

# Reaction Versus Progress 1815-1848

Chapter XI Sections 52-57 pp. 453-499

## Introduction

Two revolutions took place between 1785 and 1815. The first was political, in Europe: organization of government, taxation, individual rights, and class power. The other was economic, almost entirely in England: techniques of manufacture, formation of capital, and distribution of products. After 1815, the effect of each revolution deeply affected life in all of Europe. Conservatism and “reaction” had won out on the Continent, but industrialization was to enlarge the business and wage-earning classes and make it harder for monarchs and aristocrats to monopolize public power.

Industrialism grew up within capitalism, with control of capital through private ownership, and most capital owned/controlled by the few. In West Europe, property was considered the basis of personal independence and political liberty; commercial capital came from trade and agricultural production of previous generations. In the rest of the world, productive capital was owned by the public and controlled by the state. Where capital and western traditions are lacking, the state has typically dominated innovation, planning, decision making, and control.

Europe, for a time, would be “overwhelmingly more powerful than other parts of the world, leading to a world-wide European ascendancy in the form of imperialism...by the twentieth century, it provoked a retaliation, in which other countries tried hastily to industrialize in self-protection, or to improve the condition of their peoples, desperately hoping to catch up with the West while loudly denouncing it as imperialistic and capitalistic.”

## 52. The Industrial Revolution in Britain

pp. 455-463

- A. Introduction: The term Industrial Revolution refers to the shift from hand tools to power machinery, beginning in Great Britain between 1780 and 1830. People are conservative, and the shift required a “certain **mobility** of people and wealth. Such mobility may be produced by state planning, as the industrialization of the Soviet Union in recent times. In England a high degree of social mobility existed in the eighteenth century because of a long historical development.”
- B. The Agricultural Revolution in Britain
  1. From 1688 to 1832 the British government was in the hands of the squirearchy, landowners residing on their estates who, seeking to increase their money incomes, began experimenting with improved techniques: the use of animal fertilizer and scientific crop rotation; scientific breeding; growth of new crops, such as turnips (“Turnip” Townshend); and use of new implements, such as the drill seeder (Jethro Tull) and horse-hoe.
  2. A major barrier was the old village system of open fields, common lands, and semi-collective methods of cultivation--by farmers bound by custom. Parliament passed “**Enclosure Acts**” by which the old common lands and unfenced fields were enclosed. Small farmers now could not make a living from their own plots, and land ownership became concentrated in the hands of a relatively small class of wealthy landlords, with land rented out to a small class of substantial farmers. As a result, productivity of land and labor was increased. **Labor was released** for other pursuits--with country people working as hired hands or as cottage workers under the domestic system. This labor force was thus dependent on daily wages, was mobile, and was available to move to the new cities.
- C. Industrialism in Britain: Incentives and Inventions
  1. Britain, and only Britain, had the essential preconditions:
    - a. Colonial empire, world markets, huge mercantile marine
    - b. **Markets** were available for woolen cloth, and the possibilities in cotton cloth were enormous, if ways of producing more could be developed.
    - c. **Capital** was available and mobile due to the rise of banking, credit, and stock companies
  2. These conditions induced a series of successful textile developments: the flying shuttle to improve loom efficiency; a spinning jenny, which was a mechanized spinning wheel, and power driven looms and spinners. The key to the use of cotton was the cotton gin, then technology for making better quality thread.
  3. Meanwhile, the steam engine had been developed
    - a. Wood shortage of early 1700's brought a charcoal shortage for making iron; smelters turned to coal, but mines had water problems.
      - (1) Thomas Newcomen developed an inefficient steam engine in 1702 to pump out the mines
      - (2) James Watt produced a much more efficient model in 1769; precision engines were being produced by 1800, leading to the development of transportation systems.

### C. Some Social Consequences of Industrialism in Britain

1. Between 1750 and 1850 the population of Britain tripled from 10 to 30 million, mostly in the new industrial cities of the midlands and the north (coal/iron centers)
2. The population was also urbanized--with 31 cities over 50,000
- \*3. Manchester expanded from a market town organized as a manor to a city of 450,000 people, but it was unable to incorporate to deal with the urban problems such as crime, water purity, sewers, garbage. Such new cities in general were drab, sooty, dark; homes were poorly built and closely packed. Family life disintegrated in the slums.
- \*4. Mills required unskilled labor, with low status and pay--largely by women and children. Conditions were poor, hours long, work repetitious and regimented.
5. Workers were "a mass of recently assembled humanity without traditions or common ties. Each bargained individually with his employer, who was a small businessman, facing a ferocious competition with others...held his 'wages bill' to the lowest possible figure...."
6. "The factory owners, the new 'cotton lords,' were the first industrial capitalists. They were often self-made men, who owed their position to their own intelligence, persistence, and foresight. They lived in comfort without ostentation or luxury, saving from each year's income to build up their factories and their machines. Hard-working themselves, they thought that landed gentlemen were usually idlers and that the poor tended to be lazy. They were usually honest...; they would make money by any means the law allowed....Most of them disapproved of public regulation of their business, though a few...would have accepted some regulation that fell on all competitors equally. A cotton magnate, the elder Robert Peel, in 1802 pushed the first Factory Act through Parliament. [This act never provided for factory inspectors, a "continental bureaucracy," and so was ignored.]

### D. Classical Economics: "Laissez Faire"

1. The attitude of industrialists were strengthened by the new science of "political economy" begun by **Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations***--a work which had attacked government interference in favor of the natural working out of the laws of production and exchange. Smith was followed by the Manchester School of classical economics which worked out the **theory of laissez faire capitalism**
  - a. Free market works according to natural laws--as the law of supply and demand and the law of diminishing returns.
  - b. Each individual must be free to follow his own enlightened self interest.
  - c. Government should do little besides securing life and property through reasonable laws and reliable courts to assure private contracts, debts, and obligations.
  - d. Education and charity should be left to private initiative.
2. **David Ricardo**: The working man must expect only a bare minimum living. The operation of an "**iron law of wages**" shows that a worker receiving more than a subsistence wage breeds more children, who eat up the excess and reduce the working class again to subsistence
3. **Thomas Malthus**: The growth of population proceeds geometrically while food production increases more slowly; the surplus population--those who cannot find work--must starve to keep the population in check.
4. Were things really worse after the Industrial Revolution? (Read page 463)

## 53. The Advent of the "Isms"

pp. 463-474

- A. Introduction: Between 1815 and 1848 appeared a variety of "isms". Often the ideas were not new; many originated in the Enlightenment or even earlier. But: "The appearance of so many 'isms' shows rather that people were making their ideas more systematic. To the 'philosophy' of the Enlightenment were now added an intense activism and a partisanship generated during the French Revolution."
- B. Romanticism: A new way of sensing all human experience: Love of the unclassifiable--moods, impressions, experiences, idiosyncrasies. Valued emotions, the subconscious--feeling as well as reason. Love of the mysterious, of strange and distant societies; nostalgia for the middle ages. Concern for the expression of inner genius, which makes its own rules and laws--genius of an individual, a people (*Volkgeist*), or an epoch (*Weltanschauung*): Herder.
- C. **Classical Liberalism** represented the ideas of men of business, professions.
  1. Belief in "modern," efficient, reasonable. Desire parliaments, with responsible government, free press, speech, assembly. Fear or "mob rule"--that is, democracy.
  2. Rights of man, but emphasis on property. Favor *laissez-faire*, limiting government actions. Supported lower tariffs, free trade so each nation could produce what it did best. Progress through wealth, technical change. Anti-military.
- D. Radicalism, Republicanism, Socialism

1. English “Philosophical Radicals” of 1820 (Jeremy Bentham): Reconstruct laws, courts, prisons, poor relief, municipal organization, rotten boroughs. Reform Parliament, the Church of England, the Peerage, and the squirearchy. They favored manhood suffrage.
  2. Continental “militant republicanism” was a minority, even in France. They were mainly the intelligentsia (students and writers) plus working class radicals and the veterans of 1793. Repressed by the police, they formed secret societies. Opposed the Church and monarchy.
  3. **Socialists** shared many views of republicans, but also attacked the power and wealth of owners, private enterprise, and the idea of competition. They wanted communal ownership and social justice, brought about through government action.
    - a. **Robert Owen** (1771-1858): A Scottish mill owner, he worked to improve the lives of his workers. He is associated with paternalistic capitalism, but he also helped found the co-operative movement and can be regarded as one of the founders of Brit Socialism.
    - b. **Henri Comte de Saint-Simon** (1760-1825): Nobleman who supported revolutions. Wanted a planned society, with public ownership of equipment and capital. Believed social engineers should plan great projects, coordinate labor and resources for productive uses.
    - c. **Charles Fourier** (1772-1837): French thinker who wanted to sweep away all existing institutions in favor of a new subdivision, phalansteries of 1620 people where each would follow his natural inclinations. Utopian dreamer; ideas inspired Brook Farm in the US.
    - d. **Louis Blanc** (1811-1882): French journalist who favored workingman’s socialism. Hostile to owners and the bourgeoisie. Prior to the 1848 Revolution he proposed social workshops, directed by laborers working of, by, and for themselves.
- E. Nationalism: Western Europe
1. Nationalism was pervasive, but was latent where nations were unified; where disunified or there was foreign rule, it became focused --as Italy and Germany. Led by intellectuals, influenced by Herder. Cultural goals became political: a sovereign state representing a people--those speaking the same language, sharing traditions and customs. It soon became revolutionary, with secret societies like Italy’s Carbonari; at times it blended with Freemasonry. **Joseph Mazzini** (1805-1872), Young Italy.
  2. In Germany, frustration brought obsession with nationalism--as in the works of the Grimms and Hegel. To Hegel, there was no fixed right or wrong. Reality was a process, with an internal logic. Change was based on the mind’s ability to produce opposites--the Dialectic. A thesis would produce its opposite, or antithesis; their fight would ultimately reconcile to form a synthesis. To Hegel, history was the key to unlock meaning. Germans such as Leopold von Ranke founded “scientific” history. “The Germans, said Ranke, had a mission from God to develop a culture and a political system entirely different from those of the French; they were destined to “create the pure German state corresponding to the genius of the nation.””
- F. Nationalism: Eastern Europe
1. Poles and Magyars had long sought political nationhood, but eastern European cultures, as Czech, Slovak, Rumanian, Serb, Croat) were submerged. In the 19th century, patriots demanded the preservation of historic cultures--through folk tales, languages, and history. Russia developed a pan-Slavism, slavophilism, as their version of the German Volksgeist.
  2. Conservatism remained strong, based on the institutions of absolute monarchy, aristocracy, and the Church. It built on Burke, whose basic idea was that every people must change its institutions by gradual adaptation. Monarchism returned to the old concept of maintaining “throne and altar”. Humanitarianism also grew, as people were moved by the misery of the poor and the slaves; any degrading of humanity was seen as foreign to true civilization.

#### 54. The Dike and the Flood: Domestic

pp. 474-477

- A. Introduction: The settlement of 1815 had allowed a degree of representative institutions in German states and even Poland. But the Revolution had frightened the privileged, aristocratic elites--and the years after 1815 saw a cycle of repression--revolt--repression.
- B. Reaction after 1815: France and Poland
  1. In 1815 the French “white terror” struck at republicans, Bonapartists, and Protestants. The first Chamber of Deputies was “more royalist than the king.” Reaction intensified with the death of Louis XVIII in 1824; he was followed by **Charles X**, youngest and most reactionary brother of Louis XVI. He attacked any liberalism, for he had “learned nothing, forgotten nothing.”
  2. Nationalism was emerging in Poland. Alexander I had first allowed a constitution and limited freedoms, but formation of secret societies brought repression.

- C. Reaction after 1815: the German States and Britain
1. German universities were a hotbed of nationalism and republicanism. Assassinations by student activists brought Metternich's Carlsbad Decrees, dissolving student groups and censoring any new ideas.
  2. In Britain, the propertied classes (farmers) passed the **Corn Laws**, a high tariff on grain. A protest meeting in Manchester (by workers) brought an attack on demonstrators by police under Wellington (the "Peterloo Massacre"); Parliament passed the Six Acts, outlawing "seditious and blasphemous" literature, using a stamp act to limit cheap newspapers, allowing the search of private houses, and forbidding demonstrations of any kind.

## 55. The Dike and the Flood: International

pp. 477-484

- A. After the Congress of Vienna, the great powers met regularly to discuss issues. They formed the Holy Alliance: "on the face of it a statement of Christian purpose and international concord, gradually became an alliance for the suppression of revolutionary and even liberal activity...."
- B. The Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1818
1. Tsar Alexander suggested that a permanent European union be formed, with international military forces to safeguard recognized states against change by violence. Britain refused to make such a commitment, reserving the right of independent judgment of foreign policy.
  2. The Congress agreed to suppress the slave trade; but since only Britain had the power to do so, no one wanted to give them the right to act. The illicit trade continued.
- C. Revolution in Southern Europe: The Congress of Troppau, 1820 -- Revolutionary demonstrations in Spain and Naples brought the collapse of corrupt governments. The Congress met at Troppau, where Metternich and Alexander agreed to the Protocol of Troppau, recognizing the idea of collective security. France and Britain refused to accept it, but Russia, Prussia, and Austria agreed to send an Austrian army to Naples (to restore the corrupt Bourbons).
- D. Spain and the Near East: the Congress of Verona, 1822 -- Many Neapolitan revolutionaries fled to Spain, where revolution soon broke out. A Russian Greek named Ypsilanti led a force into Rumania in a Grecophilic movement. Alexander refused to support the Greeks, who were defeated. The Congress then agreed to send a French army to Spain, and the small force of constitutionalists, liberals, and revolutionaries was quickly crushed.
- E. **Latin American Independence**
1. Spanish America enjoyed trade with Britain during the Napoleonic wars, and after 1815 opposed returning to tight Spanish control. One result was the split between criollos (Spanish born in America) and peninsulares (born in Spain; had highest prestige, offices).
  2. Latin American revolutions were led by constitutional liberals, including Simón Bolívar and **José de San Martín**. Revolts began against Joseph Bonaparte, but became serious when reactionary Ferdinand VII refused any concessions. Bolívar freed Columbia and Venezuela; San Martín freed Chile and Argentina; and the two cooperated in Peru. In Mexico, a mass rising of Indians and mestizos was led by Father Hidalgo (September 16); it was put down by middle and upper class leaders who then completed the independence movement.
  3. At Verona, Alexander hoped to encourage joint intervention in Spanish America; the British, happy with their trade, refused--and could prevent any action. The puny new USA supported the revolutions by unilaterally declaring the Monroe Doctrine.
  4. The Congress System was effectively ended; it represented the old status quo, unable to accommodate to new realities. It propped up corrupt governments unable to stand alone and fought change. Members supported their own interests rather than the ideal of cooperation.
- F. Russia: The Decembrist Revolt, 1825 -- Alexander died in 1825. A secret society of young officers, influenced by revolutionary ideals, made a brief rebellion in support of the more liberal of two possible successors. These Decembrists were crushed; Nicholas I Romanov took power. He was to rule autocratically for thirty years. The dike was still holding back the revolutionary flood.

## 56. The Breakthrough of Liberalism in the West: Revolutions of 1830-32

pp. 484-495

- A. Seepage Begins: By 1825 most of Latin America was independent. In Europe, a revolution began again in Greece, aided by Nicholas I plus both France and Britain. A joint naval action destroyed a Turkish fleet, leading in 1827 to an independent Greece and autonomous Balkan states of Serbia, Wallachia, and Moldavia. Egypt became autonomous, a center of Arabic, anti-Turkish feeling.

- B. France, 1824-1830: The July Revolution, 1830 -- In France, Charles X paid annuities to emigrés. Repudiated by the legislature, he issued the July Ordinances, calling for press censorship and an aristocratic legislature. The bourgeoisie was ousted from power, but Parisian republicans set up barricades. Charles abdicated and fled; the bourgeoisie took control under Lafayette (symbol of national unity). Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, became constitutional monarch, once again under the tricolor. The bourgeoisie was in power, not the republicans.
- C. Revolutions of 1830: Belgium Poland, and elsewhere -- The Paris insurrection set off Belgium and Poland. A Polish revolt was crushed by Nicholas and rejoined to Russia, which began a program of “russification”. In the Netherlands, the Dutch union made sense economically but not politically. The Belgians won independence and chose a German who had married into the British royal family as king. Britain and France (Talleyrand), agreed to guarantee the neutrality of Belgium, and all Europe signed. Small scale revolutionary acts broke out all over Europe (especially in Italy). All were crushed, but it was obvious that basic problems needed to be solved.
- D. Reform in Great Britain
1. Under prime ministers like Peel and Channing, the Tory government was moving towards liberalism: freer trade, religious toleration expanded to political rights, reduction of capital punishment, development of a police. The main blocks were the Corn Laws and the need to reform of the House of Commons.
  2. Any attempt to reform Parliament was blocked by the House of Lords and Wellington. A Whig government pushed reform and the Lords were forced to yield by the threat to create enough new Whig lords to pass the bill. The result was the Reform Bill of 1832: more voters, but only from the middle class; elimination of rotten boroughs and provision for reps from the new industrial cities. The Liberal Party was formed, made up of aristocratic Whigs, radical industrialists, and liberal Tories. The old Tories became the new Conservatives.
  - \*3. Changes following: abolition of slavery (1833); new Poor Law (1834); modernized municipal structure (1835); House of Commons open to reporters (1836). Conservatives became the new champions of the workers: Factory Act of 1833 was the first to have enforceable child labor laws; Ten Hours Act of 1847, limiting labor hours of women and children--and effectively of men also.
  4. The Anti-Corn-Law League was formed in 1838--industrialists and workers against Tory land-owners. The Tory government was finally forced to yield in 1846, due to the influence of the Irish famine. Industry was the governing element; free trade was the basis of the economy. Britain ruled the sea and its governments were willing to throw their weight around.

## 57. The Triumph of the West-European Bourgeoisie

pp. 495-499

- A. The “golden age” of the Bourgeoisie
1. The propertied classes were now in control in Britain and France with the “stake in society” doctrine. In England, Tory landed interests worked for the poor and limited the power of the capitalist elite. In France, the old aristocracy was gone and the upper bourgeois was in full control--so less was done for the workers.
  2. Industrialization was rapid; national income rose, but most went to the owners, who invested heavily. Corporations were formed, the factory system took hold and output rose rapidly--iron up 300% in Britain (1830-48) and 65% in France (1830-1845). Railroad building boomed after 1840, and Cunard steamship lines began regular trans-atlantic runs. Vast amounts of venture capital were exported to the US.
- B. The Frustration and Challenge of Labor -- Republicans in France, radical democrats in England felt cheated. Excluded from government, they sought change through revolutionary or utopian channels. Told by economists not to expect change from within, they began to advocate violence. The British working poor were upset by the Poor Law of 1834; it corrected abuses, but it granted relief only to persons willing to enter a workhouse or poorhouse. (Read Dickens for details.) They objected to the idea of a labor market, where workers were bought and sold. One answer was the union movement.
- C. Socialism and Chartism -- Socialism was another answer; many looked back to the ideas of Robespierre and the egalitarian ideals of the First Republic. In Britain, socialism blended with the idea of parliamentary reform in the anti-capitalist mass movement called Chartism. **Chartism's** goals were to secure universal manhood suffrage and abolition of property qualifications for membership in Parliament. Petitions with millions of signatures were collected, and ignored. Made unpopular by a radical wing favoring force, the movement died out. It did have a major impact on the labor laws of the 1840's, and by 1918 all major provisions of the Chartist program had been accepted.

This chapter contains a large amount of very important information; your knowledge of the following major ideas will be tested:

1. What brought about the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain?
  - a. Agricultural revolution
  - b. Transportation changes (roads and canals)
  - c. “Essential preconditions”
  - d. Inventions
2. What were the consequences of the Industrial Revolution?
  - a. Mill conditions
  - b. Towns such as Manchester
  - c. Concept of laissez faire capitalism
3. What were the radical responses to the ideas of laissez faire capitalism
  - a. Philosophical Radicals of England
  - b. Robert Owen and English socialism
  - c. French socialism
4. What accounts for the stirring of moods of violence in Europe after 1815?