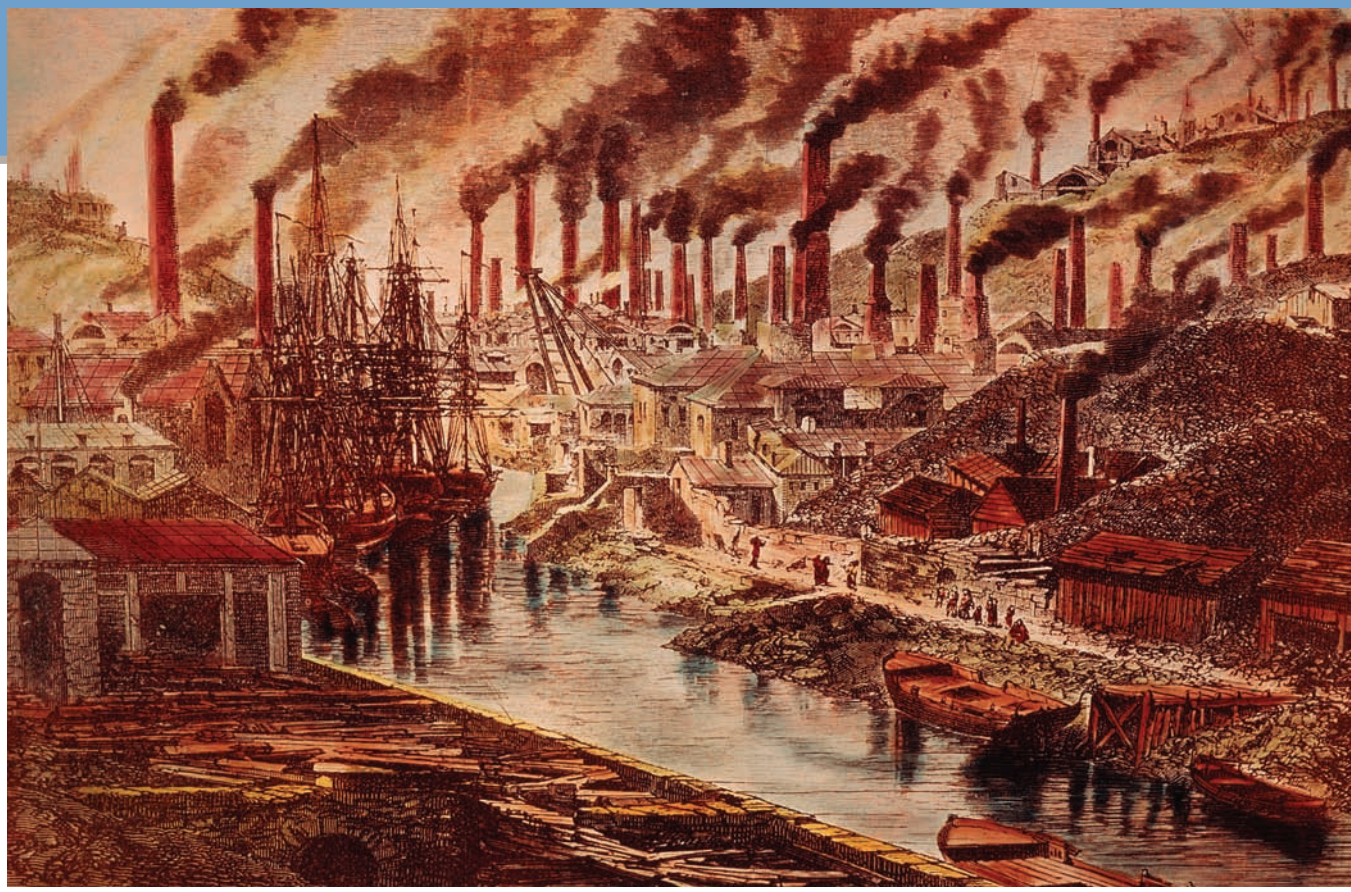


This painting of a copper foundry in the 1830s evokes the grandeur and ugliness of early industrialization.
The Art Archive/Bibliothéque des Arts Decoratifs. Paris/Dagli Orti

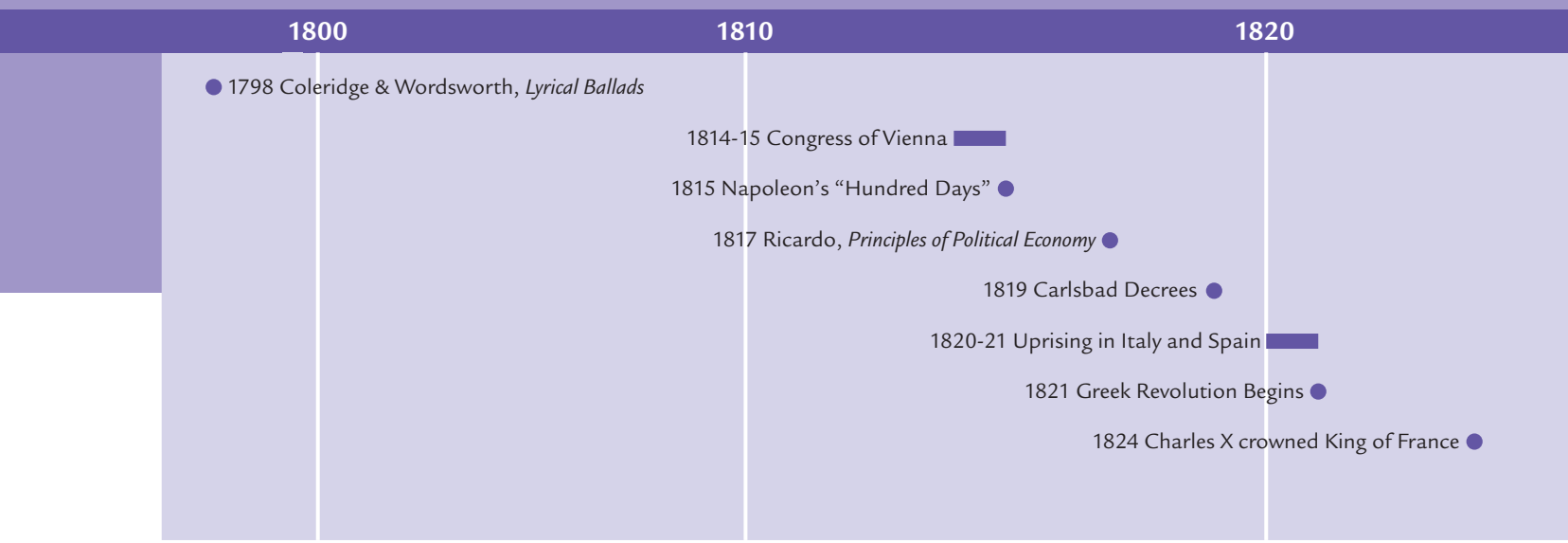
Chapter Twenty-Two

Foundations of Nineteenth-Century Europe

The Politics of Order • The Progress of Industrialization
• Society in the Early Industrial Age
• Reconsidering Self and Society in the Early Nineteenth Century

After twenty-five years of war, the powers that had opposed Napoleon sought to guarantee that no one state would be able to dominate the Continent again. The wars against France had been about more than territory or the balance of power, however. The allies also had fought to safeguard monarchy and social hierarchy and, by so doing, to prevent the outbreak of future revolutions. Their first step was to bring back the dynasties that had been overturned. These restored regimes were nonetheless new, and establishing them raised questions about how power should be organized, what institutions should direct society, and who should participate in deciding policy. The possibility of revolution thus remained a fact of life, dreaded by some and hoped for by others, reinvoked in each country by the uprisings, acts of repression, and major reforms of the next several decades.

European nations faced major economic and social challenges as well as political ones in the aftermath of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. In parts of western Europe, industrialization was beginning to transform the very structure of society. Social relations based on custom were giving way to ones seemingly determined by the impersonal rules of economics. As populations grew larger, more people migrated to cities, where they were plunged into harsh material circumstances and faced novel social problems. Industrialization increased production exponentially but also subjected millions to hardships for which neither charity nor government had adequate answers. These changes, experienced more in western than in southern or eastern Europe, opened the way to a new era of passionate social reform and became a central preoccupation of European thought.



The Politics of Order

Allied leaders wanted to design a peace that would impose order across the continent. Once they settled the boundaries between states, they placed conservative kings on hereditary thrones and pressed these monarchs to prevent disorder in their own lands. Internationally, they sought to establish an intricate balance of power that would make war unlikely and ensure that the major powers would join in stamping out any future threat of revolution. But revolutions broke out in 1820–1821 and 1830, an early measure of the limited effectiveness of the experiment in international conservatism.

The Congress of Vienna

To forge these arrangements, the great international conference known as the **Congress of Vienna** met in September 1814, an occasion for serious deliberations and elaborate pomp centered on the monarchs of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and dozens of lesser states. Officials, expert advisers, princesses and countesses, dancers and artists, and the ambitious of every rank flocked to the Austrian capital. Their gaiety and elegance made the Congress a symbol of aristocratic restoration.

The business of the Congress remained the responsibility of the four victorious powers—Austria, Great Britain, Russia, and Prussia—an inner circle to which France was soon admitted. Austria's foreign minister, Prince Klemens von Metternich, had welded the international alliance that defeated Napoleon, and he now conducted the affairs of the Congress with such skill that its provisions can be seen as largely his work. Handsome, elegant, and arrogant, Metternich was the epitome of an aristocrat, fluent in all the major European languages, a dandy who dabbled in science and shone in the ballroom. Metternich was generally supported by Lord Castlereagh, England's able foreign minister. By contrast, Russia's Tsar Alexander I, who acted as his own chief diplomat, was more unpredictable and quixotic, given to mysticism and grandiose ideas that ran counter to the practical calculations by which the Congress reached agreement.

The Peace Terms The most pressing issue these statesmen faced was the future of France. Most favored restoring the monarchy, and the Treaty of Paris, signed in May 1814, had recognized as king Louis XVIII, a brother of the executed Bourbon, Louis XVI. The treaty also restored France to its slightly expanded frontiers of 1792. A settlement covering all the territory affected by the Napoleonic wars would take longer. Those negotiations included Prince Talleyrand, the French representative, a shrewd politician noted for having held high office during the French Revolution and under Napoleon, and who now ably served Louis XVIII in his efforts to reassert French political influence in Europe.

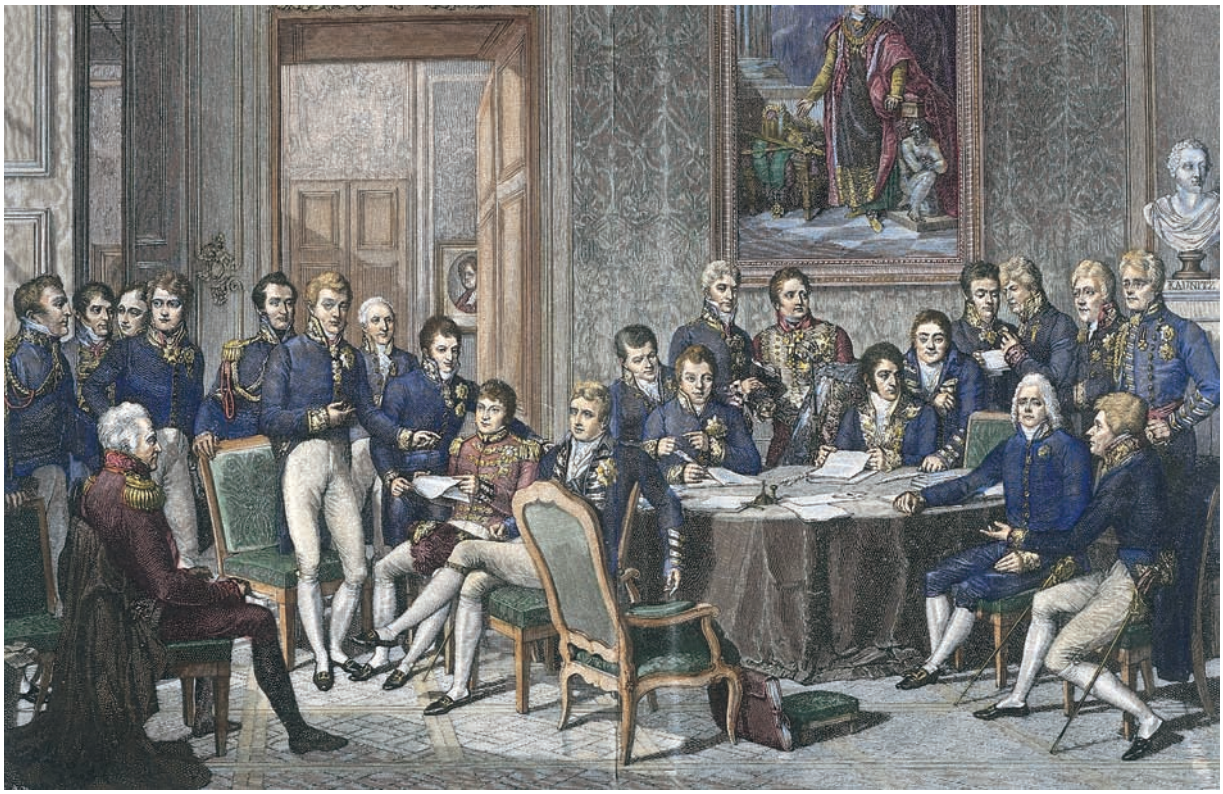
The concerns of these men focused on continental Europe, since only Great Britain among the victors had extensive interests overseas, and no one objected to its claims on South Africa, Ceylon, and Malta. Conflicting interests kept Austria, Prussia, and Russia from dividing up Poland as they had in the eighteenth century, but neither did they want to risk creating an independent Poland. So Russia received most of Poland to be ruled as a separate kingdom, and Prussia took about half of Saxony—a triumph of old regime diplomacy in which each of the powers gained something (see map 22.1). Prussia was also given greatly enlarged territories in the Rhineland, ensuring that formidable Prussian armies would stand along the French border.

1833 *Zollverein* in Germany

1846-47 Famine in Ireland

1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition

1851 Mill, On *Liberty*



The Congress of Vienna is portrayed here as a kind of elegant salon in which the very clothes these statesmen wore mix the styles of the old regime and the new century.
AKG London

The former Austrian Netherlands were absorbed into a new, independent Kingdom of the Netherlands, which created another strong buffer against France and prevented any major power from controlling the Low Countries' strategically located river ports. Austria, in return for ceding the southern Netherlands, acquired Venetia and recovered Lombardy, which greatly strengthened Austrian dominance of northern Italy. The other duchies of northern Italy went to dukes with close Austrian ties.[1]

[1] The Kingdom of Sardinia would have liked Lombardy but got Genoa, the ancient Italian maritime republic. Russia took Finland from Sweden, which in turn got Norway from Denmark.

The terms agreed on at Vienna constituted the most extensive European peace settlement since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. Each of the victors gained territory, and France was surrounded by states capable of resisting any future French aggression. The final act was signed in June 1815 by the five great powers, as well as Sweden, Spain, and Portugal, a gracious recognition of their past importance.

Napoleon's Hundred Days The terrifying news of Napoleon's escape from exile interrupted the deliberations of the Congress in March 1815. He had tried to make the best of ruling the island of Elba and had even showed something of his old flair as he designed uniforms, held receptions, and inquired into the local economy. But the island principality was far too small to contain an emperor's ambition. Landing in the south of France, he was joined by units of the French army as he moved toward Paris. Louis XVIII waited for signs of resistance that did not develop, then climbed into his carriage and headed for the eastern border. Napoleon again became the ruler of France without firing a shot. He then tried to negotiate with the powers allied against him, but they declared him an outlaw and quickly assembled their troops. After several minor battles, allied armies led by Wellington defeated Napoleon for the last time at Waterloo, in Belgium, on June 18. The allies quickly dispatched him, essentially as prisoner, to the tiny, distant island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic. Napoleon's dashing venture lasted only a hundred days, but it permanently altered the terms and spirit of the peace for France: the new Treaty of Paris signed in 1815 required France to pay an indemnity and reduced its boundaries to those of 1789. The Bourbons again returned to the French throne, but the fear of another uprising haunted the regime and gave rise, at least in part, to its repressive policies.

Principles of International Order The **restorations** of 1815 acknowledged many of the changes of the past twenty-five years. The restored Bourbons now governed France with a constitution, even if it was drafted and proclaimed by themselves alone. In Germany, the Holy Roman Empire and hundreds of minor German principalities, all abolished by Napoleon, were not restored but were consolidated into thirty-nine states, including Prussia and Austria, and joined in a loose confederation. The Congress also set down rules of diplomatic conduct useful to this day, and due in part to the complicated arrangements negotiated at Vienna, the Continent would be free of a general European war for the next hundred years. Yet the Congress was also a reactionary force, emphasizing tradition as the sole source of legitimacy for the restored regimes. One of the great symbols of its conservatism—although one with little practical effect—was the Holy Alliance, Tsar Alexander's vague proposal that European politics be governed by Christian principles. (See "Metternich Analyzes the Threat to Stability.")

Opposition to the Settlement The new order faced serious challenges almost immediately. In 1820 and l821, uprisings occurred in both Italy and Spain, led by young army officers influenced by Napoleonic reforms and convinced that individual advancement and efficient government required a constitution. Metternich quickly called for a **"Concert of Europe"** to snuff the flames of revolution by force, but unanimity among the former allies was breaking down. Great Britain did not even attend the conference, which approved Austrian intervention in Naples and called on France to intervene in Spain. French forces met little resistance in Spain, and their royal parade was welcomed by conservatives throughout Europe as evidence of the French monarchy's revived prestige.

Colonial independence movements in Latin America, which had steadily gained ground during the Napoleonic era, also burst forth anew with the 1820 revolution in Spain. But talk of European intervention to quash the revolts brought stern warnings from Britain, and the United States' proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 declared the Americas outside the sphere of European power politics. In 1821, the outbreak of the Greek war for independence against Ottoman Turk rule sparked the opposite response from the European powers. Cries for freedom from that home of ancient democracy excited liberals throughout Europe, an early demonstration of the power of nationalist movements. Metternich restrained Russia from rushing to war against the Ottomans, but he could not keep British and French fleets from intervening in 1827, when the Ottoman sultan seemed about to subdue the Greeks. Russia declared war a few months later. Greece was granted independence in 1829 on terms arranged by the European powers, which stipulated that it must have a king who was not a member of the ruling family of a major power. This was done partly in response to public opinion, but also to make sure that the Greek rising would go no further. In the name of Greek freedom, Britain, France, and Russia displayed a willingness to use force and an eagerness to carve up the Ottoman Empire that foreshadowed the practices of imperialism later in the century.

The Pillars of the Restoration: Russia, Austria, Prussia

Even the most reactionary rulers accepted some of the changes brought by revolution, war, and Napoleonic occupation. They understood that to maintain social

MAP 22.1 EUROPE, 1815
Examine the territorial boundaries of Europe after the Congress of Vienna. What do you notice about the extent of the French and Austrian empires in 1815 compared to 1810 (see map 21.1)? Compare the compact nation-states of western Europe to the geographically fragmented areas of Italy and Germany, and to the multinational Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian empires.

order, their governments had to be better able to sustain large armies and collect taxes, support a trained bureaucracy, dispense justice evenly, and provide services. Because the state thus affected the lives of its subjects more directly, even the conservative governments of Russia, Austria, and Prussia had to be concerned with popular sentiment.

The Russian Empire By 1820 Tsar Alexander had become Metternich's staunchest ally, imposing harsh censorship, increasing restrictions on universities, and making sure that the constitution granted to the newly organized Kingdom of Poland was largely ignored. On Alexander's death in 1825, a group of young army officers, the "Decembrists," attempted a coup and called for a constitution to ensure a more efficient and enlightened administration in Russia. Their poorly planned and isolated conspiracy was easily defeated, but it would be remembered by conservatives as an ever-present danger and by revolutionaries as part of Russia's radical tradition.

Alexander's younger brother, Nicholas I, succeeded him, convinced that only a loyal army and his own decisiveness had prevented revolution. He turned Russia

Metternich Analyzes the Threat to Stability

On December 15, 1820, Metternich wrote the Habsburg emperor from the international conference he had called to deal with the threat of revolution. Metternich argued that all monarchs must act together against the common threat, which he blamed on the middle class.

"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 scepter of the monarch, and usurps the cry of the people—that class so often disowned by the people, and nevertheless too much listened to. . . .

"We see this intermediary class abandon itself with a blind fury and animosity. . . . applying itself to the task of persuading 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.

". . . The evil is plain; the means used by the faction which causes these disorders are so blamable in principle, so criminal in their application, and expose the faction itself to so many dangers, that . . . we are convinced that society can no longer be saved without strong and vigorous resolutions on the part of the Governments. . . .

"By this course the monarchs will fulfill the duties imposed upon them by Him who, by entrusting them with power, has charged them to watch the maintenance of justice, and the rights of all, to avoid the paths of error . . . and to show themselves as they are, fathers invested with the authority belonging by right to the heads of families, to prove that, in days of mourning, they know how to be just, wise, and therefore strong. . . .

"The Governments, in establishing the principle of stability, will in no wise exclude the development of what is good, for stability is not immobility. But it is for those who are burdened with the heavy task of government to augment the well-being of their people! It is for Governments to regulate it according to necessity and to suit the times. It is not by concessions, which the factious strive to force from legitimate power, . . . that wise reforms can be carried out. That all the good possible should be done is our most ardent wish; but . . . even real good should be done only by those who unite to the right of authority the means of enforcing it."

From Prince Richard Metternich (ed.), *Memoirs of Prince Metternich, 1815–1829,* Mrs. Alexander Napier (tr.), Scribner's Sons Publishers, 1970.

into Europe's strongest pillar of reaction by his example at home and his willingness to use force abroad. He was also a diligent administrator who built up the Russian army and police force and who established a more effective bureaucracy by making it less attached to the nobility. Despite fears that education bred discontent, his regime also sponsored the building of schools. Nevertheless, petty corruption, the arrogance of local officials, and fear of change continued to undermine the government's capacity to manage a vast land of varied peoples in which communication was poor and few had the means or the will to effect reform.

Most thoughtful people, including the state's highest officials, agreed that serfdom had become a hindrance to Russia's development, but they proposed no solution. Intellectuals who expected Russia to develop along familiar European lines were known as Westernizers. Others, called **Slavophiles,** argued that Russia's Orthodox Christian religion, peasant communes, and traditional culture gave Russia a unique destiny. Yet, in spite of much debate about Russia's place in a changing world and the bitter grievances of Poles and peasants, the authority of the Russian state remained intact. Nicholas would watch with pride in 1848 as his empire escaped the revolutions that swept over most thrones of Europe.

The Habsburg Empire Habsburg rule over German, Italian, and eastern European lands relied on a well-organized bureaucracy. Forged by Maria Theresa and Joseph II in the eighteenth century, that system of government had enabled Austria to survive the Napoleonic wars without dramatic transformation despite repeated military defeat. Metternich and others recognized the need for domestic reform, but projects for stronger local government and for recognition of the empire's diverse nationalities came to nothing. Habsburg rule remained locked in stalemate between an increasingly cautious central bureaucracy and selfish local aristocracies.

Hungary proved particularly troublesome for the Habsburg Empire, for the dominant **Magyar** aristocracy had a strong sense of their historical identity and a good deal of power, although they remained an ethnic minority in their own country. Emperor Francis I grudgingly recognized many of their claims, and by the 1840s Magyar had replaced German as the official language of

administration and schooling in Hungary. More demands followed. The campaign for a more representative Diet or parliament and related reforms was led by Lajos Kossuth, a liberal nationalist who became Hungary's leading public figure, reaching much of the nation through newspapers and public meetings.

This widespread Hungarian agitation encouraged other groups subject to Habsburg rule to claim national rights of their own (see map 22.1). Much of Polish Galicia rose in revolt in 1846, but weakened by the bitter antagonism between Polish peasants and their masters, the uprising was soon suppressed. In Croatia and Bohemia, too, angry peasants and nationalists often had different aims. The various national groups opposed to Habsburg rule, often hostile to each other, were also internally divided by class, religion, and language. Although their dissension helped sustain Habsburg control through its divide and rule strategy, nationalist movements sought to overcome these divisions and to give broader appeal to the nationalist cause (see chapter 23).

Prussia and the German Confederation Germans called the later battles against Napoleon (1813–1814) the Wars of Liberation and after that common national experience, talk of "Germany" meant more than it had before. The Congress of Vienna acknowledged this awareness with the creation of the German Confederation. A cautious gesture toward national sentiment, the Confederation still preserved the position of the strongest local rulers while facilitating some coordination among Germany's many states. Any stronger union was prevented by the rivalry of Austria and Prussia, by distaste for reform among restoration regimes, and by the conflicting ambitions of German princes. The Confederation's Diet, a council of ambassadors from member states rather than a representative assembly, was permitted to legislate only on certain limited matters, such as restrictions on the press.

In practice, the German Confederation was important in German politics largely when Metternich wished it to be. He used it, for example, to suppress agitation led by nationalist and reformist student groups in the universities. In 1817 some of these groups organized a celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of Luther's theses with a rally, the Wartburg Festival. Several hundred young people gathered to drink, listen to speeches full of mystical nationalist rhetoric, sing songs, and cheer as a Prussian military manual was tossed into a bonfire. Even such symbolic challenges to military authority alarmed the governments in Berlin and Vienna. When a well-known reactionary writer was assassinated, the Confederation issued the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819, which intensified censorship, proscribed dangerous professors and students, outlawed certain fraternities and political clubs, and required each state to guarantee that its universities would be kept safely conservative. (See "Policing the Universities.")

Despite these fears, there was less agitation within the German Confederation than in most of the rest of Europe. Meanwhile, Prussian influence increased. Its national educational system was capped by the new but prestigious University of Berlin, its administration and its army seemed models of modern efficiency, and its policies included measures that stimulated economic growth. In 1818 Prussia lowered tariffs, allowing raw materials free entry into both its eastern and western Prussian territories. By 1833 most German governments except Austria had joined Prussia's customs union, the ***Zollverein,*** which proved a further spur to commerce. One of the most important steps toward German unification under Prussia had been taken without clear nationalist intent.

The Test of Restoration: Spain, Italy, and France

The durability of the conservative order that the Congress of Vienna sought to impose would depend less on the autocracies in Russia, Austria, and Prussia than on the new regimes imposed in Spain, Italy, and France. There, the effects of revolution and Bonapartism had been woven into the fabric of public life. Intensely divided over questions of government—its form, powers, and policies—conservatives and liberals alike considered politics central to everything else.

Spain and Italy In Spain the Bourbon king Ferdinand VII regained his throne in 1814 when Napoleon's army was expelled. Strong enough to renounce the constitution he had promised, Ferdinand was too weak to find a solution for his government's inefficiency or the nation's poverty. In Spain's American colonies, the revolts led by José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar gained strength, and in 1820 the army that was assembled in Spain to reconquer the colonies mutinied instead and marched on Madrid. The king was then forced to grant a constitution after all, and for three years the constitutional regime struggled to cope with Spain's enormous problems, weakened by internal dissension and its uncooperative monarch. The regime's restrictions on religious orders raised powerful opposition from the Church, freedom of the press produced more devastating criticism, and the government was unable to reconquer the rebellious colonies. When a French army again crossed into Spain in 1823, this time with the blessing of the Concert of Europe and in the name of order, the Spaniards who had fought French invasion so heroically just ten years earlier were strangely acquiescent. The constitution disappeared again, but the threat of revolution did not.

Policing Universities—The Carlsbad Decrees

The Carlsbad Decrees, drafted by Metternich, were adopted by the Diet of the German Confederation in 1819 to be applied in all its member states. Their spirit is in complete opposition to the ideal of academic freedom.

"1. There shall be appointed for each university a special representative of the ruler of each state, the said representatives to have appropriate instructions and extended powers, and they shall have their place of residence where the university is located. . . .

"This representative shall enforce strictly the existing laws and disciplinary regulations, he shall observe with care the attitude shown by the university instructors in their public lectures and registered courses; and he shall, without directly interfering in scientific matters or in teaching methods, give a beneficial direction to the teaching, keeping in view the future attitude of the students. Finally, he shall give unceasing attention to everything that may promote morality . . . among the students. . . .

"2. The confederated governments mutually pledge themselves to eliminate from the universities or any other public educational institutions all instructors who shall have obviously proved their unfitness for the important work entrusted to them by openly deviating from their duties, or by going beyond the boundaries of their functions, or by abusing their legitimate influence over young minds, or by presenting harmful ideas hostile to public order or subverting existing governmental instructions. . . .

"3. The laws that for some time have been directed against secret and unauthorized societies in the universities shall be strictly enforced. . . . The special representatives of the government are enjoined to exert great care in watching these organizations.

"The governments mutually agree that all individuals who shall be shown to have maintained their membership in secret or unauthorized associations, or shall have taken membership in such associations, shall not be eligible for any public office.

"4. As long as this edict remains in force, no publication which appears daily, or as a serial not exceeding twenty sheets of printed matter, shall be printed in any state of the Confederation without the prior knowledge and approval of the state officials. . . ."

Excerpt from Louis L. Snyder (ed.), *Documents of German History,* Rutgers University Press, 1958, pp. 158–159.

In Italy restoration meant the return to power of the aristocracies ousted by the French and reestablishment of the separate Italian states.[2] Yet the years of Napoleonic rule had established institutions that the new regimes could not ignore. Their insecure rulers at least promised constitutions, enlightened administration, peace, and lower taxes, even though they were hardly prepared to take such initiatives. Cautious, moderately repressive, and conveniently corrupt, these regimes provided the sleepy stability Metternich thought appropriate for Italians. Such an atmosphere bred some conspiracy and rumors of far more. Secret groups, known collectively as the *Carbonari* (charcoal burners), began to meet across Italy. Most were middle class, although their name suggested a life of rural simplicity. Some talked of tyrannicide, some sought equality and justice, and some advocated mild reform; they had in common the excitement of secret meetings, terrifying oaths, and ornate rituals.

By 1820 news of revolution in Spain was enough to prompt revolts in Italy. Young army officers led the demand for a constitution in Naples; but when the Neapolitan army turned to put down a rising in Sicily, an Austrian army was dispatched to Naples to remove the new constitutional regime. A similar revolt erupted in Piedmont, causing the king to abdicate in favor of his son, and Charles Albert, the prince regent, hastily granted a constitution. But when the new monarch arrived, the Austrian army was with him. Piedmont's constitution lasted two weeks. These revolutions, which left Italy's reactionary governments more rigid and Austrian influence more naked, demonstrated the inadequacy of romantic conspiracies but affirmed an Italian radical and patriotic tradition that would continue to grow.

The Bourbons Restored in France More than anything else, Europe's conservative order was meant to prevent France from again becoming the center of military aggression or revolutionary ideas, and the restoration there was an especially complex compromise. France received a constitution called the Charter, presented

[2] Italy was divided into three monarchies, four duchies, and a republic. The Kingdom of Sardinia (Sardinia and Piedmont), the Papal States, and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies were monarchies. The Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the duchies of Lucca, Modena, and Parma were all tied to the Habsburgs, who annexed Lombardy and Venetia. The disappearance of the republics of Genoa (part of Piedmont) and Venice left tiny San Marino, safe on its mountaintop, the oldest republic in the world.

CHRONOLOGY

Challenges to the Vienna Settlement

May 1814	Treaty of Paris.
September 1814–June 1815	Congress of Vienna.
March 1815–June 1815	Napoleon's 100 days.
1817	German students at Wartburg.
1820—1821	Revolts in Spain and Italy.
1821—1829	Greek war of independence.
1825	Decembrist rising in Russia.
1830	Revolution in France and Belgium.

as a gift from Louis XVIII rather than a right. It granted the legislature—a hereditary Chamber of Peers and a Chamber of Deputies chosen by a small, wealthy electorate—more authority than Napoleon had allowed but left the government largely in the hands of the king. The Bourbons willingly retained Napoleon's centralized administration and effective system of taxation.

The regime's supporters, shaken by Napoleon's easy return during the Hundred Days, now determined to crush their enemies. A violent "white terror" broke out in parts of the countryside as those tainted with a revolutionary past were ousted from local office or even killed. Yet Louis XVIII resisted as best he could the more extreme demands of the reactionary ultraroyalists; he did not return land confiscated from the Church and from the émigré aristocracy during the Revolution and allowed most of those who had gained office or wealth since 1789 quietly to live out their lives. From 1816 to 1820 the Bourbons governed in a relatively peaceful and prosperous country, and Paris again became Europe's center of science and the arts.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Church, weakened in the intervening years by the loss of property and a decline in the number of new priests, revived remarkably. Missions of preachers toured the countryside calling for a return to the faith, praising the monarchy, and ceremonially planting crosses of repentance for the sins of revolution. To the surprise of many Catholics, however, Napoleon's 1801 Concordat with the Church remained in effect.

From Opposition to Revolution in France Despite its achievements, the regime remained insecure and uncertain, satisfying neither Catholics nor anticlericals, neither ultraroyalists nor liberals. The assassination of the duke of Berry, the son of Louis' younger brother, in 1820 reminded everyone how fragile the monarchy was. Louis XVIII reacted to the assassination by naming more conservative ministers, increasing restrictions on the press, and dismissing some leading professors. The air of reaction grew heavier in 1824 when his brother succeeded to the throne as Charles X. A leader of the ultraroyalists, Charles had himself crowned at Reims in medieval splendor, in a ceremony steeped in symbols of the divine right of kings and the alliance of throne and altar.

The new government gave the Church fuller control of education, declared sacrilege a capital crime, and granted a cash indemnity to those who had lost land in the Revolution. In reality, the law against sacrilege was never enforced, and the indemnity, which helped end one of the most dangerous issues left from the Revolution, was a limited one. France still remained freer than most European countries, but Charles's subjects worried about the intentions of an ultraroyalist regime that disliked the compromises on which it rested. Public criticism increased, radical secret societies blossomed, and liberals made gains in the elections of 1827.

By 1829 the king could tolerate no more. While political disputes grew more inflamed, he appointed a cabinet of ultraroyalists only to have the Chamber of Deputies reject them. He called new elections, but instead of regaining seats, the ultraroyalists lost still more. Determined not to show the hesitancy of Louis XVI, Charles X reacted with firmness. In 1830 he and his ministers suddenly issued a set of secretly drafted decrees, the July Ordinances, which dissolved the new Chamber of Deputies even before it met, further restricted suffrage, and muzzled the press. Having shown his fiber, the king went hunting.

A shocked Paris slowly responded. Crowds began to mill about, some barricades went up, and stones were thrown at the house of the prime minister. Newspapers disregarded the ordinances and denounced the violation of the constitution, and the government responded with enough troops to raise tempers but too few to enforce order. Charles began to back down, but people were being killed (nearly seven hundred died in the three days of Paris fighting), some of the soldiers were mingling with the crowds, and liberal leaders were planning for a new regime. Once again, Paris was the scene of a popular uprising, and Charles X, victim of what he most detested, abdicated on August 2. For fifteen years France had been governed largely by its aristocracy, but the restoration had been meant above all to provide political stability. This the Bourbon regime had failed to do.

The Progress of Industrialization

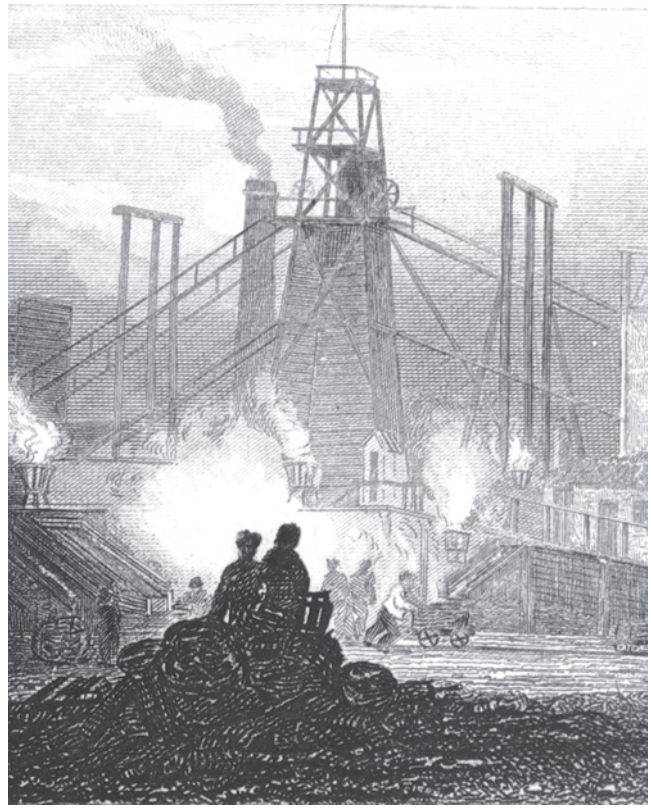
Political instability was one aspect of the larger process of change in the early nineteenth century. Meanwhile, in certain parts of Europe, industrialization was creating a dynamic of economic expansion in which the elements of growth—new inventions, demand for more capital, factory organization, more efficient transportation, and increased consumption—stimulated each other and thus led to further growth.

The Technology to Support Machines

Industrialization required the efficient use of raw materials, beginning with cheap metals, such as iron, which could be formed into machines, and cheap fuel, such as coal. The increased importance of iron and coal gave England an important advantage, for it was well supplied with deposits of coal that lay conveniently close to its iron ore.

Coal and Iron The English had increasingly turned to the use of coal as their once-great forests were cut down, and miners had begun taking coal from deeper veins, often beneath the water table. Coal in its natural form was not useful in smelting iron, however, because its impurities combined with the iron and resulted in an inferior product. For high-quality wrought iron, ironmasters at the turn of the eighteenth century turned from the traditional but expensive charcoal to coke, a purified form of coal, to produce iron. It was a breakthrough that convinced ironmasters like John Wilkinson that iron would be the building material of a new age. His improved techniques for boring cylinders made it possible to make better cannons and steam engines, and he built the world's first iron bridge over the Severn River in 1779, experimented with iron rails, launched an iron boat, and at his death was buried in an iron coffin.

The Steam Engine The need for powerful pumps to remove the water in coal mines stimulated experiments to harness steam. The first commercially successful steam engine, based on the use of atmospheric pressure to push a piston through a cylinder, was invented in England by Thomas Savery in 1698. Used as a pump, Savery's engine was woefully inefficient, but a decade later another Englishman, Thomas Newcomen, developed a different design for an atmospheric-pressure piston engine that proved one-third more efficient. Newcomen engines were soon being used to remove water from mines not only in Great Britain but in France, Denmark, Austria, and Hungary.



The crucial resource of industrialization was coal, and coal mining was one of the earliest industrial activities, employing steam engines to pump water and creating large, polluting enterprises in which hundreds of workers labored painfully, as at this English mine in Northumberland.
The Mary Evans Picture Library

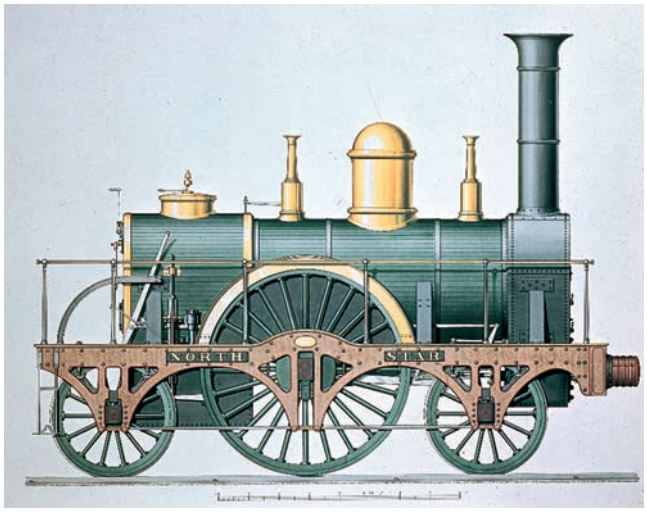
The most fundamental step in the development of steam was the work of James Watt, a young mechanic and instrument maker working at the University of Glasgow. In the 1760s, in the process of making improvements to the Newcomen engine, he came up with the idea for a new type of steam engine, one based on the creation of a separate chamber for the condensation of steam, outside of but adjacent to the cylinder. His work took years, for it required new levels of precision in machining cylinders and pistons, new designs for valves, and new knowledge of lubricants and the properties of steam itself. Finally patented in 1782, Watt's first practical model was nearly three times more efficient than the Newcomen engine. After he added a system of gears and cams for converting the piston's reciprocating motion to the rotary motion needed to drive most machines, the steam engine became much more than a pump.

Putting these inventions to use required the business talents of Watt's partner, the Birmingham industrialist Matthew Boulton. He recognized that the demand for cheap power had become more critical with the new inventions in the textile industry (including Arkwright's

water frame, Crompton's spinning mule, and Cartwright's power loom, discussed in chapter 18). From the 1780s on, the steam engine was being used in factories, and some five hundred were built before 1800. Even these early machines represented a remarkable improvement over traditional sources of power. They produced between six and twenty horsepower, comparable to the largest windmills and water mills, and did so more reliably and wherever they were needed. An economy traditionally starved for sources of power had overcome that obstacle.

Railroads New inventions grew into whole industries and were integrated into the economy with dazzling speed. The steam engine's application to rail travel is a classic case. The first successful railway line using a mounted steam engine or locomotive was built in England in 1825. A few years later an improved engine impressed spectators by outracing a horse, and in 1830 the first passenger line took its riders the thirty-two miles from Liverpool to Manchester in an hour and a quarter. Just more than a decade later, there were 2,000 miles of such rail lines in Great Britain; by 1851 there were 7,000.

Railroads constituted a new industry that stimulated further industrialization. They bought huge quantities of coal for their locomotives and iron for rails. They carried food and raw materials to cities, manufactured products to consumers, and heavy building materials and chemical fertilizers to the countryside. They made it easier for the men and women who crowded into railway cars to travel in search of work. Similarly, the telegraph, developed by a generation of scientists working in many countries and quickly adopted as an adjunct of railroading, expanded to other uses, becoming a military necessity and a conveyor of news to the general public.



Stephenson's North Star engine of 1837 was meant to be an object of beauty, combining technology and craftsmanship. Science Museum, London, UK/Bridgeman Art Library

Yet the leap from new invention to industrialization was not necessarily direct or predictable. Often dozens of subsidiary inventions or improvements were necessary to make a new machine competitive. Everywhere small-scale manufacturing and crafts persisted alongside the new. But the water-driven mills, charcoal-fired smelters, and hand-powered looms that dotted the countryside were gradually displaced, as were hundreds of thousands of skilled artisans and rural families working in their homes to make products in the old ways—a transformation that accounted for much of the human suffering occasioned by industrialization.

Patterns of Industrialization in the Early Nineteenth Century

Although twenty-five years of war had slowed and disrupted Europe's economic growth, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era had also cleared the way for future industrialization. In France, western Germany, northern Italy, and the Low Countries, land tenure was no longer the most pressing economic and social issue. Less constrained by custom and legal restrictions, landowners, including peasant proprietors, could more easily shift their production to meet the demands of a national market. The abolition of guilds and old commercial restrictions had eliminated some obstacles to the free movement of workers and the establishment of new enterprises.

The Napoleonic Code and French commercial law not only favored free contracts and an open marketplace but also introduced the advantages of uniform and clear commercial regulations. The French government had exported a common and sensible standard of weights and measures based on the metric system, encouraged the establishment of technical schools (the Polytechnic School in Paris long remained the world's best), and honored inventors and inventions, from improved gunpowder to new techniques for raising sugar beets. Under Napoleon, Europe had benefited from improved highways and bridges and a large zone of free trade, while the Bank of France, as restructured in 1800, had become the European model of a bank of issue providing a reliable currency.

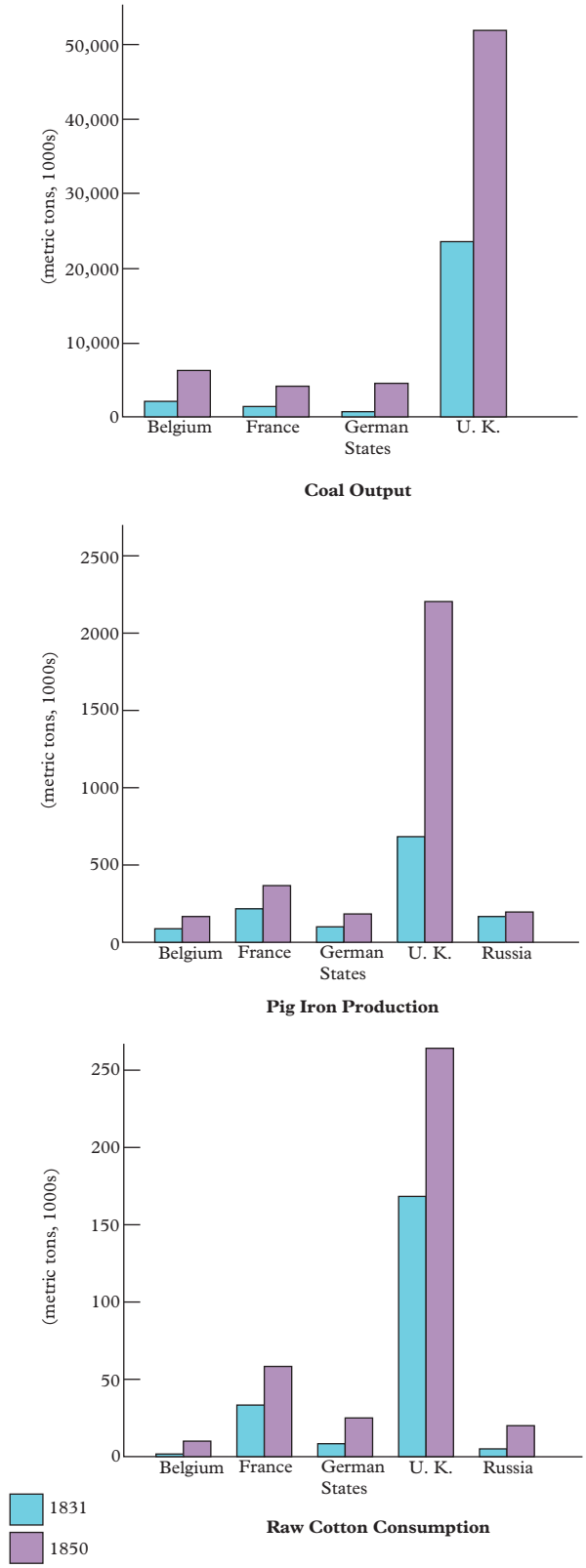
The British Model Even during the years of war and revolution, Great Britain's lead over continental countries in goods produced, capital invested, and machinery employed had widened steadily from 1789 to 1815. By the mid-1820s, after a postwar depression, British trade was reviving, and by 1830 its economy was being further transformed. Growth in one economic sector stimulated growth in others. Increased textile production, for

example, accelerated the use of chemical dyes; greater iron production required more coal. A few factories in one place encouraged the growth of others in the same region, where they could take advantage of the available workforce and capital. This concentration of production in turn increased the demand for roads, canals, and, later, railways. All this growth required more capital, and on the cycle went. In continuity, range of industries affected, national scope, and rate of increase, Great Britain's industrial growth in the first half of the nineteenth century was the greatest humankind had ever experienced.

The cotton industry dominated the booming British economy. In 1760 Britain imported only 2.5 million pounds of raw cotton; by 1830 it was importing 366 million pounds. Spurred by consumer demand, cotton textiles had become the single most important industrial product in terms of output, capital investment, and number of workers. Its production was almost exclusively organized in factories using power-driven machinery for spinning yarn and weaving cloth. In the process, the price of cotton yarn fell to about one-twentieth of what it had been in the 1760s. Lancashire, with its abundant waterways and coal deposits to fuel steam engines, became the center of a booming cotton cloth industry, and Manchester, its leading city, became the cotton capital of the world.

National Differences In 1815 many regions of the Continent, including such traditional commercial centers as Barcelona and Naples, had seemed ready to follow the British example of industrial growth, but by the 1850s the zone of industrialization had narrowed to include only northeastern France, Belgium and the Netherlands, western Germany, and northern Italy. Industrial change in this zone was uneven but more extensive than outside it. Countries poorly endowed in coal and iron, such as Italy, faced formidable obstacles. Although Saxony in eastern Germany was an early industrial center, most of Germany remained an area of quiet villages in which commerce relied on peddlers and trade fairs, even though by midcentury the German states were crisscrossed by the Continent's largest railway network. Except for pockets of industrial development, eastern Europe remained a world of agricultural estates.

Belgium, which had prospered from its former connections with Holland, built on its tradition of technological skill, its geographical advantages as a trade center accessible by water, and its excellent supplies of coal to become the Continent's first industrialized nation. Belgium extracted more coal than France or Germany and was the first country to complete a railway network. The French railway system, on the other hand, was not finished until after Germany's, because it was slowed by political conflict despite early and ambitious plans. France's production of iron, coal, and



Production in Belgium, France, the German states, and the United Kingdom
From B. R. Mitchel, *European Historical Statistics, 1750–1970,* Columbia University Press, 1975, pp. 360–361, 428–429.

textiles increased several-fold between 1815 and 1848, but Britain's expansion in each of these sectors was much greater. In iron production, for example, the two countries were about equal in 1800, but by 1850 Britain's output was six or seven times greater. Britain outstripped France still more in textiles and coal, producing by midcentury half the world total of these items.

The Role of Government Although many writers argued that the new prosperity followed from natural economic laws that worked best unimpeded by government, by midcentury the state was centrally involved in the process of economic growth even in Britain. Tariffs, the dominant issue in British politics in the 1840s, became a critical question in every country. In 1846, after a wrenching public campaign, Britain abolished the tariff on imported grain, known as the Corn Laws (after the generic British term for grain), which had protected large domestic grain producers from foreign competition. In doing so, the nation expressed confidence in its position as the world's greatest center of manufacture and trade and sided with those who favored a lower price for bread rather than with the landowners who benefited from higher, protected grain prices. Equally important to economic development was the role of government in banking and currency. Just before the middle of the century, Parliament granted the Bank of England a monopoly on issuing money and required companies to register with the government and publish their annual budget as a guide to investors. Similar steps were taken across Europe. But before industries could effectively tap private wealth, investors needed assurance that they risked only the money they invested, without being liable (as in a partnership) for all a firm's debts. In response, many European nations passed new legislation establishing limited liability and encouraging the formation of corporations.

At the same time, the growth of cities and the development of new technology created additional social demands on government. By the 1840s most cities had a public omnibus, some sidewalks, and gas lighting in certain areas. Such services, usually provided by private companies, had to be subsidized, regulated, and given legal protection by the government. As the cost and importance of these services increased, so did the state's participation in them, often extending to full ownership. By the 1840s, the leaders of Britain, France, and Belgium sought to promote economic development in a variety of ways: by subsidizing ports, transportation, and new inventions; by registering patents and sponsoring education; by encouraging investment and enforcing contracts; and by maintaining order and preventing strikes.

The growing role of government was exemplified by the postal service, which most states had provided since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These postal systems proved inadequate for an industrial era. In Britain, demands for improvement led a little-known inventor to propose a solution that captured the thinking of the new age. He called for standard envelopes and payment in advance by means of an adhesive stamp. These innovations would not only eliminate graft and reduce costs, he argued, but the service would pay for itself because lower rates would increase volume. His reforms, denounced as dangerous and impractical, passed nevertheless in 1840, and within twenty years the volume of mail in Britain increased sixfold. By then, money orders, savings accounts, and the telegraph had been added to postal services. In France, mail delivery was extended to rural areas, and by the 1850s every major government was adopting the new system, including the postage stamp.

British products dominated the machinery section of the Crystal Palace Exhibition. Here men and women marveled at Joseph Whitworth's lathe for forming railway wheels, a machine for making machines.
Guildhall Library, Corporation of London, UK/Bridgeman Art Library

The Crystal Palace The British celebrated their position as the masters of industrialization in 1851 with the first international industrial exhibition. A specially designed glass and steel pavilion was built in London, a sort of giant greenhouse called the Crystal Palace, which proved to be an architectural milestone. Many governments feared that Britain risked revolution by attracting huge throngs to London, but the admiring crowds proved well behaved. The exhibition provided a significant comparison of the relative economic development of the participating countries. Russia displayed primarily raw materials; Austria, the German *Zollverein*, and the Italian states showed mainly luxury handicrafts. Although unable to fill all the space it had demanded, the United States impressed viewers with collections of fossils, cheap manufactured products for use in the home, mountains of tooth powder and soap, and a series of new inventions, including Colt revolvers, a sewing machine, and McCormick's grain reaper.

London's imposing Crystal Palace was designed to house the first international industrial exhibition, held there in 1851. The building was constructed of cast iron and glass, a significant innovation in architecture. The exhibits held here were organized as a kind of encyclopedia of world industry, with subcategories for different products.
Hulton Archive/Getty Images

French machines, which ranged from a much-admired device for folding envelopes to a submarine, were generally considered the most elegant. But British machines surpassed everyone's in quantity, size, and variety. By 1850 Great Britain was the wealthiest nation in history,[3] and over the next twenty years, it would continue to increase its lead in goods produced.

[3] Although all estimates for this period are uncertain, it seems likely that by 1860 the per capita wealth of the French was about two-thirds and of the Germans about two-fifths that of the British.

Society in the Early Industrial Age

Economic growth on such a scale predictably set off far-reaching social change. Even in its early stages, industrialization impinged on much of society, from the state to the family, affecting governmental functions, the nature of work, women's roles, and childhood. Child factory labor, teeming slums, and severe cyclical unemployment required new social policies as the growing prosperity and security of the middle classes contrasted sharply with the destitution of the urban poor.

The Worlds of Industrial Work

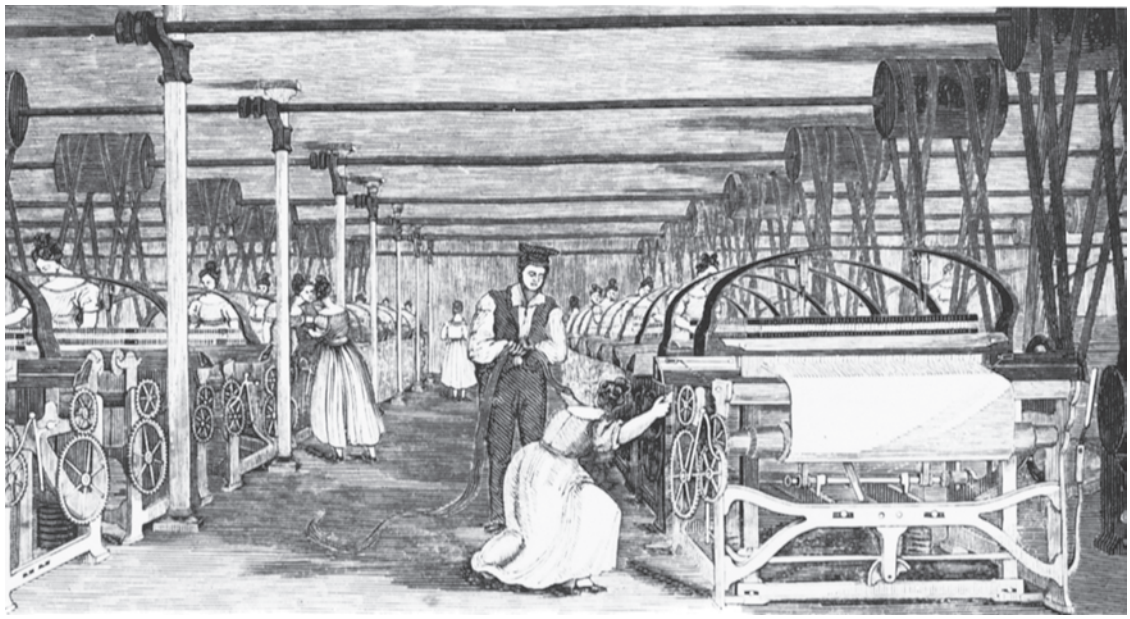
The Factory The factory quickly became the symbol of the age. Well before industrialization, there had been workplaces in which hundreds of people labored under one roof; conversely, even in industrialized societies, most wage earners did not work in factories. But the factory symbolized new kinds of power—the power of steam and of technology, the power of capital to assemble machinery and laborers, the power of competition to drive down prices and wages, the power of markets to absorb ever more production and determine what would be produced. Above all, the factory symbolized the capacity of this whole system to change the landscape, to erect or transform cities, and to reshape the lives of masses of men, women, and children.

The factory model was most clearly triumphant in the production of textiles. Spinning and weaving had always been domestic tasks, done in the home and potentially involving the whole family. The most successful weavers often employed other workers, so that the average domestic establishment contained about a half-dozen weavers. Pay and working conditions varied with the region, the season, and the ability of middlemen to control the prices of the yarn they supplied and the cloth they purchased and resold. Textile factories, on the other hand, required an investment in buildings, machinery, and raw materials far beyond the reach of most weavers; and production per worker increased more than a thousand-fold with the factory's specialization of labor, efficient organization, and power-driven machinery. By the 1830s, cotton factories in Manchester, larger than most, averaged nearly three hundred employees.

These factories would slowly drive the older forms of textile production out of business, although the flexibility of domestic production sustained it in some regions and for certain products. The first factories hired less-skilled laborers, especially women and children, to tend power looms, splice thread, or sweep the floor. Children were paid less than women, and women less than men, who did the heaviest work and served as carpenters and mechanics. At first, children usually worked with their parents in the factories, but the increased specialization of labor meant that, like their mothers and fathers, children came to be employed and supervised without regard to family ties.

Factory Life Time clocks, bells, and whistles defined the regimentation and lock step workday of the factory. It usually began at 5:30 or 6:00 in the morning and lasted for twelve hours of work, plus whatever time was allotted for meals and for recesses (when belts were replaced and machinery fixed). The workrooms were stiflingly hot in summer and cold in winter. Textile factories were usually kept damp so the taut thread would break less readily. The pace of production was relentless and the danger of accidents from machinery great.

Employers frequently found their workers to be lethargic and sullen, prone to drunkenness and indifference. To maintain the discipline that efficient production demanded, foremen hit, cursed, and most of all,



Under the foreman's close supervision, women kept the textile looms running.

imposed fines (for lateness, for slacking off, for flawed work, for talking, and sometimes even for singing or whistling). For their part, workers periodically balked at the constant surveillance and brutal work discipline. Their loss of control over their work environment and the process of production became a major cause of labor conflict over the course of the century.

The best employers, and the inspectors subsequently appointed as the result of factory legislation, were shocked by factory conditions and by the behavior of the workers themselves, in whom they discovered foul language, slovenliness, poor health, ignorance, and promiscuity. Most factory owners could see no solution beyond more discipline, however, and nearly all employers opposed measures such as the law finally passed in England in 1847 that limited the workday to ten hours. Even that legislation was primarily an embarrassed response to the evils of child labor, which reformers and writers had long criticized.

Specialization beyond the Factory The increased specialization of labor was not limited to the allocation of work within factories. The spread of specialization among groups and institutions was a characteristic of the nineteenth-century society. Just as factories separated work from family life, so money exchange and legal contracts differentiated economic from personal or social relationships. Business affairs and governmental functions became more specialized, matters determined by calculation or regulation rather than status or social connection. Maintaining the peace, collecting taxes, inspecting factories and schools, and administering poor relief fell to separate agencies. Each nation differed in the pace and manner of institutional differentiation. In Britain, more than Continental states, local government and private groups had great authority; in France the role of the national government increased; and the German states tended to combine centralizing bureaucracies with considerable local autonomy.

The Changing Structure of Society

Political change, population growth, industrialization, and urbanization altered the way people lived and the way in which society was perceived. In the old regime, discussion of the "orders" or "ranks" in society had referred to an imaginary social pyramid rising from the lowliest peasant through all the ranks to the monarch. In this idealized picture, each person had by birth an assigned place in that pyramid, and social relations were governed by elaborate networks of obligations. In the nineteenth century, by contrast, society was most often described in terms of a few broad strata, called classes. A person was said to belong to a given social class less on the basis of connection to others than as an attribute of his, or her husband's, occupation. The source of income was assumed to imply something of the values held, the style of life led, and later, the political and social interests likely to be favored. Social relations were represented as matters of free contract between individuals, with middle-class mobility the model. Descriptive of an expanding, fluid, unequal, national society, the concept of class gained urgency with the sharpening contrast between the middle class and the urban poor.

The Aristocracies The class most easily identified was the aristocracy. Recognized since the Middle Ages as a special group, it included all nobles (whose rank conferred many privileges) and their immediate relatives, whether they held noble titles or not: members of the upper gentry, large landholders who lived like nobles, and the established and wealthy patrician families of the commercial cities of the Netherlands, northern Germany, and northern Italy.

In the nineteenth century, however, the aristocracy was on the defensive. It had been a principal target of the French Revolution, and its privileges and influence were subsequently challenged by new industrial wealth (which overshadowed the fortunes of all but the largest landholders), wider participation in politics, the growth of the state, and cultural change. The aristocracy's relative decline was so clear, in fact, that its continued importance is easily overlooked. In most countries aristocrats continued to control most of the wealth, were closely allied to an established church, and dominated the upper levels of administration and the military. Aristocrats also stimulated some of the most influential critiques of nineteenth-century society, denouncing the middle classes for selfishness and materialism, proclaiming urban life morally inferior to rural, and lamenting the loss of gentlemanly honor.

In much of Europe, especially the south and east, a tiny aristocracy, constituting only about one percent of the population, held on to tremendous wealth and local power over the peasant masses. In the Kingdom of Naples, for example, the aristocracy had reestablished its authority after Napoleon's defeat and ruled over the three-fifths of the population that lived on their baronial estates. In Russia a fraction of the nobility held one-third of the land and administered much of the land owned by the state. Tyrants on their estates and dominant in local administration, Russia's aristocrats were pillars of tsarist rule.

In countries in which the nobles made up a higher proportion of the population, a different pattern emerged. In Poland, Hungary, and Spain, many nobles were extremely poor and some of them were sympathetic to social and political reform. In Hungary, confident Magyar aristocrats sought to strengthen their

influence by cooperating with reformers seeking representative government and the decentralization of power, as did aristocrats in northern Italy and Belgium. They were thus prominent during the revolutions of 1848 in Hungary and northern Italy and in the subsequent nationalist movements in those countries (see chapter 23). In Great Britain, above all, the aristocracy proved willing to accept liberal programs in exchange for keeping their political prominence; perhaps as many as four-fifths of the members of Parliament were large landholders or their representatives. On the other hand, in Britain, younger sons from aristocratic families (who would not inherit estates) were closely associated with the upper-middle class, which lessened the sharpness of social division.

In Prussia, the most influential aristocrats were the Junkers of east Prussia, owners of large estates, some of which included sizable villages. The Junkers maintained their traditional position even when the state became the instrument of dramatic and rapid change. Considered crude and ignorant by most of the aristocracies of Europe—which set great store by polished manners, elegant taste, and excellent French—the Junkers had a proud tradition of service to the state and loyalty to their king. Their manners and values—from fondness for dueling, arrogance, and loyalty—set the tone of Prussian public life. In France, where the old aristocracy was reduced to a minor role in national politics after the revolution of 1830, its members still retained the highest social prestige, along with major influence in the Church, army, officer corps, and foreign service. And even in France, aristocrats maintained a strong voice in local affairs and continued to influence manners.

Peasants The overwhelming majority of all Europeans were peasants, a social class as firmly tied to the land and to tradition as the aristocracy. The peasantry was deeply divided between those who owned land and those forced to sell their labor. Some of the former, especially in the west, grew relatively prosperous, but most peasants were tenants who received only a portion of the crops they raised, with the rest going to their landlords. Rural laborers were the poorest and most insecure of all, the tinder of violence and the recruits for factory work.

A critical change in peasants' lives occurred with their emancipation from traditional obligations to the lord whose land they worked. These "feudal" obligations typically might have required the peasant to give the lord a number of days of labor or to use the lord's grain mill at rates set by the lord. The French Revolution abolished such requirements, a policy carried by Napoleon to much of western Europe and that spread to most of eastern Europe with the revolutions of 1848.

These changes encouraged peasant producers to enter the commercial market; but they also deprived peasants of such traditional protections against hard times as the use of a common pasture, the right to glean what was left after the first harvest, and the practice of foraging for firewood in forests owned by others. Similarly, the decline of the putting-out system in textiles and of local industries took away critical income, especially during the winter months. Agriculture became more commercial, its production increasingly intended for market rather than for subsistence or local consumption. Profits could increase with the cultivation of one or two cash crops and with the use of improved fertilizers and machinery, but these changes were easier for farmers with more capital and bigger holdings than most peasants enjoyed.

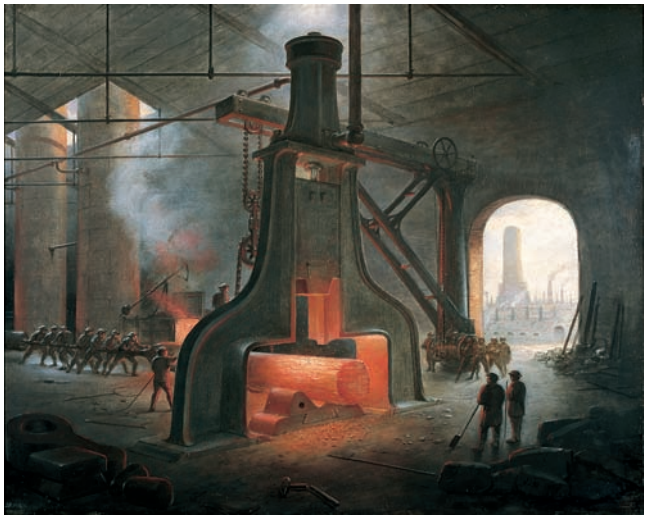
Peasants, however, were not just passive victims of outside forces. Their suspicion of outsiders and tenacious loyalty to their region and its customs made them the despair of reformers. Yet they were not always resistant to change. Shrewd judges of their own best interests, they often cooperated with measures they saw as advantageous. Their land hunger, resentment of taxes and military service, and antipathy toward those above them could also become a major political force. Peasant involvement made a crucial difference in the early days of the French Revolution, in the Spanish resistance to Napoleon, in the wars of German liberation, and in the later strength of nationalism in Germany and Italy. Rulers were kept on edge by eruptions of peasant violence in southern England in the 1820s; Ireland in the 1830s and 1840s; Wales, Silesia, and Galicia in the 1840s; and on a smaller scale in most other countries.

A central problem for nineteenth-century European society was how to integrate the agricultural economy and the masses dependent on it into the developing commercial and industrial economy. By the 1850s the process had gone farthest in France and Great Britain but by opposite means. In Britain the peasantry was largely eliminated as the continuing enclosures of great estates concentrated land ownership in the hands of the wealthy and reduced the rural poor to laborers, hiring out for the season or by the day (see chapter 18). In France, on the other hand, peasants owned approximately one-third of the arable land and many maintained small-scale craft industries as well. Patterns elsewhere lay between these two extremes. Small landholding persisted in western Germany, northern Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Scandinavia, alongside a trend toward the consolidation of larger farms that reduced millions to day laborers. In Germany, emancipation from obligations to the lord usually required peasants to pay for their freedom with part (often the best part) of the land they had previously cultivated.

The clear distinction remained, however, between these western and central regions and eastern Europe, where peasants were more directly subject to the power of the lord, most of all under Russian serfdom. There, landowners' authority over their peasants included claims to their unpaid labor, which in Russia ranged from a month or so of work each year to several days a week. The disadvantages of such a system were many, and the eventual emancipation of Russian serfs in the 1860s proved necessary for economic growth and minimal military and administrative efficiency.

Workers and Artisans Industrial workers attracted far more attention than did the peasantry, although they were a minority even among paid laborers and were still outnumbered by domestic servants. Factory hands were seen as emblematic of the new age, not least because of their absolute dependence on wages set by employers, who could fire them at will and who determined the tasks performed as well as the conditions of work and the length of the workday. Most factory workers earned too little to sustain a family even when work was steady, making the employment of women and children as necessary to the family's survival as it was advantageous to employers, who appreciated their greater dexterity and the lower wages they would accept. Even so, factory workers were, in income at least, better off than about half of all laborers, and their lot improved a bit as legislation hesitantly restricted hours and set some standards of hygiene and safety.

Industrial workers were set apart not only by the conditions of their labor, but by the slums in which they lived, and special restrictions such as the *livret*, or passport, that all French workers were required to present when applying for a job and on which previous employers recorded comments on the worker's conduct and performance. Life was still more precarious for the millions without regular employment, who did such tasks as they could find, hauling or digging for a few pence. Understandably, the powerful worried about the social volcano atop which they lived.



This Nasmyth steam hammer looms above the men who endured heat and noise to feed it—in every way the symbol of a new era.
The Science Museum, London

The most independent workers were the artisans. True, they had been stripped of their tight guilds and formal apprenticeships by the legislation of the French Revolution, by a comparable series of laws passed in Britain in the decades before the 1830s, and by a similar process in Germany that was completed by the revolutions of 1848. Nevertheless, artisans continued to ply their crafts in a hierarchy of masters, journeymen, and apprentices working in small workshops or construction sites. These skilled or semiskilled workers—carpenters, tailors, shoemakers, mechanics, stonemasons, and locksmiths—were better paid than the unskilled and often looked down on the latter. Although they could be laid off during frequent economic slumps, in general their real wages tended slowly to increase, and they tended to earn enough to support their families in one or two bare rooms on a simple diet.

Early Labor Movements Uneducated and exhausted industrial workers, often strangers to one another, for the most part lacked the means necessary for effective concerted action to improve their lot. Their frequent outbursts of resentment and intermittent strikes usually ended in sullen defeat.

Skilled workers, by contrast, held clearer visions of their rights and tended to feel most keenly the threat of economic change. They took the lead in forming labor organizations and agitating for political redress. Although trade unions were banned everywhere except in England in the early nineteenth century, many skilled workers joined local, often secret, organizations for mutual aid. By 1850 more than 1.5 million British workers may have belonged to such groups, called friendly societies in England and confraternities in France. These societies provided burial costs for members or assistance in times of illness. Other organizations, such as artisans' production cooperatives, aimed to increase workers' control over their lives. The hundreds of strikes staged by artisans throughout western Europe in the first half of the century also hinted at what trade unions might accomplish in the future.

The meetings, the torchlight parades and the working-class press, steeped in the rhetoric of natural rights and social justice, all contributed to workers' growing sense of belonging to a distinctive class. So, above all, did the repression by police and courts that usually followed.

By midcentury, millions of workers in Britain, somewhat fewer perhaps in France, and smaller numbers elsewhere shared heroes and rituals, believed they faced a common enemy, and adopted organization as the prime means of defending themselves in a hostile world. In Britain, the national trade unions of skilled workers formed in the 1830s and 1840s (with only some 100,000 members then) steadily increased their size and influence, reaching more than a million members a generation later. The vast majority of the working class, however, remained essentially defenseless, possessing meager skills, dependent on unstable employment, and living in the isolation of poverty.

The Middle Classes Of all the social classes, the most confident and assertive were the middle classes. At the top stood the great bankers, often connected to the aristocracy and with considerable political influence. Just below them in status were the great industrialists and the wealthiest merchants. The bottom—and largest—segment of the middle class, known as the petite bourgeoisie or lower-middle class, comprised office clerks, schoolteachers, and small shopkeepers, often distinguishable from artisans only by their pretensions. But the middle classes were epitomized by the strata in between, consisting of merchants, managers, bureaucrats, lawyers, doctors, engineers, and professors. Opposed to aristocratic privilege, they saw themselves as the beneficiaries of social changes that allowed talented people to gain security and influence.

Primarily urban, the middle classes were intimately connected with the commerce and politics of city life. In Paris they made up about one-fifth of the population, constituting nearly all those prosperous enough to pay taxes and to employ at least one maid. In other cities their proportion was probably somewhat smaller. Among nations, they were most numerous in Great Britain, a sizable fraction existed in France and Belgium, and a smaller minority elsewhere. The middle class was the only social class from which one could fall, and people established their membership in it by economic self-sufficiency, literacy, and respectability. No matter how favored by birth or fortune, they tended to think of themselves as self-made.

More than any other group, the middle classes of the nineteenth century were associated with an ideology that advocated constitutionalism, legal equality, individual rights, and economic freedom. The conquests of the middle class were measurable by the gradual adoption of values. Being in the middle—between the extremes of aristocratic privilege and power and mass poverty and ignorance—was seen as an advantage, a kind of inherent moderation. Most of Europe's writers, scientists, doctors, lawyers, and businesspeople would have been pleased to find themselves called by a London paper in 1807 "those persons always counted the most valuable, because the least corrupted, members of society," or hearing John Stuart Mill speak a generation later of "the class which is universally described as the most wise and the most virtuous part of the community, the middle rank." Women, assigned the role of guardians of morality, played a key role in creating this middle-class identity.

Family Life in the Nineteenth Century

To a great many nineteenth-century observers, social change threatened to undermine the family, and moralists of every sort warned that the very institution most central to civilization was in danger. Recent research suggests a different view. The heightened concern for the family was a response to real stress, but it was also an expression of a growing belief in the importance of the family, which would prove to be an extraordinarily adaptable institution.

Traditional Roles Family life in Europe had always been related to social status. For the aristocracy, family encompassed a wide network of relatives, privilege, and power. Women played a critical but subordinate role as carriers of the dowries that joined estates, as managers of large domestic staffs, and as centers of the social circles in which aristocrats met. Among peasants, the family unit might include grandparents or, where plots were large enough, even in-laws, cousins, and nephews. Particularly in the Mediterranean regions, such extended families often shared housing in the village but worked in different nearby fields. When they could, however, a young couple generally set up a household of their own. In regions where peasants owned land, they had difficulty keeping their holdings viable while still giving something to all their children. Law and custom might require equal division of inheritance (as in France), primogeniture (inheritance by the eldest son, as in England), or other more complicated arrangements. But bitter disputes occurred frequently, for the elderly feared dispossession, and children feared that they would not get their share in time.

The family was the basic economic unit, pooling income from various sources and dividing labor in customary ways. In the villages, women usually handled household chores and the smaller animals, men were responsible for the heavier work, and everyone worked together in critical periods of planting and harvest. Often the women had more access than the men to additional sources of income—piecework from a nearby mill or domestic service for the well-to-do—and they played a central role in marketing produce. Men were more likely to migrate, especially in hard times, to find work on roads or docks or at some

landlord's harvest. As population increased, children were more often pushed out to seek employment as domestic servants or in the nearest mills. For artisans as well as peasants, the family was often the unit of production, although even small workshops had long tended to exclude women, at least from the better-paid tasks.

Industrialization and the Working-Class Family The advent of industrialization presented the family economic unit with new problems, including a lack of decent housing, poor working conditions, and a higher risk of unemployment. Women and children had to supplement the father's income, but were now less likely to work side by side; if taught a trade, children were less likely to learn it from their parents. Adolescents in factory towns, hardened at an early age, often left home when their pay allowed, and urban conditions made it more difficult for the family to support the aged and the sick. Such factors could indeed weaken family ties. Critics pointed to the rise in illegitimate births and the common practice of working men and women living together without being married as signs of trouble. Yet among workers, too, the family survived.

Middle-Class Domesticity While the breakdown of the traditional household economy loosened family ties among workers, home and family emerged as linchpins of middle-class life and the stay-at-home wife became one of the chief signifiers of middle-class respectability. The life of the middle-class woman thus contrasted greatly with that of her poorer counterparts. Well-to-do women continued to be the organizers, patrons, and ornaments of many of Europe's most cultivated circles, but the middle classes isolated their women from the harsh competition of business and politics. As the contemporary French historian Jules Michelet complained, "By a singular set of circumstances—social, economic, religious—man lives separated from woman." In Victorian England, gentlemen met in their clubs or withdrew from the ladies after dinner for their cigars and weighty talk.

Except for the prosperous who had domestic (female) servants, wives—no matter what their other burdens—were expected to prepare and serve food, wash and mend clothes, and clean the home. Nineteenth-century discourse often made the image of femininity appear to be an idle and pallid creature, encased in corset or bustle, whose tendency to faint was a sign of delicacy. In reality women's roles were far more significant and varied, but the image reflected values widely shared. Allowing a wife to be idle even if her husband worked hard was a kind of conspicuous consumption, a partial imitation of aristocratic elegance. If men must be competitive, hard, and practical, women should be tender, innocent, and gracious—the weak but pure upholders of morality and taste. The middle-class woman with no estate to manage and few servants to direct was almost literally placed on a pedestal. Neither her needlework nor her piano playing was viewed as serious, but her role in maintaining the protective calm of the home was critical.

Middle-class concern with the family also emphasized the special moral role of women within the home, conceived as a private citadel largely closed to the outside world. The liberal dream of combining individualism and social order found its model in the family, where the patriarchal father, devoted mother, and carefully trained children were meant to live in disciplined harmony. Childhood itself lasted longer in the middle classes, for manners, education, and character required elaborate preparation. The mother was the core of this home; books, newspapers, magazines, and sermons enthusiastically described the talents her role required. Motherhood was treated as an honored occupation, fondly depicted in novels and in the new women's magazines founded, like the Parisian *Journal des Femmes*

The bourgeois family at breakfast: perfect domestic harmony, father looks up from the morning newspaper to enjoy the scene of an angelic child and adoring wife, while a servant tends to them in front of the Chinese screen that sets off the eating space.
Editions Tallandier

of 1832, to make women "skilled in their duties as companions and mothers."

Clearly, these attitudes also underpinned the famous prudery of the age and the distrust of sexual passion. In 1818 Thomas Bowdler produced his *Family Shakespeare*, a "bowdlerized" version "in which those words and phrases are omitted which cannot with propriety be read in a family," a strange sensitivity after two hundred years of admiration for Shakespeare's language. Similarly "the anti-English pollution of the waltz," imported from the Continent, was denounced as degenerate in *The Ladies' Pocket Book of Etiquette* of 1840. The middle classes sought to maintain an orderly world through convention. At a time when prostitution and drunkenness were believed to have reached new heights, prudery was more than repression. It was an effort to bend society to the self-discipline on which morality, a thriving commerce, the advancement of knowledge, and personal fulfillment were thought to rest.

The Changing Population

While Europeans grappled with political, economic, and social changes, they also faced the fact that there were more and more people—more people to feed, more seeking work, and more living in cities.

Demographic Growth The effects of population growth were visible everywhere, particularly in areas in which industrialization was under way. Research attributes the increase to a variety of factors, including a decline in disease-carrying germs, an increase in the food supply, a lowering of the age of marriage, and, after 1870, some improvement in public sanitation. Admittedly spotty data suggest that the world experienced a decline in some common diseases beginning in the eighteenth century. Microbes have cycles, and remissions had undoubtedly occurred many times before. Now, however, better supplies of food allowed the larger number of babies surviving the perilous years of infancy to reach adulthood and form families of their own.

The food supply rose because of better transportation, more effective agricultural techniques, and the potato. Agricultural associations, usually led by enlightened aristocrats, campaigned for more scientific farming, and the potato, a South American import that was easy to cultivate and yielded more calories per acre than any other crop, became a staple of the peasant diet in much of Europe by 1830. While infant mortality remained enormously high by modern standards, even a slight decline in death rates could make a great difference in the total number of people, so close to subsistence did most Europeans live.

The reasons for the trend toward earlier marriage are less clear, but peasants freed from servile obligations apparently tended to marry and form new households at a younger age. Early marriage was facilitated by the spread of cottage industry, which preceded the new factories and enabled families to add to their income by spinning or weaving at home.

The increased number of people in a single generation multiplied in the next generation and led to an enormous increase in the aggregate. As population grew, the proportion in the childbearing years grew still faster, which increased the ratio of births to the total population. The net result was that the 180 to 190 million Europeans of 1800 had become 266 million by 1850 and 295 million by 1870.

Urbanization At the turn of the century, greater London had reached one million in population. No European city since imperial Rome had ever approached this size. Paris, with about half that number, would reach one million a generation later. The third-largest European city, Naples, had 350,000 inhabitants, and in all of Europe only twenty-two cities had populations greater than 100,000. By midcentury there were forty-seven. Great Britain was the leader, with six cities over the 100,000 mark; London's population had surpassed 2.5 million by 1856, Liverpool had grown from 80,000 to almost 400,000, and Manchester and Glasgow each had more than 300,000 people. By the 1850s, half of Britain's population lived in towns or cities, making it the most urbanized society since the Classical era.

On the Continent, most old cities increased by at least 50 percent in the first half of the century, and many a town became a city. The major capitals burgeoned. Paris reached a population of nearly 1.5 million by 1850; Berlin almost trebled, to 500,000; and a similar growth rate pushed Brussels to 250,000. St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Budapest all had populations between 400,000 and 500,000. By the 1860s, the English countryside was actually losing people, as were some sections of France. The tide of urbanization was overwhelming, and nearly all the subsequent increase in European population would end up in cities swelling with new arrivals as rural folk moved to nearby towns, and town dwellers to cities.

Effects of the Population Boom The effects of a larger population were far reaching. More people consumed more food, which necessitated more intensive cultivation and the use of land previously left fallow. An increasing population also meant an expanding market for goods other than food, an element of growth that would have stronger impact later in the century. More people meant a larger potential workforce ready to leave the countryside for industrial jobs. This

mobility became a social change of immeasurable importance, for it reduced the isolation of the peasantry and in some regions sparked what would become a vast migration to the Americas. Young people constituted a greater proportion of the population, which may have made for increased restiveness and a larger pool of potential revolutionaries.[4] There was also a distinction in birthrates by social class, which demographers call *differential fertility*. On the whole, affluent people had fewer children, which led some to interpret the lower classes' fertility as a lack of foresight and moral restraint and to worry that they would eventually overwhelm society.

The most influential analysis of population was Thomas R. Malthus's *An Essay on the Principle of Population as It Affects the Future Improvement of Society*, first published in 1798. Malthus argued that human population, unless checked by death (through war, famine, or pestilence) or deliberate sexual continence, increases faster than the supply of food. As a clergyman, he advocated continence, but was pessimistic that most people could exercise restraint. An economist as well, Malthus presented demography as a science closely attached to liberal economic theory, with the convenient corollary that the misery of the poor resulted from their own improvidence.

The Irish Famine Although the periodic famines and subsistence crises of earlier centuries were on the decline, they still occurred occasionally. One of the last great European subsistence crises was the disastrous Irish potato famine of 1845. By winter, the blighted harvest left Irish tenant farmers unable to pay rent for the tiny plots they worked, and hundreds of thousands of families were forced off their land to starve. Hope rested on a good harvest the following year, but when desperate peasants dug up the potato plants, they found only stinking rot. By 1847, a million Irish, about a quarter of the population, had died, and abandoned huts dotted the landscape.

While the famine sparked a good deal of debate about whether the English government should take action, the Irish received little assistance, and officials who tried to organize relief were constrained by the noninterventionist precepts of liberal economics (see "Economic Liberalism," p. 655). Meanwhile, the English absentee landowners of many Irish estates followed market principles and exported most Irish wheat to England, where it fetched a better price. Many viewed the famine as a natural disaster rather than a failure of policy and blamed Irish laziness for the country's dependence on potatoes, an easy crop to grow. The Irish famine sparked a massive Irish migration to the United States and fanned a longstanding hatred of English rule.

[4] The nationalist organization Young Italy limited membership to those under forty, and probably most of the leaders of the revolutions of 1848 would have met that standard. The relation of youth to revolution is interestingly discussed in Herbert Moller, "Youth as a Force in the Modern World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April 1968.

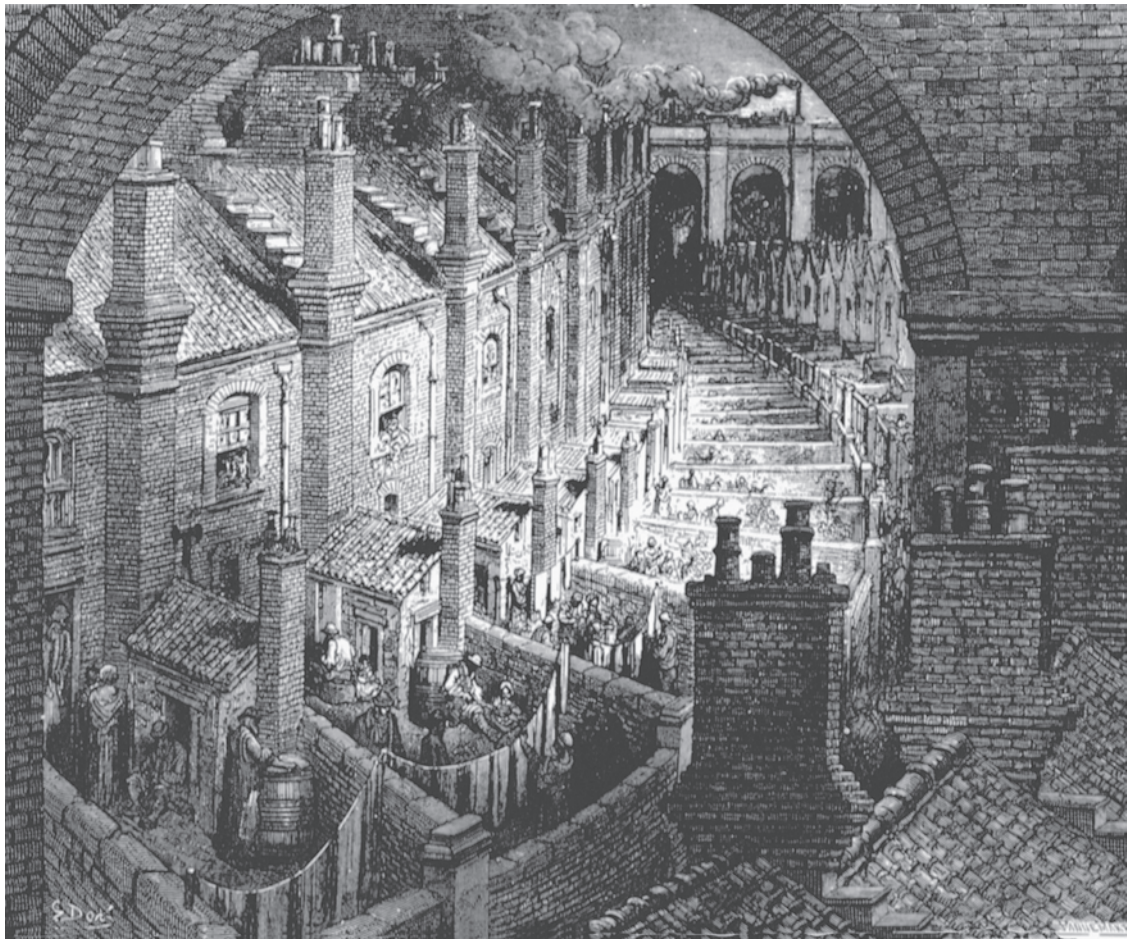
Confronting the Problems of Industrial Society

The new industrial order was burdened by many social problems, including public health and morals, class division, and appalling poverty. As the terrible conditions of modern urban life were uncovered through parliamentary and scholarly inquiries, these issues were debated in hundreds of speeches, pamphlets, and newspaper articles.

Urban Squalor Poverty of the bleakest sort was nothing new to European laborers. What was new was the urban squalor in industrial areas and cities for all but the reasonably prosperous. Narrow alleys were littered with garbage and ordure that gave off an overpowering stench. The water supply in Paris, better than in most large cities, offered access to safe water only at fountains that dotted the city (the affluent paid carriers by the bucket); in London, private water companies allowed it to flow only a few hours a day. In most cities the water supply came from dangerously polluted rivers. Sewage was an even more serious problem. A third of Manchester's houses used privies in the 1830s, and a decade later the ratio of inside toilets to population was 1 to 212. In London, cesspools menaced health only slightly less than still more public means of disposal. In every city the poor lived crowded into dark, filthy, stuffy, unheated rooms; and over the cities, especially manufacturing and mining towns, chemical smog and coal smoke darkened the sky and made tuberculosis widespread among workers. (See "The Housing Crisis in France and Germany" p. 648.)

Not surprisingly, urban poverty generated rampant crime, including prostitution, street crime, and gang activity, and maintaining public order in this setting required new police forces. London's force was established by Sir Robert Peel in 1829, and the Paris Municipal Guard was created under Guizot a few years later. Peel's role led to the nickname "bobbies," by which the police are still referred to in London.

The New Vulnerability of Industrial Workers Workers' demoralizing dependence on their employers was another characteristic feature of the industrial age. Most new factories employed between 150 and 300 men, women, and children whose well-being was largely tied to a single employer. A high proportion of



Gustave Doré
In this famous engraving of London, the rhythmic sameness and cramped efficiency of new housing suggest a machine for living appropriate to the age of the railroad.
New York Public Library

these people, new to the area in which they lived, depended on cash to pay their rent, to purchase rough cotton clothes, to provide the bread that was the staple of their diet, and to buy some candles and coal. For most workers employment was never steady. It was common for a third of the adult males of a town to be without work, especially in the winter, and pauperism was acknowledged to be the social disease of the century, a condition that included some 10 percent of the population in Britain and only slightly less in France.

Workers were the people hit hardest by the periodic economic depressions that baffled even the most optimistic observers. The depression of 1846 was nearly universal, and that of 1857 extended from North America to eastern Europe. When Britain lost access to American cotton during the Civil War of the 1860s, layoffs in the Lancashire cotton industry ran so high that at one point over 250,000 workers, more than half the total, lived on relief. Recipes for watery soup handed out by the charitable agencies of every city defined the thinness of survival.

The Standard of Living Although most workers everywhere suffered from the changing conditions of employment, workers in some trades and places were distinctly better off. Overall, real wages—measured by what people could buy—may have begun to increase somewhat even before a general rise in wages occurred in the mid-1840s and notably again in the 1850s. These gains meant less in new factory towns, however, where workers could be forced to buy shoddy goods at high prices in company stores. Alcoholism was so extensive that in many a factory town paydays were staggered in order to reduce the dangerous number of drunks. But technology brought benefits as well. The spread of the use of soap and cotton underwear were boons to health,

The Housing Crisis in France and Germany

The housing crisis was not limited to cities with a lot of new industry, as these two descriptions, expressing the shock of middle-class reformers, show. The first is from André Guépin, Nantes au XIX^{e} siècle (Nantes, 1835); the second, giving Dr. Bluemner's impression of Breslau, is from Alexander Schneer, Über die Zustänber der arbeitenden Klassen in Breslau (Berlin, 1845).

"If you want to know how he [the poorer worker] lives, go—for example—to the Rue des Fumiers which is almost entirely inhabited by this class of worker. Pass through one of the drain-like openings, below street-level, that lead to these filthy dwellings, but remember to stoop as you enter. One must have gone down into these alleys where the atmosphere is as damp and cold as a cellar; one must have known what it is like to feel one's foot slip on the polluted ground and to fear a stumble into the filth: to realise the painful impression that one receives on entering the homes of these unfortunate workers. Below street-level on each side of the passage there is a large gloomy cold room. Foul water oozes out of the walls. Air reaches the room through a sort of semi-circular window which is two feet high at its greatest elevation. Go in—if the fetid smell that assails you does not make you recoil. Take care, for the floor is uneven, unpaved and untiled—or if there are tiles, they are covered with so much dirt that they cannot be seen. And then you will see two or three rickety beds fitted to one side because the cords that bind them to the worm-eaten legs have themselves decayed. Look at the contents of the bed—a mattress; a tattered blanket of rags (seldom washed since there is only one); sheets sometimes; and a pillow sometimes. No wardrobes are needed in these homes. Often a weaver's loom and a spinning wheel complete the furniture. There is no fire in the winter. No sunlight penetrates [by day], while at night a tallow candle is lit. Here men work for fourteen hours [a day]."

"*Question:* What is the condition of the living quarters of the class of factory workers, day labourers and journeymen?

"*Reply of the City Poor Doctor, Dr. Bluemner:* It is in the highest degree miserable. Many rooms are more like pigsties than quarters for human beings. The apartments in the city are, if possible, even worse than those in the suburbs. The former are, of course, always in the yard, if places in which you can hardly turn round can be called apartments. The so-called staircase is generally completely in the dark. It is also so decrepit that the whole building shakes with every firm footstep; the rooms themselves are small and so low that it is hardly possible to stand upright, the floor is on a slope, since usually part of the house has to be supported by struts. The windows close badly, the stoves are so bad that they hardly give any heat but plenty of smoke in the room. Water runs down the doors and walls. The ground-floor dwellings are usually half underground."

From Sidney Pollard and Colin Holmes (eds.), *Documents of European Economic History,* Vol. 1, St. Martin's Press, 1968, pp. 494–495, 497–498.

and, by midcentury, brick construction and iron pipes had improved housing even for many of the relatively poor. Luxuries such as sugar, tea, and meat were becoming available to the lower-middle class and to the more prosperous artisans.

That the more fortunate workers and the middle classes were unquestionably more prosperous than they had been in the recent past made the contrast with the poverty of those beneath them even more striking. A luxury restaurant in Paris might charge twenty-five or thirty times an average worker's daily wage for a single meal, and even modest restaurants charged twice a worker's daily wage—to a clientele that ate three or four times a day, in contrast to the two meals of many workers. From the top to the bottom of society, the differences between the comfortable minority and the poor majority were striking in every aspect of daily life.

Charity Responding to the plight of the lower classes, many well-to-do people, especially women, favored charity as the best means of redressing social ills. In Britain, religious revival provided a powerful impetus to philanthropic initiatives, and on the Continent new Catholic religious orders with social reform missions were founded by the hundreds. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, founded in Paris in 1835 and soon established all over Catholic Europe, dispatched upper-class men to visit the poor regularly with the goal of teaching thrift and inspiring by example. Other charitable organizations sought to help workers help themselves, establishing night schools for workers and sponsoring lectures, although ambitious members of the lower-middle classes were more likely than workers to avail themselves of such opportunities. Still other groups organized wholesome recreation to diminish the draw of

Historical Issues: Industrialization and the Standard of Living

These excerpts show the diverse emphases and shifting conclusions in this debate but not the careful reasoning and the extraordinary range of the research that makes this literature still worth reading. The first four excerpts are anthologized in Philip A. M. Taylor (ed.), The Industrial Revolution in Britain: Triumph or Disaster?, *D. C. Heath, 1970.*

John L. and Barbara Hammond

"The apologies for child labour were precisely the same as the apologies for the slave trade. This was no travesty of their argument. The champions of the slave trade pointed to the £70,000,000 invested in the sugar plantations, to the dependence of our commerce on the slave trade. . . . The argument for child labour followed the same line. . . . Sir James Graham thought that the Ten Hours Bill would ruin the cotton industry and with it the trade of the country. . . . Our population, which had grown rapidly in the Industrial Revolution was no longer able to feed itself; the food it bought was paid for by its manufactures: those manufactures depended on capital: capital depended on profits: profits depended on the labour of the boys and girls who enabled the manufacturer to work his mills long enough at a time to repay the cost of the plant and to compete with foreign rivals. This was the circle in which the nation found its conscience mangled.

". . . Thus England asked for profits and received profits. Everything turned to profit. The towns had their profitable dirt, their profitable smoke, their profitable slums, their profitable disorder, their profitable ignorance, their profitable despair. The curse of Midas was on this society. . . . For the new town was not a home where man could find beauty, happiness, leisure, learning, religion, the influences that civilize outlook and habit, but a bare and desolate place. . . . The new factories and the new furnaces were like the Pyramids, telling of man's enslavement, rather than of his power, casting their long shadow over the society that took such pride in them."

From John L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Rise of Modern Industry,* M. S. G. Haskell House, 1925.

Thomas S. Ashton

"Let me confess at the start that I am of those who believe that, all in all, conditions of labour were becoming better, at least after 1820, and that the spread of the factory played a not inconsiderable part in the improvement. . . . One of the merits of the factory system was that it offered, and required, regularity of employment and hence stability of consumption. During the period 1790–1830 factory production increased rapidly. A greater proportion of the people came to benefit both as producers and as consumers. The fall in the price of textiles reduced the price of clothing. Government contracts for uniforms and army boots called into being new industries, and after the war the products of these found a market among the better-paid artisans. Boots began to take the place of clogs and hats replaced shawls, at least for wear on Sundays. Miscellaneous commodities, ranging from clocks to pocket handkerchiefs, began to enter into the scheme of expenditure, and after 1820 such things as tea and coffee and sugar fell in price substantially. The growth of trade-unions, friendly societies, savings banks, popular newspapers and pamphlets, schools, and nonconformist chapels—all give evidence of the existence of a large class raised well above the level of mere subsistence."

From Thomas S. Ashton, "The Standard of Life of the Workers in England, 1790–1830," *Journal of Economic History,* Vol. 9, 1949.

Eric J. Hobsbawm

"We may consider three types of evidence in favour of the pessimistic view: those bearing on (a) mortality and health, (b) unemployment and (c) consumption. . . . The rise in mortality rates in the period 1811–41 is clearly of *some* weight for the pessimistic case, all the more as modern work . . . tend[s] to link such rates much more directly to the amount of income and food consumption than to other social conditions.

". . . It is too often forgotten that something like 'technological' unemployment was not confined to those workers who were actually replaced by new machines. It could affect almost all pre-industrial industries and trades. . . . Doubtless the general expansion of the early industrial period (say 1780–1811) tended to diminish unemployment except during crises: doubtless the decades of difficulty and adjustment after the wars tended to make the problem more acute. From the later 1840s, the working classes began to adjust themselves to life under a new set of economic rules . . . but it is highly probable that the period 1811–42 saw abnormal problems and abnormal unemployment. . . . These notes on unemployment are sufficient to throw doubt upon the less critical statements of the optimistic view, but not to establish any alternative view. . . . Per capita consumption can hardly have risen. The discussion of food consumption thus throws considerable doubt on the optimistic view."

From Eric J. Hobsbawm, "The British Standard of Living, 1790–1850," *Economic History Review,* 1957.

continued

Ronald M. Hartwell

"[I]ncreasing life expectation and increasing consumption are no measures of ultimate well-being, and to say that the standard of living for most workers was rising, is *not* to say that it was high, *nor* that there was no dire poverty, and cyclical fluctuations and technological unemployment of a most distressing character.

". . . Thus much misunderstanding has arisen because of assumptions—mainly misconceptions—about England before the Industrial Revolution; assumptions, for example, that rural life was naturally better than town life, that working for oneself was better and more secure than working for an employer, that child and female labour was something new, that the domestic system . . . was preferable to the factory system, that slums and food adulteration were peculiar products of industrialization, and so on. . . . The new attitude to social problems that emerged with the industrial revolution was that ills should be identified, examined, analysed, publicised and remedied, either by voluntary or legislative action. Thus evils that had long existed—child labour, for example—and had long been accepted as inevitable, were regarded as new ills to be remedied rather than as old ills to be endured. It was during the industrial revolution, moreover, and largely because of the economic opportunities it afforded to the working class women, that there was the beginning of the most important and most beneficial of all the social revolutions of the last two centuries, the emancipation of women."

From Ronald M. Hartwell, "The Rising Standard of Living in England, 1800–1850," *Economic History Review,* 1961.

Theodore S. Hamerow

"For most [workers] the coming of the industrial revolution made little difference with regard to income, workday, diet, or housing. This was especially true of those employed in agriculture, who still made up the great bulk of the labor force. Yet even those engaged in manufacture experienced only minor changes in their accustomed level of subsistence. The goods and services generated by early industrialization remained largely inaccessible to them. But the new hardships imposed on the working population by the rationalization of production were less the result of a long-term decline in income than of psychological disorientation. Millions of people who had grown up amid the certainties and traditions of the village or small town were suddenly thrown into an alien environment of factories, shops, tenements, and slums, where the values of rural society soon disintegrated before the hard realities of the urban experience. The outcome was a profound demoralization, which primarily reflected not a change in the standard of living but a change in the way of life.

"Such generalizations about the initial effect of the industrial revolution may be open to challenge, but there can be little doubt about what happened subsequently. Within fifty years the standard of living of the lower classes began to rise. The evidence on this point is incontrovertible."

From Theodore S. Hamerow, *The Birth of a New Europe: State and Society in the Nineteenth Century,* University of North Carolina Press, 1983, pp. 140–141.

the pub. They set up trade apprenticeships; provided expectant mothers with a clean sheet and a pamphlet on child care; opened savings banks that accepted even tiny deposits; campaigned for hygiene and temperance; gave away soup and bread; supported homes for abandoned children and fallen women; and ran nurseries, schools, or hostels. Despite these efforts, philanthropy was wholly inadequate to the challenges it faced, and most of Europe's urban masses remained largely untouched by it.

Government Regulation Gradually, and often reluctantly, governments began to take a more active role in meeting the challenges of the industrial order. By the 1830s and 1840s, despite the resistance of industrialists to the expansion of state authority, some governments began to regulate child labor, banning employment of those under ten in British mines, under nine in British textile mills and in Prussian factories, and under eight in French factories. Britain and France included additional requirements that the very young be provided with a couple of hours of schooling each day, and Britain dispatched teams of factory inspectors to enforce the new regulations. In other parts of Germany, and in Italy and Russia, similar measures were adopted, which limited the workday to eight or nine hours for children under twelve or thirteen years old and to twelve hours for those under sixteen or eighteen.

A key example of expanding government intervention—and the most bitterly controversial welfare measure of the period—was Britain's Poor Law of 1834. The old parish system of paternalistic relief permitted each county to supplement local wages up to a level of subsistence determined by the price of bread. Liberal economists contended that the system was costly and ineffective because easy handouts discouraged workers from seeking jobs. Their campaign for reform led to the Poor Law of 1834, which sought to make unemployment as unattractive as possible. The able-bodied poor requiring aid had to live in workhouses, where discipline was harsh, conditions were kept suitably mean, and the sexes were separated. Workers detested the new Poor Law, dubbing the new workhouses "Bastilles."

J. Leonard
The Doctor for the Poor
Hopelessness dominates J. Leonard's painting of the poor coming to the charitable doctor in an endless stream.
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valenciennes/Giraudon/Bridgeman Art Library

Public Health Governments gradually took on a more active role in promoting public health as well, but they were often uncertain of the causes of diseases and hesitated over how to respond. Vaccination, invented by Edward Jenner, made smallpox less threatening once it was widely adopted. But serious epidemics of other kinds still broke out in every decade. Typhus, carried by lice, was a constant threat, accounting for one death in nine in Ireland between 1816 and 1819, and infected water spread typhoid fever in city after city. In the 1830s, a deadly cholera epidemic originating in India spread rapidly through East Asia, North Africa, and Europe, killing hundreds of thousands. In France, Germany, and Britain, officials knew little about the disease, but sought to mitigate the epidemic by ordering tenements to be whitewashed by the tens of thousands, foods to be inspected, and streets and sewers to be cleaned.

Over time, however, the collection of statistics and the systematic investigation of living conditions in poor neighborhoods led to better understanding of how disease spread and of the importance of social factors for public health. Gradually, hospitals, too, came under more direct state supervision as the cost and complexity of medical treatment increased. By midcentury, housing and sanitary codes regulated most urban construction throughout the West, and inspectors were empowered to enforce these rules.

Education Public education also became a matter of national policy over the course of the century. Prussia had declared local schooling compulsory in 1716, and in 1807 created a bureau of education to promote it. In the following decades the government established an efficient system of universal primary instruction, staffed by trained teachers expected to keep the curriculum politically safe, and enlarged a separate network of secondary schools. Similar arrangements in most of the German states established nearly universal elementary education.

In France the Revolution had provided the framework for a national system of free public schools meant as a substitute for the extensive but more informal and largely religious schools of the old regime. On paper, by 1833 every commune was supposed to support a public school,

and schooling steadily expanded while the quality of teachers improved and the power of state inspectors over tightfisted local authorities increased. By the Revolution of 1848, three-fourths of France's school-age children were receiving some formal instruction. Although conflict between the Church of England and other Protestant churches prevented the creation of a state-controlled system of elementary schools in Britain, by 1833 Parliament voted to underwrite the construction of private schools and to increase subsidies for education. From Spain to Russia, governments and liberal constituencies supported the establishment of public elementary schools; inadequate and impoverished though they were, few doubted that they could be a major instrument for improving society as well as a force for social peace.

Reconsidering Self and Society in the Early Nineteenth Century

Political ideas, social theories, and new movements in the arts were all closely interconnected in the early nineteenth century. They altered the way people painted pictures, wrote poetry, collected statistics, analyzed society, studied biology, and understood history. Several elements served to connect this creative diversity and increase its impact. The writers, artists, scientists, and scholars whose works were most influential increasingly saw themselves as having a special place in society because of their talents and knowledge. Primarily male and largely from the middle class, they depended less on patronage than on their connections to established institutions such as academies, universities, publishing houses, magazines, and newspapers. Through exhibitions, public lectures, and publications, they sought to reach others like themselves and then a broader audience. Their need to explain modern society, like their effort to comprehend the French Revolution, produced competing interpretations that were, in fact, debates about the nature of society and the sources of historical change.

Romanticism and the Primacy of the Individual

Romanticism, a movement in philosophy and the arts, cannot be captured in any simple definition. Associated with a great burst of creativity in Germany in the latter part of the eighteenth century and with the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (see chapter 19), the Romantic movement, initially strongest in Germany and England, rapidly spread across the Continent and to North America. Romanticism affected every aspect of culture and in such a variety of ways that it is best understood as a set of attitudes and aesthetic preferences rather than as a defined doctrine. Although by midcentury other styles and concerns challenged Romanticism, its influence continued into the twentieth century. Certain themes were characteristic: an emphasis on the individual's feelings, emotions, and direct experience more than on universal principles; a preoccupation with erotic love, often unrequited, and mortality; fascination with nature understood as an unconquerable power; a search for the organic relatedness of all life that went beyond the cold analysis of cause and effect; a concern for spirituality, deep and mysterious, that tended to dismiss the hollowness of Enlightenment materialism; and an admiration for imagination and originality that hailed the individual genius who was capable of feelings more profound than those of ordinary mortals. Romantic artists and writers favored flamboyant dress that distinguished them from aristocrats or bourgeois, and presented themselves as pensive and passionate.

Romantic Philosophy and Literature Romantic modes of thought flourished in conjunction with religious revivals, an increased interest in history, and rising nationalism (discussed in the next chapter). Romantic philosophers wrote about aesthetics and the philosophy of nature; writers expressed themselves in poetry, aphorisms, meditations on death, and autobiographical accounts of youthful yearnings for truth. The German scholar and poet August Wilhelm Schlegel and the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge (heavily influenced by German philosophy) were among the most influential Romantic thinkers. Coleridge and his closest friend William Wordsworth (see chapter 19) campaigned for a new kind of poetry, direct and emotive. Wordsworth's poems contrasted the beauty of nature with urban corruption and, like the poet William Blake before him, he denounced the materialism of his age. (See "Wordsworth on the Role of the Poet.") Blake, whose drawings and poems were filled with religious mystery, also believed that poets had a special wisdom that society should heed.

In France, where Romanticism developed somewhat later, Madame Anne-Louise de Staël's essays on the German thinkers stimulated a whole generation of philosophers, historians, and novelists. These ranged from the young Victor Hugo, whose plays and novels (*The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Les Misérables* are the best known) made him a towering figure of French letters, to the swashbuckling stories of Alexander Dumas' *Three Musketeers*. Novelists and dramatists in Italy and Russia, as well as in England, France, and Germany, often set their tales in the distant past and tended to favor flamboyant description and gothic settings.

Wordsworth on the Role of the Poet

Wordsworth was one of England's most popular poets, and the success of his Lyrical Ballads *may have encouraged him to write a preface to the second edition, explaining what he was up to. He points out that his poems differ from classical poetry with its greater formality and lofty themes, and he justifies his use of ordinary speech. In making his case, he touches on many of the themes characteristic of the Romantic movement.*

"The principle object of these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things could be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect. . . . Humble and rustic life was generally chosen because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings . . . ; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. . . .

" . . . For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. . . .

"The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude; the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, 'that he looks before and after.' He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love . . . ; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time."

From William Wordsworth, "Preface to the Second Edition of *Lyrical Ballads*," in *William Wordsworth: Selected Poems and Prefaces,* Jack Stillinger (ed.), Houghton-Mifflin, 1965.

Turning from the Enlightenment veneration for the Renaissance, they preferred the rougher, sprawling picture of human experience in writers like Shakespeare and Cervantes and felt a particular kinship with the spirituality of medieval art and architecture.

The Wider Influence of Romanticism Like romantic literature, romantic art burst beyond classical forms. Romantic painters favored scenes of storms and ruins that evoked unseen powers, as in the landscapes of J. M. W. Turner in England and Caspar David Friedrich in Germany. Others, such as Théodore Géricault in France, emphasized vibrant color and swirling lines without the sharp outlines and balanced composition so important to their predecessors. Like Eugène Delacroix (see his paintings on p. 668), they were drawn to exotic scenes from the past and from North Africa and the Middle East.

Romantic attitudes attained powerful expression in music, admired for its ability to communicate an ineffable understanding deeper than words. The response to the later works of Beethoven had brought a self-conscious seriousness to music. Critics wrote of his symphonies and string quartets in terms of their philosophic profundity, and audiences listened in reverent silence, finding in that shared experience something akin to religion. Subsequent Romantic composers appealed ever more directly to the heart, emphasizing soaring melody and using freer harmonies. When words and music were combined, as in the song cycles of Franz Schubert, or in grand opera (often hailed as the highest of the arts), it was the music that mattered most.

Both conservatives and radicals drew inspiration from the Romantic movement. Conservatives found in Romantic values powerful arguments for rejecting the French Revolution, which they regarded as a lamentable product of Enlightenment rationalism and of a universalism that ignored local tradition. Stability, they argued, was possible only in a society organically connected, held together as it had been in the Middle Ages by respect for custom and religion. Some conservatives contrasted their vision of an organic society with the competition and selfish individualism of modern capitalism.

Joseph Mallord William Turner
***Interior of Tintern Abbey*, Exhibited 1794**
The evocation of nature and time, favorite Romantic themes, made the ruins of Tintern Abbey the subject of a poem by Wordsworth and of this watercolor by Turner. Watercolor. Victoria and Albert Museum, London/Art Resource, NY

Radicals, however, used Romantic themes to argue that freedom required shattering old institutional shackles, much as creativity in the arts fostered the breaking of established forms. Romantic thinkers tended to see folk culture and local language as natural expressions of the nation. For conservatives, this validated rural life and custom; for radicals, the promise of this culture would be realized when the people arose to achieve new freedoms for their nation. Victor Hugo, for example, turned from an early conservatism to become a lifelong advocate of radical change. In its aspirations and tumultuousness, Romanticism expressed the preoccupation with change that marked the age.

Social Thought

Conservatives and Reactionaries Conservatism grew from opposition to the French Revolution to become what today would be called an ideology—a coherent view of human nature, social organization, and political power that generally justified the status quo. This conservatism was not mere nostalgia for the past. Rather, conservatives advocated changes when designed to strengthen the kind of society they favored. Emphasizing the wisdom of established customs, the value of hierarchy, and the social importance of religion, conservatives mounted a powerful critique not just of radical programs but of modern society itself as perilously inclined toward antisocial individualism, materialism, and immorality.

From the late eighteenth century on, the powerful English prose of Edmund Burke (see discussion on p. 579) provided one of the most influential formulations of the conservative position. Burke posited that social stability derived from continuity over time. By granting special privileges to certain groups, society fulfilled social needs in a way that sustains order, achieving a delicate arrangement in which rank is related to social function and in which differences of status are acceptable to all. According to Burke, this organic, historically rooted society allowed for gradual change. In his view, the abstract plans of radicals for revolutionary transformation were not only unnecessary but unattainable in the sense that no man-made social schemes or written constitutions could ever reconstitute the great interconnecting web of society.

Espousing a more hard-line conservatism than Burke, the French conservatives Joseph de Maistre and Louis de Bonald identified the Church as the linchpin of the social order. Society's first task, they maintained, was self-preservation through the exercise of an authority based on undivided sovereignty, inflexible social hierarchy, the vigilant suppression of dangerous ideas, and close links between church and state. For de Maistre, revolution was divine retribution for false ideas. Terrified of weakening the dikes that held back revolution, this brand of conservatism left little room for compromise and appealed mainly to those who shared its fears. Nevertheless, as a way of understanding change, mobilizing opposition to liberal demands, and criticizing modern life, conservatism would be a profoundly influential strand in modern thought.

Liberalism Like conservatism, liberalism was less a doctrine than a set of attitudes. Whereas conservatives emphasized tradition and hierarchy, liberals espoused ideas of social progress, economic development, and values associated with the middle classes. Confident that their ideas would triumph, they generally welcomed social change.

Influenced by John Locke and the eighteenth-century philosophes, liberals sought to guarantee legal and political freedoms. Consequently, they generally favored a written constitution and representative institutions, freedom of the press and of assembly, an extension of the jury system, separation of church and state, public education, and administrative reform. Most liberals did

not favor democracy—political wisdom, they thought, required the advantages of education and leisure and the restraint that came with owning property—but nearly all believed that giving ideas a free hearing and propertied voters a free voice would result in policies beneficial to everyone.

Liberals sought a society that promoted individual freedom and afforded opportunities for individual growth. They believed that the principles of individualism and competition were universally valid and would lead to morality, prosperity, and progress for all. Yet to their perpetual surprise, liberalism proved a creed of limited appeal, subject to frequent attack and internal division. In practice, reconciling liberty with order, or equal rights with private property, proved contentious. Enthusiasm for limited constitutional reform, for example, produced disagreements over just how limited it should be. In each country, moreover, the temper of liberalism differed, shaped by a national history liberals never wholly determined.

Although many liberals advocated a minimalist state to guarantee the freedom of the individual, in some cases the liberal call for reform entailed greater emphasis on the role of the state, as in the **utilitarianism** of the Englishman Jeremy Bentham. Like the philosophes, Bentham believed he could rationally deduce practical programs from universal principles. In contrast to most philosophes, however, he rejected the doctrine of natural rights as a meaningless abstraction. In his system, utility replaced natural rights as the basis of public policy, and he measured utility according to what brought the greatest good to the greatest number. Bentham defined the good as that which avoids pain and gives pleasure—a calculation all people make for themselves anyway and that better education would enable them to make more wisely. It was the state's task to promote the good by penalizing undesirable actions and rewarding socially beneficial behavior.

Bentham's followers, sober intellectuals who called themselves *philosophic radicals*, did not necessarily adopt all his doctrines, but they applied his principles in many spheres. By his death in 1832, they were among the most important British reformers of Parliament, law, prisons, education, and welfare. A special group within a larger liberal movement, the Benthamites shared the tendency of most liberals everywhere to press for humane reforms on grounds of common sense and social harmony.

John Stuart Mill Liberalism's broader meaning is best exemplified by John Stuart Mill, the most important liberal thinker of the nineteenth century. Mill's father was a leading Benthamite, but the younger Mill gradually came to modify the doctrines taught to him in his youth. Mill was extraordinarily learned—a philosopher, economist, and publicist—and he wrote some of the most influential classics of modern thought. Fearful of the intolerance and oppression of which any social class or political majority was capable, he made freedom of thought a first principle. He advocated universal suffrage as a necessary check on the elite and proportional representation as a means of protecting minorities. Mill acknowledged that institutions, even liberal ones, suited to one stage of historical development might not be appropriate for another.

To counterbalance the influence of the established elites, Mill favored a more open administration, organized interest groups, and workers' cooperatives. Moved by the problems of the industrial poor, he distinguished between the production of goods (which operated best without the interference of the state) and their distribution (in which the state might intervene in behalf of justice), and he came to see that collective action by the workers could enhance freedom rather than restrict it. In later years, under the influence of his wife, Harriet Taylor, Mill courageously advocated the emancipation of women, a cause that seemed radical to most contemporaries. (See "Mill Opposes the Subjection of Women.") His liberalism, thus modified and extended, remained steadfast. His essay *On Liberty* (1859) stands as one of the classic works of European political theory, an insistent declaration that society can have no higher interest than the freedom of each of its members.

Economic Liberalism Although liberal politics and liberal economic theory were closely related, they were nevertheless separable, and the advocates of one were not always committed to the other. Still, in the case of English liberalism, belief in an unfettered market tended to converge with support for political liberty. Economic liberalism had its roots in the classical economic thought of Adam Smith (see chapter 18). Smith had argued that government-authorized monopolies, high tariffs, and other forms of state restrictions on trade hampered the individual economic pursuits that created wealth. It became a dogma of economic liberalism that if left to themselves, market forces would increase productivity and prosperity.

In his *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (1817), the Englishman David Ricardo systematically codified liberal economic theory. The wealth of the community, Ricardo declared, comes from land, capital, and labor. These three "classes" are compensated respectively by rent, profit, and wages. A product's value results primarily from the labor required to make it. This was *the labor theory of value*, which socialists would later invoke for very different

Mill Opposes the Subjection of Women

John Stuart Mill published his essay The Subjection of Women *in 1869. His arguments were based on familiar ideas about individualism and modern progress, but their extension to women's rights and in such absolute terms went much further than most contemporary discussion.*

"The object of this Essay is to explain, as clearly as I am able, the grounds of an opinion which . . . has been constantly growing stronger by the progress of reflection and the experience of life: That the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other.

" . . . The masters of all other slaves rely, for maintaining obedience, on fear; either fear of themselves, or religious fears. The masters of women wanted more than simple obedience, and they turned the whole force of education to effect their purpose. All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others. All the moralities tell them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that it is their nature, to live for others; to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections.

" . . . So far as the whole course of human improvement up to this time, the whole stream of modern tendencies, warrants any inference on the subject, it is, that this relic of the past is discordant with the future, and must necessarily disappear.

"For what is the peculiar character of the modern world—the difference which chiefly distinguishes modern institutions, modern social ideas, modern life itself, from those of times long past? It is, that human beings are no longer born to their place in life, and chained down by an inexorable bond to the place they are born to, but are free to employ their faculties, and such favourable chances as offer, to achieve the lot which may appear to them most desirable.

"If this general principle of social and economical sciences is . . . true, we ought to act as if we believed it, and not to ordain that to be born a girl instead of a boy, any more than to be born black instead of white, or a commoner instead of a nobleman, shall decide the person's position through all life. . . .

"At present, in the more improved countries, the disabilities of women are the only case, save one, in which laws and institutions take persons at their birth, and ordain that they shall never in all their lives be allowed to compete for certain things. The one exception is that of royalty.

" . . . The social subordination of women thus stands out an isolated fact in modern social institutions; a solitary breach of what has become their fundamental law; a single relic of an old world of thought and practice exploded in everything else, but retained in the one thing of most universal interest."

From John Stuart Mill, "The Subjection of Women," *Three Essays,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

purposes. For Ricardo, as for Adam Smith before him, the theory led to an emphasis on labor-saving efficiencies as the route to profit. The value of land or of work was determined by the operation of impersonal economic laws. The rate of pay to workers, for example, is determined by an "iron law of wages," which dictates that when labor is plentiful workers tend to be paid at the lowest possible level. Short-term fluctuations in prices are the natural regulator within this system, pushing people to activities for which demand is high. For Ricardo, both land and labor are commodities, their value quite unaffected by any sentimental talk about the virtues of rural life or artisanship. Society is a collection of competing interests, and legislation cannot hope to raise wages or prevent the marketplace from working in its natural way.

While his opponents referred to it as "the dismal science," Ricardo called his subject *political economy*, and a powerful reform movement developed around it. Landed interests, liberals argued, had misused political power for their own benefit while harming the rest of society. Throughout Europe, liberal economic theory thus added important weight to demands that special privilege be eliminated (as the French Revolution had done), that governments be responsive to their citizens (who best know their own interests), and above all that the state not try to regulate production and trade.

Critics of Capitalism: The Early Socialists

Socialist thought offered a radical alternative to conservative and liberal ideologies and the most thoroughgoing critique of industrial capitalism. Among scores of socialist schemes, those of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen gained particular attention among intellectuals and political leaders. All three men argued that capitalist competition is wasteful and cruel, induces hard-hearted indifference to suffering, misuses wealth, and leads to frequent economic crises. Organizing production and distribution on a different basis, they believed, would create a harmonious, orderly, and truly free society.

Saint-Simon As a young French officer, Comte Claude de Saint-Simon fought alongside George Washington at Yorktown. During the French Revolution, he abandoned his title, made and lost a fortune speculating in land, and then devoted himself to social philosophy and reform. Injustice, social divisions, and inefficiency could be overcome, he believed, in a society governed by experts. Scientists, businessmen, and managers would lead humanity to self-fulfillment through the design of plans to increase productivity and prosperity. In this way, the integrated, organic quality of Greek city-states and of the Middle Ages could be recaptured in the industrial age.

Saint-Simon's theories won a following especially among young engineers at France's Ecole Polytechnique. In their penchant for planning, in their grand economic projects, and in their schemes for social reform, they carried elements of his teaching into the business world and the realm of respectable politics. Important Saint-Simonian movements took shape in several countries, and later socialists would long sustain his respect for industrialization and the power of social planning.

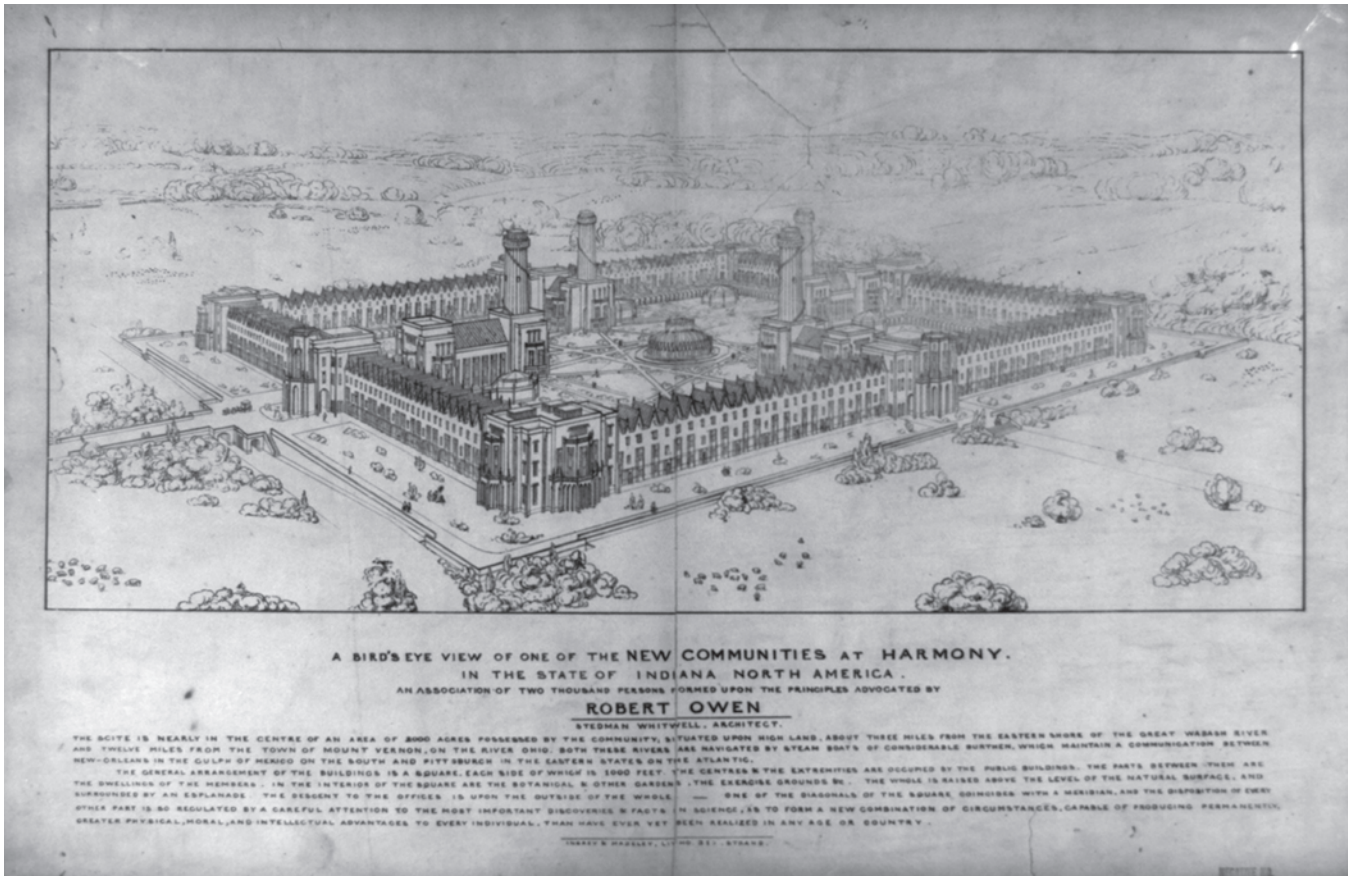
Fourier Charles Fourier had been a traveling salesman before dedicating himself to a theory that he firmly believed would rank among the greatest discoveries ever made. His cantankerous yet shrewd writings on contemporary society were so copious that his manuscripts have still not all been printed, despite the devotion of generations of admirers.

Fourier's central concept was an ideal community, the *phalanstery* (from *phalanx*). A phalanstery should contain some sixteen hundred men, women, and children, representatives of all the types of personality identified in Fourier's elaborate psychology. He proposed to organize the phalanstery in such a way that individuals would accomplish the tasks society required simply by doing what they wanted. Each member would perform a variety of tasks, engaging in no one task for too long, so that pleasure and work would flow together. Largely self-sufficient, a phalanstery would produce some goods for export and pay its members according to the capital, labor, and talent that each contributed. After even one such community was created, the happiness and well-being of its members would inspire the establishment of others until all of society was converted. Although no phalanstery was ever established exactly as Fourier planned, communities founded on Fourierist principles appeared from the United States to Romania. Few of them survived for long, but the vision endured of a society in which cooperation replaced compulsion, and joy transformed drudgery.

Robert Owen Robert Owen was one of the success stories of industrial capitalism: A self-made man, he rose from selling cloth to be the manager and part owner of a large textile mill in New Lanark, Scotland. Owen ran the mill in a way that transformed the whole town, and by the end of the Napoleonic wars, distinguished visitors were traveling from all over Europe to see the miracle he had wrought in New Lanark. He shortened the workday to ten hours. New housing allowed an employee's family several rooms, inspection committees maintained cleanliness, and gardens were planted and sewers installed. In nursery schools with airy, pleasant rooms, children were given exercise, encouraged to sing and dance, taught without corporal punishment, and trained in the useful arts. Most promising of all, the subjects of this paternalistic realm developed a pride in their community. Productivity in the factory rose, and profits increased.

Owen's success in New Lanark encouraged him to establish ideal communities elsewhere, particularly in the United States. Situated rurally, they were to supply most of their own needs. Members would eat meals and enjoy entertainment together, and children would be raised communally. Standardized production would offer goods at lower prices, while higher wages would increase consumption of manufactured products. "It is scarcely to be supposed," he declared in a speech before the U.S. Congress in 1825, "that anyone would continue to live under the miserable, anxious, individual system of [competition], when they could with ease form themselves into, or become members of, one of these associations of union, intelligence, and kind feeling." Even after losing most of his wealth when the community of New Harmony, Indiana, failed, Owen remained the most important figure in the labor movement and in the workers' cooperatives that he helped spread across England in the 1830s and 1840s.

The Socialist Critique Although much in these socialist movements was easily ridiculed, the values they



After his ventures in Scotland, Robert Owen funded the establishment of a new, cooperative settlement in the United States. But what actually took shape in New Harmony fell far short of his grandiose vision for this utopian community in Indiana, as conveyed in this model sketch.

stressed echoed those of workers' movements everywhere. These early socialists sought to combine an older sense of community with the possibilities of a society enriched by new inventions and new means of production in which new forms of social organization would foster cooperation and pleasure. Their indictment of capitalism, their insights into the nature of productivity and exchange, and their attention to social planning and education had an impact far beyond their relatively small circles of believers. The dream of fraternity and of fulfilling work echoed through later socialist and anarchist movements, yet nearly everyone ultimately rejected their ideas as impractical and too radical.

The nature of their radicalism, however, deserves a closer look. What most shocked contemporaries were their views on the status of women, sexual mores, and Christianity. Fourier rejected the place assigned to women in bourgeois society, and Owen not only specified that women should share in governing but believed that their emancipation required lessening their family responsibilities. All wrote of sensual pleasure as good and of its repression as a characteristic European error. The Saint-Simonians publicly advocated free love, and Fourier stipulated that neither young nor old should be deprived of the pleasures of the flesh. Owen was only slightly less outspoken in his contempt for traditional marriage. At the same time, all three stressed spirituality as a source of community feeling, brotherhood, and ethics. As Owen put it, "charity, benevolence and kindness: this is the *universal religion* of human nature." Their systems, therefore, included echoes of Christian ritual and a foggy mysticism that provided an easy target for their opponents. By the end of the nineteenth century, these thinkers would be remembered (and generally dismissed) as "utopian socialists." For by then, socialist thought would center on the more hard-headed and materialistic theories of Karl Marx.

Summary

The reorganization of Europe in 1815 had focused on politics as the key to social order. The system of international relations the victors established proved reasonably effective, but the conservative domestic arrangements they favored were challenged from the start. In trying various combinations of repression and compromise, the restoration regimes acknowledged that they had not achieved the stability hoped for. At the same time, accelerating industrial growth made new demands of government and placed new strains on society. Change, not stability, would be the central reality of the new century. While Europe's leaders chose different means for containing change, millions dealt with it in daily struggles over wages and housing, food and family. Preoccupation with change dominated ideological debate as well, over how to prevent revolutions or achieve them, and of the kind of future that industrialization might bring. In the arts and philosophy, Romanticism pointed nostalgically to the past but also toward the new, hailing individual genius yet yearning for community. Conservatives sustained standards critical of the new age; liberals gained strength from their confidence in the future; and socialists envisioned alternatives to economic competition and capitalist industrialization. In fact, all available ideas, institutions, and policies were challenged by the social changes that accompanied industrialization, factory labor, demographic growth, and urbanization. Living with change had become a definition of modernity. As chapter 23 will show, the explosive mixture in these intellectual, social, and political trends came together in the revolutions that swept across Europe in 1848 and in the increased importance of national states that could demand the supreme loyalty of their citizens.

Questions for Further Thought

1. What kinds of people were most likely to be drawn to liberalism or to reject its appeal? Does that change over time?
2. Urbanization and the rise of the factory system were hallmarks of change in the nineteenth century. What did workers gain and what did they lose when caught up in those trends?
3. Why did John Stuart Mill value individual freedom so highly? How should the limits of individual freedom be established?
4. Middle-class domesticity was based on separate spheres for men and women. To what extent were women constrained or empowered by their ascribed domestic roles?

Recommended Reading

Sources

The published memoirs and correspondence of diplomats are a wonderful source. *The Memoirs of Prince Metternich* (5 vols., published in the United States in the 1890s), *The Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh* (12 vols.), and the *Memoirs of the Prince of Talleyrand* (5 vols.) give a lively picture of the Congress of Vienna.

Novels are important sources for insight into nineteenth-century society. Elizabeth Gaskell (*Mary Barton* and *North and South*) and Charles Dickens (*Hard Times* and *Oliver Twist*) provided contemporaries with influential pictures of social conditions in England; Honoré de Balzac's *Père Goriot* set the tone for criticisms of the selfishness of the middle classes.

Engels, Friedrich. *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Written in 1844 and available in many modern editions, this influential work by Karl Marx's friend and coauthor paints a dark picture of the working-class slums of Manchester and conveys the moral outrage radicals felt.

Studies

Bellamy, Richard. *Liberalism and Modern Society: A Historical Argument*. 1992. Treats the changes over time and the national differences in the meanings of liberalism.

Briggs, Asa. *Victorian Cities*. 1970. Colorful studies of the urban politics and social life of individual cities.

Carr, Raymond. *Spain, 1808–1975.* 1982. The most balanced and comprehensive account in any language.

Clark, Geoffrey. *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World*. 2007. A global economic history, seeking to explain why the industrial revolution occurred in Europe rather than in Asia.

Coffin, Judith G. *The Politics of Women's Work: The Paris Garment Trades, 1750–1915*. 1996. Reveals the long evolution of women in the labor movement and of ideas about gender in this key area of women's work.

Davidoff, Leonore, and Catherine Hall. *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850*. 1985. A rich and concrete picture of the aspirations and concerns of middle-class life.

Davies, Norman. *God's Playground: A History of Poland.* Vol. 2: *From 1789 to the Present*. 1981. Effectively studies the development of a nation without a national government.

Dennis, Richard. *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century*. 1984. A comprehensive study of the special problems of this new kind of city.

Foster, R. F. *Modern Ireland 1600–1972*. 1988. A magisterial, well-written synthesis.

Frader, Laura L., and Sonya O. Rose. *Gender and Class in Modern Europe*. 1996. Essays exploring the relationship between social change and conceptions of gender and class.

Franklin, S. H. *The European Peasantry: The Final Phase*. 1969. These essays on different countries reveal not only the striking differences in peasants' lives but the importance of the peasantry for understanding the general history of European nations.

Gash, Norman. *Aristocracy and People: Britain, 1815–1865*. 1979. An incisive and balanced account of how British politics adapted to social and economic change.

Gideon, Sigfried. *Mechanization Takes Command*. 1948. This provocative analysis of the social and aesthetic implications of the machine age has become a classic.

Goldstein, Jan. *The Post-Revolutionary Self: Politics and Psyche in France 1750–1850.* 2005. On the philosophical sources of bourgeois selfhood in the early nineteenth century.

Hamerow, Theodore S. *The Birth of a New Europe: State and Society in the Nineteenth Century*. 1983. On the major social changes of the nineteenth century, noting their connection to industrialization and the role of the state.

Heilbroner, Robert L. *The Worldly Philosophers*. 1972. A good introduction to the ideas of the economic liberals.

Hilton, Boyd. *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People? England, 1783–1846*. 2008. A rich interpretive synthesis of English political and social history.

Hobsbawm, E. J. *Industry and Empire*. 1969. A lively account of British economic transformation by an influential Marxist historian.

Hopkins, Eric. *Industrialisation and Society: A Social History, 1830–1951*. 2000. A wide-ranging discussion of the impact of industrialization on British society through the nineteenth century.

Katznelson, Ira, and Artistide R. Zolberg (eds.). *Working-Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*. 1986. Interpretative essays by some leading scholars take a fresh look at how working-class awareness was formed.

Kemp, Tom. *Industrialization in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. 2nd ed. 1985. Comparative analysis of differences and similarities in the process of industrialization as it spread across Europe.

Koditschek, Theodore. *Class Formation and Urban-Industrial Society: Bradford, 1750–1850*. 1990. Analyzes the emergence of the industrial middle classes against the backdrop of Bradford's transformation from village to factory town to industrial city.

Kossman, Ernst H. *The Low Countries, 1780–1940*. 1978. Balanced treatment of a region that was an important participant in all the trends of modern European history.

Lichtheim, George. *A Short History of Socialism*. 1975. Well-constructed treatment of the evolution of socialist ideas in their historical context.

Lindemann, Albert S. *A History of European Socialism*. 1984. Establishes the line of continuity from the early socialists through labor movements and the eventual dominance of Marxism.

Macartney, C. A. *The Habsburg Empire, 1790–1918*. 1968. Detailed and authoritative.

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