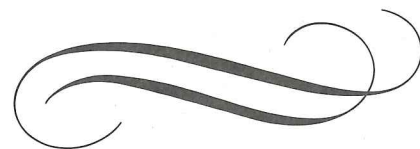




# A HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE

*From the Renaissance to the Present*



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because he thought that it *had* to happen, based on the scientific analysis of class struggle.

Marx believed that a revolution by workers would be prepared by the organizational efforts of a group of committed revolutionaries like himself. Gradually winning followers, Marx formed the Communist League. In 1848, he published the *Communist Manifesto*, which ends with the resounding, provocative, “Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains.”

## CONCLUSION

Europeans could not help but be impressed with the rapid pace of economic change during the first half of the nineteenth century. Trains truly revolutionized commerce and travel. The population of cities grew even more rapidly than did the population in general. Agricultural productivity increased in Northern Europe with capital-intensive farming. In some places, property-owning peasants gave up rural life, moving to the cities in search of industrial work. More people worked in industry than ever before. More than this, factories now dotted the landscape, although traditional workshop and cottage production, too, continued strong.

Yet, many upper-class contemporaries were worried by what seemed to be teeming, increasingly disorderly cities that were being overwhelmed by new inhabitants. The Industrial Revolution, to be sure, had generated material progress—indeed opulence for some people—but it also seemed to have increased wrenching poverty among laborers. The Revolution of 1830 in France, and liberal and national movements elsewhere in Europe (see Chapter 14), reflected not only middle-class aspirations, but the dissatisfaction of artisans in the face of large-scale manufacturing. Beginning in the 1830s, socialists called for radical political change as the only solution for redressing social inequities. Urban rebellions and full-scale political revolutions suggested that more upheavals and even social revolution might follow. To conservatives, such movements seemed unwanted and unsettling consequences of rapid change. Léon Faucher, French politician and keen observer of economic change, offered a prophetic warning in 1846. Claiming that the middle class now occupied the same position as the nobles had in the previous century, Faucher argued that the middle class could hold its place only by “raising little by little the lower classes.” He predicted that if his class failed to serve as “an instrument of progress . . . it will have to contend with another 1789.”

## CHAPTER 17

# THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1848



The year 1848 was the year of barricades in Europe, the “springtime of the peoples.” Few took note when an uprising occurred in January 1848 in Palermo, Sicily, against King Ferdinand II of Naples. But when a revolution drove Louis-Philippe from the throne of France in February, nationalists exiled in London, Brussels, Paris, and Zurich excitedly returned to their native lands, convinced that their time had come. Everything seemed possible.

The establishment of a republic in France, reminding people of the vulnerability of monarchical regimes to revolution, became the catalyst for revolutionary movements in Central Europe. In the face of clumsy attempts by governments to repress opposition by force, barricades and street insurgency forced the rulers of Prussia, Austria, and several other German and Italian states to accept more liberal constitutions when confronted by determined crowds. The existence of the Habsburg monarchy was threatened by insurrections against its rule. People in Lombardy and Venetia in northern Italy, and Czechs, Poles, and South Slavs put forth demands for autonomy. In Austria, liberals demanded political reforms, while some German speakers sought inclusion in a unified Germany. Magyar nobles forcefully asserted demands for Hungarian autonomy. Of the European powers, only Britain (the most economically and politically advanced) and Russia (the most backward) did not experience revolutions. But in Britain, the Chartist petition campaign for the extension of political rights revived in 1848 with news from the continent. In several countries, monarchs capitulated to liberal demands. In Sweden, the king appointed a new, more popular government. Danish nationalists pressured their king to grant a liberal constitution. The Dutch United Provinces received a new constitution in October 1848, and popular pressure forced the expansion of the Belgian electoral franchise.

A common process was present in the revolutions in France, the German states, and in the Habsburg lands: initial mobilizations of liberals, re-



publicans, and nationalists coalesced into movements against existing regimes (see Map 17.1). In each revolution, the hard times of the 1840s, marked by harvest and business failures, had increased popular dissatisfaction with conservative or moderate regimes. Essentially middle-class movements drew on the support of artisans and craftsmen, members of trade organizations who believed that political change would lead to social reforms that would benefit their trades. Following initial victory, ranging from the overthrow of the Orleanist regime in France to political concessions in Austria and Prussia, however, the ensuing struggle to implement change led to a split between moderates and radicals. Then followed the gradual but convincing victory of counter-revolution during the next years.

### REVOLUTIONARY MOBILIZATION

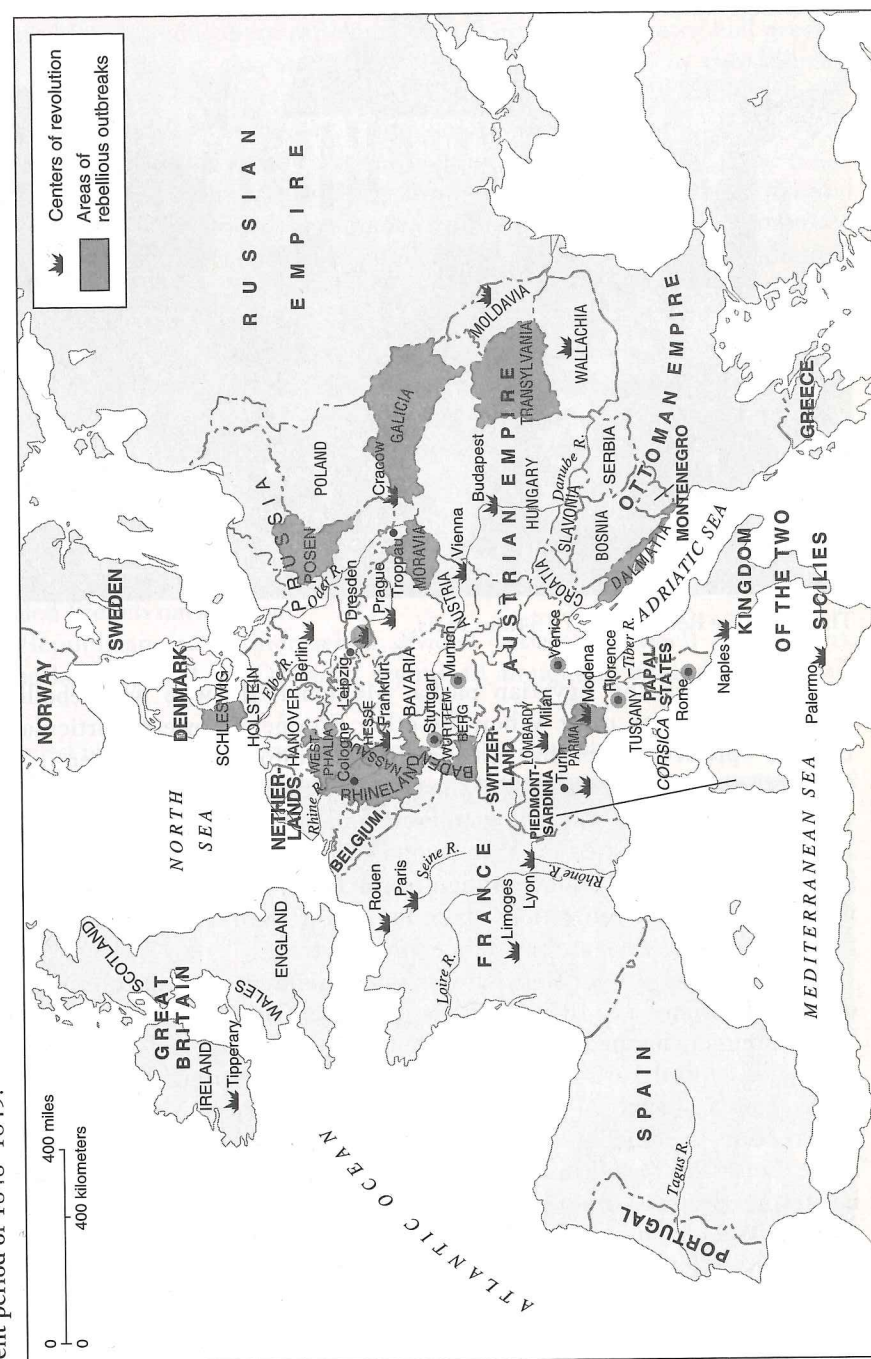
The late 1840s were a period of food shortages in Europe. This was a continent-wide crisis that included the tragic Irish potato famine. Unemployment plagued manufacturing towns. Yet, however widespread, economic discontent was not enough in itself to bring about the wave of revolutions that occurred in 1848 (if this was the case, the Irish would certainly have risen up). Rather, hard times provided an impetus to political opponents of existing regimes, which themselves were preoccupied with food riots and other popular protest.

Critics and political opponents included reformers asking for moderate political changes, such as a lessening of restrictions on the press, or, in states with elected assemblies, an expansion in the electoral franchise to allow more people to vote. German nationalists stood ready to push for the unification of the German states. Republicans and socialists demanded more radical reforms, including universal manhood suffrage and social reforms to ameliorate the condition of the laboring poor. Radical reformers also included nationalists within the Austrian Habsburg lands, principally Czechs and Hungarians, who wanted their own independent states. When a spark ignited the fires of protest, moderates and radicals joined forces in revolution. The sudden overthrow of the July Monarchy provided that spark.

#### *The February Revolution in France*

In France, the liberal Orleanist monarchy, which had been established by the Revolution of 1830, seemed to have more enemies than friends. It was caught between nobles insisting that the monarchy lacked dynastic legitimacy and republicans demanding a regime based on popular sovereignty. Republicans had begun to campaign for electoral reform in 1840–1841, as the country reeled from a disastrous harvest. France had also suffered international humiliation in 1840 after King Louis-Philippe

MAP 17.1 MAJOR REVOLUTIONS, 1848–1849 The map shows areas of rebellion and centers of revolution during the turbulent period of 1848–1849.







The February Revolution of 1848 in Paris.

seemed to back the Egyptian pasha, Mehemet Ali, who was rebelling against the Turkish ruler. When the other European powers, particularly Britain, opposed the pasha, fearing that his autonomy and recent conquests threatened the stability of the Ottoman Empire, France had to back down to avoid war. It was a blow to French national pride.

Republicans mounted another campaign for electoral reform, organizing banquets to rally public opinion in the midst of another cyclical economic crisis that began with the poor harvest of 1846. Workers demanded the right to vote and state assistance for their trades.

The electoral reform campaign was to culminate in a giant reform banquet on February 22, 1848, in Paris. François Guizot (1787–1874), the king's premier, banned the event. Demonstrators marched through the streets of central Paris, shouting for Guizot's resignation. The next day, large crowds assembled in the pouring rain. The Paris National Guard, drawn from the middle class, refused to disperse the demonstrators by force. Louis-Philippe dismissed Guizot. But that evening, amid continuing boisterous protests, troops panicked and fired on a crowd, killing forty people. The crowds carried the bodies through the streets, and workers (primarily craftsmen) began to construct barricades. After insurgents captured government buildings, King Louis-Philippe abdicated, hoping that the Chamber of Deputies would crown his young grandson, the count of Paris. It was too late. The victorious crowd proclaimed the Second French Republic at the town hall.

The Chamber of Deputies selected a provisional government, headed by nine well-known republicans, a list that reflected a balance between moderate liberals and well-known democrats. A crowd at the town hall pressed for the addition of two well-known socialists supported by the radicals: Louis Blanc and a worker, Alexander Martin, known as Albert. The provisional government immediately proclaimed universal manhood suffrage and abolished slavery in the French colonies.

The revolution spread to the provinces. Enthusiastic crowds planted "liberty trees," intended to commemorate a new era, a ritual borrowed from the French Revolution. Republicans were not the only political group seeking to fill the power vacuum left by the Orleanist regime. "Legitimists" wanted a Bourbon Restoration. Nor could the Orleanists be counted out, for Louis-Philippe had several able sons in exile. Both shades of monarchists could count on the support of local notables (nobles or wealthy bourgeois). Furthermore, Napoleon Bonaparte's nephew, Louis Napoleon (1808–1873), had a coterie of supporters who honored his uncle's memory. At a time when the prominent poet Alphonse de Lamartine (1790–1869) complained that "France is bored," the legend of Napoleon remained strong among many soldiers and former soldiers, peasants, and students. Popular histories of the French Revolution and the empire extolled French nationalism.

Republicans were themselves divided between staunch republicans, who had opposed the Orleanist regime all along, and moderates, who ac-

A priest blessing a liberty tree in the spring of 1848 in Paris.



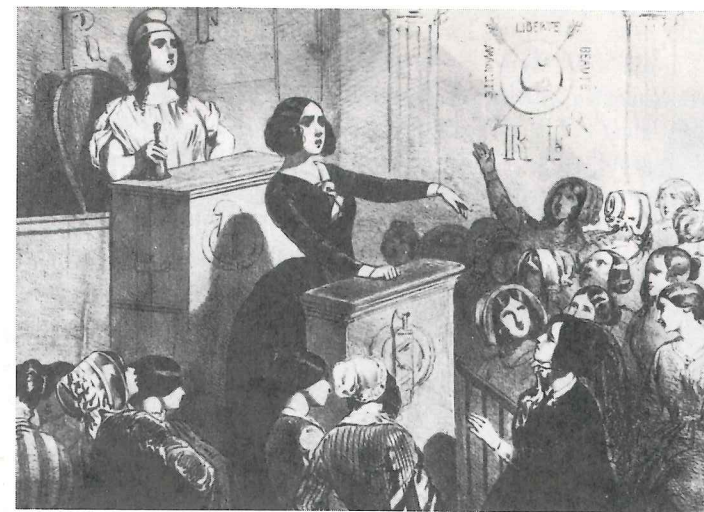
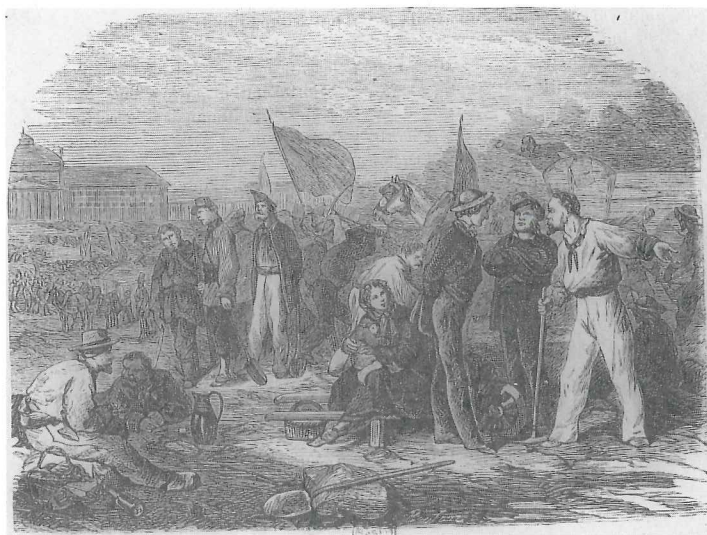


cepted the republic only after its proclamation. Socialists hoped that the republic would be but the first step toward a "democratic and social republic." Louis Blanc and other socialists were committed to the "right to work," as they put it, believing that the government should assume responsibility for providing employment in times of economic crisis, as well as encouraging or even subsidizing workers' associations.

Because of France's revolutionary tradition, the fledgling republic had to reassure the other powers of Europe that the French would not try to export their revolution, as had occurred in the 1790s. The other powers feared that the new regime might publicly support Polish independence or Italian or German nationalism, spurred on by the presence in Paris of political exiles advocating these causes. Some French nationalists called for the annexation of Savoy and Nice (parts of the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia), which France had claimed off and on for centuries. Volunteers formed a ragtag army with this acquisition of territory in mind. But Lamartine, the new republic's minister of foreign affairs, assured the European powers that the French had only peaceful intentions.

With elections for a constitutional assembly approaching, political interest was widespread among people previously excluded from political life. In Paris, more than 200 political clubs, mostly republican and republican-socialist, began to meet and almost that many newspapers began publication, joined by others in the provinces. When George Sand (the pen name of Amandine Aurore-Lucie Dudevant; 1804–1876), a writer and activist for women's rights, was locked out of her apartment, she discovered that all three of the neighborhood locksmiths were at club meetings. Representatives from the clubs went into the provinces with the goal of

The national workshops in Paris.



A women's club in 1848 in Paris.

wooing the overwhelmingly rural electorate away from the influence of local notables who favored a monarchy.

The economic crisis immediately cast a shadow over the new regime and widened the gap between moderate republicans and socialists. Unable to secure credit, many businesses closed. Government bonds plunged in value, and the Paris Stock Exchange temporarily shut down. Artisans were left without clients, laborers without work. More than half of the workforce in the capital was unemployed. Younger and more marginal workers were enrolled in an auxiliary paramilitary police force, the Mobile Guard, organized by the provisional government to help maintain order. Short of funds, the provisional government raised direct taxes on an emergency basis by 45 percent.

With unemployment growing and more provincial workers arriving in Paris every day looking for assistance, the provisional government opened "National Workshops," paying unemployed workers to repair roads and level hills. But there was not enough work to go around, and soon after their creation many well-off Parisians began to grumble about the new government having to support unemployed workers. The workers continued to make demands, and the government finally agreed to restrict the workday to a maximum of ten hours in Paris and twelve hours in the provinces. At the request of the socialists, the government also established the "Luxembourg Commission" to study working conditions.

By undermining existing political structures, the 1848 revolution called into question all social institutions, including the existing sexual hierarchy. In Paris, women formed a number of clubs. *La Voix des Femmes* (The Women's Voice) and several other newspapers begun by women called for





Carting away the stones that make up the revolutionary barricades, the conservatives literally and figuratively dismantle the revolution in the spring of 1848.

✓ reforms, including equality of women before the law, the right to divorce, and better working conditions. Petitioners demanded that the republic extend the electoral franchise to women. This groundswell of demands for change frightened the upper classes.

✓ Elections were scheduled for April to select a National Assembly to write a new constitution. The elections, in which an astounding 84 percent of the eligible voters (adult males) cast ballots, brought a conservative majority, including many monarchists, to the National Assembly in Paris. Radical republicans and socialists won only about 100 of 900 seats. The republicans were hurt by the provisional government's imposition of the surtax. Moreover, many peasants, who were voting for the first time in their lives, did not vote for the republican candidates, whom they identified with the tax. Furthermore, many rural people resented the demands of urban workers, including low bread prices and the maintenance of National Workshops. In two industrial cities, Limoges and Rouen, workers, angered by the conservative victory, seized power, at least until troops arrived several days later. Social tensions mounted in Paris and other large cities. France was a republic, but one now in the hands of an assembly dominated by conservatives, many of whom were monarchists. The euphoria of February gave way to the anxiety of the spring.

### *Revolution in the German States*

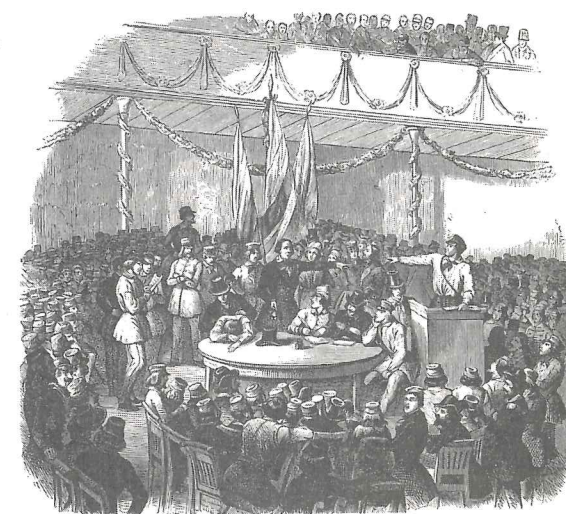
Unlike the Revolution of 1789, that of 1848 spread rapidly from France into Central Europe. The composer Richard Wagner (1813–1883), a fer-

vent German nationalist, had predicted in 1846: "the new Germany is ready, like a bronze statue that requires only a single blow from a hammer in order to emerge from its mold." Wagner, however, overestimated popular support of German nationalism. While liberals bided their time, young German radicals, few in number, became more restive. During the "hungry forties," in which perhaps 50,000 people died of disease in Prussian Silesia alone, riots against grain merchants and tax collectors occurred in many German states. Craftsmen formed trade associations and mutual aid societies. Although these organizations offered only minimal assistance during times of unemployment and strikes, they provided an apprenticeship in political ideology.

The differences in tactics between German liberals and radicals were clear and significant. Both groups, sometimes sharing newspaper offices, political clubs, and even associations of gymnasts and rifle enthusiasts, demanded an end to all remaining feudal obligations owed by peasants to nobles, the end of political repression, the granting of a constitution, freedom of assembly and the press, and expansion of the electoral franchise. Liberals, however, rejected universal manhood suffrage. Radicals, some of whom were socialists, believed that only revolution could move the German states along the path to a new, more liberal political order, and perhaps to unification.

The news in late February 1848 of revolution in France convinced rulers of the German states to make concessions to liberals. In Bavaria, word of the February Revolution arrived at a time when students had begun protesting the rule of Ludwig I (ruled 1825–1848). As Bavarian demonstrators built barricades and demanded a republic, Ludwig granted freedom of the press and other liberties. When this failed to placate his opponents, the king abdicated in favor of his son. The sovereigns of sev-

German students debate the ongoing Revolution of 1848.





eral smaller states, including Hanover, Württemberg, Saxony, and Baden, also named prominent liberals to ministerial positions. These were the "March governments," formed not out of conviction but rather from fear of revolutionary contagion.

Everyone waited to see what would happen in Prussia and Austria, the two largest and most powerful German states. In the Prussian capital of Berlin, demonstrators agitated for liberal political reforms and in favor of German nationalism. Prussian King Frederick William IV responded by convoking the United Diet, or Parliament. On March 18, he replaced his conservative cabinet with a more liberal one. Addressing a crowd from the balcony of his palace, he promised to end press censorship and grant a constitution. He further stated that the Prussian monarchy would take the lead in pushing for a joint constitution for the German states.

But as troops moved in to disperse the throngs, someone on one side or the other fired shots. Students and workers put up barricades. The next day the army attacked insurgents, killing about 250 people. As in Paris, the shooting of civilians by troops drove the situation out of control. Women were among the casualties. The king sent the troops out of the capital and appealed for calm. Intimidated by the disturbances, he met with representatives of the crowd, authorized the formation of a civic guard, and ordered the release of imprisoned liberals. He paid homage to those killed in the "March Days" and announced that "Prussia is henceforth merged with Germany."

Most of the Berlin insurgents had been journeymen artisans, among whom tailors, cabinetmakers, and shoemakers were prominent, as in the February Revolution in Paris. Although some of them were vaguely nationalist and wanted Prussia to lead the way toward the unification of Germany, most had economic goals. During the "hungry forties," mechanized production had undercut tailors, whose handmade clothes could not compete with mass-produced wear. Cabinetmakers and shoemakers had lost the security afforded by guilds. Now these artisans demanded state protection. Workers in other German states, too, mounted protests, principally in the more industrialized Rhineland. Transport workers who had been put out of work attacked railroads and steamships on the Rhine, forcing temporary government concessions.

As in Paris, clubs and workers' associations began meeting in several German cities in March. A Club of Democratic Women and a congress of workers both demanded equal rights for women. Workers formed the first All-German Society of Labor. The German political theorist and revolutionary Karl Marx hurried back to the Rhineland from Belgium, convinced that revolution was at hand.

Disturbances broke out in the German countryside. In the Black Forest, peasants attacked noble manors. In early March, the rural poor increasingly defied laws forbidding them to use royal and noble forests, and now

hunted game and pastured their flocks as they pleased. Some peasants seized and destroyed old documents that had recorded feudal obligations and forced lords to sign formal renunciations of old privileges. Outbreaks of violence occurred even in Brandenburg, where the iron will of the Prussian nobles, the Junkers, had rarely been tested. Several wary German princes formally relinquished long-held rights. Armies, militias, and police hesitated to enforce the laws or obligations that affected the peasantry for fear of sparking a bloody uprising like that in Polish Galicia in 1846. The revolution in the German states had not only quickly shaken Berlin and other capital cities but had reached the countryside as well.

### *Revolution in Central Europe*

To most liberals and nationalists, it seemed unlikely that news of the overthrow of the Orleanists would bring revolution to the multinational Habsburg lands. There were relatively few liberals to trouble the sleep of the feeble-minded Habsburg ruler, Ferdinand (ruled 1835–1848), who could barely sign his name to the reactionary decrees put before him. The emperor decidedly did not share the belief increasingly shared by many literate people that the empire would have to be reorganized in order to become more efficient.

Liberals, most of whom were Austrians seeking political change or Czechs desiring more rights for their people, opposed Habsburg autocracy, not Habsburg rule itself. They wanted constitutional reform, the complete emancipation of the peasantry, and, like Western liberals, freedom of the press and expansion of the electoral franchise.

Although Hungary, over which Ferdinand ruled as king, had an even smaller middle class than Austria, it did have several prominent Hungarian nobles who espoused liberalism and supported constitutional reform. Their chief goal, however, was less political reform within the monarchy than the creation of an independent Hungary. Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894), a lawyer from a lesser noble family, emerged as the leader of Hungarian liberals who had been influenced by British and American constitutional liberalism. Whereas some Magyar leaders believed that Hungary could survive as a nation only within the Austrian monarchy, Kossuth saw Hungary's junior partnership with Austria as an obstacle to liberal reform and to Magyar nationalism. Most nobles were unwilling, however, to support reforms that would inevitably undercut their special privileges. Elsewhere in the Austrian monarchy, small nationalist groups, such as the Polish Democratic Society, Young Italy, and the Italian Carbonari, also demanded national independence from Habsburg rule.

News from Paris encouraged liberals and radicals in the imperial Habsburg capital of Vienna. On March 13, 1848, crowds composed largely of students and artisans demanded reform. Troops opened fire, killing several demonstrators, by now a familiar scenario. Klemens von Metternich, the





Vienna explodes in revolution in 1848.

seventy-five-year-old Austrian premier, was not optimistic: "I am not a prophet and I do not know what will happen, but I am an old physician and can distinguish between temporary and fatal diseases. We now face one of the latter. We'll hold on as long as we can, but I have doubts about the outcome." The Imperial Council advised Ferdinand to sacrifice Metternich. The guiding light and symbol of the post-revolutionary restoration left Vienna in a rented carriage, beginning his voyage to the safety of London amid the spectacle of joyous crowds parading through the streets in triumph. The crown capitulated to protesters' demands and authorized the formation of a National Guard, with a separate battalion (the Academic Legion) for Vienna's students. Workshops, similar to those in Paris, provided many workers with temporary employment.

The emperor then announced several important political concessions, including freedom of the press, a constitution, and the expansion in the narrow electorate for the Diet. But these concessions were not enough to stave off revolts in other parts of the monarchy, notably Bohemia, Hungary, and Milan. Ferdinand hurriedly granted constitutions to Austria, Moravia, and Galicia, adding lower houses to the Diets that were to be elected indirectly by men wealthy enough to pay taxes. When demonstrators protested these requirements, the crown reversed itself, creating a single house of parliament to be elected by universal manhood suffrage in each province. In the elected Assembly, the monarchy's ethnic minorities would outnumber German speakers.

Ferdinand attempted to renege on his promises and ordered the universities closed and abolished the student "Academic Legion" within the National Guard. But again barricades went up in Vienna, and again Ferdi-

nand was forced to relent. Fearing rural rebellions upon which liberals and nationalists might capitalize, the emperor in September decreed the abolition—effective the following year—of all remaining seigniorial obligations. He also abolished the onerous *robot*, the yearly obligation of labor service—sometimes a hundred days working in the fields or on roads—that peasants owed lords. The crown would compensate the lords for their losses. Some landowners had been advocating precisely those reforms that were promulgated in the wake of the March Days, and many had already converted the labor obligation into peasant cash payments.

Meanwhile, the Hungarian nobles proceeded as if the Habsburg monarchy no longer existed. Kossuth, the liberal Hungarian aristocrat, demanded virtually complete Hungarian autonomy. He and his allies proclaimed the "March Laws," under which the delegates to the Hungarian Diet were to be elected by male property holders. The cabinet would be responsible to Hungary's Parliament. The emperor of Austria would remain the king of Hungary, but Hungary would maintain a separate army and conduct its own foreign policy. The Habsburg court, reeling from reverses on all sides, had little choice but to approve the changes. The new Hungarian government immediately proclaimed freedom of the press, established a civilian guard, and affirmed the abolition of the *robot* for peasant landowners, while maintaining it for landless peasants.

Although asserting its own autonomy from the Habsburg empire, the Hungarian Diet virtually ignored that of the other nationalities within the Hungarian domains, including Czechs, Poles, Croats, Slovenes, and Romanians. Croats, the largest of the non-Magyar nationalities in Hungary, were particularly resentful at not having been consulted. A small insurrection of students in Budapest on March 15 first challenged Kossuth's preoccupation with the interests of Hungarian landowners. The narrow electoral franchise, based on property owned and taxes paid, excluded most people of the poorer nationalities from election to the Diet. So did the requirement that each representative speak Hungarian, one of Europe's most difficult languages (though Latin remained the official language of Hungary until 1844).

The problem of national minorities confronting the Magyars became the Habsburg dynasty's hope for holding its empire together. The imperial government began to mobilize the Croats against the Hungarians, with whom the Serbs and Romanians were also angry. In March, the emperor appointed Joseph Jelačić (1801–1859) as the new governor-general for Croatia. Jelačić refused to cooperate with the Hungarians. In retaliation, the Hungarians refused to send troops to help the imperial army battle Italian insurgents. Ferdinand then withdrew the concessions he had made in March to Hungarian autonomy.

Another challenge to the monarchy, again revealing the complexity of Central Europe, came in Bohemia, populated by both Czechs and Germans. In March, Czech nationalists revolted in Prague, the capital of



Bohemia, and demanded that Bohemia, like Hungary, become an autonomous state only loosely tied to the old monarchy. They wanted the Czech language to be made equal to German, which remained the language of the army, the bureaucracy, and commerce. They also wanted to expand the borders of Bohemia eastward into Moravia, where many Czechs lived. At the same time, many Bohemian Germans looked eagerly toward possible unification with the German states to the north. In the meantime, Emperor Ferdinand and his family left Vienna for Innsbruck in May 1848, fearing that revolutionary students and workers might make him, like Louis XVI during the French Revolution, an ill-fated prisoner in his own palace.

### *Revolution in the Italian States*

In the Italian states, March brought insurrections against Austrian rule in Lombardy and Venetia, and against conservative regimes in the other states, notably the Papal States. In Tuscany, the grand duke bowed to reformers by promulgating a constitution. King Charles Albert (ruled 1831–1849) of Piedmont-Sardinia met some liberal demands by creating a bicameral parliament to be selected by a small minority of adult males, easing press censorship, and establishing a civilian guard in Italy's strongest state. The revolutions in the Italian states were animated by different goals: bourgeois liberals called for political reform and Italian unification, radicals wanted a republic, and workers demanded some tangible benefits for themselves.

On March 18, ten thousand people marched to the palace of the Austrian governor-general in Milan carrying a petition calling for liberal reforms echoing those in Paris, Berlin, and Vienna. Barricades went up, and five days (known as the "Five Glorious Days") of bitter street fighting followed. The poorly armed people of the city, whose arsenal included medieval pikes taken from the opera house, drove away the Austrian army of Count Joseph Radetzky (1766–1858). Radetzky would become a major figure in the counter-revolution at age eighty-one (and was energetic enough to have fathered a child only two years before). Radetzky had overcome an unhappy family life and an earlier career setback brought on by his wife's debts. Now in Milan, as insurgents established a provisional republican government, he found his army weakened by the desertion of many Hungarian, Croat, and Slovene soldiers.

Suddenly, much of Italy, particularly the Austrian-controlled north, seemed on the verge of a liberal and national revolution. Other towns in Lombardy rose up against Austrian rule. Venetians forced Habsburg troops to leave their city and declared a republic. In Naples, liberals forced a constitution on King Ferdinand II (ruled 1830–1859), who had also faced a republican insurrection in January in Sicily.

Many Italian nationalists now looked to Charles Albert of Piedmont-Sardinia for leadership in the political unification of Italy. Yet, despite

pleas for armed assistance from Lombardy and Venetia, Charles Albert hesitated to send his army against the Habsburg forces. He felt that if the Italian peninsula were to be unified, it should be on his terms, not as a result of rioting commoners and armies swollen by ragtag volunteers. The Piedmontese king feared the specter of popular insurgency in northern Italy. He also worried that if Piedmont launched a war against Austria, the new French republic might take advantage of the situation to invade Savoy and Nice, which French nationalists believed should be annexed to France.

The outpouring of anti-Austrian sentiment in Piedmont and the opinions of his advisers convinced Charles Albert to change his mind. The Piedmontese army, swollen by volunteers from Tuscany, Naples, and Parma, and even the Papal States, marched unopposed through Lombardy, defeating the Austrian army. But instead of crossing the Po River and cutting off Radetzky from supplies in Venetia, Charles Albert decided to consolidate his gains in Lombardy, with an eye toward annexing that territory to Piedmont.

In Lombardy itself, no one seemed able to agree on what should happen next. Wealthy landowners wanted little more than a loose union of Lombardy with Piedmont. Middle-class nationalists hoped to drive the Austrian army from Italy and establish a unified state, perhaps a moderate republic. Radicals, including many Milanese workers, were determined to have a progressive republic that would offer the poor a better life. They were surprised and disappointed when the charismatic nationalist leader Giuseppe Mazzini supported Charles Albert, instead of forcefully arguing in favor of a republic. In a hurried plebiscite, the people of Lombardy approved union with Piedmont.

The other Italian states hesitated. Some rulers mistrusted Charles Albert, fearing that he wanted to expand Piedmont at their expense. Traditional tensions between northern and southern Italy surfaced. Further-

Giuseppe Mazzini dreaming of a unified Italy.





more, the pope helped stymie the movement for Italian unification. Before the revolutions, the new pope, Pius IX (pope 1846–1878), had initiated a few modest reforms in his territories, releasing some liberals jailed by his predecessor. Some nationalists had even begun to think that Italy could be unified around papal authority. But the pope was hardly about to oppose the Catholic Habsburg dynasty on which the papacy had depended for centuries. The pontiff intended to crush republicans within the Papal States who challenged his temporal sovereignty. Pius then tried to recall his army from the north, announcing that he would not support the war against Austria.

Meanwhile, the newly elected French National Assembly unanimously approved a motion calling for the liberation of the Italian states. A French volunteer legion stood ready on the frontier, hoping that its help against Habsburg armies would bring French annexation of Savoy and Nice, as Charles Albert had feared. But facing British opposition and with enough to worry about at home, the new French republic stayed out of the Italian fray. Nonetheless, for the moment the beleaguered Austrian court seemed resigned to losing Lombardy, and willing even to abandon its claim on Venetia, provided that Piedmont would not directly annex either of them.

Benefiting from better troop morale and reinforced by soldiers arriving from Austria, Radetzky believed he could defeat the nationalist armies of the Italian states, which fought with more enthusiasm than experience and lacked effective organization and supplies. One Piedmontese commander complained that the nationalists did “Nothing, except to drown themselves with flowers, dancing, singing, shouting, and calling each other ‘sublime,’ ‘valorous,’ and ‘invincible.’” Radetzky’s army defeated the Piedmontese-led army of Italian nationalists at Custoza near Milan in early August 1848. The people of Milan then scornfully turned against Charles Albert, who slipped out of the city late at night and returned to his capital of Turin. From safer ground, the hesitant king negotiated an armistice with Austria, hoping in vain that he could retain Lombardy for his kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia.

#### THE ELUSIVE SEARCH FOR REVOLUTIONARY CONSENSUS

The Revolutions of 1848 generated resistance almost immediately from the political and social forces that had the most to lose from their success. In Prussia, where the revolutionaries included liberals, radicals, and nationalists (and some who were all three), opposition came from the king and nobles. In the Habsburg lands, where nationalism was the most significant factor in the revolution, resistance came from the emperor and his army. In France, where liberals accepted a republic and radicals demanded reforms that would better the lives of workers and peasants, the upper classes generally opposed such changes. The ultimate success of the

counter-revolution throughout Europe was aided by the revolutionaries’ mixed aims, which were magnified by the anxieties of the moment. The split between liberals and radicals worked to the advantage of those who wanted a return to the way things had been before the spring of 1848.

#### *Crisis in France*

In France, where the wave of revolutions had started, the political crisis intensified as the provisional government faced competing demands. France was to be ruled by committees constituted from the Assembly until a new republican constitution could be proclaimed. On May 15, 1848, an attempt by the political clubs of the far left to dissolve the Assembly and declare a “social” republic of the people failed. The new government now began to arrest radical republicans.

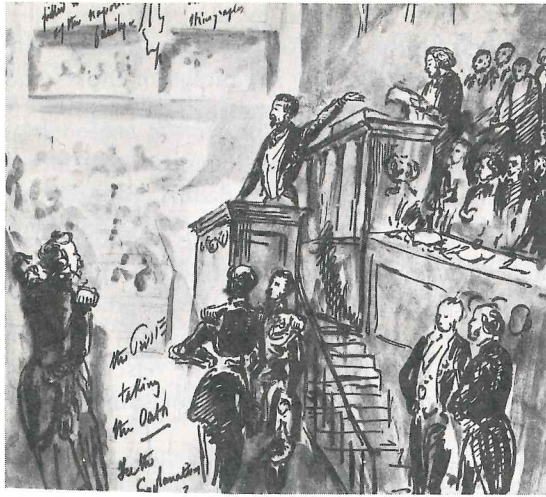
With the provisional government rapidly running out of money and credibility, the Assembly voted to halt enrollment in the National Workshops, which were generating considerable opposition from the upper classes. The workers’ associations and radical political clubs protested vigorously. On June 23, the Assembly announced that the National Workshops would be closed in three days. Enrolled unmarried men were to be drafted into the army and married workers sent to work in the provinces. When word of the dissolution decree leaked out that morning, Parisian workers rose up in rebellion.

For three days the “June Days” raged in the workers’ quarters of central and eastern Paris. General Louis Cavaignac (1802–1857), the minister of war, put down the uprising with brutality, using regular army soldiers, the Mobile Guard, and National Guard units, some of whom arrived from conservative provinces by train and steamboat, two symbols of a new age. In the climate of social tension, fed by false rumors that the insurgents were sawing in half captured Mobile Guardsmen and raping women from the wealthy quarters, between 1,500 and 3,000 insurgents were killed, some summarily executed by National Guardsmen. Afterward, the provisional government deported more than 4,000 workers to Algeria or other colonies, and sent thousands of people to prison.

Karl Marx believed that the June Days were a dress rehearsal for a future proletarian revolution that would pit worker against bourgeois. The short, bloody civil war, however, was more complicated than that. Some younger workers, including artisans, fought alongside unskilled proletarians in the Mobile Guard, which helped put down the uprising. Some radical bourgeois supported the workers. A majority of the insurgents were artisans from working-class quarters; the typical participant was a young journeyman artisan, married, and a member of a trade association.

The Assembly immediately passed legislation to curtail the popular political movements. New laws limited freedom of the press and assembly and closed political clubs, specifically banning women from membership.





Louis Napoleon taking his oath as president of the Second French Republic, which he would then systematically destroy.

The Luxembourg Commission was quickly disbanded. Cavaignac, "the butcher of June," became provisional chief executive of the republic. The government sent new prefects and other officials into the provinces. Many who had begun their administrative careers during the July Monarchy felt only tepid support for the republic they would represent.

Attention now focused on the presidential elections instituted by the new republican constitution that was finally promulgated in November. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte quickly emerged as a leading candidate, largely because of the reputation of his uncle, Napoleon. Although one wag cruelly dubbed him "the hat without the head," it was testimony to the magic of the Napoleonic legend that Louis Napoleon had been elected to the Constitutional Assembly in April 1848, after returning from exile. Many nobles and prosperous bourgeois believed that Louis Napoleon could restore political stability. Marx wrote that because Napoleon's nephew was nothing, that is, unknown, he could appear to be everything. Even those who were against the republic could vote for him because they identified him with the empire. Cavaignac, the other major candidate, was the favorite of those who wanted to combine social order with a very moderate republic. The minister of the interior of the provisional government, Alexandre-Auguste Ledru-Rollin (1807–1874), was the principal candidate of the socialists, while the poet Lamartine, a moderate, also ran, but both were identified with the provisional government and the unpopular 45 centimes tax. Furthermore, outside of Paris many people had never heard of either Ledru-Rollin or Lamartine, while just about everyone had heard of Napoleon. Louis Napoleon also won the support of many people who were for the republic. Like his uncle, he was assumed to have good will toward all people in France and, for that matter, had published a book

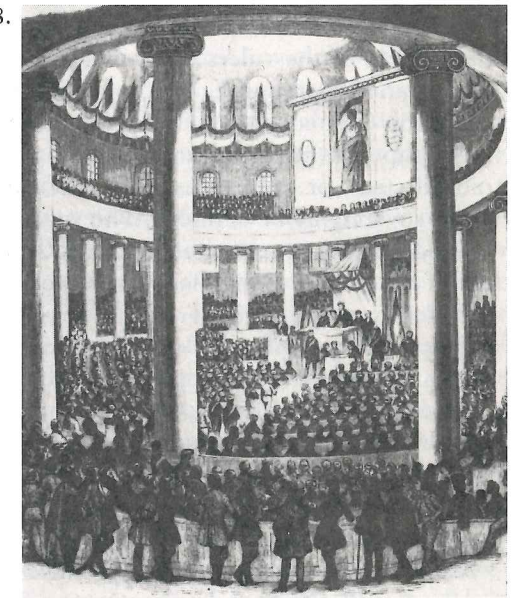
called *The Extinction of Pauperism* (1844). On December 10, 1848, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was overwhelmingly elected president of the Second Republic. Some skeptics were already wondering whether he, like his uncle, would serve as the heir to a revolution, or its executioner.

### *The Frankfurt Parliament*

In the German states, liberals and radicals gradually split as conservative forces gathered momentum. Shortly after the February Revolution in Paris, a group of about 50 German liberals, meeting in Heidelberg, invited about 500 like-minded figures to form a preliminary parliament to prepare elections for an assembly that would draft a constitution for a unified Germany. Most liberals among the organizers of the parliament wanted the German states to be united under a constitutional monarchy. Radicals, however, wanted nothing less than a republic based on universal manhood suffrage, and some of them joined a brief insurrection in the Rhineland state of Baden. To conservatives, and to some of the liberals as well, this insurrection raised the specter of "communism," amid rumors that radicals would divide the great estates among landless peasants.

The remainder of the members of the preliminary parliament announced elections for a German Constituent National Assembly, the Frankfurt Parliament. But, distinguishing their liberalism from that of the departed radicals, only male "independent" citizens in the German states would be eligible to vote, with some states using this vague qualification to exclude

The Frankfurt Parliament in 1848.





men who were propertyless. The Diet of the German Confederation accepted the plans for the election of the Frankfurt Parliament.

In May 1848, more than 800 elected delegates of the German Constituent National Assembly filed into Frankfurt's St. Paul's Church, which was decked out in red, black, and gold, the colors of early German nationalist university student organizations. State, municipal, and judicial officials, lawyers, university professors and schoolteachers comprised about two-thirds of the Frankfurt Parliament. Since about a third of the delegates had some legal training, many people began to refer to the gathering as a "parliament of lawyers," whose members debated far into the night. Almost giddy with enthusiasm as news of insurrections came from various corners of the continent, delegates spoke from the church's pulpit, confident that their deliberations would shape the future of the German states. Many were oblivious to the fact that poor acoustics rendered their speeches inaudible to people sitting in the back.

In electing Heinrich von Gagern (1799–1880) president, the delegates chose a man who symbolized the liberal and nationalist idealism of 1848. Gagern, whose father was a prosperous farmer, had fought in the Battle of Waterloo as a boy of sixteen. He had been one of the founders of the nationalist fraternities and a leader of the liberal opposition in his native Hesse. Although not of great intellect, Gagern nonetheless offered an imposing physical presence and carried out his difficult tasks with dignity. He echoed the lofty hopes of nationalists while pushing difficult and insoluble problems into the background, confidently giving the false impression that the unity of the delegates was assured and that German unification lay ahead.

The Frankfurt Parliament operated outside any state structure. It lacked the support of the rulers of Prussia and Austria, and, for that matter, of Bavaria and Württemberg. Without an army, it could not impose its will on any of the German states. Furthermore, considerable division existed over what shape the proposed unified Germany would take. Would it be a centralized state, or only an expansion of the German Confederation? How would sovereignty be defined? Who would have electoral rights?

Amid flowery speeches celebrating German national destiny, the problem of nationality immediately surfaced. Some delegates wanted Austria excluded from a united Germany, leery of the problem posed by non-German speakers within their state. Among these exponents of this "smaller German" (*Kleindeutsch*) solution, some wanted German unification around Protestant Prussia, fearing the inclusion of Catholic Austria. The more liberal "greater German" (*Grossdeutsch*) group wanted a unified Germany to include all states and territories within the German Confederation. Some wanted Austria's inclusion to encounter possible Prussian domination, as well as that of northern Protestants.

After months of debate, a compromise solution appeared to be a victory for the "smaller German" plan. On October 27, the Frankfurt Parliament

voted that any German state could join the new Germany, but only if it did not bring with it territories having non-German populations. Unless Austria was willing to separate itself from Hungary, it would have to remain outside a united Germany. For the moment, the Austrian government, struggling against resistance to its authority from Hungary and the northern Italian states of Lombardy and Venetia, regarded the Frankfurt Parliament's German nationalism as another threat to its survival.

In the meantime, the United Assembly of Prussia (which had been elected by universal manhood suffrage after the March insurrection in Berlin) gathered in May 1848 to begin to draft a constitution for Prussia. Amid urban and rural unrest, the Assembly provoked the Prussian nobles in October by voting to make the civic guard a permanent institution, which challenged noble control of the army officer corps. It also abolished the Junkers' special hunting privileges and banned the use of all noble titles in anticipation of the abolition of formal class distinctions.

The Junkers, however, were not about to stand by and watch Prussia drift toward a constitutional monarchy or republic. They vowed to defend "God, the King, and the Fatherland," which they identified with their immunity from taxation and other prerogatives. Encouraged by the reaction to the June Days in France, Frederick William dismissed his liberal cabinet, sent troops to Berlin, and then in December dissolved the Assembly. He declared martial law, disbanding the civic guard. Prussian troops crushed opposition in the Rhineland and Silesia.

The Frankfurt Parliament itself put aside its liberalism when it came to the question of Poland, which had lost its independence following the Third Partition of 1795. When a Polish uprising against Prussian rule broke out, a parliamentary delegate rose to denounce Polish nationalism, insisting on "the preponderance of the German race over most Slav races" and calling for "[German] national egotism" and "the right of the stronger." The Frankfurt Parliament voted overwhelmingly in favor of armed Prussian repression of the Polish uprising, also expressing support for the Habsburg monarchy's crushing of the rebellious Czechs.

While counter-revolution gathered momentum in Prussia, the middle-class liberals of the Frankfurt Parliament, powerless to effect German unification on their own, failed to build a base of popular support among workers and peasants. They feared the lower classes perhaps even more than did the Prussian nobles: one member of the Parliament described universal manhood suffrage as "the most dangerous experiment in the world." Thus, the Frankfurt Parliament rejected craftsmen's demands for protection against mechanization and an influx of new practitioners into their trades as being incompatible with economic liberalism. Since the eighteenth century, German guilds had gradually lost their autonomy to the regulatory authority of the states. The influx of apprentices and journeymen into trades had reduced the opportunity for journeymen to become masters. By turning a deaf ear to workers' demands, the Frankfurt



Parliament lost a significant source of popular support. Furthermore, any hope of winning the allegiance of German peasants probably ended when the Parliament proclaimed that peasants must compensate their former lords in exchange for their release from remaining obligations.

Frustrated by the Parliament's moderation and general dawdling, in September several hundred workers charged into St. Paul's and tried to persuade the Parliament to declare itself a national convention of republicans. Austrian, Prussian, and Hessian troops had to rescue the delegates.

After six months of debate, the Frankfurt Parliament proclaimed in December 1848 the Basic Rights of the German People. Influenced by the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, it proclaimed the equality of "every German" before the law, freedom of speech, assembly, and of religion, and the end of seigniorial obligations, and the right to private property. Jews gained legal equality. But the document would remain only a theoretical exercise unless a substantial number of states agreed to put it into effect.

The support of Prussia and/or Austria would be necessary to implement the Basic Rights of the German People and to form a united Germany. "To unite Germany without [Prussia and Austria]," would be, as a contemporary put it, "like two people trying to kiss with their backs turned to one another." But Austria's opposition to the Frankfurt Parliament became even stronger. Nationalism was antithetical to the monarchy's existence. The Frankfurt Parliament could do nothing as the Austrian government executed one of its delegates for having led an uprising in Vienna in October 1848. The Habsburgs encouraged other German states to disregard the Parliament and to proceed with their own counter-revolutions. The emperor made it clear that Austria would only consider joining a united Germany if the entire Habsburg monarchy, with its many non-German nationalities, was included. The Parliament had already rejected such a possibility.

In April 1849, the Frankfurt Parliament promulgated a constitution for a united Germany. It proposed the creation of a hereditary "emperor of the Germans" and two houses of Parliament, one representing the individual German states, the other elected by universal manhood suffrage. Austria, Bavaria, and Hanover rejected the proposed constitution.

The only chance for the constitution to succeed was to convince the king of Prussia to become king of a unified Germany. Frederick William had occasionally voiced vague support for German nationalism. The Parliament sent a delegation to Berlin to offer Frederick William the German crown. A Prussian noble shouted: "What, you bring an imperial crown? You are beggars! You have no money, no land, no law, no power, no people, no soldiers! You are bankrupt speculators in cast-off popular sovereignty!" When the head of the delegation asked for a glass of water in the royal palace, he was denied even that. Frederick William refused to accept a "crown from the gutter," a "dog collar" offered "by bakers, and butchers, and reeking with the stench of revolution."

Divided by indecision, lacking popular support, and facing Prussian and Austrian opposition, most of the Frankfurt parliamentarians returned home. The remaining delegates moved to Stuttgart in Württemberg but were dispersed in June by force. The Frankfurt Parliament, which embodied the hopes of German liberals and nationalists, ended in abject failure. Germany would not be unified by liberals.

## COUNTER-REVOLUTION

The growing split between liberals and radicals in 1848 helped the cause of counter-revolution. Once middle-class revolutionaries had seized power in Paris or brought about liberal reforms in Berlin and Vienna, they resisted the demands of the lower classes for further change. Most liberals did not want a republican form of government based on universal manhood suffrage, and very few supported significant state intervention on behalf of workers. In France, some of the same men who supported the February Revolution fought against the June insurgents, cheering on the repression that followed. In Frankfurt, lawyers and professors ignored the artisans meeting in the same town. In the Habsburg lands, German liberals rejected the national claims of the Czechs and Hungarians. Each revolution generated its equivalent of the "communist" or "red scare."

Ordinary people were far more interested in concrete reforms than they were in impassioned speeches by Mazzini, for whom a unified Italian republic, not social reform, was the ultimate goal, or by members of the Frankfurt Parliament, who championed German unification. Frederick William and the Junkers were able to capitalize on the estrangement of the Prussian lower classes from the nationalists. When radical uprisings occurred in 1849 in the German states, they found little popular support and the Prussian army was ready.

The high hopes of the revolutionaries of 1848 were thus disappointed by the reality of different aims and a split between liberals and radicals. With the lack of consensus among the revolutionaries, counter-revolution now gained the upper hand in the Habsburg monarchy, the German states, and the Italian states. In the Habsburg monarchy, the initial period of optimism gave way to a grim realization of the complexity of Central Europe. Ethnic conflicts broke out among Hungarians, Croats, and Serbs, as well as between landowners and peasants.

### *Counter-Revolution in Central Europe*

The confusion of competing national claims and rivalries within the monarchy eased the task of counter-revolution within the Austrian empire. If freedom was a central concern of the revolutionaries, it meant different things to different people. Magyar nobles wanted more autonomy for Hungary; Viennese journalists wanted freedom from press censorship;



artisans wanted freedom from the competition of mechanized production; peasants wanted freedom from labor obligations owed to nobles. Czechs demanded freedom from German domination as well as their own national freedom.

German speakers and Czech nationalists in Bohemia had different aims. Despite the opposition of Czechs, who tried to impede the elections, Germans living in Bohemia elected several German speakers to represent them at the Frankfurt Parliament. Czech nationalists, on the other hand, resisted any "Greater German" plan for German unification that would include Bohemia, fearing that this would leave them in an even more subordinate position vis à vis the Bohemian German-speaking population. Other ethnic minorities voiced similar fears.

Czechs hosted a Pan-Slav Congress in Prague in June 1848 to promote the rights of and bolster a union of Slavs within the Habsburg empire and Central Europe. The assembled national groups could agree only on their common dislike for Habsburg policies. Each group had a different plan for the reorganization of the empire, one that would favor its own interests. Finally, the Pan-Slav Congress issued a vague statement in June 1848 that condemned the Germans for having oppressed the Slavic peoples and called for the reorganization of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy into a federation that would take into consideration the rights of each nationality.

While the Pan-Slav Congress, like the Frankfurt Parliament, was discussing lofty national questions, ordinary people were hungry. On June 12, 1848, barricades went up in Prague, manned by artisans and the laboring poor. Prince Alfred Windischgrätz (1787–1862), the imperial governor, ended the insurrection on June 16, bombarding Prague with cannon fire. Meanwhile, in northern Italy, the imperial army defeated the Piedmontese forces, which had moved to assist the revolutions against Austria-Hungary, and Jelačić's Croatian army defeated Hungarian revolutionary forces.

In August, Ferdinand returned to Vienna, welcomed by the middle classes. When Ferdinand began to shut down the workshops (which had been established to provide work for the unemployed), the workers rose up, as they had in Paris, before being crushed by the bourgeois National Guard. Two months later, workers rebelled again. Expected support from Hungary for the revolutionaries did not materialize, once again demonstrating the seeming incompatibility between the goals of workers and students in Vienna and those of national movements for autonomy. Ferdinand left his imperial capital a second time, taking his court to a town in Moravia. The imperial armies under Windischgrätz bombarded Vienna, killing more than 3,000 people. Once again, enthusiastic revolutionaries proved no match for the professional armies of the established powers. The emperor imposed martial law, closed the political clubs, dissolved the National Guard, and reestablished censorship. Arrests, trials, and twenty-



Croatian regiments loyal to the Habsburg emperor attack Viennese revolutionaries, October 1848.

five executions followed. The Habsburg emperor ruled by martial law until the "Patent" of December 31, 1851, officially restored imperial absolutism. The emperor appointed a council of advisers (the *Reichsrat*), but was under no obligation to consult it.

Emperor Ferdinand appointed the noble Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg (1800–1852) as head of government on November 21, 1848. This ended the period of political uncertainty within Austria that had followed the March insurrection. Schwarzenberg convinced the hapless emperor to abdicate his throne in December 1848 in favor of his eighteen-year-old nephew, Francis Joseph (ruled 1848–1916), who had fled Vienna during the March insurrection and turned up at Radetzky's camp in northern Italy dressed in military uniform. Placing his faith in the army, the new emperor was determined to assure the dynasty's survival and influence in Central Europe and the Italian states.

Prince Schwarzenberg enhanced the effectiveness of the imperial bureaucracy by appointing able commoners to important posts. In order to confront the Hungarian challenge and prevent any further radical uprisings in Vienna, he hoped to win the support of Hungarian moderates, albeit without recognizing the rights of nationalities. Alexander Bach (1813–1893), a lawyer of noble origins, was first appointed to be minister of justice and then of the interior and reformed the Habsburg legal system. At the same time, he implemented a system of carefully coordinated bureaucratic surveillance, spying, and repression—known as the "Bach system"—that helped root out political opposition.



But the Schwarzenberg government still had to deal with the Austrian Parliament. That body, from its exile in the town of Kremsier, had produced a draft for a liberal constitution. The constitution approved the emancipation of the peasantry and sought to establish a decentralized, multinational state, under a constitutional monarchy that would recognize all languages. It would have made ministers responsible to Parliament, which would consist of a lower house elected by universal manhood suffrage and an upper house formed by representatives of the provincial diets. But the liberal Kremsier constitution was never implemented. Schwarzenberg suddenly dissolved the Parliament in March 1849, ordered the arrest of some of the deputies, and imposed a constitution. Although it had liberal aspects, it made virtually no concessions to the non-German nationalities within the Habsburg domains and restored Hungary to its pre-1848 position. Furthermore, Schwarzenberg, with the young emperor's consent, intended to delay putting the constitution into effect until the revolutionary crisis had passed.

In April, the Hungarian Parliament refused to recognize Francis Joseph's ascension to the Habsburg throne and thus his sovereignty over Hungary. In turn, the young emperor refused to recognize Ferdinand's concessions to Hungary. Kossuth tried to rally support in Hungary against Austria. Although the Hungarian army fell back at the approach of a Habsburg army, forcing the provisional government to withdraw to the east, the tables then turned. The Hungarians defeated the imperial forces twice in the spring, taking Budapest and driving the Habsburg army out of Transylvania.

On April 14, 1849, the Hungarian Diet proclaimed Magyar independence and made Kossuth president of the newly formed Hungarian republic. As the monarchy's survival was now defiantly threatened, Francis Joseph called on the Russian tsar for help. Nicholas I responded by sending 140,000 troops into Hungary and Transylvania. Kossuth frantically implored the Frankfurt Parliament for assistance, but that body had no army. The British government disliked the Russian intervention in Central Europe, but it wanted to preserve the Habsburg monarchy as a buffer against French and, above all, Russian interests. Hungarian resistance ended in August as Russian and Austrian forces advanced. Kossuth escaped to Turkey, never to return to Hungary. Austria executed thirteen Hungarian generals for treason, imprisoned thousands of people, and imposed martial law.

In the German states, Prussian King Frederick William's scornful rejection in March 1849 of the "crown from the gutter" was the final blow to German liberals who hoped to unify Germany. Before the Prussian Parliament could approve the constitution proposed by the Frankfurt liberals, the king dissolved it on April 28, 1849, declaring a state of emergency. He then implemented new voting restrictions that greatly favored the conservatives in subsequent parliamentary elections. Henceforth, the wealthiest 3

percent of the Prussian population (paying one-third of all taxes) elected one-third of the representatives; the next wealthiest 10 percent (paying the next third of taxes) elected another third; and the remaining 87 percent of men elected the final third of the Prussian Parliament. Liberal abstentions and popular indifference further assured conservative domination of the new Parliament, which created an upper house of nobles, officials, churchmen, and other members to be selected by the king.

One by one in the other German states, the "March ministries" of 1848 fell from power as rulers abrogated constitutions granted that spring. Even where constitutions remained on the books, the counter-revolution orchestrated by rulers with the help of nobles left parliaments and assemblies with little or no effective power.

As the counter-revolution gained momentum, radicals continued to organize opposition, launching scattered insurrections, all of which failed. After being chased from his duchy in June 1849, the grand duke of Baden returned to oversee the trials of more than a thousand people. Ten thousand people fled Baden, including Karl Marx, many emigrating to the United States. The German Revolution of 1848 was over. On August 23, 1851, the German Confederation annulled the Basic Rights of the German People, the major work of the Frankfurt Parliament.

#### *Prussian-Austrian Rivalry*

Prussian King Frederick William IV had grown up with a romantic attachment to the idea of German nationalism, while never losing an iota of his commitment to the interests of the Prussian ruling dynasty. Now that the German revolutionaries had, for all intents and purposes, been swept away by the juggernaut of counter-revolution and their own divisions, he proposed the creation of a "Prussian Union." It would consist of two "unions": the larger would include the states of the defunct German Confederation, as well as non-German Austrian territories; the smaller would be a confederation of all German-speaking lands, including those of Austria. In proposing these clumsy structures, a loose confederation based both on conservative political premises and an expansion of Prussian influence, Frederick William took advantage of the insurrections against Austrian authority in Hungary and northern Italy. Austria, Bavaria, and Württemberg all expressed immediate opposition to the plan. The Habsburg dynasty no more wanted to see an expansion of Prussian influence in Central Europe than it had desired German unification under the liberal auspices of the Frankfurt Parliament. On September 1, 1849, Austria unilaterally proclaimed the revival of the old German Confederation, pressuring member states to withdraw all the concessions to constitutionalism and liberalism they had made in 1848.

As Prussia and Austria both sought to assure the victory of counter-revolution, each seeking a dominant position in Central Europe, relations be-



tween the two powers deteriorated to the point that war seemed possible. In September, the prince of Hesse asked the reconstituted German Confederation for assistance when his own people rebelled against the withdrawal of a liberal constitution he had earlier granted. The government of Prussia, however, objected to the involvement of the Confederation in Hesse because Hesse stood between two parts of Prussia. Now Prussia, which had the right to move troops through Hesse, threatened to send an army there if the Diet tried to intervene. But the Russian tsar, who had become wary of a possible expansion of Prussian power in Central Europe, forced Prussia to back down. In October, the German Confederation, with secret Russian backing, sent Bavarian and Hanoverian troops to Hesse, but Prussian forces blocked their way. Once again, the Prussian government backed away from war, agreeing to drop plans for a Prussian Union. The Prussian government signed the so-called "humiliation of Olmütz" (November 29, 1850), in which Prussia agreed to demobilize its army.

### *The Counter-Revolution in the Italian States*

When Habsburg forces were fighting in Hungary, a nationalist "war party" in Piedmont-Sardinia pushed King Charles Albert toward a resumption of hostilities with Austria. The Piedmontese army crossed into Lombardy, but Austrian forces under General Radetzky defeated it at Novara in March 1849. Fearing that Radetzky's strengthened army would invade Piedmont, Charles Albert asked for peace and abdicated in favor of his son, Victor Emmanuel II. The new king signed an armistice with Austria in Milan in August, renouncing Piedmontese claims to Lombardy.

In 1848, revolutionaries even challenged the authority of the pope in the Papal States. In August, workers in Bologna rose up against Pope Pius IX because he had helped the Austrian cause by recalling his army to Rome. But the pope's forces prevailed. The next outbreak of opposition to papal authority came in Rome itself. Fearing an insurrection, Pius named a new, more liberal government, which announced the imposition of a tax on Church property. After one of the government's leaders was assassinated in November 1848, crowds stormed into the streets, calling for a declaration of war against Austria. Pius appointed more liberals to his government and called for parliamentary elections, before fleeing in disguise to Naples, from which he called for the overthrow of the government he had appointed under duress.

In Rome, the new cabinet met many of the workers' demands, setting up charity workshops and ending the grain tax. Like the leaders of the French Revolution of 1789, the new government confiscated Church property, turning some buildings into apartments for poor workers. In elections for a Constitutional Assembly, the radicals won an overwhelming victory. On February 9, 1849, the Assembly proclaimed the Roman Republic. The pope immediately excommunicated some of its officials from the Catholic

Church. The republic, in turn, abolished the Inquisition and proclaimed freedom of the press and the secularization of university education.

Some Italian nationalists now were beginning to think of the Roman Republic as a center around which the peninsula could be unified. Giuseppe Mazzini's arrival in Rome in early March 1849 to join the revolutionary government confirmed the pope's fears in this regard. With the armies of the Habsburgs tied up with struggles in Central Europe, the pontiff had to look elsewhere for a strong army to come to his rescue. Although Piedmont, the strongest Italian state, did not want a Roman Republic, the pope did not solicit Piedmontese assistance, fearing that if its forces came to the rescue, they might never leave.

Beset by severe economic shortages and inflation and discouraged by the news of the Piedmontese defeat at Novara in March, leaders of the Roman Republic now learned that the French were coming to try to restore the pope's temporal power. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was eager to win the support of French Catholics. He also did not want Austrian influence in Italy to go unchallenged. With the approval of the French National Assembly, an army of 10,000 French troops disembarked near Rome, and then, embarrassingly enough, had to retreat when they were met by fierce resistance. Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882), a more strident—and organized—republican nationalist than Mazzini, arrived with a corps of volunteers from Lombardy to help the besieged republic. As pro-papal forces sent by the king of Naples and the Spanish government approached Rome, the French army began to shell the eternal city in early June. The Assembly capitulated a month later. French troops then occupied Rome, dissolv-

Pope Pius IX puts aside the liberal mask of Christ, revealing his true conservative face.





ing the Roman Assembly and the clubs and reviving press censorship. Three cardinals assumed power, preparing for the pope's return in April 1850 and the brutal repression that followed.

Of all of the governments formed by revolutions and uprisings in the Italian states in 1848, only the Venetian Republic survived. But having defeated the Piedmontese in March, the Austrians now blockaded and bombarded Venice. Morale fell inside the hungry city, and disease spread. The Venetian Republic capitulated on August 22, 1849.

The Italian revolutions were over. The only liberal regime that remained was in Piedmont. Austria retained Lombardy and Venetia. The king of Naples, the grand duke of Tuscany, and the pope were back in power. Italian unification remained a dream of northern middle-class nationalists. The multiplicity of states and lack of strong popular support for unification—reflected by the gap between liberals' and workers' goals—had for the moment proven too powerful.

### *The Agony of the French Second Republic*

In France, where the wave of 1848 revolutions had begun, political reaction was also gaining momentum following the June Days. The election of Louis Napoleon as president in December of that year seemed to guarantee a return to political stability. The economic situation also improved, helped by abundant harvests and the gradual return of business confidence. Most of the wealthiest landowners and businessmen, threatened by the reforming zeal of the radical republicans and universal manhood suffrage, rallied to Louis Napoleon, Bonaparte's nephew, whom they viewed as the savior of property and family. In the meantime, the "prince president" took command of the centralized administrative, judicial, and military apparatus of the state.

Even as better economic times gradually returned, the "democratic-socialists," whose supporters had been primarily drawn from France's largest cities and some smaller market towns, expanded their appeal in the countryside, particularly gaining followers in the south. They won support not only among radical bourgeois and artisans but also among many peasants, for whom the low prices of the long agricultural depression had brought hard times. In some parts of France, the left reversed the pattern in the French Revolution of radical towns and conservative countryside. Taking the name of the far left during the French Revolution, the Montagnards called for specific national reforms such as the establishment of progressive taxation, higher wages, the abolition of the tax on drink, the creation of credit banks for peasants, and free and obligatory primary schools.

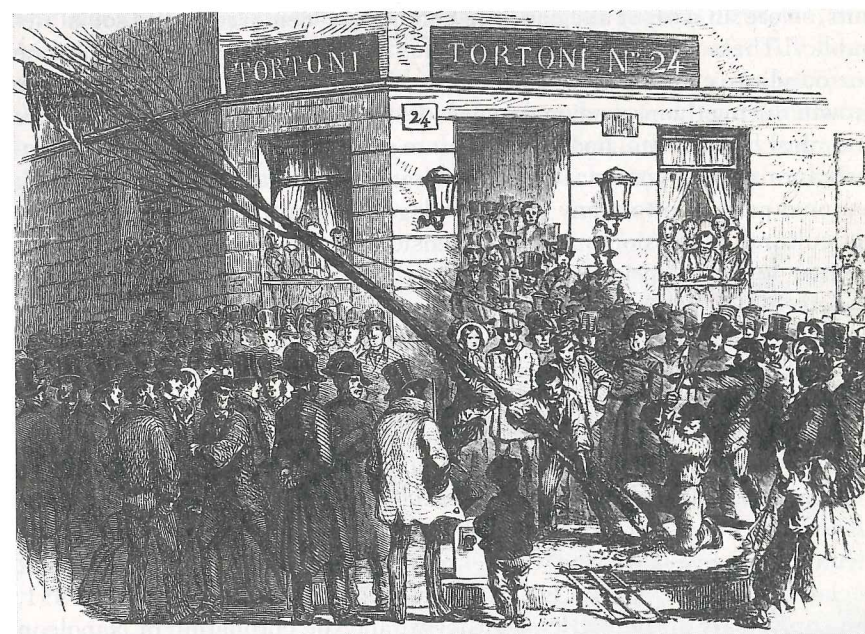
Many of the post-revolutionary clubs were reconstituted as electoral organizations before the elections to be held in the spring of 1849. The democratic-socialists effectively used written political propaganda to reach

ordinary people. They also exploited the deep-seated traditions of oral culture in a society in which only somewhat more than half of the people could read and write; stories, songs, lithographs and engravings also spread the popularity of radical candidates. In the legislative elections of May 1849, the left won almost a third of the seats in the National Assembly, harnessing the heritage of the French Revolution in regions in which it had found enthusiastic support.

Encouraged by the strength of the left in the Chamber of Deputies and in Paris, Ledru-Rollin, who had been a socialist member of the provisional government and a candidate in the presidential election, attempted to provoke an insurrection on June 13, 1849. His pretext was the Assembly's readiness to send a French army to support the pope, which the left claimed violated the new constitution, because French troops would be violating the freedom of the Romans. However, intervention in Rome earned Louis Napoleon the gratitude of conservative Catholics; the uprising discredited the left among the upper classes. But by-elections in the spring of 1850 reflected the growing popularity of the democratic-socialist program among ordinary people in Paris and several provinces.

Backed by the "party of order," Louis Napoleon Bonaparte's government claimed that a massive plot threatened social order. Symbols of the French Revolution itself, including singing *The Marseillaise*, became illegal. The government also outlawed red caps and belts, because red was identified as the color of the left. The police chopped liberty trees down one by one.

Uprooting a liberty tree in Paris.





The government waged war against popular political activity itself, curtailing the freedom of assembly and association. It banned a number of workers' associations, including some that had been granted state funds in 1848 to establish producer and consumer cooperatives. National Guard units in many towns were disbanded if their members were radical republicans or socialists. Politically active mayors were dismissed. Schoolteachers were replaced if they supported the left, and cafés identified with the democratic-socialist cause were closed. Many radical republican and socialist leaders were jailed. These included Jeanne Deroin (1810–1894), a socialist seamstress and feminist, who in 1849 had tried to run for election despite the fact that women were ineligible for election and could not vote. Others were forced into exile or frightened into submission. In March 1850, the Assembly passed the Falloux Law, which allowed the Catholic clergy to open secondary schools and permitted them to serve on education committees. One of the practical consequences was that villages now could turn operation of their schools over to the clergy.

In May 1850, the National Assembly ended universal manhood suffrage by adding a residency requirement that disqualified many workers who travelled from place to place. This reduced the electorate by one-third, eliminating 3 million voters. Many of the disenfranchised lived in the larger cities, where Napoleon and his candidates had not fared well. The repression succeeded in smashing the left in much of France.

But elsewhere, links between economic change and political activity aided the left. In some southern and central regions, the repression drove the left into secret societies, whose members, mostly artisans and peasants, swore an oath of allegiance to defend the "democratic and social Republic." These societies, which started in towns, gradually spread into the surrounding countryside. This occurred particularly where economic growth during the preceding two decades, including cash-crop agriculture and rural handicrafts, had brought more rural artisans and peasants regularly into market towns. Townspeople and rural craftsmen helped bring national politics into many French villages. In contrast, in the north, the agricultural depression augmented tensions between urban workers, who wanted low food prices, and property-owning peasants, who naturally preferred high prices for agricultural products. The precocious politicization of the French Second Republic, through the conduits of voluntary associations and cafés, reflected links between economic growth and political activity.

The constitution limited the presidency to one term of four years. Although Louis Napoleon's term as president was, in principle, nearing an end, he had no intention of stepping aside despite the fact that the Chamber of Deputies had rejected a proposal to allow the president, if re-elected, to serve a second term. In the fall of 1851, the government declared a state of martial law in several regions. On December 2, 1851, the anniversary of the battle of Austerlitz and the coronation of Napoleon Bonaparte as emperor, Parisians awoke to read an official poster that an-

nounced the dissolution of the National Assembly. The secret societies then undertook the largest national insurrection in nineteenth-century France. A small uprising broke out in eastern Paris and, while troops easily dispersed demonstrations in several other major cities, more than 100,000 people in eighteen *départements* took up arms in defense of the republic. But the ragged forces of artisans and peasants armed with rusty rifles and pitchforks were easily dispersed by troops before they got very far. Military courts tried over 26,000 democratic-socialists, and almost half that many went into exile.

Support for the coup by Louis Napoleon was overwhelming in France as a whole, however. The plebiscite that followed the coup approved the takeover by more than 10 to 1. The Paris Stock Market soared. Louis Napoleon proclaimed a new constitution, which made him chief executive of the republic for ten years. On December 2, 1852, he took the title Napoleon III, emperor of the French.

## THE LEGACY OF 1848

The glacial winds of reaction brutally chilled the "springtime of the peoples." The wave of repression dashed the hopes of liberals, republicans, and nationalists throughout Europe. It has often been said, with the advantage of hindsight, that in 1848, at least with reference to the German states, European history reached its turning point and failed to turn.

European states became even stronger after the Revolutions of 1848. The revolutions had succeeded at first because the French, Prussian, and Austrian authorities lacked sufficient military preparedness. All three quickly learned their lessons. With the defeat of the revolutionaries came the end of the era of civic or national guards, which had been demanded by the people of Berlin, Vienna, and Paris. Professional armies enforced the counter-revolution: those of Jelačić, Windischgrätz, and Radetzky re-

The generals who crushed the insurgency within the Habsburg empire: Jelačić, Radetzky, and Windischgrätz.





stored Habsburg authority in Bohemia, Hungary, and northern Italy; the Prussian army crushed the last gasps of revolution in the German states; and the French army put down subsequent resistance to Louis Napoleon's coup d'état. Louis Napoleon's plebiscite reinforced the centralized character of the French state.

Nonetheless, the Revolutions of 1848 marked the first time workers put forward organized demands for political rights. Class antagonisms, already evident in much of Europe during the "hungry forties," would deepen further after the failures of 1848. Radical peasants in southern France helped dispel the myth of the inevitably conservative peasant.

Although the Revolutions of 1848 ultimately failed, they left crucial political legacies. The period was one of political apprenticeship for republicanism in France and nationalism in the German and Italian states. The revolutions were not only separate national phenomena but part of a common process that anticipated the emergence of mass politics. While many of the goals of the revolutionaries centered on middle-class demands for liberal reforms, such as freedom of the press, the Revolutions of 1848 also had a popular quality characterized by demands for universal manhood suffrage, as well as by a few calls for political rights for women. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary people participated, if only somewhat briefly, in political life.

The counter-revolution in Europe scattered a generation of committed republicans and socialists throughout much of the world. Thousands of Frenchmen were exiled to Algeria, while German and Italian political exiles emigrated to the United States. They acquainted many other people with the tenets of republicanism, nationalism, and socialism. The mid-century revolutions influenced the subsequent political evolution of each country that had had a revolution in the spring of 1848.

The failure of the mid-century revolutions was a particularly significant juncture in the history of modern Germany; the hopes of many for its unification along liberal lines—either as a truly constitutional monarchy or a republic—came to naught. But the Revolutions of 1848 accentuated support for German nationalism. A Prussian minister recognized that "The old times are gone and cannot return. To return to the decaying conditions of the past is like scooping water with a sieve." The revolution did produce a Prussian constitution and an elected assembly, however, which the king only slightly modified in 1849–1850 when he again took control.

The Habsburg monarchy, too, survived the liberal and nationalist challenges of 1848. Young Habsburg Emperor Francis Joseph bragged to his mother, "We have thrown the constitution overboard and Austria has now only one master." The Austrian government had adroitly manipulated ethnic tensions, using a Croatian army against a Hungarian uprising. The situation was so complicated that a Hungarian noted that "the King of Hungary declared war on the King of Croatia, and the Emperor of Austria remained neutral, and all three monarchs were the same person." Hun-

gary, in which perhaps as many as 100,000 people were killed during the fighting in 1848–1849, remained within the monarchy as Austria's junior partner. But none of the major reforms undertaken within the monarchy in the wake of the revolution were abolished during the counter-revolution. Peasants were now free from labor obligations previously owed to landowners. Although the progressive Kremsier constitution had been tossed aside, the Austrian constitution of March 1849 did establish a parliament. Yet, the goals of many Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, and other ethnic groups remained unachieved. On the Italian peninsula, Habsburg control of Lombardy and Venetia, the existence of many other separate states, and the indifference of most people to Italian nationalism remained daunting obstacles to Italian unification.

The failure of the Revolutions of 1848 in Central Europe left little doubt that German unification could only be achieved under the auspices of either Prussia or Austria. By revealing the complexity of national tensions and rivalries within the Habsburg monarchy, it now seemed even more unlikely that Austria would have an interest in bringing about German unification, and that instead it would oppose an expansion of Prussian power. Prussia would only be likely to support German unification, however, if it would serve to extend its own power within the German states and in Europe.

German unification under any auspices would potentially entail a drastic change in the European state system, particularly in Central Europe. France and Russia, above all, had reasons not to want to see the emergence of a stronger state in Central Europe. The unification of Italy, too, could alter the balance of power, potentially threatening Austria and perhaps France as well.

Even in failure, the revolutions in the Italian states had only made Italian nationalists more determined to work for national unification. Continued Austrian control of Venetia and Lombardy, and the division of the rest of Italy into a number of small states, including the Papal States, remained serious impediments to Italian unification, despite the eagerness of Piedmontese liberals to unify the peninsula under Piedmont's leadership. Likewise, the defeat of the Hungarian and Bohemian revolutions, as well as the failure of the radical revolution in Vienna that had first challenged Habsburg rule, by no means ended the threat to the Habsburg monarchy.