



THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

TWO PARTS: 1815-1850 & 1850-1914

PURPOSE: WHAT ARE THE MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN THE 19TH CENTURY? DO THESE DEVELOPMENTS CREATE OUR MODERN WORLD?

UNIT 4, CLASS 1

Part One: Introduction to the Nineteenth Century

Section A: 1815-1850

After reading the excerpt below, identify the main trends in this period in writing.

Historians who examine Europe and the events of late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth century often refer to the period as the “dual revolution.” While political systems were loudly altering the concept of the state, sovereignty and the citizen, economic systems were quietly and almost imperceptibly transforming society in a far more permanent manner. This unit examines the roots of the quietly developing industrial revolution as well as the post Napoleonic concepts of liberalism and conservatism and their by-products nationalism, socialism and romanticism.

Key forces in this period were the conservative aristocrats and the middle-class and working-class liberals and nationalists. Conservatives wanted to maintain the status quo and reestablish a sense of traditional European values and practices. Liberals and nationalists sought to carry on the destruction of the old regime of Europe that had begun in France in 1789. The symbol of conservatism in this period was Prince Metternich of Austria. Metternich was convinced that liberalism and nationalism were destructive forces that had to be repressed. In opposition, liberals and nationalists vehemently and relentlessly pushed their creeds as ways to free humanity from the burden of supporting a lazy aristocracy and from the threats of foreign oppression.

Ultimately these forces and their dreams for Europe collided in 1848, a year of revolutions and upheavals. Of the major powers who dealt directly with these forces, only Britain managed to balance reform with traditional systems and thus remained untouched by revolution. For the rest of Europe, the result was the birth of a new type of European leadership, neither totally liberal, nor totally conservative. The leader's of this new Europe would eventually become known as nationalists who themselves would grapple with even more debate and discussion among the ideologically charged environment of late nineteenth century Europe.

Response:



Section B: 1850-1914

After reading the excerpt below, identify the main trends in this period in writing.

At mid-century, Great Britain, France and Russia were the three major powers of Europe. However the unification of Italy and Germany altered the balance of power in Central Europe and dramatically changed international politics. Moreover, ethnic minorities in the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary clamored for more rights, setting the stage for further conflict in Europe. During the second half of the 19th century, Europe moved into the age of mass politics. The British Parliament passed a second reform bill in 1867 and a third in 1884, expanding the franchise. The ministries of Gladstone and Disraeli fought for the hearts of the working class with progressive policies. Beginning with a republic, then another Napoleonic empire, France ended up with a Third Republic, more an accommodation than a choice. The franchise also increased in Belgium, Germany and Italy.

The last few decades of the century saw remarkable changes in economic, social and cultural arenas. The Great Exposition of 1851 set the stage for remarkable changes in the markets. Mass production helped to usher in a period of rapid growth, despite long depressions that gripped Europe during the 70's and 80's. Though this period of mass production helped to increase the quality of life, the difficult conditions of the laboring poor helped the creation of mass socialist parties in France, Germany, Italy and most Western European states. Despite these developments, economic conditions also helped to create modern mass culture. Mass circulation newspapers, department stores offering an astonishing variety of goods, the emergence of spectator sports and the bicycle help symbolize this period.

The rise in aggressive nationalism was one of the consequences of the advent of mass politics. Newspapers in every country castigated national rivalries and encouraged the "new imperialism" that began in the 1880's. By the outbreak of World War I, the European powers had divided up three-quarters of the world's surface. Imperialism helped sharpen international rivalries and contributed to the entangling alliance that led Europe into two heavily armed camps.

Amid scientific progress, a boom in manufacturing, and the emergence of mass politics in Western Europe, many artists and intellectuals worried that Western Civilization was moving too rapidly and was almost out of control.

Response:



Part Two: Visualizing the Nineteenth Century

Section A: Picture Interpretation

Examine these pictures. Did daily life change in the 19th century for the middle and lower classes? Working in group and using the pictures below, answer this question in writing.



The Stone Breakers (1849-50)
Gustav Courbet



The Gleaners (1857)
Jean-Francois Millet



Third Class Carriage (1860-63)
Honore Daumier

Gare St-Lazare (1877)
Claude Monet



The Bar at the Follies Bergere (1882)
Edouard Manet



Sunday afternoon on the Island of la Grande Jatte (1886) Georges Seurat



