Restoration, Ideologies, and Upheavals 1815-1850

Reforms and Revolutions

For a few years after the Congress of Vienna, the conservatives generally held sway over Europe, but liberalism and radicalism remained strong ideologies, and they successfully challenged conservatism in the years between 1830 and 1850, especially in western Europe. In some countries, change occurred gradually and peacefully, but in others it took the form of violent upheavals.

Uprisings in Spain and Italy

When Ferdinand VII regained the Spanish crown in 1814 after Napoleon's control collapsed, he restored the old institutions of the nobility, church, and monarchy. He allowed the publication of only two newspapers, and he forbid foreign books and newspapers to enter the country. Many middle-class Spaniards, especially those exposed to liberal French ideas, responded by joining secret societies. When the revolt spread to army officers, Ferdinand was forced to convene the *cortes* (parliament), but no agreements could be reached. In 1823, Ferdinand won the upper hand when a French army invaded and restored him to absolute power. The other members of the Concert of Europe backed the French invasion, and the restored Spanish government tortured and executed hundreds of rebels and imprisoned and exiled many others.

Shortly after the Spanish uprising began, rebellious soldiers in the Italian kingdom of Naples joined forces with the *carbonari* ("charcoal burners," or secret societies that marked each new member's forehead with a charcoal mark) to demand a constitution. When they succeeded in getting a new parliament to assemble, the promise of reform spread the rebellion in Piedmont-Sardinia, a state in the north. Austria signaled an alarm to the other great powers since its sway over northern Italian states was threatened, and with the backing of Prussia and Russia, the Austrians defeated the rebels in Naples and Piedmont in 1821. Even though Britain opposed the suppression of the Italian states, Metternich convinced the other powers to agree to Austria's actions.

Revolutions in the Americas

Enlightenment values appealed to many people throughout Europe and the Americas, especially after the successes of the American and French

Revolutions. The earliest response was in Haiti, when slaves in the French colony of Saint Domingue rebelled against their masters, and later revolutions broke out all across Latin America, so that by 1830, most Spanish and Portuguese colonies had gained their independence.

By 1800 the *creoles* (Europeans born in Latin America) far outnumbered the *peninsulares* (Europeans born on the Iberian Peninsula), who still ruled the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. Many creoles were wealthy and powerful owners of plantations and ranches, and others were well-to-do urbanites involved in trade or business. Like their counterparts in the British North American colonies, the creoles resented control by representatives from their mother countries. Many were well read in Enlightenment philosophy, and like the bourgeoisie in France, wanted political rights that were equivalent to their economic accomplishments. As a result, creoles were attracted to the idea of political independence as the British colonies in North America had achieved, but they were not particularly interested in social egalitarian reform, such as the revolution in Haiti had aimed for. Between 1810 and 1825 creoles led revolutionary movements all over Latin America that resulted in their taking political control of the newly independent countries

The precipitating event for most of the revolutions was Napoleon's invasion of Spain and Portugal in 1807, and the rebel groups that resisted his control created instability on the Iberian Peninsula, especially since Napoleon named his brother Maximillian as the king of Spain. In Latin America juntas, or organizations of military leaders, were set up to rule in the name of the deposed King Ferdinand of Spain, but soon the juntas – which were mainly staffed with creoles – had their own agendas to follow.

Spanish South America

Independence movements in Spanish South America started in two places: northern South America near Caracas and southern South America near Buenos Aires. The first one began in 1810 under the leadership of Simon Bolivar, a wealthy Creole military officer who raised enough support between 1817 and 1822 to win a series of victories against the Spanish in Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. His junta spurred large numbers of loyalists to rally free blacks and slaves to defend the Spanish Empire. Bolivar was able to eventually defeat the Spanish, partly through military skill, and partly through the force of his personal ability to hold the loyalty of his troops, attract new allies, and build coalitions. Until 1830, the area that he controlled was called Gran Colombia, and Bolivar dreamed of someday uniting all South

Americans under one government. However, political and regional interests led to the breakup of Gran Colombia, and to his south, another junta leader, Jose de San Martin was rising in Argentina. Buenos Aires was a growing trade city whose residents resented Spanish restrictions, and San Martin, like Bolivar, hoped to unite many people under him. His army united Chileans and Argentines who crossed the Andes Mountains to attack Spanish strongholds in Chile and Peru. Just as Bolivar could not keep regional factions from forming, San Martin was not able to stop splits among Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia. By 1825, all of Spanish South America had gained its political independence, and all the new states founded republics with representative governments.

Brazil

The movement for independence took a different path in Brazil, partly because of the large number of slaves who worked the sugar, cotton, and cacao plantations. Although the planters sometimes resented Portuguese control oftrade and political decisions, they were more afraid of a general slave uprising such as had occurred in Haiti. As a result, potential movements inspired by Enlightenment ideas were unsuccessful until Napoleon's troops invaded Portugal in 1807, causing the entire Portuguese royal family to flee the country to find a haven in Brazil. The family ruled in exile from Rio de Janei ro, and all government business was conducted from this new capital city for the Portuguese Empire. Seeing the rising tide of independence movements in Spanish America, King Pedro I took the initiative in declaring Brazil an independent empire in 1822. Of course, the empire was a monarchy, but Pedro was willing to concede many liberal principles, including a written constitution in 1824 which provided for an elected parliament and granted personal liberties. However, he made some enemies when he openly opposed slavery. After he ratified a treaty with Britain in 1831 to end Brazilian participation in the slave trade, slave owners cried out against him, and military losses to neighboring Uruguay made his rule more difficult still. He was forced to abdicate to his five-year old son, Pedro II, who became emperor after a nine-year regency and ruled until he was overthrown by republicans in 1889.

Mexico

Napoleon's invasion of Spain also caused unrest in Mexico, the largest and richest of the Spanish colonies in the Americas. The Mexican Revolution began in 1810 when a priest, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, called upon his parishioners to rise against Spanish officials. In the tradition of priests as

champions for the rights of natives, Father Hidalgo was particularly charismatic, and tens of thousands of poor Amerindians joined his movement. Their targets were not only Spanish officials but also many wealthy creoles who owned mines and ranches and exploited their workers. As a result, the creoles supported Spanish authorities and turned on Hidalgo's masses, capturing and executing Hidalgo in 1811. Despite the death of this important leader, the popular rebellion continued for another few years under the guidance of another priest, Jose Maria Morelos, who was caught and executed in 1815. At that point, events from Europe again intervened when a military revolt in Spain weakened the king and the central government. Not wanting to be cast with Spanish officials, a *creole* military officer, Augustin de Iturbide, struck an agreement with the rebellious peasants, and with combined forces declared Mexico's independence in 1821. However, Iturbide was proclaimed emperor of Mexico, a conservative solution that greatly offended liberals, and he was overthrown by the military and executed. This rapid turnover of leadership in the first few years of Mexico's independence created an atmosphere of instability and military coup d'etats that have characterized Mexico's political system ever since.

Revolutionary Ideals and the Abolitionist Movement

Enlightenment-inspired revolutions generally resulted in some measure of liberty and/or equality for middle class and elite males, but applying the concept of "natural rights" to slaves was another challenge that called for even more serious breaks with past traditions. Solutions did not come immediately during or after the revolutions, but as a result of reform movements that achieved their goals gradually over time.

Comparison: Motives for Revolution in the Americas and France

Almost all the revolutions of the late 1700s and early 1800s in the Atlantic world were rooted in Enlightenment philosophy. However, each revolution emphasized different aspects of the ideology, resulting in some complex, contrasting motivations to both lead and support the insurgencies. For example, the main motivation of colonists in the American Revolution was independence from Britain, and its leaders emphasized the Enlightenment value of liberty. French leaders valued liberty, but the radicals that took over the French government during the Reign of Terror pushed for equality among

male citizens and sought to rid the country of all vestiges of the old unequal social order, including the nobility and the Catholic Church. In Latin America, the *creole* leaders generally were attracted to the same goals that appealed to the colonists in North America – freedom to conduct their own affairs, free of Spanish or Portuguese control. In contrast, Toussaint L'Overture led a slave rebellion in Haiti, emphasizing the inequality of that social system and reflecting another aspect of Enlightenment thought. Mexico's complex sequence of events that led to its independence in 1821 weaves several Enlightenment themes: oppression of Amerindian people, *creole* desires for independence, and the motivation to establish a republican government. In contrast to France, where the Catholic Church was seen as a cause for unequal stations in life, in Mexico the cry for equality first came from a Catholic priest, Father Hidalgo.

The movement to end slavery began in the late 1780s, as abolitionists who blended Enlightenment thought with principles of Christianity sought to end the slave trade. The earliest push came from members of the British Parliament who succeeded in passing legislation in 1807 to end the slave trade. Other countries soon followed with anti-slave trade legislation: the United States in 1808, France in 1814, the Netherlands in 1817, and eventually Spain in 1845. The British even sent their navy to patrol African ports to enforce their laws, although illegal slave trade continued for a number of years until governments took action to outlaw the practice of slavery as well. In Haiti slavery ended with the success of the slave rebellion in 1804, and many newly-independent countries in Latin America passed laws forbidding slavery. Eventually slavery was ended by all the Atlantic states by the end of the 19th century, with Britain banning slavery throughout its empire in 1833. The United States ended slavery in 1865, and Brazil was the last major American state to ban slavery in 1888.

Once slavery was abolished, political equality did not follow immediately. Property requirements kept most former slaves from voting, and even though constitutions were changed – as in the United States – economic, political, and social inequality continued to be issues for minorities of African background for years to come. Although the slave trade and the slave system were banned, they were not totally abolished and are still practiced today. However, the abolitionist movements of the 19th century did put an end to the extreme reliance on slave labor that characterized the era from 1500 to 1800, and they set the stage for later equality movements of the 20th century.

National Liberation in Greece

Whereas the revolutions in Spain and Italy failed, Greece succeeded in its attempt to gain independence from the Ottoman Turks in a revolution that began in 1821 and continued until 1830. Since the 15th century, the Greeks had lived under Ottoman rule, but their sense of nationality had remained strong through common customs, the Greek language, and the Greek Orthodox religion. As nationalist movements spread across Europe during the early 19th century, secret societies formed in Greece, and in 1821 a revolt erupted, led by Alexander Ypsilanti, a Greek Patriot and a general in the Russian army. Many Russians supported the Greeks, since they shared the Orthodox faith, as well as a common enmity against the Ottoman Turks. However, other great powers, particularly Austria under Metternich, opposed any revolution, even if it was against the Ottoman Empire.

Despite Austria's opposition, many Europeans sympathized with the Greeks. Educated Europeans came to see the Greek struggle as an attempt to revive the culture of classical Greece, long suppressed by a foreign power. Romantic writers and artists, including Lord Byron, thought of Greek freedom as basic to that of all western societies, and their works inspired others to support the cause. In 1827 Great Britain, France, and Russia responded to popular demands at home and sent military forces to convince the Turks to allow Greek freedom. The Turkish fleet was destroyed at Navarino, and Russia attacked and occupied Rumania, which had also been under Turkish rule. The Turks were unable to stop the three powers when they declared Greece independent in 1830, creating the first fissure in Metternich 's conservative order.

Liberal Reform in Britain

By the early 19th century, Britain had practiced constitutionalism for many years, and the growing influence of liberalism was reflected by the country's withdrawal in the 1820s from Metternich's Concert of Europe. Even so, the government's economic policies still favored the rich, and demands for reform swept the country. An early warning sign occurred with a mass meeting for reform at St. Peter's field, Manchester, in 1819. The local government responded by calling out troops to attack, and hundreds of demonstrators – including women and children – were wounded, and several were killed. Reformers nicknamed the incident the Peterloo Massacre, and their protests rose to new heights after Parliament passed laws which restricted

public meetings, facilitated the prosecution of radicals, and imposed a tax on the radical press. Protestant dissenters and Roman Catholics openly criticized the special privileges accorded the Church of England.

Change over Time: Major Reform Legislation in Britain

In Britain, change after 1815 took place in a series of reforms that helped to avoid revolution, even though they still caused serious conflict. Major milestones in British reform before 1850 included these pieces of legislation passed by Parliament.

1828 – Restrictions of non-Anglican Protestants lifted
1829 – Restrictions on Catholics lifted; Catholics allowed in Parliament
1832 – The Reform Bill of 1832 changed the British electoral system; suffrage increased and representation redistributed
1833 – Slavery abolished in British Empire; child labor in factories restricted
1834 – Poor Law further restricted child labor in factories
1846 – Corn Laws repealed
1847 – Ten Hours Act limited the workday for women and young people in factories to ten hours

Tories and Whigs disagreed over how to respond to demands for reform, but even the conservative Tories recognized the need to lift newspaper censorship and allow Catholics and religious dissenters to vote and to hold public office. In 1828 the government put domestic order in the hands of civil authority by creating a police force. After the more reform-minded Whigs gained power, Parliament passed the important Reform Bill of 1832, which marked a fundamental change in Britain's electoral system. Though rejected by the House of Lords, the bill had the support of the House of Commons and the king, and it greatly increased suffrage, allowing some 800,000 well-to-do, property-owning men to vote for the first time. The bill also redistributed representation to Parliament to better reflect population shifts caused by industrialization. As a result, industrial cities – such as Birmingham and Manchester – that had been underrepresented now had voices in the House of Commons. Other reforms of the 1830s abolished slavery in Britain's colonies and restricted the hours that children could work in factories. Another law

extended suffrage even more by allowing all resident taxpayers to vote in municipal elections.

During the 1840s Britain's Corn Laws that benefitted the landowning classes came under attack. These laws placed tariffs on imported grain in order to protect British landowners, but they negatively impacted middle and working-class people because they increased the price of bread. The Anti-Com Law League spread across the country from its origins in Manchester, appealing to supporters through parades, rallies, songs, speeches, and pamphlets. The government responded by twice lowering duties on a wide range of items, including grain, but the League pressed for more, and finally, the Corn Laws were repealed in 1846. The prime minister – Robert Peel – was ultimately swayed by the potato famine in Ireland, since he believed that repealing the laws would boost food supplies there. He convinced both the Commons and the Lords to support the repeals, although his actions brought great criticism from conservatives, and ultimately ended his ministry.

The Revolutions of 1830

In 1830 a new wave of liberal and nationalistic movement broke out to challenge the conservative order. The first one took place in France in reaction to the ultraroyalists' attempt to restore the old regime under Charles X. As resistance increased in the Chamber of Deputies, Charles repudiated the Constitutional Charter, issued decrees stripping much of the wealthy middle class of its voting rights, and censored the press. Spontaneous demonstrations in Paris led to fighting on July 26, beginning what became known as the July Revolution, and after three days of fighting, the government collapsed. Charles X went into exile in England, and in order to stabilize the country, a group of moderate liberal leaders agreed to give the crown to Charles X's cousin, Louise Philippe, duke of Orleans.

Louis Philippe accepted the Constitutional Charter of 1814, and adopted the flag of the French Revolution. He even dressed like a member of the middle class, in business suits and hats. Constitutional changes that favored the interest of the prosperous bourgeoisie were instituted, and financial qualifications for voting were reduced, increasing the number of voters from 100,000 to almost 200,000. However, many supporters of liberalism were bitterly disappointed in these results, since few beyond those in the upper middle class benefitted from the revolution.

Whereas the 1830 revolution in France was primarily motivated by liberal demands, the revolution in the Netherlands was based on nationalism. The

area in the south known as the Austrian Netherlands had been merged with the Dutch Republic by the Congress of Vienna, but the people there identified themselves as Belgians, not Dutch. The Belgians – inspired by the July Revolution in France rose against the Dutch, and King William of the Netherlands appealed to the great powers to intervene. The powers disagreed among themselves, but finally reached an agreement that Belgium could gain its independence in exchange for its neutrality in international affairs. Belgium became a constitutional monarchy in 1831 when the crown of the new kingdom was offered to Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who abided by the neutrality provision, and set the pattern for Belgian diplomacy for many years to come.

Revolts based on nationalism also took place in 1830 in Italy and Poland. One reason that Austria and Russia did not intervene in the Netherlands was that they were both preoccupied with their own revolts – Russia with the Poles and Austria with their Italian provinces. Anti-Austrian uprisings in Italy were unsuccessful when the French refused to support them, but the Polish revolt was more difficult. It began with students in the streets of Warsaw, and then spread to Polish aristocrats – who had long resisted royal control of government. They formed a provisional government, but despite some initial Polish victories on the battlefield, Russian forces crushed the rebels when no other European powers came to aid the Poles. Russia reacted by abolishing the Polish constitution that Tsar Alexander I had initially granted, and thousands of Poles were executed or exiled.

The Revolutions of 1848

In 1848, liberal and nationalistic revolutions broke out across Europe that were even more widespread than in 1830. Like most of the previous revolutions, these were led by political liberals, who were generally drawn from the middle classes. Throughout the Continent, liberals were pushing for their programs of more representative government, civil liberty, and unregulated economic life. In Britain, revolution was avoided through a series of reform laws: most importantly the Reform Bill of 1832 and the repeal of the Com Laws in 1846. However, on the Continent, peaceful tactics were less successful, so political liberals gained the support of the urban working classes, who wanted improved working conditions rather than a liberal framework of government. Their discontent was intensified by crop failures across Europe beginning in 1845, with the Irish potato famine only the worst of many.

Outside France, nationalism was an important common factor in the

uprisings. Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Czechs, and many other groups in eastern Europe wanted their own national states. The Austrian Empire was the state most profoundly endangered by nationalism, but in the end the nationalities failed to unite against the old empire. Despite the outbreak of so many major uprisings, the revolutions failed to establish genuinely liberal or national states, partly because the rebels had such different goals for their reforms.

Revolution in France

A severe economic depression beginning in 1846 convinced many working-class urbanites and peasants to support the middle-class disgruntlement with Louis Philippe's government. The middle class wanted to extend suffrage, but the government resisted, and so with growing support from others, a group of moderate and radical republicans overthrew the monarchy and established a provisional government and declared France to be a republic once again in February 1848. The new government issued liberal reforms – an end to the death penalty for political crimes, the abolition of slavery in the colonies, and freedom of the press – and agreed to support universal manhood suffrage.

Examining the Evidence: Radical and Moderate Women's Groups in 1848

The February Revolution of 1848 in France inspired many feminists to demand equal rights for women. Many joined a wide variety of political clubs that emerged, and some women even tried unsuccessfully to vote in the various elections of 1848. The most radical group of women called themselves the Vesuvians, after the volcano in Italy. They demanded full equality for women in the home, the right for women to serve in the military, and similarity in dress for men and women. A more conservative group of women – the Voix des femmes (Voice of women) – organized a daily newspaper that addressed women's issues. They supported traditional gender roles, but tried to elevate the importance of family and motherhood. They argued that women must receive better educations, the right to work, equal civil rights, property rights, and the right to vote. By the end of the year, the Vesuvians and the Vois des femmes suffered the same fate as that of the radical workers. Their workshops were shut down, and women were forbidden to participate in political clubs. A few years later, two leaders associated with the Vois de femmes were arrested, tried, and imprisoned for attempting to organize groups to improve the economic

situation for working-class women. The efforts of both women's groups were totally erased, just as earlier French feminists had been defeated in1793 .

The provisional government established national workshops, which provided the unemployed with jobs, but the cost of the program led to a new surtax on property taxes, alienating peasants and landowners. Women, too, demanded workshops, but the government was able to provide only a few for women workers. Soon a split developed between the moderate republicans, who had the support of most of France, and the radical republicans, whose main supporters were from the Parisian working class. Voters elected a largely moderate National Assembly in April 1848, which – frightened by the growing deficits – closed the workshops on June 23, but the workers rose in protest. In the June Days – as the following period came to be called – tens of thousands took to the streets of Paris, and the government summoned the army to fight the workers. The republic's army crushed the protest, with more than 10,000 killed, 12,000 arrested, and 4,000 deported to the French colony of Algeria in northern Africa.

With the defeat of the Parisian workers, the moderates prevailed, confirming that middle-class desires for political representation and protection of private property would dominate the French government. The victor in the presidential election in December 1848 was Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, a nephew of the great emperor. Within four years, President Napoleon would follow the pattern set by his famous uncle to become the emperor of France.

Prussia and the Frankfurt Assembly

The February revolution in Paris sparked revolutions in many other parts of Europe, including the German states. Many German rulers promised constitutions, a free press, and other liberal reforms, and even Prussia made concessions. Prussian liberals hoped to transform absolutist Prussia into a liberal constitutional monarchy, which would in turn take the lead in merging all other German states into a unified nation. After the Prussian army failed to push back a major demonstration in front of Berlin's royal palace on March 18, 1848, King Frederick William IV agreed to abolish censorship and work for a united Germany. An important result was the election – by universal manhood suffrage – of the Frankfurt Assembly, an all-German parliament called to prepare a constitution for a new united Germany. However, the 800 delegates to the assembly had little practical political experience, and they had no real means of compelling the German rulers to accept the constitution that

they drew up. As in France, the delegates were mainly moderates from the middle class, and their desire for political unity clashed with the demands from the working class, and so the rebels were divided. The advantage lay with the princes, who controlled the armed forces, and by the fall of 1848, Frederick William IV had a change of heart, and sent his army to crush the revolution in Berlin. By 1849, the leadership for unification passed from the German liberals at Frankfurt to the Prussian military monarchy.

Ethnic Fighting in Austria

The revolts among nationalities in the Austrian Empire began in Hungary, which had long been a region of discontent. The Hungarian liberals under Louis Kossuth demanded "commonwealth" status, which would allow them to have their own legislature while keeping the Habsburg monarch. In March 1848, demonstrations in Buda, Prague, and Vienna led to Metternich's dismissal, and he fled to England in disguise. Emperor Ferdinand promised a constitution, an elected parliament, and the end of censorship. Hungary was granted its own legislature, a separate national army, and control over foreign policy and budget. In Bohemia, the Czechs demanded their own government as well and convened a Slav congress similar to the Frankfurt Assembly for Germans. This action provoked Germans in areas with Slav majorities to protest, and so the nationalities began to argue among themselves. As in France and Germany, divisions between radical and moderate revolutionaries weakened their movement as well.

Sensing these divisions among the rebels, the Austrian government took action in June by sending military forces to suppress the Czech rebels in Prague. By October, the Austrian forces had crushed the rebels in Vienna, and by December Ferdinand was forced to abdicate to his nephew, Francis Joseph I, who turned his attention to Hungary. He gained support from Tsar Nicholas I, who sent Russian troops to help suppress the Hungarians. Hungary was put under martial law, and Kossuth fled to the United States. Autocratic government was restored, and no liberal or radical reforms remained in place by 1849.

The Revolutionary Movement in Italy

The reestablishment of Austrian control over the Hungarians and Czechs led to the defeat of the revolutionary movement in Italy also. At first, most Italian states rallied behind Sardinian leaders, but there were serious differences among the insurgent Italians. The question of the future status of

the Papal States was a particular problem, since the pope protected the age-old independence of his domain. Divisions made the Italian states vulnerable to defeat by Austrian armies that challenged them, so the revolutionary forces were defeated, and the king of Sardinia was required to abdicate as punishment for leading the movement. Despite this setback, the kingdom of Sardinia emerged after 1849 as the one hope for the national unification of Italy. Republican schemes were discredited by the failures of 1848-49, but more and more, nationalistic Italians turned toward Sardinia in much the same fashion as Germans began to look to Prussia to unify them. In both countries, Austria had become the arch-enemy of all liberal and nationalistic reform.

Throughout Europe in 1848, popular revolts forcefully demanded the formation of liberal constitutions and governments, and many nationalities also revolted in pursuit of self government. However, these revolutions failed, since divisions – between moderates and radicals, middle and working classes, and among various ethnic groups – diffused and ultimately undermined their goals. However, liberalism and nationalism would eventually prevail in the second half of the 19th century, and radicalism would survive to provide strong challenges for traditional regimes.