

century, of the middle class, whose members advocated increased power and influence for themselves in both political and economic spheres.

Related to liberalism and another powerful driving force in nineteenth-century Europe was nationalism. The ultimate goal of nationalism is to create a unified nation-state, in which the citizens of that state identify with both the nation (the people) and with the state (the political community). The ideal of the nation-state was relatively new in Europe and in the world generally. Before the sixteenth century, most political communities were built on family dynasties (hereditary monarchies), with little regard for popular allegiance or national culture. In that century, powerful monarchs began to centralize political control within their countries and to distance themselves from outside control by emperors or popes. This movement coincided with the Protestant Reformation, which questioned and challenged the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church. In England, in 1534, for example, Henry VIII, in his efforts to divorce Catherine of Aragon and marry Anne Boleyn, signed the Act of Supremacy, which rejected papal authority and established the Church of England, with Henry in control. This was the beginning of the emergence of England as a nation-state and was followed by nation-state consolidation in Spain, France, and elsewhere.

The forging of centralized, unified, national states by monarchs, from the top down, is sometimes referred to as **civic nationalism**. **Popular nationalism**, the forging of states from the bottom up, is more recent still and is linked to the Enlightenment and uses the revolutionary ideas of the people as the source of power. This form of nationalism assumes that people who share a common language, culture, and identity—a nation—should be in charge of their own political destiny. It sees the people as a whole—rather than simply the elite—as the repository of culture. This kind of populist nationalism was apparent in France during the 1789 revolution, and was symbolized by people wearing their hair naturally, snubbing the use of wigs, and wearing common working trousers instead of silk breeches. In fact, ordinary working people, the emblem of the Revolution, were referred to as the *sans-culottes* (without fancy pants).

The political manifestation of nationalism is the demand for autonomous political communities based on the nation; it threatened primarily, of course, the multinational and autocratic states that still controlled most of Europe in the nineteenth century. Napoleon had helped spread these ideas, even creating new national states in Poland, Holland, and parts of Italy, but the Congress of Vienna abolished most of these states. The idea of nationalism remained widespread, however, and the precedent of the nation-state was established. In the years of reaction after 1815, Italian nationalist and revolutionary Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) popularized the principle of nationalism. In the 1830s, Mazzini founded a secret

organization, Young Italy, committed to ridding Italy of foreign rulers and creating a unified Italian state. "Neither pope nor king," he declared, "only God and the people." Later, he created an international branch of his organization, Young Europe, which trained a network of conspirators across the Continent to agitate for democratic constitutions.

PRECURSORS TO 1848: THE 1830 REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

These liberal and national movements came together in revolts and revolutions in numerous places in the 1820s and 1830s, including Belgium (chafing under Dutch rule), Spain, and several Italian states. The best-known and most successful revolutionary movement before 1830, however, was the Greek revolt against Ottoman control. The Greeks won sympathy in Europe as a Christian nation struggling against Muslim domination and from the European sense that Western civilization had begun in Greece. So, in contrast to other national insurgencies, the revolt in Greece actually won support from some of the monarchies in Europe, and the Greeks won their independence in 1829. (The British romantic poet Lord Byron died while fighting for the Greek cause.)

But it was France, once again, that experienced the most important upheaval during this period—the July Revolution of 1830. The restored Bourbon monarch, Louis XVIII, had been succeeded by Charles X in 1824, who quickly moved toward a more absolutist regime, threatening to roll back most of the gains of the 1789 revolution. Legislative elections in 1830 brought in a legislature that opposed and resisted the reactionary tendencies of the king. In July, Charles declared the elections invalid, outlawed public assembly, and stepped up censorship. The response was immediate: Barricades were thrown up and workers, students, and intellectuals massed in the streets, defying the army and the police. Most of the army refused to fire on the protestors, however, and Charles, not wanting to suffer the same fate as his brother (Louis XVI, who was beheaded in 1793), abdicated and fled to England.

In seeking a successor as king, the revolutionaries bypassed the Bourbon line and placed on the throne the Duke of Orleans. As a young man, the Duke had served in the republican army of 1792, so he was assumed to be sympathetic to revolutionary ideals. He took the name Louis Philippe and called himself not the king of France, but the king of the French; he flew the tricolor flag of the Revolution, not that of the Bourbon lily. France still had a monarchy, but it was the end of the Bourbon monarchy, and this king owed his throne to the insurrection, not to his bloodline.

Word of the July uprising spread throughout Europe, sparking similar uprisings in Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, and

Poland. The outcomes of these revolts were mixed. In Brussels, disturbances just a month after the Paris events led to demands for the independence of Belgium from Holland, which was finally granted the following year. A nationalist revolt in Poland against Russia, however, was brutally repressed. In the aftermath, Poland was dissolved and merged into the Russian Empire, once again disappearing from the map. Nevertheless, the 1830 events were a clarion call to revolution that was heard all over the Continent. The French novelist Victor Hugo wrote, in 1831, that he had heard "the dull sound of revolution, still deep down in the earth, pushing out under every kingdom in Europe its subterranean galleries from the central shaft of the mine which is Paris."³

THE REVOLUTIONS OF 1848

In France, with two revolutions in as many generations, the principle of popular sovereignty was increasingly affirmed and consolidated, at least in rough form. So, when new hardships and renewed repression confronted the French in the 1840s, revolution was once again an option. A major economic recession and food shortages in 1846–1847 fueled popular unrest. The economic problems affected every country in Europe, not just France, and were caused in part by a devastating failure of the potato crop. The potato blight hit especially hard in Ireland, causing widespread famine, a million deaths, and the emigration of another million from the country.

The economic depression was accompanied in France by a new round of political repression in the 1840s. The Chamber of Deputies did provide a certain check on the power of the monarch, Louis Philippe, but with only one man in thirty eligible to vote, the chamber was increasingly irrelevant and ineffectual. The king resolutely opposed a popular campaign for broader voting rights and other reforms. Peaceful protest demonstrations in Paris, in February 1848, prompted police action, which led once again to street barricades and revolution. Louis Philippe, like Charles X eighteen years earlier, abdicated and fled to England. For a second time, a Paris revolution unseated a monarch in three days.

This time, however, the ouster of the monarch was not enough. By the 1840s, France, and especially Paris, was in the throes of the Industrial Revolution, with the consequent emergence of a new and vocal urban working class. Many workers insisted on a social revolution as well as a political one, and the ideas of socialism were gaining currency in the cities of France and other countries. In January 1848, Marx and Engels published their call for socialist revolution in *The Communist Manifesto*.

In Paris, a provisional government had established national workshops to provide jobs for the unemployed, and these now became a source of de-

BOX 4.1

Adam Mickiewicz: Romantic Poet and Revolutionary

The Polish national poet Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855) symbolizes the close association between romanticism, nationalism, and revolution. He first gained attention with his *Balady i romance* (Ballads and Romances, 1822), which opened the romantic era in Polish literature. His epic poetic masterpiece *Pan Tadeusz* is a nostalgic panorama of gentry society in its last days and the forces pulling it apart. In his fantasy drama *Dziady* (Forefathers Eve), Mickiewicz sees Poland as fulfilling a messianic role among European nations by embodying Christian themes of suffering and redemption. In this work and others, he glorifies resistance and rebellion. These romantic notions, and his image of Poland as "The Christ of Nations," became rallying calls for Polish nationalists all the way up through 1989.

Mickiewicz was a political activist as well as a brilliant writer. As a young man, he was enamored of Voltaire and other Enlightenment philosophers. He witnessed (and admired) the Napoleonic army when it entered his hometown on its expedition to Russia in 1812. His participation in patriotic literary clubs got him arrested and expelled from Poland, and he eventually ended up in Paris. He tried unsuccessfully to return to Poland in 1830, to support the doomed national insurrection against the Russians. During the Peoples' Spring of 1848, he set off for Italy to organize a Polish legion there to fight for the liberation of Italians from Austria. He issued a set of principles for the legion that echoed those of the Enlightenment:

Everybody in the nation is a citizen. All citizens are equal before the law. . . . To the Jew, our elder brother, esteem and help on his way to eternal good and welfare, and in all matters equal rights. . . . To every family, a plot of land under the care of the community. To every community, common land under the care of the nation.⁴

The 1848 revolutions failed, and Mickiewicz returned to Paris. He joined another heroic lost cause in 1855, traveling to Constantinople to join a Polish legion in the Crimean War to fight against Russia. He contracted cholera and died there. His body was returned to France, but in 1890 his remains were transported to Poland and buried with Polish kings in Wawel Cathedral in Kraków.

mands from workers for improved working conditions. In April, elections produced a new National Assembly, based on universal male suffrage, but it was overwhelmingly conservative. In June, the assembly resolved to close the workshops, and workers took to the streets in protest. They stormed the assembly, declared it dissolved, established their own provisional government, and called for a social revolution to supplement the purely political one. The army and the police sided with the government,

however, and restored the Constituent Assembly, which promptly declared martial law. Paris was convulsed with a raging class war in which armed workers confronted soldiers across barricades all over the city. In the Bloody June Days of June 24 to 26, several thousand people were killed and eleven thousand insurgents were imprisoned or deported. The specter of socialist revolution had been suppressed, but the events of June sent a shudder through all the governments of Europe.

As with the revolutions of both 1789 and 1830, the gains of the 1848 revolution in France were short-lived and soon reversed. In the aftermath of the June days, the Constituent Assembly began drafting a constitution for a new republic and called for the popular election of a president. One of the candidates was Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the nephew of the great Napoleon. He claimed to be a friend of the common people and also promised to restore order, an attractive combination after the traumatic events of the summer. He was elected by a landslide in December of 1848. But, in the tradition of his uncle, he soon undermined the democracy that brought him to power. In 1851, he seized absolute control in a *coup d'état* and dissolved the assembly; the next year, he declared himself emperor and took the name Napoleon III. Once again, the French political pendulum had swung back to reaction.

REVOLT SPREADS THROUGH EUROPE

The influence of the events in Paris reached far beyond French borders. In 1848 and 1849, revolts spread to Austria, Prussia, Hungary, Bohemia, and parts of Italy. Some of these revolts contained either the liberal or socialist ingredients of the French experience, but some also reflected peasant grievances against landlords or nationalist aspirations.

The most serious and widespread revolts struck the Austrian Empire of the Habsburg monarchy, with its capital at Vienna. The Austrian Empire was the most populous state in Europe after Russia. It had three major geographic divisions, Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary, containing a dozen nationalities, including Germans, Czechs, Magyars (Hungarians), Poles, and Slovaks, so that the empire was vulnerable to both liberalism and nationalism. Soon after news of the February revolution in Paris reached Vienna, that city faced its own insurrection. Workers and soldiers invaded the imperial palace, forcing Prince Metternich, stalwart of the Concert of Europe, to flee the city in disguise and make for England. As the government in Vienna crumbled, national revolts erupted among Czechs, Hungarians, and Italians under Habsburg control. Radical nationalists in Hungary declared a constitutional separation from the empire, and a few months later, moved their capital from Pressburg, near the

Austrian border, to Budapest, in the center of the country. The flustered emperor, Ferdinand, allowed a similar autonomous status to the Czechs in Bohemia. But by the fall, the revolutionary movement had spread so far and wide that he gave up, abdicated in favor of his eighteen-year-old nephew, Francis Joseph, and fled Vienna.

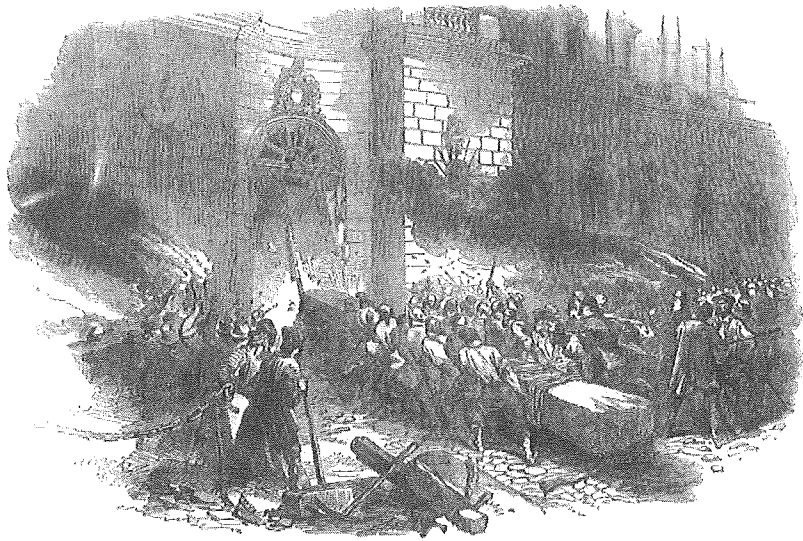
In Italy, nationalists drove out the Austrian garrisons and seized control in Milan, Tuscany, Sardinia, and elsewhere. Venice declared itself an independent republic. In Rome, Pope Pius IX fled the Vatican as a radical Roman republic was proclaimed, with Mazzini as one of its leaders. In Prussia, rioting in Berlin followed a few days after the insurrection in Vienna, compelling the Prussian king to promise a constitution. Finally, an assembly was called in Frankfurt, beginning in May, with the goal of uniting all the German states into a single, liberal, democratic state.

REPRESSION AND REACTION

During the 1848 Peoples' Spring, virtually all of Europe was rocked by the tempest, with exceptions being the most liberal state, Britain, and the most reactionary one, Russia. The changes during those few months were phenomenal, with revolutionaries, nationalists, and patriots demanding constitutions, representative assemblies, responsible government, extended suffrage, jury trials, the right of assembly, and freedom of the press, and with stupefied governments allowing constitutional assemblies, independent nations, and the abolition of serfdom.

Within a year, however, the forces of reaction were back in control, and the revolution was over. As we have seen, in France, the revolution had run its course by the end of 1848, with the election of Louis Napoleon as president. In Austria, the Habsburg monarchy, after the initial shocks of March 1848, regained its footing and deployed the army against rebels in Bohemia, Italy, and Hungary. The Russian tsar contributed one hundred thousand Russian troops to the suppression of the revolt in Hungary. And in Italy, an intervention by the French army helped drive Mazzini and the republicans out of Rome and restore the pope to the Vatican.

The German assembly in Frankfurt was defeated by divisions from within and conservative reaction from without. Composed of elected representatives from all parts of German-speaking Europe, the assembly wrote a constitution for a united Germany. But the representatives were divided over whether Germany should include only German ethnic territory or should also include the Austrians, whose empire in eastern Europe was mostly non-German. In the end, the assembly decided to exclude the Austrians and to make the Prussian king the emperor of a newly united, all-German nation. By that time, however, the pendulum had swung back



The Revolution of Germany: Storming the Arsenal, Berlin 1848. © Topham/The Image Works.

from revolution to reaction. Confident that he could contain the national movement by military force if necessary, the Prussian king declared that he would not “pick up a crown from the gutter”—a complete dismissal of the Frankfurt assembly and the popular-revolutionary-nationalist sentiment of 1848.

CONSEQUENCES AND LEGACY OF 1848

In the end, not one of the newly established republics survived. And, in only a few small states were any real constitutional gains made from the events of 1848. In France, the monarchy was toppled, but Louis Napoleon soon undermined the very republican institutions that brought him to power, and within three years the country once again had an authoritarian emperor. National liberty had not been secured anywhere in Europe by the Peoples’ Spring.

Despite these defeats, important changes had occurred, and 1848 remains a watershed year in European history, both for individual countries and for the Continent as a whole. France moved one step closer to representative government, with the final abolition of the monarchy and the permanent establishment of universal manhood suffrage. Manorialism was permanently abolished in Germany and the Habsburg lands, eliminating the last traces of serfdom. Prussia got a limited parliament.

The 1848 revolutions frightened the crowned heads of Europe and caused several to abdicate. Those who remained were cognizant of the threats posed by liberalism, nationalism, and socialism, and some of them took steps in years afterward to allay the problems that contributed to revolutionary ferment. In Russia, a new tsar, Alexander II, began a series of liberalizing reforms including, most importantly, the emancipation of serfs in 1861. The Austrian emperor Francis Joseph also made some concessions and compromises to both liberals and nationalists, including the 1867 *Ausgleich*, in which the monarchy recognized the desire for Hungarian autonomy and established the dual Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Most significantly, the ideas of revolution gained ground with the revolutions of 1848. That year showed that all the conservative monarchies of Europe were in jeopardy, not just the French king. Heretofore, revolution seemed to emerge only from that one country and had been mostly contained there. But, by the spring of 1848, revolutionary passion had infected Belgians, Italians, Hungarians, Germans, Bohemians, Dutch, and Danes. The Concert of Europe was a system, and while it had the strengths of a system—in the common determination of the conservative monarchs to stifle revolution—it also had its weaknesses, including the tendency for change in one part of Europe to affect all other parts. This was particularly true of ideas, which had spread inexorably from England and France through the rest of the Continent. The basic liberal principle of government by consent was steadily gaining influence as the middle class grew in size and influence. The ideas of nationalism and national unification were frustrated in 1848, but gained currency in that year—and within a generation, they proved victorious in Germany and Italy. And socialism, which had raised the red flag in France, Hungary, and elsewhere, was now on the political agenda.

1848 VS. 2011

In the shadow of the past

BY KURT ANDERSEN

LIKE NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST TODAY, continental Europe in the 1840s consisted of monarchs ruling impoverished masses who were suffering acute economic distress. Political liberalization was inching along too slowly to satisfy the intelligentsia and the new middle classes in the cities.

In Paris, 163 years ago last month, the regime threatened to put down a peaceful protest, which resulted in thousands of angry protesters taking to the streets and demanding democracy. The mobs swelled, streets were torn up, demonstrators fraternized with national guardsmen, relatively small numbers of protesters were killed, the army didn't intervene—and within days, King Louis-Philippe had abdicated, a republic was declared, freedom of speech was allowed, and elections were scheduled.

A decade earlier, what happened in Paris might have stayed in Paris. Instead it triggered a continental wave of democratic revolution, with the news spreading rapidly by new technologies: the electric telegraph, newspapers printed by steam-powered presses, railroads.

A week after the startling French success, protests arose in Munich, driving out the Bavarian King, and a week after Munich, protests erupted in Berlin, the Prussian capital, where troops attacked demonstrators. But then the King withdrew his soldiers, ended censorship, appointed a liberal Cabinet, agreed to parliamentary elections and fled the city. The wave hit Vienna, the capital of the Habsburg Empire, forcing the great power broker Metternich to resign. Then came days of street fighting in Milan, which caused the occupying Austrian army to retreat, and a rebellion in Venice forced out the Austrian rulers there. Only a month had passed since the Paris uprising, and the revolutionary tide kept rolling all spring in dozens more places.

But as we look at the parallels with this year's uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East, we should remember what came next. In France, the radicals pushed too far too fast, essentially demanding socialism and provoking a backlash. Elsewhere the empire simply struck back. By fall, most of the revolutions had been reversed; the rest were crushed within a year. And in 2011? We'll know soon enough. ■

Andersen's best-selling novel *Heyday* won the Langum Prize for best American historical fiction in 2007

TWO YEARS AND A CHANGED WORLD

1848	2011
Monarchies	Monarchies
Feeble parliaments	Crypto-monarchies
Brutal police	Brutal police
Limited suffrage	Limited suffrage
Limited freedom of expression	Limited freedom of expression

REVOLUTIONARY CONTAGION SPREADS QUICKLY

2010-11		
1. TUNISIA DEC. 17, 2010	6. EGYPT JAN. 25	10. KUWAIT FEB. 6
2. ALGERIA JAN. 5, 2011	7. LEBANON JAN. 25	11. SAUDI ARABIA FEB. 13
3. JORDAN JAN. 14	8. WEST BANK FEB. 2	12. IRAN FEB. 14
4. OMAN JAN. 17	9. IRAQ FEB. 3	13. LIBYA FEB. 15
5. YEMEN JAN. 22		14. MOROCCO FEB. 20

ECONOMIC WOES

1848 Failed harvests led to spikes in food prices, which, with high unemployment, impoverished the masses. The region was industrially backward compared with Britain and the U.S.

2011 Recent spikes in food prices and high unemployment impoverished the masses. The region is industrially backward compared with the E.U., U.S. and East Asia

AT THE ROOT OF THE TURMOIL

A NEW, GROWING, POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND CULTURALLY FRUSTRATED MIDDLE CLASS 1848 AND 2011

DEPOSED RULERS' COMFY EXILE

French King Louis-Philippe to England



Tunisian President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali to Saudi Arabia



SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED SUCCESSSES

1848 In February, after the government suppresses peaceful protests in France, three days of massive street protests and riots follow. The King abdicates, a republic is declared, and a hopeful democratic chaos ensues

2011 In January and February, in Tunisia and Egypt, after the government suppresses peaceful protests, 29 and 18 days (respectively) of massive street protests follow. Kinglike Presidents resign, and a hopeful democratic chaos ensues

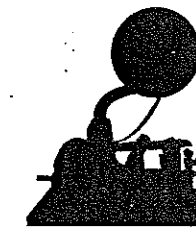
- 1848**
1. PARIS, FEB. 22, 1848
 2. MUNICH, BAVARIA MARCH 2
 3. COLOGNE, PRUSSIA MARCH 3
 4. BERLIN, PRUSSIA MARCH 11
 5. VIENNA, AUSTRIAN EMPIRE MARCH 12
 6. BUDA AND PEST, AUSTRIAN EMPIRE MARCH 18
 7. VENICE, AUSTRIAN EMPIRE MARCH 22
 8. MILAN, AUSTRIAN EMPIRE MARCH 22

AMBIVALENT ARMIES

1848 French national guardsmen fraternize with street protesters

2011 Tunisian and Egyptian soldiers fraternize with street protesters and refuse to fire on them. Some Libyan officers and troops join rebels

NEW TECHNOLOGY HELPS SPREAD THE WORD



1848 Revolutionary news is transmitted as never before by telegraph, steam-power-printed newspapers and railroads



2011 Revolutionary news is transmitted as never before by cell phones, the Internet and cable television

ONE-LINER BY VERY ODD RULER

'But are they allowed to do that?'

—Austro-Hungarian Emperor Ferdinand after his Chief Minister, Prince Klemens von Metternich, told him his people were having a revolution

'They give them pills at night, they put hallucinatory pills in their drinks, their milk, their coffee, their Nescafé.'

—Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi on why young Libyans are rebelling

WASHINGTON'S COZINESS WITH OLD REGIMES

1848 U.S. Navy trains and supplies Prussian imperial navy during the year

2011 U.S. military trains and supplies Egypt's military for decades

DEMOCRATIC AMERICA IS PLEASED ...

'The world has seldom witnessed a more interesting spectacle than the peaceful rising of the French people, resolved to secure themselves enlarged liberty.'

—PRESIDENT JAMES POLK

... BUT ALSO DUBIOUS, BECAUSE ...

'It's a beginning. I'm sure there will be difficult days ahead, and many questions remain unanswered.'

—PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

'They have decreed a republic, but it remains for them to establish one.'

—SENATOR JOHN C. CALHOUN

... YOU KNOW, THOSE PEOPLE ARE JUST SO, WELL, UNCIVILIZED

'The Italian character is so thoroughly imbued with intolerance and sentiments of hatred ... as to forbid the establishment of any form of government founded on mutual concession ... for the common good.'

—NATHANIEL NILES, U.S. Congressman and envoy to Torino

Arabs 'are simply not ready for free and fair elections.'

—BERNARD LEWIS, Princeton professor emeritus of Near Eastern studies



RICH, UNBUDGING REACTIONARY TO THE EAST

Russian Czar Nicholas I

1848 The Czar sends troops to help his fellow monarchs

Saudi King Abdullah

2011 The multibillionaire King says the Egyptian uprising was the work of foreign "infiltrators"

DEMONIZING TAGS FOR PROTESTERS

RADICALS SOCIALISTS ISLAMISTS

A FLOOD OF REFUGEES

1848 Poor, displaced Europeans, many of them Roman Catholic and darker-skinned, flee postrevolutionary chaos, immigrate to Protestant U.S.

2011 Poor, displaced North Africans, mostly Muslim and darker-skinned, try to flee postrevolutionary chaos, immigrate to Christian E.U.