

1740–1780), *Napoleon Bonaparte* of France (ruled 1799–1814), and Catherine the Great of Russia (ruled 1762–1796).

Only a few European monarchs could be called enlightened. Meanwhile, some Asian rulers in areas such as the “Gunpowder Empires” became less progressive and more despotic as their empires began to decline in territory and prestige. In the Ottoman Empire, for example, sultans who might have instituted Enlightenment reforms were violently opposed by conservative groups such as the Janissaries and the ulama (religious experts). The opposition forced Sultan Selim III (ruled 1789–1807) to suspend reforms to make his army more efficient, to centralize government, and to standardize taxes. He was executed before government forces could rescue him from a massive uprising of the Janissaries. (For more about the “Gunpowder Empires,” see pages 353–363)

Revolutions and Reactions

Despite the few enlightened despots, conservative forces grounded in centuries of tradition and dynastic ambition resisted the new ideas of representative government. However, conservatives faced growing pressure to change. As urbanization increased and a new middle class rose out of the Industrial Revolution, people increasingly protested against governments that failed to recognize individual and natural rights. All over Europe and in its colonies, revolution—and reaction—were in the air in the late eighteenth century.

Periodization and Revolutions On the surface, modern revolutions appear to follow a similar pattern. In *The Anatomy of Revolution* (1938), Crane Brinton described the similarities of four political revolutions: the English Revolution of the 1640s, the American Revolution of 1776, the French Revolution of 1789, and the Russian Revolution of 1917. Brinton thought that all four revolutions went through four stages.

1. Citizens become dissatisfied with government.
2. Moderates gain more power.
3. Radicals take over in a “terror” phase.
4. The process culminates in a period of relative calm and acceptance, or what he calls the “Thermidorean Reaction.”

Within this pattern, each revolution had unique revolutionary circumstances and outcomes. For example, Brinton acknowledged that the American Revolution, unlike the other three, lacked a “terror” phase. He concluded his study by noting that some top-down reforms imposed by government or elite leaders brought more lasting social change than the political revolutions he described. (For more about a top-down revolution, read about the regime of Mustafa Kemal in Turkey. See page 521.)

The American Revolution

The ideals that inspired the American Revolution had their roots in European Enlightenment philosophy. Despite being a conservative thinker, even

the British writer Edmund Burke was willing to support the American Revolution. “No taxation without representation” was a distinctly English notion, demanded repeatedly and with increasing insistence from the time of the Magna Carta. Burke, though, would not be so generous toward the French Revolution, which followed the American one by about a decade.

The economic ideas of the physiocrats also played a part in the American Revolution, providing a defense of free market ideas in opposition to English mercantilism. Additionally, the American colonists had become more independent politically: colonial legislatures were making decisions usually made by Parliament. Moreover, great distances separated the colonists from Parliament and the king in London. With economic and political desires for independence grew a new social spirit. In America, chances for success were shaped less by the status of one’s parents and more by one’s own merit.

Declaration of Independence On July 4, 1776, the *Declaration of Independence* expressed the philosophy behind the Patriots’ fight against British troops in America. In writing the document, Thomas Jefferson picked up the phrase “unalienable rights” from John Locke. For Jefferson, these rights were to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In the war that followed, the colonists received crucial help from Britain’s long-time enemy, France, and eventually triumphed. With the British–U.S. Treaty of Paris of 1783, the 13 colonies won their independence from Britain.

New Constitution During the Revolutionary War, Americans created their own government under the Articles of Confederation. In it, they reacted against the excesses of the British government by setting up a weak central government. That government had no executive branch and no power to impose taxes, and it kept most authority with the individual states.

In a few years, many leaders began calling for a stronger central government. The result was the *United States Constitution*, which was ratified by the states in 1788. The U.S. Constitution, the oldest written constitution still in use in the world today, created a republic with a bicameral legislature (House of Representatives and Senate), an executive who was elected by the people through an Electoral College, and a judicial branch. These three branches of government illustrate the *separation of powers* so praised by the French writer Montesquieu: executive, judicial, and legislative. These branches provide important *checks and balances* on one another. Ten amendments to the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights, were soon added to protect basic civil liberties such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion, as well as the rights of people accused of crimes.

The French Revolution

In France in the 1780s, revolutionary ideals took on their own spin, summarized in the slogan *liberté, égalité, et fraternité* (liberty, equality, and fraternity). These ideas, which struck many people as radical, were popularized throughout Europe in the writings of the *philosophes*.

Economic Woes However, there were additional causes that led to the French Revolution. France had long spent more money than it was taking in, partly to finance a series of wars against Great Britain and other countries. Among this spending was the economic aid that France supplied the Americans in their revolution. In order to address its dire financial situation, the French government called a meeting of the Estates-General in the spring of 1789.

The chart below shows the social and legal breakdown of the French population in 1789. The *First Estate* (the clergy) and the *Second Estate* (the nobility) paid almost no direct tax, and they resisted calls that they pay any more. The burden of taxation fell on the *Third Estate*, the common people, composed of peasants, urban workers, and the *bourgeoisie*, or middle class.

| Estate | Population | Land Ownership | Taxation |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| First: Clergy | Less than 1% | About 10% | Less than 1% |
| Second: Nobility | Less than 2% | About 25% | Less than 1% |
| Third: Commoners | More than 97% | About 65% | More than 98% |

Since King Louis XVI (ruled 1774–1792) could not raise more money to finance the large and inefficient government, he called for the Estates-General to meet in 1789. Not having met since the days of Louis XIII in the early seventeenth century, the calling of the Estates-General caused excitement in France. Finance ministers had come and gone in the French government, fired when their plans for equalizing the tax burden had faltered. Now Louis XVI would be forced into some action.

The Revolution Begins When the Estates-General met, the First and Second Estate outvoted the Third Estate by a margin of two to one. Thus, the Third Estate withdrew to an indoor tennis court where they declared their intention to remain apart until a National Assembly could be formed that would grant one vote per member rather than one vote per estate. Representatives from the Third Estate supported this revolutionary idea with the *Tennis Court Oath*, which also called for a constitution limiting the king's power.

The early days of the French Revolution were exciting, as moderates like Marquis de Lafayette seemed to be on the point of establishing a constitutional monarchy. The National Assembly began meeting in Paris, but then the King threatened to arrest the leaders. Angry crowds rioted in Paris and elsewhere in France. On July 14, 1789, a crowd in Paris stormed the *Bastille*, a former prison that still symbolized the abuses of the monarchy and the corrupt aristocracy. In the French countryside, peasants rose up against nobles, even burning some manor houses. Some royal officials fled France. The king was forced to accept a new government with a National Assembly in charge.

The date July 14, 1789, became French Independence Day. The most permanent changes were enacted early in the Revolution—the abolition

of feudalism and the adoption of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, a statement declaring basic human rights. However, one major problem for the new government was its creation of the *Civil Constitution of the Clergy*, which abolished special privileges of the Catholic Church in France and put it under state control. Condemned by the Pope and most of the French clergy, Louis XVI and the nobility refused to accept the limited monarchy, which led to dissatisfaction among radical groups such as the Jacobins and inspired the establishment of the First French Republic in 1792. It was from the Jacobins that sprang the Reign of Terror, a period during which the government executed thousands of opponents of the revolution.

Reign of Terror Among the first to die in the Reign of Terror was Louis XVI, who was executed by guillotine (beheading) in 1793. Louis' death raised grave fears among European leaders. Prussia and Austria were already at war with France. Britain, Spain, and Holland would join them. Besieged by enemies abroad and at home, the ironically named Committee of Public Safety, led by *Maximilien Robespierre*, sought to quell opposition by imposing the death penalty on opponents. They also started the *levée en masse*, or mass male conscription into military service. The idea grew from the revolutionary ideal of the democratic citizen, who, while assured of certain rights, was also given certain responsibilities, such as fighting for the security of the nation.

Also sent to the guillotine in 1793 was *Olympe de Gouges*, a French playwright. Her *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen* (1791) alienated the male dominated leadership of the French Revolution. In pamphlets that she had written, she had asserted that French women should be given the same political rights as French men, and her work *Social Contract* called for marriages to be based on gender equality.

Conservative Reaction In 1794, moderates regained control of the French government and provided a return to a sense of security. They had Robespierre beheaded, thus ending the Reign of Terror. Yet another constituent assembly formulated a constitution. This period of relative calm became known as the *Thermidorean Reaction*, so named after *Thermidor*, the "month of heat" in the French revolutionary calendar when much of this reaction occurred.

As revolutionary vigor decreased in 1795, an oligarchic form of government called the Directory came to power. Under it, important reforms took place that preserved people's natural rights. The French had abolished slavery in the French colonies a year earlier, and now they reformed education and prohibited *primogeniture* (the right of an eldest son to inherit all his parents' property).

Nationalism increased in France and in other areas of Europe and in the Americas. More than in the past, people felt a common bond with others who spoke their language, shared their history, and followed their customs. Nationalism would contribute to the French people's willingness to support the 1799 coup led by the young general Napoleon, himself one of the directors of the new government. By 1804, France had returned to one-man rule governed

by Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (ruled 1804–1814). Meanwhile, nationalism was thriving in France and beyond its borders in areas conquered by Napoleon, particularly those in the Germanic areas of the declining Holy Roman Empire.

Napoleon's Reforms Coming to power later than the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century, Napoleon nevertheless shared many of their characteristics. He instituted a series of popular changes.

1. He made the tax burden more equal than it had been under the monarchy.
2. He had a new law code, the *Code Napoleon*, prepared. In it, all citizens were equal, and it provided for trial by jury and freedom of religion. It became the model for other law codes he imposed on lands he conquered.
3. Napoleon set up a public school system.
4. He sponsored archaeological expeditions in Egypt and elsewhere.
5. He established the French Legion of Honor (an honor society for those who served France well) and promoted government and military officials according to merit rather than family connections.
6. He even made peace with the Pope (Concordat of 1801), who had been distanced from France by the Civil Constitution of the Clergy.

Napoleon the Dictator Despite his achievements, Napoleon was despotic in his use of internal spies and control of government. More than any ruler, he showed the contradictions in the term “enlightened despot.”

Napoleon's Foreign Policy In foreign affairs, Napoleon defeated the armies of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. His armies occupied northern Italy, knitting together a puppet kingdom out of several Italian states. Napoleon's conquests helped bring an end to the Austrian-dominated Holy Roman Empire and united several German states into a Confederation of the Rhine. He set up his relatives as “rulers” over France's satellite nations, such as Spain, Naples, and Westphalia. Part of his downfall came from instituting the Continental System, an international embargo of British trade. It failed because other nations refused to comply, and Britain retaliated with its own embargo.

Failure in the Peninsular Campaign Two poor military decisions led to Napoleon's downfall. France invaded Portugal in 1807, and soon Spain as well. Britain sent troops to help those countries fight France. This Peninsular Campaign tied up many French troops and other resources.

Disaster in Russia Five years into the Peninsular Campaign, Napoleon invaded Russia, using troops from all over Europe. At first, the campaign seemed successful. His forces were victorious at the Battle of Borodino, outside Moscow, and occupied the Russian capital. But *Tsar Alexander I* refused to sign a peace treaty. The Russian Army simply retreated farther east. Napoleon realized his army would never chase down the Russian army and destroy it. The French began to retreat. However, the harsh Russian winter set in. By the end of 1812, the French forces were suffering from hunger, cold, and disease. Napoleon had sent 600,000 soldiers to Russia. Only 100,000 returned. About

half of the deaths were caused by typhus. The rest came from a combination of other diseases, battle wounds, the cold weather, hunger, and thirst.

Napoleon's military failure in the Peninsular Campaign and in Russia showed that he could be defeated. In 1814, France faced attack by the allied forces of Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain. After these forces took Paris, Napoleon abdicated. At the *Congress of Vienna* in 1815, the European powers, led by *Klemens von Metternich*, the conservative prime minister of Austria, exiled Napoleon to the island of Elba. Then, they set about restoring former boundaries and former dynasties. The Congress of Vienna marked the resurgence of conservative forces that opposed nationalist movements and revolutions. For much of the nineteenth century, these forces would try to keep peace by maintaining a *balance of power* among European nations and by opposing popular upheavals. Their biggest test came in 1848, when violent protests demanding wider participation in government broke out in Austria, France, Germany, Prussia, and Italy. All were defeated.

The Haitian Revolution

At the end of the eighteenth century, revolutionary forces were also at work in the rich French sugar and coffee colony of *Haiti* on the western end of the island of St. Domingue. Escaped slaves, called *Maroons*, revolted against their white masters, killing them and burning their houses. The examples of the recent American and French revolutions led former slave *Toussaint L'Ouverture* to join the revolts in 1791 and then to lead a general rebellion against slavery. Besides being well-read in Enlightenment thought, L'Ouverture proved to be a capable general. His army of enslaved Africans and Maroons established an independent government and played various forces of French, Spanish, and British against each other.

In 1801, after taking control of the territory that would become the independent country of Haiti, L'Ouverture produced a constitution that granted equality and citizenship to all residents. He also declared himself governor for life and declared complete independence of Haiti from France. Haiti next enacted land reform: plantations were divided up, with the lands being distributed among former slaves and free blacks.

L'Ouverture worked with the French but then he was betrayed by them. France promised to grant Haitian independence if L'Ouverture would abdicate, but then Napoleon had L'Ouverture captured and arrested. L'Ouverture was executed in France in 1803. Nevertheless, he had succeeded in establishing the abolition of slavery in Haiti and set Haiti on the road to complete independence from France.

In 1804, L'Ouverture's successor, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, took advantage of a distracted Napoleon and of an outbreak of yellow fever to declare Haitian independence permanently. Thus, Haiti became the first country in Latin America to win its independence and the first post-colonial, independent, black-led country in the world. It was also the only country to become permanently independent as a result of a slave uprising.

Comparing the Haitian and French Revolutions

Both the Haitian and French revolutions grew out of the Enlightenment's insistence that men had natural rights as citizens, and that legal restraints were limiting the freedom of people by forcing them into various estates (social classes). However, in the case of the Haitians, the restraints were more severe in that the rebellion was led by slaves who had no rights at all.

Long after its revolution, poverty would plague Haiti, while in France, protection of property and reform of taxation enacted during the French Revolution would help France's economic recovery. But the outcome in both cases was increased freedom. In France, the legal establishment of estates was abolished along with the last vestiges of feudalism. In Haiti, slavery was abolished and the rights of citizens were upheld. While class differences did not evaporate, legal discrimination was ended in Haiti even before its independence by the Constitution of 1801.

However, the Haitians had an additional wish— independence from France. While France wrestled with internal reform and the need for return to stability and order after the Reign of Terror, Haiti wrestled with the desire of foreign powers to exert control over them. Haiti succeeded in establishing the first independent republic in the Caribbean, although its economic success has been limited. France in the nineteenth century shifted between being a constitutional monarchy, a republic, and an empire, and back to being a republic. In both France and Haiti, aims of the Enlightenment were implemented. However, many necessary advances were yet to be made.

Creole Revolutions in Latin America

On the Latin American mainland, revolutionary ideals were taken up by *creoles*. Born of European parents in the Americas, the *creoles* were well educated and aware of the ideas behind the revolutions in North America and France. They considered themselves superior to the *mestizos*, who were born of European and Indian parents. Colonists who were born in Spain or Portugal, known as *Peninsulares*, felt superior to everyone. At the bottom of the social ladder were the African slaves, the indigenous population, and those of mixed African–indigenous heritage. (Some of these social distinctions remain today.)

There were many reasons for discontent in the colonies. Many *creoles* wanted independence from Spain because of Spain's mercantilist policies. These policies required that the colonists buy manufactured goods only from Spain and sell their products only to Spain. The *creoles* tended to be the wealthy landowners, mine owners, and businesspeople. As such, they were the ones most vocal against mercantilist policies.

Meanwhile, Spain tended to give important government jobs in the colonies to *Peninsulares*. *Creoles* resented this situation and wanted more political power. *Mestizos* also wanted political power, as well as a share of the wealth of the colonies. Many had jobs in the towns or worked in the mines or on the estates of the *Peninsulares* and *creoles*.

Mexico Becomes Independent A Mexican village priest, Father *Miguel Hidalgo*, called on Indians and *mestizos* for support in his 1810 drive for Mexican independence from Spain. Hidalgo and his followers won several battles, but the previously sympathetic *creoles* turned on him when the revolutionaries began attacking and looting their property. As the owners of large ranches and mines, the *creoles* eventually supported the Spanish authorities, who came to represent law and order. The Spanish captured and then executed Hidalgo.

In 1821, a *creole* colonel named Agustín de Iturbide attracted the support of the Mexican army and the Roman Catholic Church to win freedom for Mexico City. Spain was so preoccupied with domestic problems that even Mexican conservatives were ready for independence from the home country. The leadership vacuum allowed Iturbide to declare Mexico an independent empire with himself as emperor. Opposition forces led by the conservative general Antonio López de Santa Anna soon overthrew Iturbide, and in 1824 Mexico became a republic. In the coming decades, Mexico would have many heads of government who had been successful military leaders.

The 1824 Mexican constitution guaranteed basic civil rights but did not address serious issues of inequitable land distribution, widespread poverty, the status of Mexican Indians, and inequitable educational access. The political environment featured *liberals* calling for reforms and *conservatives* opposing them. Liberals were influenced by the French and U.S. political models; they stressed the importance of individual rights and opposed the centralized state model of government. They wanted to limit the role of the Roman Catholic Church in politics and in education. Conservatives, by contrast, favored a centralized state in alliance with the Church.

Conflict with the United States In the 1830s and 1840s, the Mexican government was led by the *caudillo* (military dictator), General Santa Anna. Not everyone in Mexico accepted his rule. For example, Americans who had settled on Mexican lands disliked the Mexican law prohibiting slavery. Santa Anna, in between terms as president of Mexico, led Mexican forces in a brief war with Texas. After a defeat at the Battle of the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, the Texans rallied under the leadership of American Sam Houston to defeat Santa Anna's forces. Mexico granted Texas independence in 1836, and it became the Republic of Texas and applied for admission to the United States.

A dispute over the border between Mexico and the United States resulted in the Mexican–American War (1846–1848). Mexico lost and was forced to cede vast territories from Texas to California to the United States in return for \$15 million. Mexico also accepted an earlier U.S. annexation of Texas, with the Rio Grande as its southern border.

Benito Juárez A few years later, democratic reform would come to Mexico. *Benito Juárez*, an Indian lawyer from a background of poverty, became Mexico's president and eventually served five terms, breaking the patterns of military leadership and *creole* rule. He had led a liberal revolt called *La Reforma*, which resulted in a new constitution for Mexico in 1854. He also limited the power of both the Catholic Church and the Mexican army.

But European powers had not finished trying to control Mexico. In 1862, Napoleon III of France invaded, backing a conservative civil war against Juárez's institution of social reforms. His excuse was that Mexico had failed to pay debts owed to French citizens living in Mexico during the Mexican War with the United States. The French forced Juárez to flee Mexico City, they suspended the constitution, and they installed the Austrian *Archduke Maximilian* as emperor of Mexico. Juárez, however, organized resistance and drove the French army out in 1867, aided by some diplomatic pressure on France from the United States, which also wanted the French out of Mexico. Maximilian was captured and shot. Although constitutionally prohibited from serving more terms, Juárez continued to be reelected president until his death in 1872. Mexico had entered a period of political stability with a strong central government.

The Bolívar Revolutions Farther south, in South America, a desire for independence from Spain was also growing among the creole class. Fearing the masses, the creoles refused the support of mestizos, Indians, and mulattos (people of mixed African and European heritage). The creoles had seen the result in Haiti of a slave uprising as well as the excesses of the French Revolution during the Reign of Terror. Some creoles, such as *Simón Bolívar*, continued to push for Enlightenment ideals in Latin America. Never accepting a crown, he was instrumental in the independence of areas that became Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.

Bolívar was born in Venezuela in 1783 to a family whose ancestors had been village aristocrats in Spain. The family had grown very wealthy in Venezuela, and Bolívar had access to this wealth for his revolutionary causes. After considerable military success in Latin America fighting the Spanish, his forces achieved the formation of a large area that he called Gran Colombia. He hoped it would become a federation similar to the United States, one based on Enlightenment ideals. He described himself as a liberal who believed in a free market and the abolition of slavery. Bolívar's goals and concerns for Latin America are outlined in his "Jamaica Letter" (1815): "Generous souls always interest themselves in the fate of a people who strive to recover the rights to which the Creator and Nature have entitled them, and one must be wedded to error and passion not to harbor this noble sentiment."

Bolívar served from 1819 to 1830 as president of Gran Colombia, a vast area of northern South America made up of present-day Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, northern Peru, western Guyana, and northwest Brazil. Due to its size and pressure from separatists, Gran Colombia split into the three successor countries Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador in 1830.

José de San Martín was another creole in South America who defeated royalists to establish an independent government. He led troops from his native Argentina over the Andes Mountains to set up independent republics in Chile and Bolivia. San Martín played the role of liberator in the southern part of South America much as Bolívar did in the northern part. He was hailed as the liberator

of Argentina and the "Protector of Peru." Argentina achieved its independence in 1816 and Peru, in 1821, although consolidation of Peru's territories was not achieved until three years later. By 1825, most of Spanish America was independent; all the new republics had been born of the Enlightenment and nineteenth-century liberalism. Cuba and Puerto Rico, though, stayed under Spanish rule until 1898.

The new nations of Latin America suffered from the long wars of independence. Armies loyal to their generals led to the rise of the caudillos, who controlled only local areas. These men intervened in national politics to make or break governments. Sometimes the caudillos defended the interests of the regional elites and sometimes of the indigenous population and the peasants, but in general they disregarded representative forms of government and the rule of law.

Brazil As a Portuguese colony, Brazil's course was different from many other parts of Latin America. With creoles fearful of revolution, Brazilians were ruled by a prince who had fled Portugal in 1807 when Napoleon invaded. In 1821, the prince left Brazil and moved back to Portugal to become its constitutional monarch, King John VI. His son, Dom Pedro I, stayed in Brazil as regent. When the Portuguese government threatened Brazil's political autonomy, many Brazilians threatened revolution. In a surprising twist, Dom Pedro sided with the Brazilians and declared Brazil's independence from Portugal in 1822, one of the most nonviolent battles for independence in all of Latin America. He declared himself Emperor Pedro I and established a constitutional monarchy. Brazil remained a monarchy with the same social system in place until 1889 when it, too, became a republic after a conservative coup by the military and upper classes.

Results of the Creole Revolutions Although the constitutions of the newly independent countries in Latin America legally ended some social distinctions and abolished slavery, governments were often conservative. The first constitution of Peru, for example, forbade voting by those who could not read or write in Spanish, which effectively denied most Indians the vote until the constitution was changed in 1860. The creoles continued to form a powerful and conservative upper class, as they had before the wars of independence from the European nations.

Women gained little from the revolutions in Latin America. They were still unable to vote or enter into contracts. Most women received little education until late in the nineteenth century, and most remained submissive to men. One notable exception was Manuela Sáenz (1797–1856), who was the lover of Simón Bolívar. She actively participated in fighting alongside Bolívar, for example, in 1822 in a battle near Quito, Ecuador. An excellent rider as well as courageous fighter, she rose to the rank of colonel. On one occasion, she saved Bolívar's life, for which she received the nickname "Liberator of the Liberator."