

# 22

## Coping with Change in the New Industrial Era

1830-1870



Queen Victoria and family (center left) admiring a display in the Crystal Palace.

**I**n the spring of 1851, thousands of exhibitors from around the world gathered in Hyde Park, London, for the opening of the Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations. On display within the colossal Crystal Palace, so named for its dazzling glass walls and ceilings, were the latest machines and manufactures, as well as handicrafts, artworks, and exotic plants, animals, minerals. Six million visitors flocked to the exposition to marvel at the goods and cultural artifacts of many lands. Organized by the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, the Great Exhibition aimed to educate the public, spur technological progress, and illustrate the marvelous potential of unfettered world trade.

Exploring this array of products, wonders, and amazing inventions (including a primitive ancestor of the fax machine), attentive visitors must have thought about the dizzying speed of change in the world, though no one could have understood how compellingly the fair displayed the arrival of the modern age. London's population of about 2.3 million in 1850 was more than one-third of what the entire world's population had been in 8000 B.C.E. Between 1830 and 1870, global population grew by about 130 million, about three and a half times as much as in the entire first millennium B.C.E. Industrialization continued to spread across Europe and the United States, and global industrial output in those four decades increased by around 50 percent. In 1800 a steam engine could put out more than 100,000 watts of power, by 1870 about 1 million. Also by that year, rail locomotives could go more than sixty miles per hour, faster than any horse. Looking back, we can see that in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the world of machines, communication networks, urban living, and governing systems became much more like the one we live in today.

The Crystal Palace housed exhibits from overseas regions where British people and numerous other Europeans were settling in large numbers between 1830 and 1870. The first section of the chapter explores the global conditions that prompted a rapid acceleration of human migration from one part of the world to another in the nineteenth century. Tens of millions of men and women from both Europe and Asia traveled far from home to seek work, opportunity, and refuge, even as the forced transfer of African slaves across the Atlantic to American plantations finally came to an end. Mass global migration was multidirectional and complex, and it had profound, often disastrous consequences for the indigenous populations on whose lands newcomers encroached.

In the second part of the chapter we consider how societies in Europe, the Americas, and the Muslim lands attempted to reimagine government and the social order in the

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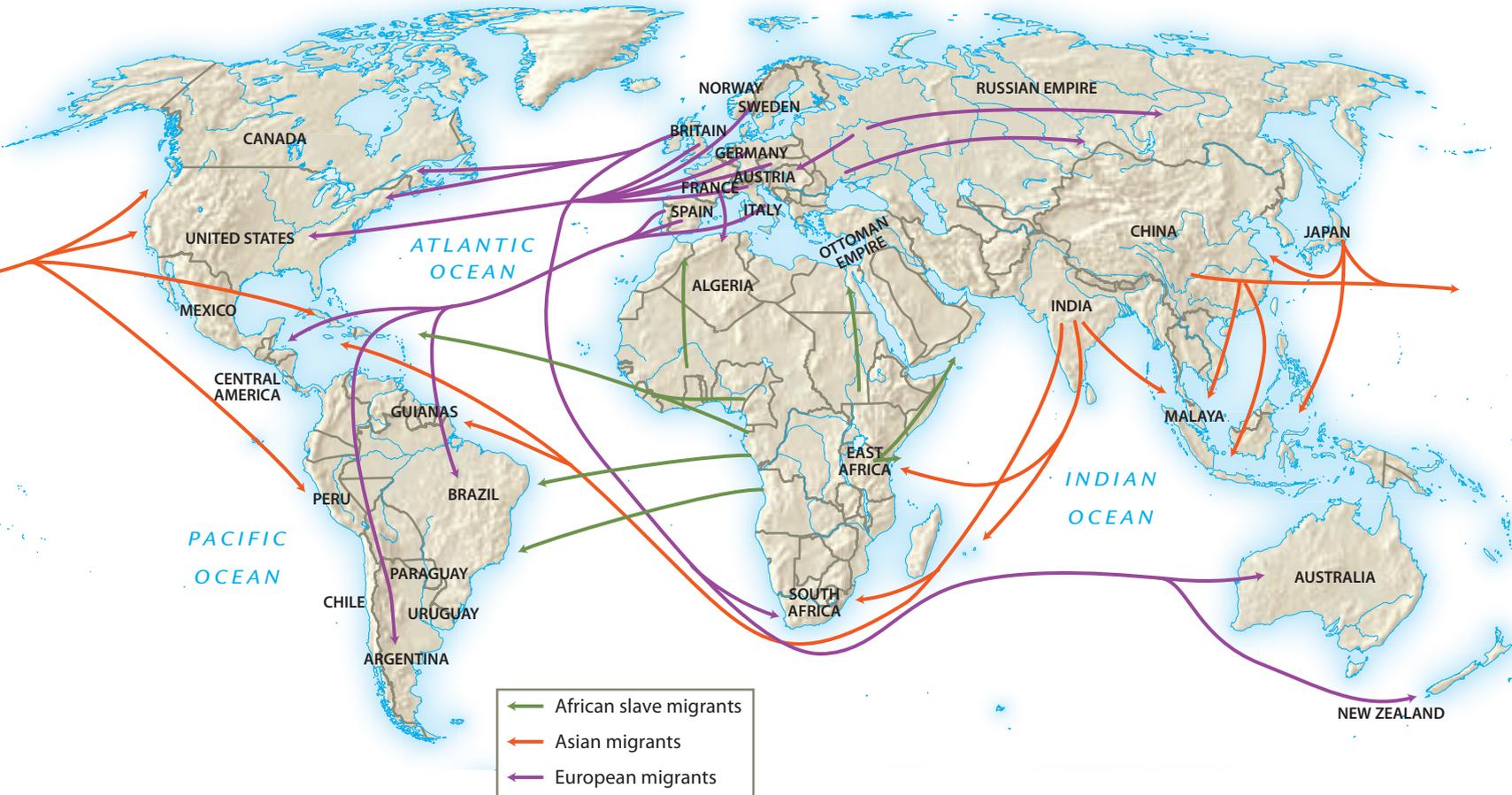
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face of perplexing demographic and economic change. The Great Exhibition trumpeted not only liberalism, the doctrine that extolled free trade, private property, and limited government, but also nationalism, the principle that human beings naturally cluster together in distinct cultural communities, or nations, and that every genuine nation has an inherent right to govern itself. The mid-nineteenth century was the period when nationalism and liberalism as intertwined ideologies began in some measure to shape human thought and action through much of the world. Also in this era, thinkers who witnessed the social injustices and inequalities that

# A Panoramic View



**MAP 22.1** Global migrations, 1820–1913.

Large scale migrations affected every inhabited region of the world in the nineteenth century. Which migration routes were part of networks that operated within empires? Which routes linked independent states with one another?

accompanied industrialization began to frame the principles of socialism as a critique of liberal capitalist economics and an alternative path to the future.

The Great Exhibition did not neglect the representation of religious faith. Indeed, in midcentury, most people in the world looked to their religions and traditional moral codes as guides to bewildering change in the conditions of life. The third section of the chapter explores connections between modern technology and religion, religious reform, and the activism of missionaries.

In the final part of the chapter, we survey the surge of wars and revolutions that agitated the world in the middle decades of the century. The Great Exhibition was on some level an affirmation that in 1851 peace reigned in most of Europe and that civilized and orderly progress lay ahead. But for humankind as a whole, the 1850s and 1860s were decades of war and revolution on an unprecedented scale of violence. These conflagrations were all linked to the disruptions that attended the great transition to fossil-fuel industry and globe-embracing capitalism.

# Waves of Migrants

**FOCUS** Why did many millions of people undertake long-distance migrations in the nineteenth century?

In the nineteenth century, roughly 150 million people worldwide left their homes to seek wealth, work, or a better chance of survival in foreign places (see Map 22.1). This migration represented a spectacular acceleration of human movement compared to any earlier century. It happened because the industrial revolution created colossal demands for labor, not only in rapidly growing manufacturing centers but everywhere that capitalist entrepreneurs oversaw production of raw materials for industry and food for urban workers. Railways, clipper ships, and steamer networks met the physical challenge of moving millions of people across continents and oceans. The anxieties of migration also diminished somewhat because telegraph lines and faster mail services allowed friends and family members to keep in regular contact with one another over longer distances.

Rapid global population growth in the nineteenth century provided businesses with a much larger potential labor force to meet the multitude of new job demands. Nineteenth-century capitalists argued that this force should earn cash wages and be liberated both from government restrictions on travel and from customary labor obligations to chiefs and landlords. Consequently, the forms of migration changed dramatically in the nineteenth century. The number of people who migrated long distances as slaves to toil entirely for someone else's benefit declined sharply, though forced labor systems by no means disappeared. Conversely, the numbers who migrated voluntarily, if often under economic or political pressures, increased by many millions.

## The End of the Atlantic Slave Trade

From the sixteenth century to the early nineteenth, about eight million enslaved African men and women were transported across the Atlantic to the Americas. The slave trade produced the largest and most sustained transoceanic flow of peoples in those centuries. The number of Africans arriving in American ports exceeded the number of free Europeans by four to one. The trade reached its numerical peak in the 1780s. It declined gradually thereafter until about 1840, then dropped fast, ending altogether around 1870. But why *did* the slave trade end, considering that in the nineteenth century many societies in the world accepted slavery as customary and normal? The answers lie in the growth of social movements to end the slave trade and to emancipate slaves, as well as economic changes in the Atlantic region.

**Antislavery movements.** In eighteenth-century Europe, several leading Enlightenment thinkers denounced slavery as incompatible with the natural rights of human beings. Between 1761 and 1800, Portugal, Britain, and several northern states in the United States made slavery illegal on home

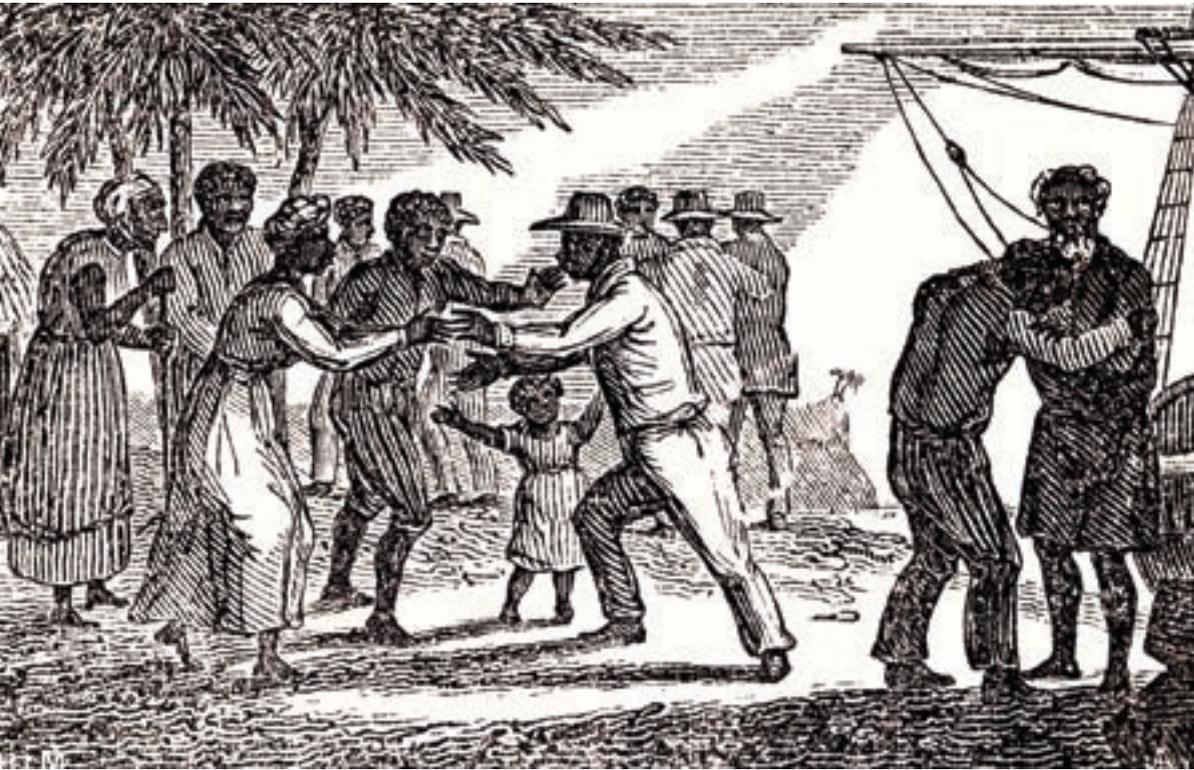
territory. In 1794 the French revolutionary government outlawed slavery both at home and in overseas possessions, though Napoleon restored the institution eight years later. An internationally linked antislavery movement was slow to develop, but abolitionist organizations, for example, the British Anti-Slavery Society, formed in countries on both sides of the Atlantic. In Britain evangelical Christians and small numbers of freed Africans agitated against both slavery and the slave trade, branding it manifestly inconsistent with both human rights and the moral responsibility to introduce Christian civilization to Africans. Economic liberals also joined the emancipation chorus, arguing for the benefits of a free and mobile work force.

Between 1803 and 1814 the pressure of antislavery movements pushed Britain, the United States, Denmark, and the Netherlands to outlaw slave trading, though abolition of the institution of slavery took decades longer. France, Spain, Portugal, and most of the new Latin American states outlawed the trade in the ensuing decades. However, it fell mainly to the British navy, with some help from French and American vessels, to enforce the new policy by intercepting slave ships when they left African ports. Beginning in the 1820s naval crews caught and arrested numerous shippers, releasing their human cargos mainly to the tiny British colony of Sierra Leone in West Africa. Owing to the immense length of the continental coast, however, the patrols seized only a fraction of outbound slave ships. Until 1850, plantation owners in Brazil continued to purchase an average of about thirty-seven thousand slaves a year, mainly from West Central Africa.

**The changing economics of slave labor.** On the American side, the demand for slave labor remained high in countries where the practice was legal and plantation agriculture profitable. Industries relying on slave labor—coffee in Brazil, sugar in Cuba, and cotton in the United States—continued to expand to meet world market demand. Although the United States outlawed slave imports in 1807, the American-born slave population reproduced itself, thereby making up for the loss of imported labor. In Brazil and Cuba, however, native-born slave numbers continued to show a net yearly decline, owing largely to the lethal conditions of work on tropical plantations. Consequently, both of those countries tried to keep the Atlantic trade going as long as they could.

Planters and merchants, however, had increasing trouble defending their labor system, which came under economic as well as social attack. The abolition of slavery in Haiti following the long revolutionary struggle there (see Chapter 20) inspired slave uprisings elsewhere, for example, the Nat Turner rebellion in Virginia in 1831 and a rising of Muslim slaves in Bahia, Brazil, in 1835. These and numerous other insurgencies forced planters and colonial governments to spend increasing sums on armed security. Liberal Britain eliminated tariffs on sugar imports in 1846, which slashed the world price and further reduced planters' profits. On the global scale, European capitalists found attractive





**Freed slaves arriving in Sierra Leone.** In its efforts to suppress the slave trade, the British navy relocated over 40,000 liberated Africans to Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, between 1808 and 1855. There they received land and Christian baptism. This influx created tensions with local residents, who resisted both British colonial rule and the status of the transplanted men and women, known as Krios. Why might British officials have decided to release freed slaves at Freetown rather than return them to their places of origin?

new investment opportunities besides American sugar. Consequently, international capital shifted toward mechanical industries, railway building, mining, and commercial farming in places like South Asia, South Africa, Latin America, Canada, and the United States, using legally free if not necessarily well-treated wage laborers.

Once most European states abolished slavery, they mounted pressure on other countries to follow suit. Britain outlawed the institution in its colonies in 1833, France (for a second time) in 1848, and the United States in 1865, following its civil war. Thereafter, the United States joined the European democracies in urging Brazil and Cuba (still a Spanish colony) to enact full emancipation, though politically dominant sugar and coffee interests prevented that from happening until the late 1880s.

## The Outpouring from Europe

The transition from predominantly African to heavily European and Asian transoceanic migration took place in the decades after 1820. Somewhere between fifty and fifty-five million men and women emigrated from Europe up to 1939. In the nineteenth century most Europeans emigrated voluntarily and sold their labor freely, though poverty or misfortune could impose their own forms of servitude on settlers. In contrast to African slaves, European migrants had legal freedom to move from place to place. A minority of them returned permanently to Europe for one reason or another. Others traveled regularly back and forth between Europe and points abroad to do seasonal agricultural work,

for example, laborers who made repeated trips between Italy and Argentina or Brazil.

**Beachheads and neo-Europes.** The great majority of migrants went to regions where other Europeans in much smaller numbers had already established what we have called neo-European societies, places where the newcomers put down roots, worked the land, and attempted to recreate as best they could the European cultural and social environments they had left behind. In those places the population of European ancestry came to far outnumber indigenous populations (see Chapter 19). In 1800 the largest frontier of permanent European migration was the young United States, which then had about 4.3 million people of European descent, plus another 1 million African slaves, free blacks, and American Indians. Other, demographically smaller regions of settlement before 1800 included eastern Canada, Siberia, the Cape region of South Africa, and Australia. All those regions attracted much greater settlement in the nineteenth century.

**Why did so many people leave Europe?** In a sense the scattering of millions of European migrants to faraway lands represented a global extension of the even more complicated journeys of people from one part of Europe to another. In the first century of industrialization, Europe was a whirl of human movement, some of it one way and permanent, much of it round trip and temporary.

Three developments underlay this mobility. First, the continuing growth of capitalist industry and commercial



agriculture required movable labor, that is, workers who could be shifted to places where factories and mines were opening and who could be hired and fired at will. Second, new canal, rail, and steamship networks meant that people could travel both faster and more reliably from one worksite to another. For example, Europe's rail network grew from 1,700 miles in 1840 to 63,300 miles by 1870. Third, Europe's population doubled between 1820 and 1913, from about 170 million to more than 340 million. With that growth came increased competition for land and employment. Although industrialization created many new jobs and prosperity in parts of Europe, uneven economic development between one region and another, plus fluctuations in prices and wages forced multitudes in poorer and more rural countries to relocate to find work.

Rural people left their lands by the millions to take urban or agricultural wage jobs. Many had lost their plots to capitalist landlords or simply hoped to escape chronic poverty. The elimination of serfdom in Poland, Prussia, Austria, and Russia between 1807 and 1861 propelled growing numbers of eastern European and Russian peasants into the migratory stream of wage seekers. Most of those migrants were men and teenage boys. Married men often sought seasonal or temporary work away from home, while wives and daughters continued to work the family plots. By 1850 half the population of most European cities had been born elsewhere.

Fewer people might have left Europe for new shores if more farm land had been available or industry had developed faster in the east and south. But this was not the case. Consequently, population movement within Europe spilled out across the world to New York, Chicago, Toronto, Buenos Aires, and Sydney, then onward to farming frontiers. Many people also fled Europe in the extremity of famine, revolution, or persecution. The Irish famine of 1845–1852, a catastrophe caused by loss of potato crops to a devastating fungus, washed the poorest of the poor onto foreign shores,

about 1.8 million people by 1855. In the aftermath of revolutionary movements that briefly upended Europe in 1848, a wave of migrants headed to America in fear of political reprisals. Jews deserted their homes by the hundreds of thousands to escape anti-Semitic persecution or violence. In the 1880s pogroms in Russia, that is, organized massacres or ethnic cleansing of Jews, triggered mass flight.

In short, several forces combined to “push” people out of Europe. Other forces worked to pull them overseas. Emigrants usually had high expectations that in places where neo-Europes were emerging they would find cheap land and a cultural and social life not too different from the one they were leaving behind. Moreover, getting there was not prohibitively expensive, because transport costs dropped steadily as railway and steamship routes multiplied. Before 1870, emigrants came principally from the northern European lands stretching from Ireland and Britain to Germany and Scandinavia. After that date, millions of Italians, Poles, and Russians gravitated to the industrial core regions of western Europe, then out again to overseas destinations. The proportion of women in emigrant groups varied widely among different nationalities. Most women traveled with families or followed fathers, husbands, and fiancés who had preceded them to find employment.

## Neo-Europes and Indigenous Populations

For several millennia before the nineteenth century, peoples who foraged, herded animals, or practiced subsistence farming on the margins of densely agrarian and citted lands had been gradually losing their livings and habitats to invaders or immigrants who possessed superior numbers, technologies, and armed power. This process sped up after 1800. Neo-Europes formed where indigenous societies retreated, shrank in size, or died, despite their attempts to fight back.

**Russian Jewish immigrants arriving in New York City with their belongings.** Pogroms prompted a thirty-year migration of Jews out of Russia and eastern Europe. Why might some U.S. citizens have responded to this illustration with sympathy but others with hostility?



**North America.** In the thirteen British colonies of North America, European colonizers battled and expelled Native Americans whose numbers had already been depleted by diseases that the first waves of Europeans or African slaves introduced two or three centuries earlier (see Chapter 16). Conversely, the descendants of Europeans multiplied. In 1820 the United States (twenty-two states at that point) already had a population of 9.6 million, 82 percent of it of European descent. As migrants poured into the Southeast and Midwest, government authorities collaborated with them to subjugate, kill, or expel Indians still living east of the Mississippi. The largest southern groups, including the Cherokee, Choctaw, and Creek, cultivated and hunted lands that immigrant farmers and cotton planters wanted. President Andrew Jackson (1829–1837) ensured the availability of land to white Americans and their black slaves by pushing the great majority of Indians across the Mississippi River to stark reservations in the Oklahoma territory.

Nevertheless, Native Americans contested the immigrant intrusion. Fighting between Indians and settlers marked every phase of the westward advance. In Florida, for example, Seminole Indians rebelled in 1835 rather than relocate to Oklahoma. Fighting alongside runaway African slaves from strongholds in the Everglades, the insurgents held off U.S. soldiers for seven years. The federal government ended the war in 1842 without ever forcing all the Seminoles out of their swamps and forests.

**South America.** The temperate southern cone of South America—Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, and southern Brazil—attracted a growing multitude of European migrants, especially in the later nineteenth century. Wheat, horses, cattle, and sheep flourished on the pampas, or prairies, west and south of the Plata River. Export of hides, wool, and grain grown on some of the richest soil in the world provided the economic foundation for the neo-European society that gradually took hold. Between 1870 and World War I, about six million Spanish, Italian, and other European workers moved to Argentina.

As for the native peoples, their numbers had been historically small compared to the societies of the Andean highlands. Alien diseases shrank them even more, and resistance that Indian cavalry put up on the southern pampas ultimately proved futile. Today the descendants of European immigrants make up 97 percent of Argentina's population of more than forty million.

**Australia.** Although Australia lies eight thousand miles from Europe, 92 percent of its current population claims European descent. Aborigines, the indigenous people who had Australia to themselves barely more than two hundred years ago, number just 1 percent. The settling of the continent by Europeans began in 1788, when a fleet of British naval vessels landed at Botany Bay in the far southeast to set up a penal settlement. Between 1788 and 1852 the British

crown condemned more than 160,000 men, women, and children to “transportation” to the Australian colony of New South Wales. Women accounted for about one-sixth of these involuntary travelers, and, like many of the men, they were often poor people found guilty of minor crimes. Above this penal class, which labored in slave-like and unhealthy conditions, stood a small hierarchy of British officials, military officers, merchants, and land-owners. In the 1830s free European farmers began to export wool and beef, linking New South Wales to the global economy. The settler population, however, grew slowly until 1851, when gold prospectors hit pay dirt. After that, voluntary migrants scrambled in, swelling the population from about 400,000 in 1850 to 1.4 million just ten years later.

Meanwhile, Aboriginal hunting and foraging bands slowly retreated and withered. Like the Americas, Australia had for thousands of years remained isolated from the teeming pool of infectious diseases endemic to Afroeurasia. When the early European settlers introduced influenza, smallpox, and other virulent ills, epidemics raged through indigenous communities. By the 1820s European settlers began pushing inland. Aborigines regarded land as communal property, but Europeans saw individual ownership as the natural form of land use. Since no one presumably “owned” Aboriginal land, it was free for the taking. According to one British official, “It is in the order of nature that, as civilization advances, savage nations must be exterminated.”<sup>1</sup> Carving out commercial farms and huge stock ranches, European immigrants pushed native communities toward the arid interior or massacred those who refused to fall back. After 1850 the balance of population shifted steadily in favor of the immigrants.

**Siberia.** The enormous Inner Eurasian land of Siberia was different from other emerging neo-Europes because it was within Afroeurasia, not separated from it by a span of ocean. However, the indigenous population, which included Yakuts, Evenks (Tungus), and numerous other hunting, fishing, and horse-herding groups, lived far enough away from Afroeurasia's denser population centers that they fell easily to the same noxious diseases that killed Australian Aborigines and Native Americans (see Chapter 19). In the late eighteenth century, for example, a pestilence on the Pacific peninsula of Kamchatka carried off as much as three-quarters of the local inhabitants.

Between 1830 and 1914, Siberia became overwhelmingly European. Similarly to Australia, the discovery of gold in the 1830s brought a fresh wave of immigrants. In 1858–1860, one-sided treaties between Russia and the weakened Chinese empire opened new lands to farm settlement in the Amur River valley north of Mongolia. The emancipation of Russian serfs in 1861 propelled hundreds of thousands of men and women over the following decades to migrate eastward. After 1880, new mine, rail, and commercial farm enterprises in southern Siberia drew in five million more.



### Europeans and Aborigines exchange goods—at a distance.

The French writer and artist Jacques Arago drew this scene about 1820 during a visit to Australia. What features of the picture suggest that the meeting was probably tense and might easily have turned violent?



## Migrations of Asians and Africans

Next to Europe, India and China were the largest suppliers of migrant workers to plantations, mines, factories, and railroads in distant lands. Between 1820 and 1914, approximately twelve million men and women left those lands on the promise of work or opportunity abroad. This number represented about one-fifth of the European exodus, and more Asians than Europeans eventually returned home. Nevertheless, in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean rim lands, and the Americas, Chinese and Indian migrants planted permanent minority communities.

Nineteenth-century Chinese migrants perpetuated on a growing scale a long tradition of settlement in Southeast Asian cities from the Philippines to Burma. Indian neighborhoods sprang up in almost every part of the British empire where employers needed labor, for example, in Malaya, South Africa, and British Guiana in South America. The great majority of Asian migrants went to areas where commercial export agriculture was expanding. For example, as the African slave trade shrank, European investors opened new sugar plantations in South Africa, Southeast Asia, and Oceania, employing Indian and Chinese contract workers.

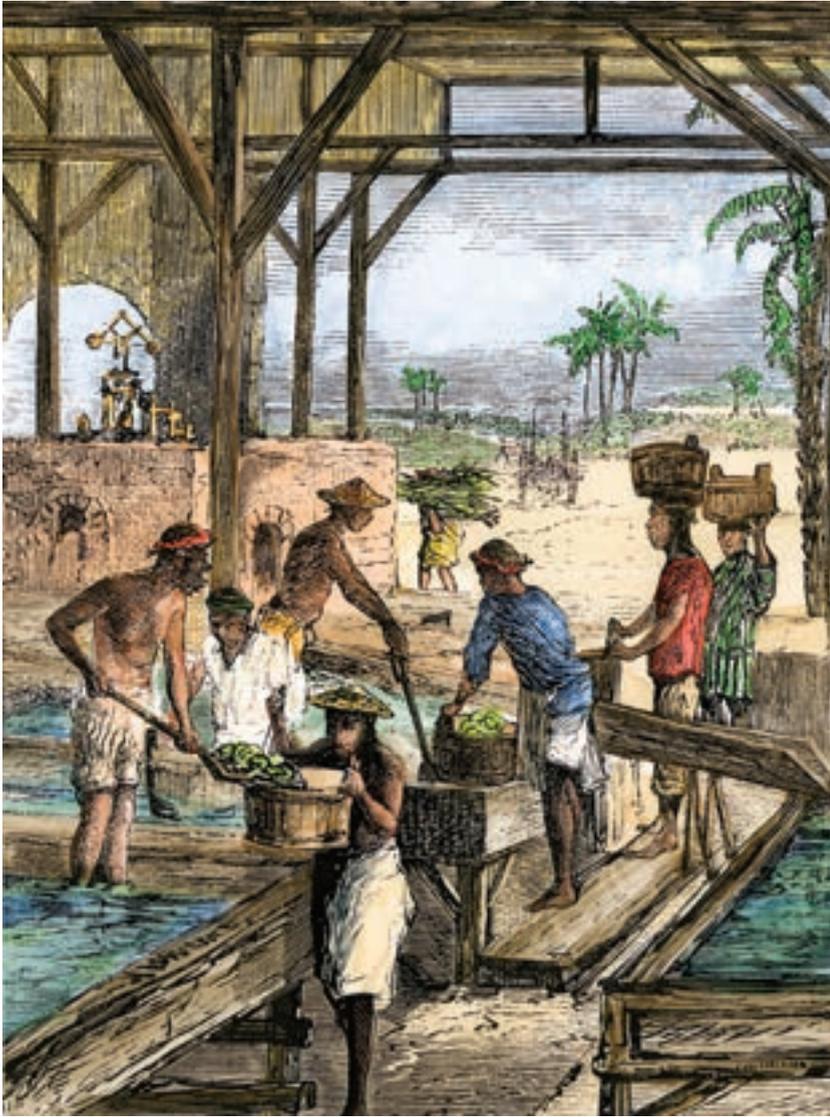
**The meaning of “voluntary migration.”** Like Europeans, most Asians left home voluntarily, but that term had shades of meaning. Most traveled to ports and boarded ships because they had experienced economic stress or discontent. Beginning in the 1820s, for example, the British colonial authorities in India systematically organized labor

transport of poor people to other parts of the empire to do farm work. In China, land shortages arising from population growth, price inflation, rebellion, and periodic drought propelled tens of thousands out of the country every year, especially from the densely populated southern provinces. Labor recruiters, whether Europeans or Asians, often deceived illiterate men and women about the intended destination, the working conditions, or the promised wages. In Portuguese Macao, off China’s coast, for example, unscrupulous recruiters sometimes snared poor Chinese into games of chance, then demanded that they or a family member pay losses by accepting an overseas labor contract requiring work over a specified period of time.

The great majority of emigrants from South and East Asia were boys and men, but women also left home, especially migrating to places where the labor importers wanted to encourage men to settle permanently. Also, the social conventions of Chinese and Indian societies restricted women from circulating in public as freely as European women could. For example, the midcentury gold rushes that happened in both California and Australia attracted tens of thousands of Chinese construction workers. Of the 65,000 Chinese in California in 1860, only 1,800 were women. Some single women went abroad voluntarily, but many were kidnapped or deceived and ended up as prostitutes or domestic servants.

**Asian workers in tropical America.** The decline and eventual end of slavery created a serious labor crisis for plantation owners in the Caribbean and South America.





**Chinese immigrants working in a sugar factory in Cuba, 1872.** Men and women from East and South Asia filled a labor void after the importation of African slaves declined. Working conditions, however, did not much improve for Asian laborers under contract. What factors might have motivated people to cross the Pacific to engage in arduous, dangerous work for little pay?

Many freed slaves stayed on plantations, but others left to plow their own farms or work in towns. Consequently, colonial governments and private planters devised new schemes to replace slaves with contract workers. Historians have asked whether contract labor work might typically have been as harsh as slave labor. Asian workers bound for the Caribbean or South America usually suffered dreadful shipboard conditions, and their employers sometimes housed them in barracks originally built for slaves. Between 1853 and 1874, about 125,000 Chinese workers debarked in Cuba, where slavery was still legal. There, they sweated in the cane fields alongside black slaves, and they suffered numerous restrictions and punishments set forth in Cuban law: “The colonist disobeying the voice of the superior, whether it be refusing to work, or any other obligation, may be corrected

with 12 lashes; if he persists, with 18 more, and if even thus he should not enter on his course of duty, he may be put in irons, and made to sleep in the stocks.”<sup>2</sup>

**Continuing slave trade.** Even though the trans-Atlantic slave trade shrank to insignificance between 1840 and 1870, human trafficking continued, whether legally or not, wherever people could be held in bondage. Commercial planters from the southern United States continued to buy and sell slaves and move them from one state to another until 1865. Between 1820 and 1860, Brazilian merchants moved about one million slaves from depleted sugar plantations in the northeast to expanding coffee-growing lands in the south. Slavery and slave trading remained a customary practice in many Asian lands and most of Africa throughout the nineteenth century. Industrialization in Europe increased demand for African commodities such as lumber, peanut oil, and palm oil. Consequently, slavery actually expanded in some parts of West and Central Africa in the mid-nineteenth century as rulers and proprietors responded to new opportunities in the global economy.

In northeastern Africa, the Egyptian ruler Muhammad Ali (see Chapter 21) invaded the upper Nile River valley (today the republics of Sudan and South Sudan) in 1820 to capture boys and young men to serve as military slaves. Thereafter, Sudanese merchant expeditions armed with modern guns raided far to the south, enslaving villagers and selling them downriver to Egypt. To the west, slave traffic across the Sahara declined steadily in the nineteenth century, though in the middle decades around four thousand slaves a year may have entered Morocco, most of them women. Along the Indian Ocean coast of Africa, the sultan-

ate of Oman and Zanzibar tapped East Africa for ivory and slaves in exchange for imported textiles. At midcentury, armed convoys drove as many as fifty thousand slaves a year from the interior to the Indian Ocean coast. Some of them, predominantly women, were then shipped to Arabia and other Muslim lands for domestic or sexual service. Others were taken to Zanzibar Island, where they harvested cloves, a popular spice in the international market. Under British pressure the Omani sultan abolished the export slave trade in 1873, though effective enforcement came slowly.

## Oceania Connected

The peoples who inhabited the immense Pacific basin became permanently incorporated into the global network



**MAP 22.2** The Pacific basin, 1760–1880.

Considering that the Pacific is dotted with thousands of islands and the Atlantic is not, why did it take nearly three centuries longer to establish routine communications across the Pacific than it did across the Atlantic?

of migration and trade in the later eighteenth century (see Map 22.2). Over a period of about 2,600 years, migrants who spoke Polynesian languages had sailed outrigger canoes to explore and settle many of the ocean’s twenty-five thousand islands. Those colonizers adapted ingeniously to a variety of climates and natural environments, building societies that ranged from hunter-forager bands in southern New Zealand to small kingdoms on Tonga and the Hawaiian Islands. But they maintained no sustained contact with Afroeurasia, the Americas, or Australia. Then, beginning in the 1760s, European mariners, notably the English explorer James Cook, crisscrossed the Pacific in growing numbers, landing on many islands, introducing new crops and animals, opening mines and plantations, and founding Christian missions.

**The perils of contact.** In the early nineteenth century, Oceania became a new zone of world commerce and migration, though the cost in lives and environmental degradation ran high. The thousands of Europeans and Asians

who sailed into the Pacific brought with them a “suitcase” of plants, domestic animals, pests, and microorganisms, many of them unknown to Polynesians. Like Australian Aborigines, Pacific Islanders initially suffered catastrophic die-off owing to exposure to unfamiliar infectious diseases, including smallpox, measles, and influenza. For example, when European settlers started arriving in New Zealand in 1840, the Maori population may have numbered 100,000 or more. By 1858 it declined to 56,000, owing mainly to imported infections.

Merchants and migrants swarmed into the Pacific to exploit resources of both land and sea. Russian, American, and Australian hunters profited handsomely from trade in seal fur, though by 1840 they nearly wiped out this species in the Pacific. Beginning in 1819 American and other whale hunters entered the ocean. Whale oil commanded a huge market for lighting, industrial lubrication, and cooking. The industry flourished at first, but hunters rapidly depleted several species, forcing this enterprise to shut down almost entirely for several decades after 1860.





**Whalers in the port of Honolulu, Hawaii, 1849.** Though ship owners were typically American or European, whaling crews included Pacific Islanders. Honolulu's buildings, too, reveal a blend of European and Hawaiian architecture. What elements of this nineteenth-century engraving might have seemed unusual or exotic to American viewers?

In the later century, thousands of Polynesians migrated from island to island to find jobs in commercial agriculture and shipping. A sugar industry in Fiji succeeded because planters attracted contract laborers from South Asia. Their descendants make up nearly 40 percent of the population today. Sometimes, however, migration was induced by brute force. In several parts of the Pacific, armed labor contractors made a business of kidnapping islanders, a practice called “blackbirding.” In 1862–1863, Peruvian kidnappers carried off about 1,500 men and women from Rapa Nui (Easter Island) to work in South American mines and sugar fields.

**The birth of the “Pacific world.”** As trade grew across the Pacific, port cities multiplied. Oceania offered a variety of exotic commodities that East Asians wanted to buy, including sealskins, otter pelts, pearls, and ambergris, which is an intestinal secretion of sperm whales used as a spice, in perfume, and as an aphrodisiac. Honolulu, today the capital of Hawaii, emerged after 1820 as the key mid-ocean trans-shipment center. Vessels converged there from Guangzhou (Canton), Manila, Sydney, and several Latin American ports, as well as from small havens along the coasts of California and Canada, where Native Americans and European settlers sold furs, skins, and timber.

Gold rushes in California (1849), Australia (1851), and British Columbia (1858) added yellow metal to the Pacific

exchange web. The gold bonanzas did not last long, but they revived the Pacific economy chiefly because European populations in the mining regions became permanently much bigger. California grew from about 15,000 inhabitants in 1848 (not counting American Indians) to more than 250,000 in 1852. Southeastern Australia experienced similarly explosive immigration. Fast clipper ships and then steamers progressively shortened Pacific crossing times.

## Groundswells of Political and Social Reform

**FOCUS** What historical factors account for the rise of a variety of reformist and revolutionary political movements in the nineteenth century?

In every era of world history over the past five thousand years, prophets, reformers, and revolutionaries have stepped forward in times of change to offer solutions to problems of instability, economic stress, or social injustice. Beginning in the eighteenth century, however, the pace of global population growth, industrialization, and human migration accelerated at such a rapid pace that movements proposing better ways to manage or restructure society multiplied around the globe. Newspapers, telegraph lines, railways,

and urban coffeehouses all permitted would-be reformers to spread their ideas much faster and farther than ever before. The nineteenth century, we might say, was the first age of “isms”—liberalism, republicanism, conservatism, nationalism, socialism, and communism. All of these ideologies were imprecise, complicated, and prone to spin off in multiple directions. Nevertheless, they animated social movements that greatly affected the course of change as the century progressed.

## Nationalism and the Power of the People

Public debates in Europe and the Americas over the ideas of nationalism and liberalism (see Chapters 20 and 21) were barely separable from each other. Both ideologies grew in the nineteenth century as political doctrines of great appeal to capitalists, governing elites, and affluent urbanites. But by midcentury, nationalism began to resonate deeply in the cultural and emotional lives of ordinary people, as liberalism did not. In the past hundred years, nationalism has been the most potent force in the world for mobilizing popular action.

According to nationalist thought, a group of people sharing a common language, cultural forms, history, and a sense of common destiny ought in the natural order of things to enjoy sovereign self-government. When the society achieved that aim, it constituted a nation-state. By appealing to such nationalist feeling, central governments could both shore up popular loyalty and organize citizens for public action more effectively than they had in any previous era. States could take advantage of new communication technologies to encourage people to “imagine themselves” as a single community, even though the sovereign territory embraced individuals, perhaps tens of millions of them, who were not culturally homogeneous and knew little or nothing about one another’s daily lives.<sup>3</sup>

Modern states, especially the large ones, invariably included different social classes and political interest groups. Urban workers agitated for higher wages, ethnic communities demanded regional self-government, liberals pressed rulers for legal equality and economic freedoms, and radicals urged broader democracy. At the opposite end of the political spectrum, conservatives, including both aristocrats and many rural peasants, contended that traditional ways such as a strict social hierarchy and a state-sanctioned church should be preserved and honored as the social glue that held society together.

Because of these various pressures and conflicts, governments turned with growing enthusiasm to the idea of the national community as a way to soften social tensions. Governments also tended increasingly to claim legitimacy—their rightfulness and legality as managers of the state—in secular rather than religious terms, that is, as advocates of the welfare and rights of national citizens rather than as agents of God. To be sure, the ingredients of a national community in the making often included a dominant religious culture,

though priests and other clerics tended steadily to lose political power in favor of secular rulers and officials. Elements of a national society also typically included history, literature, music, folklore, and legend. Governments supported public education that would instill patriotic love and selfless service to the state. They promoted civic ceremonies, stirring anthems, a single vernacular language, and a set of founding leaders and patriotic heroes that everyone should revere. In the United States and the Latin American republics, for example, the wars of independence provided a wealth of narratives (George Washington at Valley Forge and the liberation exploits of Simón Bolívar) to feed sentiments of common nationality. In Europe the first half of the nineteenth century was the era of the Romantic Movement, when folkways and fables served as sources of inspiration for modern poetry, novels, and music seeking to capture the nation’s “soul.”



**French citizens defend the Republic.** *The Departure of the Volunteers of 1792* by the sculptor François Rude adorns one of the four pillars of the Arc de Triomphe, which Napoleon erected in Paris in 1836 to celebrate the glory of France. A Winged Victory leads volunteers to battle in a scene so connected to French patriotism that the relief has become known as “The Marseillaise,” after the revolutionary song that became the national anthem. How might an image like this one have served to galvanize shared national identity?



## Varieties of Socialism

**socialism** A variety of ideologies that advocate social equality and justice and the community's collective control and management of economic institutions; in Marxist thought, socialism follows capitalism in society's transition to communism.

The word *socialism* originally evoked the idea of a society founded on cooperation and mutual concern rather than on individual self-interest. Among intellectuals and activists agitating for reform in the nineteenth century, social-

ists often championed the democratic and egalitarian ideals of nationalism, but they questioned liberalism's most cherished tenets. All socialists regarded liberalism as an inadequate and at least partially misguided response to the harsh realities of industrialization. Socialists did not share liberal confidence that the selfish pursuit of profit would benefit all levels of society. Rather, private ownership of industry, accumulation of capital in the hands of a few, and ruthless competition all made for appalling working conditions and nearly hopeless life prospects for wage earners and their families. Workers were "wage slaves"—men and women at the mercy of capitalist owners. Low pay, unsafe mills, and urban squalor not only created misery for workers but also led inevitably to social conflict and disintegration. Society must therefore be reformed and restructured to achieve fairer distribution of expanding riches. Socialists generally supported the struggles of artisans, factory hands, and miners to improve their lot by marching, striking, organizing trade unions, and agitating for government action. And many socialist leaders doubled as theoreticians and public activists.

One of the earliest socialist pioneers was Claude Henri de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), a French nobleman who nevertheless despised aristocratic privilege and wealth. He was one of the first writers to argue that free-market competition would in fact benefit relatively few and that industrialization should be linked to society's general welfare. He advocated planned industrial communities in which politicians would relinquish power to entrepreneurs, engineers, and bankers. Those experts would advance economic and technological progress while scientists and artists took charge of civic and moral affairs. Saint-Simon influenced other socialist innovators in Europe and the United States who set up, or at least sketched out, small-scale utopian communities, where workers would share equally in the fruits of production or at least receive fair treatment from employers. For example, Robert Owen (1771–1858), a Welsh factory manager, founded a textile-producing community in Scotland in 1810 that catered to the security and comfort of workers. But like other utopian projects, this one did not outlast its founder.

The most elaborate statement of socialist principles, and the most pungent critique of capitalist economics, came from the pen of the German philosopher and activist Karl Marx (1818–1883). He and Friedrich Engels (1820–1995), his



**Karl Marx.** Though he championed the rights of working people, Marx came from a prosperous family. He studied philosophy in German universities, where his social activism began to bloom. In 1845 he famously wrote, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways—the point however is to change it."

longtime collaborator, emerged at midcentury as the leading proponents of what they called "scientific socialism." In 1848 Marx published the *Communist Manifesto*, which set forth his fundamental idea that the laboring masses could achieve economic and social justice only through revolutionary struggle. Moving to England the following year, he spent the rest of his life there, much of it reading and thinking in the British Library and elaborating his ideas in *Das Kapital* ("Capital").

Marx drew on earlier socialist ideas but also scorned the utopians for thinking that programs of kindly cooperation among employers, governments, and workers would ever produce a just society. He also thought that class distinctions



**bourgeoisie** The urban middle class; in Marxist thought, the property-owning class that oppresses the working class.

**proletariat** The working class; in Marxist theory, the class that must overthrow the capitalist bourgeoisie to achieve control of the means of production.

were much more important than national ones. He contended that the industrial elite, or **bourgeoisie**, merely fooled workers into thinking that it shared with them a national bond. To the contrary, wage workers everywhere, whom he called the **proletariat**, must unite against their bour-

geois oppressors. Marx argued from what he called a “materialist” standpoint that work, or “production,” was central to all social organization and that history was fundamentally a class struggle between those who controlled the “means of production” and those who did not. In the modern era, industrial capitalists had replaced slave owners and estate lords as the dominant class. Now, Marx proclaimed, the proletariat must rise up to recover for itself the means of production, securing its interests by confiscating all productive property. Factories, farms, and businesses must be held in common for everyone’s use and benefit.

For Marx, history was a process in which conflict over contrasting social systems would inevitably lead to a higher form of society. In the *Communist Manifesto*, he argued that the proletariat would ultimately triumph: “What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.”<sup>4</sup> Once workers overthrew the owners of capital,

**communism** A dimension of socialist thought that advocates revolution to eradicate capitalism and establish the universal triumph of the proletariat.

class struggle would end and **communism**, the existence of society without class or private property, would be established worldwide.

Socialists founded political parties and labor unions in most European states in the second half of the century, though some of them rejected or modified Marx’s radical program. Marxian socialists also struggled with two developments they did not expect. One was that legal reforms and continuing economic growth progressively lifted workers’ standards of living in the industrializing countries without proletarian revolution. The other was that nationalism proved a powerful tool for persuading ordinary people to identify with even their richest fellow citizens. Nevertheless, the power of Marxist ideas grew as the century proceeded and the gap between rich and poor continued to widen on a global scale.

## Movements for Women’s Rights

For some thinkers, both liberals and socialists, the logic of their doctrines demanded radical change in the civic rights and responsibilities of women. Around the world, women had long fought to loosen the control of men over such institutions as marriage, divorce, property ownership, and religious

leadership. The new European ideologies, however, offered frameworks for thinking critically about the social relations between women and men. Several women, for example, rose to prominence in the socialist movement. The English activist Anna Wheeler campaigned tirelessly for women’s rights and in 1825 coauthored the bluntly titled book *Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other, Men*.

Many women educated in the United States and Britain saw a blatant inconsistency between slave emancipation and the web of legal inequalities that kept females out of public life. In 1840 the male organizers of the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London initially stopped female delegates at

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton speaking at the first Woman’s Rights Convention, 1848.** Making bold political claims, Stanton addressed a mostly female audience in the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York. What might you infer from this picture regarding the social class of Stanton’s supporters?



the door, then compromised by allowing them to be seated behind a curtain. Eight years after she attended that conference, Elizabeth Cady Stanton joined with her fellow American Lucretia Mott to convene the first women's rights meeting in Seneca Falls, New York. The delegates' Declaration of Sentiments demanded women's enfranchisement. Slave abolitionism, however, tended to overshadow their budding movement. In 1870 the U.S. Congress passed the Fourteenth Amendment, which gave the vote to freed male slaves but not to the women of any race. In Britain, though bills introduced in Parliament to enfranchise women failed repeatedly throughout the nineteenth century, a movement for women's rights initiated in 1851 continued to grow. In that same decade, liberals in Mexico began to lobby for expanded female education, and the Argentine-born writer Paula Manso de Noronha launched a feminist magazine in Brazil.

## Movements for Political Reform and Unification in Europe

Between 1815 and 1848, Europeans lived with a vexing and potentially explosive contradiction. An assortment of dynastic monarchies, their ruling houses almost all related to one another by blood, endeavored to limit as much as possible the effects of the French Revolution, especially any drift toward popular democracy or social revolution. Simultaneously, however, liberals, nationalists, and radical democrats—their ranks growing among the urban administrative and professional classes—pushed for reforms. In almost every European country, protest marches, strikes, or urban riots disturbed the relative peace that prevailed among the region's states.

Some of those popular actions succeeded in forcing change. In France, Parisian insurgents overthrew the deeply reactionary King Charles X (reigned 1824–1830) in the July Revolution of 1830, replacing him with Louis-Philippe (r. 1830–1848), a nobleman dubbed the “Citizen King” because he accepted his mandate from the French National Assembly, not from God. The same year, rebels succeeded in splitting the Netherlands to create the new constitutional monarchy of Belgium. Greece achieved independence in 1830 after an alliance of middle-class merchants and mountain chieftains, with help from the British navy, drove out their Ottoman Turkish rulers. Britain also experienced industrial walkouts, protest rallies, and, in Ireland, rural insurrections. Liberal members of Parliament slowly pushed through political reforms. In 1832 Parliament voted to lower property requirements for male voters. This doubled the size of the electorate, though only to about 217,000 out of a population of 27 million.

**Revolutionary movements of 1848.** Then, in 1848, popular uprisings burst forth across Europe, surprising not only liberals but also socialists and republicans who had longed for just such an event. Street fighting broke out in Paris, targeting King Louis-Philippe, whose liberalism did not go nearly far enough for many. When the army failed

to quash the insurrection, the king abdicated. Telegraphs and trains carried the breaking news across Europe, triggering urban uprisings, first in several major German cities, then in the Habsburg empire and Italy. In several places, rural farmers rose up as well, seizing towns and burning down their landlords' stately houses. Within just a month, French insurgents proclaimed a republic, the Habsburg emperor lost control of several cities, and revolutionary leaders in some of the small states of Germany and Italy began to write new constitutions. In far-off Brazil, rebels briefly rose up against Emperor Pedro II.

Social and political discontent had clearly been building for three decades. Urban workers complained of bad wages and vile working conditions. Men objected to the loss of their jobs to wage-earning women. Peasants protested against chronic poverty and consolidation of land into big estates. Minority ethnic groups in the Austrian, Russian, and Ottoman empires began to hatch their own nationalist movements. In the three years before the uprisings, moreover, western Europe experienced two seasons of bad harvests, rising food prices, and a moderate drop-off in economic growth. Anxious governments either froze in panic or retaliated so ineptly that even more people joined the insurrections.

The revolutions of 1848, however, played themselves out within a year. Government forces regrouped, and the laborers and artisans who had taken to the streets did not succeed in coordinating their actions in different cities. In France, the army killed ten thousand street fighters. In Hungary, Russian troops helped the emperor crush a rising of Magyar (Hungarian) nationalists seeking independence from Austria. Reactionary governments returned to power, but the risings frightened them and caused them much expense. Not wanting to witness such a pan-European explosion again, most dynastic regimes moved gradually over the next two decades to concede at least moderate political reforms and to try to identify themselves more intimately with the national community.

**European nation-building after 1848.** Liberal and nationalist ideologies were powerful enough in the two decades after the uprisings to inspire three successful nationalist movements, which reshaped Europe's political geography. In Hungary, Magyar nationalists did not stop agitating for independence from Austria. In 1867 the emperor Franz-Joseph agreed to a power-sharing arrangement called the Dual Monarchy. It retained him as head of state of both Austria and Hungary but granted each region its own parliament and control of internal affairs.

In the Italian peninsula, a nationalist movement to weld together a unified Italy took concrete shape in the first half of the century. In 1848 the region was a patchwork of territories variously ruled by Austria, the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, the Spanish Bourbon dynasty, the pope, and several minor princes. However, secret independence associations multiplied in most of those territories. In Piedmont-Sardinia, Camillo di Cavour, prime minister to King Victor





**Wilhelm I of Prussia proclaimed Kaiser of Germany following its unification, 1871.** Anton von Werner's 1885 oil painting, *The Proclamation of the German Empire*, depicts Kaiser Wilhelm flanked by nobles, including Crown Prince Friedrich on his right. Otto von Bismarck, wearing a white tunic, stands facing the king. The royal family commissioned this painting to commemorate Bismarck's 70th birthday.

Emmanuel II (r. 1849–1878), worked doggedly to construct economic foundations for unification by modernizing industry, building rail lines, and expanding the army. He also played a skillful political game, negotiating with France's Napoleon III for support against Austria.

Modern Italy came quickly together between 1859 and 1870. With the help of French troops, Piedmont expelled Austrian forces from most of the northern peninsula and unified it under the banner of Italian nationalism. Giuseppe Garibaldi, a passionate revolutionary who had fought for democracy in Brazil and Uruguay, launched a private and brilliantly successful expedition to bring Sicily and the south into the Italian union. In 1861 a newly constituted parliament proclaimed Victor Emmanuel king of Italy. In the following nine years, the new state seized Venice from Austria and all of the pope's territories except the Vatican. Italy thus emerged as an independent constitutional monarchy that embraced most of Europe's Italian speakers.

Like Italy, Germany in midcentury was a collection of loosely confederated states. Prince Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), the premier of the kingdom of Prussia under Wilhelm I, cared more for aristocratic privileges than for liberal principles. But he worked ceaselessly to expand Prussia's territorial reach and economic power, regarding military victories and rapid industrialization as potent ways to stimulate unity.

In a series of deft political and military maneuvers starting in 1864, Bismarck provoked successive wars with Denmark, Austria, and France, winning them all after short campaigns and then annexing additional German-speaking territories to Prussia. Victory in the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871) brought down Emperor Napoleon III, cost France

its provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, and generated enduring antagonism between Germany and the Third Republic, the new French parliamentary government created in 1871. In the triumphant aftermath of victory in France, all remaining German-speaking states, except for Austria with its multitude of ethnic minorities, joined Prussia to form a unitary monarchy that same year. The new Germany, however, was no democracy. "The great questions of the day," Bismarck declared, "will not be settled by speeches or majority votes—that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849—but by blood and iron." Power remained concentrated in the hands of the emperor and his central ministries, though Bismarck placated liberals by agreeing to a parliament (Reichstag) elected by property-owning males.

## Modernizing Reforms in Muslim Lands

Since the fifteenth or sixteenth century, several Muslim monarchies, similarly to China, Russia, and western European states, had been occupied with projects to strengthen and extend central power by adopting both firearms technology and new, more efficient ways of governing and taxing their populations. As global commercial relations became more complex and European states projected more military and economic might, the political elites of most Muslim states considered new policies, which historians have called "defensive modernization." These military, technical, and administrative reforms were intended to stave off European diplomatic and commercial pressures or even prevent foreign invasion.

In the early 1800s liberal and nationalist ideas began trickling into major Muslim cities, reaching small numbers



of army officers, officials, and international traders, especially people with knowledge of European languages. Muslim rulers knew well that European states were outpacing them technologically. Austrian armies had overpowered Ottoman forces in southeastern Europe; the British were conquering South Asia; Napoleon had invaded Egypt in 1798; and Greece, with British help, successfully threw off Turkish rule in 1830. Urban intellectuals and educated officers speculated on possible connections between material power and new ideas and institutions like constitutions, legislatures, and civil rights. Many reform-minded Muslim leaders favored fundamental secular changes, or modernization unimpeded by established cultural ways and authority figures. The trick for Muslim governments was to select innovations from abroad without upsetting delicate agreements with various power groups—religious leaders, land magnates, rural tribes—on which the stability of the state depended.

**Reforms in the Ottoman empire.** Among Muslim states, the Ottoman empire launched by far the most ambitious modernizing experiment, initiating military, administrative, educational, and political reforms. The Tanzimat, or “Reorganization,” as these reforms became known, began with Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839) and continued through several of his successors. In the military sphere the government hired French and Prussian advisers, translated French army manuals into Turkish, and imported up-to-date European weaponry. In 1826 Mahmud deployed a well-trained force to eradicate, amid great bloodshed, the janissary corps, the conservatively minded class of soldiers and artisans that had maintained a semi-independent army (see Chapter 17). To modernize education, the government sent young men to Europe to study, and it opened new

schools to train future officers and civil servants in European languages, administration, and science. Tanzimat reformers gradually reorganized the state bureaucracy along French lines and, much to the dismay of the religious establishment, laced the Muslim legal system (*shari’a*) with language taken from the French Civil Code. Appropriately characterized as the “French-Knowers,” reformist officers donned European-style uniforms, and bureaucrats traded their robes for western frockcoats.

The most audacious modernizers also pushed for new laws founded on liberal and nationalist principles. Before the Tanzimat, the major Christian and Jewish groups in the empire enjoyed autonomy over their internal affairs but also lived under legal restrictions that did not apply to Muslims. Between 1839 and 1869 a series of imperial edicts made all religious and ethnic communities equal citizens and subject to the same laws and reforms. Like European nationalists, Turkish leaders tried to infuse the culturally diverse population of thirty million with feelings of patriotic attachment to the Ottoman state. Reforms based on this essentially secular Ottomanist ideology culminated in a constitution (1876) that instituted a national elected assembly and put mild restrictions on the sultan’s power.

Unfortunately for the modernizers, the Tanzimat era ended shortly after the new constitution appeared. The reformers themselves tended to be out of touch with peasants and urban workers and therefore lacked mass support. Moreover, the plan to cultivate a united Ottoman cultural identity ran up against local nationalisms that were awakening among Serbs, Bulgarians, Romanians, and several other ethnic communities within the empire. Finally, the government continued to sign “unequal treaties” with European powers (see Chapter 21) and contracted large loans with European banks. These policies sank the state ever deeper into

**Students of the Ottoman Military Medical School.** Western education was an important aspect of the Tanzimat reforms. The students wear Western-style military uniforms along with the modern Turkish headgear, or fez. Notice the skeletons and other bones posed in the photograph. Why might a formal group portrait like this one have been important to the reform movement?



## A Moroccan Diplomat in France

Several Muslim states besides the Ottoman empire experimented with modernizing reforms in the mid-nineteenth century, though on a much smaller scale. These states included Iran, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco. The kingdom of Morocco ventured only the most cautious steps toward military and administrative modernization, though some members of the official class centered in the capital city of Fez took a serious interest in European affairs.

In early 1845 Mulay Abd al-Rahman, the reigning sultan, assembled a diplomatic embassy to visit France and the government of King Louis-Philippe. The sultan instructed the delegation to negotiate a solution to violence along Morocco's border with Algeria, which France had invaded fifteen years earlier. He also advised the mission to learn as much as possible about French society and come back with insights that might help explain its apparent military prowess. Muhammad al-Saffar, a young legal scholar and secretary in the employ of the embassy's diplomatic leader, kept notes during the group's stay in France and wrote an account of the adventure upon his return. In this selection, Al-Saffar offers his views on French economic values, military power, and religion.

The people of Paris, men and women alike, are tireless in their pursuit of wealth. They are never idle or lazy. The women are like the men in that regard, or perhaps even more so. . . . Even though they have all kinds of amusements and spectacles of the most marvelous kinds, they are not distracted from their work, and give every moment its due. . . . Nor do they excuse someone for being poor, for indeed death is easier for them than poverty, and the poor man there is seen as vile and contemptible. . . .

Their Sultan [King] summoned us to attend a review of the troops as an extravagant expression of his high esteem for us, . . . We were blinded by the flashing of their swords, the gleam of the horses' trappings, the shine of their helmets, and the radiance of the armor they wore both front and back. . . .

So it went until all had passed, leaving our hearts consumed with fire from what we had seen of their overwhelming power and mastery, their preparations and good training, their putting everything in its proper place. In comparison with the weakness of Islam, the dissipation of its strength, and the disrupted condition of its people, how confident they are, how

impressive their state of readiness, how competent they are in matters of state, how firm their laws, how capable in war and successful in vanquishing their enemies—not because of their courage, bravery, or religious zeal, but because of their marvelous organization, their uncanny mastery over affairs, and their strict adherence to the law. . . .

In Aix [Aix-en-Provence] we saw a huge cross made of wood standing on one side of the town square. At its top was a smaller bit of wood made into the likeness of a crucified man, naked except for a cloth covering his maleness. What a sight it was! . . . They claim he is Jesus, that is to say, a likeness of him crucified. . . . May [God] preserve them from that, and may He be raised high above what the sinners say. The proof of our eyes only increased our insight into their unbelief, the falsity of their creed, and the stupidity of their reasoning. Thanks be to God who guided us to the true religion.

Source: Susan Gilson Miller, trans. and ed., *Disorienting Encounters: Travels of a Moroccan Scholar in France in 1845–46: The Voyage of Muhammad al-Saffar* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 108, 110, 153, 190, 193–194.

### Thinking Critically

Which aspects of French society and culture impress Al-Saffar, and which do not? Why do you think his views are ambivalent? What inferences might you make about Moroccan society in the 1840s, based on Al-Saffar's observations about France?

debt. Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who came to power in 1876, had no sympathy for European-style reforms. He halted the Tanzimat, suspended the new constitution, and ruled in the old autocratic manner until 1909.

**The fate of Muslim Algeria.** In the territory that is today the Republic of Algeria, Muslims witnessed a demonstration of Europe's raw military power when in 1830 French forces crossed the Mediterranean to seize the port of Algiers. Before

then, an elite of Turkish military men owing formal loyalty to the Ottoman sultan ruled the cities and towns along Algeria's Mediterranean coast. Self-governing Arabic- and Berber-speaking tribes held sway in the interior plains and mountains. France's Charles X, motivated more by hunger for political prestige than by any clear strategic aim, exploited a minor diplomatic incident to occupy Algiers. When local resistance erupted, the intruders found themselves fighting for more territory than they had planned. The French quickly



eliminated the Turkish regime, but rural populations led by Abd al-Qadir battled French forces for nearly fifteen years. An Arab cavalry warrior esteemed for his Muslim learning, Abd al-Qadir founded a centralized Algerian state in interior areas beyond French reach. He also modernized his struggle by acquiring up-to-date weaponry and arguing his cause to European newspaper reporters. In 1840, however, France unleashed a scorched-earth campaign to make Algeria's Mediterranean hinterlands safe for land-hungry European settlers, who were beginning to pour in. In 1847 Abd al-Qadir was caught and deported, though popular risings continued to shake the country for another quarter-century.

## The Limits of Liberalism in Latin America

Liberal ideas spread widely among educated city dwellers in the Latin American states that gained independence from Spain in the 1820s. The sixteen states created in the aftermath of the liberation wars became constitutional republics. Only Brazil remained a monarchy after Portugal withdrew. Land-owners, professionals, and government functionaries who admired the European and North American models of popular sovereignty formed liberal blocs in almost every country to press for continuing reforms. Liberals had no desire to perpetuate the authoritarianism and restricted commerce that had characterized the Spanish and Portuguese colonial empires, and they yearned to reduce the power of the Roman Catholic Church over social life and education.

During the first few decades after independence, however, liberal hopes wilted. Activist political groups remained small, and liberals quarreled incessantly with conservatives; each group promoted its own political and economic agenda. Like their counterparts in Catholic European countries, conservatives argued for strict social ranking between land-owning elites and ordinary people, and they honored the church as the preserver of tradition. Liberals contended that a combination of modern technology, property rights, and free trade would push their countries along Europe's path of material progress. But in fact, most of Latin America remained economically stagnant until after 1850. The wars of independence had wrecked economic infrastructures, and most of the urban educated class, including liberals proclaiming universal equality, held deep cultural prejudices against the Indians, *mestizos*, and black workers that inhabited the rural backlands.

**Dictators on horseback.** When postindependence governments achieved little economic change, military officers seized power, sometimes in rural regions, sometimes in whole countries. Across Latin America, the period from

**caudillos** Autocratic political bosses or dictators, especially in the postindependence period in Latin America.

1830 to 1860 was the age of the **caudillos** (kahw-DEE-yohs), political strongmen who led their own Indian

and *mestizo* cavalry and who typically ruled with clenched fists. In several countries these warlords competed ruthlessly with one another for power and land, inflicting prolonged political and economic turmoil in the process. Those who fought their way to national ascendancy retained republican institutions and symbols but routinely stuffed ballot boxes and suspended representative assemblies.

Two larger-than-life caudillos were Juan Manuel de Rosas and Antonio López de Santa Anna. Rosas dominated Argentina from 1829 to 1852. He personified the caudillo ideal, galloping with gauchos (cowboys), proclaiming himself champion of the poor, and having his own portrait placed on church altars. Simultaneously, he protected the wealth of the land magnates. He finally fell to an enemy alliance of exiled liberals and rival caudillos.

In Mexico, Santa Anna served as caudillo-president of the republic nine different times between 1833 and 1855. Like Rosas, he had the support of rich patrons, who locked up huge acreages of land while the economy stagnated. As one midcentury liberal wrote, "There are Mexican land-owners who occupy (if one can apply the word "occupation" to a purely imaginary thing) a greater extent of land . . . even than one or more European countries. Over this vast expanse of land, much of which lies idle, . . . live scattered four to five million Mexicans who have no other means of subsistence than agriculture yet are forbidden the use of the land."<sup>5</sup> Mexico's still rudimentary communication system made sustained central management of the state, which extended from tropical forests to northern California, nearly impossible. In the north, settlers from the United States penetrated Texas and in 1836 declared independence from Mexico. They also legalized slavery again. In the Yucatan Peninsula, a rebellion of Maya farmers simmered well into the second half of the century.

The Santa Anna era ended in the traumatic aftermath of war with the United States from 1846 to 1848, an episode that cost Mexico half its territory. The United States was industrializing, settlers were pouring across the Mississippi, and President James Polk aimed to annex territory all the way to the Pacific. The Mexican government lacked comparable economic resources and suffered from chronic political factionalism. U.S. forces occupied Mexico City briefly but did not pursue annexation south of the Rio Grande. The federal government was more interested in settling American and European migrants on western Indian lands than in ruling millions of Mexican farmers.

**Liberal revival.** After 1850, liberal elites took back the presidential palaces in several Latin American countries, including Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, and Chile. Those states wrote new constitutions, trimmed the power of the church, and dropped tariffs in order to export more minerals and farm commodities. In many countries, *mestizos* and Indians began to take a freer part in civic life. Liberal regimes abolished slavery in most countries by 1854, though





**Mexican cavalry charge a U.S. artillery position.** Mexican artist Julio Michaud y Thomas depicts the 1847 Battle of Sacramento near the city of Chihuahua. Mexican troops outnumbered the Americans three to one, but U.S. artillery power forced them to retreat with “great confusion in their ranks.” How does Michaud’s lithograph express a Mexican nationalist perspective on the Mexican-American War?

nowhere did women gain rights to active citizenship. In Mexico, liberal reformers under Benito Juárez, an Indian and two-time president, achieved stability and conditions for economic growth in the late 1860s.

Nationalism gelled slowly in Latin American countries. In the decades after independence, popular identification with Mexico, Venezuela, Chile, or any of the new republics as distinct national communities barely existed. Even so, newspapers and café talk in the larger towns helped broadcast economic and political news along with a rising national consciousness. Such sentiment took longer to spread to the countryside, but in the late nineteenth century, rising literacy rates together with patriotic expressions in art and literature broadened the base of the imagined community in all Latin American countries.

## Religion and Reform

**FOCUS** How did established religions and new religious movements address popular concerns about rapid economic and social change in the nineteenth century?

Liberalism and nationalism were secular ideologies, but they did not disdain all religion. Emerging nationalist movements,

especially in the later nineteenth century, typically defined the national community partly in terms of its religious culture. For example, Polish nationalism identified with the Roman Catholic Church and Serbian nationalism with the Serbian Orthodox Church. Secular liberals critiqued conservative church hierarchies but religious beliefs not so often. Under liberal pressures, monarchs associated with an official state religion came slowly to accept wider religious liberties. The Protestant constitutional monarchies of northern Europe, for example, progressively abolished discriminatory laws against Roman Catholics.

For hundreds of millions of farmers and urban workers, who, like educated men and women, worried about the directions the world might be taking, religion provided a fundamental moral foundation for coping with rural impoverishment, job insecurities, price fluctuations, and taxes. Spiritual teachings provided ideological frameworks for thinking about the world, finding meaning in it, and perhaps making it better.

## Global Trends and Religious Change

Two broad developments presented the world’s religions with both dangers and opportunities. First, religious leaders saw their political power eroded in several parts of the world. This happened partly because republics in Europe and the Americas whittled away the independent authority of churches. Or they “disestablished” religious organization, as the United States Bill of Rights did in prohibiting Congress from making laws “respecting an establishment of religion.” Clerics also lost power because some states, for example, the Ottoman empire in the Tanzimat period, gave government officials tighter management over religious affairs and protected freedom of worship for minority groups.

The second development was the revolution of steam-powered travel and mechanical printing, which allowed religious ideas to circulate wider and faster. In the nineteenth century, pilgrims traveled in larger numbers than ever before to holy sites—Roman Catholics to Rome, Muslims to Mecca, Hindus to the banks of the Ganges—where they identified intellectually and emotionally with a larger community of co-believers. Modern transport carried missionaries to previously inaccessible countries. Printing presses cranked out Bibles, Qurans, Buddhist texts, and the literature of new sects and reform movements.



These two trends contributed in turn to important changes in religious life. The adherents of the major traditions, particularly Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism, became more acutely aware that they belonged to a “world religion.” This happened as leaders disseminated authoritative versions of sacred texts and worked to standardize and purify doctrines. In 1864, for example, the Roman Catholic pope Pius IX published the “Syllabus of the Most Important Errors of Our Time,” which clarified and reaffirmed the church’s position on numerous issues ranging from state–church relations to marriage. In Muslim lands, the Ottomans and other rulers regularized the curriculum taught in universities and strengthened their supervision of religious law courts. In India, intellectual and moral leaders worked together to make Hindu belief and practice more coherent, knowing that from ancient times this tradition had embraced a multitude of ideas and devotions. The idea of Hinduism as a unitary tradition entered the popular imagination of millions of Indians only in the nineteenth century.

## Christian Evangelism

**evangelism** The practice of propagating the Christian gospel by preaching, personal witnessing, and missionary work.

A new spirit of **evangelism** permeated both Protestant and Catholic communities. The term *evangelism*, derived from Greek, refers to

the sharing of the Christian Gospels. Protestants had traditionally been less zealous than Roman Catholics about leading strangers to Christ. But this changed in the nineteenth century as Protestants realized the power of print to spread the holy word, as well as the urgency of ministering to those who endured urban poverty. Church organizations became more deeply engaged in modern social issues, taking up causes like slave abolition, alcohol addiction, education, and poor relief. For example, political groups broadly described as Christian socialists argued that social compassion and justice lay at the heart of the Gospels. In 1865 the English preacher William Booth founded the Salvation Army, a new denomination with military ranks and uniforms that waged war for Christ among the working classes of London.

In the middle decades of the century, Protestant migrants from northern Europe carried evangelical zeal to the growing neo-Europes, transforming Australia, New Zealand, and Canada into mainly Protestant lands (though French-speaking Canada remained predominantly Catholic). By 1870 the United States was the largest Protestant country in the world. Traveling pastors fanned out across the country, holding gospel meetings and saving souls. America was also fertile ground for new faiths. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormonism), which grew as migrants poured westward, established a powerful base among new settlers in Utah. In Massachusetts, Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910) founded the Christian Science



**Catherine Booth, mother of the Salvation Army.** An impressive speaker, she partnered with her husband William to reach out to the urban poor. She also advocated eloquently for women’s ministry in a time when females were excluded from speaking in most Christian churches. What might account for Catherine Booth’s popularity as a preacher among middle-class British Christians, when the focus of her evangelical work was criminals, addicts, and other outcasts?

church, which taught that redemption and healing were to be found through self-surrender to rational spiritual laws. In Africa, Asia, and the Island Pacific, Protestant missionary organizations competed with Catholic priests and nuns who had been proselytizing abroad since the sixteenth century. Wherever British forces seized new territory, missionaries from the Church of England and other Protestant denominations invariably turned up. Catholic missions similarly followed the French flag. Wherever they went, Christian missions included teachers and medical personnel, many of them women.

## Jewish Reform

Within the world’s dispersed Jewish communities, new movements arose to adapt religious practice to ideals of



## Ram Mohan Roy: Hindu Reformer

In the commercial ports of South Asia, European liberal ideas circulated among young Hindu and Muslim intellectuals, who fiercely debated the challenges of British East India Company rule and the rapid commercialization buffeting the subcontinent. Among these thinkers was Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833), who rose to public prominence as an advocate of modernization and a tireless reformer of traditional Hindu beliefs and practices.

Roy belonged to a small elite of well-educated Hindus determined to fathom Europe’s swelling economic and military power by grappling seriously with European ideas. These scholars learned English and studied the European Enlightenment alongside the classics of Indian religion and philosophy. A man of high caste from the region of Bengal, Roy received a thorough classical education, including studies in Bengali, Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic. A young man of boundless intellectual energy, he went on to master English and even learned some Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.

In his thirties Roy took a post with the East India Company, as other literate men did, and he rose as high in the giant British firm as a native Indian was allowed to go. In 1814, however, he left the company to join other Hindu intellectuals in Calcutta to talk and write about religion, philosophy, and politics. His studies led him to conclude that over the centuries layers of false belief, deadening ritual, and baneful superstition had concealed the original Hindu faith. The pure teachings of ancient India, he argued, attested to a universal monotheism; to a religion founded on reason, not on the personal authority of priests; to social equality, not caste hierarchy; and to egalitarian relations between men and women. Despite his own family’s attachment to traditions that subordinated women to male relatives, he denounced polygamy, child marriage, and male exploitation of women’s labor. He also denounced *sati*, the custom of high-caste women throwing themselves on their husband’s funeral pyre as proof of their fidelity. This stance pleased English liberals, who looked down on most Hindu practices as antiquated and barbarous, even though there is little evidence of *sati* being widely practiced.

Roy believed that Indian spirituality, washed of unreasonable customs, was readily adaptable to the modern world and had

much to give to it. Fundamentally a moral reformer, he also aimed to harmonize religious belief with the new doctrines of secular liberalism, which were just beginning to reach the elites of Asian cities. For example, as much as he loved Sanskrit learning, he advocated a modern system of education that would employ “European gentlemen of talent and education to instruct the natives of India in mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, and other useful sciences.”<sup>6</sup>



Ram Mohan Roy

Roy was well versed on the French Revolution, sympathized with popular uprisings in places like Ireland, and imagined the day when South Asians would again take charge of their own affairs. In his time, nationalist ideology was still in its formative phase. Nevertheless, he and his fellow activists were the first to express the idea of South Asia, not just as the land of Bengalis, Punjabis, Sikhs, and numerous other ethnic and religious groups, but as India, a distinct cultural community whose members deserved modern rights to equality and justice. On this idea Roy’s intellectual successors founded the Indian nationalist movement in the decades after his passing. He died of meningitis in 1833 during a visit to England.

### Thinking Critically

Why do you think that Ram Mohan Roy’s proposals for change in South Asian society did not include a demand that Britain and its East India Company immediately restore the region’s political independence?

modernity and national citizenship. The German thinker Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), a leader of the reform movement known as the Jewish Enlightenment, translated the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) into German and urged Jews to strive for integration into the social and cultural mainstreams of the countries where they lived. In the early nineteenth century, German Jewish intellectuals established schools to teach modern subjects in addition to

religious texts. Mendelssohn and others argued that Judaism must change with the times rather than cling to laws belonging to ancient Jewish kingdoms long vanished.

Pushed by liberal opinion, many European governments, though not all, gradually lifted limitations on Jewish civil and cultural rights. Where Jews became more successfully linked into national life, notably in Germany, Austria, Britain, and the United States, growing numbers embraced



what became known as Reform Judaism. Its adherents simplified rituals, ended sexual segregation in worship, and introduced sermons in vernacular languages.

## Religious Reform and Revolution in the Muslim World

Like Christians and Jews, devout Muslims responded to the acceleration of global change in a variety of ways. In urban intellectual circles, Muslims talked of ways to join Islamic beliefs and traditions with modern science and liberal ideology. The Iranian-born writer and activist Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839–1897) sparked the imagination of young Muslims in the early 1870s by insisting that Muslims must stand up to European material power. This would require reviving feelings of unity among all Muslims as members of the universal *umma*, or “community of believers.” Al-Afghani was the first Muslim thinker to put forward the idea of pan-Islamic solidarity as a modern political ideology.

**The Wahhabi movement.** In the Arabian Peninsula, tarnished faith and gross materialism, though not anything that Europeans in particular were doing, troubled the pious scholar Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792). He urged Muslims to renew their spiritual commitment by dedicating themselves to the Quran and to the authentic traditions of the Prophet Muhammad as the foundation of law and daily life. He rigorously criticized local popular beliefs that had seeped into Islamic culture, as well as Sufi

mystical practices, which included veneration of living or deceased holy men. His school of thought, which became known as Wahhabism, demanded reverence for God alone. He also argued that Muslims must fulfill the Quranic requirement to respect women and their legal rights, though later Wahhabi leaders largely failed him on this point.

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab allied with Muhammad ibn Sa‘ud, an Arabian warrior chief, who in 1808 conquered Mecca and a large part of Arabia. That success ended the relatively loose rule that the Ottoman empire exercised in the region and replaced it with a new state based on Wahhabi teachings. This kingdom, however, flourished only a few years before an Egyptian army invaded the peninsula and reduced it (at least for the time being) to a small desert principality. Nevertheless, the Wahhabi call to return to belief and worship presumably as practiced in the early Muslim centuries continued to influence Islamic reform movements, especially in West Africa, India, and Indonesia. Wahhabism is the religious ideology of the modern kingdom of Saudi Arabia founded in 1932, and in the past few decades its precepts have inspired radical Muslim political movements, including al-Qaida.

**Religious revolution in West Africa.** The impulse to reform also inflamed popular uprisings in West Africa. Islam had been established for centuries in the Sudanic region, that is, the savanna lands south of the Sahara Desert, though mainly among urban merchants, scholars, and ruling families. In the eighteenth century Muslim reformers

### Warriors of the Sokoto

**Caliphate.** This American engraving from 1857 shows Sokoto horsemen and infantry raiding for slaves. Why might the artist have focused on slavery rather than depicting the Muslim religious reform that also contributed to Sokoto’s imperial success?



THE SLAVE HUNT.

in the area that is today Senegal, Gambia, and Guinea overthrew chiefs and land-owning nobles that they believed violated the Muslim ideals of good governance. At the center of those movements were the Fula (or Fulani), a predominantly cattle-herding people who increasingly identified with Islam.

In the early nineteenth century Usman dan Fodio (1754–1817), a town-dwelling Fula and respected Muslim scholar, led a rebellion that changed the political and religious map of West Africa. His targets were the rulers of the large and prosperous city-states that are today part of Nigeria and Niger. The rulers of those walled cities, the largest of which was Kano, spoke the Hausa language and identified themselves as Muslims, but they gave little attention to religious duties or law. Dan Fodio called upon Muslim Fula and non-Muslim Hausa peasants (the majority of the population) to join together to overthrow their tyrannical rulers, whom he accused of a multitude of transgressions, including the enslavement of fellow Muslims. Like Abd al-Wahhab in Arabia, dan Fodio aimed to strengthen the Muslim community by cleansing it of local folk beliefs. But in contrast to the Wahhabis, he embraced the Sufi tradition and indeed propagated his movement through the Qadiriyya, a large mystical fraternity. Among family members who helped lead the revolution, dan Fodio's daughter Nana Asma'u played a key part as an essayist and poet who called upon women to educate their children in orthodox Muslim practice.

Between 1803 and 1808 dan Fodio's force of mounted archers and spearmen swept several Hausa dynasties out of power. He united the city-states under his rule, taking the title of *khalifa* (caliph), a rank that combined religious and political authority. Under Muhammad Bello, his son and successor, the Sokoto caliphate continued to conquer territories east, west, and south until it eventually became one of the largest empires in Africa. The successors of dan Fodio, however, failed to sustain his reformist zeal. Within a short time, they came to resemble the Hausa princes they had replaced, amassing property, trading slaves, and imposing burdensome taxes. Nevertheless, dan Fodio's example inspired similar Muslim revolutions in other parts of West Africa. Because of those movements and the continuing work of the Sufi fraternities, Islam became the predominant religion across Sudanic Africa by the end of the century.

## Global Change and the Calamitous Wars of Midcentury

**FOCUS** Why did so many wars break out in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, and why did these wars produce death and destruction on such a large scale?

On a world scale the 1850s and 1860s were decades of extraordinary violence. Each of the disastrous conflicts of the period had its distinctive causes, but all of them were bound up with the explosive growth of the capitalist world economy, advances in military technology linked to mass production, and the social stresses of rapid change. One historical estimate suggests that more people died in war and rebellion during those decades than in any comparable period earlier in history. Such mortality was not to be exceeded until the catastrophe of World War I.<sup>7</sup> Two of the most destructive clashes of the period, the Crimean War (1853–1856) in the Crimean Peninsula (today part of Ukraine) and the War of the Triple Alliance (1864–1870) in South America, pitted one sovereign state against others. Three of the conflicts, the Taiping Rebellion in China (1851–1864), the Great Indian Rebellion in South Asia (1857–1859), and the American Civil War (1861–1865), were internal revolts against central state authority (see Map 22.3).

### The Crimean War and the Industrialization of Violence

Imperial Russia in the nineteenth century deployed its huge land army to expand its borders, pushing in the west against the Ottoman empire. Conflict between Russia and the Ottoman empire over territory in what is today Romania triggered the war in October 1853. The following year Britain and France joined with the Ottomans to blunt Russia's advance by invading the Crimean Peninsula, Russian-ruled territory on the northern rim of the Black Sea. The European powers had no urgent interest in the Crimea, but their political and commercial strategies required that Russia be prevented from controlling Black Sea shipping, invading southeastern Europe, or seizing Ottoman Constantinople, which guarded the vital Bosphorus strait that gave access to the Mediterranean.

The war lasted barely more than two years, but it cost the lives of an estimated 264,000 soldiers in combat and an even greater number from diseases such as dysentery and cholera. Historians generally agree that generals on both sides hopelessly mismanaged the fighting, but the belligerents also introduced new technologies and tactics that foreshadowed the American Civil War and even World War I. These included field communication by telegraph, steam-powered supply vessels, massive artillery barrages, and, in the British and French forces, new rifles that could shoot accurately eight hundred yards farther than older muskets. This was the first modern war in which military machines of the industrial era wreaked serious havoc. It was also the first war recorded by photographers. Primarily because Britain and France could easily resupply their forces by sea, they eventually forced Russia to sue for peace. The struggle checked Russian ambitions in the region, at least for a time, though it also signaled growing volatility in relations among the European powers.





**MAP 22.3 Wars of the mid-nineteenth century.**

Which of these wars, if any, might be described as a colonial resistance movement?

## Paraguay: A War of Annihilation

In South America the waning of the era of caudillo strongmen and the revival of liberal-minded governments restored political calm to most countries and spurred economic growth, especially in exports of raw commodities. Tensions grew, however, among countries over control of regional resources and the ports and transport routes that afforded access to world markets. Such pressures led the land-locked republic of Paraguay to war against its three neighbors.

In 1860 Paraguay had a remarkably prosperous economy based on crops that the Guaraní Indian population grew. Between 1840 and 1870 Carlos Antonio López, followed by his son Francisco Solano, ran Paraguay as a dictatorship with republican trappings. Still, they had a modernizing agenda that included abolishing slavery, promoting literacy, building industries on a small scale, and creating a well-equipped military. Francisco López even visited the Crimean War front to get military ideas, and he modeled his force on the French army.

The War of the Triple Alliance broke out in 1864, when Brazil invaded Uruguay, inciting López's fears that those

two countries in collaboration with Argentina would restrict Paraguay's access to the Atlantic ports of Buenos Aires and Montevideo. When López declared war on Brazil, all three of his neighbors did indeed gang up on him. Though Paraguay had an army of seventy thousand soldiers, by far the largest in the region, the alliance gradually wore down the country amid ghastly carnage. In five years of fighting, more than 300,000 combatants died on both sides, and in Paraguay invading armies slaughtered people indiscriminately, reducing the population by 20 percent, including the great majority of adult males. In the peace that finally came in 1870, the country lost large chunks of territory to the victors, as well as most of the economic gains it had made earlier. Thereafter, the economy became increasingly tied to foreign merchants, land speculators, and banks.

## The Taiping Rebellion in China

By far the bloodiest conflict of midcentury was not a war between states but a volcanic protest of a people against its own government. Historians have estimated that the Taiping (TEYE-pihng) Rebellion of 1851–1864 cost between ten



and thirty million Chinese lives, either in combat or from the disease and hunger that accompanied the destruction.

The Taiping revolt was the biggest of several popular risings that challenged the authority of the Qing dynasty in the nineteenth century. All of these movements grew out of peasant grievances over land shortages linked to growing population, price inflation, government negligence, and, in some areas, floods and famines. China's humiliating defeat by Britain in the Anglo-Chinese wars of 1839–1842 and 1856–1860 (see Chapter 21) exposed the empire's military weakness. Chinese of all classes also saw weakness in the growing numbers of foreigners doing business in the ports, in the degrading unequal treaties the Qing government had to accept, and in the opium trade, which debilitated millions of men and women while enriching European merchants.

Hong Xiuquan (hoong shee-OH-chew-an, 1814–1864), the leader of the Taiping movement, was a poor schoolteacher from southern China who had failed the Confucian civil service exams and could not get a place in the imperial bureaucracy. After reading bits of Christian literature, he had a vision instructing him that he was the younger brother of Jesus sent by God to right the wrongs of the world. He had only minimal contact with European missionaries in China, but he preached to aggrieved peasants an austere doctrine that, vaguely echoing European socialism, proclaimed the equality of men and women and the eradication of private property. He denounced female foot-binding, opium use, prostitution, and gambling, and he promised to stock public granaries for famine relief, which the Qing government had neglected to do.

In 1851 Hong declared himself leader of the Kingdom of Heavenly Peace (Taiping), which would soon embrace the world. Amassing a following of hundreds of thousands of Chinese farmers and workers, he and his poorly equipped army overran several cities in southern and central China, flattened opposing militias, and executed rich land-owners. In 1853 the rebels captured the northern metropolis of Nanjing and killed most of its inhabitants. Although government forces repulsed an attack on Beijing, Hong's army grew to about a million men and women and took control of seventeen provinces.

Hong ruled from Nanjing for a decade, but his lieutenants frequently quarreled. Little came of his radical reform plans. In the meantime, wealthy families and bureaucrats gradually organized opposition. In 1864 a Qing army retook Nanjing,



**Qing troops attack a rebel stronghold at Tientsin.** This image conveys the magnitude of the Taiping Rebellion, which resulted in huge casualties on both sides of the civil war. What elements of the painting suggest it commemorates a Qing victory?

killing about 100,000 beleaguered rebels. Hong soon died in mysterious circumstances. The end of the rebellion left China economically depleted and more vulnerable than ever to European political pressures. The imperial government had to defer to regional lords and officers to quell the rebellion and try to revive farms and cities. Consequently, the regime lost more of its authority over provincial leaders, a process that worked to the benefit of foreign merchants, who wished to be regulated as little as possible. Nevertheless, the revolt roused small bands of Chinese modernizers to search for new ways to strengthen the empire's defenses against European power and the gales of economic change.



## The Great Indian Rebellion

In contrast to China, most of South Asia in midcentury was already a European colonial possession. It was therefore bound more tightly to the capitalist world economy than China was, a fact visible to anyone who watched raw cotton, opium, and migrant labor flowing out of Indian Ocean ports in return for growing volumes of European manufactures.

In 1857 local soldiers in the pay of the East India Company mutinied against their European officers, triggering a popular revolt that within a few months engulfed northern and central India. Mutinies flared in several towns after Indian garrison troops, or *sepoys*, refused to load rifles that officers had issued them because the cartridges were smeared with either pig fat, which Muslim soldiers would not touch, or beef tallow, which repelled Hindus. Behind this cultural complaint, however, lay numerous grievances over inadequate salaries, bad living conditions, use of Indian troops to support British conquests in Burma, and racist policies that permitted only Europeans to hold officer ranks. More broadly, millions of South Asians seethed over the company's rapacious taxation and its refusal to seriously consult Indians on any aspect of colonial policy. The revolt had no central direction, but rebel forces marched on Delhi and several other large cities, amid much burning of villages, executions, and other horrific violence. The company spent a full year suppressing insurgencies in several different regions.

The rebellion had long-term consequences for both India and Britain. Parliament in London dissolved the East India Company and assumed direct control over the colony, henceforth known as the British Raj, or "Rule." The new British governors, or viceroys, initiated many reforms to strengthen colonial authority and internal communication, though not to widen Indian political participation. Reforms also encouraged more systematic exploitation of the country's resources for the benefit of European firms and a small sector of wealthy Indian land-owners and investors. The rebellion cost the British government millions of pounds and therefore hardened colonial resolve to crush any new insurgency.

## The American Civil War

More blood ran in the American Civil War than in any other conflict of the era except for the Taiping catastrophe. Similarly to the situation in Germany and Italy before their unifications, the United States suffered tensions between those who believed concentrated power was the key to material progress and those who defended regional autonomy. In the first half of the nineteenth century the country had a relatively weak central government. The federal bureaucracy in Washington, D.C., was tiny, especially compared to those in countries like France or the Ottoman empire. The country had no integrated communication or transport system,

not even a single national currency. Although Americans envisioned their land as a cultural community dedicated to republican principles, there were deep economic and political divisions. The most toxic of these centered on slavery.

On this issue the United States swam against the Atlantic current. All European states except Spain abolished slavery in their American colonies by midcentury, as did all Latin American countries except Brazil. In the southern United States, by contrast, slavery grew and spread. The plantation-owning class and its political allies played a key part in the industrial revolution—not by industrializing, but by making themselves the world's chief supplier of raw cotton to both Britain and the northern states. Although abolitionism gained strong support in the North, southern leaders insisted that slavery was essential to economic growth.

The dispute became aggravated every time the United States acquired new land. In the space of fifty years the country more than tripled in size, acquiring the huge Louisiana Territory from Napoleon in 1803, adding Florida and land in the Pacific Northwest in 1819, and seizing millions more square miles, including California, in the settlement of the Mexican War of 1848. All these acquisitions raised the thorny question of where slavery should be allowed. Capitalist and political interests in the North perceived the west as wide open space for the throngs of new settlers from Europe. The army would deal with obstinate Indians, and towns and railways would rise up everywhere. This vision had no room for planters bent on locking up huge tracts of land to produce crops with slave gangs. Southern slave owners also feared that their workers would try to run away to new free states with abundant land. Between 1820 and 1854, Congress enacted a series of compromises that treated each phase of westward expansion as a matter of balancing northern and southern interests—permitting slavery in one new state but not another. In the 1850s, political relations between North and South deteriorated steadily.

Opposing the extension of slavery, northern leaders founded the Republican Party. When its candidate, Abraham Lincoln, won the presidency in 1860, eleven southern states seceded from the union, joining together to form the Confederate States of America. In stark contrast to the 1848 revolutions in Europe or even the Taiping Rebellion, this revolt did not aim to broaden democracy or win social justice but to perpetuate black bondage.

To Lincoln, who had written that "that portion of the earth's surface which is owned and inhabited by the people of the United States, is well adapted to be the home of one national family," the secession was unacceptable.<sup>8</sup> The war that followed, mostly a protracted Union invasion of the South, lasted almost four years and caused nearly a million casualties, including about 620,000 combat deaths. At first, Lincoln justified the war as a mission to save the union, not end slavery, but in early 1863 he proclaimed the emancipation of slaves in all the rebellious states, though not in slave





**Freed slaves travel north.** Copies of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation decorate the coach and serve as flags. This illustration appeared in a French magazine, suggesting that the proclamation attracted international interest. What events in French history might this image have brought to mind?

states that remained in the union. The proclamation encouraged slaves to flee to the North, permitted blacks to join the Union army, and roused livelier sympathy in Europe, especially in Britain, for the northern cause.

The Civil War showed on a far larger scale than the Crimean conflict the power of mechanized industry to wear down an economically weaker enemy, if not win every battle. The Union pumped vast amounts of capital into factories in order to produce arms, ammunition, food, uniforms, locomotives, and steel rails. The accurate, long-range rifles introduced in the Crimea were further improved, and inventors made early experiments with machine guns. The war produced great butchery on both sides, but it eventually exhausted the Confederacy, which depended heavily on European imports to sustain its fight.

Near the end of the war, Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which ended slavery everywhere in the United States. Subsequent amendments granted rights of citizenship to all African Americans and the vote to black males, though another century would pass before these rights were seriously enforced in the South. The war also propelled the United States to the rank of a major industrial state. By 1873 only Britain exceeded it in industrial output. Finally, the conflict shifted the balance of power in the United States in favor of the central government. For the first time, it became a proactive maker of national policy, sponsoring a national bank, a common currency, a homestead policy for the West, broader education for the young, and a transcontinental railway.



## Conclusion

In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the transition from the agrarian era in human history, which lasted 10,000 years, to the fossil-fuel age, in which we now live, went into full swing. In the half-century this chapter has explored, world population grew by more than 20 percent, global GDP increased by more than 60 percent, and the value of British exports alone grew by nearly 1,000 percent. Changes like these inevitably had a radical reordering effect on the way millions of people worked, thought, and organized themselves. This was the first period in which mass, long-distance migration took place to supply the global economy with infusions of wage labor for thousands of new enterprises around the world. Also in this period,

reformers worked out elaborate new secular ideologies to try to explain and manage a world profoundly different from the one into which they were born. Religious leaders brought their spiritual and ethical systems to bear on the same problem.

Throughout those fifty years, western Europe, the first region to harness the energy of coal on a large scale, accumulated scientific knowledge, technical power, and disposable capital much faster than any other region of the world, with the exception of the United States. After 1870, as we will see in Chapter 23, European states deployed their armies, engineers, entrepreneurs, and migrant settlers to dominate by one means or another a large part of the planet.



### Key Terms

American Civil War 638  
bourgeoisie 647  
British Raj 660  
caudillos 652  
communism 647  
Crimean War 657  
evangelism 654

Great Indian Rebellion 657  
Mexican-American War 652  
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pogrom 639  
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secular 645  
socialism 646  
Taiping Rebellion 657  
Tanzimat 650  
War of the Triple Alliance 657



# Change over Time

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>1788</b>      | First European settlers reach Australia.  |
| <b>1803</b>      | Usman dan Fodio launches Muslim revolution in West African Sudan.   |
| <b>1808</b>      | Wahhabi forces seize Mecca in Arabia.   |
| <b>1829–1852</b> | Caudillo Juan Manuel de Rosas rules in Argentina.   |
| <b>1830</b>      | French forces undertake invasion of Algeria.<br>Greece wins independence from the Ottoman empire.                         |
| <b>1832</b>      | The British political reform act expands voting rights.   |
| <b>1839–1876</b> | The Ottoman state institutes modernizing reforms known as the Tanzimat.   |
| <b>1840s</b>     | The trans-Atlantic slave trade begins a rapid decline.  |
| <b>1846–1848</b> | Mexico under Santa Anna loses half of its territory to the United States in the Mexican-American War.                     |
| <b>1848</b>      | Insurrections rock Europe in the revolutions of 1848.   |
| <b>1845–1852</b> | A potato famine propels massive migrations from Ireland.  |
| <b>1848</b>      | Karl Marx publishes the <i>Communist Manifesto</i> .  |
| <b>1851–1864</b> | Millions die as a result of the Taiping Rebellion against Qing rule in China.   |
| <b>1854–1856</b> | The French, British, and Ottomans ally to thwart Russian expansion in the Crimean War.                                    |
| <b>1857–1859</b> | Indian Rebellion against the British East India Company spreads across South Asia;<br>Parliament creates the British Raj. |
| <b>1861–1865</b> | North and South fight over slavery and secession in the American Civil War.   |
| <b>1864–1870</b> | The War of the Triple Alliance pits Paraguay against its neighbors in South America.                                      |
| <b>1870–1871</b> | Italy and also Germany complete the process of unification.   |

Please see end of book reference section for additional reading suggestions related to this chapter.

