussed elsewhere. Many Poles felt that it was the time to declare independence.

Napoleon IV felt very conflicted. On the one hand, with France looking as if she was about to lose her South Slav foothold, Napoleon was very reluctant to lose France’s North Slav foothold as well. But there wasn’t much Napoleon *could* do. The Grandee Armee was weak, and France wanted peace. The prolonged state of war was already causing serious unrest at home. Napoleon was compelled to accept the declaration. Besides, there was no chance of the newly-declared Republic of Poland being an ally with Russia. It was likely that, as long as Napoleon didn’t spoil Franco-Polish relations by invading, Poland would eventually naturally align with France.

## 1892 | Hungary declares independence

With the success of the Illyrians a year prior in establishing their independence, the Hungarians were emboldened to do the same. Since the Revolutions of 1852, Hungary had been almost entirely independent. The French had agreed to twelve of Hungary’s ‘14 points’- specifically those establishing a liberal democracy in Hungary. However, the Emperors of the French were still the head of state (although not head of government) of Hungary, and Hungarian troops were obliged to serve in the Grande Armee. Just as in Poland, Hungary had initially been somewhat pacified by the threat of another power- in this case, Austria.

But both Austria and France were now weak. Hungary was determined to gain its freedom, and declared independence from France. Napoleon IV reluctantly conceded. The benefits to doing so outweighed the cost. Napoleon could become bogged down in a parabellum war there, but it wasn’t worth it. Hungary was, in truth, a remote possession that wasn’t much use to France. Besides, Hungary wasn’t going to form any alliances with Austria. Napoleon conceded, and with a display of magnanimousness granted the Hungarians independence.

## 1892-1895 | Flanders Insurgency

France had just lost Illyria, Poland, and Hungary- the latter two had been simply accepted by France. Flanders (northern Belgium) had been a part of France for around a century now, and had remained a part of France even after the Revolutions of 1852. Unrest here had continued, with revolts occurring periodically and being put down by French troops. However, emboldened by France accepting two successive declarations of independence, the region of Flanders unilaterally rose up in arms and declared themselves temporarily independent, with the intention of joining the Republic of the Netherlands for security against France.

But this was something that Napoleon IV was *not* willing to accept. Flanders was valuable to France. It was not at all remote- being right on the French border- and was a valuable source of coal for industrialisation. Flanders joining the Netherlands would create a powerful neighbour to France which Britain would inevitably turn against her. Moreover, Napoleon IV was growing despondent at the collapse of the French Empire. It was bad for France, and the French people were losing morale, but it was having a profound psychological effect on Napoleon personally.

Napoleon’s predecessors had ruled over an immense empire in Europe. They had fought, and won, immense wars and held great prestige. Compared to them, Napoleon IV felt inadequate. Napoleon hadn’t really won the Great Balkan War. He had lost Illyria. He had lost Poland. He had lost Hungary. Napoleon could not lose Flanders as well- it would ruin him personally. He could not countenance the idea of him being a complete failure. He moved troops into Flanders and occupied the country.

France loses here as well: it wasn’t feasible that she could win. The Netherlands declared war on France to support the rebels. The British were too interested in isolationism for a declaration of war, but they supported the Flemish with funds and arms. France lacked the strength to suppress the rebels, eventually after having to destroy the Dutch army and after troops were killed in the [War of Illyrian Independence](#_1885-1891_|_War). The French populace also pressured Napoleon to end the war, and agitation for democracy increased fivefold in France as people resented how Napoleon could defy the wishes of the people with impunity.

Guerrilla wars were becoming difficult in BTL around this time. In OTL, the British lost the First Boer War and South Africa later became independent. The success of guerrilla fighters was massively helped by the guerrillas being armed with rifles- historians such have J. Lehmann have concluded that the usage of breech-loading percussion-cap firearms ‘made it exceedingly dangerous for the British to expose themselves.’ The average British soldier had no experience in guerrilla warfare, little training in marksmanship, and was trained according to the principles of conventional warfare. In TTL, the French have more experience with guerrilla warfare from Italy and Illyria, but the Flemings are still armed with the most modern equipment that the British can buy and simply do not give in. In 1895, Napoleon- with extreme reluctance- moves troops out of Flanders, and the Flemings join the Republic of the Netherlands. Almost every state in Europe recognises the territorial adjustment. France has lost.

## 1895 | Napoleon IV and Failure

Napoleon IV falls into a period of depression at this point. Facing rebellions in France, he is forced to democratise the country at least partially, and the 1890s sees the French legislative gain the powers to veto legislation, and the judiciary become independent from France. Napoleon’s popularity in France reaches a low point. What would Napoleon do?

His personality in OTL gives us some indication of how he might respond to this. Napoleon’s passion is soldiering, and in TTL he has failed in this twice now, all in the space of a decade. He’d likely feel a sense of personal failure, amplified by the achievements of his ancestors. Napoleon has also, at this point, lost much of his control over France and is disliked by the French people. He’d be blamed for prolonged warring and depriving France of peace, and, in subsequent years, for allowing the French Empire to decline. Napoleon’s likely response at this point would be to back off at this point and stay in recluse for a while.

This kind of action has precedent. In OTL in 1908, after a disastrous interview with the British press, Kaiser Wilhelm II was strongly criticised and mocked in Germany, and never again took a dominant role in foreign policy. It also seriously impacted his personal self-confidence. In TTL, Napoleon’s failure is far more severe than Wilhelm’s, and the repercussions are thus amplified. Napoleon takes a lengthy period away from governance, caused by feelings of shame, depression, and being resented.

Of course, in OTL Wilhelm II eventually recovered, and in TTL Napoleon IV would as well. But Napoleon, never particularly power-hungry by nature, would probably remain at least partially detached from governance. Napoleon would probably devote more of his attention to soldiering in wars- which is what he did in OTL- and, similar to Queen Victoria in BTL, shift the role of the monarchy into a more symbolic, figurehead nature. That’s not to assume that Napoleon is Cincinnati- Napoleon would still hold on to some power, probably establishing a situation similar to Britain c.1800. But just as Queen Victoria’s reinvention of the monarchy massively increased the monarchy’s popularity in Britain, a similar process would probably happen in France.

By the outbreak of the Great War, Napoleon wasn’t exactly a figurehead, but France could be classed as a democracy. Napoleon had, in the past decades, allowed the French legislature to act independently. He had, in the first decade of the 1900s, allowed the Corps legislatif to draft laws, but they had to be approved by Napoleon to be put into law But Napoleon, partially out of non-interest and mainly to regain popularity amongst the people, generally gave imperial assent to the laws put in front of him. For a decade or so after 1895, he was rarely seen by the French people and generally just approved laws and did little else. In the first decade of the 1900s, he began to act as an observer for wars again, and in the fifteen or so years before the Great War began to take in effort in philanthropy, just as Prince Albert did in OTL, but on a far greater scale. He expended much of his own money building public works, including museums, parks, and orphanages. These moves, coupled with a sense of pity amongst the French people and gratitude at Napoleon’s permission of democracy, restored Napoleon’s public opinion.

By the outbreak of the Great War, Napoleon was popular amongst the French people once again. The adoration he received was imperative to restoring his self-confidence, and by the 1920s he was ready to once again lead the nation from the front.

# European Supremacy | 1893-1910

## 1893 | Illyrian Federation declares support for Slavs in the Ottoman Empire

With the Federation of Illyria having been made independent two years before, pan-Slavism was more popular than ever because now the Illyrians could actually act independently. Many politicians advocated another war with the Ottomans to liberate the Albanians and Macedonians, adding them as ethnically homogenous states to the Federation of Illyria. There was initially debate as to whether to do this, with different political factions arguing different approaches. In the end, in 1893 they declared that if any South Slavic ethnic group were to revolt, they would support their rebellion by declaring war on the Ottomans to liberate them and give them a choice on whether to be independent or join the federation. This was feasible due to the considerable weakness of the Ottoman Empire at this time, and because the Illyrians were confident of Russian support in this matter.

Russia was seriously interesting in consolidating influence in the Balkans and establishing close relations with Illyria, and told the Illyrians that Russia was willing to support the Illyrians with money and arms if this occurred. The Illyrians gratefully accepted. The Ottomans, horrified, sent soldiers to the Balkans and established martial law there- but a rebellion would occur sooner or later.

1893, the year of this declaration, is often dated as the beginning of a period of European supremacy over the rest of the world. Subsequent years would see the division of the Ottoman Empire, China, and Africa. A new era had begun.

## 1897 | War of the Balkan League

[The Federation of Illyria’s declaration](#_1893_|_Illyrian) was put to the test in the Albanian revolt of 1897, a reaction to the martial law and brutal suppression of unrest by the Ottoman Empire for four consecutive years. Albanian nationalism in TTL is intensified by the Great Balkan War, although in BTL it was already an increasingly prevalent cultural force beforehand. The subsequent war lasted five months.

The War of the Balkan League is heavily similar to a war in OTL, the First Balkan War. This occurred just before WWI: in 1912-3. It is also similar to the 1877-8 Russo-Turkish War. In the First Balkan War, the Ottoman Empire was defeated by the Balkan League, a quadruple alliance consisting of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro. The war took seven months and saw the Balkan countries partition almost all of the Ottoman Empire’s territory in Europe between them. The Ottomans lost 83% of all their land in Europe. It is also similar to the Russo-Turkish War in that Russia becomes involved and helps win a swift five month victory.

The Balkan League exists in TTL too, being a multinational alliance of Illyria, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria, having been established in 1894. In OTL, this treaty was established in 1912, but in TTL it is far sooner due to heightened pan-Slavism, sudden Illyrian independence, and the increased weakness of the Ottoman Empire.

After the Albanian revolt of 1897, the Illyrian Federation immediately declares war on the Ottoman Empire to liberate the Albanians. The rest of the Balkan League declares war, as does Russia, which marches to occupy Constantinople. The Macedonians in the empire also rise in revolt: in OTL, [guerrilla warfare in Macedonia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian_Struggle) begins in 1893, and in TTL it starts earlier due to heightened pan-Slavism and Ottoman weakness. The Macedonians stage a revolution.

The Ottoman Empire is soon defeated. The 1897 Treaty of Sofiya was negotiated between the Balkan League and the Ottoman Empire. Its provisions were as follows:

* The Principality of Albania and the Principality of Macedonia to voluntarily join the Federation of Illyria, which is to be renamed to the Federation of Yugoslavia
* Territorial gains for Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece
* The Ottoman Empire to retain eastern Thrace, and the lands surrounding Adrianople and Constantinople

In 1899, Montenegrins voted to join the Federation of Yugoslavia, and were accepted.

However, this did *not* count for the Russians, who still occupied Constantinople, Midia, Adrianople, and Thrace. It now became apparent why the Russians had so enthusiastically joined the war- note that in OTL the Russians supported the Balkan League but did not actually declare war on the Ottomans. The Russians had wanted Constantinople.

The Russians had wanted Constantinople for centuries now. Catherine the Great had actually named her son Constantine to emphasise how much she wanted it, for example. Russia had, as early as the 15th century, believed that Moscow was the rightful successor of Byzantium as the ‘Third Rome’. This was because the Russians supported and enforced Christianity, and were an imperial autocracy. The reasons for acquiring Constantinople were mainly strategic however. Constantinople was an incredibly wealthy and powerful city. At several points it was one of or *the* most populated city in the world, and it controlled the straits from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea.

Russia has the opportunity to take Constantinople in OTL several times during the 19th century but doesn’t. This is because Russia knows the other European great powers will never accept Russia making such a massive gain in mainland Europe. The 19th century in Europe was all about maintaining a balance of power in the continent, and one country making too many gains would be met by the other great powers containing them. But even in OTL, the European great powers (Britain and France) agreed with Russia that should the Entente win WWI, the Russians would get Constantinople. The idea of a Russian Constantinople was at no point ridiculous or out of reach.

In TTL, the Russians take Constantinople because Europe is exhausted from the Great Balkan War, and Russia bets that if Russia makes heavy concessions elsewhere, she will be permitted to hold Constantinople as the European powers won’t want war. Therefore, the Russians separately negotiate the Treaty of Moscow with the Ottomans. Its provisions are that all remaining Ottoman territory west of the Bosporus, and Ottoman territory in the tip of Anatolia would be annexed to Russia. The Ottomans are too weak to resist. The Russians make Constantinople the Russian capital, and rename it to the Slavic name.

Constantinople is now Tsargrad.

## 1898 | Congress of St Petersburg; Scramble for China begins; Collapse of Qing China

Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and Austria all protest the Russian annexation of Constantinople *heavily*, and openly threaten war should Russia not withdraw immediately. Russia had anticipated this. Tsar Nicholas II invited several European countries to attend a congress which he would host in St Petersburg. Representatives for eleven nations were in attendance: Russia, Britain, France, Austria, Italy, Germany, Illyria, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, and Montenegro.

Nicholas II was willing to make any concessions in order to keep Tsargrad. It was true that the European great powers did not want another war- they were not yet ready. It had been 15 years since the [Great Balkan War](#_Great_Balkan_War), and whilst by now the European great powers could wage another war if needed, it suited them more to extort the Russians for concessions. These concessions came in the form of specific concessions for each country, and in the form of the Scramble for China.

Russia gave no specific concessions to France or Italy, who weren’t strong enough to wage war with Russia without the support of other great powers. Russia and Britain had, for maybe a decade or so now, been engaged in a political confrontation in South and Central Asia competing for influence. This engagement was called the Great Game, and existed in OTL, but began in 1830. In TTL, Russia agrees to essentially lose the Great Game. Nicholas pledges that Russia will cease all activities in these regions and completely withdraw Russia’s sphere of influence from there, giving Britain impunity to expand there.

Russia also needs to placate Germany, and does so by giving Germany some of her colonial possessions. Germany in BTL is looking to expand her colonial empire, and Russia has one. Russia in TTL still owns Alaska. In OTL, Russia sold it to the USA in the 1860s, as the Crimean War with Britain convinced her that Alaska could easily be seized by them, giving Britain (in OTL their arch-rival) a presence right next door. This doesn’t happen in TTL because the Anglo-Russian Great Game begins much later and there is no major war between them like the Crimean War. Russia therefore holds Alaska.

Russia is uncomfortable with having Germany next door, but Germany will not accept Tsargrad without heavy concessions, and the great powers like the idea of Germany being next door to Russia to help maintain a balance of power. But Alaska won’t be enough to compensate for Constantinople. Russia thus agrees to give Germany Alaska, Chukotka, and Kamchatka.

The Balkans don’t threaten Russia with war, but tacitly they are slightly concerned with Russia becoming too influential in the region. Romania and Bulgaria covertly speak with Illyria in trying to limit Russian influence. The Balkan countries procure certain guarantees from Russia regarding their sovereignty, nominally preventing Russian interference in elections, diplomatic affairs, wars, etc. Russia grants these less because she fears Balkan military strength and more because she just wants to maintain positive relations here.

Russia also renounces all claims to Anatolia. These concessions aren’t really *enough*, however. In OTL, Britain was only willing to countenance Russian holding Constantinople in the case of her winning WWI. Losing the Great Game wouldn’t be sufficient. This is where China comes in.

In OTL, China wasn’t actually partitioned between the European great powers. Certain regions were annexed outright, but whilst European intervention in China was extremely extensive, this was mainly limited to spheres of influence being set up in the country. China came close to territorial partitions and economic vassalage- just what happened in India. There was no great, overbearing reason why China could not be subjugated. In BTL in the 1880s, China actually began modernising and growing in power, even compelling Russia to acknowledge that China could pose a serious military threat- the time was ripe for the European great powers to intervene fast and hard. This could be done as China, though a rising power, was still vulnerable, and lost wars to Japan in the 1890s. The point is that the West began to see China as a threat that could still be subjugated- but only if action were taken *now*.

In OTL, there were reasons why China wasn’t partitioned like India. Firstly, China was larger, more populous, and unified. Its population greatly disliked foreigners, as evidenced by the Boxer Rebellion, and China would thus be hard to pacify. Logistically, it was considerably far from Europe. Secondly, the European great powers competed over the wealth that China possessed and fought amongst themselves, rather than cooperating to subdue the region.

In TTL, this is precisely what the West does. Nicholas II proposes that Russia relinquish her influence in the region, but whilst all the European great powers are present, a mutually agreed upon and enforced situation to China can be worked out. Nicholas argues that this would help maintain the balance of power by making the other great powers wealthier and with access to more resources. They accept.

A total dismemberment of all of China is too difficult to implement and maintain, but certain regions can be annexed. In OTL, Britain has a sphere of influence in Chinese-held Tibet as British India was next door, and in TTL the Congress permits Britain to annex Tibet. France has influence in OTL in South China as French Indochina was next door. In TTL France has been focussed more on Europe than colonisation, and she is currently seen as a weakening power. However, in the interests of a balance of power, France is given some of South China, although it is less land than the French had a sphere of influence on in OTL. Germany is given Shandong. Italy, with no pre-existing influence in the region, is given Manchuria, which Russia previously holds. Austria, declining in influence and with no interest in colonisation, is given lucrative economic treaties with China designed to enrich the former at the expense of the latter. Indeed, it is agreed that the Western powers will cooperate in forcing China to establish international settlements (like the Shanghai International Settlement established in OTL) and more unequal treaties.

In OTL, Russian dominance in Manchuria prompts the Russo-Japanese War, which Japan wins. In TTL, Russia moves into Manchuria several decades earlier due to the [Franco-Russian War](#_1869-1872_|_The) diminishing Russian influence in the Balkans. Japan at this point is not comfortable challenging Russia. When Italy then acquires Manchuria, Japan becomes more confident. In BTL, Japan offers to recognise foreign influence in Manchuria in exchange for recognition of Korea in the Japanese sphere of influence. In OTL, Russia rejects this. In TTL, however, Italy would probably accept. Italian Manchuria is a remote and thus vulnerable possession, not connected to core Italian territory. Italy would recognise that Manchuria was vulnerable, and seek a deal with Japan in order to protect it. Thus, there is no Russo-Japanese or Italo-Japanese War. It is more likely that during the subsequent collapse of the Qing dynasty into various warring polities, Japan would simply expand into mainland China.

The following decades see European great powers declaring wars on China to enforce their claims. With China being faced with many wars at once, they collapse early. The European great powers enforce their claims (although in subsequent decades they would face sustained unrest and rebellions) and the Qing dynasty as a result collapses early. In OTL, they collapse in 1912 into a period of instability characterised by warlords holding small polities: essentially, it was the [Warlord Era](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warlord_Era) come early.

Africa would soon follow.

## 1910 | Congress of Munich; Scramble for Africa begins

The Scramble for Africa still occurs in this TTL, but around three decades later than in OTL. Why is this? The Scramble still occurs because the reasons for the European colonisation of Africa still remain. Africa still has extensive resources, and European imperialism still spurs European countries to colonise more land to accumulate prestige and compete with rivals. It is inevitable in any timeline wherein Europe has the capability that they would colonise Africa. However, the Scramble occurs three decades later because Europe doesn’t have the capability until later.

The Scramble for Africa begins in OTL in 1884 after Bismarck establishes a formal Congress to partition Africa, spurred by frequent disputes between European powers. That is to say, it begins after colonisation of Africa is already partially underway to the degree where European powers start coming into conflict. In TTL, this stage is not reached until the late 1900s. The 1880s and 1890s sees limited European colonisation as the various belligerents are recovering from the [Great Balkan War](#_Great_Balkan_War). By the time European powers recover and begin colonising Africa in the 1890s, the [Scramble for China](#_1898_|_Congress) begins before this colonisation can begin in earnest.

The increased European intrusion into China causes increased unrest there. Events like the [Boxer rebellion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boxer_Rebellion) would be far more commonplace in TTL, and occupy the European powers’ attention temporarily. The European powers are able to divert soldiers and resources in time because the agitation is eventually suppressed, and because the collapse of the Qing dynasty in the early 1900s causes many Chinese to serve in Warlords’ armies.

But by the late 1900s or so the European powers would probably once again have the means to move into Africa, and as soon as they would have the means to, they would do so. In BTL, the Scramble is prompted by various factors, mainly conflicts between European powers (namely Britain and France) over land near Egypt, and Germany starting to launch its own expeditions. In TTL, these events simply happen later.

Bismarck in TTL still serves the German Empire, and in BTL with British support, Bismarck calls on various European nations (and the USA) to come up with a joint African policy. Bismarck wanted in BTL to enhance German prestige and aid diplomacy by establishing Germany as a reconciling/peace-making nation in Europe.

Britain, the dominant world power in BTL, would receive the greatest proportion of land. In TTL Germany, having industrialised and unified a decade before than in OTL, is more powerful and thus receives a greater amount of land, mainly at the expense of Portugal, who in TTL is considerably weaker and is not invited to the Congress. Spain is stronger in TTL and gains more land. Italy is weaker, having unified later and having to recover from the destruction wrought by the Parabellum, and thus has less land and influence. Belgium does not exist in TTL and doesn’t receive land, although the Netherlands is awarded some land due to its strength and alliance with Britain. France has recovered from its previous wars in TTL and is slightly stronger in TTL as in OTL- despite being weakened by wars, it is still larger and more industrialised. France is in TTL consistently stronger than in OTL apart from the period just after the Great Balkan War. It gains approximately the same amount of land.

Britain in TTL controls Egypt, Sudan, and the Horn of Africa + surrounding territory. This is mainly to secure the route to India. They also control South Africa, just as in OTL. Finally, they control eastern Congo, allowing the construction of a railway from Cape Town to Cairo. Britain also gets northern Ethiopia as she doesn’t have to compete with Italy and France here, allowing her to conquer the region unopposed by them. However, the comparative strength of Ethiopian forces to other African countries, the mountainous terrain, and the lack of natural resources means that a full conquest of the region isn’t worth it for Britain. Most of Britain's held territories have been acquired prior to the Congress, however.

Germany in TTL controls East Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, and Angola. Spain controls the Western Sahara and the West African coast. France controls Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and West Africa (including Benin). The Netherlands gets the remainder of the Congo. Italy gets the Cameroons and some of Equatorial Africa.

Morocco remains independent, competed over by Britain, Spain and France, who are played against each other. Madagascar also remains independent as it’s competed over by Britain and France: France in OTL gains Madagascar in the 1880s, but in TTL France is occupied with the Great Balkan War.

Countries like Ethiopia and Siam were in OTL able to preserve independence in the late 19th century by playing other European powers against each other. If multiple European powers sought to bring a country into its sphere of influence, the country in question could take advantage of this. Often in OTL, competing European powers would compromise by allowing the target country to retain independence. The Great Game in OTL helped Persia and Afghanistan stay independent as Britain and Russia competed here- however, Nicholas II ending the Great Game means that in TTL Britain also gets Persia.

Madagascar is also helped by its distance from other colonies. Had Madagascar been in West Africa, an area where France already had influence in BTL, the Congress would probably have just given it to France. Because it was so remote, however, Britain contests the claim, leading to no resolution being taken.

Morocco is annexed by France in OTL, with the French conquest beginning as late as 1907. Morocco was in OTL nearly a trigger for WWI. The First Moroccan Crisis occurred when Germany demanded Morocco to be independent in 1905, and the *Second* Moroccan Crisis occurred when Germany wanted territory in Morocco in 1911. Morocco is just as contentious, if not more in TTL. A brief history of Morocco is needed.

France is considerably stronger in TTL than in OTL and Napoleon II begins the process of extending French influence over Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripoli- the French would like to influence Egypt, but this area is in BTL fiercely held by the British, who see it as vital for securing their route to India. In BTL, the French take an interest in Morocco to secure Algeria. In OTL the Germans challenge France’s growing control in Morocco. Britain actually supports France here, and the resulting crisis in 1905 significantly enhances Anglo-French relations and enhances the Entente. In TTL, the conflict is not between France and Germany, but France and Britain/Spain.

Britain is France’s arch-enemy throughout TTL, and is realistically going to try and curb French influence in any way possible. Moreover, in TTL France and Germany are *not* arch-enemies and actually largely cooperate. France’s antagonist here is Britain, not Germany. Britain justifies its intervention here by taking the position of supporting Spain. In OTL, Spain was determined to also check French influence in Morocco, but was too weak to do anything about it, and the French mollified them by giving them a very small amount of territory. Spain is stronger in TTL however, and is backed by Britain. Therefore, as neither Britain nor France can decide on who gets Morocco, it remains independent for now.

# Nationalism, Imperialism, Apocalypse | 1910-1929

## 1910-1929 | The Long-Term Causes of War

A large-scale war between the European great powers was inevitable in BTL. The long-term causes of this are common buzzwords when describing this period of history, but they are appropriate terms. These buzzwords are nationalism, imperialism, and xenophobia.

The author Roger Osborne explains this very effectively in his book *Civilisation: A new History of the Western World*. A war between the European great powers was inevitable for several reasons. Xenophobia made each country despise each other. Nationalism made each country want to go to war to win more land and power and to become great. Imperialism made each country compete with each other for empire. These factors all combined to make a war pretty much inevitable. Each country *wanted* to go to war with each other. They wanted to win a decisive victory which would confirm them as the world’s greatest power. And because each country *wanted* to go to war, the direct trigger was irrelevant.

This state of affairs began to materialise in OTL at around the 1880s or so. The Scramble for Africa is often credited as a reason for this shared mindset because it amplified imperialism in Europe. The same thing occurs in TTL with the [Scramble for China](#_1898_|_Congress) and the [Scramble for Africa](#_1910_|_Congress).

Nationalism, imperialism, and xenophobia all transform Europe into a powder keg, and any region of instability could provide the spark to set it off. In OTL, this happened to be the assassination of the Archduke of Franz Ferdinand. But the situation *could* have been resolved peacefully- previous crises in the Edwardian Era had been. The long-term causes of WWI in BTL are more complex and nuanced than a simple assassination, and are ideological, rather than political, causes.

## 1910-1929 | The Development of Factions

Although the long-term causes of WWI developed in the aftermath of the [Great Balkan War](#_Great_Balkan_War), no Great War occurred. This was mainly, of course, because the European powers were too exhausted to fight, but it took half a century for a war to occur because the Great Balkan War saw the breakdown of factions. Without this, there could be no Great War. A war between two countries, no matter how powerful, is not a world war. It’s just a war. In OTL, if Austria and Russia were in no factions (i.e. no multinational alliances), then WWI wouldn’t have *been* WWI, it would have been the Austro-Russian War. The development of factions in Europe was a necessary prerequisite for the elevation of a regular war into a world war.

The 1880s and 1890s saw a flexible balance of power system with all European countries viewing each other as rivals and using a conference system for the resolution of disputes. This phenomenon occurred in OTL and was called the second phase of the Concert of Europe, wherein great powers worked together in conferences. In the 1910s and 1920s (with the 1900s being a sort of transition period between the two systems), this system gave way and was replaced by countries gathering into large multinational alliances. This was facilitated by the continued breakdown of the Ottoman Empire, China, and the growth of imperial power across the world. This meant that the Concert of Europe’s goal of preserving stability and balance was made almost impossible by the sheer number of opportunities and areas of uncertainty in the world.

As nationalism, imperialism, and xenophobia on the continent intensified, and the European powers began to first contemplate and then desire a war, factions did form. The process is the same in BTL. The difference is the countries in each faction.

The Entente in OTL consists of France, Britain, and Russia. This alliance would, of course, be completely impossible in TTL. The enmity between France and Britain/Russia is just too great. So who would France be allies with?

Though it may sound surprising, it would likely be Germany. Germany in OTL was destined to be the enemy of France because the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine made relations between the two countries implacably hostile. Nothing like this exists in TTL. [France willingly grants Germany independence](#_1852_|_German), and focuses on developing relations between them. Bismarck, a major political figure in BTL, was a pragmatist, and therefore wouldn’t oppose an alliance with France out of sheer dogmatic hatred. He’d likely recognise that an alliance of France could potentially be in Germany’s interests, and wait and see which major power (France or Britain) would be most advantageous to back.

It is very likely that Germany and Britain would develop hostile relations, which would make the two countries enemies in BTL. This is because the reasons why Anglo-German relations deteriorated in OTL are still valid in TTL. Britain simply couldn’t accept the rising power and influence of Germany, and the construction of an empire which equalled the power of her own. Britain in the decades leading up to WWI was continually alarmed by the expansionism of Germany. With Germany industrialising and unifying a decade early, they’d likely be even more of a threat to Britain in TTL. The build-up of the German navy, in OTL a major cause of Anglo-German rivalry, would also probably occur in TTL. Granted, there would be no reckless Kaiser Wilhelm II to accelerate this process and cause a full-on arms race: Bismarck would avoid this to minimise tension.

But Germany would have to build up a navy to properly enforce her rule in Africa and China. Although the avoidance of a full naval arms race would mean that Anglo-German tension wouldn’t be *as* high, it would still be high as Britain would definitely recognise that her naval pre-eminence was being challenged. Britain would probably eventually therefore still produce a dreadnought. There were other causes to Anglo-German tension in this period too: for example continuous espionage between the two countries. This actually caused major spy scares in Britain and the creation of the British Secret Service Bureau (the forerunner of MI5). Due to tension between the two tensions still existing, this would probably still be the case, leading to a vicious cycle of increasing tension. Bismarck would eventually recognise that British and German interests were inevitably going to conflict and align Germany with France instead.

The thing is that France doesn’t have many friends in Europe, and this would have been obvious to [Napoleon IV](#_Napoleon_IV). He would have attempted to find some allies in Europe in the early 20th century. The question is, of course, *who*- France has, over the past century, gone to war with almost everyone. But sudden realignments *are* possible, and have precedent in OTL- the alliance between Britain and France in the 1900s was highly unusual, and a contradiction of centuries of loathing. Such rapid realignments are not just limited to this century. The [Diplomatic Revolution of 1756](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diplomatic_Revolution) saw France and Austria, longstanding enemies for centuries, suddenly became allies. This could actually happen again. Austria dislikes France, but does not despise her. Austria currently dislikes Russia more than France, who is a greater threat to Austrian interests. As Russia is an inevitable enemy of France in any scenario, in order to Austria to oppose Russia she would have to join the Entente. Another major reason why Austria would join France’s side is Bismarck, who in BTL makes it a major foreign policy goal to ally with Austria. Austria and Germany are bound together in BTL by a sense of fraternity, and Austria allying with Germany is the most probable state of affairs. Austria would therefore join France’s side.

Bismarck in BTL would seek to create a system of alliances. Bismarck in OTL had actually established alliances with Austria-Hungary and Russia, but Wilhelm II later dismissed Bismarck and let the Russian alliance lapse. Bismarck was so desperate to make alliances in OTL because, with France an implacable enemy, Bismarck did not want to fight a two-front war with France and another neighbour. Bismarck knows that Italy is going to be an enemy of France no matter what, and Germany will have to fight a southern front. Bismarck is therefore most opposed to fighting an enemy in the north: Prussia. Prussia, being an enemy of France and Bavaria, would be very likely to make an alliance with Britain. Bismarck is determined to procure at least Prussian neutrality. Bismarck would likely achieve this by emphasising pan-Germanism and a national reconciliation between Bavaria and Prussia. Considering Bismarck’s considerable ability to secure alliances in OTL, it is likely that he would succeed in securing Prussian neutrality in TTL. With France to the west and Poland to the east, this helps secure Bismarck’s position.

Poland would definitely ally with France. France released Poland without an unnecessary war to sour relations, and with Russia and Prussia likely seeking to divide Poland again, Poland would naturally gravitate towards France for protection. With Russia aligning with Britain, Poland would regardless align with France simply because Poland wouldn’t fight with Russia.

Russia would definitely side with Britain. Both of these nations have despised France the most out of any others. With Russia conceding the Great Game to Britain, nothing really sours their relations anymore. The threat of a common enemy would undoubtedly unite them.

Italy, another committed enemy of France, would also undoubtedly side with Britain.

The Netherlands were neutral in OTL but the [Flanders Insurgency](#_1892-1895_|_Flanders) would have turned them against France, and with no Congress of Vienna in TTL none of the Low Countries would be neutral. The French attack of the Netherlands would alienate them, and Britain would inevitably ally with them to ensure that the Channel ports were in good hands. The Netherlands would join Britain.

Spain would probably side with Britain as well, considering the British support for Spain in Morocco, which would be the most likely trigger for war in TTL. France and Spain have historically had good relations, but it is entirely possible for relations to deteriorate over the course of a few decades.

This puts Portugal in a difficult position: on the one hand, they have been allies with Britain for a long time. On the other hand, they now hate the Spanish. The idea of Portugal fighting with Spain with the Spanish having annexed half of the country would be anathema to them. Portugal would probably just stay neutral.

Switzerland in TTL would probably end up being neutral. Their neutrality in OTL was established by the Congress of Vienna, which doesn’t happen in TTL, and Switzerland becomes a French client state. However, Switzerland was continually unstable when under Napoleon I, and Napoleon I was forced to make concessions such as turning Switzerland from a unitary republic to a federation. Switzerland, by this point, would be independent. They’d likely be neutral. Even before OTL’s Congress of Vienna, the number of wars the Swiss have carried out is extremely low compared to other countries. There has long been a trend towards neutrality and isolationism even before these concepts were enshrined into international law. Although Switzerland would be aligned with France, a full alliance is unlikely. Switzerland would be neutral.

Prussia despises France just as much as Britain does, but would probably be reluctant to go to war with Germany. It’s difficult to predict how Prussia would react: on the one hand, there is undoubtedly a rivalry between Prussia and Bavaria, but on the other hand Prussia still sees itself as German. Even in OTL, the war between Prussia and Austria was called the ‘Brothers’ War’ and the Prussians didn’t even march into Vienna. In TTL, Prussia would be very unlikely to engage in a great war with Germany, a war wherein each belligerent strives for total victory and complete destruction. Prussia would thus probably stay neutral.

The Ottomans, despite despising France for regularly annexing their country, would almost definitely be too weak to actually fight, and therefore also stay neutral- at least initially.

Yugoslavia would also dislike France greatly, but be too weak/disinterested to join. Just as with the Ottomans, this could change over time.

Sweden, Denmark, and Norway (Norway in BTL gains independence in the early 20th century) have each been historically aligned against and with France, but are too disinterested in current conflict now to join.

The names of the factions in TTL are slightly arbitrary, but the French faction would almost definitely be called the Entente, just as in OTL. The British faction *wouldn’t* be called the Coalition however, as the multinational alliance would be assembled before the actual outbreak of war. It would probably just be called the Allies or something.

So, in summary, upon the outbreak of the Great War the Entente consists of: France, Germany, Austria, and Poland. The Allies consist of Britain, Russia, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain.

With the alignment of Europe into factions, the stage for war would be set. A single entanglement between two powers would drag the world into war.

## 1920 | Austro-Bohemian Empire declared

The Austrian Empire in OTL contained many different ethnic groups. There were Austrians (a Germanic people), Hungarians, South Slavs, and Czechs. In 1867, the Austrian Empire became the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with Hungary being governed by a separate parliament and prime minister. Austria and Hungary would both be ruled by the same monarch and be in the same country- but that same country would have more than one state. From 1878, Bosnia-Herzegovina was jointly administered. Archduke Ferdinand during his lifetime often expressed the desire to give the Slavs a ‘comfortable, fair, and good life’.

Before his assassination, he was thinking of implementing flags to establish a separate South Slav state within the Empire, potentially establishing an Austro-Magyar-Slavic Empire. Previous archdukes would have done this, but the Hungarians protested vehemently to such measures in order to avoid competing with another state for influence. The Czechs in TTL agitated for independence, initiating in the Revolutions of 1848, and this unrest became an important political factor within the Empire. During WWI, Czech politicians advocated for full independence.

In TTL, the situation of Austria is *completely* different. After the Revolutions of 1852, the Empire excludes Hungary, and since the creation of the Illyrian Provinces, the Empire excludes the Balkans as well. This actually makes Austria a much more stable country than in OTL. In OTL, the Austrian Empire is made so unstable by the presence of competing, agitating ethnic groups, that it is constantly at risk of collapse, and WWI causes the state to simply explode. This isn’t really a risk in TTL. But there is *one* ethnic group still in the Empire that wants more autonomy: the Czechs.

In OTL, the Austrian Empire doesn’t grant any concessions to the Czechs, but this would probably change in TTL. The Hungarians gaining independence from Austria in 1852 would inspire the Czechs to agitate more to achieve the same result. Moreover, the elevated South Slavic nationalism in TTL caused by the Illyrian Movement and Great Balkan War would also inspire the North Slavs in the Austrian Empire (i.e. the Czechs) to agitate for independence. Austria would naturally be very reluctant to enact a compromise with the Czechs similar to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867.

However, consistent Czech nationalism, rebellion, and unrest would eventually grind the Austrians down. Moreover, there would be no Hungarian state to resist other ethnic groups getting their own state. The Austrians would have a greater capacity to suppress Czech unrest, however, as they don’t have to simultaneously suppress Hungarians and Slavs. In TTL, the Austrians enact a ‘compromise’ with the Bohemians in 1920, establishing the Austro-Bohemian Empire.

The Bohemian state would likely have close relations with the Poles as both are North Slavic ethnic groups, and both are trying to maintain independence/autonomy in the face of a larger empire (being Austria and Russia respectively). Close Bohemian-Polish relations would reinforce the Austrian Empire’s alliance with France as the Bohemians would be reluctant to fight Poles, and the Poles are allied with France.

## 1923 | Napoleon IV dies; Napoleon V replaces him

[Napoleon IV](#_Napoleon_IV) dies of old age, and his son [Napoleon V](#_Napoleon_V) replaces him. Napoleon V existed in OTL but is *not* the same as Napoleon V in TTL, for reasons explained [here](#_Napoleon_V). Napoleon V in TTL is a fictitious character. His personality is therefore fabricated- however, it is essentially just a combination of those of his relatives, namely his father and grandmother.

## 1929 | The Trigger for War; France in Morocco

In BTL, there were various crises in the 20th century which almost led to war and were eventually resolved. In OTL, examples include the First Moroccan Crisis, Pig War, Bosnian Crisis, Agadir Crisis, etc. These didn’t cause war, however. WWI was caused by the July Crisis in 1914, caused by the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. Essentially, the short-term cause for WWI was the Balkans. Bismarck actually predicted beforehand that if a war in Europe were to occur, it would be because of ‘some damn foolish thing in the Balkans.’ But any of the previous crises in Morocco could also have led to war. The trigger of war was determined less by the geographical region and more by the desire of the great powers to engage in a war.

In TTL, the short-term trigger for war is Morocco, not the Balkans. The Balkans are more stable in TTL due to the War of the Balkan League being different to OTL’s First Balkan War, and as such the most commonly predicted flashpoint for war is Morocco rather than the Balkans. Morocco gains more attention in TTL because Britain and Spain both oppose French intervention in Morocco and escalate tensions there.

In BTL, various crises in Morocco arise in the 20th century. In OTL, there are two, but in TTL due to the increased focus on Morocco there would be more than this, in this case four. The European powers resolve the first three crises but by around 1930 they feel ready to begin a war. This happens in around 1930 as this is around thirty years after the beginning of the Congress system. In OTL, WWI happens around thirty years after the beginning of the Congress system (1884 and 1914). The duration of time between the genesis of this system and the breakout of war is the time because in BTL, a period of time is needed for nationalism and imperialism to increase and for the diplomatic situation in Europe to change. There is no reason why in TTL this gradual change would take more or less time than in OTL.

The short term cause for war thus in TTL occurs in 1929 with the Third Moroccan Crisis. It is necessary to examine what the previous Moroccan crises were to get an idea of this.

The First Moroccan Crisis occurs in OTL in 1905. Germany challenges France’s growing control over Morocco and attempt to establish a protectorate there. Germany isn’t trying to curb French expansion, but rather to enhance their own prestige- and they fail. The result is a strengthening of Anglo-French relations and Germany being far more willing to go to war.

The First Moroccan Crisis in TTL occurs far sooner, in 1858. This is because France moves to invade Morocco far sooner in TTL. In BTL, France invades Algeria in 1830. France in BTL later moves to invade Morocco and Tunis in order to secure her grasp on Algeria by preventing independent/hostile states to be neighbouring it. This is why in OTL France eventually moves to invade Morocco and Tunis. In TTL, France is considerably stronger for various reasons (much more land, more competent leadership, industrialisation, etc) and can therefore move to secure Morocco and Tunisia much earlier. Napoleon III in BTL focuses on imperial expansion and colonisation, and in TTL would therefore target North Africa as soon as he could. Napoleon III thus initially moves into Morocco in 1858.

Both Spain and Britain would object to this. Spain in BTL has its own ambitions for Morocco but it is only in TTL that Spain is strong enough to actually challenge France here. Spain doesn’t expect to overpower France, but she does anticipate that Britain will intervene if she sees any opportunities to. Spain appeals for British support, and Britain enthusiastically accepts, contesting the French invasion. Neither nation would want to go to war, being slightly exhausted from the War of the Eighth Coalition and wanting to focus on expanding colonially, and it is likely that they’d work out a compromise. The result was a French protectorate in Morocco, though with limited control, and Britain would be able to trade with Morocco freely. This satisfied both parties- Napoleon had still expanded the Empire, and Britain had changed a full annexation to a limited protectorate and had preserved her economic interests.

The Second Moroccan Crisis in OTL occurs in 1911 when France forces the Moroccan sultan not to sign treaties with any other countries without French approval, and Germany intervenes by sending gunboats to Morocco.

The Second Moroccan Crisis in TTL occurs in 1867. It is inevitable that France would try and expand her control over Morocco and would force the sultan into not signing treaties independently in TTL as well as in OTL. This occurs almost a decade after the First Moroccan Crisis as Napoleon spends time fighting the Illyrian War. Britain would almost definitely contest this- however, this would be less because Britain cared about Morocco, which was in truth of little interest to her, and more to test the alliance between France and Germany. Indeed, the Second Moroccan Crisis in OTL was Germany testing the alliance between France and Britain. Because Britain in TTL is the aggressor, Germany would probably side with France, and Britain would back off.

France consolidates her influence in Morocco and gradually erodes the powers of the sultan, but without a sudden incremental change the opportunity for a crisis is absent. This opportunity comes in 1929 with the Third Moroccan Crisis when France attempts an outright annexation of Morocco. French troops move into Morocco to place the sultan under custody. Spain formally appeals to Britain to preserve Moroccan independence, who sends gunboats to Morocco. The crisis escalates. A resolution is not found. Britain and Spain bilaterally declare war on France on behalf of the sultan of Morocco. The Entente and Allies become involved.

The Great War begins.

# The Great War | 1929-1934

## 1929-1934 | Great War Technology

Great War technology in TTL is more advanced than Great War technology in OTL. The Great Balkan War served as a major impetus for military technology innovation, and during the 20th century, the looming threat of war caused further military research and development.

However, breakthrough technologies specific to trench warfare- for example, the tank- are absent from TTL because although countries have experience fighting in trenches due to the Great Balkan War, the lack of trench *warfare* as such means that the colossal amount of resources, innovation, and dedication required to develop a tank has not materialised.

The Maxim gun was invented in 1884 in BTL, meaning that the European great powers have no experience in countering machine guns in BTL. In TTL, because the Great War occurs 15 years later, machine guns are more advanced, and militaries have a greater sense of the importance of them. For example, in OTL in 1912 the US Army issues each regiment with four machine guns, and by 1919 it is 336 machine guns per regiment. In TTL, the French Army issues each regiment with 36 machine guns per regiment in 1928.

Artillery is also far more advanced. Many artillery developments made during WWI in OTL are made in the pre-war years in TTL. By 1929, artillery is rifled, with hydraulic recoil mechanisms and high-explosive shells. Anti-aircraft guns were also developed before the war due to the advances in aircraft technology. Artillery shells designed to destroy barbed wire were also developed before the war as barbed wire was used extensively in the Great Balkan War. However, advances like the creeping barrage, counter-battery fire, artillery sound ranging, box barrages, etc come during the Great War itself.

## 1929-1934 | The Nature of the War

## 1929-1934 | The Course of the War

## 1929-1934 | New Belligerents

## 1934 | Treaty of Tsargrad

The Allies win the Great War, with the Entente being decisively defeated.

Just like OTL’s Great War, the Great War in TTL is an ‘industrial war’ (the faction with the greatest industry is victorious), and the Allies simply have more combined industrial power. With France and Germany, the main countries of the Entente, collapsing into revolution, the Allies are able to seize victory.

The Treaty of Tsargrad wasn’t quite as harsh as the Allies wanted it to be due to the French and German Revolutions, but the vast majority of the Allies’ war goals were realised because the Entente simply wasn’t able to resist.

The provisions of the Treaty of Tsargrad were as follows:

* France to bear guilt for the war and to pay £10,000,000,000 to the Allies
* All ethnic-German lands held by France to be made into a new state, the Republic of the Rhine
* Morocco to become a joint Anglo-Spanish protectorate
* Walloonia to become an independent state consisting of lands where Walloons are an ethnic majority
* Italy to annex Piedmont, Aosta Valley, Tunisia, Tripoli, and all ethnic Italian lands in Austria
* Spain to annex Pyrénées-Atlantiques, Hautes-Pyrénées, Pyrénées-Orientales, Ariége, and southern Haute-Geronne
* The Netherlands to annex all majority-Dutch French lands
* Switzerland to be given the option to annex Valais
* Algeria to be made an independent state under Anglo-Spanish supervision
* The Republic of Warsaw to be partitioned between Russia and Prussia
* Prussia to annex Brandenburg and Posen from Germany
* Russia to annex the remaining Polish lands
* Austria-Bohemia to be partitioned into Austria and Bohemia, with Bohemian territory to include ethnic-Slovak lands
* West and East Galicia to be made an independent Republic of Galicia
* Austria and Bohemia to be forbidden from making an alliance or union in perpetuity
* Yugoslavia to annex Croatia from Austria
* Spain to annex all previously French lands in Africa above the 21st line of latitude
* Britain to annex all German land in Africa except Angola
* The Netherlands to annex Angola, the Cameroons, and French equatorial Africa
* Prussia to annex the remainder of French West Africa

# The Rise of Socialism | 1933-1934

## 1933 | Russian Revolution

## 1933-1934 | Second French Revolution

In OTL, communism and socialism have a long history in France, and communists have taken power several times. Communist views in France date back to the 18th century and were widely propagated by the French Revolution. For example, the Jacobins supported the idea of redistributing wealth equally among the people, and radical thinkers continually espoused communist ideas. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, for example, declared that ‘property is theft’.

The egalitarian ideas of communism and socioeconomic ideas of socialism were widely popular in French revolutionary circles by the 1830s and 1840s. The Revolutions of 1848 saw substantial socialist activity, and socialist ideas became even more popular. Socialism actually became implemented in 1871 due to the social turmoil of the Franco-Prussian War: socialists seized control of Paris and created the [Paris Commune](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris_Commune). For the majority of the 20th century, communism has been ‘[an enduring presence on the French political scene](https://history.wisc.edu/publications/rural-communism-in-france-1920-1939/)’. The French Section of the Communist International was founded in the aftermath of WWI, in 1920. After WWII, the USA was seriously concerned that France would become communist. This was a major reason for the implementation of the Marshall Plan later. For a decade after WWII, the French Communist Party was actually in government, albeit in a coalition led by Charles de Gaulle.

France nearly became communist in OTL despite winning both wars. Losing a war as comparatively minor as the Franco-Prussian War caused Paris to become socialist. In TTL, the immense socioeconomic stresses of the British blockade, brutal war, and losing the Great War causes the entire country to undergo a second French Revolution.

In OTL, the French Army became wracked by mutinies in 1917 after the unsuccessful and costly Second Battle of the Aisne in the Nivelle Offensive. Soldiers still stayed in their trenches and defended, however, they just refused to attack. The Germans actually didn’t know about these mutinies, one of the most severe intelligence failures of the whole war. The mutinies were supressed by a combination of military justice and a few incentives, namely an end to mass offensives and longer/more frequent leave. The mutinies were *not* political or pacifistic in nature: they were entirely motivated by despair at failed offensives and the belief that offensives would never prevail against machine guns.

In TTL, similar mutinies occur in 1932, three years after the outbreak of the war. Just as in OTL, these are repressed by the same methods. However, in TTL the war continues for a longer amount of time. The mutinies in BTL cease after this repression, but in TTL they flare up again in 1933 due to prolonged warfare, deprivation, and general misery. The continued war causes the mutinies to be even greater in scale, and are more difficult to repress. The mutinies gradually take on a more political character. The French soldiers view the Allies as an existential threat by this time and believe that pacifism will cause the Allies to completely overrun and subjugate the country, and they therefore continue defensive actions. However, the mutinies become political as the soldiers begin to despise their government for failed offensives and general incompetence. The mutinies are too large in scale to be hidden from the Allies, who use the temporary cessation of Entente offensives as an opportunity to improve troop morale, increasing their capability to fight. The mutinies become widespread knowledge by late 1933, and leak to the civilian population.

The French civilian population during TTL’s Great War is extremely close to revolution. All the conditions are present: mass-starvation (due to the blockade), extreme discontent with the government (due to poor military policy), and crushing taxes (to finance the war). Napoleon IV in TTL, due to his love of soldiering, becomes involved in military matters, just as Nicholas II in OTL does. In both cases, the failures of the army becomes associated with the monarch in the eyes of the population. Napoleon V only began ruling since 1923 and had no opportunity to do much during that period, and is therefore almost entirely associated with the Great War and the corresponding bitterness and misery. Napoleon V is just as unpopular as the legislature.

Communism and socialism, already popular ideologies in OTL, become extremely prevalent in TTL. Revolts and insurrections occurring throughout the country have already been occurring sporadically in 1933 and been suppressed by colonial French Army troops. The news of widespread mutinies in the French Army serves as the catalyst for genuine revolution as the already borderline revolutionary population sees an opportunity to revolt with impunity as the colonial troops are sent to the front.

In December 1933, revolutionaries take control of Paris and re-institute the Paris Commune, a far-left revolutionary socialist government. Napoleon V and the French legislature flee to Marseilles. The supporters of the Commune become known as communards. In OTL in 1871, the French Army suppresses the Commune. But in TTL in 1933, the French Army are either at the front or in a continuous state of mutiny. The survival of the Commune serves as an impetus for further revolutionary activity in other cities.

In 1934, various major cities see the establishment of other Communes. However, the Revolution was by no means uniform: much of the countryside and even a few major changes were still liberalist (rather than socialist) for now, just as in the First French Revolution. Over the course of 1934, however, the Revolution spread. New government bodies were formed out of communard revolutionary institutions, which began to legislate for all of the Communes. Over 1934, the system of disparate urban Communes gradually gave way to a system of large swaths of France being under the control of the socialist Revolutionary government. Just as in the First French Revolution, the Second French Revolution falls to radicalism (in this case full communism), and despots like Robespierre come into power with the backing of the poorest members of society, initiating a ‘Reign of Terror’ period. However, in both cases, this eventually falls. In 1935, communism ends in France, and France becomes a socialist country. Napoleon V flees to West Africa.

Although it is fair to assume that the Second Revolution would follow much of the trends of the First, it is unlikely that in this scenario a new Napoleon figure would take power. The French people by this point opposed the Bonaparte dynasty and would not want to bring another autocrat into power and run the risk of a new Napoleon. Although in the initial stages of the Revolution the chaos in the country would likely allow an autocrat to gain power (similar to Lenin in OTL’s Russian Revolution), but it is unlikely that the French people would tolerate this for long.

The Second French Revolution thus results in a socialist society largely run by local Commune governments, with a larger national government determining national policy.

## 1934-1935 | German Revolution

# Interwar Period | 1934-1960

# The Greater War | 1960-1967