

Here is the story of what was happening in the major areas of continental Europe following the traumatic era of the French Revolution.

The Restoration Era in the Major Continental Areas

The Restoration took different forms in the various areas of continental Europe. These forms depended on the local history and the political situation. For example, Germany and Italy, divided into different states, were both dominated by Austria and subject to Metternich's policies. The different states, however, had dissimilar fates, because of their diverse history, their recent relationship to the French Revolution and Napoleon, and their ability and/or willingness to oppose Metternich. This meant that some states of both areas, influenced by Bourbon France, were fairly liberal, others conservative. Spain, which had opposed French domination, had passed through a difficult guerrilla war, isolated from the rest of Europe, and wracked by dynastic disputes, developed in unpredictable ways. Far from Western Europe and suspicious of liberal thought that might spread to the country, Russia nevertheless traversed a fairly liberal period before slipping back into conservative and reactionary policies.

The New Shape of Germany

The Restoration Era in Germany saw competition for influence in the area between Austria and Prussia, the two German great powers. Austria under Metternich won the struggle. Metternich's policy for Germany was to preserve the secondary states of Germany, in general, as Napoleon had enlarged them. Napoleon had suppressed the very small states in the area and consolidated them into larger ones. Metternich aimed to succeed Napoleon as their protector. This prevented the possibility of formation of a united Germany, which would have benefited Prussia.

The Prussians wanted a strong unitary Germany in which Prussia would be predominant, while the English and the French favored a loose confederation, as did Metternich. Metternich knew that in such a confederation the German states would support Austria, which favored their independence. His ideas won out and the German Confederation, which conformed to Metternich's conception, was established.

The machinery of the Confederation enhanced Austrian influence. Its main bodies were the Diet, which met in plenary session only when constitutional problems arose. States, not people were represented. Each state had at least one vote, but the largest had several votes. The six largest states could block a 2/3 vote, which gave practically gave Austria absolute control. This control was reinforced in the other body, the Council, which was the real deliberative body of the Confederation. Here only the largest eleven states had one vote each, while the smallest ones were grouped together and shared votes.

The German States

In South Germany (Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden), the centralization and unification effected by Napoleon remained in effect. Furthermore, when it became clear that Metternich opposed modern-style constitutions such as existed in France, the monarchs forestalled him by issuing their own constitutions (1818-1819). These constitutions were based on the French Charter of 1814 and, like it, established bicameral legislatures, preserved power for the rich, and protected the monarch's interests. In general, liberals had power in the legislatures and they were content with the constitutions.

However, while the South German states granted constitutions and were liberal, this by no means happened in many other German states. In some of the smaller states such as Hesse-Kassel, Brunswick, and Saxony there was a literal restoration with the re-establishment of feudal institutions, tyranny, corruption, and old-style professional armies.

Prussia

In Prussia there had been a reform movement after the Battle of Jena (1806), after which the state had practically collapsed. This movement gave some positive results, but after the fall of Napoleon, the reform movement ran out of steam and Prussia returned to its old, authoritarian ways.



The reformers had concentrated on four areas. The agrarian reforms had aimed to get the peasants involved in the state by creating an independent, landowning class. The reformers did manage to achieve personal freedom for the peasants, but a heavy price was paid for this advance and by 1816 they had failed in their objective as many peasants lost their lands—which were incorporated into larger holdings—and they became farm laborers. In the military sphere, the reformers aimed to create a citizen army and a popular reserve, but while conscription was introduced the old social caste retained control of the army. In politics the reformers wanted a national representative body and a government responsible to it. In 1819, after a clamorous assassination occurred, Metternich convinced the Prussian king Frederick William III that establishing such a body would not be advisable. Prussian reformers had also wanted to give the people a voice in local government, but only the provisions relating to cities went into effect. Thus Prussia remained a strongly conservative state, finding some opposition only in the Rhineland, under strong French influence. While there were advances in constitutionalism in other parts of Germany, this movement would be defeated in Prussia throughout the 19th century; this would have incalculable effects on Germany, which was later united under conservative Prussian auspices.

Conservatives thus triumphed in most of Germany during the Restoration, especially after 1817 and 1819. In 1817, students meeting to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Luther's 95 theses burned symbols of the old regime, creating a



backlash; in 1819 a student killed a suspected Russian agent (von Kotzebue: http://www.xs4all.nl/~ejnoomen/kotz_sand.html). Metternich got the Diet of the German Confederation to pass the “Karlsbad Decrees” which cracked down on subversion in Germany.

German Economic, Social, and Political Developments

While conservatives triumphed, however, changes were taking place in the economy that threatened the social basis of their policies.

The industrial revolution was coming into Central Europe, laying the basis for Germany’s future economic leadership of the continent. The first changes took place in textile production and mining. Later came railroad-building, which began to link central Germany with the northern ports. In 1818, the Zollverein was established—a free-trade area in Prussia which other German states eventually joined and that would eventually become important for German unification (see <http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/Z/Zollvere.asp>). At the same time, an industrial proletariat was formed and the handicraft industry declined. This development aided the rise of a Socialist opposition that fought against both conservatives and liberals.

Important changes also took place on the land, especially in Prussia, where Prussian nobles (called Junkers) had absorbed more land. When new products (alcohol, sugar refining) came in, a capitalistic economy began to be created. This caused economic uncertainty and many Junkers lost their land.

The economic changes of the 1820s and 1830s were to be important factors in the German revolutions of mid-century.

German Cultural and Intellectual Life

This period witness the important development of German philosophy. Hegel (<http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/hege.htm>) and his school were active during this period and Ranke (<http://www.bartleby.com/65/ra/Ranke-Le.html>) applied the scientific method to the study of history. Science studies also became very important in Germany after 1830.

The Restoration in Italy

Just as there were different conditions depending on which German state one discusses, the same was true in Italy.

In Italy, however, the idea of a possible liberation from Austria and possible unification was more advanced. In 1815 the first war for Italian independence occurred under the Napoleon's brother-in-law Joachim Murat (http://www.histofig.com/history/empire/personnes/france_murat_en.html), who had been King of Naples. This attempt failed due to the war weariness of the Italians and the swift defeat of Napoleon during the Hundred Days, freeing up the Austrian army to fight Murat, who lost his throne. Another advance toward the idea of unification was made during the Napoleonic period with the emergence of the "Jacobin-Patriotic" movement, a group that posed the problem of Italian

unification in terms of changing the peninsula's political, and to a certain extent social, structure and advocated the formation of a national democratic state. The many reforms implemented by the Napoleonic administrations in Italy such as doing away with the feudal structure were generally retained by the restored states. The Napoleonic period had also combined several states into one, doing away with tariff barriers and demonstrating the economic advantages of unification that would free the peninsula of barriers to trade.

The Restoration in Northern Italy

The regions of Lombardy and Venetia were annexed to the Austrian Empire on June 12, 1814 (Lombardy had belonged to Austria before the French Revolution, but Venetia had been independent). Lombardy-Venetia was ruled as an Austrian possession directly under a Viceroy. The administrators were Austrian and there was no room for Italians in the administration. Church-State relations were regulated by laws issued during the reign of Joseph II during the 18th century and partly by Napoleonic legislation. Land that had been confiscated from the Church and sold during the Revolutionary period and Napoleonic periods was recognized as belonging to its new owners.

The Austrian administration of Lombardy was resented by the people, because of the lack of any autonomy, because of the large occupation force in Lombardy, and because of the conscription laws. The Lombards particularly resented the financial exploitation that took place. This was a period of economic

progress, but the Austrians took most of the funds produced by this economic advance to help pay for the deficits of the rest of their empire. After 1815, Lombardy-Venetia had large surpluses, but the Austrian treasury absorbed two-thirds of these surpluses, even after subtracting the costs of the Austrian occupation. In addition, the customs system imposed by the Austrians hampered trade, had negative effects on the economy (despite its progress), and benefited the Austrians.

Despite these negative aspects, the economy of Lombardy-Venetia developed greatly between 1814 and 1848, especially in Lombardy. This was primarily the effect of the long period of peace. The capital of Lombardy, Milan, was the advance guard of Italian culture as it had been during the Enlightenment.

In Piedmont things were different. The restored Savoy monarchy tried to turn the clock back to before the French Revolution as the government abrogated more advanced Napoleonic legislation and re-issued old legislation. The Church regained its old influence and, combined with the renewed power of the court, a repressive atmosphere settled over the state. The same thing happened in economic life. The system that existed before the French Revolution returned—reestablishing a complicated system of internal taxes and tolls and commerce controls. As a result, the Piedmontese economy languished.

Cultural life had a reactionary character to it. The major conservative thinker of this period, Joseph De Maistre, came from this state

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_de_Maistre). Prominent liberal thinkers

such as Silvio Pellico had to leave the state. However, there was in Piedmont a young generation of liberals who hailed mostly from the nobility and were formed during the period of French domination. Out of this younger generation came patriotic liberals who wanted to combine loyalty to the dynasty with loyalty to Italy and therefore would be important for the future unification movement.

Central Italy

In Parma (famous for its cheese and wine), Napoleon's second wife Marie Louise ruled with her lover, an Austrian general. Parma had a history of Enlightenment liberalism, and this continued. Napoleonic legislation was retained until 1820 when it was replaced by a new code regarded as among the best in Italy. Modena (now known for Ferraris), next to Parma, was reactionary. Offices were reserved for friends of the Duke and many able persons who had served the Napoleonic administration were ignored.

South of these small states, Tuscany (the area surrounding Florence) was ruled by Grand Duke Ferdinand III, a moderate whose government was closely tied to the best traditions of the Tuscan Enlightenment. He retained advisers who had been active during the Enlightenment. Although he did away with Napoleonic legislation he replaced it with progressive Tuscan laws. Tuscany also passed legislation curbing the power of the Church. From the economic viewpoint, Tuscany was unusual because it returned to a system of free trade.



This caused the prices of agricultural products to drop, favoring commercial activity especially at the port of Livorno.

The Papal State returned to Pope Pius VII's control, but a struggle ensued between conservatives (the zelanti) and the Pope's able moderate adviser Ettore Consalvi. He succeeded in giving the state an administration modeled on the Napoleonic pattern (July 6, 1816). The Church lands that had been confiscated and sold during the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods were recognized as belonging to their new owners, although they had to pay an indemnity. Napoleonic legislation was generally abolished but a commission was set up to prepare new codes. This commission accomplished little and in most cases pre-revolutionary legislation was restored. Torture, however, was abolished.

The zelanti defeated Consalvi in what was perhaps his most important idea—opening up the high offices of the state to laymen. The Papal State thus remained in the hands of a restricted group of prelates who did not consider the Papal domains as public but as personal property to be exploited. The monopoly of power remained in the hands of priests, and this ultimately hurt the state.

The atmosphere in the Papal State was oppressive. The judicial power was subjugated to the executive, there was poor public education, and censorship was harsh. The prohibitive customs duties damaged the economy, which worsened during the course of the 19th century, probably Italy's worst. From 1815 to 1817 a famine raged, but economic crises were chronic and misery



widespread. These conditions spurred the growth of secret societies (such as the Carbonari) that conspired against the government and planned revolutions.

Southern Italy

The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies consisted of the Kingdom of Naples and the Kingdom of Sicily (these were under the same monarch and were merged in 1816). Here the Bourbons were restored in the person of Ferdinand (he had two numbers, IV in Naples and III in Sicily). Because a serious reaction had occurred in 1799, Metternich expected a new one and tried to block it. However, Ferdinand had as his adviser a moderate, Luigi de' Medici.

Medici believed that the Napoleonic administration of Murat had put into effect the program of the Neapolitan Enlightenment and wanted to keep the Napoleonic legislation with few changes. Medici tried to win over the opposition gathered in the Carbonari, but his policies inadvertently strengthened that society. After defeating conservative opposition, Medici planned to put his program into action. First he annexed Sicily and instituted the reforms of the French Revolution there. He then signed a Concordat (February 1818) with the Church which strengthened that institution. This move, combined with an austerity policy, alienated the moderate liberals with whom he had planned to work.

Medici's policies ran afoul of a division between the Carbonari and the moderate liberals. The Carbonari demanded the Spanish Constitution of 1812, a

radical document not favored by rulers, and attempted revolt several times. The moderate liberals had served under Murat (hence their name, Muratists) wanted a moderate constitution, a government more progressive than Medici's but which they would control, and less dependence on the Church and on Austria. This situation created the conditions for a revolution that would occur in 1820.

Spain: The Troubled Legacy of the Constitution of 1812

The Spanish Constitution of 1812 that the Carbonari desired was a widespread one during the Restoration period. What were its origins and its impact in Spain?

In Spain there had been a guerrilla uprising of the people against the Napoleonic regime. Napoleon had taken the Spanish king Charles IV and his son Ferdinand to France and had forced them to resign. The Spanish uprising aimed to restore Ferdinand, who was called "the Desired." In the confused situation of the insurgency against the French, the Spanish called a Cortes (Parliament) in 1810. This Cortes was elected by a complicated system and returned more liberals than their strength in Spain warranted. In addition, the Cortes met in Cadiz, where organized radicals supported the liberals from the gallery. The result was the Constitution of 1812, which became the ideal of European liberals.

The Constitution of 1812 had a major problem: it drastically limited the powers of the king, more so than other constitutions of the period, and deprived



the clergy and the aristocracy of influence in the government. Kings and these groups, therefore, could never accept it or compromise with it. The conservatives denounced the document and charged that an unrepresentative minority of liberals had imposed it upon Spain.

In 1814, when Ferdinand returned as King Ferdinand VII, the Cortes called upon him to swear allegiance to the Constitution. Instead, Ferdinand dissolved the Cortes, abolished the Constitution, and arrested the liberals who had been responsible for writing it. He promised to call a new Cortes and to grant freedom of the press and personal freedom, but he did not keep his promises.

The Return of Despotism

Ferdinand announced his program in May of 1814. Despite his promise to agree to compromise rule between the Cortes and the King, Ferdinand returned to the despotism that had existed before the French Revolution.

In implementing this decision, Ferdinand tried to rule through his ministers in an absolute manner. His rule, however, resulted in confusion and instability because each minister was responsible to the King and subject to immediate dismissal. The ministers were kept in ignorance of what their colleagues were doing and sometimes two ministers held the same post. The average term of a minister between 1814 and 1820 was six months.

The Former Spanish Colonies

A prime reason for the chaos was the bankruptcy of Spain. This, in turn, was caused by the loss of its American colonies, which had declared independence during the French Revolutionary period. The King wanted the colonies back and started gathering an army in order to reconquer them, but he had enormous difficulty doing so because he did not have the funds to raise this army. This dilemma caused problems that would lead to a revolution in 1820.

Russian Involution

In Russia, events took a course that produced even an even more powerful and longer lasting despotism. Alexander I, the Tsar who had led Russia against Napoleon, had been educated by La Harpe, a Swiss liberal republican, (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/L/LaH1arpeF1.asp>) in the ideas of the Enlightenment. It is thus not surprising that we find Alexander open to liberal reforms after the defeat of Napoleon and, given the strength of the Russian autocracy, shifting back later. His reign can be divided into two phases:

The Liberal Stage was an era of reform. Alexander formed a committee of liberal advisers. This committee recommended governmental reorganization and help for the serfs, but little came of this, although eight ministries were established in the government. His adviser Michael Speransky proposed an independent judiciary, an elected representative assembly (Duma), and a council



of state consisting of ministers and other high officials to advise the Tsar. Only the Council of State was established and functioned through 1905, though as a nominated body to which the Tsar could refer legislative proposals if he wished.

Speransky was out of power by 1812, after which the Tsar entered the conservative phase during the last years of his reign. Alexander fell under the influence of a conservative count (Arakcheev) who served as virtual prime minister.

The Decembrist Conspiracy

Alexander died suddenly on December 1, 1825 (he was rumored to have become a monk, and years later when his coffin was dug up, only rocks were found in it). Since he had no children, his brother Constantine would have become Tsar; but even before Alexander died, Constantine renounced the throne in favor of his younger brother Nicholas.

The agreement, however, was not announced in advance. When Alexander died, liberal upper class conspirators and army officers who believed Constantine to be more liberal than Nicholas rose up against Nicholas on December 24, 1825 (the slogan was: "Constantine and Constitution"; but many peasants thought Constitution was Constantine's wife). Nicholas defeated the

uprising and had the conspirators executed or exiled to Siberia. Although defeated, the Decembrists retained an appeal in Russian society as a model of unselfish efforts against autocracy, maladministration, and serfdom.

The Autocratic Reign of Nicholas I (1825-1855)

Nicholas quickly established a strict autocracy. He instituted a secret police to prevent uprisings. This police covered Russia with a large network of secret agents who reported on political and religious dissidents, foreigners, and other suspicious possible opponents. Political prisoners did not have to receive trials in open court.

Nicholas also instituted strict control of the universities, checking on both students and professors. Students were upper class, but the upper class was the only group in a position to revolt in Russia. It is all the more striking, therefore, that Romantic literature began during this period and that there were a number of important authors who prepared the way for the great realistic novelists of a later period. These authors included Pushkin, Lermontov, and Gogol.

These and other authors represented the “Westerners,” who welcomed the introduction of European cultural trends into Russia and who frequently found



themselves in jail. They were opposed by the “Slavophiles” who wished to keep Western influences out and who argued for an independent Russian development and who favored the Orthodox Church.

Nicholas’s repression was so effective that the only opposition to him came from Poland, which revolted in 1830-31 and was harshly repressed. The revolutions of 1848 that shook the European continent did not touch Russia and, indeed, Nicholas tightened his control. In 1849, he even sent troops to suppress the Hungarian Revolution against Austria.