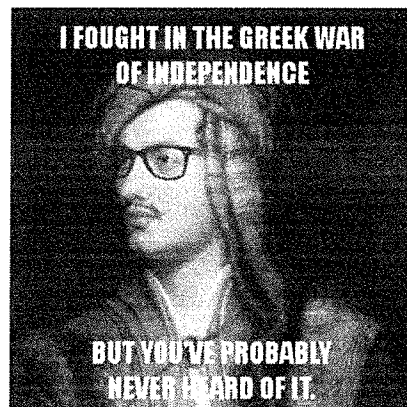


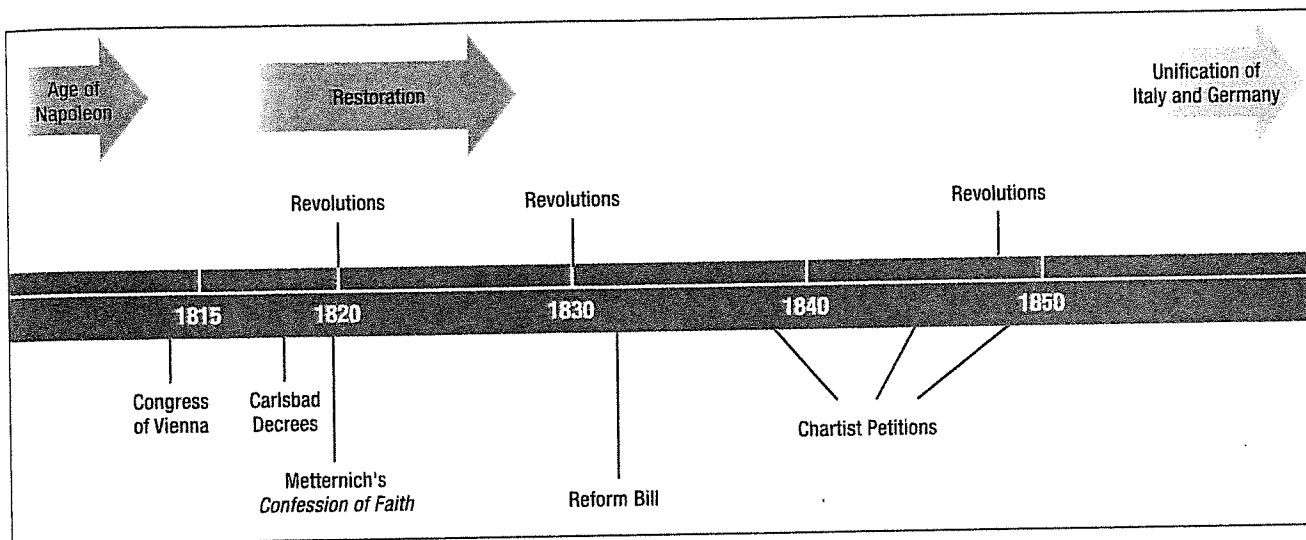
CHAPTER 21 READINGS

REACTION, REVOLUTION, AND ROMANTICISM, 1815–1850

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12 Reaction, Reform, Revolution, and Romanticism: 1815–1848

The European powers met at the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) to decide how to proceed now that Napoleon had been defeated. Conservative sentiments, exemplified by the views of Prince Metternich of Austria, predominated at this congress. Although the final settlement was not punitive or humiliating to France, it did represent an effort by conservative leaders to reject changes instituted during the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods, to restore traditional groups and governments to power, and to resist liberalism and nationalism. As a result of this and other developments, the aristocracy regained some of its prominence, monarchs such as Louis XVIII (brother of Louis XVI) returned to power, and armies intervened (as in Spain and Italy) to crush threats to the status quo.

Nevertheless, movements for national liberation and liberal reform surfaced during the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s.

In the 1820s and 1830s, Greece and Belgium gained independence and less successful nationalistic movements arose in Italy and Poland. Liberalism, encompassing demands for greater freedom, constitutional government, and political rights, was particularly strong in Western Europe. In England a series of legislative acts in the 1830s and 1840s clearly recognized liberal demands. In France a revolution in 1830 brought to power groups more open to liberal ideas.

A climax came in 1848, when revolutions erupted across Europe. Although each revolution was different, in general the middle and working classes demanded changes in the name of nationalism or liberalism. At first, established governments weakened or fell, but the revolutionaries found it difficult to remain unified once power was in their hands. Soon groups standing for authoritarian rule took advantage of this disunity and regained power.



The conservatism and liberalism that characterized so many of the political developments of this period were reflected in certain artistic and literary styles. Romanticism was the most important of these, reflecting, in different ways, both conservatism and liberalism. From its beginning in the late eighteenth century, it spread until it became the dominant cultural movement of the first half of the nineteenth century. Romanticism rejected the formalism of the previously dominant Classical style, refused to be limited by Enlightenment rationalism or the stark realism of everyday life, and emphasized emotion and freedom.

The sources in this chapter focus first on conservatism: What were some of the main characteristics of conservatism? What did it stand against? What policies fit with conservative attitudes? In what ways did the Congress of Vienna reflect the conservatism of the period? The next set of documents looks at liberalism and movements for reform: What did liberalism mean in the first half of the nineteenth century? What reforms did liberals demand? What

was the nature of reform movements, as exemplified by Chartism in England? Third are the revolutions of 1848: In what ways did the revolutions of 1848 bring to a head some of the main trends of the period? Who might be considered the “winners” and “losers” in these revolutions? Finally sources on the nature of Romanticism, particularly as it is revealed in literature and art are reviewed: What were some of the ties between Romanticism and conservatism? How was Romanticism related to liberal and even revolutionary ideals? What emerges from these selections is a picture of Europeans trying to deal politically and culturally with the legacy of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment.

For Classroom Discussion

What are the differences between nineteenth-century conservatism and liberalism? Use the source by Metternich, the excerpts from the Carlsbad Decrees and Bentham, and the analysis of Bramsted and Melhuish.



Primary Sources

Secret Memorandum to Tsar Alexander I, 1820: Conservative Principles

Prince Klemens von Metternich

The outstanding leader of the conservative tide that rose with the fall of Napoleon was Prince Klemens von Metternich (1773–1859). From his post as Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Metternich hosted the Congress of Vienna and played a dominating role within Austria and among the conservative states of Europe between 1815 and 1848. Both in principle and in practice, he represented a conservatism that rejected the changes wrought by the French Revolution and stood against liberalism and nationalism. The following is an excerpt from a secret memorandum that Metternich sent to Tsar Alexander I of Russia in 1820, explaining his political principles. While not a sophisticated statement of political theory, it does reflect key elements of conservative attitudes and ideas.

CONSIDER: *What threats Metternich perceives; how Metternich connects “presumption” with the middle class; how this document reflects the experience of the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods; the kinds of policies that would logically flow from these attitudes.*

SOURCE: Prince Richard Metternich, ed., *Memoirs of Prince Metternich, 1815–1829*, vol. III, trans. Mrs. Alexander Napier (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881), pp. 454–455, 458–460, 468–469.

“L’Europe,” a celebrated writer has recently said, “fait aujourd’hui pitié à l’homme d’esprit et horreur à l’homme vertueux.”¹

It would be difficult to comprise in a few words a more exact picture of the situation at the time we are writing these lines!

Kings have to calculate the chances of their very existence in the immediate future; passions are let loose, and league together to overthrow everything which society respects as the basis of its existence; religion, public morality, laws, customs, rights, and duties, all are attacked, confounded, overthrown, or called in question. The great mass of the people are tranquil spectators of these attacks and revolutions, and of the absolute want of all means of defense. A few are carried off by the torrent, but the wishes of the immense majority are to maintain a repose which exists no longer, and of which even the first elements seem to be lost. . . .

Having now thrown a rapid glance over the first causes of the present state of society, it is necessary to point out in a more particular manner the evil which threatens to deprive it, at one blow, of the real blessings, the fruits of genuine civilisation, and to disturb it in the midst of its enjoyments. This evil may be described in one word—presumption; the natural effect of the rapid

¹Europe . . . is pitied by men of spirit and abhorred by men of virtue.

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progression of the human mind towards the perfecting of so many things. This it is which at the present day leads so many individuals astray, for it has become an almost universal sentiment.

Religion, morality, legislation, economy, politics, administration, all have become common and accessible to everyone. Knowledge seems to come by inspiration; experience has no value for the presumptuous man; faith is nothing to him; he substitutes for it a pretended individual conviction, and to arrive at this conviction dispenses with all inquiry and with all study; for these means appear too trivial to a mind which believes itself strong enough to embrace at one glance all questions and all facts. Laws have no value for him, because he has not contributed to make them, and it would be beneath a man of his parts to recognise the limits traced by rude and ignorant generations. Power resides in himself; why should he submit himself to that which was only useful for the man deprived of light and knowledge? That which, according to him, was required in an age of weakness cannot be suitable in an age of reason and vigour amounting to universal perfection, which the German innovators designate by the idea, absurd in itself, of the Emancipation of the People! Morality itself he does not attack openly, for without it he could not be sure for a single instant of his own existence; but he interprets its essence after his own fashion, and allows every other person to do so likewise, provided that other person neither kills nor robs him.

In thus tracing the character of the presumptuous man, we believe we have traced that of the society of the day, composed of like elements, if the denomination of society is applicable to an order of things which only tends in principle towards individualising all the elements of which society is composed. Presumption makes every man the guide of his own belief, the arbiter of laws according to which he is pleased to govern himself, or to allow some one else to govern him and his neighbours; it makes him, in short, the sole judge of his own faith, his own actions, and the principles according to which he guides them. . . .

The Governments, having lost their balance, are frightened, intimidated, and thrown into confusion by the cries of the intermediary class of society, which, placed between the Kings and their subjects, breaks the sceptre of the monarch, and usurps the cry of the people—the class so often disowned by the people, and nevertheless too much listened to, caressed and feared by those who could with one word reduce it again to nothingness.

We see this intermediary class abandon itself with a blind fury and animosity which proves much more its own fears than any confidence in the success of its enterprises, to all the means which seem proper to assuage its thirst for power, applying itself to the task of per-

suading Kings that their rights are confined to sitting upon a throne, while those of the people are to govern, and to attack all that centuries have bequeathed as holy and worthy of man's respect—denying, in fact, the value of the past, and declaring themselves the masters of the future. We see this class take all sorts of disguises, uniting and subdividing as occasion offers, helping each other in the hour of danger, and the next day depriving each other of all their conquests. It takes possession of the press, and employs it to promote impiety, disobedience to the laws of religion and the State, and goes so far as to preach murder as a duty for those who desire what is good.

The Carlsbad Decrees, 1819: Conservative Repression

One way political leaders tried to assert conservatism against any perceived threats such as liberalism or nationalism was through international cooperation and action, a policy known as the Concert of Europe. Another way was through taking internal measures against the same threats, such as occurred in Germany in 1819 with the issuance of the Carlsbad Decrees. These decrees were pushed through the Diet of the German Confederation by Austria and Prussia, but particularly by Prince Metternich, in reaction to nationalist student movements against the principles of the Congress of Vienna. The following excerpts from those decrees concern the universities, the press, and all "revolutionary plots."

CONSIDER: *The purposes of these decrees and the means used to effect these purposes; whether these decrees are consistent with attitudes expressed by Metternich in the "confession of faith" he makes in his secret memorandum to Tsar Alexander I; the consequences of the effective enforcement of these decrees.*

PROVISIONAL DECREE RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITIES, UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 20, 1819

§2. The confederated governments mutually pledge themselves to remove from the universities or other public educational institutions all teachers who, by obvious deviation from their duty or by exceeding the limits of their functions, or by the abuse of their legitimate influence over the youthful minds, or by propagating harmful doctrines hostile to public order or subversive of existing

SOURCE: From James Harvey Robinson, ed., "The Reaction after 1815 and European Policy of Metternich," in *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, vol. 1, no. 3, ed. Department of History of the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1898), pp. 16–20.

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governmental institutions, shall have unmistakably proved their unfitness for the important office intrusted to them. . . .

§3. Those laws which have for a long period been directed against secret and unauthorized societies in the universities, shall be strictly enforced. These laws apply especially to that association established some years since under the name Universal Students' Union (*Allgemeine Burschenschaft*), since the very conception of the society implies the utterly unallowable plan of permanent fellowship and constant communication between the various universities. The duty of especial watchfulness in this matter should be impressed upon the special agents of the government.

PRESS LAWS FOR FIVE YEARS

§1. So long as this decree shall remain in force no publication which appears in the form of daily issues or as a serial not exceeding twenty sheets of printed matter shall go to press in any state of the Union without the previous knowledge and approval of the state officials.

§6. . . . The Diet shall have the right, moreover, to suppress on its own authority, without being petitioned, such writings included in Section 1, in whatever German state they may appear, as in the opinion of a commission appointed by it, are inimical to the honor of the Union, the safety of individual states or the maintenance of peace and quiet in Germany. There shall be no appeal from such decisions and the governments involved are bound to see that they are put into execution.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE AT MAINZ

ARTICLE I. Within a fortnight, reckoned from the passage of this decree, there shall convene, under the auspices of the Confederation, in the city and federal fortress of Mainz, an Extraordinary Commission of Investigation to consist of seven members including the chairman.

ARTICLE II. The object of the Commission shall be a joint investigation, as thorough and extensive as possible, of the facts relating to the origin and manifold ramifications of the revolutionary plots and demagogical associations directed against the existing Constitutional and internal peace both of the Union and of the individual states: of the existence of which plots more or less clear evidence is to be had already, or may be produced in the course of the investigation.

English Liberalism

Jeremy Bentham

*The roots of liberalism are deep and varied, stretching back to the writings of John Locke in the seventeenth century and further. By the time liberalism started to flourish during the nineteenth century, it had a particularly strong English tradition. Perhaps the most influential of the early-nineteenth-century English liberals was Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832). He is best known as the author of the theory of utilitarianism and for advocating reform of many English institutions. The ideas and efforts of Bentham and his followers, who include James Mill and John Stuart Mill, formed one of the main-streams of English liberalism and liberal reform in the nineteenth century. The first of the following two selections comes from Bentham's *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789) and focuses on the principle of utility. The second is from his *Manual of Political Economy* (1798) and indicates his views toward governmental economic policy.*

CONSIDER: *What exactly Bentham means by the principle of utility; what, according to the principle of utility, the proper role of government in general is; his explanation for the proper role of the government in economic affairs.*

I. Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other chains of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve to demonstrate and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to abjure their empire: but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while. The *principle of utility* recognizes this subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and of law. Systems which attempt to question it, deal in sounds instead of sense, in caprice instead of reason, in darkness instead of light.

But enough of metaphor and declamation: it is not by such means that moral science is to be improved.

II. The principle of utility is the foundation of the present work: it will be proper therefore at the outset to give an explicit and determinate account of what is meant by it. By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears

SOURCES: Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1876), pp. 1–3; John Bowring, ed., *Bentham's Works*, vol. III (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843), pp. 33–35.

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to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness. I say of every action whatsoever; and therefore not only of every action of a private individual, but of every measure of government.

III. By utility is meant that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness (all this in the present case comes to the same thing) or (what comes again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community: if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual.

IV. The interest of the community is one of the most general expressions that can occur in the phraseology of morals: no wonder that the meaning of it is often lost. When it has a meaning, it is this. The community is a fictitious *body*, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its *members*. The interest of the community then is, what?—the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it.

V. It is in vain to talk of the interest of the community, without understanding what is the interest of the individual. A thing is said to promote the interest, or to be *for* the interest, of an individual, when it tends to add to the sum total of his pleasures: or, what comes to the same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains.

VI. An action then may be said to be conformable to the principle of utility, or, for shortness sake, to utility (meaning with respect to the community at large) when the tendency it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any it has to diminish it.

VII. A measure of government (which is but a particular kind of action, performed by a particular person or persons) may be said to be conformable to or dictated by the principle of utility, when in like manner the tendency which it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any which it has to diminish it. . . .

The practical questions, therefore, are how far the end in view is best promoted by individuals acting for themselves? and in what cases these ends may be promoted by the hands of government?

With the view of causing an increase to take place in the mass of national wealth, or with a view to increase of the means either of subsistence or enjoyment, without some special reason, the general rule is, that nothing ought to be done or attempted by government. The motto, or watchword of government, on these occasions, ought to be—*Be quiet*.

For this quietism there are two main reasons:

1. Generally speaking, any interference for this purpose on the part of government is needless. The wealth of the whole community is composed of the wealth of the several individuals belonging to it taken together. But to increase his particular portion is, generally speaking, among the constant objects of each individual's exertions and care. Generally speaking, there is no one who knows what is for your interest so well as yourself—no one who is disposed with so much ardour and constancy to pursue it.
2. Generally speaking, it is moreover likely to be pernicious, viz. by being uncondusive, or even obstructive, with reference to the attainment of the end in view. Each individual bestowing more time and attention upon the means of preserving and increasing his portion of wealth, than is or can be bestowed by government, is likely to take a more effectual course than what, in his instance and on his behalf, would be taken by government.

It is, moreover, universally and constantly pernicious in another way, by the restraint or constraint imposed on the free agency of the individual. . . .

. . . With few exceptions, and those not very considerable ones, the attainment of the maximum of enjoyment will be most effectually secured by leaving each individual to pursue his own maximum of enjoyment, in proportion as he is in possession of the means. Inclination in this respect will not be wanting on the part of any one. Power, the species of power applicable to this case—viz. wealth, pecuniary power—could not be given by the hand of government to one, without being taken from another; so that by such interference there would not be any gain of power upon the whole.

The gain to be produced in this article by the interposition of government, respects principally the head of knowledge. There are cases in which, for the benefit of the public at large, it may be in the power of government to cause this or that portion of knowledge to be produced and diffused, which, without the demand for it produced by government, would either not have been produced, or would not have been diffused.

We have seen above the grounds on which the general rule in this behalf—*Be quiet*—rests. Whatever measures, therefore, cannot be justified as exceptions to that rule, may be considered as *non agenda* on the part of government. The art, therefore, is reduced within a small compass: *security* and *freedom* are all that industry requires. The request which agriculture, manufactures and commerce present to governments, is modest and reasonable as that which Diogenes made to Alexander: "*Stand out of my sunshine.*" We have no need of favour—we require only a secure and open path.

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Liberalism: Progress and Optimism

The Economist, 1851

Liberals usually believed in progress and were optimistic about their own times and the future. By mid-century, liberalism was most widespread in England, Europe's dominant economic power. English liberals living in the mid-nineteenth century were therefore particularly confident and proud, as indicated by the following excerpts from two 1851 articles published in *The Economist*. This journal appealed to England's prosperous middle class.

CONSIDER: What liberals considered the great improvements of the first half of the nineteenth century; who benefited most from these changes; how conservatives or socialists might respond.

Economists are supposed to be, by nature and occupation, cold, arithmetical, and unenthusiastic. We shall not, we hope, do discredit to this chapter when we say that we consider it a happiness and a privilege to have had our lot cast in the first fifty years of this century. . . .

It has witnessed a leap forward in all the elements of material well-being such as neither scientific vision nor poetic fancy ever pictured. It is not too much to say that, in wealth, in the arts of life, in the discoveries of science and their application to the comfort, the health, the safety, and the capabilities of man, in public and private morality, in the diffusion if not in the advancement of knowledge, in the sense of social charity and justice, in religious freedom, and in political wisdom,—the period of the last fifty years has carried us forward faster and further than any other half-century in modern times . . . in many of the particulars we have enumerated, it has witnessed a more rapid and astonishing progress than all the centuries which have preceded it. In several vital points the difference between the 18th and the 19th century, is greater than between the first and the 18th, as far as civilised Europe is concerned.

When we refer to a few only of the extraordinary improvements of the half century just elapsed—such as the 35 years' peace, so far as morals are concerned; such as the philanthropic and just conviction that the welfare of the multitude, not of one or two classes, is the proper object of social solicitude; the humane direction which the mind has received towards the abolition of slavery; the amelioration of all penal systems, and the doubts that have been generated of their utility; the advances in religious toleration, and in forbearing one with another:

and such as the application of steam to locomotives on water and land, and the consequent vast extension of communication all over the world, so far as physics are concerned;—such as the invention and general introduction of gas; the use of railroads and electric telegraphs; the extended application of machinery to all the arts of life, almost putting an end to very severe injurious bodily toil, except in agriculture, in which, though the labourers are speedily doubled up with rheumatism, and become, from poverty and excessive labour in all kinds of weather, prematurely old, great improvements have nevertheless been made:—when we refer to a few events of this kind, we become convinced that the half century just elapsed is more full of wonders than any other on record.

The First Chartist Petition: Demands for Change in England

Movements for reform occurred throughout Europe between 1815 and 1848 despite the efforts of conservatives to quash them. Eventually almost all countries in Europe experienced the revolutions conservatives feared so much. One exception was England, but even there political movements threatened to turn into violent revolts against the failure of the government to change. The most important of these was the Chartist movement, made up primarily of members of the working class who wanted reforms for themselves. The following is an excerpt from the first charter presented to the House of Commons in 1838. Subsequent charters were presented in 1842 and 1848. In each case the potential existed for a mass movement to turn into a violent revolt, and in each case Parliament rejected the Chartist demands. Only later in the century were most of these demands met.

CONSIDER: The nature of the Chartists' demands; by what means the Chartists hoped to achieve their ends; how Metternich might analyze these demands.

Required, as we are universally, to support and obey the laws, nature and reason entitle us to demand that in the making of the laws the universal voice shall be implicitly listened to. We perform the duties of freemen; we must have the privileges of freemen. Therefore, we demand universal suffrage. The suffrage, to be exempt from the corruption of the wealthy and the violence of the powerful, must be secret. The assertion of our right necessarily involves the power of our uncontrolled exercise. We ask for the reality of a good, not for its

SOURCE: *The Economist* (London), vol. IX, January 4, 1851, p. 5; January 18, 1851, p. 57.

SOURCE: From R. G. Gammage, *History of the Chartist Movement*, 2nd ed. (Newcastle-on-Tyne, England: Browne and Browne, 1894), pp. 88–90.

semblance, therefore we demand the ballot. The connection between the representatives and the people, to be beneficial, must be intimate. The legislative and constituent powers, for correction and for instruction, ought to be brought into frequent contact. Errors which are comparatively light, when susceptible of a speedy popular remedy, may produce the most disastrous effects when permitted to grow inveterate through years of compulsory endurance. To public safety, as well as public confidence, frequent elections are essential. Therefore, we demand annual parliaments. With power to choose, and freedom in choosing, the range of our choice must be unrestricted. We are compelled, by the existing laws, to take for our representatives men who are incapable of appreciating our difficulties, or have little sympathy with them; merchants who have retired from trade and no longer feel its harrassings; proprietors of land who are alike ignorant of its evils and its cure; lawyers by whom the notoriety of the senate is courted only as a means of obtaining notice in the courts. The labours of a representative who is sedulous in the discharge of his duty are numerous and burdensome. It is neither just, nor reasonable, nor safe, that they should continue to be gratuitously rendered. We demand that in the future election of members of your honourable house, the approbation of the constituency shall be the sole qualification, and that to every representative so chosen, shall be assigned out of the public taxes, a fair and adequate remunerative for the time which he is called upon to devote to the public service. The management of his mighty kingdom has hitherto been a subject for contending factions to try their selfish experiments upon. We have felt the consequences in our sorrowful experience. Short glimmerings of uncertain enjoyment, swallowed up by long and dark seasons of suffering. If the self-government of the people should not remove their distresses, it will, at least, remove their repinings. Universal suffrage will, and it alone can, bring true and lasting peace to the nation; we firmly believe that it will also bring prosperity. May it therefore please your honourable house, to take this our petition into your most serious consideration, and to use your utmost endeavours, by all constitutional means, to have a law passed, granting to every male of lawful age, sane mind, and unconvicted of crime, the right of voting for members of parliament, and directing all future elections of members of parliament to be in the way of secret ballot, and ordaining that the duration of parliament, so chosen, shall in no case exceed one year, and abolishing all property qualifications in the members, and providing for their due remuneration while in attendance on their parliamentary duties.

"And your petitioners shall ever pray."

An Eyewitness Account of the Revolutions of 1848 in Germany

Annual Register, 1848

In 1848 revolutions broke out throughout Europe. The February Revolution in France seemed to act as a spark for revolutions elsewhere, particularly in the German states. Indeed, within a few days of the outbreak in France, the established governments of the German states were faced with demands for change, demonstrations, and revolutions. The following is an account by an eyewitness of some of the events in Germany during March 1848, as reported in the London Annual Register.

CONSIDER: *Whether this indicates any pattern to the revolutionary activities; the nature of the demands for change; how the established governments reacted.*

In order to give a clear and distinct narrative of the complicated events which have taken place during the present year in Germany, we have had to consider carefully the question of arrangement; for, independently of the revolutionary movements in the separate kingdoms, there has been a long-sustained attempt to construct a new German nationality on the basis of a Confederation of all the states, with one great Parliament or Diet, and a Central Executive at Frankfort. . . .

It was in the southwestern states of Germany that the effects of the French Revolution began first to manifest themselves. On the 29th of February the Grand Duke of Baden received a deputation from his subjects who demanded liberty of the press, the establishment of a national guard, and trial by jury. They succeeded in their object, and M. Welcker, who had distinguished himself as a Liberal leader, was appointed one of the ministers.

On the 3d of March, the Rhenish provinces, headed by Cologne, followed the same example. On the 4th similar demonstrations took place at Wiesbaden and Frankfort, and on the 5th at Düsseldorf. At Cologne, on the 3d of March, the populace assembled in crowds before the Stadthaus, or town hall, where the town council were sitting, and demanded the concession of certain rights, which were inscribed on slips of paper and handed about amongst the mob. They were as follows: (1) Universal suffrage; all legislation and government to proceed from the people. (2) Liberty of the press and freedom of speech. (3) Abolition of the standing army and the armament of the people, who are to elect their own officers. (4) Full rights of public

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meeting. (5) Protection to labor, and a guarantee for the supply of all necessities. (6) State education for all children.

The military were, however, called out, and the streets were cleared without much difficulty.

At Wiesbaden, in Nassau, a large concourse of people met opposite the palace on the 4th, and demanded a general arming of the people under their own elective leaders; entire liberty of the press; a German Parliament; right of public meeting; public and oral trial by jury; the control of the duchy domain; convocation of the second chamber to frame a new electoral law on the basis of population, and to remove all restrictions on religious liberty. The Duke was absent at Berlin, but the Duchess, from the balcony of the palace, assured the people that their demands would be fully conceded by the Duke, her stepson. Subsequently appeared a proclamation in which the Duchess *guaranteed* the concession of these demands; and on the same day, in the afternoon, the Duke returned, and, immediately addressing the people, he ratified all the concessions made by the Duchess and his ministers.

The Tables Turned: The Glories of Nature

William Wordsworth

Romantic themes were reflected in poetry as much as in other cultural forms. The British poet William Wordsworth (1770–1850) focused early on romantic themes in his work. He emphasized the connection between the individual and the glories of nature. Wordsworth gained much recognition in his own lifetime and was eventually appointed Poet Laureate of England. The following poem, "The Tables Turned," was first published in 1798.

SOURCE: Edward Dowden, ed., *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, vol. IV (London: George Bell and Sons, 1893), pp. 198–199.

CONSIDER: *How this poem might be viewed as a rejection of the Enlightenment; the ways in which this poem relates to themes stressed by Châteaubriand in an excerpt later in this chapter.*

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:

Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your Teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.



Visual Sources

Abbey Graveyard in the Snow

Caspar David Friedrich

Abbey Graveyard in the Snow (figure 12.1) was painted by the well-known North German artist Caspar David Friedrich in 1819. In the center are the ruins of a Gothic choir of a monastic church surrounded by a snow-covered graveyard

and leafless winter forest. To the left a procession of monks follows a coffin into the ruins.

This painting exemplifies many elements typical of Romanticism, particularly German Romanticism. The scene, while visually accurate, goes beyond realism: The light is too perfectly placed, the church remains are too majestic, the surrounding forest is too symmetrical a frame, and the funeral

procession is out of place (funerals did not take place in ruins). By implication, this painting rejects the limits of Enlightenment rationalism and the reality of nineteenth-century urban life. Instead, a Romantic version of the Middle Ages, the spirituality of nature, and the glories of Christianity are evoked. The Romantic longing to be overwhelmed by eternal nature is suggested, particularly by the rendering of small human figures in a large landscape. Romanticism typically exalted the emotional over the rational, even if it was a melancholy sensitivity that was being displayed.



FIGURE 12.1 © Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz / Art Resource, NY

CONSIDER: The ways in which the Romanticism of this painting is consistent with that of Wordsworth's poetry, and with Châteaubriand's description of a Gothic cathedral, which follows.

The Genius of Christianity

René de Châteaubriand

The Romantic movement of the late eighteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century was in part a rebellion against new trends such as rationalism, urbanization, and secularism. Many historians have noted specific connections between Romanticism and conservatism, particularly in the longing for a less complex life, the respect for traditional religion, and the sense of unity between rural life and human institutions. This is illustrated in the following selection from *The Genius of Christianity* by René de Châteaubriand (1768–1848), a conservative French politician and writer. Published in 1802, it gained considerable popularity and helped Châteaubriand achieve a leading position among French conservatives. Here Châteaubriand describes the Gothic churches of the Middle Ages.

CONSIDER: Why this description might appeal to members of the aristocracy and the Catholic Church; by implication, the aspects of Châteaubriand's own times that he was attacking; how this complements Friedrich's painting.

You could not enter a Gothic church without feeling a kind of awe and a vague sentiment of the Divinity. You were all at once carried back to those times when a

fraternity of cenobites, after having meditated in the woods of their monasteries, met to prostrate themselves before the altar and to chant the praises of the Lord, amid the tranquillity and the silence of night. Ancient France seemed to revive altogether; you beheld all those singular costumes, all that nation so different from what it is at present; you were reminded of its revolutions, its productions, and its arts. The more remote were these times the more magical they appeared, the more they inspired ideas which always end with a reflection on the nothingness of man and the rapidity of life. . . .

The forests of Gaul were, in their turn, introduced into the temples of our ancestors, and those celebrated woods of oaks thus maintained their sacred character. Those ceilings sculptured into foliage of different kinds, those buttresses which prop the walls and terminate abruptly like the broken trunks of trees, the coolness of the vaults, the darkness of the sanctuary, the dim twilight of the aisles, the secret passages, the low doorways,—in a word, every thing in a Gothic church reminds you of the labyrinths of a wood; every thing excites a feeling of religious awe, of mystery, and of the Divinity.

The two lofty towers erected at the entrance of the edifice overtop the elms and yew-trees of the churchyard, and produce the most picturesque effect on the azure of heaven. Sometimes their twin heads are illumined by the first rays of dawn; at others they appear crowned with a capital of clouds or magnified in a foggy atmosphere. The birds themselves seem to make a mistake in regard to them, and to take them for the trees of the forest; they hover over their summits, and perch upon their pinnacles. But, lo! confused noises suddenly

issue from the top of these towers and scare away the af-frighted birds. The Christian architect, not content with building forests, has been desirous to retain their mur-murs; and, by means of the organ and of bells, he has at-tached to the Gothic temple the very winds and thunders that roar in the recesses of the woods. Past ages, conjured up by these religious sounds, raise their venerable voices from the bosom of the stones, and are heard in every cor-ner of the ancient Sibyl; loud-tongued bells swing over your head, while the vaults of death under your feet are profoundly silent.

Liberty Leading the People: Romanticism and Liberalism

Eugène Delacroix

A number of historical themes of the first half of the nine-teenth century are combined in Liberty Leading the People (1830) by the French painter Eugène Delacroix (figure 12.2).

The painting shows an important event of the revolution of 1830 in Paris—revolutionaries fighting off government troops at a bridge in the center of the city. The revolutionaries are led by a feminine figure symbolizing liberty and carrying a Re-publican flag in one hand, a gun in the other. She is followed by people of all classes and ages.

In both style and content this painting reveals some of the connections between liberalism and Romanticism. The scene represents the high moral purposes of the revolution: the people struggling for the ideals of liberalism and nationalism. Despite the turmoil of the event, the people's faces convey a calm, firm assurance of the rightness and the outcome of their liberal cause. At the same time, the style of the painting is in the Romantic tradition, above all in its emphasis on heroism and the attainment of ideal goals—here liberal goals—beyond the normal expectations of life.

CONSIDER: *The ways in which this painting represents what Metternich and the Congress of Vienna struggled against.*



FIGURE 12.2 © Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

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Working Class Disappointments: Rue Transnonain, April 15, 1834

Honoré Daumier

The 1830 revolutions may have brought victories to the middle class in some countries, but the working class was soon disappointed. In the years after 1830, the new regime in France not only did little to ease conditions for workers but actually passed legislation restricting their rights to organize. In 1834, outraged by the institution of the repressive Law on Associations (which would ban all unauthorized associations with more than 20 members in the name of order) and suffering from brutal labor conditions (silk weavers usually worked 16 to 20 hours a day), a workers' insurrection erupted in Lyon. After four days of bloodshed that left hundreds dead, government troops put down the uprising. A smaller insurrection also broke out in Paris, where armed insurgents began building barricades on the streets. This too was put down by government troops.

In this 1834 lithograph (figure 12.3), Honoré Daumier (1808–1879), a republican critic of the government and

illustrator for two political periodicals, depicted the aftermath of this action, focusing on an event at 12 rue Transnonain in a working-class neighborhood of Paris. There, government troops believed they were being fired upon from an apartment house window. On the night of April 14–15, they stormed up the stairs to the apartment complex and shot, stabbed, and clubbed to death eight innocent men, a woman, and a child. Daumier shows the dead victims strewn in a bedroom. In the center, next to an overturned chair and propped up on the bed, lies a father whose body is riddled with wounds. Beneath him is his infant, his bashed-in bleeding skull showing from under the nightshirt. On the right is the dead grandfather and in the darkened left is the body of the mother. On the floor are the bloody footprints of the murderers. French officials quickly confiscated all the copies of this print they could find.

CONSIDER: What this reveals about the policies of even the more “liberal” governments that came to power during the 1830 revolutions; why governmental officials tried to confiscate all copies of this print.



RUE TRANSNONAIN, LE 15 AVRIL 1834





Secondary Sources

The Congress of Vienna

Hajo Holborn

Hindsight allows historians to evaluate diplomatic events with a sharply critical eye. Often great settlements between nations have been criticized for not taking into account the historical forces that would soon undo the stability that the peace treaties were supposed to establish. Although this critical view applies to the Congress of Vienna, there are historians who see it as relatively successful, particularly in comparison with the settlement after World War I. One of these historians is Hajo Holborn of Yale University. In the following selection Holborn evaluates the Congress of Vienna from the point of view of what was realistic for the parties at that time.

CONSIDER: *Why Holborn feels that the Congress of Vienna produced a constructive peace treaty; how other historians might criticize this view.*

The Vienna settlement created a European political system whose foundations lasted for a full century. For a hundred years there occurred no wars of world-wide scope like those of the twenty-odd years after 1792. Europe experienced frightful wars, particularly between 1854 and 1878, but none of them was a war in which all the European states or even all the great European powers participated. The European wars of the nineteenth century produced shifts of power, but they were shifts within the European political system and did not upset that system as such.

The peace settlement of Vienna has more often been condemned than praised. The accusation most frequently levelled against the Congress of Vienna has been that it lacked foresight in appraising the forces of modern nationalism and liberalism. Foresight is, indeed, one of the main qualities that distinguishes the statesman from the mere political professional. But even a statesman can only build with the bricks at hand and cannot hope to construct the second floor before he has modelled the first by which to shelter his own generation. His foresight of future developments can often express itself only by cautious attempts at keeping the way open for an evolution of the new forces.

It is questionable how successful the Congress of Vienna was in this respect. None of the Congress representatives was a statesman or political thinker of the first historic rank. All of them were strong partisans of conservatism or

outright reaction, and they found the rectitude of their convictions confirmed by the victory of the old powers over the revolutionary usurper. Still, they did not make a reactionary peace. They recognized that France could not live without a constitutional charter, and they knew, too, that the Holy Roman Empire was beyond resurrection. The new German Confederation represented a great improvement of the political conditions of Germany if one remembers that in Germany as well as in Italy the national movements were not strong enough to serve as pillars of a new order. In eastern Europe, furthermore, the modern ideas of nationality had hardly found more than a small academic and literary audience. A peace treaty cannot create new historical forces; it can only place the existing ones in a relationship most conducive to the maintenance of mutual confidence and least likely to lead to future conflict. The rest must be left to the ever continuing and never finished daily work of the statesmen.

In this light the Vienna settlement was a constructive peace treaty.

Western Liberalism

E. K. Bramsted and K. J. Melhuish

Although liberalism varied throughout Europe in accordance with the circumstances facing each country, there were broad similarities among the various liberal ideas and demands during the first half of the nineteenth century. In the following selection E. K. Bramsted and K. J. Melhuish summarize the common elements of liberal doctrine and attitudes in Europe.

CONSIDER: *How these doctrines and attitudes differ from conservatism; why liberalism would be more appealing to the middle class than to the aristocracy or the working class.*

In spite of the variations in the three main strands of liberalism, the features which classic liberals from Locke to John Stuart Mill had in common should not be overlooked. Rooted largely in the outlook of Enlightenment there was a constant emphasis on man's fundamental rationality and reasonableness. Privileges of the ruling strata based on mere tradition and custom were questioned and often rejected. Everywhere we encounter a strong urge to expand the rights of the individual and to

SOURCE: Hajo Holborn, *The Political Collapse of Europe*. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. (New York, 1965), pp. 27–28. Copyright © 1965 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

SOURCE: From E. K. Bramsted and K. J. Melhuish, eds., *Western Liberalism: A History in Documents from Locke to Croce*, pp. 35–36. Copyright © 1978 Longman Publishing Group, UK. Reprinted by permission.

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reduce the powers of the State and of the government. However widely their arguments differed, liberal thinkers of the period . . . argued mainly in favour of the rights and the social usefulness of the individual citizen and stressed the need for parliamentary control of the powers of the government and of the accountability of its civil servants. Throughout, liberalism presumed a pluralism of existing political and religious opinions; everywhere it tended to make a plea for the rights of minorities, rights which should be protected. Civil disabilities on account of religious or political dissent were to be abolished, provided the dissenters kept their activities within the rule of the law. The right to own property and the obligation of the government to safeguard it were essential features of the liberal ideology. It was not accidental that most liberals insisted on property qualifications to be attached to the right to vote. . . .

While by no means all liberals shared Guizot's famous slogan "*Enrichissez vous!*,"² people without property were not much respected by most of them, but were regarded as the concern of charity, if not of socialists and anarchists. Instead liberals busied themselves with the belief in a rational political order, based on a constitution and promoted by a government with limited powers. Ministers were to be responsible to Parliament.

The belief in progress, in an advancing civilization, was another characteristic of most liberal thought. . . . The continuous improvement of mankind, helped by the advance of science and the new self-confidence of the diligent middle classes, was never seriously doubted.

The European Revolutions, 1848–1851

Jonathan Sperber

The revolutions of 1848 have been at the center of historical debate for a long time. To some, 1848 represents the end of the system set up by the Congress of Vienna; to others, it represents the great battle between the forces of liberalism and conservatism; and to still others, it represents the point at which liberalism, nationalism, socialism, and Romanticism met. Perhaps the most persistent historiographical tradition views 1848 as a point at which history made a "wrong" turn. Aspects of this historical debate are summarized in the following selection by Jonathan Sperber.

CONSIDER: *The differences between the three major interpretative traditions concerning the revolutions of 1848; which of these interpretations makes the most sense to you.*

²Make yourself wealthy.

SOURCE: Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848–1851*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 1–2.

The European revolutions of 1848 have not always received the kindest of treatment at the hands of historians. Gentle mockery, open sarcasm and hostile contempt have frequently set the tone for narrative and evaluation. More favorable treatments of the period have not been much of an improvement, since their poetic interpretations have subtly downgraded the revolutions as serious political movements, not to be compared to the real business of 1789 and 1917. We might point to three major interpretative traditions.

One is characterized by its description of 1848 as the "romantic revolution." Historians writing along these lines apostrophize the barricade fighting born from a combination of youthful enthusiasm and romantic poetry; they evoke a revolution reaching its climax in the brief euphoria of liberation in March 1848, the "springtime of the peoples" as the contemporary German phrase described it. In this version, attention is often focused on the romantically heroic deeds of individual great figures: Lajos Kossuth travelling from village to village in the Hungarian plain, to rally the peasants against the invading Habsburg armies; Giuseppe Garibaldi leading the improvised armies of the Roman Republic against the French expeditionary force; Daniele Manin single handedly rallying the Venetians to fight the Austrians against terrible odds. It was all great and glorious, but primarily in gesture and pathos—whether it really accomplished anything is quite another matter.

Rather darker is another version of the 1848 revolutions, that views them primarily as farce, a revolution made by revolutionaries who were at best incompetent dilettantes, at worst cowards and blowhards who stole away from the scene when the going got rough. This version features the story of the Parisian revolutionary observing from his window a demonstrating crowd go by, springing up from his chair, and rushing out, proclaiming, "I am their leader; I must follow them." Another typical victim of retrospective contempt is the Frankfurt National Assembly, the all-German parliament. Historians have had their fun with the "professors' parliament," mocking its lengthy debates about whether Germany should be a *Bundesstaat* or a *Staatenbund*, noting how, after a year of deliberation, the deputies voted to name the King of Prussia emperor, only to discover that he had no interest in the post.

The third and probably most substantial of the historians' versions of 1848 directs attention to the failure of the revolutions of that year to establish new regimes, pointing out that after a shorter or longer—and usually shorter—interval, the authorities overthrown at the onset of the revolution returned to power. Historians working in this tradition contrast the failed revolutions of the mid-nineteenth century with the more successful ones in 1789 and 1917, and offer a variety of explanations for the differences.

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The Revolutions of 1848

John Weiss

The scholarly debate over the revolutions of 1848 continues, but in recent years several historians have suggested a new interpretation. The following selection by John Weiss is an example of this new trend. Here he deemphasizes the role of liberalism, stressing instead the role played by artisans and peasants in the revolutions.

CONSIDER: According to Weiss, the social and economic causes of the revolutions; how Weiss supports his conclusion that it is misleading to label these revolutions liberal.

The revolutions of 1848 were the last in Europe, excluding those caused by defeat in war. Their suppression also marked the last triumph of the semi-feudal varieties of conservatism discussed previously. It is misleading to label these revolutions liberal, as is usually done. The revolutions were started and maintained by artisans and peasants who were either fighting to maintain some elements of the traditional order, or whose status had been dislocated by the intrusion of liberal commercial capitalism. It is true that liberals assumed leadership once the outbreaks had started, but they wanted reform, not revolution. Moreover, the liberals did not represent the middle class as a whole, but only the politically aware professional groups—lawyers, civil servants, educators and students. There was no mass following for liberal reforms in Europe, and the middle classes in general had no clearly perceived class enemy blocking their social mobility as in 1789. Consequently they were much more wary of the potential for social upheaval from below.

SOURCE: From John Weiss, *Conservatism in Europe*, p. 56. Reprinted by permission of Thames & Hudson, Ltd.

The liberal leaders of the revolutions were isolated from their own class and, as it turned out, had little to offer the artisans and peasants in revolt that could not as easily have been granted by conservatives. Only in Hungary and Italy, where nationalism incited mass risings against the Austrians, were the revolutions truly violent and sweeping. Elsewhere, we find only urban revolts accompanied by sporadic peasant uprisings. Excluding France, frightened conservative élites were never overthrown; they merely made paper concessions and withdrew temporarily until the weakness of the revolutionaries was evident, whereupon they returned in force. East of France traditionalists could still dominate the forms of social upheaval characteristic of pre-industrial society. In 1848 the industrial proletariat played almost no role whatsoever, and the outbreaks had familiar traditional causes: 1846 and 1847 were the years of the most terrible crop failures of nineteenth-century Europe, from which stemmed famine, inflation, shrinking markets and unemployment.

CHAPTER QUESTIONS

1. In a debate between liberals and conservatives of the early nineteenth century over how the French Revolution should be evaluated, what points would each side make?
2. In what ways might conservatives find Romanticism to their liking? What aspects of Romanticism might appeal to liberals?
3. Analyze nineteenth-century conservatism, liberalism, and Romanticism as alternative ways in which Europeans attempted to deal with the changes in Western civilization that had been occurring since the second half of the eighteenth century.

"Address to Second National
Congress" - Feb. 15, 1819
Venezuela

13.3 Simon Bolívar's Political Ideas

Simon Bolívar (1783-1830) played crucial roles in independence movements in modern-day Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Born to a wealthy family, Bolívar's progressive education brought him into contact with the writings of Enlightenment figures such as John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau. In the excerpt from his writings included here, Bolívar sketched the political problems facing the Americas as he saw them. *Source: From Vincente Lecuna, comp., and Harold A. Bierck, Jr., ed., Selected Writings of Bolívar. Vol. 1 (Caracas: Banco de Venezuela, 1951), pp. 175-80, passim. Reprinted by permission.*

America, in separating from the Spanish monarchy, found herself in a situation similar to that of the Roman Empire when its enormous framework fell to pieces in the midst of the ancient world. Each Roman division then formed an independent nation in keeping with its location or interests; but this situation differed from America's in that those members proceeded to reestablish their former associations. We, on the contrary, do not even retain the vestiges of our original being. We are not Europeans; we are not Indians; we are but a mixed species of aborigines and Spaniards. Americans by birth and Europeans by law, we find ourselves engaged in a dual conflict: we are disputing with the natives for titles of ownership, and at the same time we are struggling to maintain ourselves in the country that gave us birth against the opposition of the invaders. Thus our position is most extraordinary and complicated. But there is more. As our role has always been strictly passive and our political existence nil, we find that our quest for liberty is now even more difficult of accomplishment; for we, having been placed in a state lower than slavery, had been robbed not only of our freedom but also of the right to exercise an active domestic tyranny. Permit me to explain this paradox.

In absolute systems, the central power is unlimited. The will of the despot is the supreme law, arbitrarily enforced by subordinates who take part in the organized oppression in proportion to the authority that they wield. They are charged with civil, political, military, and religious functions; but, in the final analysis, the satraps of Persia are Persian, the pashas of the Grand Turk are Turks, and the sultans of Tartary are Tartars. China does not seek her mandarins in the homeland of Genghis Khan, her conqueror. America, on the contrary, received everything from Spain, who, in effect, deprived her of the experience that she would have gained from the exercise of an active tyranny by not allowing her to take part in her own domestic affairs and administration. This exclusion made it impossible for us to acquaint ourselves with the management of public affairs; nor did we enjoy that personal consideration, of such great value in major revolutions, that the brilliance of power inspires in the eyes of the multitude. In brief, Gentlemen, we were deliberately kept in ignorance and cut off from the world in all matters relating to the science of government.

Subject to the threefold yoke of ignorance, tyranny, and vice, the American people have been unable to acquire knowledge, power, or [civic] virtue. The lessons we received and the models we studied, as pupils of such pernicious teachers, were most destructive. We have been ruled more by deceit than by force, and we have been degraded more by vice than by superstition. Slavery is the daughter of Darkness: an ignorant people is a blind instrument of its own destruction. Ambition and intrigue abuse the credulity and experience of men lacking all political, economic, and civic knowledge; they adopt pure illusion as reality; they take license for liberty, treachery for patriotism, and vengeance for justice. This situation is similar to that of the robust blind man who, beguiled by his strength, strides forward with all

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the assurance of one who can see, but, upon hitting every variety of obstacle, finds himself unable to retrace his steps.

If a people, perverted by their training, succeed in achieving their liberty, they will soon lose it, for it would be of no avail to endeavor to explain to them that happiness consists in the practice of virtue; that the rule of law is more powerful than the rule of tyrants, because, as the laws are more inflexible, everyone should submit to their beneficent austerity; that proper morals, and not force, are the bases of law; and that to practice justice is to practice liberty. Therefore, Legislators, your work is so much the more arduous, inasmuch as you have to reeducate men who have been corrupted by erroneous illusions and false incentives. Liberty, says Rousseau, is a succulent morsel, but one difficult to digest. Our weak fellow-citizens will have to strengthen their spirit greatly before they can digest the wholesome nutriment of freedom. Their limbs benumbed by chains, their sight dimmed by the darkness of dungeons, and their strength sapped by the pestilence of servitude, are they capable of marching toward the august temple of Liberty without faltering? Can they come near enough to

bask in its brilliant rays and to breathe freely the pure air which reigns therein?

Legislators, mediate well before you choose. Forget not that you are to lay the political foundation for a newly born nation which can rise to the heights of greatness that Nature has marked out for it if you but proportion this foundation in keeping with the high plane that it aspires to attain. Unless your choice is based upon the peculiar tutelary experience of the Venezuelan people—a factor that should guide you in determining the nature and form of government you are about to adopt for the well-being of the people—and, I repeat, unless you happen upon the right type of government, the result of our reforms will again be slavery. . . .

The more I admire the excellence of the federal Constitution of Venezuela, the more I am convinced of the impossibility of its application to our state. And, to my way of thinking, it is a marvel that its prototype in North America endures so successfully and has not been overthrown at the first sign of adversity or danger. Although the people of North America are a singular model of political virtue and moral rectitude; although the nation was cradled in liberty, reared on freedom, and maintained by liberty alone; and—I must reveal everything—although those people, so lacking in many respects, are unique in the history of mankind, it is a marvel, I repeat, that so weak and complicated a government as the federal system has managed to govern them in the difficult and trying circumstances of their past. But, regardless of the effectiveness of this form of government with respect to North America, I must say that it has never for a moment entered my mind to compare the position and character of two states as dissimilar as the English-American and the Spanish-American. Would it not be most difficult to apply to Spain the English system of political, civil, and religious liberty? Hence, it would be even more difficult to adapt to Venezuela the laws of North America. Does not [Montesquieu's] *L'Esprit des lois* state that laws should be suited to the people for whom they are made; that it would be a major coincidence if those of one nation could be adapted to another; that laws must take into account the physical conditions of the country, climate, character of the land, location, size, and mode of living of the people; that they should be in keeping with the degree of liberty that the Constitution can sanction respecting the religion of the inhabitants, their inclinations, resources, numbers, commerce, habits, and customs? This is the code we must consult, not the code of Washington!

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1848 VS. 2011

In the shadow of the past

BY KURT ANDERSEN

LIKE NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST TODAY, continental Europe in the 1840s consisted of monarchies ruling impoverished masses who were suffering acute economic distress. Political liberalization was inching along too slowly to satisfy the intelligentsia and the new middle classes in the cities.

In Paris, 63 years ago last month, the regime threatened to put down a peaceful protest, which resulted in thousands of angry protesters taking to the streets and demanding democracy. The mobs swelled, streets were torn up, demonstrators fraternized with national guardsmen, relatively small numbers of protesters were killed, the army didn't intervene—and within days, King Louis Philippe had abdicated, a republic was declared, freedom of speech was allowed, and elections were scheduled.

A decade earlier, what happened in Paris might have stayed in Paris. Instead it triggered a continental wave of democratic revolution, with the news spreading rapidly by new technologies: the electric telegraph, newspapers printed by steam-powered presses, railroads.

A week after the startling French success, protesters arose in Munich, driving out the Bavarian King, and a week after Munich, protests erupted in Berlin, the Prussian capital, where troops attacked demonstrators. But then the King withdrew his soldiers, ended censorship, appointed a liberal cabinet, agreed to parliamentary elections and fled the city. The wave hit Vienna, the capital of the Habsburg Empire, forcing the great power broker Metternich to resign. Then came days of street fighting in Milan, which caused the occupying Austrian army to retreat, and a rebellion in Venice forced out the Austrian rulers there. Only a month had passed since the Paris uprising, and the revolutionary tide kept rolling all spring in dozens more places.

But as we look at the parallels with this year's uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East, we should remember what came next. In France, the radicals pushed too far too fast, essentially demanding socialism and provoking a backlash. Elsewhere the empire simply struck back. By fall, most of the revolutions had been reversed, the rest were crushed within a year. And in 2011? We'll know soon enough. ■

Anderson's best-selling novel 'Hercules' won the Langston Prize for best American historical fiction in 2007.

TWO YEARS AND A CHANGED WORLD

1848	2011
Monarchies	Crpto-monarchies
Public parliaments	Public parliaments
Guaid police	Guaid police
Limited suffrage	Limited suffrage
Limited freedom of expression	Limited freedom of expression

REVOLUTIONARY CONTAGION SPREADS QUICKLY

1848	2011
TUNISIA	EGYPT
DEC. 17, 2010	JAN. 25
ALGERIA	LEBANON
JAN. 6, 2011	FEB. 15
JORDAN	WEST BANK
JAN. 14	FEB. 7
OMAN	IRAQ
JAN. 17	FEB. 9
YEMEN	LIBYA
JAN. 22	FEB. 15
	MOROCCO
	FEB. 20

1848	2011
1. PARIS	1. TUNISIA
FEB. 22, 1848	DEC. 17, 2010
2. MUNICH	2. EGYPT
MARCH 18	JAN. 25
3. COLOGNE	3. LEBANON
MARCH 3	FEB. 15
4. BERLIN, PRUSSIA	4. WEST BANK
MARCH 11	FEB. 7
5. VIENNA, AUSTRIAN EMPIRE	5. IRAQ
MARCH 12	FEB. 9
6. BUDA AND PEST	6. LIBYA
MARCH 18	FEB. 15
7. VENICE, AUSTRIAN EMPIRE	7. MOROCCO
MARCH 22	FEB. 20
8. MILAN, AUSTRIAN EMPIRE	
MARCH 22	

ECONOMIC WOES

1848 Political unrest in food prices and high unemployment impoverished masses, impoverished the masses. The region is industrially backward compared with Britain and the U.S.

AT THE ROOT OF THE TURMOIL

A NEW GROWING POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND CULTURALLY FRUSTRATED MIDDLE CLASS 1848 AND 2011

DEPOSED RULERS COMIFY EXILE



Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Saudi Arabia



1848 In February, after the government suppresses peaceful protests in France, three days of massive street protests and riots follow. The King abdicates, a republic is declared, and a hopeful democratic chaos ensues.

2011 In January and February, in Tunisia and Egypt, after the government suppresses peaceful protests, 20 and 18 days (respectively) of massive street protests follow. King-like Presidents resign, and a hopeful democratic chaos ensues.

ONE-LINER BY VERY ODD RULER

"But are they allowed to do that?"
—Anis-Hungarian Emperor Ferdinand after the Chief Minister Prince Klemens von Metternich told him his people were having a revolution

"They give them pills at night, they put hallucinogens mixed their drinks, that milk, their coffee, their Nescafe."
—Ugandan leader Muhammad Gaddafi on why young Ugandans are rebelling

DEMOCRATIC AMERICA IS PLEASED ...

"The world has seldom witnessed a more interesting spectacle than the peaceful rising of the French people, resolved to secure themselves enlarged liberty."
—PRESIDENT JAMES POLK
—OSWALD REYNOLDS

"There are very few moments in our lives where we have the privilege to witness history taking place... For Egyptians have made it clear that nothing less than genuine democracy will carry the day."
—OSWALD REYNOLDS

... BUT ALSO DUBIOUS, BECAUSE ...

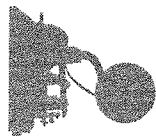
"It's a beginning. I'm sure there will be difficult days ahead, and many questions remain unanswered."
—PRESIDENT BUCKLEMAN WASHINGTON
—SEANATOR JOHN C. CALHOUN

... YOU KNOW, THOSE PEOPLE ARE JUST SO, WELL, UNCIVILIZED

"The Italian character is so thoroughly imbued with intolerance and selfishness of heart ... as to forbid the establishment of any form of government founded on mutual concession ... for the common good."
—ANTHONY MILES U.S. Congressman and envoy to Torino

Aides "are simply not ready for free and fair elections."
—DEBRIERED
LEWIS Pincus professor, director of Near Eastern Studies

NEW TECHNOLOGY HELPS SPREAD THE WORD



1848 Revolutionary news is transmitted as never before by telegraph, steam-powered printed newspapers and railroads.



2011 Revolutionary news is transmitted by cell phones, the Internet and cable television.

WASHINGTON'S COZINESS WITH OLD REGIMES

1848 U.S.	1. military trains and supplies
2011 U.S.	1. military trains and supplies
	2. Egypt's military for decades



RICH, UNBIDDING REACTIONARY TO THE EAST

1848 The czar sends troops to help his fellow monarchs.

2011 The multibillionaire King says the Egyptian uprising was the work of foreign "influencers."

DEMONIZING TAGS FOR PROTESTERS

RADICAL SOCIALISTS

A FLOOD OF REFUGEES

1848 Poor displaced Europeans, many of them Roman Catholic and darker-skinned, flee post-revolutionary chaos, immigrating to Protestant U.S.

2011 Poor displaced North Africans, many Muslim and darker-skinned, try to flee post-revolutionary chaos, immigrating to Christian U.S.