The Revolutions of 1848 and Nationalism

**I. The Revolutions of 1848:**

* In 1848, liberal revolutions broke out throughout Europe. Although, at first, they appeared to be spectacularly successful, in the end, all the revolutions failed.
* In general, revolutions occurred where governments were distrusted and where the fear and resentment fed by rising food prices and unemployment found focus in political demands.
* In the end, the revolutions failed b/c the revolutionaries found themselves divided, and also, as Seaman states, because the original governments still had the power and will to survive.
* Sometimes 1848 is referred to as “the turning point at which modern history failed to turn” because it seemed as though the revolutionaries were only so close to success.

**II. Revolution in France:**

* Started in France b/c of a small issue about suffrage.

-When the government refused to widen suffrage, the parliamentary opposition launched a protest movement that staged large banquets across the country.

* The government banned the banquet scheduled for Paris in late February 1848, but some deputies said they would attend anyway, sparking a popular rebellion – barricades formed, the whole deal.
* Louis Philippe responded by reviewing his National Guard, they refused to cheer him, LP realized he had no support and abdicated in favor of his grandson and left for England.
* Instead of abiding to LP two rival newspapers chose a provisional government of men, who appeared a the Hotel de Ville and declared France a republic.

-Led by Alphonse de Lamartine, an admired romantic poet, the new government was dominated by moderates who at first cooperated with the more radical members.

-They agreed on universal male suffrage, and on the citizen’s right to work, and they established a commission to hold public hearings on labor problems.

* But the new regime didn’t want to go overboard – it rejected intervention on behalf of other revolutions, didn’t use the red flag, and added new taxes. Relations w/the church were great, nearly 85% of the people voted, moderate republicans won
* The workers, however, were not satisfied and agitated for a social program and pinned their hopes on the program of national workshops that had been established
* Now the workers were really ticked off, and they responded by building barricades. For three days they fought viciously against the republic’s troops (led by General Cavaignac) but were crushed in the bloody time known as the June Days.
* Cavaignac restricted the press, suppressed the radicals, and instituted severe discipline on the workers. Although Cavaignac remained a republican and the assembly still wrote its constitution, something was definitely off.
* The June Days represented the fatal split between the two revolutionary groups:

-Middle class: wanted moderate goals, like equality of taxation, careers open to talent, representative government (but only w/middle class voting b/c voters had to have stake in society and education), freedom of speech, press – goals of Enlightenment.

-Working class: wanted radical goals, socialism, total equality – new type of revolution no longer based on Enlightenment but based on socialism and working class.

* December, there was an election and Louis Napoleon Bonaparte won w/70% of the votes b/c of his name, which meant glory and stability. Bonaparte later changed the government to an empire w/himself as emperor just like his uncle, the original Napoleon. Revolution failed

**III. Revolution in Austria:**

* In the Austrian Empire, the Hungarians had by mid-March established a free press and a national guard and had abolished feudal obligations and special privileges.

-Vienna then reluctantly allowed Hungary to levy its own taxes and direct its own army.

* This Hungarian example caused students in Vienna to demand representative government for Austria as well

-crowds rose up, Metternich resigned, censorship was abolished, a constitution was promised, and universal male suffrage was given.

* Hungarian autonomy caused similar demands from the Czechs in Bohemia, the Croatians in Croatia, and the Romanians in Transylvania.
* The original revolutionaries, however, had no tolerance for other smaller revolutions against the Germans, and it supported the repressors of those small revolutions.
* As the smaller revolutions gained power, so did the Hapsburgs (who asked for the support of the smaller revolutions against the first revolutions).

- The Hapsburgs then used their powerful armies to force all the revolutionaries into submission.

**IV. Revolution in Prussia:**

* In the meantime, Frederick William IV of Prussia, upon hearing about the uprising in Vienna, granted some concessions, relaxed censorship and called the Landtag
* Fighting broke out anyway. But when FW agreed to remove his troops from Berlin and elected a constitutional assembly through indirect male suffrage it stopped and it seemed that the revolution had won out.
* Frankfurt Convention: in May, 830 delegates met at Frankfurt to discuss German issues. Most favored a monarchial German state w/a semi-democratic constitution, but there was a split between the Little Germans (wanted Prussia to lead) and Big Germans (wanted Austria to lead).
* Finally, the Little Germans won out, and in March 1849 the Prussian king was elected to become the German emperor. But he refused, cared nothing for Germany, and FW didn’t want his power limited –
* so the constitution was never put into effect. Note that by this time the Landtag in Prussia had already been dissolved.

- Also by this time the MC had been spooked by the strength of the working class rebellions, so they asked for help from the Prussian king

**V. Revolution in Italy:**

* A similar pattern occurred in Italy. At first, the revolutions were successful, and all the states got constitutions (Napes, Tuscany, Piedmont, even Papal States).
* Lombardy and Venetia had been part of the Hapsburg Empire, but after the revolution in Vienna, a revolt broke out in Milan against the Austrian forces there. In the Five Glorious Days of Milan the Austrians were forced to retreat. The Venetian republic was reestablished, and Piedmont joined the war against Austria as well.

- Austria came back and beat Piedmont and its allies, leaving Austria back in firm control. Louis Napoleon then restored the pope, Sicily fell to the kingdom of Naples in May 1849, and, finally, Venetia was defeated in August 1849 by Austria.

**VI. The Effects of Revolution:**

* Although none of the revolutions succeeded, they had a lasting impact on Europe.
* The widespread revolutions measured the failures of restoration, once again demonstrated the power of political ideas, and uncovered the effects of a generation of social change.
* Several gains, in fact, did endure: peasants in Prussia and Austria were emancipated, Piedmont and Prussia kept their new constitutions, and monarchs learned they needed to watch public opinion.
* Liberals learned that they couldn’t depend on the masses to follow them w/out making demands, they reevaluated their own goals – perhaps the old order was better than anarchy, they thought.
* Everyone realized that revolutions needed power and armies to back them up but that, nevertheless, nationalism was a powerful new force in politics.

**VII. Nationalism:**

* Nationalism’s roots stem from a shared sense of regional and cultural identity, but the French Revolution and the effects of Napoleon’s conquests really caused it to emerge as a force in Europe.
* Nationalism was also a movement towards modernization, as countries attempted to industrialize in order to compete with other nations and tried to modernize their political systems.
* As an intellectual movement, nationalism also emphasized the importance of culture and cultural uniqueness. It rejected the universality of the Enlightenment and stated that each country had its own unique values and was suited to its own system of government. Many thinkers (like German nationalists Herder and Gottlieb) urged their countrymen to celebrate their cultural values.
* So, nationalism led to a fascination with folk culture and national history.
* As a political movement, the goal of nationalism was independence: both actual and economic.

Two different types of nationalism:

-Liberal: combined w/ideas of the French Revolution, the liberal nationalists stated that no country is better than another, but that each country has its own unique qualities. All nations deserve to be unified and led by people of their own nationality who can provide the nation with a constitution that is rational, reasonable and just, they said.

-Militaristic: associated w/ideas of social Darwinism and Realpolitik, the claim of militaristic nationalism is that one’s nation is better, not just different. Machiavellian politicians who are out for personal power can exploit this form of nationalism.

**VIII. The Crimean War:**

* Nationalist tensions led to the Crimean War, which originated over competing claims by Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox monks to be the guardians of Jerusalem’s holy places.
* France pressured the Ottoman sultan into giving the Catholics special privileges, which caused the Russians to demand a protectorate over Orthodox churches w/in the Ottoman Empire.

-Then the Russians occupied Wallachia and Moldavia, Danubian lands that were under the Ottomans.

* English urged the sultan to resist the Russian demands. When negotiations broke down, Britain and France sent their fleets to the Aegean Sea, and in
* October 1853 the sultan declared war on Russia. Britain and France joined him to preserve the balance of power.
* In the end, England (BOP), France (defend Catholics), Piedmont (to go to peace conference) and Turkey fight Russia in the Crimean area. This war exposed the weakness of Austria and Russia, and showed how antiquated their systems were.
* Congress of Paris: Turkish side won and the powers met at the Congress of Paris, a congress that was preoccupied with issues of nationalism.

-Russia was forced to cede some territory, surrender its claims in Turkey and accept a ban on warships in the Black Sea.

-The big issue at the conference had to do w/national claims (who should get the Danubian principalities?), an issue which was postponed b/c the Austrians didn’t want the obvious solution (an autonomous state) to be put into effect as they felt threatened by nationalist interests.