

# The Emergence of Industrial Society in the West, 1750–1914

## The Age of Revolution

- Eighteenth-century faith in progress was reflected in Condorcet's *Progress of the Human Mind*, written in 1793 while the author was in hiding. The **age of revolution** was inspired by that spirit, but also shook its optimism.
- Three influences came to overturn Europe by the mid-19th century. Intellectual excitement was pervasive. The ideas of such philosophers as Jean-Jacques Rousseau were widely read. Secondly, more and more Europeans were part of the commercial economy. Commercial wealth challenged traditional notions of the right to rule. Thirdly, the **population revolution** resulting from better nutrition, and limited control of diseases, led to population pressure. **Proto-industrialization** was spurred by the wealth of labor resulting from the population revolution.
- When the British Atlantic colonies rebelled it was not truly a revolution, but a war of independence. The so-called **American Revolution** established a new government in 1776, and achieved its aims in 1789.
- The **French Revolution** soon followed, beginning a profound political restructuring. Ideology called for reforms, and social change added a dimension to the struggles. However, the French government was too slow to adapt. When **Louis XVI** finally called a parliament in the summer of 1789, reform was forced upon him. The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* proclaimed the ideology of the reformers. The taking of the Bastille, a symbol of royal power, on July 14th began widespread uprisings.
- Calls for reform in 1789 turned to radicalism in 1792. The monarchy was abolished and the king beheaded by **guillotine**. Maximilien Robespierre led the radical revolution. Leading the "Terror", he also suppressed French Catholicism, but was finally guillotined himself. Universal male suffrage, abolition of colonial slavery, and universal conscription were among his policies. **Nationalism** added to calls for reform to crystallized adherence to the movement. The arrival on the scene of **Napoleon Bonaparte** in 1799 transformed the revolution. Monopolizing power, he nevertheless continued many of the liberal reforms. Legal reforms were promulgated under the Code Napoleon. Ambitious wars led to the undoing of Napoleon in 1815. Yet, the revolutionary legacy was great.
- Following the defeat of Napoleon, the **Congress of Vienna** met in 1815 to settle the peace. The principle of the balance of power was followed, and was successful for decades. The ascendancy of **conservative** goals was signaled by the

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restoration of monarchies. Much of the Enlightenment ideology was pursued by **Liberals**, who formed in opposition to the Conservatives. **Radicals** wished to push reforms further. Nationalists allied sometimes with Radicals, sometimes with Liberals. The **Greek Revolution** in 1820 was one of many uprisings inspired by the French Revolution and the ideas of nationalism. The British **Reform Bill of 1832** achieved many of the reformers' goals without revolution.

- Industrialization, added to the social upheavals, creating a working class with its own agenda. The **Chartist movement** in Britain hoped to extend suffrage, enact educational reforms, and improve working conditions. However, in the 1848–1849 revolutions, unrest peaked. Beginning with France, uprisings followed in Austria, Germany, Hungary, and Italy. These short-lived revolutions did not bear immediate fruit. In France itself, Napoleon III imposed authoritarian rule. The age of revolutions was over. Many of the goals of revolutionaries had been met, but governments had also learned how to control challenges.

### The Consolidation of the Industrial Order, 1850–1914

- The second half of the 19th century was marked by growth and a growing infrastructure linking European countries. Urban life was improved by better sanitation and attention to the needs of the poor and sick. Crime rates stabilized or fell.
- Industrialization changed every aspect of life. Material well-being rose. Mortality rates among infants fell, and more effective methods limited childhood diseases. The work of **Louis Pasteur** accounted in a large part for massive improvement in health. At the same time, corporations transformed business, drawing on capital. Their work forces became a major political and economic power, while the political power of peasants declined.
- Politically, the agenda changed radically after the 1848 revolutions. The Argument over absolutism and constitutions was resolved, and gave way to debates over workers' rights and voting. **Benjamin Disraeli**, the British conservative prime minister, expanded the vote for men. **Count Camillo di Cavour** also responded to liberal demands. In Prussia, **Otto von Bismarck** extended the vote to all men, emancipated the Jews, and pushed mass education. These new conservatives also called upon nationalism to consolidate their power. National platforms often took the form of imperialism, as in the case of British and U.S. expansion. In Italy and Germany they were formative. Under Cavour's leadership, Italy was unified in spite of papal opposition. Bismarck similarly used nationalism to unite Prussia. He maneuvered the country into war with Denmark and Austria, culminating in German unity in 1871. The **American Civil War**, from 1861–1865, reaffirmed the Union and ended slavery. France returned to its republican system. Across Europe, parliamentary systems allowed continuity in spite of changes in leadership, a process the Italians called **transformismo**.
- Governments increased their domestic scope after 1870. Agencies regulating education, health, industry, and welfare became common. Germany was a leader, implementing social insurance for illness and old age. The **social question** came to dominate political debates, leading to the emergence of **socialism**. Earlier socialists had general aims, often taking shape in utopian communities. Inspired

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by the ideas of **Karl Marx**, new generations focused on his idea of the centrality of the class struggle, and the necessity of violent protest. Socialism became an important force by the last decades of the 19th century. **Revisionist** socialism called for achieving Marx's ends without violence. **Feminist movements** added their agendas, demanding a political voice. Such leaders as Emmeline Pankhurst used strikes and protests to gain suffrage.

### Cultural Transformations

- While the growing working class copied middle-class tastes, they also demanded entertaining leisure pursuits. On the supply side, meanwhile, producers had to stimulate demand to find a market for their goods. **Mass leisure culture**, informed and shaped in part by high-circulation newspapers, called for entertainment. Team sports developed along with nationalism to create new loyalties. In many ways mass culture replaced religion.
- Unlike the sciences in the Enlightenment, in the late 19th century, the sciences moved away from other intellectual pursuits, and professional scientists took the place of amateurs. In 1859, **Charles Darwin** published his influential work on the theory of evolution. His ideas conflicted not only with religious notions, but with the Enlightenment idea of an orderly natural world. Meanwhile, work in physics included discoveries in electromagnetism, particle physics, and astronomy. **Albert Einstein** came up with the idea of relativity, also a challenge to accepted ideas of the physical world. The late 1800s were a period of great development in the social sciences, including economics, sociology, and psychology. **Sigmund Freud** advanced his ideas on the human subconscious.
- In the arts, the prevalent movement in the early 1800s was **romanticism**. In reaction to the Enlightenment, romanticism emphasized individual emotional responses in the plastic arts, music, and literature. The end of the century saw a move to challenge every canon of representation, harmony, rhyme, and narrative.

### Western Settler Societies

- Industrialization spurred the search for raw materials and markets. At the same time, it gave the West a military advantage, in its use of guns and steamships. These factors drove the expansion of settler societies in the United States, Canada, Australia, and South Africa.
- The new United States came to be a world power in the 19th century. Massively enlarging its territory with the Louisiana Purchase and settling the lands beyond the Mississippi, it was able to extend its influence partly due to a huge influx of Europeans. The American Civil War, 1861–1865, violently resolved the economic and cultural split between the north and south. The war pushed industrialization and the development of infrastructure. A railway linking the east and west coasts was key to exploiting western lands. Outside the Western Hemisphere, the influence of the United States was small.
- The British dominions of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand had been relatively sparsely-populated by indigenous peoples. In each area, governments followed western models. Canada was divided by French and British settlers. From 1839, the British began the process of giving Canada autonomy, to avoid an inde-

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pendence movement. As in the United States, railways facilitated settlement. Australia was originally colonized as a penal colony, but by the middle of the century was an important wool producer. Gold strikes spurred settlement. Britain granted self-rule, and the Australian parliamentary government developed. New Zealand was different. Its Maori people were politically organized, and resisted successfully for decades. Nevertheless, European immigration began in 1840, and the Maoris were defeated by 1870. New Zealand, Canada, and Australia remained closely linked to Britain, but developed along their own lines. With the United States and South America, they received the bulk of European immigrants in the 19th century.

### Diplomatic Tensions and World War I

- German unification undermined the balance of power in Europe. At the same time, European leaders were looking for solutions through imperialism. Yet by 1900, there was little territory left to take.
- The alliance system replaced the balance of power. The **Triple Alliance**—Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy—and the **Triple Entente**—Britain, Russia, and France—set the powers of Europe against each other. Militarization, spurred by nationalism and industrialists, made the face-off volatile. Russia and Austria-Hungary were the least stable elements, susceptible to internal upheavals. As provinces of the Ottoman Empire sought independence, **Balkan nationalism** also threatened the peace. Serbia emerged and then sought to expand its territory.
- The causes of the First World War included militant nationalism. Industrialization was an indirect cause, as leaders used international undertakings to appease social unrest. Militarization, an economic plus, also led to conflict.

### Multiple-Choice Questions

1. The chief intellectual cause of the French and American revolutions was the  
(A) Enlightenment.  
(B) economic ideas of mercantilism.  
(C) Renaissance.  
(D) 1688 Glorious Revolution in England.  
(E) economic system of mercantilism.
2. All of these were forces for change in Western Europe during the period 1750–1914 EXCEPT:  
(A) the ideas of the Enlightenment.  
(B) the increasing wealth and success of the business classes.  
(C) religious innovation.  
(D) the population pressures caused by demographic shift.  
(E) industrialization and mechanization.
3. All of these led to the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 EXCEPT:  
(A) the inability of the French government to reform itself.  
(B) an invasion of France by Prussia and Austria.  
(C) a massive debt and need for tax reform.  
(D) a desire to limit the powers and rights of the king, nobles, and clergy.  
(E) bad harvests and rural (peasant) unrest.
4. The political ideology most favored by the victorious allied powers at the Congress of Vienna was:  
(A) nationalism.  
(B) radicalism.  
(C) liberalism.  
(D) conservatism.  
(E) revolution.

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5. The older European loyalty to established religions and God was often replaced after the French Revolution by
    - (A) devotion to the Pope.
    - (B) support of the king and national rulers.
    - (C) allegiance to local leaders.
    - (D) allegiance to strong military leaders.
    - (E) nationalism and loyalty to the nation-state.
  6. The European Industrial Revolution directly influenced
    - (A) the American Revolution.
    - (B) the French Revolution.
    - (C) the European revolutions of 1848–1849.
    - (D) the Greek nationalist revolution of 1820.
    - (E) the Napoleonic Revolution.
  7. All of these demands were advocated by the 1848 revolutionaries EXCEPT:
    - (A) social reform.
    - (B) an end to serfdom and manorialism.
    - (C) nationalist independence and/or unification.
    - (D) liberal constitutions with political rights and protections.
    - (E) an end to colonialism and overseas acquisitions.
  8. The new European power, which benefited from industrialization and nationalism, and which came to rival Great Britain in the 19th century, was
    - (A) the United States.
    - (B) Italy.
    - (C) Russia.
    - (D) France.
    - (E) the German Empire.
  9. The social questions, demands for reform, and the need for money to support the construction of railroads during the 19th century led to
    - (A) the expansion of and increasing intervention by governments in society.
    - (B) increasing radicalization of a majority of workers and peasants.
    - (C) numerous violent, socialist revolutions.
    - (D) the decrease in support for socialism, either Marxist or revisionist.
    - (E) the bankruptcy of many governments.
  10. All of these conditions led to the outbreak of World War I EXCEPT:
    - (A) rival systems of alliance.
    - (B) international courts of justice and organizations such as the Red Cross.
    - (C) increased militarization of societies.
    - (D) the rivalry for and expansion of colonial empires.
    - (E) national rivalries between Balkan states.

### *Free-Response Question*

*What was the relationship between the French Revolution and the revolutions of 1848–1849?*

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## ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

### *Multiple-Choice Questions*

- **1. (A) is correct.** The ideas of the Enlightenment, especially the innate right to freedom, were key in both revolutions. Critique of the clergy was an important part of the French revolution.
- **2. (C) is correct.** There was no significant religious reform in the period, but all of the other factors were important.
- **3. (B) is correct.** All of the answers except for B influenced the Revolution. The invasion by Prussia came later in the century.

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- **4. (D) is correct.** The Congress of Vienna represented a reaction to the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment, as rulers attempted to stabilize their positions and suppress revolt.
  - **5. (E) is correct.** While the spiritual role of religion was little changed, Europeans increasingly gave their allegiance to, and formed their culture around, nationalism.
  - **6. (C) is correct.** Unlike the other revolutions, the revolutions of 1848–1849 were inspired not by Enlightenment ideals but by unrest resulting from industrialization.
  - **7. (E) is correct.** The revolutions of 1848–1849 concentrated on domestic reforms.
  - **8. (E) is correct.** The German empire achieved unity through nationalism, and its support of industrialization increased the power gained through unification.
  - **9. (A) is correct.** Governments intervened both to satisfy the needs of the population, and often in opposition to worker demands.
  - **10. (B) is correct.** World War I broke out in spite of the emergence of such international organizations.

### ***Free-Response Essay Sample Response***

*What was the relationship between the French Revolution and the revolutions of 1848–1849?*

The revolutions of 1848 and 1849 were fought over a different set of issues than the French Revolution. The French Revolution broke out because of economic conditions in France, and the inflexibility of the government when faced by calls for reform along Enlightenment lines. By 1848, industrialization had transformed Europe, and raised new issues about workers rights and other changes in society. The two revolutionary periods had some broad issues in common, but their most direct link was that the French revolution had demonstrated the efficacy of violent revolution for bringing about change.