

**Chapter 20****INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND ITS IMPACT ON EUROPEAN SOCIETY**

The Industrial Revolution was one of the major forces of change in the nineteenth century as it led Western civilization into the machine-dependent modern world. It began in Britain, which had an agricultural revolution that increased the quantity of foodstuffs, population growth that created a supply of labor, capital for investment, a good supply of coal and iron ore, and a transportation revolution that created a system of canals, roads, and bridges. As the world's leading colonial power, Britain also had access to overseas markets. The cotton industry led the way as new machines such as the spinning jenny and power loom enabled the British to produce cheap cotton goods. Most important was the steam engine, which led to factories and a system of steam-powered railroads that moved people and goods efficiently. The Great Exhibition of 1851 in London showed the world the achievements of Britain's Industrial Revolution. Industrialization also spread to the Continent, and by 1860, the United States was also well along that road. In the non-Western world, industrial development was much slower, in large part because European colonial powers deliberately pursued a policy of preventing the growth of mechanized industry, thus keeping the colonies as purchasers of industrial products. The Industrial Revolution also transformed the social world of Europe. The creation of an industrial proletariat produced a whole new force for change. The work environment, especially in the new factories and

mines, was dreadful, characterized by long hours, unsafe conditions, monotonous labor, and the use of child labor. Eventually, laws were passed to improve working conditions, especially for women and children. Labor unions were also formed to improve wages and conditions but met with limited success. Workers sometimes protested by destroying the factories and machines, as did the Luddites. The Chartist movement petitioned Parliament, calling for the right to vote and other reforms, but the members of Parliament refused the demands. The development of a wealthy industrial middle class presented a challenge to the long-term hegemony of landed wealth. Though that wealth had been threatened by the fortunes of commerce, it had never been overturned. But the new bourgeoisie became more demanding, as we shall see in the next chapter.

The Industrial Revolution seemed to prove to Europeans the underlying assumption of the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century—that human beings were capable of dominating nature. By rationally manipulating the material environment for human benefit, people could attain new levels of material prosperity and produce machines not dreamed of in their wildest imaginings. Lost in the excitement of the Industrial Revolution were the voices that pointed to the dehumanization of the workforce and the alienation from one's work, one's associates, oneself, and the natural world.

**Chapter 21****REACTION, REVOLUTION, AND ROMANTICISM, 1815-1850**

In 1815, a conservative order was reestablished throughout Europe at the Congress of Vienna, which made peace at the end of the Napoleonic wars and tried to restore Europe's "legitimate" rulers. The great powers, whose cooperation was embodied in the Concert of Europe, attempted to ensure the durability of the new conservative order by intervening to uphold conservative governments. Great Britain, however, seeking new markets, opposed intervention when the Latin American colonies of Spain and Portugal declared their independence. Within the European countries, conservative rulers worked to reestablish the old order.

But the revolutionary waves of the 1820s and 1830s made it clear that the ideologies of liberalism and nationalism, first unleashed by the French Revolution and now reinforced by the spread of the Industrial Revolution, were still alive and active. Liberalism favored freedom both in politics and in economics. Natural rights and representative government were essential, but most liberals favored limiting the right to vote to male property owners. Nationalism, with its belief in a community with common traditions, language, and customs, threatened the status quo in divided Germany and Italy and the multiethnic Austrian Empire. The forces of liberalism and nationalism, however, faced enormous difficulties as failed revolutions in Poland, Russia, Italy, and Germany all testify. At the same time, reform legislation in Britain and successful revolutions in Greece, France, and Belgium demonstrated the continuing strength of these forces for change. In 1848,

they erupted once more as revolutions broke out all across Europe. A republic with universal manhood suffrage was established in France, but conflict emerged between socialist demands and the republican political agenda. The Frankfurt Assembly worked to create a unified Germany, but it also failed. In Austria, the liberal demands of Hungarians and other nationalities were eventually put down. In Italy, too, uprisings against Austrian rule failed when conservatives regained control. Although they failed, both liberalism and nationalism would succeed in the second half of the nineteenth century but in ways not foreseen by the idealistic liberals and nationalists. The disorder of the age also led European states to create civilian police forces.

Efforts at reform had a cultural side as well in the movement of Romanticism. Romantics reacted against what they viewed as the Enlightenment's excessive emphasis on reason. They favored intuition, feeling, and emotion, which became evident in the medieval fantasies of Walter Scott, the poetry of William Wordsworth and Percy Bysshe Shelley, the Gothic literature of Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe, the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich and Eugene Delacroix, and the music of Ludwig van Beethoven and Hector Berlioz. Romanticism also brought a revival of religion evident in a renewed interest in Catholicism's medieval heritage and in a Protestant "awakening."

## Chapter 22

# AN AGE OF NATIONALISM AND REALISM 1850-1871

Between 1850 and 1871, the national state became the focus of people's loyalty, and the nations of Europe spent their energies in achieving unification or reform. France attempted to relive its memories of Napoleonic greatness through the election of Louis Napoleon, Napoleon's nephew, as president and later Emperor Napoleon III. Louis Napoleon was one of a new generation of conservative political leaders who were practitioners of *Realpolitik*.

Unification to achieve a national state preoccupied leaders in Italy and Germany. The dreams of Mazzini became a reality when the combined activities of Count Cavour and Giuseppe Garibaldi finally led to the unification of Italy in 1870.

Under the guidance of Otto von Bismarck, Prussia engaged in wars with Denmark, Austria, and France before it finally achieved the goal of national unification in 1871.

Reform characterized developments in other Western states. Austria compromised with Hungarian nationalists and created the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary. Russia's defeat in the Crimean War led to reforms under Alexander II, which included the freeing of the Russian serfs. In Great Britain, the pressures of industrialization led to a series of reforms that made the realm of Queen Victoria more democratic. The American Civil War ended with the union of the states preserved and slavery abolished. Canada achieved dominion status from Britain, which included the right to rule itself in domestic affairs.

Political nationalism had emerged during the French revolutionary era and had become a powerful force for change during the first half of the nineteenth century, but its triumph came only after 1850. Associated initially with middle-class liberals, it would have great appeal to the broad masses as well by the end of the century as people created their national "imagined communities." In 1871, however, the political transformations stimulated by the force of nationalism were by no means complete. Significantly large minorities, especially in the multiethnic empires controlled by the Austrians, Turks, and Russians, had not achieved the goal of their own national states. Moreover, the nationalism that had triumphed by 1871 was no longer the nationalism that had been closely identified with liberalism. Liberal nationalists had believed that unified nation-states would preserve individual rights and lead to a greater community of European peoples. Rather than unifying people, however, the new, loud, chauvinistic nationalism of the late nineteenth century divided them as the new national states became embroiled in bitter competition after 1871.

The period between 1850 and 1871 was also characterized by the emergence of Marxian socialism, new advances in science including the laws of thermodynamics, a germ theory of disease, and Darwin's theory of evolution. In the arts, Realism prevailed, evident in the writers and artists who were only too willing to portray realistically the grim world in which they lived.

**Chapter 23****MASS SOCIETY IN AN “AGE OF PROGRESS,” 1871-1894**

The Second Industrial Revolution helped create a new material prosperity that led Europeans to believe they had ushered in a new age of progress. In this second revolution, steel, chemicals, electricity, petroleum, and the internal combustion engine led the way to new industrial frontiers. Europe became divided into an industrialized north and a poorer south and east, while European manufactured goods and investment capital were exported abroad in exchange for raw materials, creating a true world economy. New jobs provided work opportunities for many women, although prostitution remained an avenue for survival for other women. Working-class socialist parties, such as Germany's Social Democratic Party, began working for change by forming trade unions and electing representatives to legislative bodies.

A major feature of this “new age of progress” was the emergence of a mass society. Better sanitation and improved diets led to a dramatic population increase, while emigration enabled Europe to avoid overcrowding. Class divisions continued to dictate styles of living, while industrialism reinforced traditional gender patterns: women stayed at home while men went out to work. Nevertheless, some women began to espouse birth control as an avenue for change. The lower classes benefited from the right to vote, a higher standard of living, and a modicum of education from new schools as most states assumed responsibility for mass compulsory education for children. New forms of mass transportation, combined with new

work patterns, enabled large numbers of people to participate in new mass leisure activities, including weekend excursions to amusement parks and seaside resorts, dance halls, and sporting events. New patterns of mass consumption arose, encouraging people to accumulate more material possessions.

By 1871, the national state had become the focus of people's lives. Especially in western Europe, liberal and democratic reforms brought new possibilities for greater participation in the political process, although women were still largely excluded from political rights. After 1871, the national state also began to expand its functions beyond all previous activities by adopting social insurance measures to protect workers against accidents, illness, and old age, and by enacting public health and housing measures, designed to curb the worst ills of urban living.

This extension of state functions took place in an atmosphere of increased national loyalty. After 1871, Western national states increasingly sought to solidify the social order and win the active loyalty and support of their citizens by deliberately cultivating national feelings. Yet this policy contained potentially great dangers. As we shall see in the next chapter, nations had discovered once again that imperialistic adventures and military successes could arouse nationalistic passions, but they also found that nationalistic feelings could lead to intense international rivalries that made war almost inevitable.

**Chapter 24****AN AGE OF MODERNITY, ANXIETY, AND IMPERIALISM 1894-1914**

What many Europeans liked to call their “age of progress” in the decades before 1914 was also an era of anxiety. Driven by national rivalry, social Darwinism, religious and humanitarian concerns, and economic demands for raw materials and overseas investment, at the end of the nineteenth century Western nations began a renewed frenzy of imperialist expansion around the world. By 1914, European nations had carved up most of Africa into colonies and created spheres of influence in Asia. Both China and Japan were also affected by Western imperialism. The opening of China to Western trade concessions ultimately led to a revolution and the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. Japan adopted Western military, educational, and governmental ways, even becoming an imperialist power in its own right. At the same time, Western treatment of non-Western peoples as racial inferiors caused educated, non-Western elites in the colonies to initiate movements for national independence. Before these movements could be successful, however, the power that Europeans had achieved through their mass armies and technological superiority had to be weakened. The Europeans soon inadvertently accomplished this task by demolishing their own civilization on the battlegrounds of Europe in World War I.

This war was a result of the growing tensions that arose as a result of national rivalry. In competing with and

fearing each other, the European nations formed defensive alliances that helped maintain a balance of power but also led to the creation of large armies, enormous military establishments, and immense arsenals. The alliances also generated tensions that were unleashed when Europeans were unable to resolve a series of crises, especially in the Balkans, and rushed into the catastrophic carnage of World War I.

The cultural revolutions before 1914 had also produced anxiety and a crisis of confidence in European civilization. Albert Einstein showed that time and space were relative to the observer, that matter was simply another form of energy, and that the old Newtonian view of the universe was no longer valid. Sigmund Freud argued that human behavior was governed not by reason but by the unconscious, adding to the uncertainties of the age. Some intellectuals used the ideas of Charles Darwin to argue that in the struggle of races and nations the fittest survive. Collectively, these new ideas helped create a modern consciousness that questioned most Europeans' optimistic faith in reason, the rational structure of nature, and the certainty of progress. As we shall see in the next two chapters, the devastating experiences of World War I would turn this culture of uncertainty into a way of life after 1918.