

Chat 2

1. What were your first impressions of the revolutions that took place in 1848? How do you think that the political, social, and economic causes of those revolutions intersected?
2. It seems that Spain was out of the European mainstream during the nineteenth century. Can you provide reasons why this was so? Austria and France make a nice contrast during the same period. What do you see as the major differences between these two countries?
3. In the course I teach on the history of Italy, I make the point that Italian unification was “modern” in that it was a successful movement of a weaker people (in terms of power) that succeeded nonetheless. Do you think this is a valid point, and can you see other “modern” aspects of the movement?
4. The unification of Germany occurred primarily through the “traditional” auspices of war. Nevertheless, there were some “modern” aspects to the movement. I am thinking of Bismarck’s ability to rally all the Germans against the French in a nationalistic conflict. What are your thoughts on this point?
5. What do you think were the weak points in the structure of the parliamentary democracies during the late nineteenth century?
6. Can you see any “strong points” in the structure of the authoritarian countries during the same period? Conversely, can you see anything of the later historical developments in the history of these countries during the period under discussion? Can you discuss each country separately in this light?
7. Do you see any similarities in the diplomacy of the late nineteenth century and in our period? And, for students familiar with the period after World War I, between the diplomacy of the late nineteenth century and the 1920s and 1930s.
8. What are your impressions of the culture of the nineteenth century?
9. What will you take away from this course?