

## **THE EASTERN QUESTION 1815-1878**

The Eastern Question was one of the main issues which disturbed Europe between 1815-1878. From the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) had entered Europe and conquered the people of the Balkan region/states/peninsular. Such people/states included the Bulgarians, Albanians, the Serbs, Romanians, Hungarians, Greeks, Yugoslavia, Wallachia, Moldavia, and Macedonia among others.

It also crossed and conquered some of the Asiatic races and Northern part of Africa like Libya, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Crete, Ionian isles (islands), Malta and Cyprus among others.

During the time when the Empire was expanding, most of the conquered states were Orthodox Christians who had been conquered by Moslems but at the same time they were harsh and oppressive.

The Ottoman Empire was therefore made up of numerous subject Nationalities with different backgrounds, cultures, norms, interests, languages, religions etc and their master the Moslem Turks oppressed them with all sorts of injustices, so this caused confusion and mistrust in the empire leading to conflicts.

The Ottoman Empire expanded and reached its apex and it became a threat to other European states like Britain, Austria and Russia among others because of its aggressiveness and expansionism.

The Eastern Question therefore was a term used to describe the various attempts by the conquered states to attain their independence leading to the decline of the Ottoman Empire.

**OR**

The Eastern Question referred to the period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that was characterized by unrests, conflicts, turmoil and confusion that existed in the Empire, emanating from Turkey's expansion and its failure to contain the diversities.

Because of the existence of different people, races, cultures, customs etc, these people could not stay together in one way or the other peacefully. So they started struggling so as to achieve their independence. This made the Empire shaky and it appeared like a melting pot and it was against this background that Czar Nicholas 1 of Russia referred to the Ottoman Empire as the "sick man of Europe"

### **TURKEY AS THE SICK MAN OF EUROPE**

- 1. Why was Turkey referred to as the sick man of Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century?**
- 2. Was it justifiable to describe Turkey as the sick man of Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century?**

The nature and composition/size of the Empire, it was too big to be controlled effectively. It was heterogeneous with different people of different nationalities with different interests, customs and religions. These people were conquered by force and not by plebiscite. They proved to be the source of trouble especially when they started demanding for independence. They made the empire unstable and they could not control the Nationalities, that's why Nicholas referred to the empire as the sick man of Europe.

The continuous decline of the Ottoman Empire in the administration and the loss of military strength, the army that was much needed for the survival of the empire was also weak, so the administration and the army could not keep the empire intact and the leaders overthrown or conquered started acting independently e.g. Ali Pasha of Jemina who declared himself independent and made the empire sick.

The outbreak of a number of revolts or rebellions e.g. the Greek war of independence 1821, Syrian Question 1831, Crimean war of 1854 and failure by Ottoman Empire to suppress these rebellions showed that Turkey was really the sick man of Europe.

The crumbling or collapsing of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey was crumbling at rapid speed as far as her imperial foreign integrity was concerned in relation with other powers e.g. former colonies of the empire started breaking away one after the other and declaring themselves independent or being conquered by other powers yet Turkey had no capacity to control them and indeed Turkey was a sick man.

The mal-administrative or bad policies of the empire qualified her to be called the sick man of Europe. Turkish administration at home was becoming unpopular because of its bad policies i.e. the administration was oppressive, exploitative with corrupt officials who embezzled tax payers money and made life difficult for the conquered people which caused a number of rebellions in the empire a sign of a sick man.

The weakness and the incompetence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Sultans/leaders of the Ottoman Empire e.g. Sultan Mohamood 11 and Sultan Abdul Majid; they were weak and incompetent to effectively control the empire. They remained true to themselves and this widened the gap between them and the conquered people a symptom of a sick man.

Economically the Ottoman Empire was exploitative through its taxes and tributes and what worsened the situation was the corrupt nature of the Turkish officials who embezzled the funds which would have been used to better the lives of the conquered people. Even the methods used to collect taxes, left a lot to be desired satisfying the view that Turkey was sick.

In addition, there was economic decline of the empire. Before the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the economy of the Ottoman Empire was strong and stable; it controlled trade on the Black sea and Mediterranean Sea. It also controlled all strategic places of the world e.g. Constantinople port but during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the empire started collapsing in commerce and trade, sea-faring because of corruption and embezzlement and because of the rise of Britain due to industrialization, it took over economic activities which had been monopolized by Turkey. This led to loss of wealth a sign of a sick man.

Religiously, the Moslem Turks discriminated and under looked their subjects who were Orthodox Christians and on a number of occasions, they referred to them as inferiors/infidels and when the Christians organized a rebellion, the Moslem masters suppressed them with a lot of brutality and this drew the attention of the big powers like Russia who intervened to safeguard the Christians indeed Turkey was sick.

The role/influence of leading personalities also made Turkey to be referred to as the sick man of Europe e.g. Alexander Hypslanti and Capbistrions. They were Greeks; they wrote and greatly criticized the oppressive and exploitative Turkish rule. Even Nicholas 1 referred to Turkey as the sick man of Europe. They created a sense of resistance among the conquered people against the Turkish rule e.g. the Greek war of independence.

In 1839, Turkey invaded Egypt and the effects of this invasion were disastrous i.e. Turkey was defeated by the Egyptian forces and was forced to surrender and in the process, they lost Syria to Egypt not until Britain intervened, gave back Syria to Turkey but all the same, Turkey had already shown signs of a sick man.

During the Greek war of independence, the Sultan of Turkey sought assistance from Mehemet Ali of Egypt to defeat the Greeks and promised him territories of Damascus and Syria. Unfortunately, the combined forces of Turkey and Egypt were defeated by the Greeks and this made the Sultan refuse to honor the promise he had made to Ali. This forced Mehemet Ali to attack Turkey and in the process, Turkey lost Damascus and Syria satisfying the view that Turkey was really a sick man of Europe.

European interests in the Balkan peninsular made her to be referred to as the sick man of Europe. This was so because, these powers had hidden interests in the empire e.g. Russia under Nicholas 1 wanted Turkey to collapse so as to take control over vital strategic places, areas on the Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea. Russia also wanted to share in the monopolized trade by Britain and converted Constantinople and the control of international trade on international waters (Mediterranean and Black Seas). Russia also claimed to be a guardian of all Orthodox Christians all over the world and the guardian of Slavonic races in Europe and wanted to see them free. It was against this background that Nicholas 1 referred to Turkey as the sick man of Europe.

Britain never wanted the sick man to die but also never wanted any other power enter into the Ottoman Empire especially if that power was Russia. This was so because, Britain wanted to monopolize the trade in the Balkan region and control strategic ports of Constantinople.

France involved herself in the Ottoman Empire because she wanted to promote her economic commercial interests in the empire, promote her foreign glory, share in the monopolized trade by Britain, protect the Catholics but above all, protect the holy places of Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Austria also wanted strategic positions in the Ottoman Empire e.g. River Danube. Austria also hated Russias expansionism in the Balkan and above all Austria wanted to gain back her

prestige/ position in Europe, so it can be said that, the interest of the big powers in the Balkan region in one way or the other contributed to Turkey to be referred as the sick man of Europe.

## **SUMMARY**

- The nature and composition (size) of the Empire
- Continuous decline of the Empire
- Outbreak of rebellions
- Administrative weakness
- Bad policies/mal-administration
- Weakness of Ottoman leaders (Sultan)
- Exploitative nature of the Empire
- Economic decline of the Empire
- Religious conflicts in the empire
- Turkish invasion of Europe
- Influence of personalities
- Interest of big powers
- The declining strength of Turkey's imperial foreign integrity
- Turkey's involvement in disastrous wars like Syrian question and Greek war of Independence.

## **THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE OF 1821-1832**

The Greek war of independence was the first event of the Eastern Question which took place in 1821. The Greeks were among the subjects of Turkey and belonged to the Slavonic race something which kept them close to the Russians. By the time the Greeks organized their revolution, their conditions of living were not too bad because they had some freedoms like freedom of worship, education, free from compulsory military service and had land among others. Despite the above the Greeks revolted because of a number of factors;

## **CAUSES OF THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE**

- The desire for independence or nationalism
- The harsh/bad administrative policies of Turkey
- The collapse of the Ottoman Empire (sick man of Europe)
- Influence/Encouragement by the big powers to the Greeks
- Religious question/differences
- The hanging/execution of the Orthodox leader on Easter Sunday
- Outbreak of rebellions in other areas of the Ottoman Empire
- The desire to revive their past glory
- The role played by the Greek secret society (society of friends)
- The role of the Greek leaders
- The role of the Greek merchants

- The influence of the 1789 French revolution
- The weakness of the Vienna settlement
- Unfair taxation system
- Rise of the forces of liberalism and democracy
- The role played by the Greek philosophers

### **Why and how were the Greeks able to attain their independence by 1832?**

The desire for independence caused the Greek war of independence, the Greeks were not happy with being under the Turkish foreign rule because it was oppressive. It enslaved them and denied them their basic rights, so they organized a rebellion/war intended to liberate them from the Turkish harsh rule and attain independence.

The harsh policies of the Turkish governors or administrators caused the Greek war of independence. The governors who were Moslems were more oppressive, despised the Greeks who were Orthodox Christians, discriminated them, denied them big posts and this angered the Greeks and forced them to get rid of the bad rule of the Turkish governors.

The political/economical collapse of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; slowly but surely, the empire had started on its systematic journey to decline. This decline of the Empire encouraged the Greeks to revolt because the empire had lost the ability to suppress rebellions which had occurred within the empire and the Greeks exploited this weakness leading to the Greek war of independence.

The influence/encouragement given to the Greeks by the big European powers e.g. Britain caused the Greek war of independence. For a longtime, Russia had given support to the Greeks to revolt against their master. This was so because, Russia wanted Turkey to collapse and that is why Nicholas 1 referred to her as the sick man of Europe. More so, Russia wanted to set her foot hold (influence) in the Ottoman Empire. Russia also wanted to take part in the monopolized trade by Britain. But above all, Russia shared a lot in common with the Greeks (religion and race), so the support of big powers to the Greeks caused the Greek war of independence.

Religious differences between Greek Orthodox Christians and Moslem Turks; some historians say that the main cause of the Greek war of independence was not political but religious. The Turkish who were the controllers of the Greeks were predominantly Moslems who looked down their subjects who were predominantly Orthodox Christians and constantly referred to them as inferiors, denied them religious freedom. So the sharp difference between the two groups of people made it difficult for the two to reach a compromise and it made the war occur.

The hanging of the Orthodox leader on Easter Sunday caused the Greek war of independence. The incident which sparked off the war was about Turkish officials who hanged the Orthodox leader on Easter Sunday accusing him of insighting resistance against Turkish officials. It was a minor religious issue which turned out to be political and it caused the war.

The outbreak of rebellions in other areas of the empire; the Greeks exploited this chance to wage a war against his masters who was mehemet Ali who had conquered some parts from Turkey Serbia revolt. This development encouraged the Greeks to organize a rebellion and achieve their independence.

Social injustices committed by the Turks against the Greeks such as persecution, imprisonment of the Orthodox Christians.

Influence of exiled Greeks in Britain, France and Russia with their liberal ideologies especially the elites, merchants and people like Hypslati.

The desire to revive their past glory, culture, language, beliefs and customs; it is said that the Greeks were the first people to be civilized. They were respected in many ways, had a unique culture and generally progressive. However, when they were conquered by the Turkish Moslems, they started referring to them as inferiors. The educated Greeks could never accept this, so they organized the war so as to revive their culture, pride, conscious and attain independence.

The role played by the Greek secret society known as the Society of Friends. This society or movement encouraged the growth of the spirit of nationalism and the desire to defeat the Turkish by Greeks. The movement revived the old cultural glory, promoted unity, mobilized the masses and made them ready for the war against their masters the Turkish.

The role played by the Greek leaders was instrumental in causing the Greek war of independence. These leaders were Alexander Hypslanti and Capolitious. The two encouraged the Greeks to rise against the Turkish masters and it were these two who started the rebellion in the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia and this sparked off a revolution in other parts of the country.

The role played by Greek merchants; they controlled commerce and trade and they were prosperous/wealthy but they were discriminated in all aspects of life by their masters the Turkish. They denied them political rights, no freedom of worship and trade among others and since they had the money, they financed the war and made it possible to occur.

The influence/impact of the French revolution of 1789 with its revolutionary catch words like liberty, equality and fraternity/peace to the people and war to the tyrants. The French Revolution had far reaching effects on the people of Europe and the Greeks could not escape such effects and it were these effects of the revolution which inspired the Greeks to revolt.

The weakness of the Vienna settlement and the Congress System; by the time the Greeks organized their war of independence, the settlement and the congress had started showing cracks of collapse. It should be remembered that, the settlement and congress aimed at stopping the revolutions so as to maintain peace and stability in Europe but at the same time some members of the settlement and congress supported the revolutions e.g. Russia such weaknesses gave an open chance to the Greeks to revolt.

Desire for a number of reforms e.g. Education, economy and fair taxation system; the Turkish administration imposed heavy taxes on to the Greeks, even the method of collecting their taxes were equally bad. People were mistreated and their property confiscated for failure to pay the tax and what made matters worse was that the tax collected ended up in the hands of the corrupt Turkish tax officials. This caused resentment among the Greeks who organized the war to free themselves.

The rise of the forces of liberalism across the European continent caused the Greek war of independence. These forces were strong and they inspired the Greek masses to revolt so as to be free in their country and stop the mistreatment caused by the Turkish administrators.

The influence of the Greek philosophers who through their writings inspired fellow Greeks to rebel against the oppressive and exploitative administration; such philosophers included Kiores who wrote and spread nationalistic feelings among the Greeks leading to the Greek war of independence.

The corrupt nature/tendencies of the Turkish officials who were exploitative and oppressive to the Greek peasants

## **THE COURSE OF THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE**

The Greeks succeeded in staging a revolt against their Turkish masters mainly because the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) had become a sick man of Europe and the Greeks exploited this opportunity to organize war against the Turks and attain independence.

The Greek war of independence started in the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia under the leadership of Prince Alexander Hipsilanti in March 1821 using a small force and he declared the two provinces independent of Turkey but also wanted to liberate other parts of Greece and revive their culture.

His activities in the two provinces were barbaric i.e. he killed a big number of Turks officials and innocent Moslems and because of this he lost the support of Czar Alexander 1 of Russia.

The Greeks continued with the war against Turkey and the Turkish were defeated because of the barbaric nature of Hipsilanti. The Turkish leaders organized a war of revenge and killed about 30,000 Greeks in the city of Chios and about 27,000 in the provinces of Macedonia. It was during this incident that the Greek patriot/orthodox leader was hanged on the Easter Sunday and this drew the attention of the big powers.

After seeing that it was hard to defeat the Greeks, the Sultan of Turkey sought assistance from Mehemet Ali of Egypt under his son Ibrahim Pasha but the joint force of Egypt and Turkey was defeated by the Greeks.

The Czar of Russia felt sympathetic to the Greeks and intervened but Britain did not want Russia to intervene alone on the side of the Greeks, so in 1827, a conference was called in London and it was during this meeting that Greece was declared independent but still under the lordship of Turkey but Austria and Prussia refused to sign this treaty because it would

lead to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. This divided the Congressmen and the congress system leading to its collapse.

After realizing that Austria and Prussia were supporting Turkey, the Turkish continued occupying some Greek Provinces of Morea not until a joint force of Britain, France and Russia attacked Turkey and at the battle of Navarino bay, Turkey was completely defeated.

In 1832, another treaty was called in London and it was this meeting which declared Greece completely independent with Otto the Prince of Bavaria as their King and to achieve the above, the Greeks used the following measures;

- i. They revived their past cultural glory i.e. they came up with the mode of language only known to them and it helped them to forge unity.
- ii. They adopted and used nationalistic liberal and revolutionary ideas of Western Europe i.e. the French Revolution of 1789 ideas (liberty, equality and fraternity) which they used to mobilize one another.
- iii. They also formed Secret Society known as the “Society of Friends”, it brought about unity, helped to identify the enemy, mobilized the masses and aroused the spirit of nationalism.
- iv. The Greeks used the support of other European powers to achieve their independence and they greatly relied on the support of Russia, Britain and France especially during the treaty signing in the London Conference.

It were the above that helped the Greeks to attain independence and it marked the first phase of the Eastern Question, it showed that indeed Turkey was sick, it also showed the interest of European powers, it ended the congress system but at the same time it marked the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Eastern Question.

## **SUMMARY**

- The war started in the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia in 1821.
- It was led by Prince Alexander Hypslanti.
- He was cruel/barbaric and killed many Moslem Turks.
- He lost the support of Russia because of his barbaric ways.
- The Sultan of Turkey revenged and killed over 57,000 Greeks and the Orthodox leader on Easter Sunday.
- The war drew the attention of the big powers leading to the London Conference of 1827
- Greece was declared semi-independent.
- Turkey continued to control Greece until the battle of Navy Bay.
- In 1832, the London Conference declared Greece completely independent
- Prince Otto of Bavaria became the first King of Greece
- They revived their past Greek cultural glory to attain independence
- They adopted revolutionary ideas of Western Europe



- They formed the secret society i.e. the Society of Friends
- They used the support of big powers e.g. Russia, Britain and France

**Why and how were the Greeks able to attain their independence?**

## **THE EFFECTS/SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE**

The Greek war of independence which started in 1821 ended in 1832 and this war had a number of effects which included the following;

It was the Greek war of independence which led to the establishment of an independent Greek state free from Turkish foreign rule and for the first time the Greeks were under a Greek leader president Prince Otto of Bavaria in 1832.

The Greeks for a long period of time had been under the Turkish control which was oppressive and exploitative but because of the Greek war of independence, the Greeks were able to free themselves from the oppressive rule of the Turks. In other words, they attained their basic rights.

The Greek war of independence marked the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the Eastern Question and it was this event which marked the beginning of the disintegration/collapse of the Ottoman Empire showing that Turkey was really a sick man of Europe.

It was the Greek war of independence which marked the final collapse of the congress system. This was so because, members of the congress system stood on opposite sides against each other e.g. Britain, France and Russia supported Greece while Austria and Prussia supported Turkey. Such divisions weakened the congress system leading to its collapse.

France lost the support of the great powers because he had supported Mehemet Ali of Egypt and was excluded in the later meetings.

The Greek war of independence exposed the European interests in the Balkan region especially Russia which had a lot of interest in the Ottoman Empire and Russia wanted to see Turkey collapse so as to set her foot hole in the region to satisfy her political, social and economic interests.

Louis Philippe in France lost support among the masses and European powers having supported the wrong side. This contributed to his down fall.

It was the Greek war of independence which led to the rise and growth of the spirit of nationalism among the Balkan races. They learnt lessons from the Greeks and they started demanding for their independence e.g. Serbians, Syrians among others.

The Greek war of independence led to the occurrence of future conflicts/wars among big powers. It should be remembered since the days of Napoleon 1, big powers had never fought any major war but the Greek war of independence caused future wars e.g. Crimean war of 1854-1856 which was fought by the big powers.

The Greek war of independence resulted into massive loss of lives on either side i.e. many Greeks were killed by the Turkish officials and many Turkish were killed by the Greeks e.g. 30,000 Greeks in the province of Wallachia 27000 in the province of Macedonia and there was property destruction as a result of this war

The Greek war of independence swept away Islamic influence and cultures from the Greeks and led to the revival of the ancient Greek cultural practices.

This war intensified conflicts between Britain and Russia over the Balkan region leading to the straits convention of 1841 and the Crimean war of 1854-1856.

It was the Greek war of independence which inspired the 1830 and 1848 revolutions in Europe which were aiming at attaining either national unity/independence or liberal reforms

It led to the signing or calling off of London treaty of 1827, and this had consequences like the collapse of the congress system.

The Greek war of independence intensified the previous conflicts between the Greek Christians and the Turkish Moslems and it were these conflicts which readily weakened the Ottoman Empire hence becoming the sick man of Europe.

It led to the signing of the treaty Adrianople in 1829 which concluded the Greek war of independence

It was the Greek war of independence 1821-1832 which marked the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Eastern Question i.e. the Syrian Question 1831-1840

It exposed the hidden interests of the big powers in the Balkan state e.g. exposed Britains double standards, Russias claims of protecting Orthodox Christians, Britains protection of her economy, interests against Austria and Prussias non intervention.

## **SUMMARY**

- Inspired the 1830 and 1848 revolutions in Europe
- Led to the establishment of the independent Greek state
- The Greeks attained their basic rights
- Marked the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of Eastern Question
- Marked the beginning of the Ottoman Empire
- Marked the final collapse of the congress system

- Exposed European interests in the Balkan region
- Led to the rise and growth of nationalism among Balkan states
- Led to the occurrence of future conflicts e.g. the Crimean war
- Resulted into massive loss of lives
- Swept away Islamic influence and culture from the Greeks

## **THE SYRIAN QUESTION 1831-1840**

The Syrian Question marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Eastern Question, it should be noted that during the Greek war of independence, the Sultan of Turkey sought assistance from Mehemet Ali of Egypt to suppress the Greeks and promised him territories of Damascus, Crete, Morea and after the war Ali demanded for his promise which the Sultan refused to honor because they were defeated in the war. This made Ali to attack and occupy Syria.

The Sultan appealed to the big powers to assist and stop Mehemet Alis advance in the Balkan region and a meeting of big powers was called to solve this question and Ali was given Syria but he was to surrender other parts which he did and perhaps that marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Eastern Question but also the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase.

### **SUMMARY**

- Marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Eastern Question
- Sultan of Turkey sought assistance from Mehemet Ali to suppress the Greeks
- The two were defeated by Greece
- Sultan refused to fulfill his promise and Ali occupied Syria by force
- Sultan appealed to the big powers to stop Alis advance to the Balkan region
- A meeting was called to solve this question
- Ali was given Syria but was to surrender other parts
- It marked the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase and the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Eastern Question.

## **THE CRIMEAN WAR 1854-1856**

The Crimean war came after a number of wars fought between Russia and Turkey but the Crimean war was on a wider scale because it involved many countries such as Britain, France, Piedmont and Turkey on one hand against Russia

The Crimean war marked the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Eastern Question. It was a great war fought since the days of Napoleon 1. This war destroyed European peace which had lasted for 40 years and it ended in 1856 with the calling of the Paris Treaty/Conference.

The Crimean war was fought because of many reasons/factors, some were serious while others were not and it is against this background that this war has been described differently by different historians. Some called it wasteful, others useless, expensive while others called it accidental while at the same time others called it disastrous. The war was caused by a number of factors and they included the following;

### **FACTORS/CAUSES OF THE CRIMEAN WAR**

The Crimean war was caused by the long term Russias ambitions in the Balkan region on one hand and the dislike/mistrust to this policy/ambition by other European powers. For a longtime, Russia wanted to extend her influence in the Balkan region so as to control strategic economic places of Constantinople to protect the Orthodox Christians, the holy places e.g. Jerusalem, Bethlehem etc and Russia wanted to see Turkey collapse and it was against this background that Czar Nicholas 1 of Russia referred to Turkey as the sick man of Europe. So Russias ambitions in the Balkan region caused the Crimean war.

The scramble/struggle/quarrel over the guardianship/protection of the holy places caused the Crimean war. This was between France and Russia; the two countries claimed to be the rightful guardians of the holy places of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The struggle to control them caused misunderstanding between France and Russia and eventually caused the Crimean war.

Russias claim to be the guardian/protector of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire caused the Crimean war because European powers looked at Russias claims as a threat to other powers. They thought that Russia wanted to use that claim to extend her influence in the Ottoman Empire. This created a war feeling among the European powers who had to fight Russia in what came to be known as the Crimean war.

The desire to destroy despotism/dictatorship in Russia caused the Crimean war. Britain and France regarded Russia to be the pillar of despotism in Europe because Russia had denied her subjects the basic rights for a longtime e.g. the Hungarians, the Polish among others. Such anti liberal tendencies made Britain and France join hands in any way against Russia aimed at destroying despotism and the Crimean war served this purpose well.

The Crimean war was fought on personal ground/reason between Napoleon 111 of France and Czar Nicholas 1 of Russia. Nicholas had stubbornly and repeatedly refused to recognize Napoleon 111 as an emperor brother as it was the culture among European powers while addressing their fellow monarchs instead Czar referred to Napoleon 111 “my friend” instead of emperor brother. This annoyed Napoleon 111 who looked for an opportunity to teach Czar a lesson not to call him a friend again.

The Crimean war was also fought by Napoleon 111 because he desired to revenge on Russia for the defeat and humiliation of his uncle Napoleon 1 during the Moscow campaign 1812.

During this campaign, Napoleon 1 was defeated with his 610,000 soldiers and it was partly because of this defeat that Napoleon 1 lost power and according to Napoleon 111, 1854 Crimean war was the right time and chance to revenge.

More so, Napoleon 111 fought the Crimean war because he wanted to revive/restore the past French foreign glory as it were during the days of his uncle Napoleon 1. He also wanted to recover/restore the lost territory from France during the Vienna Settlement.

The Crimean war was fought by the big powers because they failed to respect the balance of power politics in Europe. It should be noted that during the Vienna settlement and the Congress system, European powers had agreed upon balancing power such that there was no single power/state to endanger the peace of the continent. However, this concept was violated by Russia when she occupied the Balkan state thereby causing imbalance in power so the Crimean war was fought to maintain balance of power politics in Europe.

The sickness/weakness of the Ottoman Empire caused the Crimean war; by 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire had become sick/weak and it had collapsing subjects/ conquered states started breaking away one after the other and were taken by others or declared themselves independent e.g. Greece, Moldavia and Wallachia among others. All these were symptoms of a sick man (Turkey), this therefore drew the attention of the big powers making the Crimean war inevitable.

The struggle to control major or vital economic places in the Balkan region caused the Crimean war especially between Russia and Britain each struggled to have a larger market and at the same time protect the home industries. To make matters worse, Russia started challenging Britain in the struggle to control strategic places like Constantinople which led to the Crimean war.

Some historians believed that the collapse of the Congress system and the unfairness of the Vienna settlement by 1830 and the absence of the peace making people like Metternich and Lord Castlereagh of Britain caused the Crimean war. Metternich by then was known as the coachman of Europe working together with Castlereagh of Britain by the time of the Crimean war neither the Congress system nor the peace making people were there to stop the occurrence of the Crimean war.

The role played by leading personalities of the time caused the Crimean war through their activities e.g. Czar Nicholas 1 of Russia, Napoleon 111 of France, Mahmoud 11 of Turkey, Stratford British ambassador among others. These personalities in one way or the other caused the Crimean war.

Russias occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia July 1853 caused the Crimean war. These provinces were semi-independent and were mainly composed of majority Orthodox Christians and Russia claiming to be the guardian of all Orthodox Christians chose to occupy those provinces yet they were still under Turkish rule. This made Turkey seek assistance from Britain and France who in turn sent an ultimatum calling Russia to vacate the provinces.

When Russia refused, the Turkish army attacked knowing that she had the support of Britain and France. Other powers joined later and made the Crimean war a reality.

Russia's sinking/destruction of the Turkish warships at Sinope in 1853; It was this event which sparked off the Crimean war. It came as a result of Russia's occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia. When Russia failed to withdraw from the two provinces, Turkey mobilized her warships on the Black Sea to attack Russia but Russia reacted first and destroyed the Turkish ships and during the incident, many people were killed. Britain and France regarded this event as hostile, unfriendly and unnecessary act of large scale murder and it was this which sparked off the Crimean war.

## **SUMMARY**

- Russia's interest in the Balkan states
- The desire by France to control the holy places of Bethlehem and Jerusalem
- The desire to protect the Orthodox Christians against the Turkish
- The desire to destroy dictatorship in Russia
- Personal conflicts/misunderstandings between Nicholas I and Napoleon III
- The desire to revenge against the Moscow defeat 1812
- The desire to revive the lost glory by Napoleon III of France
- Failure to respect the balance of power by the big powers
- The sickness/weakness of the Ottoman Empire
- The desire to control major economic places
- The collapse of the Congress
- Unfairness of the Vienna settlement
- Absence of peace loving people
- The role played by the leading personalities of the time
- Russia's occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia
- Russia's sinking/destruction of Turkish warships

## **THE EFFECTS OF THE CRIMEAN WAR**

The Crimean war was fought by big powers e.g. Turkey, Britain, France and others against Russia's desire to set her foothold in the Balkan region. This war was fought between 1854 and 1856 and it had long term and immediate effects and both positive and negative and they included the following;

The Crimean war was concluded/led to the signing of the Paris peace treaty of 1856 and it was this treaty which had a number of terms e.g. the Balkan region especially the Black sea was to be demilitarized, R. Danube was to be free for navigation by all powers and that Turkey was to treat her subjects equally and fairly.

Since the war was concluded by signing a peace treaty in Paris (France), it promoted French foreign glory/status as France and Napoleon III became popular which helped Napoleon III to consolidate his position in France.

Russia was defeated by the big powers as an outcome/effect and this gave Turkey a breathing space, in other words, the Crimean war checked Russias influence in the Ottoman Empire.

It was the Crimean war which led to massive loss of lives due to massive killings and untold property destruction. This was so because of the heavy military and navy operation employed. It is said that some people died of war directly, others because of poor sanitation, others because of epidemic diseases like pneumonia, typhoid and cholera.

Because of the many people that were wounded during the war, it led to the founding of modern nursing and improvement of medical services. It was during this time that Florence Nightingale took charge of the wounded and saved a number of lives and it was Florence who started the nursing profession but it came as a result of the Crimean war

The massive loss of lives and war destructions led to the formation of an international group of volunteers to save life and this led to the formation of the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC)

The two provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia predominantly occupied by Christians finally obtained self rule and seized/stopped being part of the Ottoman Empire and this was agreed upon by the big powers.

The defeat of Russia during the Crimean war gave encouragement to the Russian nationalists to rise against their oppressive regime and demanded for liberal reforms like end of social classes, feudalism and heavy taxes.

The Crimean war reaffirmed the independence of Turkey especially after the defeat of Russia and the big powers agreed that no European state had the right to interfere in the affairs of Turkey and Turkey was given a special position and recognized as one of the big powers of Europe.

The Crimean war forced Turkey to guarantee equal and fair treatment to her Christian subjects meaning that the Crimean war ended religious persecution and oppression that existed in the Ottoman Empire.

The Crimean war helped in the final unification of Italy, it should be remembered that Cavour of Piedmont took part in this war on the side of the big powers and after the war during the Paris treaty, Cavour aired out grievances of Italy against Austria and it was from here that he won the support of France and Britain leading to the unification of Italy.

The Crimean war taught a lesson to the big powers, they came to realize the need for better preparation and organization in order to avoid large scale disaster to mankind, they also learnt to solve their conflicts through negotiations on a round table than resorting to war

The war reduced the population of Europe; this was so because millions of people died during and after the war and many others were wounded and it was against this background that, this Crimean war sometimes referred to as “wasteful, useless, expensive war ever fought in the history of mankind”

The war worsened the delicate relationship between Russia and France and for that matter neither Russia nor France was willing to ally/cooperate with another. In other words the Crimean war spoilt the European diplomacy

The Crimean war marked the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase and beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of the Eastern question known as the Berlin Congress 1878

### **Assess the impact of the 1856 Paris treaty on Europe**

#### **SUMMARY**

- It led to the signing of the Paris treaty of 1856
- It promoted French foreign glory/status
- It made Napoleon III popular
- Russia was defeated by the big powers
- It led to massive loss of lives
- It led to the founding of modern nursing
- It led to the formation of International group of Volunteers hence ICRC
- The defeat of Russia gave encouragement to the Russian Nationalists to rise against the government
- Wallachia and Moldavia became independent and received self rule
- It re-affirmed the independence of Turkey
- It forced Turkey to guarantee equal and fair treatment to the Christians
- It helped in the final unification of Italy
- It taught a lesson to the big powers
- It reduced the population of Europe
- It worsened the delicate relationship between Russia and France
- It marked the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase and beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase

#### **APPORTION RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CRIMEAN WAR**

**“Russia was primarily responsible for the outbreak of the Crimean war of 1854-1856”**

##### **Discuss.**

Several historians have tried to apportion/distribute the responsibility for the outbreak of the Crimean war several times but with a lot of difficulties. However, what is important was that whichever country that took part in the Crimean war can be squarely blamed for the outbreak of the war and these countries included the following;

##### **RUSSIA**

Russia caused the Crimean war in that for a long period of time, Russia wanted to set her foot hold/interest in the Balkan region and it was this Russian imperialism in the Balkan region which met stiff resistance from other powers like Britain making the Crimean war occur



Russia caused the war because of her leader Czar Nicholas I who constantly referred to Turkey as “the sick man of Europe” and Nicholas wanted to see Turkey disintegrate and take over

Russia is blamed for causing the Crimean war because of her claim to be the rightful guardian of all Orthodox Christians in the Balkan region. This attracted the attention of the big powers and eventually led to the outbreak of the Crimean war

Russia caused the Crimean war when she revived her claims of the guardianship of the holy places in Palestine i.e. Bethlehem and Jerusalem against France who also claimed to be the rightful guardian hence conflict and war

Russia caused the Crimean war when she claimed to be the rightful guardian of the Slav speaking race in the Balkan region. It was resented by other powers especially Britain and France hence leading to the Crimean war

Russia caused the Crimean war because she wanted to have a share of the monopolized trade by Britain in the Mediterranean and Black seas. This automatically caused conflict between Britain and Russia hence the Crimean war

It was the Czar/leader of Russia and Nicholas I who stubbornly refused to recognize Napoleon III as a leader/emperor/brother and instead referred to him as “my dear friend”. This annoyed emperor Napoleon III who longed for an opportunity to teach Czar a lesson and this opportunity came in 1854

Russia is also blamed for attacking and occupying the two provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia which were both Turkish subject states. This drew attention of the big powers who demanded Russia to vacate the two provinces and when Russia failed, the war was inevitable

Russia is also blamed for causing the Crimean war because she refused/failed to respect the balance of power politics and diplomacy and even refused to respect the resolutions of the Straits Convention of 1841

It was Russia which sunk/destroyed the Turkish warship- flotilla at Sinope leading to the killing of many innocent lives. This act was regarded as hostile, barbaric and unfriendly, it annoyed the big powers and decided to fight Russia in what came to be known as the Crimean war.

## **BRITAIN**

Britain is blamed for causing the Crimean war because for a long period of time Britain had dominated important international trade on international water and was rivaled by other powers especially Russia which wanted to share in that trade hence conflicts and war.

It was Britain which feared Russias imperialism/ expansionism in the Balkan region and it made her risk fighting the Crimean war so as to stop Russia.

Britain more than any other power wanted to preserve / keep the sick man Turkey alive and was ready to do anything even if it meant war to keep the sick man alive.

Britain together with France hated Russias despotism/ dictatorship and the two were determined to join hands together and fight Russias despotism leading to the Crimean war.

It was Britain who send her troops through Dardanelles to attack Russia in 1854 this violated the straits convention of 1841, it destroyed the peace process and it led to the Crimean war.

Britain supported Frances claims / revival of the guardianship over the holy places of Bethlehem and Jerusalem in Palestine against Russia causing the Crimean war.

**N.B** Austria and Prussia were not active in the Crimean war and therefore cannot be blamed for causing the war.

### **TURKEY**

Turkey caused the Crimean war because she had become weak socially, politically and economically and it was this weakness which made Nicholas 1 to be referred to her as the Sick man of Europe.

Turkey is blamed for causing the Crimean war because she constantly mistreated the Orthodox Christians / subjects in the province of Wallacha and Moldovia hence attracting the attention of Russia leading to their occupation which sparked off the war.

It was Turkey who refused to grant independence and rights to her subject states even when she knew that she was weak to contain / control such states hence making these states break away one after the other.

### **PIEDMONT (ITALY)**

It caused the Crimean war because she wanted to win the support of the big powers so as to accomplish her unification struggle against Austria and it was against this background that she fought the war even when she had no conflict with Russia.

### **FRANCE**

France under Napoleon III caused the Crimean war because Napoleon III of France was ambitious; he wanted to appear big by reviving the French foreign glory as it was during the reign of Napoleon I.

France caused the Crimean war because she actively took part in the struggle for the control of the holy places in Palestine (Bethlehem and Jerusalem ) which she had neglected and this drew the attention of Russia and it caused the conflict between the two leading to Crimean War.

France caused the Crimean war when the leader Emperor Napoleon III wanted to teach a lesson to Tzar Nicholas I of Russia who rudely refused to address him as Emperor/ brother and instead referred to him as *“My dear Friend”*.

France like Britain and Russia also had economic interests in the Balkan region and never wanted to be left out in controlling this trade and the strategic economic places like Constantinople and Adrianople.

France feared and hated having a strong neighbour like Russia who would in turn destabilize her politically. So France fought the Crimean war to keep Russia weak.

## **PERSONALITIES THAT CAUSED THE CRIMEAN WAR**

**To what extent was Napoleon III responsible for the outbreak of the Crimean war of 1854-1856?**

### **NICHOLAS I**

He played a vital role that led to the outbreak of the Crimean war in that he promoted Russia's expansionism/imperialism in the Balkan region there by annoying other European powers like Britain and France

Nicholas worked hard to see the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and it was Nicholas who referred to Turkey as the sick man of Europe contrary to the French and British policies

Nicholas I encouraged the Pan-Slav movement/ the spirit of nationalism among the Slav speaking races and made them struggle for their independence as it was the case in the two provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia.

It was Nicholas who claimed and desired to protect the Orthodox Christians who were being persecuted by their Muslim Turkish masters and it was partly this which led to the outbreak of the Crimean war.

Nicholas caused the Crimean war when he conflicted with Napoleon III of France when he refused to recognize him as an emperor and instead referred to him as a friend hence annoying him and later it caused the war.

Czar Nicholas I had unlimited economic interests/desires in the Mediterranean and Black sea so as to challenge/share the British monopolized trade/economic interest in the region hence conflicting with Britain.

It was Nicholas who invaded and occupied two Turkish provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia and this drew the attention of the big powers against Russia and it caused the Crimean war.

It was Nicholas I of Russia who sunk the Turkish warships at Sinope, November 1853 and during this incident, many innocent lives were lost and it attracted the attention of the big powers referring to it as hostile and barbaric.

Nicholas I of Russia diplomatically attacked/insulted the British ambassador Lord Stratford; this was a diplomatic insult to the person and the country of Britain.

Nicholas underestimated/undermined the reactions of the big powers when he carried out his policies like expansionism, economic interests, destroying Turkish warships. He did not know that such policies might attract the attention of the big powers hence causing the Crimean war.

### **SUMMARY**

- Nicholas I promoted Russia's expansionism and imperialism
- He referred to Turkey as the sick man of Europe
- He encouraged the Pan-Slav movement/spirit of nationalism
- He claimed to be the guardian of Orthodox Christians
- He conflicted with Napoleon III when he referred to him as a friend
- He had unlimited economic interests in the Mediterranean and Black Sea (share trade with Britain)
- He invaded and occupied the two provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia
- He sunk Turkish warships at Sinope
- He diplomatically insulted the British ambassador Stratford
- He undermined the reactions of the big powers

### **NAPOLEON III**

Napoleon III caused the Crimean war when he revived the old French claims over the holy places of Jerusalem and Bethlehem and this made him conflict with Nicholas I of Russia

Napoleon III also caused the war because of the desire to revive the lost French foreign glory, he became aggressive because he wanted to please his supporters at home but also wanted to be like his uncle Napoleon I

He caused the Crimean war because he wanted to protect Turkey and her independence against Russia's imperialism. This automatically was bound to make the war occur

Napoleon III caused the war because he wanted to fulfill his personal hidden interests/motives e.g. he wanted to revenge against Nicholas (Russia) for the defeat of his uncle, also he wanted to teach Nicholas a lesson for refusing to recognize him as an emperor

### **SULTAN MAHMOUD (TURKEY)**

He was the Sultan/leader of Turkey and caused the Crimean war when he discriminated and persecuted his Christian subjects hence drawing the attention of the big powers

It was him who refused to grant independence to his subject states and continued oppressing them e.g. the Serbs, the Bulgarians and others

He also failed to take control over the holy places of Jerusalem and Bethlehem and this made France and Russia to struggle over them for the rightful ownership

Mahmoud failed to maintain the Ottoman Empire as a strong state and this gave an opportunity to subject states to break away one after the other or to be conquered by the big powers like Russia and that is why Nicholas I referred to her as the sick man of Europe

## **LORD PALMERSTONE**

He wanted to maintain the independence of Turkey against Russias imperialism and preserved British interests in the Balkan region against Russias interests hence the war

He was aggressive and a war monger and believed in wars to solve problems thats why he took part in the Crimean war

He caused the war because he failed to respect the earlier diplomatic treaties aimed at solving European problems e.g. the treaty of Unkiar Skelles and the Straits convention

## **LORD STRATFORD DE-REDCLIFFE**

He was the British ambassador and caused the war because he was reckless in his policies towards Turkey and Russia. He refused negotiations to end conflicts in the Balkan region, in fact he shared traits with Palmerstone

It was him who advised Turkey to open up war against Russia at the Sinope incident and it was this incident which sparked off the Crimean war

## **LORD ABERDEEN (British prime minister)**

He caused the Crimean war because he was weak willed but at the same time a war monger. He advised Palmerstone and Stratford to be adamant, reckless and even encouraged them to fight against Russia.

## **PRINCE MENSCHIKOFF**

He was Russias ambassador, a strong believer in war to solve problems. It was him together with Nicholas 1 who conflicted with the British Ambassador (Stratiford) leading to diplomatic insults and later the Crimean war.

## **CAVOUR OF PIEDMONT**

He caused the Crimean war because he wanted to win the support of the big powers in his struggle to unify Italy from Austrian rule.

## **THE BERLIN CONGRESS 1878**

After the final defeat of Turkey in the Turko-Russian war of 1877-78, Russia forced the Sultan of Turkey to sign the San-Stefano treaty. This treaty had a number of terms and they included;

- The treaty created a new country known as “Big Bulgaria”
- It also gave independence to Serbia and Montenegro
- It also gave Russia the right to control a big part of Turkey

However, the San-Stefano treaty was rejected by the big powers because it gave Russia a chance to control the big part of the Balkan region and because of this, other powers would be stopped from trading in the Balkan region especially Britain, France and Austria. These powers threatened to fight Russia or else the San-Stefano treaty be nullified. It was against this background that Bismarck called European powers to an International meeting known as the Berlin Congress.

The Berlin congress therefore was a meeting held from June-July 1878, Germany or Bismarck as a host and other powers in attendance were Austria-Hungary, France, Britain, Turkey, Russia. Bismarck served as the chairman.

### **EVENTS LEADING TO THE CALLING OF THE BERLIN CONGRESS**

The Berlin Congress was called and chaired by Bismarck and it was to solve problems in the Balkan region. It was attended by countries like Germany, Britain France, Austria-Hungary and Turkey and the following events led to its signing or calling.

The outbreak of the Crimean war 1854-1856, during this war, Russia was defeated and the Paris treaty was signed which partially checked Russias interest in the Balkan region but the interests were not permanently checked.

The outbreak of the Turko-Russian war of 1877; during this war, Russia defeated Turkey and even occupied the important seaports of Constantinople and Adrianople. This threatened other powers who also had interest in the region and this led to the calling of the Congress in Berlin

The signing of the San Stefano treaty 1878; this treaty came as a result of the defeat of Turkey by Russia. The San Stefano treaty increased Russias influence in the Balkan region especially after the creation of big Bulgaria which was under Russia. This threatened and annoyed other power almost causing a war, so the Berlin congress was to stop this immediate war.

The Sultans mistreatment of the Christian subjects; the Sultan of Turkey discriminated, oppressed, exploited and even killed many Christians. This drew the attention of the big powers leading to the calling of the Berlin Congress.

The continuous decline of the Ottoman Empire in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire had become too weak to maintain itself and because of this, other powers especially Russia picked interest in her referring to her as the sick man of Europe. This was against the wishes of other powers who threatened her (Russia) hence the calling of the congress.

The outbreak of nationalistic struggles in the Balkan region; here subject states broke away one after the other from Turkey e.g. the Greek war of independence, Bosnia, Herzegovina also broke away from Turkey. This encouraged other states to do the same to save Turkey and for this a conference had to be called.

The collapse of the Austrian empire and the rise of Germany; after losing German states, Austria turned her attention to the Balkan region to compensate for the loss.

The Bulgarian atrocities/massive killings; here many Christians in the Bulgarian states were killed by the Turkish Moslems and this attracted the attention of the big powers leading to the calling of the Berlin Congress.

### **WHY WAS THE BERLIN CONGRESS CALLED**

The Berlin congress was called by Bismarck to settle European problems concerning the Eastern Question and to stop the immediate war which was about to occur between the big powers on one hand against Russia.

The congress was called to revise/destroy the San Stefano treaty with its terms which were reached after the war between Russia and Turkey. This treaty was looked at as dangerous because it gave Russia a chance to dominate the affairs in the Balkan region.

The congress also aimed at checking the over growing Russian ambitions in the Balkan region. Russia wanted to take over control of Bulgaria so as to protect the Slavs speaking race and the Orthodox Christians in the empire/region

Russia wanted to control the strategic economic places of Constantinople and Adrianople and this drew the attention of the big powers. It caused tension among the powers almost causing the war, so the Berlin congress was to check on the above

The Berlin congress was called to re-divide or partition the big Bulgaria which had been created by the San Stefano treaty and for that matter, Bulgaria was divided into three parts i.e. Bulgaria proper, Romania and the third section was given to Turkey

The congress was called to force the Sultan of Turkey to promise reforms in the treatment of the Christian subjects, so this congress was to end religious persecution in the Ottoman Empire

It was also called to grant total independence to former Turkish subject states that anxiously needed their independence e.g. Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria among others

It was also called to solve the big problem that existed between Austria-Hungary and Bosnia Herzegovina. Bosnia Herzegovina wanted to be free from Austrian rule so the congress was to solve this but unfortunately, it failed.

Britain, France and Russia attended the Berlin congress because they wanted to solve problems in Turkey which had made her the sick man of Europe i.e. while Britain and France wanted to have the sick man by taking over control.

The Berlin congress was called purposely to promote the states of Germany as a big power and Bismarck as an international mediator/broker

### **SUMMARY**

- To stop the war between Russia against the big powers
- To revise the San Stefano treaty
- To check the growing Russian ambitions
- To stop tension and later war among powers over strategic places
- To re-divide the big Bulgaria into three
- To force the Sultan to grant reforms to the subject
- To give total independence to Balkan states
- To solve problems between Austria-Hungary and Bosnia-Herzegovina
- To stop Turkey from crumbling
- To promote the position of Germany and the status of Bismarck

## **THE OUTCOME OF THE BERLIN CONGRESS**

### **Assess the impact of the Berlin congress of 1878 on Europe**

It was called and attended by European powers such as Austria-Hungary, Turkey, France, Russia, Britain and Germany as a host. It was mainly to solve problems that existed among the big powers in the Balkan region. This congress had both positive and negative outcomes and they included the following;

The Berlin congress of 1878 checked Russias ambitions in the Balkan region; this was done through destroying or revising san-Stefano treaty with its terms

It succeeded in stopping the occurrence of a major war among the big powers against Russia over the Balkan region but this was temporary because later in 1914, World War 1 broke out

The Berlin congress succeeded in destroying/dividing the big Bulgaria into three parts. It was a success because formerly it was under Russias control and by dividing it, the congress checked Russias imperialism in the Balkan region.

The Berlin congress helped countries like Britain and Austria-Hungary to acquire additional territories e.g. Britain got Cyprus islands and Austria-Hungary got Bosnia-Herzegovina, Russia on the other hand was given to Serbia and France was given to Tunisia

The Berlin congress granted independence to former Turkish subject states and countries like Serbia, Romania, and Montenegro got their independence from their colonial master the Ottoman Empire

The Berlin congress at least maintained peace and stability in the Balkan region and in Europe at large, for a period of 36 years not until the outbreak of World War 1 1914

The Berlin congress promoted the status and position of Germany and Bismarck in Europe i.e. Bismarck became an international broker and became to be known as the man of peace and Germany gained foreign glory because the congress was held in Germany (Berlin)



On the other hand however, the Berlin congress had a number of negative effects/impacts e.g.;

The Berlin congress sowed the seed of hostility between Austria-Hungary and Serbia over Bosnia and Herzegovina. These two provinces were under Serbia but the Berlin congress gave them to Austria-Hungary there by ignoring their nationalistic feelings and it was this which caused World War 1 in 1914.

The Berlin congress temporarily checked Russias advance/interests in the Balkan region but in actual sense or in reality, Russia was not completely chased out of the Balkan region and not all problems were solved by the congress leading to future problems

The congress caused suspicion and mistrusts between Germany and Russia; each suspected the other, it can be said that the Berlin congress spoilt the relationship between Russia and Germany

It was the Berlin congress which led to the formation of the alliance system among powers and it was this alliance system which divided Europe into two hostile camps i.e. the triple alliance against triple Entente and it was partly this alliance system which caused World War 1

It failed to protect Turkey from collapsing/disintegrating because Turkish subject states broke away one after the other e.g. Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia and this made the lifespan of the Ottoman Empire short

Even the Sultan of Turkey refused/rejected the terms of the congress i.e. He continued mistreating his Christian subjects and the years that followed saw Christians suffering and many died in the process

The congress made the Ottoman Empire to be humiliated especially when the empire was made to lose territories and forced to accept the terms set by the big powers as if Turkey was not big

The Berlin congress also humiliated Italy; it was not invited, it even never gained any territory as is it was not a big power.

The Berlin congress suffocated Balkan nationalism especially when it put the Balkan states under foreign control of Austria-Hungary (Serbia) and this caused World War 1

It also made Russia unhappy and made her feel cheated and mistreated by other powers. Russia lost territories, lost influence in the Balkan region and this bred hostility between Russia and Germany.

In conclusion, the Berlin congress never stopped Balkan states from demanding their independence, they organized wars in 1912 and by 1913, Russia was not completely chased out of the Balkan region and Turkey was not stopped from being a sick man of Europe and it was against this background, that Disraeli the British Prime Minister commented/said that “in

supporting Turkey, Britain backed a wrong horse” and mean while the Eastern question remained unanswered.