European History
and
European Lives:
1715 to 1914
Part I
Professor Jonathan Steinberg
Jonathan Steinberg, Ph.D.
Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania

Jonathan Steinberg is the Walter H. Annenberg Professor of Modern European History at the University of Pennsylvania and Chair of the Department of History. He was born in New York in 1934, graduated from Harvard in 1955, and was immediately drafted into the U.S. Army, where he served two years in the Medical Corps. After a period in investment banking, he took his doctorate at Cambridge and was University Lecturer (from 1993, Reader) in European History; Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from 1966 to 1999; and Vice-Master from 1990 to 1994. From January 1, 1991, to December 31, 2000, he co-edited The Historical Journal (Cambridge University Press). In 1992, he served as an expert witness in a Commonwealth of Australia war crimes prosecution.

In December 1997, Professor Steinberg was appointed to the Historical Commission of the Deutsche Bank AG, Frankfurt am Main, set up to look into the bank’s activities under the Nazis, and was principal author of the commission’s report. He gave the biennial Leslie Stephen lecture on November 25, 1999, in the Senate House of the University of Cambridge with the title “Leslie Stephen and Derivative Immortality.” Previous Leslie Stephen lecturers include A. E. Housman, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Iris Murdoch, and Seamus Heaney.

Professor Steinberg is the author of Yesterday’s Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle Fleet (1965), Why Switzerland? (1976; paperback, 1980; 2nd ed., 1996), and All or Nothing: The Axis and the Holocaust, 1941 to 1943 (1990; paperback, 1992; second edition 2002; also available in German- and Italian-language translations). All or Nothing tries to explain why Fascist Italy in its zones of occupation in Greece, Croatia, and southern France systematically refused to assist Nazi Germany, its nominal ally, in the extermination of the Jews. By using German and Italian sources, Professor Steinberg attempts to compare the two faces of fascism. He has also translated Margaret Boveri, Treason in the Twentieth Century (London, 1961), and Friedrich Heer, Intellectual History of Europe (London, 1965), from German and Pino Arlacchi, Mafia, Peasants and Great Estates: Society in Traditional Calabria (Cambridge, 1983), from Italian.

From 1979 to 1987, Professor Steinberg wrote a monthly column in New Society, and he has reviewed for The London Review of Books, The Evening Standard, The Financial Times, and The Times Literary Supplement. He has written radio and TV documentaries and talks, including BBC Radio Four’s salute to the U.S. Constitution on the 200th anniversary of its signing. During his years at Cambridge, he lectured regularly at the Royal College of Defence Studies, the Joint Services Staff College, and continues to lecture at the IBM Cambridge summer school. Professor Steinberg is also a member of the Board of Trustees, Franklin College, Lugano, Switzerland, and of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets.
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European History and European Lives: 1715 to 1914

Scope:

This course of 36 lectures is an experiment. In my 40 years in the business of teaching history, I have never done anything like it. I don’t think anyone has. The idea is simple: to use individual lives to explain a great historical transformation. That sounds easy but is not. The great historical transformation I have in mind is no small matter: How did the world of lord and serf, horse and carriage, superstition and disease, turn into the world of boss and worker, steam and steel, science and medicine? In other words, how and why did what we call the modern world come about? Why did it start in the Europe of lord and serf in the 18th century and end in the world of boss and worker by 1914? How and why did Europe by the end of the nineteenth century come to control all the ancient empires of the globe? The trick in this series will be to see these great transformations by looking at the lives of those who made them happen. Most of the lives will be those of great figures—kings, queens, generals, artists, thinkers, and entrepreneurs—but one lecture, that on the Irish famine, will have no single biography. The Irish people of the 1840s will be the actors.

The course falls into two clear sections: Section 1 covers the years 1715 to 1815, from the end of the attempt by one French monarch to dominate Europe—Louis XIV—to the final defeat of another—Napoleon. Its principal transformation is the French Revolution or the democratic transformation. Section 2 takes the story from 1815 to 1914, from the end of the Napoleonic war to the beginning of the first of two terrible world wars of the twentieth century. In this period, the main transformation is the Industrial Revolution, with the accompanying explosion of science and technology.

To lecture on lives raises a serious problem of method. Much of what happened in the years 1715 to 1914 depends on the lives and activities of ordinary people whose struggle for existence and happiness makes up the great story of modern history. Changes in population, disease, famine, immigration and emigration, factory labor, strikes and trade unionism, literacy, emancipation of women, armies, and empires are mass phenomena, not individual ones. No single life can remotely express these huge forces. Much of the time, those then living had no way of knowing the things we now know. What justifies the biographical approach?

First of all, it is fun. It is in our nature to be interested in one another. The people whom we shall study are among the most interesting people who have ever lived. That’s why we remember them, and the rest have been forgotten. Telling the stories of their lives helps us to understand what it is to be human and to grasp the idea that even the “self” has a history that changes over time.

Second, it is way to look at the great changes. If we see the times in which our figures lived as a kind of lens or magnifying glass, we can look for the background, as well as the foreground. We know what they could not: what happens next. Their future is our past. We know what they had no words to describe or tools to measure.

Third, it is a way to educate ourselves, using the meaning for the Latin verb *educere*, which means, according to my ancient Latin dictionary, “to lead or draw out.” In other words, education does not mean “stuffing the mind with information” but drawing out our awareness of ourselves and our world. By looking at what even the greatest of the actors of the past could not see or understand, we get a glimpse of what we may be missing in our own thinking. After all, the things we take for granted are rarely conscious and never written down. When we observe the way people in the past seemed unaware of great changes now obvious to us, we have a useful moment of self-doubt. What are we missing in our world? We become one degree less self-confident that we know what is going on. That touch of humility, that creative moment of hesitation, that openness to the possibility that we might be wrong, those are the signs of a real historical education.
Lecture One

History as a “Soft Science”

Scope: This lecture provides a road map of the course. The basic idea is to tell the history of Europe, from the aristocratic early 18th century to the outbreak of the First World War, through the lives of the colorful personalities who traversed its landscape. Each life, in a highly distinctive way, helped shape the 18th century and the “long 19th century.” This course looks at 35 such individuals. Though roughly biographical in scope, the course concerns itself more with how each of these lives embodied a specific, critical stage in Europe’s development or represented new and powerful ideas that propelled the Continent toward modernity. These two centuries are crucial in European development. They begin with a world of privilege, poverty, disease, and inequality, the so-called Old Regime, whose way of life was not that different from that of the Romans or the Chinese Empire, and end with cities, technology, a new kind of state, and modern mass society. At the end of this period in 1914, Europe is like our own world, and a new self, set in a new social reality, has become the dominant actor.

The lives we study affect that process. We will look at monarchs and politicians; those who affected the economy; gender relations, industry, and science; along with philosophers, writers, and artists. In one lecture, we analyze the disaster of a whole people in the Irish famine. Our challenge is to discover whether lives can embody the great forces and factors that historians often describe as impersonal. Is biography a way to see the whole story through the optic of one individual?

Outline

I. A great transformation takes place in Europe between 1715 and 1914—from the Old Regime to modern mass society. The Old Regime is a term invented after the French Revolution to describe a lost world of privilege, aristocracy, serfdom, and poverty. How does it become the modern regime of cities, technology, mass movement, and increasing equality?
   A. The sudden explosion of European culture and power in the 18th and 19th centuries is a general trend of the period, and there are great shifts in power.
      1. Huge new empires grow up after 1715. The British and the French are new players, replacing Spain and Portugal.
      2. Between 1715 and 1914, the growth of European supremacy becomes obvious. By 1914, Europe (together with the English-speaking former colonies), the United States, and Japan enjoy a near monopoly on high technology. The gunboat of gunboat diplomacy is the symbol of this supremacy.
   B. A second change is the rise of the secular state.
      1. A state founded on reason and natural laws begins to emerge. It is the end of the divine right of kings. The social contract is the great revolutionary experiment: The state can be conceived as reformer and provider of welfare, education, and so on.
      2. The belief in the “yoke of sin,” the conviction of the sinfulness of humanity, gives way in these two centuries to the idea that human nature is good and can be shaped by the activity of the state.
      3. The great Enlightenment project begins between 1715 and the 1760s. The idea was to use human tools to perfect human nature. This attempt links 1789 to 1989. All the ideologies of the modern era (fascism, communism, liberalism, nationalism) believed they knew how to make us happy and virtuous.
   C. A third change comes about through the exploitation of science and technology.
      1. An agricultural revolution brings new crops and crop rotation systems. After 1848, for the first time in history, famine ceases to be a threat in Europe.
      2. New technology is developed, such as the steam engine, which multiplies the capacity of labor by multiples of horsepower and, by the 1830s, produces a transportation revolution. The telegraph, invented in 1833, offers instant communication.
      3. A new technology of measurement is seen in the developments in statistics, data filing, and surveying, giving political authorities new sources of power. The state “knows” about its citizens.
D. Industrialization applies new technology and new machinery to human work. The factory embodies the multiplication of human power by assembly lines and mechanized, simplified production systems.

1. New products and new consumers develop. Traditional marketplaces give way to shops. The English become “a nation of shopkeepers” in Adam Smith’s phrase. The shop represents specialization of trade and distribution, and the consumer is born.

2. Why England was first to industrialize is a complicated question. Trade produced capital accumulation. The new financial institutions allowed for modern investment and speculation. People collected in factory towns, and new social problems arose.

3. Economics developed as a way of understanding these new realities. We will examine the greatest economics textbook ever written, Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) in Lecture Thirteen.

E. Demographic changes are reflected in the sudden growth in European populations around 1700.

1. Epidemics decline, and medicine, health, and nutrition improve.

2. As a consequence, humanity in our period faces the problems of overpopulation for the first time. In fact, gains in productivity, as well as agriculture and industry, made these fears groundless.

F. War is prominent and has far-reaching effects on society.

1. The 18th-century war was a military chess game. Professional soldiers used fixed maneuvers and stylized tactics. Armies enjoyed long winter pauses, and most ordinary people were not involved.

2. The French Revolution transformed war because it transformed society. The revolutionary wars of the 1790s introduced the war of masses. People were drafted, and the French waged a “people’s war” against “enemies of the people.” Democratic war is much more destructive than old professional warfare. From 1789 to the trenches of the western front, there is a direct connection.

G. The transformation of art and the public sphere has no parallel in other eras.

1. Before 1715, the arts represented the crown and altar. The arts served patrons who had political or religious power (for example, Michaelangelo and the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel).

2. After 1750 (roughly), art became a commodity for sale to the “public” (a new phenomenon in human history).

3. The new artist was genius, critic, and salesman at the same time.

II. There are advantages and limits in using biography as a way to understand these changes.

A. We see the types of changes embodied in the lives studied.

1. Frederick the Great or Joseph II tried to create the new type of state. We see the king as state-builder and reformer from above. Although these kings were absolute despots, they ran into limits.

2. Biography helps us to see the modern self emerge. By studying the lives of Hume, the philosopher and skeptic; Rousseau, the self-confessor; Mary Wollstonecraft or George Eliot, as “new” women; Goethe, the artistic genius as himself a work of art, we watch the emergence of our own selves.

3. Robert Walpole, Adam Smith, or Nathan Meyer Rothschild illustrate the emergence of capitalism and the first stages of globalization.

4. The Krupp family represents the new kind of heavy industry.

5. The new public sphere involved the sale of art works and the mass marketing of culture, but it also produced a new sort of religion of art. Samuel Johnson and C. P. E. Bach represent the 18th-century stage of this change. The painter Goya marks the transition from court to popular painter. Wagner and Tolstoy represent the cult of art in an industrial society.

6. Robespierre, Mazzini, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels represent the new type of revolutionary. Metternich, Edmund Burke, and Pope Pius IX embody the conservative reaction to the new revolutionaries. Wagner is a pivotal figure who started off as a revolutionary but turned into the prophet of a new conservatism that both fueled Nazism and created a powerful artistic cult.

7. Pasteur and Darwin embody the role of science, and the politician David Lloyd George represents the new kind of politics of reform.

8. The “Jewish problem” is represented by Nathan Meyer Rothschild and Alfred Dreyfus, whose lives embody the problems of Jewish emancipation on the road to modernity in Europe.

9. Two aristocrats in a modern world—Otto von Bismarck, the German statesman who unified Germany, and Queen Victoria, the monarch who embodied a kind of democratization of English politics—allow us to see two different strategies for dealing with the emergence of mass society.
B. The lectures tend to be divided into two parts: the biography of the individual and the social context of his or her life and achievement. Thus, the lives are a way to understand the changes of the period.

C. There are disadvantages in using biography as a way to understand history.
   1. *Hard* history and *soft* history are my terms for distinguishing two domains of historical evidence. Hard history covers demography and quantitative history. Human beings are both subject and objects; as objects, they can be counted or, as consumers, their aggregate behavior is measurable. Statistics and computerized research provide something close to “objective” knowledge.
   2. Soft history deals with biography, politics, and society, where the evidence cannot be measured and, in a sense, it “talks back.”
   3. Certain problems are not easily understood through a single life, which is why one lecture offers the biography of a mass of people, the generation of the Irish who suffered the 1840s potato blight.
   4. The long-run elements (Keynes: “In the long run we are all dead”) are not likely to be covered well by biography. No life can cover a long enough span. Certain phenomena (population, nutrition, industrialization) will be hard to catch in this course.

D. The return of biography as a method of study and of selling books is a striking phenomenon of the last 15 years.
   1. In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, serious historians studied large-scale forces and factors and used social scientific techniques. Biography was not done by “real professionals.”
   2. Biography as a technique has become popular and produced some of the best-selling books of our time, such as *Benjamin Franklin* by Edmund S. Morgan, *John Adams* by David McCullough, *Winston Churchill* by Roy Jenkins.
   3. There are several possible reasons for the return of biography. The most important is the decline in prestige of social scientific models, brought on by the fall of communism. The explosion of religious fundamentalism in all the world’s major religions was not predicted by social scientists, which further reduced their claims.
   4. An advantage of biography as a means of explanation is that it tells a story. The life can be set in an analytical framework; for example, the life of Frederick the Great can be compared to the “model” of absolute despotism. We must be aware of the constraints on the actor and the choices open to him or her. The human dimensions of a problem come clear when the life is seen as emblematic.

III. The objective of this course is to provide a means of historical reflection.
   A. Are there “lessons of history”?
      1. History offers lessons, such as “Things rarely work out as planned” or “What most people think most of the time is going to happen turns out to be wrong,” but those are not what the public really wants from historians.
      2. The public and politicians want specific lessons, such as “Resistance to communism in Vietnam in 1968 was the same as resisting Nazism in Europe in 1938.” It wasn’t.
   B. The comparative approach is useful as an alternative to a laboratory.
      1. Comparison is an essential element in this course because the types of lives have been chosen to be compared.
      2. We can draw modest lessons by comparing phenomena.
   C. Studying biography provides enjoyment and enlightenment.
      1. The great lives are interesting in themselves. Theodor Fontane (1819 to 1898), the best German novelist of the 19th century, wrote: “When Bismarck sneezes or makes a toast, I find it more interesting than the wise speeches of six members of Parliament.”
      2. These lives show us the greatest examples of what it is like to be human, and that exercise alone is deeply pleasurable.

Essential Reading:
Mary Fulbrook, *Historical Theory: Ways of Imagining the Past.*

Questions to Consider:
1. In what ways does your life “embody” certain identifiable changes in a wider historical context?
2. Why do you think historical biographies have become bestsellers lately?
Lecture Two

Augustus the Strong—Princely Consumption

Scope: Augustus the Strong, duke of Saxony and king of Poland (1670–1733, r. 1694–1733), is our first subject. He had a large frame and even larger appetites. He consumed art, money, and women with gargantuan gusto. He built palaces, collected art, founded the famous Meissen china works, and made himself into the king of Poland. He ruled the richest of the many German states and nearly exhausted the royal treasury. Yet Augustus and the huge wastefulness of his life cannot be understood without knowing the system in which he operated. His conspicuous consumption grew from the needs of his state in an extremely expensive competition among states. He was not unique in his age, and his life is a way to understand the lost world of Old Regime Europe. As we shall see in Lecture Four, the Prussian kings made another choice: to save money and build an army. That choice, unusual in its time, determined the rest of European history to our own day. Yet to explain the Old Regime, we must begin with certain features that made Europe unique in world history.

Outline

I. The nature of Europe itself explains some of the continent’s amazing vitality and the character of Augustus’s world. From the fall of the Roman Empire to the adoption of the Euro nearly 16 centuries later, all attempts to impose uniformity from above have failed. From Charlemagne to Hitler, the dream of unity has resisted all those who tried to impose it.

II. The peculiar combination of Roman, Christian, and feudal inheritance made Europe unlike any other part of the world.

A. The first legacy is the Roman inheritance.
   1. When the Roman Empire disintegrated, it left an unusual legacy: the image of a world empire that was also a city, a polis, an entity composed of citizens who had laws, votes, plebiscites, senates, consuls, and all the rest of Roman republican paraphernalia.
   2. No other world empire had those features. Roman law embodied them and passed it to us today through the conduit of Latin Christianity and humanist scholarship.
   3. Most of the words in our political vocabulary, starting with the words political and vocabulary themselves, can be traced back to the Roman Republic or its predecessor, the Greek city-state.
   4. The civic practice of free Romans rested on slavery. Citizens belonged to a privileged minority who depended on institutional inequalities to enjoy the otium, or leisure, that the res publica required.

B. Cutting across and, in many ways, undermining the Roman inheritance is the Judaeo-Christian inheritance.
   1. In its later years, the Roman inheritance got mixed up with the very different values of the Judaeo-Christian prophecies. The Old Testament prophets condemned “those that oppress the hireling in his wages.” The prophet Malachi asked, “Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?” (Malachi 3.5 and 2.10).
   2. This message of the equality of all men became one of the central precepts of the “good news” of Jesus Christ, that the last shall be first, that the poor are particularly blessed, and that in a famous simile, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.”
   3. The Roman Catholic Church, which survived and preserved the Roman civic inheritance, transmitted the revolutionary egalitarianism of Jewish and Christian prophecies to Europe. “When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?” asked the peasants who rebelled in England in 1381.
   4. Judaeo-Christian egalitarianism planted a ticking bomb at the base of every European authority, whether religious or secular. St. Francis; Savonarola; Martin Luther; the Anabaptists; the enragés of 1792; the utopians of the 19th century; the anarchists, communists, hippies, and demonstrators outside the IMF of our own time continue in varying ways to try to fulfill that ancient prophesy, where indeed the last shall be first.

C. The final peculiarity of European history is feudalism, that curious disintegration of central authority that occurred only in 9th- and 10th-century Europe and early-modern Japan and nowhere else.
1. The two feudal systems in Europe and Japan arose when the emperor’s authority fell into bits. Great lords took chunks of imperial power and, to sustain their new authority, made deals with lesser lords and they, in turn, with even lesser lords and so on.

2. In the Latin West, but not in the Greek or Russian Orthodox East, there emerged a thicket of rights, privileges, exemptions, and contractual agreements out of which the Swiss cantons and other European polities emerged.

3. The struggle to regain central control over the disintegrated imperial possessions, the battles between princes and their Stände (“estates”), between cities and their guilds, between churches and their tenants, between peasant communities and their lords became the structural reality of Europe from the 11th century to last week. These struggles used the language of Roman law and civic individualism but also of Christian justice and egalitarianism.

III. The balance between unity and diversity is the key to European history.

A. The vitality of the smallest European political entity is rooted in Roman law and Christian ideas of justice. Every entity had rights and privileges, yet rulers tried to suppress the liberties of the little units.

B. In this frame, Augustus the Strong, electoral duke of Saxony and king of Poland, lived his life.

IV. At the core of the Old Regime was an astonishing institution, the Holy Roman Empire.

A. The empire is impossible to understand. Even its greatest expert, Johann Jakob Moser, threw up his hands in trying to describe it.

B. The empire was structured to include an elected emperor and a kind of parliament.

1. The Imperial Assembly, or Diet (Reichstag) consisted of three councils: those of the electors, princes, and the free cities or imperial cities (Freistädte oder Reichsstädte).

2. The electors were, initially, many princes who claimed the right to elect a head of the empire. The Golden Bull of 1356, however, restricted this right to seven ecclesiastical and secular princes, who were called prince-electors (Kurfürsten).

3. Augustus of Saxony was one of seven electoral princes as duke of electoral Saxony. Not all Saxony was electoral, nor were all his territories inside the empire.

4. The smaller princes, free cities, archbishoprics, and so on had their own names and titles. For example, the Margrave of Ansbach held the titles duke, prince, count, and lord over more than 30 territories. He actually ruled only in a part of the Sayn County, but he had grandiose and absurd claims to all the rest.

5. Hundreds of these small princes were “sovereign” in their territories. The free cities and the ecclesiastical princes were also numerous. The prince archbishops, like the pope today, were sovereigns of territories; monasteries also often were sovereign.

6. The map was a crazy jigsaw puzzle of overlapping jurisdictions and states, semi-states, or possessions of local lords.

V. This map serves as the backdrop for the life of Augustus the Strong.

A. An aspiring prince, Augustus was born into the Wettin “family,” a great European dynasty.

1. All politics in this world were, in some sense, family politics. The family was a political structure. Princes and princesses were there to produce heirs and heirs were to be married to other important dynasties to solidify claims. Marriages were acts of state.

2. Frederick Augustus, born May 12, 1670, was a younger son and faced the problem of inheritance and status. His grandfather was an electoral duke, but he would have had no chance if plague, smallpox, and pneumonia had not wiped out his father, older brother, and many others. Augustus, who was physically quite strong, survived.

B. In 1694, Augustus inherited the throne. His education was limited, and his main ambition was to acquire Ruhm (“fame” or “glory”).

1. In this period, all princes had the ambition to be “glorious.”

2. Augustus spent $50,000 a month (in today’s money) on his “grand tour” as a young prince; he had a “Turkish costume” covered in diamonds; and kept three or four mistresses at a time.

3. His court was “the proudest and most expensive in Germany” (1695), and his main maxim was Pracht macht Kunde (“Splendor makes news!”).

C. Augustus’s capital city was Dresden.
1. Electoral Saxony had two great cities, Leipzig and Dresden, but Augustus preferred Dresden to sober, hard-working Leipzig.

2. He built an astonishing array of buildings in Dresden, aspiring to make it the “Paris of the North,” and spared no expense on his glass and tableware and the importation of famous artworks for museums he founded—all to show the greatness of the elector.

D. Its population, industries, and famous mines gave the electoral state of Saxony its great wealth.

1. The population of the capital, Dresden, in 1733 was about 50,000, and of the duchy, about 1 million.

2. In its wealth and variety, Leipzig was the second city.

3. Johann Sebastian Bach was organist at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig. Its special Protestant industriousness in fact made Leipzig richer than Dresden but less showy.

E. The politics of the early-modern royal state were very simple. It rested on the practice of absolutism (the duke rules absolutely), but there were ancient rights (ancient privileges of the nobility, towns, corporations, and so on) that clashed with the duke’s claims to be absolute.

1. Almost all the smaller princes had the same ambitions as Augustus, to be mini-magnates; all lesser princes in Germany (and there were thousands) imitated Louis XIV’s absolutism and his style of life—building mini-Versailles palaces—with disastrous consequences for the state treasury and the population.

2. Politics in Saxony and elsewhere (except Prussia) revolved around the battle between the prince, in this case, Augustus, and his Stände (“estates”). The estates voted the money; the prince spent it.

F. Augustus wanted desperately to earn the title of king, marry above his station, marry his children to the greatest princes and kings, win a war, and become glorious. He did not think that the welfare of the subjects mattered very much. The grand stage of Europe gave Augustus a chance.

1. To the east was the kingdom of Poland, the biggest state in Europe, where the government had become completely anarchic.

2. In the struggle between king and estates, the estates had won. Any Polish nobleman could exercise the liberum veto in parliament.

3. Because the Polish parliament, or Sejm, elected the king, Augustus had a chance. All the candidates bribed the members lavishly.

4. Unfortunately for Augustus, Poland was Catholic; he hurriedly converted to Catholicism in 1697.

5. His misfortune was that his attempt to get himself elected king in 1733 provoked the War of the Polish Succession over the rival claims of Augustus and the Polish prince Stanislaus Leszcynski to the throne of Poland. Stanislaus was backed by France, Spain, and Piedmont-Sardinia; Augustus, by Russia and Austria.

6. Poland was a buffer state, an area with weak government surrounded by others who wanted to intervene. Thus, Augustus had spent a fortune to become a king without a real country.

G. Europe was moving from the period of small states and variety to an era of great states with greater uniformity.

1. The emergence of Russia as a great power threatened Poland, as did the growth of the power of Prussia.

2. Poland and Saxony were doomed to be squeezed between Russia and Prussia.

3. Augustus’s ambitions did not fit reality. He was playing in a league too high for him and for his successors.

VI. Augustus the Strong stands as an example of the old version of rule. Louis XIV said, “L’etat c’est moi” (“I am the state”). That was already wrong in 1700 but not yet clear. Augustus’s failures arose partly from his personal characteristics but really reflected change in the structure of authority in the state itself.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, Court Culture in Dresden.
Questions to Consider:

1. Is it possible to imagine what glory meant for a prince in the 18th century?

2. How do you explain the fact that Augustus’s bad morals, many mistresses, and lack of education seem to have been irrelevant to his functioning as a prince?
Lecture Three
Robert Walpole—Politics of Corruption

This lecture is dedicated to Sir John Plumb (1911–2001)
who taught me how to understand Georgian England.

Scope: Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745), who served as prime minister for more than 20 years, was older than Augustus the Strong but seems somehow modern to us. Why? Georgian Britain differed from every continental country. As English speakers, we look back on 18th-century Britain as “normal” because the Anglo-American way of life and politics has become the world standard and, therefore, seems inevitable and progressive. Very little of that could have been foreseen in the early 18th century, when France dominated European politics, culture, and minds. Foreign visitors noticed with amazement that Britain looked richer, freer, more urban, and more literate than any continental European country but could not, of course, imagine that the British were inventing the modern middle class, the Industrial Revolution, and representative government. Walpole, the first modern prime minister, made his name in the South Sea Bubble scandal, a financial crash uncannily like the dot.com meltdown. We can see our world beginning to take shape as we look at the age of Robert Walpole. Yet, like Augustus, Walpole belonged to an aristocratic, premodern social order, not to ours. The growth of political stability in Britain, which had suffered a terrible civil war (1640–1660), beheaded one king (1649) and deposed another (1688), and was invaded twice by would-be kings (1715 and 1745), occurred under Walpole’s shrewd, corrupt, and comfortable administration.

Outline

I. My peculiar experience of England is an element in this story. For more than 30 years, I lived in a relic of Walpole’s world, Trinity Hall, but was never allowed to lecture on it. The “Yank” in Cambridge was kept safely in European (that is, across-the-channel) history. Thus, this lecture is my first ever on 18th-century England.

II. In some respects, England is unique in Europe, and that uniqueness presents a problem.

A. Each society is unique in some sense, but the English case is odd. English culture has become world culture. On Sundays in Philadelphia, for example, West Indians dressed in white play cricket in Fairmount Park. Pakistani officers have British uniforms and wear mustaches, and their “batmen” polish the regimental silver. Such examples are numerous.

B. My central hypothesis is that the United Kingdom is as an “exception” in modern Europe and, by extension, the United States and English-speaking countries are also exceptions.

1. Britain’s history was determined by geography, the island kingdoms. The continental “state” arose as a function of the expense of defense. England developed in relative safety.

2. The United Kingdom is a multinational state composed of four nationalities: English, Scots, Welsh, and Irish. The term British applies to all four nations.

III. There are several special features of English development without which one cannot understand Walpole.

A. Religious pluralism characterized 18th-century England.

1. Eighteenth-century England had an established Anglican Church but also non-conformists (Wesleyans, Baptists, Congregationalists, and so on), as well as Catholics and Jews.

2. Its degree of tolerance was unusual in Europe (in contrast with the Netherlands, for example), and the sheer variety of religious sects and churches was unique to England (Scotland was more uniform).

B. Mercantile capitalism had evolved with the corresponding growth of economic institutions.

1. The English had developed a set of modern financial institutions. The Bank of England was founded in 1694. The brokers were making markets in coffeehouses by 1700. The English common law was effective and uniform.

2. Commercial values were compatible with noble status.

C. There was no state in the continental sense.
1. There was a peculiar absence of state control. Law was decentralized: Note the role of the justice of the peace in the country or medieval corporations in the towns (the so-called *livery companies*).

2. There was no standing army, which had serious long-term implications.

3. There was almost no domestic control of personal activity.

4. There was, on the other hand, the uniformity of the *king’s justice* from the 15th century, and there was equality before the law.

D. An urban middle class had evolved, the members of which met in coffeehouses and shops.
   1. The coffeehouse was the meeting place of a new public, where the aristocracy mixed with others of lower standing. Social mobility was possible.
   2. Primogeniture was important. For example, the grandson of a duke is only a Mr. (for example, *Mr. Winston S. Churchill*).
   3. English “public schools” blurred social boundaries but produced a type of person unique in Europe: the “gentleman.”

E. Britain was a relatively wealthy nation. One contemporary observer noted that some merchants in Britain were wealthier than European nobility, and Daniel Defoe commented that the standard of living of ordinary workers was comparatively comfortable.

F. The British were very pleased with themselves. There was a high level of patriotism and jingoism. Britain was best.

G. In politics, the monarchy was weaker than it was on the Continent.
   1. One legacy of the English civil war was a reduction in the power of the Crown. This was a real contrast with the Continent: Louis XIV of France, who ruled from 1643 to 1713, created absolute government, and German and Italian princes imitated him. (See Lecture Four on Frederick the Great.)
   2. The “Protestant succession” of 1688 was both a religious and a political arrangement. Parliament (Lords and Commons) was embedded in ancient “rights,” but these were not written down.
   3. Political parties emerged. In the English debates between 1688 and 1750, the battle between *Whig* and *Tory* was central. Neither of these were parties in our sense but embodied currents of opinion or clusters of attitudes. Whigs were Protestant, anti-Catholic, anti-French, and pro-German (that is, the Hanoverian dynasty after 1714); Tories supported “Church and King” and were anti-London, anti-commercial, and anti-Hanoverian. Some were pro-Stuart; some, pro-Catholic; and so on.
   4. The structure of rule was such that the king’s patronage was crucial: All jobs were *his* to grant. The key to government was the favor of the king, the queen, or occasionally, the prince of Wales as crown prince.
   5. The peculiar situation in the United Kingdom in 1714 was that the new King George I (1660–1727), king of Great Britain and Ireland, was a German prince. In 1698, he became elector of Hanover. He was exactly like Augustus the Strong (see Lecture Two), but he was the heir of the last Stuart, Queen Anne, who died in 1714.
   6. The career of Walpole was entirely dependent on King George I and George II, the “German” kings. There was constant conflict between the king and prince of Wales (the later George II). Walpole’s skill lay in winning both father and son. Thus, the most successful prime minister of the 18th century fell because of a royal family quarrel. Britain was still operating under the Old Regime.

IV. The social structures of 18th-century England also influence our understanding of Walpole.
   A. In the countryside, there was the high aristocracy, great landords, such as the duke of Newcastle, duke of Bedford, and others. There was also a large squirearchy: A country squire was a gentleman who was often without title but had an estate, a grand house with a name.

   B. The boundaries were blurry (as always in England) between aristocracy and gentry. The Walpoles were simply squires in Norfolk, that is, gentry, not aristocracy; they were socially commoners.

   C. Parliament was one of the instruments of gentry rule; it was a closed corporation, and voting was limited. The tiny numbers of voters were distributed by history, not population. For example, Old Sarum had no voters left, but it still had a parliamentary constituency with a seat. It was easy for a grand local lord or well-to-do gentleman to buy the seat.

   D. The oligarchic character of the institutions plus the system of patron and client meant that parties were essentially bought and paid “factions” tied to a great lord or powerful member of the House of Commons.
1. Corruption was essential to reward and punish. Many obsolete offices were intentionally maintained, for example, the Board of the Green Cloth, with four members, each paid £500 a year for doing nothing but voting correctly.

2. Big jobs meant big money. Walpole was paymaster general from August 3, 1714, to October 1717. Over £100,000 passed through his hands (more than £10 million in today’s money); much of it ended up in Walpole’s account.

3. Walpole had a huge income and huge expenditures. He was involved in turning his country seat at Houghton in the county of Norfolk into a palace, in buying up local office-holders, and investing in farms in Norfolk and Suffolk.

4. Walpole was a big man physically (over 250 pounds) and in politics.

V. Walpole was born August 26, 1676, at Houghton, Norfolk, into a family with origins as simple country squires.

A. The early death of his two older brothers and his father ended Walpole’s education.

B. At 17, he was now head of the household and soon married to Catherine Shorter, a wealthy heiress to a merchant fortune.

C. At age 25, he entered Parliament as MP for Castle Rising, then for King’s Lynn, a Norfolk port.

D. His skill was very much “internal” to the House of Commons, that is, not in public oratory. Walpole was an expert on finances and a manager of men.

E. His role in covering up scandal earned him the title of “Skreen Master General.” His technique was: “to skin the wound over rather than probe it” (Plumb, 1956, p. 333).

F. Walpole had a reputation for cynicism, among other traits.

1. The Earl of Chesterfield described him as “good-natured, cheerful, social; inelegant in his manners, loose in his morals. He had a coarse, strong wit, which he was too free of for a man in his station, as it is always inconsistent with dignity” (Stanhope, Augustan Reprint Society, nos. 259–260, 1990).

2. His policy was to preserve peace with France. He had contempt for those who easily advocated war.

3. He had the virtues of the cynical, shrewd manager of men and affairs. He had no need to raise emotions or stir crowds. Crowds had no votes. He used skill, efficiency, corruption, and cynicism, both in his own interest and that of the nation.

G. His financial policy was the key to his success.

1. His reputation was made as a financial wizard. He invented the sinking fund for the national debt, a fund into which a certain amount of government revenue is paid for the purpose of redeeming the national debt.

2. Walpole began the fund in 1717, and by 1727, the national debt was reduced from £54 million to £47.5 million.

H. The South Sea Bubble was the first modern stock market boom; the craze affected the highest ranges of society.

1. Walpole was also involved but, luckily, had to sell his stock in January 1720 to buy farms. His banker saved him by a delay in executing his orders to get back into the overheated market in August/September 1720.

2. Walpole lost a lot but escaped the blame. His calm defense of the directors of the South Sea Company, who were his political enemies, was a model of restraint. He prevented a witch hunt and protected the royal family, who had also been involved. He accumulated much good will and increased his reputation.

3. The sudden death of his main rival, Charles Spencer, third earl of Sunderland, allowed Walpole, now First Lord of the Treasury, to exercise undisputed political supremacy.

VI. Walpole was both modern and not modern. The political machine was fueled by greed and oiled by money and position. A tiny oligarchical ruling elite was more easily run than a modern mass democracy. Walpole’s power was a function of the antiquated arrangements of the House of Commons, local government, and other institutions, yet the type is recognizable; he was an aristocratic Boss Tweed or Boss Crump.

A. His corruption, vast debts, mania for collecting art and books, and conspicuous consumption were no less flamboyant than those of Augustus the Strong.
B. Walpole’s third son and an 18\textsuperscript{th}-century wit, Horace Walpole, defended his father, noting that the “Grand Corrupter” ran his country in peace and prosperity for 20 years. We might ask ourselves if we point fingers at the corrupter because we dislike how easily corrupted we ourselves are.

**Essential Reading:**

**Questions to Consider:**
1. Walpole used corruption to maintain political stability. Was that justified? Was England to be ruled in any other way?
2. Is it acceptable to use the word *modern* in the context of Walpole’s England?
Lecture Four
Frederick the Great—Absolute Absolutist

Scope: Frederick the Great, king of Prussia (1712–1786, r. 1740–1786), embodied the principle of a rational autocracy. He wanted his state to hum like a well-oiled machine. All the parts had specific functions, but only the king could see the whole. Wit, philosopher, expert musician, brilliant general, tireless administrator, he called himself “the first servant of the state,” and for 46 years, he served the state with no family, no close friends, no advisors, no confidantes—only his six beautiful greyhounds and a few silent servants. His life shows the limits of and contradictions in the idea of rational autocracy. No human being, no matter how brilliant, can avoid the paradoxes built into our mortality and human nature. The more the great king centralized power, the harder he worked, the more the state evaded his absolute control.

Outline

I. Frederick the Great was a phenomenon recognized as extraordinary in his own lifetime. His peculiar fascination today is in his personality and its link to events.

A. Frederick was the most interesting, ablest, and most complicated ruler in the 18th century.

B. His long reign lasted from 1740 to 1786. Longevity was itself a source of stability in an age when the rulers held nearly absolute sway. Longevity brought continuity of policy and direction.

C. He changed tremendously during the course of his reign.
   1. The young Frederick was a dandy, an aesthete, powdered and covered in jewels. He had long, beautiful hair hanging down both sides in loose curls. His palace as crown prince at Rheinsberg was a literary paradise.
   2. The old Frederick was a fierce, toothless, scarecrow, who wore a filthy blue military coat.

D. His work habits were phenomenal.
   1. The daily routine of the old Frederick was quite incredible: He was up each morning at 4:00 in summer, 5:00 in winter. Servants had orders to wake him by force with cups of coffee laced with mustard. Frequently, he slept in his day clothes, filthy, snuff-covered waistcoats, and poorly powdered hair.
   2. His morning work was dealing with dispatches, reports, and orders—literally every detail was in the king’s control.
   3. A five-hour break followed for a ride and long lunch. Lunch at the king’s table was a terrible ordeal. Guests faced royal monologues and terrible table manners. Beautiful food was ruined by heavy spices.
   4. He was in bed by 10:00, read to by his faithful servant, Catt.

E. Music was Frederick’s main recreation. His evenings were devoted to music, his only real luxury.
   1. He maintained a royal orchestra of the highest standard at all times for himself alone, not for concerts or other purposes.
   2. His flute teacher was Johann Joachim Quantz (1697–1773), who also served as conductor.
   3. C. P. E. Bach was his keyboard player from 1740–1768 (see Lecture Nine), but the king hated the great composer’s music as too modern.
   4. The two Graun brothers, Karl Heinrich (1704–1759) and Johann Gottlieb Graun (1702–1771), both famous composers and players, worked in the king’s orchestra.

F. Frederick the Great was utterly isolated as a person.
   1. He never had children. The queen (Princess Elisabeth Christine of Brunswick-Bevern) was miserable and ignored. It’s not clear if they ever had sexual relations, and she certainly never lived with him. He had no favorites, no mistresses, no sex life. He loved his famous greyhounds but no other living thing.
   2. His father, Frederick William I, who reigned from 1713 to 1740, was a brutal, violent, puritanical man who lived for his tall soldiers and had contempt for his dandy son. The king beat and humiliated his son unmercifully, as he beat his servants, pastors who preached badly, and his ministers.
   3. In 1730, Frederick tried to escape his father’s torture, was caught, imprisoned in the fortress of Küstrin, and made to watch the execution of his companion, Lieutenant Hans Hermann von Katte, the young officer who had been his accomplice in the plan.
4. I believe that Frederick William I actually beat Frederick because he was gay and punished him by executing his lover. He next intended to execute Frederick but was talked out of it.

G. Frederick’s intellectual interests were wide.
   1. His main language of conversation was French, which he spoke perfectly.
   2. He composed concerti and sonata, wrote philosophy and history, and engaged in a famous correspondence with Voltaire.
   3. He was a great intellectual, as well as a great king.

H. Frederick the Great’s legacy was his transformation of Prussia into one of the great powers of Europe, ruled as a rational state.
   1. Frederick was an outstanding soldier. He was, unlike Augustus the Strong or any other king of his generation, a great general and field commander. He won famous victories in the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763). Despite the fact that Prussia was poorer and less populous than Saxony, Frederick’s military genius turned it into one of the five great European powers.
   2. Prussia’s military tradition made it the vehicle around which Bismarck unified Germany. Indeed, it was a Prussian field-marshals, Paul von Hindenburg und Benckendorff, who made Hitler chancellor and other Prussian aristocrats who tried to assassinate Hitler on July 20, 1944.
   3. The rational state is also part of Frederick’s legacy. The king was a genius as an administrator. His domestic genius created a new kind of state, based on absolute authority but religiously indifferent and governed by the will of perhaps the smartest human being ever to rule a great state (Napoleon is the only competitor).

I. The king was a universal genius. To do Frederick justice, two lectures are needed: one on his military and diplomatic brilliance and the other on his domestic political achievements.

II. Frederick was the perfect philosopher-king.
   A. His technique of rule involved the art of concealing his thoughts. He wrote: “The art of concealing your thoughts or ‘dissimulation’ is indispensible for every man who has the management of weighty affairs.”
   B. The king avoided all informal influences. Frederick was the most absolute ruler ever. Nobody influenced him. He had a wife he never saw, no mistress, no family, no friends, no advisors; hence, he was free of corruption or persuasion.
      1. His brilliant mind and commanding personality showed him that he needed no advice.
      2. As a philosopher and historian, he was free of the need for theoretical instruction.
      3. Because he had no religion, he was not influenced by God; his atheism was shocking to his era.
   C. His view of his duty as king was unusual.
      1. Frederick had only one belief—in the power of reason—and one goal—the well-being of the state. He wrote: “The ruler is the first servant of the state. He is paid well, so that he can maintain the dignity of his office, but he is required in return to work effectively for the well-being of the state” (Political Testament, 1752).
      2. Frederick was the most absolute of all absolute rulers—Hitler or Stalin were much less absolute than Frederick.

III. The paradoxes of absolutism brought about Frederick’s failures.
   A. Even Frederick could not be both a generalist and a specialist, could not know everything. Experts are necessary, and expertise is a form of power; its use allows the expert to escape the king’s control.
   B. Further, the dynamics of deception played against the king.
      1. Frederick’s anger meant the end of one’s career or, worse, one’s life. Because nobody wants to tell the king unpleasant truths, lies are built into the system.
      2. Frederick was too smart to be fooled and trusted no one. But if all are liars, how does Frederick know what is really going on? He introduced supervisors to check on his civil servants’ performance, but in turn, they lied.
      3. Lying is rational if the king is absolute, unforgiving, and quick-tempered.
   C. Rule by an absolute absolutist is impossible.
      1. The job specifications are incredible; the absolute absolutist must be inhuman.
2. Frederick’s lack of normal human relations was unique and terrifying. Every other absolute monarch or dictator was corrupted or affected by some humanity or contact with other beings.

D. Normally, in absolutism, there was a “kitchen cabinet,” or camarilla.
1. Absolutism in normal hands always leads to a kitchen cabinet, because influence is a function of proximity.
2. There is a parallel in the U.S. presidency. The U.S. president is an enlightened, elected king of the 18th-century variety; the White House staff and the First Family are structures of influence.

IV. Frederick was also affected by the paradox of the rational state.
A. The committee or council is a rational instrument of rule, but consultation inevitably reduces absolutism.
1. Frederick rejected the committee system of his father, believing that committees simply provide opportunities for mutual intrigue and for the introduction of hate and passion into the affairs of state.
2. Frederick regarded his ministers and bureaucrats as dummköpfe (“blockheads”). Hence, all collective decision making was abolished in 1740. The result was that ministers of departments gained strength.
3. The operations of vertical authority came into play. The logic is as follows:
   a. Only the king can decide.
   b. No committees exist to reconcile differences among ministers.
   c. Intrigue to persuade the king to accept one or the other view is inevitable.
   d. Hence, the king is rarely in a position to decide using rational criteria.
   e. The king is frustrated and angry and acts irrationally.
B. To illustrate, consider the U.S. Constitution as a comparison.
1. The wisdom of the Founding Fathers was greater. Like Frederick, they were rationalists but with a difference. For Frederick, rationality was a form of thought based on means and ends. For the Founding Fathers, rationality was a device for analyzing reality; hence, the U.S. Constitution rests on observation of human nature, then uses rationality to contain its vices. The object, of course, is the opposite of Frederick’s: to prevent the exercise of absolute power.
2. James Madison’s views, for example, reflect the same mechanical rationality as in Frederick’s state, but the Madisonian view has one advantage: It starts with human fallibility.
3. Ambition and self-seeking are universal. Frederick loses his temper at these inevitable human reactions; the Founding Fathers calmly harness ambition for rational ends.
C. What if rationality rests on wrong assumptions?
1. An example is found in Frederick’s finances, which the king oversaw himself.
   a. The state was there to carry out the king’s purposes, and war was its main object; hence, financial activity was rationally directed to fill the war chest.
   b. The state treasury was filled with bags of silver, and Prussia was, by far, the best run continental state; it fought two great wars (1740–1748 and 1756–1763) without bankruptcy.
   c. After a generation of war, the Prussian treasury, which held 13.8 million thaler in 1763, had, on Frederick’s death in 1786, reached 23.7 million thaler, including the cost of maintaining 87,000 men in a standing army.
2. Frederick’s trade policy was quite successful. He encouraged trade and industry, along with toleration of Jews. He also founded state monopolies in porcelain manufacture, trade, mining, tobacco, coffee, and other industries.
3. Frederick’s economic ideas were, however, wrong. Adam Smith wrote in 1776 in The Wealth of Nations: “The sole use of money is to circulate consumable goods…” Hoarding silver in bags was deflationary and reduced the wealth of the state.
4. Thus, Frederick the Great fails the test as a rational finance minister, which also involves a paradox. To follow the British model meant freeing the markets from control, which undermined absolutism. The error is not simply wrong knowledge, but is built into the system.
D. The very system of monarchy is irrational.
1. Frederick was not chosen by public examination. It was an accident that he was a genius; his successor, Frederick William II, was a nice cello player but lazy and indecisive. Heredity is not a rational way to select leaders, but organic, biological, and dependent on genetic variation.
2. The family tradition in the House of Honenzollern was an unusual one.
a. The great elector (1640–1688), Frederick William I (1713–1740), and Frederick the Great (1740–1786) all had long reigns and great skills.

b. Prussia was turned into a military state. Like Israel, it had no defensible borders and enemies all around it. Hence, the king had to be, first and foremost, a general.

c. The rulers spent modest sums on palaces, fancy clothes, or royal display. The court of Prussia was notoriously spartan.

3. Frederick relied on the aristocracy as officers in the army, a second irrationality.
   a. The concept of Ehre (“honor”) was fundamental.
   b. Frederick was clear that only aristocrats could be proper commanders.
   c. The Prussian junker class was a service nobility. It had a monopoly of high office in the army and state in exchange for surrender of feudal rights to resist payment of taxes and other considerations.
   d. The irrational exclusion of men of talent who happen to be commoners reduced the pool of gifted officers.
   e. Again, this irrational outcome shows the limits of the absolute absolutist. Because royal position rests on nobility and both rest on birth and privilege, not reason, the king could not escape this paradox.

V. Frederick the Great was an enlightened prince.
   A. The king was a full-time intellectual, author of theoretical texts and famous letters. He corresponded with great luminaries of the Enlightenment.
   B. His indifference to religion was an essential tenet of the Enlightenment. During the 18th century, no European state or society was religiously homogeneous, but minorities were persecuted.
   C. Frederick encouraged religious tolerance, which meshed with the Enlightenment belief in the right of the autonomous human being to choose a religion on the basis of reason or conscience. Frederick also saw the practical advantages of tolerance for modernizing states, which need new bases for loyalty to the sovereign and to attract immigrants.
   D. The reign of Frederick was a great period of German culture, spawning, among others, Goethe, Schiller, and Immanuel Kant, who paid tribute to Frederick in his famous essay “What Is Enlightenment?” (1784).
   E. By 1786, because of Frederick’s fame, Berlin was a capital of enlightened thought and German culture. Prussian prestige in war and in letters was at its highest. Yet Frederick the Great, the idol of the new German intellectuals, spoke only French and disdained the new German culture, another paradox of the absolute absolutist.

Essential Reading:
Gerhard A. Ritter, Frederick the Great: A Historical Profile.

Supplementary Reading:
David Fraser, Frederick the Great.

Questions to Consider:
1. Is it fair to compare the views of Hamilton and Madison to those of Frederick the Great when the aims are so different?
2. What is “honor” and who has it?
Lecture Five
Jean-Jacques Rousseau—A Modern Self

Scope: Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) is, like us, middle class, self-made, and full of self-awareness. He is the first representative of what would become the modern sense of self. Although of humble birth, he joined and influenced the aristocratic elites of Europe. He wrote the first French bestseller, Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloïse, a story of passion across the lines of class. He wrote works of philosophy, and his Social Contract remains one of the most important accounts of democracy ever written. He argued against the prevailing optimism about the progress of civilization and believed that the “noble savage” represented humanity’s highest form of morality. He made his private life, loves, and sexual urges public in his Confessions. He was a mega-star in 18th-century culture but also a man of his time, born in the same year as Frederick the Great. Rousseau became part of that movement of ideas called the Enlightenment and was effective because of the new “public” that emerged in the 18th century, which had money and leisure to “buy” ideas, literature, and music. Thus, the new structure of society itself was an element in Rousseau’s career.

Outline

I. Even today, Switzerland is partially a remnant of medieval Europe.
   A. In Rousseau’s time, it was a collection of small valleys and cities with surrounding territories that enjoyed formal independence. These territories were called republics, although the term was not used as it is today.
   B. Authority in the republics was not derived from the people but from a small body of nobles. The largest republics had formed leagues to control so-called subject territories.
   C. Geneva, Rousseau’s birthplace, was one of these republics but was not yet a member of the Swiss Confederation.
      1. It was an 18th-century Hong Kong, a small, independent, French-speaking state.
      2. It was Protestant and the home of Calvinism. Its publishers were free to publish texts forbidden in Catholic France.
   D. Geneva’s form of government was complicated and oligarchical. The Founding Fathers were aware of Switzerland as a model of how to do things. Geneva was an aristocratic oligarchy of wealthy families, corrupt and undemocratic.
   E. Despite that structure, its reputation was unusual.
      1. By the standards of 18th-century Europe, Geneva was “free,” a place of “liberty.” If we compare Geneva with the absolute despotism of Frederick the Great (see Lecture Four), we understand why Europeans thought so.
      2. Rousseau was always proud to call himself citoyen du Genève (“citizen of Geneva”) as his title on his works; plain “citizen” was good enough.
   F. Only a fraction of the population, less than a quarter, were “citizens” with full rights.
      1. Citizen meant full membership in a kind of exclusive club. The rest were either habitants (“inhabitants”) or natifs (“native born” but without rights).
      2. Yet the image of the Roman Republic (see Lecture Two) gave this system prestige as a system of civic virtue. The republic, in theory, rejected the society of title, rank, and hierarchies.
      3. For Rousseau to use the simple title citoyen in Old Regime Europe was a form of rebellion in itself.

II. The Enlightenment will occupy us in several lives, including those of Hume (Lecture Eight), Catherine the Great (Lecture Ten), Joseph II (Lecture Eleven), Adam Smith (Lecture Thirteen), and Robespierre (Lecture Sixteen), and is one of the main themes of the first half of this course.
   A. The Enlightenment was a movement of ideas and is difficult to define easily.
      1. Dictionaries start with the image of “light,” receiving mental or spiritual light, but where does the light come from? The traditional answer was that God and his revelation gave us the divine light.
2. The Enlightenment was a revolution in thought: The “light” in the 18th century was no longer the light of revealed truth but the light of human reason. This development was unique to Europe and is an essential element in the evolution of modern society.

3. The implications of this “light of reason” are fundamental:
   a. If all are endowed with natural reason, the world should be better and people should act that way.
   b. The fact that they do not shows that reason is impeded by ignorance and “superstition”; for the Enlightenment, superstition meant belief in God.
   c. Education and the elimination (or reduction) of religion were, thus, essential.

B. The new basis of authority was human reason.
   1. This meant the authority of individual reason, best expressed in the admonition of the great philosopher Immanuel Kant: “Have courage to use your own understanding!” (“What Is Enlightenment?” 1784).
   2. Enlightenment was an extension of the Protestant conscience and Martin Luther’s notion of the priesthood of all believers (1520).
   3. The Enlightenment replaced faith with reason, and the results were a fundamental milestone on the road to modernity. One view was that God is reason; hence, the world must be a reasonable machine.
   4. The other view was that there is no God. The universe is simply a great machine governed by laws of nature.
   5. The Enlightenment, which was European in scope, was a spectrum of views on the role of reason, God, the nature of man, the just society, the causes of inequality, and the problem of luxury. Scotland, England, Germany, Italy, and Spain all experienced their own versions of the Enlightenment.

C. The Enlightenment sparked the growth of the new public sphere.
   1. Economic growth and ideas played a part in the Enlightenment: Money and mobility transformed social structures. Wealth ignores social hierarchies and ancient distinctions; money brings society into movement.
   2. Jürgen Habermas developed the idea of the bourgeois public sphere. Habermas, born in 1929, is a German philosopher and emeritus professor at the University of Frankfurt. Habermas thought that the 18th century was a period in which a new space emerged, both beyond and alongside the court, the closed corporation, and the family.
   3. The public sphere is real and can also be imaginary, as expressed in literary works. The public sphere was a function of the growth of towns, printing presses, and literacy. The market for goods and services developed, and new consumption goods spread, such as coffee. The coffeehouse was the perfect institution of the public sphere; it was open to all, irrespective of rank in society, and it offered newspapers and conversation to all.
   4. The market for goods and services developed, and new consumption goods spread, such as coffee. The coffeehouse was the perfect institution of the public sphere; it was open to all, irrespective of rank in society, and it offered newspapers and conversation to all.
   5. The French version of the coffeehouse was the salon, an open house in the apartments of a prince or wealthy aristocrat. Careers were made and broken at salons, which were frequently run by women, as they, too, entered the new public sphere.
   6. An encyclopedia, such as the one compiled by Diderot, was the most important physical expression of the Enlightenment. It represented the systems of knowledge, the rational explanation of that knowledge, and its availability to anybody who could read.
   7. A generation of intellectuals was now able to live by its wits. Careers were open to all, great or humble in social standing, if they were smart and could shine in the salons.

III. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was born in 1712 in Geneva. His father was a watchmaker, and his mother died soon after his birth.
   A. His father left Geneva when Jean-Jacques was only 10, and Rousseau was apprenticed at the age of 13, first to a notary, then to a coppersmith, but after three years, he ran away.
   B. After several days of wandering, he was directed to the household of the wealthy and charitable Madame Louise de Warens in Savoy; she would become his first lover and his tutor in arts and letters.
C. From that point on, Rousseau’s life was influenced by his relationship to women (was he looking for his lost mother?), characterized by a succession of mistresses, patronesses, lovers, and one wife. They all appear in the Confessions and are described quite literally.

D. His sexual appetites were strong but rather specialized. His ideal was what we would now call the dominatrix.

E. In his Confessions, he also describes the way he came to write his novel, Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse (published in 1761). The relationship between the hero and heroine, St. Preux and Julie, was autobiographical. The hero is a middle-class tutor; the heroine, a noble lady. Again, Rousseau expresses the theme of sexual domination.

F. It was not so much what Rousseau did, but the fact that he talked about it. Rousseau’s private life and sex life became public. In 1771, he began public readings of his Confessions. The new modern “self” was born in Rousseau’s life and was a literary and personal creation.

IV. Paris and its salons were the stage for Rousseau’s dramatic career.

A. In 1742, Rousseau moved to Paris to make a career as a musician and composer. His opera Les muses galantes made his reputation. He met Diderot, Condillac, and other stars of Parisian intellectual society and entered the salon world.

B. In 1750, he made his great philosophical breakthrough in an essay competition of the Academy of Dijon. The issue to be addressed was “if the reestablishment of the sciences and arts has contributed to the purification of customs.”

C. Rousseau answered with a resounding no: “It is thus that dissolution of morals, a necessary consequence of luxury, brings with it in its turn the corruption of taste.”
   1. The essay was signed, not “Rousseau,” but “A Citizen.”
   2. The discourse was a sensation. It attacked the Enlightenment’s view of progress and urban life. Rousseau argued that luxury and city life destroy morals.
   3. Man is essentially good, a “noble savage” when in the “state of nature,” but society is “artificial” and “corrupt.”
   4. Rousseau was ambivalent about Paris and city life, yet paradoxically depended on it. His career was a creation of the new Parisian world, yet he ostentatiously and noisily rejected it.
   5. The new Rousseau was still a “citizen” but had now become a hermit, a prophet of the natural and savage, though, of course, making sure that Paris was watching him in his country hideaway.
   6. In A Dissertation on the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality of Mankind (1755), he launched an attack on society, which “for the advantage of a few ambitious individuals, subjected all mankind to perpetual labour, slavery and wretchedness.”

D. Rousseau was also one of the most important philosophers of all time.
   1. Between 1750 and 1762, he published “The First Discourse,” Whether the Restoration of the Arts and Sciences has assisted the purification of morals (1750); “The Second Discourse,” A Discourse upon the Origin and the Foundation of the Inequality among Mankind (1754); Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse (1761); The Social Contract (1762); and Émile, ou l’éducation (1762).
   2. This was an astonishing achievement—any one of these books would have been enough to make him immortal.
   3. Émile ou l’éducation is the least known of his great works. Immanuel Kant considered its publication an event comparable to the French Revolution.
   4. The Social Contract is an exploration of the dilemma of pure democracy: How can the citizen be free if his or her will is subjected to the will of the majority? The first chapter begins with one of the most famous phrases ever written: “Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains.”
   5. The Volonté générale, or General Will, is deeply controversial; the problems, which Rousseau simply denies, are as follows:
      a. How can protection be ensured against the tyranny of the majority?
      b. What happens if the general will is wrong?
      c. How justified is Rousseau’s assumption of the similarity and equality of citizens?
      d. Are there limits on the power of the sovereign general will?
E. Twentieth-century critics have condemned Rousseau as the father of totalitarian democracy, the inspiration of Jacobins and Communists. The *Social Contract* was precisely what the Founding Fathers rejected, and the Constitution of 1787 was designed to prevent democracy, not encourage it.

V. Rousseau was the first to plot the evolution of the modern self, to be that self, and to write the theory of that self’s philosophical basis, how that self was to be incorporated into the community and how the new community was to operate. He was the first to ask, a generation before the U.S. Constitution was drafted, what is the meaning of democracy and the “will” of the people? He was also the first exponent of romantic love as the source of self and the first modern advocate for the importance of women. His contribution was to foresee the outlines of our world.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:

Questions to Consider:
1. Do you agree with Rousseau that modern, city life corrupts morals?
2. To what extent do we need protection in our democracy today against what Rousseau called “the General Will” or what we might call “majority opinion”?
Scope: Samuel Johnson (1709–1784) became the most famous literary figure in England during the 18th century. In 1755, he published his two-volume dictionary, the biggest commercial publication of its time. Johnson’s witty definitions made it an immediate success:

Lexicographer: a writer of dictionaries, a harmless drudge.

Oats: a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.

Patron: One who countenances, supports or protects. Commonly a wretch who supports with indolence and is paid with flattery.

“Dictionary Johnson,” a huge and irascible figure, became the center of a circle of wits. Equally important was James Boswell, a Scot who attached himself to Johnson in 1763 and wrote his biography. Boswell’s Life of Johnson stands as the greatest biography in the English language and has a double connection in this course. Johnson, the professional author, became the subject of biography, but both subject and biographer represent a new stage in the evolution of modern communications: the emergence of publishing as an industry. Writing, publishing, bookselling, together with the new public ready to “consume” literary products, created the new market for ideas and entertainment. Johnson and Boswell’s Life of Johnson mark a further stage in the transformation of the premodern world into something we begin to recognize as our own.

Outline

I. The growth of the book trade was a feature of the English economy in the 18th century.
   
   A. The author’s rights underwent a legal transformation.
      1. Copyright is an exclusive right given by law for a certain term of years to an author, composer, or designer to print, publish, and sell copies of his or her original work. We tend to take this right for granted now, but until the 18th century, it was not necessary.
      2. The sovereign had previously held the right to control publication, which presented no problem when books had to be copied by hand. Printing “democratized the word,” and the government issued exclusive licenses to certain printers and maintained strict censorship.
      3. In 1709, the English copyright act, the first such act in history, changed the rules. Its full title was An Act for the encouragement of Learning by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the authors or Purchasers of Such Copies. No other European state followed the English model until much later.
      4. The break was fundamental. Previously, the right to print granted by the Crown limited the business of books, and the market was under control. Now, the market became the arbiter of bookselling and publishing.

   B. The professional author was a consequence of the change.
      1. A new profession became conceivable: that of professional author. A writer might make a living selling books, just as he or she might by selling any other commodity.
      2. Samuel Johnson’s career illustrates this new possibility. He was one of the first and, perhaps, the greatest of professional authors.

II. The magazine emerged as a new vehicle for professional authors.

   A. In 1731, Edward Cave founded The Gentleman’s Magazine. Its purpose was to summarize the news of the month.
      1. Cave’s success was a consequence of the copyright act of 1709 and the ferocity of partisan politics under the Hanoverian kings (see Lecture Three on Walpole).
      2. The Gentleman’s Magazine was an instant success, and its offices became a meeting place for writers and publishers.
      3. The social implications of this change can be seen in two ways:
a. First, the erosion of aristocratic exclusiveness was accelerated, and barriers between classes were weakened. The magazine was like the coffeehouse, an institution of the public sphere. (See Lectures Three on Walpole and Five on Rousseau.)

b. Further, the sheer volume of journalistic activity created significant openings for poor, clever lads (and lasses) able to “write to order.” Most journalism was anonymous or signed “The Spectator” or “The Gentleman”; the writer could be a woman, a lower-class person, anybody. The journalistic hack, people with “pens for hire,” were now a recognizable type.

B. The Gentleman’s Magazine used a subterfuge to publish parliamentary reports.
   1. In 1732, the House of Commons would not allow speeches of members to be printed even after the end of the session. The House of Lords followed the same practice even more stringently.
   2. Cave invented an imaginary country, which he called Magna Lilliputia (from Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels, published a few years earlier in 1726), gave it a parliament, and proceeded to report that country’s parliamentary debates.
   3. Samuel Johnson was hired to write these imaginary debates. Sometimes he used notes of those present; sometimes, “the mere coinage of his imagination,” as Boswell elegantly put it; in other words, he made them up.
   4. Johnson could write three columns of the magazine in an hour. He was the perfect lobby correspondent, establishing a new career path with the mix of publishing, politics, and the public.

III. Who was Samuel Johnson?
   A. Johnson was from Lichfield near Birmingham and was born in 1709. Like Ned Cave, he was a poor boy who made it in the new publishing and journalistic industries. His father was a bookseller.
   B. Samuel was a huge, lumbering, ill-coordinated boy who suffered as a young man from scrofula, a form of tuberculosis of the lymph glands. The disease left him disfigured and nearly blind in one eye.
   C. Johnson’s habits were very odd. He was said to suffer “queer convulsions” and make “strange gesticulations” on entering a room.
   D. Johnson’s poverty was another important element in his career:
      1. A scholarship took him to Pembroke College, Oxford, but he had to quit because he could not afford it. He faced an uncertain life, with a bankrupt father and no prospects, when he met “Betty,” an older woman whom he loved dearly and who had a little money. With her cash, Johnson tried to found a school, but it failed.
      2. London was the last hope for a career. In 1737, he and his friend, David Garrick, later the most famous actor of the era, walked from Lichfield to London to seek their fortunes. They chose an ideal time to go: The new journalism and the commercial theater were looking for bright young men who did not cost much.

IV. Johnson, the subject of Boswell’s biography, always had a strong attraction to the genre.
   A. Johnson wrote lives of famous statesmen for Cave’s magazine, in addition to his poems and parliamentary reports.
   B. In 1744, Johnson wrote The Life of Richard Savage, a kind of self-portrait, given that Savage, though higher born, was also a “pen for hire.” Johnson’s portrait of a literary hack marked a further stage in the modernization of literature.
   C. Johnson wrote other lives, including the three volumes of The Lives of the Poets (1777) and The Life of Pope (1781).

V. James Boswell (1740–1795) is the alter ego in Johnson’s life.
   A. Boswell, a Scottish gentleman of terrible character, arrived in London in 1762. He was a toady, a name-dropper, a sexually irrepressible rake. His London Journal, 1762-1763, reveals that he was an anxious depressive who suffered from mood swings, hypochondria, and fears of venereal disease.
   B. Boswell’s genius was the perfect foil to Johnson’s. Boswell had several rare gifts, including an insatiable curiosity about other people and the ability to make them talk about themselves.
   C. Boswell had a superb prose style, along with great wit and charm, and was a fascinating diarist.
D. His relationship to Johnson was complicated. His attachment to Samuel Johnson, who was 30 years older than he, was special; in some mysterious way, Johnson made him feel better about himself. Early in their relationship, on June 14, 1763, Boswell wrote: “I never am with this great man without feeling myself bettered and rendered happier.”

E. A few weeks later, Boswell decided to record Johnson’s conversation word for word. Later that night, at a tavern in Fleet Street, Boswell confessed his religious doubts and struggles to Johnson, a deeply pious, if eccentric, Christian. As Boswell recorded in his Journal: “He was much pleased with my ingenuous open way, and he cried, ‘Give me your hand. I have taken a liking to you.’”

VI. Boswell’s _Life of Johnson_ rests on one of the greatest literary collaborations in history.

A. Johnson acts as the master of conversation and opinion; Boswell, the faithful scribe, writes it down. The book is often pure dialogue.

B. Yet the reality is actually more complicated. Boswell’s need for Johnson’s approval was limitless. Johnson remarked: “Of the exaltations and depressions of your mind, you delight to speak, and I hate to hear. Drive all such fancies from you.”

C. For 25 years, Boswell refashioned his notes and created a portrait of the living Johnson. Both the subject and the biographer were literary geniuses, great stylists, both preoccupied with the art of biography. The book evolves almost like a novel.

D. Both Johnson and Boswell agreed on the method of biography: to look for the small, telltale particulars of character.

   1. Boswell observed that minute particulars are frequently characteristic and always amusing when they relate to a distinguished man.

   2. Johnson agreed: “More knowledge may be gained of a man’s real character by a short conversation with one of his servants than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree and ended with his funeral.”

   3. Both writers used English in its classical period. Johnson and Boswell wanted to achieve balance and pithiness of phrase, as shown in Johnson’s beautiful letter of condolence to a friend, describing the reality of grief:

   The continuity of being is lacerated; the settled course of sentiment and action is stopped; and life stands suspended and motionless, till it is driven by external causes into a new channel. But the time of suspense is dreadful.

   4. Both writers also strove for what Boswell called “the perfection of language,” the idea that there is some choice of words that perfectly expresses an idea.

VII. The careers of both Johnson and Boswell depended on the functions of the new publishing industry: Johnson, the poor scholar from the provinces, and Boswell, the Scottish lord, met in the new market for literary products. Both became “celebrities” in the modern sense of the word. The media of the day made them famous and they, in turn, exploited the media. Thus, the “modern” media star is a function of the industrialization of literary communication, the spread of the mass press, and the creation of the “author” as a new type.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:

Questions to Consider:
1. Why are readers interested in the lives of authors, and does it help the reader to understand the books if he or she knows about the author’s life?
2. Were Johnson and Boswell right that human character reveals itself in certain small but specific ways of behaving?
Lecture Seven

Maria Theresa—Mother of the Empire

Scope: Maria Theresa (1717–1780) ruled over a complex of states and territories that had no overall name. She was archduchess of Austria above the Enns and archduchess of Austria below the Enns; queen of Bohemia, Hungary, Dalmatia, and Slavonia; and Duchess of Burgundy. The most important title, Holy Roman Empress, could not be hers, because Salic law forbade female succession; her husband, Francis Stephen, duke of Lorraine, became Emperor Francis I in her place. This fact raises the first of several gender issues for our exploration: How did it matter that Maria Theresa was a queen, not a king? Was there anything “feminine” in her success? In addition, the long reign of this remarkable queen/archduchess raises, for the first time in this course, “the Austrian problem,” a set of issues that dominated European politics from 1740 to 1914. It was, after all, an Austrian crisis, the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28, 1914, that destroyed Europe in the First World War and ushered in the catastrophes of the 20th century. Maria Theresa began her reign by fighting to defend her inheritance in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) and, in a sense, the First World War marked the last War of the Austrian Succession. What was the Austrian problem, and why could Europe never solve it?

Outline

I. Part of the Austrian inheritance was the question of Austria’s statehood.
   A. Maria Theresa’s problem was how to be queen in her territories. The absence of a unified kingdom meant that she had different titles and powers in different places. The map of Europe in 1700 shows the different authorities.
      1. We saw in Lecture Two, in the case of the Grand Duchy of Baden, that authority in Old Regime Europe suffered from extreme fragmentation. At the local level, this was even more marked.
      2. Baden’s map shows that the essence of l’ancien régime was the minute fragmentation of authority. One small region of southwestern Germany contained dozens of semi-independent archbishoprics, bishoprics, free abbeys, free cities, principalities, duchies, margravates, landgraves, lordships, and so on.
      3. This was the legacy of the feudal history of Europe. The disintegration of central authority in the Middle Ages and the splitting and dying out of ruling families produced chaos.
   B. The lost world of the Old Regime had certain distinguishing features.
      1. It was an age of particularism. Rights were specific, not general. Certain territories, groups, trades, guilds, orders of monks, towns, barons, and so on had certain historic rights and privileges.
      2. Some common features were also important. The societies were overwhelmingly agricultural. Only Britain and Holland depended at all on commercial or trading activity.

II. The Holy Roman Empire of the German nation was the central framework of Maria Theresa’s life.
   A. The Holy Roman Empire was literally impossible to understand, even by its greatest experts.
   B. Its structure was intricate.
      1. There was an elected emperor and a kind of parliament: the Imperial Assembly, or Diet (the Reichstag).
      2. The Imperial Assembly consisted of three councils: those of the electors, the princes, and the free cities or imperial cities.
      3. The electors were called prince-electors. According to law, the Council of Electors consisted of seven members: the king of Bohemia (Maria Theresa, queen of Bohemia from 1740, was, hence, an elector); the archbishop of Mainz; the archbishop of Trier; the archbishop of Cologne (Köln); the duke of Saxony-Wittenberg (electoral Saxony); the margrave of Brandenburg (the king of Prussia after 1713); and the count palatine of the Rhine.
      4. The Reichsfreiherren (“imperial knights”), free cities, sovereign abbeys, and prince-bishops were represented in the lowest house.
   C. The Habsburg dynasty depended on the Holy Roman Empire: Its history was tied to it.
1. Albert V of Austria married the daughter of Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund, succeeded him as king of Bohemia and Hungary, and in 1438, was chosen German king as Albert II. With one exception, the head of the House of Habsburg was elected German king and Holy Roman Emperor from 1438 to 1806, when Napoleon abolished the empire.

2. The “exception,” Charles VII (elector of Bavaria, a member of the Wittelsbach family, 1742–1745), occurred because Maria Theresa was a woman and was, in Charles’s view, not the legitimate heir of Charles VI.

3. Hence, the essential Habsburg dilemma: Their highest title, their greatest prestige, rested in their elections as emperors. Yet the empire was a huge anachronism, an unwieldy medieval mess. It was incomprehensible, unrefromable, indispensable, and in no way, a state.

4. Still, the Habsburgs depended on it for prestige and taxes. Their best soldiers were drawn from the empire. Their other crowns and kingdoms were not enough. “Austria” was not an entity on its own.

5. The essential Austrian problem from 1715 to 1914 was the same: Its rulers were doomed to be enemies of progress. They were condemned to cling to antiquated structures, but without improving those structures and increasing the control of their territories in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Habsburgs were certain to be destroyed by more “modern” states.

III. “Austria” was a family enterprise.

A. Maria Theresa inherited territories by marriage, death, and complex legal battles.

B. The problem of female succession led to the Pragmatic Sanction of 1713. It was issued by Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI to alter the law of succession of the Habsburg family. We must examine the situation step by step to grasp it.

1. In 1705, Emperor Leopold I died and was succeeded by his son Joseph as emperor.

2. In 1711, Joseph I died, leaving two unmarried daughters: Maria Josepha (1699–1757), who married (1719) the future Elector Augustus II of Saxony, king of Poland, and Maria Amalia (1701–1756), who married (1722) Charles Albert (1697–1745), elector of Bavaria.

3. Charles VI, brother of Joseph I, was elected emperor and inherited the Habsburg lands according to the succession pact of the family issued by Leopold in 1703.

4. On September 26, 1711, Charles VI made a will in which he gave his daughters precedence over those of Joseph in case of extinction of his male line (in violation of the family pact of 1703). This led to fierce precedence disputes between the archduchesses at court. A “private conference” (composed of Prince Eugene of Savoy, Count Seilern, and two privy councilors) recommended the publication of a succession law.

5. The Pragmatic Sanction of 1713 was collectively termed “the laws of the House of Austria” and passed the succession to Charles’s eldest female child if there were no living males.

C. The problem was how to get the Pragmatic Sanction of 1713 accepted, first by the family, then by the Austrian lands and other European states.

1. In 1719, Maria Josepha married Augustus the Strong.

2. Because Augustus wanted to be king of Poland, he traded his wife’s rights for support from Charles VI.

3. The family was dissatisfied with the arrangement, which resulted in immediate international consequences: Most states guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction in 1732, but an important exception was that of Elector Charles Albert of Bavaria, who married the other daughter, Maria Amalia, in 1722. Bavaria was an important dukedom, and Charles Albert had ambitions to be elected Holy Roman Emperor. He succeeded in doing so but ruled only from 1742 to 1745.

4. When Maria Theresa acceded to the Habsburg throne in 1740, she had to defend her rights in a long and bitter struggle, the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748), in spite of all the guarantees her father had obtained.

5. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle of 1748 confirmed the Pragmatic Sanction.

IV. Maria Theresa’s personality was a powerful element in her success as a ruler.

A. Her early life shows that Maria Theresa was truly remarkable. She was born May 13, 1717, into the foremost royal family in Europe.
1. She had little proper education and spoke German with a broad Viennese accent, which made her extremely popular. Her nickname was Reserl (“little Tess”) in Viennese dialect.

2. When her first male grandson was born to her son Leopold in 1768, she announced the news by rushing onto the stage at the Royal Theater, stopping the show, and exclaiming in Viennese: “Our Leopold has had a lad!”

3. Her naturalness was unusual in the stiff world of royal protocol, which in the Habsburg case, had come from the stiffest protocol in Europe, that of the Spanish court.

B. Maria Theresa’s physical strength was important in her success, as well. She had no need for much sleep, bore 16 children in 19 years, and survived smallpox. Even while queen of Europe’s biggest state, she attended to every detail of the children’s upbringing.

C. She encouraged close advisors to tell her the truth at all times.
   1. One advisor, Emanuel Count Sylva-Tarouca (1696–1771), was employed as her official critic. His job was to tell her all her mistakes.
   2. Another was her former governess, Countess Maria Carolina Fuchs (“Fox” in English), whom she called Foxy and Mami (“mommy”).
   3. Her relationship with these advisors stands in marked contrast to those of other rulers. Think of telling Frederick the Great the truth! (See Lecture Four.)

D. Maria Theresa’s marriage was another important element in her reign.
   1. Her husband, Francis Stephen, duke of Lorraine (1708–1765), was the love of her life. When she was 16 and Francis was 25, she fell in love with him, insisted on having him, and succeeded, despite political complications. The match was a passionate and successful marriage of two partners.
   2. Francis Stephen was a gifted businessman and administrator. He was given the position of grand duke of Tuscany in exchange for giving up his native Duchy of Lorraine. Cheerful, sensible, and good tempered, he settled down to govern Tuscany with his young wife. He earned a huge fortune in Italy and, after 1740, helped manage the finances of Maria Theresa’s kingdoms and estates. Unfortunately, he was a dreadful soldier and field commander, and his failures in war made him unpopular with the Austrians.
   3. Yet Francis Stephen was ideal for Maria Theresa. His death in 1765 was a near fatal blow to her, from which she never fully recovered.

E. Maria Theresa practiced a ruthless form of marital politics.
   1. Though she married for love, her children were not granted any freedom at all. They were family assets to be used for diplomacy.
   2. All their marriages were arranged on purely political considerations. Her daughter Maria Carolina of Habsburg-Lorraine (1752–1814) was sent out to marry the ghastly king of Naples in 1768 when her sister Josepha died, a victim of the 1767 smallpox epidemic.
   3. Maria Theresa knew how awful Carolina’s life was but accepted that her daughter had become “a victim of policy.” Service in Habsburg marital politics was a fact of life.
   4. Another move in marital politics, which proved fatal but was an apparent triumph at the time, was to marry her youngest daughter, Marie Antoinette (1755–1793), to the future king of France, Louis XVI. As we shall see in Lecture Fourteen, that marriage brought the young queen to the guillotine in 1793.

V. Maria Theresa was a state-builder.
   A. The preservation of the monarchy was her main concern.
      1. In 1740, she seemed to have all of Europe against her, yet she saved the monarchy against all her enemies. She won the loyalty of the Hungarian nobility: “I am only a woman but I have the heart of a king,” she announced to the Magyar parliament. Her charm and sense of drama in 1741 saved the House of Habsburg.
      2. Her policies arose from a mixture of her prejudices and habits, her stubbornness and deep Catholic piety.
      3. Her greatest virtue was courage—she refused to be cowed by Frederick the Great and the sovereigns of Europe in the War of the Austrian Succession.

   B. Her other great virtue was much rarer in royalty: common sense. Maria Theresa had a kind of genius for politics. She was not theoretical, but exceptionally shrewd.
1. Her hatred of the partition of Poland (1772) is an example. Russia and Prussia proposed to carve up Poland. Maria Theresa refused at first. Eventually, Austria took the eastern province of Galicia in order not to be left out.

2. Frederick the Great scoffed: “She wept but she took.” In fact, she allowed her foreign minister Kaunitz and her son Joseph to override her common sense.

VI. Maria Theresa’s long reign, her reforms, and sensible changes in government made a great difference, but above all, her personality was the key to her impact. In 1740, the Habsburg lands were all completely separate, joined only by personal union to the queen. When she died in 1780, there was a feeling that all belonged to a single state of which Maria Theresa was the “mother.” Her accent, her style, her humanity, her maternal qualities were essential elements in her success.

Essential Reading:
All the good biographies of Maria Theresa in English are out of print. For German readers, I recommend the excellent Edwin Dillman, *Maria Theresa* (Munich: Deutsche Taschenbuch Verlag, 2000).
As substitute for a biography, others might look into Charles W. Ingrao, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1618–1815*.

Questions to Consider:
1. How did it matter that Maria Theresa was a queen, not a king?
2. What does it mean to say that a ruler has “common sense”?
Lecture Eight
David Hume—The Cheerful Skeptic

Scope: Anthony Quinton begins his book by calling David Hume (1711–1776) “the greatest of British philosophers: the most profound, penetrating and comprehensive” (The Great Philosophers, 1999), and the famous philosopher and mathematician Bertrand Russell reserved a particularly painful chamber in hell for philosophers who tried to refute Hume. It may seem odd to follow an empress and queen who ruled over millions with a retiring Scots gentleman who wrote books, but the publication in 1739 of A Treatise of Human Nature: Being an Attempt to introduce the experimental Method of Reasoning in Moral Subjects can justly be compared to Frederick the Great’s attack on Silesia in 1740. Both the act of naked aggression, scarcely justified by even the flimsiest legal claim, and Hume’s application of the experimental method to ideas broke the continuity of human affairs, the one in international relations and the other in the way we think about ourselves. Frederick broke the rules of diplomacy, but Hume demolished the existing rules of thought.

Outline
I. Hume’s ambition was to be “the Newton of philosophy.”
   A. He was a successful essayist and historian, but his greatest work, A Treatise of Human Nature (1739), was not appreciated or understood.
      1. Hume’s wry comment in his autobiography has become famous: “Never literary attempt was more unfortunate than my Treatise of Human Nature. It fell dead-born from the press, without reaching such distinction as even to excite a murmur among the zealots.”
      2. The 19th century was out of sympathy with 18th-century values. The Enlightenment was viewed as a movement of “shallow and pretentious intellectualism.”
      3. Hume was known in his time and in the 19th century more as a skeptic and debunker of religion than a great technical philosopher. “The Essay upon Miracles” made him notorious.
   B. In the 20th century, Hume came to be widely regarded as the greatest philosopher of knowledge and the godfather of the analytic school of philosophy.

II. To begin, we must set the general context and note the peculiar character of the Enlightenment in Britain.
   A. The Enlightenment involved both ideas and a set of people who propagated them; it differed in different countries (see Lecture Five).
      1. The core of the Enlightenment is found in Immanuel Kant’s famous essay: “What Is Enlightenment?” (1784): “Have courage to use your own understanding.”
      2. All enlightened thinkers shared certain underlying assumptions:
         a. Human beings are naturally good.
         b. There exists in each of us an innate natural reason.
         c. Progress is inevitable, because it is a function of enlightened thinking.
         d. Human nature is fundamentally uniform.
   B. The British version of the Enlightenment was a product of its history.
      1. The English Civil War (1640–1660) was a religious war; its protagonists were the representatives of three types of religion:
         a. Religion is sacramental (Roman Catholic or Anglican): The priest, church, sacraments, and liturgy are necessary for salvation because the church is God’s manifestation on earth.
         b. Religion is Bible-based: In the Congregationalist, Baptist, and other biblically directed churches, individual conscience and Bible study allow direct access between the worshipper and God.
         c. Religion is personal conversion: These were the various millenarian and sectarian movements, including the churches of the Holy Spirit, where frequently, neither pastor nor parishioner exists as a separate function. Some operate either without or beyond the Bible. Personal conversion is the test, but in the quietest sects, as in Quakerism, only the movement of the Spirit can be discerned.
2. Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) was the philosopher of the English Civil War. Hobbes saw the religious wars as chaotic and dangerous to orderly rule. His *Leviathan* (1651) is a reflection of the chaos of civil war. It rested on three principles:
   a. A mechanistic view that life is simply the motions of the organism and that man is, by nature, a selfishly individualistic animal at constant war with all other men. In a state of nature, men are equal in their self-seeking and live out lives that are “nasty, brutish, and short.”
   b. Fear of violent death is the principal motive that causes men to create a state by contracting to surrender their natural rights and to submit to the absolute authority of a sovereign.
   c. The sovereign’s power is absolute and not subject to the law. Temporal power is always superior to ecclesiastical power.
3. Hobbes’s philosophy was gloomy and authoritarian, but it was the first mechanical and realistic philosophy. Like Hume, Hobbes wanted to found a scientific study of man.

C. The period from 1660 to 1713 in England was one of instability. The failure of the restored Stuart dynasty to reestablish itself after 1660, partly because of its Catholic leanings, produced unrest and anxiety. The year 1688 and the Glorious Revolution put a liberal Protestant prince, William of Orange, on the throne, and after 1713, the Hanoverians, a German collateral line, became kings of England.
   1. The establishment of George I marked a further stage in the progress of parliamentary power and a victory for the Protestant parties. Religion in the new Hanoverian settlement was now divided in two camps:
      a. The deists believed that God and nature were essentially the same. They rejected revelation and the supernatural doctrines of Christianity in the name of natural religion.
      b. The religion of traditional Christianity rested on the Bible as a source but also on the Anglican Church as a “Catholic and Apostolic Church.” The Church of England was established as the official religion of England but not in Hume’s Scotland, where the Scottish kirk rested on Presbyterian principles.
   2. In Scotland, religion was divided between the moderates and the evangelicals. The Act of Union of 1707 united Scotland and England and threatened to reintroduce bishops to Scotland. The Scottish kirk divided into strict Calvinists, who rejected all compromise, and moderates, who were prepared to live with elements of Anglicanism in Scotland. Hume’s life and career took place under the ascendancy of the moderates.

D. Science, often called natural philosophy, had great prestige.
   1. The effect of Dutch improvements in microscopes, lenses, and telescopes; the experiments of Robert Boyle (1627–1691); and the theories and experiments of Isaac Newton (1642–1727) created a new relationship between man and nature.
   2. Science bequeathed an important legacy to philosophy: There was now the possibility that scientific, moral, and religious reasoning could be compatible. If the universe was a logical structure and there was a rational God, why could there not be a science of morals or of human understanding?
   3. Bishop Joseph Butler (1692–1752) was an example of that attempt. Butler’s sermons and his *The Analogy of Religion* (1726) were attempts to avoid “inquiring into abstract relations of things” but instead to begin “from a matter of fact, namely, what the particular nature of man is…”

E. Hume was impressed by Butler’s work. In the introduction to *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume speaks of “some late philosophers in England, who have begun to put the science of man on a new footing, and have engaged the attention and excited the curiosity of the public.”

F. Both the Old and New Testaments use miracles as testimony to God’s power, which presented a problem for the new scientific philosophy.
   1. Can a belief in miracles be compatible with a rational, law-based universe? In particular, revealed religion exhibited a degree of dependence on the miraculous in Christ’s life.
   2. The dilemma for Butler was resolved by his understanding of God as the human conscience—as Leslie Stephen wrote in his *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, “that great standing miracle—the oracle implanted in every man’s breast.”
   3. Hume’s place in these debates was to cut the ground from under them by making it impossible to know things in themselves and to introduce a wide-ranging skepticism about the truth of anything. It was a revolution in thought.
III. Hume was the son of Scottish gentry, an exceptionally studious and scholarly boy but unfit for law or business.

A. His great inspiration apparently came to him as early as 1729: to apply Newton to philosophy. He was only 18 when he got the idea and just 28 when he published his masterpiece.

1. He began feverish, furious work for four years but had a nervous collapse in 1733. He took a break from philosophy for a short period in business, which was unsatisfactory.

2. Because his modest family income went further on the Continent, Hume lived in France from 1734 to 1737, where he settled down to write his great work. He was always certain that he was producing “a total alteration of philosophy.”

B. The prose of *A Treatise* is beautiful and clear and not by chance. Hume was always preoccupied with his written style.

C. Hume’s revolutionary idea was that it was impossible to know more than the mental sensations in our heads. The “thing in itself” cannot be known, only the impression it makes on the brain. The category *existence* is, thus, impossible to separate from the idea of the thing. We believe in causation only as a result of *custom*, that is, because we have seen a certain chain of events happen. Hume’s example is of billiard balls striking each other.

D. Hume shows that we cannot know causation as such, only the experience that the billiard balls have behaved this way in the past and we saw them do so. The following passage in the *Treatise* was so important that Hume put it in italics: “There is nothing in any object consider’d in itself, which can afford us a reason for drawing any conclusion beyond it and that even after the frequent or constant conjunction of objects, we have no reason to draw any inference concerning any object beyond those of which we have had experience.”

E. One consequence of Hume’s philosophy was that it argued for radical skepticism.

1. We know nothing for certain. Human beings know only their mental processes and, therefore, we have no assurance that reason and thought are necessarily connected to reality.

2. Hence, all essences or substances cannot be certainly said to exist. All we have to offer in their support are simply impressions of the mind, in other words, ideas in our heads. We cannot even prove that our selves exist, and the idea that there is a God must be completely unproven and impossible to verify in any way.

3. Hume came as close to total skepticism as any philosopher ever has. He goes out of his way to show that he has exceeded the ancient Greek skeptics. Hume’s case is impossible to refute. Mind and matter are apparently radically separated.

F. Hume’s responses to his philosophy are much like the man himself.

1. Hume was disappointed by the public’s failure to understand his masterpiece. He later wrote more philosophy but decided to seek fame (and money) as a writer of essays and his *History of England*.

2. Hume was a person of extraordinary good cheer and was unusual in drawing no personal consequences from his philosophy. He believed that philosophers should know the limits of philosophy.

IV. At the age of 28, David Hume had completed one of the most important books ever written and set new limits to philosophy, even his own. He went on to write in grand fashion on economics, history, and religion. Although he never married, he was a cheerful, kindly, and good friend, without malice or rancor. His contemporaries regarded him as a kind of secular saint, and his French colleagues called him *le bon David*.

**Essential Reading:**


**Supplementary Reading:**


**Questions to Consider:**

1. How can radical skepticism be combined with religious faith?

2. Is it reasonable to compare *A Treatise of Human Nature*, published in 1739 and 1740, with Frederick the Great’s invasion of Silesia in 1740?
Lecture Nine
C. P. E. Bach—Selling the Arts

Scope: Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788) was the most distinguished son of the great Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) and a great composer in his own right. As he said, “I never had a teacher other than my father.” Yet their styles could not have been more different. The younger Bach’s expressive style seems to reflect a change in the social reality and in the listening public. C. P. E. Bach lived through the transition from art as a form of glorification of God or the exaltation of a great king (see Lecture Two) to art as a commodity and the emergence of the public. He played the keyboard in the orchestra of Frederick the Great, serving to proclaim the magnificence of the king. At the same time, in 1753, he published a style manual, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, with exercises in the back for budding players, a commercial enterprise designed for a new middle-class public. The traditional arts represented the glory of God or the ruler; the new art expressed the soul of the artist. That transformation, in turn, marked the emergence of the market for works of art and a new distinction between public and private.

Outline

I. This lecture compares two of the world’s greatest composers, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788), to show the ways in which the composition of German music changed during our period of study and draw parallels with the change from the European Old Regime to the society of the modern world.

II. Dozens of Bachs were musicians in the era from 1500 to 1800. Johann Sebastian Bach made his own list in his family history and counted 53.
   A. The idea that musicians are “artists” has a short history, beginning in the life of C. P. E. Bach himself. Before that, they were servants or, if independent, were premodern guild members who practiced as craftsmen, similar to shoemakers or saddlers.
   B. The immediate Bach family was amazingly gifted. Of Johann Sebastian’s 20 children, several were well known as musicians. The eldest son, Wilhelm Friedemann (1710–1784), was a brilliant organist and well-known composer. Two younger sons, Carl Philipp Emanuel and Johann Christian, the “English Bach,” were even more famous.

III. Johann Sebastian Bach really had no other activity but music. He was taught by his father and, later, by his brother Johann Christoph and was a boy soprano in Lüneberg.
   A. In 1703, he became a violinist in the private orchestra of the prince at Weimar but left within a year to become organist at Arnstadt. Bach went to Mühlhausen as organist in 1707. There, he married his cousin Maria Barbara Bach, who was to bear him seven children.
   B. In 1708, he was made court organist and chamber musician at Weimar and, in 1714, became concert master. Prince Leopold of Anhalt engaged him as musical director at Köthen in 1717. Three years later, his wife died, and in 1721, he married Anna Magdalena Wilcke, who eventually bore him 13 children.
   C. In 1723, he became music director at the Church of St. Thomas, Leipzig, and its choir school; he remained in Leipzig until his death.
   D. Bach had had only two types of employers: the princes and the Church. His art was used to represent the power and glory of God or the prince. He did not sell his music but served his part in a grander purpose.

IV. Emanuel was the second son of J. S. Bach, who was his only teacher.
   A. For a time, Emanuel studied at the University of Leipzig and thought of becoming a lawyer but, at 24, took the post of harpsichordist at the court of Frederick the Great. His chief duty there from 1738 to 1767 was to accompany the monarch’s performances on the flute. The king hated Emanuel’s music and refused to play it himself or hear it played.
   B. In 1768, Emanuel succeeded his godfather, Georg Philipp Telemann, another great Baroque composer, as musical director at Hamburg.
C. Note that C. P. E. Bach, like his father, also had only types of two employers: the king—Frederick the Great—and, instead of the Church, the city of Hamburg.

D. A change in the social situation opened new possibilities. Even while he was playing the harpsichord for Frederick the Great, Emanuel Bach had begun to market his wares. The number of amateur musicians suddenly increased, spawning a demand for “how-to” books. For the first time, there was a middle class, wealthy enough and with enough leisure to make music at home.

E. By 1770, Emanuel Bach had a mail-order business for his compositions, and his catalogue was an important financial asset. It listed works by date, groups of instruments, and places of composition. It also served as the basis for his posthumous Nachlass-Verzeichnis, or “estate catalogue,” which he bequeathed as a kind of capital stock to his wife.

F. Bach was a canny businessman and only printed works he thought he could sell. His conception of his art was thoroughly modern. He used his works as articles for sale and as transferable asset to his heirs.

V. A comparison of certain features of the music of father and son highlights the transformation that took place in art at this time.

A. C. P. E. Bach’s favorite instrument was a clavichord; his father played similar keyboard instruments. Both also used the same forms. For example, both of the following pieces are themes and variations for keyboard: Theme and variation No. 1 of the Goldberg Variations, composed in 1741 by J. S. Bach, and the first of 12 variations on La folia d’Espagne, composed in 1778 by C. P. E. Bach.

B. J. S. Bach was a deeply pious Lutheran and, for him, music was a way to God’s truth. Music and mathematics were the thoughts of God, and composing was a form of worship. For his son, Emanuel, the musician must be able to place himself in the same emotional state as he wishes to arouse in his hearers. Music is about expressing emotions.

1. The generation of C. P. E. Bach developed a theory of emotions called Die Affektenlehre (“Doctrine of the Emotions”). It came from classical ideas of rhetoric and oratory and was based on the theory that certain devices used in speech would influence audiences. In the same way, certain musical figures could move audiences. Baroque treatises discussed this idea.

2. Music was composed in terms of ruling affections. Each composition must express only one “affection.” The doctrine expressed the demand for a new emotional content in music.

3. J. S. Bach was attacked by the critic Johann Mattheson (1681–1764) for “wishing to be moved rather than to move; that is to say, they aim more at the touch of the fingers than to touch the heart.”

C. In the father and son, we also see the father’s music of form and the son’s music of feeling.

1. J. S. Bach’s music was too complicated for the new age; it had “too many notes.” Critics and public demanded “feeling,” music to “touch the heart.”

2. The son Bach was a composer of feeling. One extraordinary example is C. P. E. Bach’s Trio (Sanguinous and Melancholicus) of 1749. Violin and flute “play” the cheerful and melancholy personalities in a tiny musical drama.

VI. The theoretical explanation for these differences can be found in Jürgen Habermas’s Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere.

A. As noted earlier, Jürgen Habermas set forth the theoretical explanation of the emergence of the “private” and “public” and the new art. Habermas ignored music; yet C. P. E. Bach is the perfect test case. Habermas’s theory explains the transformation of art and culture in the 18th century.

B. Habermas’s book first appeared in 1961 as Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit; an English edition was not brought out until 1989 as Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society.

C. The emergence of a public sphere, as we have seen, began in England in the late 17th century and reached France and Germany in the mid-18th century.

1. The spread of the money economy and goods for sale (see Lecture Three) created a new market situation of specialized sale and distribution of commodities, such as coffee and others. The public purchased art, knowledge, goods, or services with the same cash.

2. There was a new public “space” made up of newspapers, coffeehouses, and publishers (see Lecture Six), along with commercial taverns, theaters, museums, and pleasure gardens.
3. Public opinion emerged through the new press for the first time.
4. The new market for art and culture developed quickly, spawning a need for critics to write reviews and tell consumers what to buy.
5. Artists now “created” for the public and were no longer forced to be servants of their lords or the Church. The poet and playwright Friedrich Schiller wrote: “I write as a citizen of the world who serves no prince… The public is now everything to me…”
6. Artists may have been free of the lord, but they became slaves of the market. They were also free to starve if their works did not sell.
7. The artist expresses his or her soul. Because the public buys art to enjoy in private, the private emotions of the artist are important. The private self is the opposite of the public sphere; the private self expresses emotions, as Mattheson argued in 1749.
8. The new doctrine of the emotions is the art of the new public, because the private sphere is the other half of the public sphere.

VII. As I hope our comparison has shown, C. P. E. Bach is a transitional figure, simultaneously a servant of the king and a musical entrepreneur; a devoted disciple of his father, yet a composer of the emotions capable of touching the feelings of the new public.

Essential Reading:
Jürgen Habermas, Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society.

Questions to Consider:
1. What happens when art becomes something to be bought and sold?
2. Do you agree that the music of J. S. Bach and that of his son C. P. E. Bach express different musical philosophies?
Lecture Ten
Catherine the Great—Russian Reformer

Scope: Catherine the Great (1729–1796), empress of Russia, belongs in that long line of Russian reformers, from Peter the Great to Valdimir Putin today, who would like to Westernize Russia. To make Russia like the West, however, means an erosion of its historic identity. Opponents of change fear that it will cease to be Russian. This dilemma, expressed in the battle between Slavophiles and Westernizers, has bedeviled every attempt to force Russia to change its nature. Catherine’s astonishing successes and her equally clamorous failures suggest that elements in Russian society and history simply will not give up their “Russian-ness” without a fight, even though Russian-ness has often been synonymous with backwardness. The dilemma of all Russian reform has been the possibility that backwardness may make up an essential element in the Russian national character. Yet without reform, Russia cannot survive as a great European and, now, world power. Must Russia, in gaining the world, lose its soul?

Outline

I. Several key factors help explain why Russian history has been different from that of Western Europe.
   A. First, medieval Russia was an Asian principality.
      1. A basic date in Russian history is 988, the baptism of Vladimir and the conversion of Russia to Christianity (but pagan beliefs continued among ordinary folk and still do).
      2. In 1147, Moscow was founded by Yuri Dolgoruki and, in 1156, the first Kremlin was built in Moscow.
      3. In 1227, Genghis Khan died, and in the years 1237–1242, his sons spread out in all directions and set up four khanates. They were the Great Khanate, which comprised all of China and most of East Asia; the Jagatai khanate in Turkistan; the Kipchack khanate, or the Empire of the Golden Horde, founded by Batu Khan in Russia; and a khanate in Persia.
      4. The grand duke of Moscow became just a local prince who paid tribute to “the Golden Horde.” The Mongols set up a loosely governed state comprising most of Russia. The name Golden Horde was derived from the Russian Zolotaya Orda, used to designate the Mongol host that had set up a magnificent tent camp along the Volga River.
      5. In the years between 1430 and 1466, the Golden Horde disintegrated. The parallel with tribal warlords in Afghanistan today gives us an idea of how easily that can happen.
      6. Russia was part of Asia while Europe went through the High Middle Ages and the Renaissance.
   B. Second, the Russian Orthodox Church is part of the identity of Russia.
      1. In July 1054, both the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches excommunicated each other and split Christianity into two hostile camps. The ancient and invisible line between Latin and Greek Christianity persists to this day. The line marks the eastern boundaries of Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary.
      2. In 1448, the Church of Russia was declared autocephalous, that is, the Russian Orthodox patriarch no longer recognized Constantinople.
      3. The Holy Church in Russia began to see itself as the custodian of true Christianity and think of itself as the “Third Rome.”
      4. To be Russian was (and is, for some) to be an Orthodox Christian.
   C. A third key factor in the explanation of Russia’s development is that the grand duke of Muscovy was the heir of the Byzantine emperor.
      1. In 1453, the Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople and put an end to the Byzantine Empire, the last direct successor of the Roman Empire.
      2. In 1472, Ivan III, known as “the Great” (1462–1505), married Zoe (Sophia), a niece of the last Byzantine emperor, and claimed the imperial title.
      3. That is how the Russian royal title of tsar or czar came about. It comes from the Latin Cæsar, “emperor.” Ivan the Great was the first to call himself tsar, or caesar.
   D. Further, the nobility in Russia were seen as servants of the tsar.
1. The *boyars*, the upper nobility, occupied the highest state offices and, through a council, advised the prince. They were great landlords. Ivan IV, “the Terrible,” broke their power and influence.

2. This is the first time in this course that we encounter the Eastern European pattern of nobility, which was the rule in Poland, Hungary, and Russia. There were a few great magnates and many, mostly untitled, usually poor nobles of the lower aristocracy.

3. The word for all the Russian nobility was *dvorianstvo* from *dvor* (“house” or “court”), that is, the tsar’s court. As one Russian reformer in the early 19th century said, “In Russia, there are only two classes: the servants of the Tsar and the servants of the servants of the Tsar.”

4. Nobility could be acquired by taking a post in the civil service or in the military services. The large class of rural gentry was rather impoverished.

E. The absence of the Roman law also played a role in Russia’s history.

1. In Lecture One, I suggested that Western Europe was an amalgam of Roman, Judaeo-Christian, and feudal features. Medieval and early-modern Russia lacked the first and third element.

2. The Roman empire was a unique city-state that became a world empire. Its procedures were based on *citizens*, that is, inhabitants of a city or town and, in its other meaning, someone who possessed civic rights or privileges, a burgess or freeman of a city (see Lecture Two).

3. Because the Russian Empire had few towns and no tradition of Roman civil codes, it had unspecific categories for important Western terms, such as *property*, *individual*, or *contract*, all of which have origins in the inheritance of Roman law.

F. Russia had no bourgeoisie, as most Western European countries did.

1. The word *bourgeois* (German: *burger*) was originally the name for the inhabitants of walled towns in medieval France and Germany. The growth of towns was an essential feature of the European West. The towns and the bourgeoisie had certain rights.

2. Towns emerged late in Russian history. In 1564, the first book was printed in Moscow. By that time, the book trade had been flourishing in Western Europe for more than 100 years.

G. Serfdom flourished in Russia.

1. Serfdom is a system in which the agricultural worker is a kind of slave. It is the exact opposite of the citizen. During Catherine’s reign, serfdom was at its height; 34 out of 36 million peasant families were either landlord serfs or state peasants. Peasants were prohibited from moving from their estates without the permission of their landlord and owed him service.

2. The *mir*, or “commune,” was another uniquely Russian feature. The lord’s land, or *demesne*, was divided by the peasant commune (*obshchina* or *mir*) into three large fields, worked on a rotation crop system. Each field was divided into strips, and each family was given so many strips in each field according to the number of male workers in the family or the number of mouths to feed. The system was a form of peasant communism.

H. Russia has a strong tradition of Slavophiles (versus Westernizers).

1. Though the terms were invented in the 19th century, they are useful in our discussion. The Slavophiles preached the unique Russian way, prizing the communal principle over the principle of personality (another of those fundamental Latin words).

2. The great Russian writer Alexander Herzen once said, “Thank God that Russia has been spared the three great scourges of the West: Roman Catholicism, the bourgeoisie and the Roman law.”

I. In sum, Russia was both immensely backward, yet extremely complex. It had a harsh climate, a short growing season, bad roads, and few warm-water ports. The low productivity of Russian agriculture, combined with ignorance, illiteracy, drunkenness, superstition, and the traditions of the “Holy Fool” all contributed to the poverty and backwardness of society. Yet the Russian Empire was a European great power and full of potential.

II. Modernization came to Russia through the influence of Westernizing tsars.

A. Peter the Great (1672–1725), tsar of Russia from 1682 to 1725, was a major figure in the development of imperial Russia. He built St. Petersburg as a “window on the West” and Westernized manners. He banned beards and Muscovite dress. He reformed the calendar and simplified the alphabet. He transferred the capital from “backward” Moscow to “modern” St. Petersburg.

B. Catherine the Great (1729–1796) reigned from 1762 to 1796.
1. She was a German princess, born April 21, 1729, in Stettin. Her father was Prince Christian August of Anhalt-Zerbst, and she was christened Sophia Augusta Frederica. Her family was a typical small royal family, subdivided into rulers of mini-states.

2. Little Sophie was a phenomenon, irrepressible, smart, and obstinate. German princesses were the breeding farms of European royalty because there were so many states and so many royal families. When the childless Empress Elizabeth of Russia sought a bride for her nephew, heir to the throne, the Grand Duke Peter, she found Sophie.

3. On February 9, 1744, Sophie, aged 15, came to Russia at the invitation of the empress and, on August 21, 1745, was married in St. Petersburg. She had to give up her German Lutheran faith and was christened into the Russian Orthodox Church as Ekaterina Alexeevna; hence, she became Catherine.

Catherine observed that her young husband lacked direction, and his sexual inadequacies were soon apparent, as well. Catherine looked elsewhere; found a handsome Guard officer, Sergei Saltykov; and had a baby. Everybody knew that the future Tsar Paul I was almost certainly not Peter’s son, but he was a male heir.

1. Grand Duke Peter was obsessed by Frederick the Great and war. He played with human toy soldiers, his Holsteiners, and joined them in drinking and stupidity. He refused all things Russian and flaunted his “German” tastes. In 1762, Empress Elizabeth died, leaving Peter, her inadequate and disturbed nephew, tsar.

2. Because he refused to learn Russian and had seized Orthodox Church lands, he was unpopular from the start. Just as Russia and Austria were about to crush Frederick the Great, he ended the war with Prussia. Instead, he declared war on Denmark to regain his Holstein lands.

3. The army hated him. On June 28, 1762, there was a coup d’etat: Gregory Orlov, Satykov’s successor as Catherine’s lover, and his four brothers mobilized the Guard regiments. They seized Tsar Peter; bundled the befuddled fool off to prison, where he died “in a drunken scuffle” (that is, murdered); and made Catherine tsarina.

III. Despite an uncertain hold on power and the difficulties presented by her gender, Catherine attempted to introduce reforms and a Westernizing influence in Russia.

A. Catherine’s hold on power was always uncertain. There was no real Romanov succession, because the future tsar, Paul, was not the son of Tsar Peter III.

1. False Peters arose frequently in the peasantry and threatened Catherine’s hold on power.

2. Catherine was foreign and known contemptuously as the “German” in spite of her devotion to Russia.

B. Catherine was the opposite of Maria Theresa, who in 1737, formed a chastity league to reduce promiscuity among the aristocracy. Catherine was openly libertine and made no secret of her powerful sexual drive.

1. Her list of known official lovers, or “favorites” (later, “pupils”), is long and distinguished, including Potemkin, and others.

2. A European pornographic literature sprang up to describe her unbridled lust. The reality was much more complicated. Orlov (lover from 1762–1772) and Grigori Aleksandrovich Potemkin (lover from 1774 on) played important roles in the unstable and primitive state. They provided essential links to power, to the army, and to the nobility.

3. Potemkin (1739–1791) and Catherine had what today would be called an “open relationship” after 1776, but they never quite separated. She took other lovers and he did, too, but they remained, in an odd way, like a married couple; his counsel and assistance in making policy were essential.

4. The problem of female rule in Russia raised peculiar difficulties. Because there was a total absence of rights for wives and women in general, Russian nobles and members of the royal family thought nothing of dismissing unwanted wives to convents.

C. Catherine was strongly influenced by the French Enlightenment and read widely in the latest French philosophy. She corresponded famously and openly with Voltaire and Diderot.

1. She was determined to open Russia to Western influences and, early in her reign, decided to open Russian society to foreigners.

2. She attempted to reform and Westernize Russian laws in 1776. The new law code spoke the reasonable language of the Enlightenment, but it had to be applied in the reality of a drunken, illiterate, savage society, full of superstition and religious to its core.
3. Catherine’s travels were famous. Because communications were difficult and roads, frequently impassable, Catherine’s tours might take months. In such a vast territory, there was no effective way to enforce the laws, no sanctions nor any easy means of showing the monarch to her people.

4. She introduced reforms of government and society in famous decrees. The Charter of Nobility of April 21, 1785, is an interesting example: Catherine established feudal rights four years before the French Revolution abolished feudalism and nobility. Westernizing transformed social relations and the essential Russian character was eroded.

5. Her foreign policy was, on the whole, successful. Through the three partitions of Poland, she gained vast territories and pushed Russia’s frontiers far to the west. Together with Potemkin, she pursued several successful wars against Turkey and pushed the empire’s borders to the Black Sea and into the Caucasus. In 1795, the new city of Odessa on the Black Sea was founded.

IV. Catherine’s choice of symbol for her reign was the bee, with the motto l’utile. The busy bee expressed her concept of work. She wanted to see order and hated Russian sloppiness. Ultimately, Catherine remained an orderly German at heart and never became a proper Russian.

Essential Reading:

Questions to Consider:
1. Is it justifiable to consider certain societies as “backward”?
2. What do you think about the way Catherine the Great took her male lovers?
Lecture Eleven
Joseph II—The Rational Emperor

Scope: Joseph II (1741–1790), Holy Roman Emperor (1765–1790), king of Bohemia and Hungary (1780–1790), was the son of Maria Theresa and Holy Roman Emperor Francis I, whom he succeeded. Joseph attempted to rule his immense and quarrelsome territories by pure reason. He tried to rationalize the mess of royal possessions that Maria Theresa had ruled by common sense. The battle between mother and son over the lives of millions of subjects is dramatic enough on its own, but it reveals a process that rarely shows up so clearly: the law of unintended consequences in history. Joseph thought everybody should speak German, because it was the language of the court and the government. He forced it on Czechs, Croats, Poles, and Magyars, most of whom were peasants and could not read. Joseph, by creating schools to achieve a rational goal, unleashed the irrational force of nationalism.

Outline

I. As we saw in Lecture Seven, part of the Austrian inheritance was the question of its statehood. Maria Theresa’s problem was how to be queen when each of her territories had its own constitutional arrangements.
   A. The crowns and lands were “real,” with their own identities and histories. Consider, for example, the case of Hungary and its “Englishness.”
      1. Liberalism grew up in Hungary on similar foundations as in England. The “Golden Bull” of Andrew II (1222) and the Magna Carta (1215) are similar, reflecting the demand for self-government by the Hungarian gentry and English barons.
      2. The official language of the kingdom of Hungary was Latin, a universal, non-national tongue, which all the various nationalities could use without offense.
      3. The Magyars, like the Angles and Saxons, invaded their territories in the early Middle Ages. The Magyars were conquerors, and in 895, under Arpad the Great, they occupied the great Danubian plain. Their alien identity reflected the fact that the Magyars were a Mongol people who moved west from the Russian steppes.
      4. In the Habsburg lands, the basic identities were historical, not rational.
   B. The Holy Roman Empire was the greatest dilemma for the Habsburgs.
      1. As we saw in Lecture Seven, another essential Habsburg dilemma arose from the fact that their highest title and greatest prestige was to be elected emperor.
      2. Yet the empire was an anachronism, an unwieldy medieval mess and, in no way, a state.
   C. Emperor Francis I, consort of Maria Theresa, died unexpectedly on August 18, 1765, and Maria Theresa’s son Joseph II was elected emperor. She, of course, could not hold the title because no female succession was permitted.

II. The consequence of this election was conflict between mother and son.
   A. Joseph was the emperor, but his mother was the queen and was in charge. Inevitably, the 25-year-old Joseph would find the situation intolerable. He was exasperated by the lack of rational, enlightened thought and intellectual pursuits at court.
   B. Maria Theresa lived easily with the historical principle, whereas Joseph II insisted on governing according to the rational principle.
      1. Joseph II was born in 1741, Maria Theresa’s first child. Even as a boy, he showed that he was impatient by nature, wanting to “do good” according to the rules of reason, instead of following the traditional “rules, statutes and oaths.”
      2. The generation of Joseph II was also the generation of the Founding Fathers of the American Republic. Joseph II shared similar views with John Hancock and Thomas Jefferson on the objects of government and the innate reasonableness of mankind.
      3. The difference between Joseph II and Jefferson was not in the aim but the method. Who decides what are rational ends? For Joseph, it was the wise philosopher-king; for Jefferson, it was the people.
a. Government for the generation of Jefferson was a rational activity. Joseph’s way to achieve the rule of reason was through the benign rule of an enlightened despot (that is, himself). The “enlightened people” was Jefferson’s alternative.

b. What happens to our society if neither is right? In the era of “dumbing down,” can we sustain our faith in our institutions and fellow citizens? Are “the people” really rational?

c. There is a strong argument against reason as the basis of politics. In politics, belief in reason is the faith that we can improve things by thought. Burke argued for the importance of history: the belief that only that which evolves over time will work. He believed that political affairs are too complicated to plan. This is a major theme of this course, as we shall see in Lecture Fifteen.

III. How was the rule of reason applied in the Habsburg lands and the Holy Roman Empire?

A. Historically, the Holy Roman Empire was a confusing mess, with myriad forms of governments and lands. The various estates and realms saw the need to protect their institutions against ambitious emperors, such as Joseph.

1. For Joseph, the empire was maddeningly nonrational and a source of frustration.
2. Yet the empire was also the source of his power. His election was an example of the odd rules by which electors chose the emperor. To attack these rules as irrational was contradictory. Joseph II was the man sawing off the branch on which he sat.

B. Joseph II instituted a program of reforms, the object of which was the construction of the “enlightened state.”

1. He instructed his civil servants: “…national or religious differences must not make the slightest difference…and all must feel themselves to be brothers in a single monarchy, all striving to be useful to each other” (Blanning, 1994, p. 59).
2. This was a completely utopian program. How were Hungarians and Croats, Croats and Serbs, Germans and Czechs to be “brothers in a single monarchy”? Was there to be no difference between Catholics and Protestants?
3. Joseph’s complex and obsessive personality played a role in his attempt to institute reforms. He had huge energies and could give great dedication to a task, but he was terribly impatient. He believed in a set of axiomatic principles to be carried out over any opposition: All human beings were equal (except the emperor); reason was to be the only guide to action and the good of the state, the only end.
4. The combination of his impatience, his diligence and capacity for hard work, his intolerance, and his belief in certain axioms led to what his bureaucrats called vielregieren (“lots of governing”). He issued no less than 6,000 decrees between 1780 and 1790. Nobody could read them all, let alone carry them out.

C. Joseph’s reforms fell into various categories.

1. Among his humane reforms was the abolition of torture and witchcraft trials. He imposed toleration of Protestants and Jews. He founded homes for the deaf and dumb, liberated peasants from servitude in parts of the empire, and tried to tax the peasants’ lords. He founded hospitals and introduced street lighting.
2. Joseph also carried out religious reforms, including abolishing “useless” monastic orders and reorganizing the dioceses of bishops to correspond to the territorial borders of the empire. He reduced the pope’s authority and clashed with ecclesiastical princes in the empire. He was determined to cleanse the church of “abuses.”
3. In 1784, he decreed that German was to be the official language of the empire. It was to be introduced at once, and public employees were to be competent in it within a fixed time.

a. Obviously, some nations objected to the standardization decree, but Joseph dismissed their complaints.

b. Joseph’s policies had a paradoxical outcome: The spread of schools to teach German to populations of mostly illiterate peasants required training schoolmasters. These young Poles, Magyars, Czechs, and Croats attended training colleges to learn German but used their native dialects when they taught. They were, in effect, teaching Czech, Polish, Croat, and Magyar as they taught German. Thus, rational standardization produced its opposite: nationalism. A rigorous application of reason yielded anti-reason in the cult of the nation.
4. Joseph also attempted to suppress the ancient noble privileges and to humble and impoverish the grandees. The contrast with Frederick the Great of Prussia (see Lecture Four) was sharp. Frederick believed that a sovereign should regard it as his duty to protect the nobility.

D. The result of the reform program was that the whole monarchy increasingly rose in revolt against Joseph’s tyranny, culminating in a revolution in the Austrian Netherlands in 1789.

E. Joseph grew tired and increasingly disappointed, even disillusioned. He fell ill and, on February 20, 1790, died. His brother Leopold, the new emperor, repealed most of the reforms.

IV. The contemporary assessment of Joseph and that of many historians claimed that Joseph was convinced of his failure “in all his endeavors.”

A. Joseph had, however, gained deep affection among the poor, the peasants, the Jews, and the Protestants. He made real improvements in the laws, city government, and bureaucracy, but he had earned the hatred of the grand nobles and the privileged.

B. Joseph faced the dilemmas of enlightened despotism.
   1. His authority rested on non-rational structures. He was a king by birth, not by a competitive or reasonable system of selection.
   2. The nobility had a case against him, as perfectly stated by General Yorck von Wartenburg: “If your Royal Highness removes my rights and those of my children, who will defend yours?”
   3. Thus, the attempt to reduce and eliminate noble “privilege” ended in a paradox: The emperor was the most privileged of the privileged. His attempt to crush the rights of Belgian nobles was an attack on the Old Regime as a whole.
   4. Joseph was also caught in another paradox: the dilemma of all reform from above. How do you write a decree to make people citizens and brothers?
   5. The final paradox was that Joseph II did everything for the greater good of the state. The glorification of “the state” was his _palladium_, or “safeguard.” But what was the state? It was either an abstraction or another name for the emperor’s unlimited power.

C. Joseph’s ultimate dilemma was that of all reformers who want to practice despotic reason by forcing human beings to be free. He ordered his subjects to behave reasonably and become uniform and identical citizens. He denied their collective identities and recognized no groups; there was the state and the individual.

D. Joseph II was the extreme example of the attempt to make us better by reason; his reign marks another step on the way to the rational, modern state.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
Andrew Wheatcroft, _The Habsburgs: Embodying Empire_.

Questions to Consider:
1. To what extent is enlightened despotism a contradiction in itself?
2. Which side do you chose in the dispute between reason and history and why?
Lecture Twelve
Goethe—The Artist as Work of Art

Scope: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) is to German literature what Shakespeare is to English. Goethe could do everything well. He painted, sketched, designed, and wrote poetry and plays. He had a large private income and could afford to travel, never having to slave as a tutor to some minor German prince. Goethe knew everybody worth knowing, and they found him fascinating. Two of his greatest novels are autobiographical, and he wrote an explicit autobiography. Here, we consider that astonishing moment when Goethe had his “revelation,” as a student in 1770, that marked the beginning of Romanticism. We ask what causes a generation to change its values and habits so suddenly? The 1960s in the United States serves as a comparison in trying to understand the mysterious changes that mark great cultural breaks.

Outline

I. Our journey from the Old Regime to modernity takes an important step in this lecture. In Lecture Five on Rousseau, we saw the emergence of a new bourgeois self, but in Goethe, this change takes place in a “normal” person and a German. Here, we can study the sudden rise of Germany to cultural importance.
   A. The peculiar career of Goethe shows that he was, in many ways, the subject of his own art. The odd thing is how interesting he is. His prose has a unique, ironic charm.
   B. Goethe was a European “star” at the age of 25; the publication of The Sorrows of Young Werther (1774), the first German novel, was the start of a new movement: Sturm und Drang (“Storm and Stress”).
      1. Storm and Stress was a movement of German writers in the 1770s and 1780s who rebelled against the existing artistic model, proclaimed their dedication to art, and preached a return to nature.
      2. Our problem is to explain the emergence of this new, more modern self. What accounts for the rise of the cult of youth, the worship of the “genius”? There seems to have been a sudden break in the conception of a person. For what reasons, and why then and there?

II. We will use the young Goethe as a test case to address these questions.
   A. Goethe’s achievements were gigantic. He wrote several of the world’s greatest literary masterpieces (including novels, poems, plays, and nonfiction), painted, drew, acted as a minister for Duke Carl August of Saxe-Weimar, founded the National Theater, and experimented in science and studied the physics of color.
   B. In this lecture, we will examine the really interesting issue of Goethe’s personality and the new type of person that Goethe represents: the student as hero, the young as the ideal type.
      1. The idea of the young as an ideal is now taken for granted, but in Goethe’s age, it was a kind of revolution. Hitherto, the young were suppressed and bound to the established hierarchy.
      2. With Goethe and Storm and Stress, the young were important cultural trendsetters. Sturm und Drang might be compared to the impact of the Beatles and their generation in the 1960s.
   C. Sturm und Drang also marked the birth of the Romantic movement in the early 1770s. Goethe was not the sole agent of this movement, but for Germany, he was an emblem of it. In the end, he came to dislike Romanticism, an irony of history.

III. The birth of Storm and Stress took place in the context of an explosion of German culture after 1750.
   A. Sudden bursts of cultural development in history present a puzzle. Such a flourishing took place in parts of Greece in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. Similarly, during the Italian Renaissance, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and other artists were clustered in Florence. In the age of George Washington, the colony of Virginia had dozens of statesmen-philosophers. Why in certain locations, but not others?
   B. The sudden emergence of a German culture after 1750 was unexpected. The terrible destruction of the Thirty Years’ War (1618–1648) had left Germany in poverty and provincialism. Music was the only really great art in Germany before 1750, but many of the nation’s great composers had to go to Italy to learn technique.
      1. The prevalence of French culture and the prestige of the Palace of Versailles, Louis XIV, and later, the philosophes in Paris (Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot) swamped the poor, provincial German states with
the French language, manners, styles of art and literature, and architecture. Indeed, Frederick the Great, the greatest German king, spoke only French in society.

2. In 1755, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781), the first serious German playwright, put on a bourgeois tragedy, Miss Sara Simpson. It was a revolutionary break, because the English middle classes had become the model, not the French aristocracy.

C. Things began to change in Germany after 1750, beginning with a transformation of the reading public between 1750 and 1800. The number of new journals founded in this period was nearly four times higher than in the previous 50 years. By 1800, Leipzig had 18 printing presses, each employing 17 to 20 workers. Literature replaced theology as the main type of book published.

D. Cultural institutions for the public began to emerge. The court theater had been the prince’s private activity, and no tickets were sold. Frederick the Great’s symphony orchestra existed for his use, not to give concerts. In 1767–1769, when Lessing tried to experiment with a public theater in Hamburg, it failed. By comparison, London and Paris had dozens of commercial theaters.

E. By the 1770s, German culture could boast Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and others in philosophy, along with Goethe and Schiller (1759–1805) in literature.

IV. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, on August 28, 1749.

A. His father was a wealthy lawyer and city magistrate. Wolfgang and his sister were taught at home by their father and private tutors. Wolfgang wrote his first plays for a small puppet theater.

B. When Goethe was 16, he entered the University of Leipzig as a law student. He completed his studies at the University of Strasbourg and was awarded a doctor of laws degree in 1771.

C. Goethe returned to Frankfurt to practice law but turned to writing almost at once. In 1773, his drama Goetz von Berlichingen was published; the following year, he wrote The Sorrows of Young Werther. Werther was a sensation and made the young Goethe famous.

D. There are several things to notice in this story. The Goethe family was rich on both sides and belonged to the urban elite in Frankfurt, though, of course, without a claim to noble status. The young Goethe had no formal schooling and was allowed to do what he wanted. His puppet theater and youthful plays eventually became the subject of an autobiographical novel: Wilhelm Meister: The Years of Apprenticeship.

E. Because Goethe was independently wealthy, he never had to serve as a house tutor to some noble’s child, nor was he forced to become a pastor or civil servant; all the other German artists were unable to make a living from their art and had to bow and scrape to their lords.

V. Goethe’s celebrity at age 25 was a sign of two changes: First, that there was a literate public in Germany that could and would buy books and, second, that there was a new sensibility or a new kind of person.

A. The Sorrows of Young Werther was the bible of the new type of man. The book begins with a tone of overblown emotions and borrows the epistolary form from Samuel Richardson’s Clarissa (1748).

B. The plot is simple: Werther, a student, goes off to study at a university (not unlike the experience of the author) and meets Charlotte. He is ecstatic.

C. But Werther has to learn that genius and sensibility cannot make up for rank in society. Werther may be the man of passion, but he is only middle class, as he learns to his cost.

D. In one of the most humiliating passages in literature, Werther learns that genius is not enough to overcome the limits of social inferiority. Goethe was rich, handsome, and gifted but still a middle-class man. The Old Regime was still in place; the new Romantic hero was subordinate to the old nobility.

E. Werther’s tragic end comes when Charlotte marries another man, and Werther borrows his dueling pistols to commit suicide. At the end, the Romantic hero is born. The book was a sensation, and Goethe became internationally famous.

VI. When a new type of person appears, we have to ask why. It is clear that such changes occur in history, but they are hard to explain.

A. For Goethe, the change came as a revelation he had in looking at a cathedral of Gothic architecture. The moment is described in Autobiography: Truth and Fiction Relating to My Life.
B. This “revelation” was the key moment of a new sense of the individual and national identity—Goethe was a “German” writer, who had a “German” self and was a Romantic. He then describes the subsequent rejection of the French style and manners in favor of more natural manners and emotions.

VII. The 1960s and 1770s were both periods when new generations emerged. The rejection of prevailing mores was common to both, and the changes in culture took on wider meanings in politics and society.

Essential Reading:
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.

Supplementary Reading:
T.C.W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture*.

Questions to Consider:
1. How do you react to the Romantic text of *Werther*? If you find it ridiculous or overdone, ask yourself why it was such a huge success in the 1770s.
2. Do you think there is such a thing as “genius”?
Timeline

1713..................Peace of Utrecht (June 13); end of the War of the Spanish Succession.

1714..................George, the German elector of Hanover, becomes King George I of Britain (Aug. 1); Henry Mill receives patent in England for a typewriter.

1715 ..................Five-year-old Louis XV of France succeeds his great grandfather, with the duke of Orleans as regent (Sept. 1). Jacobite nobles (trying to put James Stuart back on the British throne) defeated at Preston and Sheriffmuir (Nov. 13).

1716..................The first group of black slaves is brought to the Louisiana territory. John Law founds joint-stock bank in Paris.

1717..................Prince Eugene captures Belgrade (Aug. 18).


1719 ..................Reaumur proposes using wood to make paper. Defoe publishes Robinson Crusoe.

1720 ..................Peter the Great of Russia signs treaty with the Chinese permitting trade. South Sea Bubble bursts, and France is bankrupt (Dec.).


1722 ..................J. S. Bach, Wohltemperiertes Klavier (“Well-Tempered Clavier”).

1723 ..................Russia gains control of southern shore of Caspian Sea (u.1732).

1724 ..................Russia and Sweden sign treaty of mutual assistance (Feb. 24).

1725 ..................Peter the Great dies (Feb. 8). G. B. Vico, Scienza nuova intorna alla Natura. Academy of Science founded at St. Petersburg.


1727 ..................Isaac Newton dies (March 31). George I of Britain dies (June 12); succeeded by George II (–1760).


1729 ..................J. S. Bach, St. Matthew Passion. Hall constructs achromatic lens.

1730 ..................Peter II of Russia dies of smallpox (Feb. 11). Anne succeeds (–1747). Senate House completed in Cambridge by J. S. Gibb.


1732 ..................Boerhaave, Elements of Chemistry, founds organic chemistry.


1735 ..................Peace of Vienna (Oct. 3); Stanislas obtains Lorraine; duke of Lorraine to obtain Tuscany on grand duke’s death; Austria obtains Parma and Piacenza; Don Carlos, Naples and Sicily.

1736 ..................Maria Theresa marries Francis Stephen of Lorraine (Feb. 12). Russo-Turkish War (May). Euler establishes analytical mechanics.

1737 ..................Death of last Medici grand duke (July 9); Francis Stephen inherits duchy.


1740 ....................Frederick William I of Prussia dies (May 31); succeeded by Frederick II (–1786). Charles VI, last Habsburg emperor dies (Oct. 20); succeeded by Maria Theresa, queen of Bohemia and Hungary (–1780). Frederick II invades Silesia (Dec. 16). Richardson, Pamela.

1741 ....................Frederick II defeats Austrians at Möllwitz and conquers Silesia (April 10). Treaty between France and Prussia against Austria (June 5). French invade South Germany, Austria, and Bohemia (Aug. 15). Handel, Messiah. First German translation of a Shakespeare play (Julius Caesar by von Borcke).


1746 ....................Charles Stuart and Jacobites finally defeated at Culloden (April 16). Scottish clan organization abolished by “Butcher” Cumberland. Austro-Russian alliance against Prussia (June 2).


1749–1753..Drainage of the Oder moorlands.

1754 ....................Anglo-French war breaks out in North America.


1757 ....................Empire declares war on Prussia (Jan. 10). Russia, Poland, and Sweden join war against Prussia. Second treaty between France and Austria; Prussia to be divided (May 1). Frederick II victory at Prague (May 10). Austrians defeat Frederick at Kolin (June 18). Russians defeat Prussians at Gross Jägersdorf and occupy East Prussia; Swedes invade Pomerania (Aug. 30). Frederick defeats French and imperial troops at Rossbach (Nov. 5). Frederick defeats Austrians at Leuthen (Dec. 5).


1759 ....................Russians and Austrians defeat Frederick at Kunnernsdorf (Aug. 12). Prussian army capitulates at Maxen (Nov. 12).

1760 ....................Prussian defeat at Landshut (June 23). Frederick defeats Austrians at Liegnitz (Aug. 15). George II dies (Oct. 25); succeeded by George III (–1820).
1761.................. Austrians take Schweidnitz and blockade Frederick at Bunzelwitz (Oct. 1). Russians take Kolberg (Dec. 16).

1762.................. Elizabeth of Russia dies (Jan. 5); succeeded by Peter III (“the miracle of the House of Brandenburg”). English cease subsidies to Prussia (April). Peace between Russia and Prussia (May 5). Peace between Prussia and Sweden (May 22). Peter III assassinated (July 17); succeeded by Catherine II (−1796). Frederick defeats Austrians at Burkersdorf (July 21). Truce among Prussia, Austria, and Saxony (Nov. 24).

1763.................. Peace of Paris among England, France, Spain, and Portugal (Feb. 10). Peace of Hubertusberg between Austria and Prussia, which definitely cedes Silesia (Feb. 15).

1764.................. Treaty between Russia and Prussia to control Poland (April 11).

1765.................. Emperor Francis I dies (Aug. 18); succeeded by Joseph II (−1790).

1769................. First partition of Poland (Aug. 5): Russia obtains territory east of the Duna and Neiper; Austria, eastern Galicia and Lodomeria; Prussia, west Prussia, except Danzig and Ermland.

1773................. Clement XIV suppresses the Jesuit order (July 21).

1774................. Peace of Kutschuk-Kainardi between Russia and Turkey, which cedes mouth of Dnieper and Crimea (July 21).


1777................. Maximilian III of Bavaria dies; Joseph II claims the succession (Dec. 30).

1778................. Prussia declares war on Austria on behalf of Bavaria (July 3).

1779................. Peace of Teschen (May 13). Austria receives Inn Quarter; Prussia gets reversionary rights to Ansbach and Bayreuth.

1780................. Maria Theresa dies (Nov. 29).

1781................. Prussia joins League of Armed Neutrality (May).

1782................. Peace of Versailles: England recognizes independence of United States of America (Sept. 3).

1784................. Joseph II proposes to exchange Bavaria for Belgium (April 1).

1785................. North German League against Joseph II (July 23).

1786................. Frederick II dies (Aug. 17); succeeded by Frederick William II (−1797).

1787................. Prussia intervenes in Holland in favor of William V against the Patriot Party.

1788-1792......... Russia and Austria at war against Turkey.


1790................. Organization of France into 83 departments (Feb. 26). Sections of Paris established (May 21). Civil Constitution of the Clergy (July 12).

1791................. Guilds and corporations dissolved (March 2). Flight of Louis XVI and the royal family to Varennes (June 20). Declaration of Pillnitz; Austria and Prussia threaten intervention (Aug. 27).
1792....................War declared on Austria (April 20). Storming of Tuileries; overthrow of the monarchy (Aug. 10). Massacres in Paris, murder of more than 1,000 prisoners (Sept. 2–6). Convention meets (Sept. 20). Republic proclaimed (Sept. 22).


1794 ....................Danton and Desmoulins executed (April 5, 16 germinal year I). Law of 22 prairial year II: Great Terror begins (June 10). Fall of Robespierre (July 27, 9 thermidor year II). Jacobin Club closed (Nov. 12).

1795 ....................Treaty of Basle concluded with Prussia (April 5). Directory constituted (Nov. 2).

1796 ....................Bonaparte appointed commander in Italy (March 2). Battle of Lodi (May 10); Bonaparte defeats the Austrians.

1797 ....................Peace of Campo Formio (Oct. 17). Austria cedes Belgium and Lombardy to France.


1799 ....................Bonaparte's coup d'état (Nov. 9). Directory overthrown and Bonaparte becomes first consul.

1800 ....................Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland (July 2).

1801 ....................Concordat restores Roman Catholic Church in France (July 15).

1802 ....................Peace of Amiens between Britain and France (March 27). Bonaparte appointed consul for life (Aug. 2).

1803 ....................Britain declares war on France (May 18).

1804 ....................Diet of Ratisborn abolishes German ecclesiastic principalities and imperial free cities (Feb. 25). End of Holy Roman Empire. Bonaparte crowned Emperor Napoleon I (Dec. 2).


1806 ....................Napoleon defeats Prussians and Saxons at Jena (Oct. 14).

1807 ....................Napoleon defeats Russians at Eylau (Feb. 7–8). Peasants in Prussia emancipated (Oct. 9).

1808 ....................Insurrection against French begins in Spain (May 2).

1809 ....................Napoleon annexes papal state (May 1). Napoleon defeats Austrians at Wagram (July 5–6).

1810 ....................Andreas Hofer leads insurrection in Tyrol (Feb. 10).

1811 ....................State bankruptcy in Austria (Feb. 20).

1812 ....................Spanish Cortes in Cadiz passes liberal constitution (March 18). Napoleon defeats Russians at Borodino (Sept. 7). Napoleon takes Moscow (Sept. 14); holds it until Oct. 18. Convention of Tauroggen (Dec. 30): Prussia switches sides in war and joins Russia against France.


1814 ....................Allies enter Paris (March 30). Napoleon abdicates and becomes Prince of Elba (April 11). Ferdinand VII abolishes liberal constitution in Spain (May 4). First Peace of Paris (May 30); France granted frontiers of 1792; Louis XVIII, king of France. Congress of Vienna opens (Nov. 1).

1815 ....................Napoleon lands in France (March 1). Empire restored. Louis XVIII flees. Congress of Vienna closes (June 8). Wellington and Blücher defeat Napoleon at Waterloo (June 18). Napoleon abdicates and is banished to St. Helena (June 22).
1816....................Carl-August of Saxe-Weimar grants first German constitution (May 5).

1817....................German student festival at Wartburg condemns reactionary politics (Oct. 18). David Ricardo publishes *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*.

1818....................Liberal constitution in Baden (Aug. 29). Mary Wollstonecraft-Shelley publishes *Frankenstein*.

1819....................Princess Alexandrina Victoria (Queen Victoria) born (May 24). Peterloo demonstrators fired on, causing “massacre” (Aug. 16). Metternich imposes Carlsbad decrees on German states, putting an end to constitutions and other freedoms (Sept. 20).


1821....................Bank of England resumes cash payments (May 1). Death of Napoleon (May 5).

1822....................Congress of Verona meets (Oct. 20); Metternich guides powers against the revolutionary movements.

1823....................War between France and Spain to restore Ferdinand VII (April 7). French storm Trocadero and restore Ferdinand VII (Aug. 30).

1824....................Louis XVIII dies (Sept. 16); Charles X succeeds (–1830). Beethoven finishes Ninth Symphony.

1825....................Nicholas I succeeds Alexander I as tsar of Russia (Dec. 1). First steam locomotive between Stockton and Darlington.

1826....................First German gas works at Hannover.

1827....................Manzoni publishes *I Promessi Sposi*.

1828....................Wellington forms Conservative government in Britain (Jan. 25).


1831....................Austria suppresses revolutions in Modena and the papal states (Feb.). Russian army suppresses Polish revolution and takes Warsaw (Sept. 8).

1832....................Goethe dies (March 22). Great Reform Bill passes House of Lords and becomes law (June 4).

1833....................German *Zollverein* (Customs Union) established (March 22). Keble publishes *National Apostasy*, and Oxford movement to reform the Church of England begins (July 14).

1834....................Slavery ends in the British Empire (Aug. 1).

1835....................First German railroad between Fürth and Nuremberg (Dec. 7).

1836....................Louis Napoleon Bonaparte fails to seize Strasbourg, is exiled to the United States (Oct. 29).

1837....................Accession of Queen Victoria to the throne of Great Britain, and Crowns of Britain and Hannover separated (June 20).

1838....................Anti-Corn Law League founded (Sept. 24).

1839....................First prohibition of child labor in Prussia (March 9).

1840....................Penny postage introduced in Britain (Jan. 10). Queen Victoria marries Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (Feb. 10). Frederick William III dies (June 7). Frederick William IV, king of Prussia.

1841....................*Punch* started (July 17). Hoffman von Fallersleben publishes *Deutschland über Alles* (Aug. 16).

1842....................Chartist riots in manufacturing districts (Aug.).
1843....................Disruption of Scottish church; Free Church of Scotland started (May 18). Richard Wagner’s *Flying Dutchman*.

1844....................Bank Charter Act passed (July 19).

1845....................First potato blight signs found in Ireland (Sept. 9). Friedrich Engels publishes *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.

1846....................Pius IX elected Pope (June 16) (–1878). Corn Laws repealed in Great Britain (June 26).

1847....................United Diet summoned in Prussia (Feb. 3). *Sonderbundkrieg* (“Swiss Civil War”) (Oct. 21–Nov. 19).


1851....................Louis Napoleon’s *coup d’etat*. Republic overthrown (Dec. 2).

1852....................Cavour forms government in Piedmont (Feb. 2).

1853....................Turkey declares war on Russia (Oct. 4).

1854....................Britain and France declare war on Russia (March 27). Dogma of the Immaculate Conception made an article of faith (Dec. 8).

1855....................Piedmont-Sardinia signs alliance with France and Britain to send troops to fight Russia in the Crimean War (Jan. 26). Nicholas I of Russia dies (March 2); Alexander II, tsar of Russia (–1881).

1856....................Congress of Paris (Feb. 25–March 30) opens to settle peace in the Crimean War. Louis Pasteur becomes professor at the University of Paris.

1857....................Atlantic cable completed (Aug. 5).

1858....................Italian republican, Felice Orsini, attempts to assassinate Emperor Napoleon III (Jan. 14). James Stephens founds Irish Republican Brotherhood in Dublin (March 17). Napoleon III and Cavour meet at Plombières (July 20); the emperor agrees to join Piedmont in a future war against Austria, provided that Austria is the aggressor.


1860....................In Palermo, an insurrection against the Bourbons is suppressed, but the rising continues in the countryside and small towns (April 4). Garibaldi sets sail from Quarto, near Genoa, with 1,000 volunteers (May 5). Garibaldi lands at Marsala and, at Salemi, assumes the dictatorship in the name of Victor Emanuel II (May 11). Battle of Calatafimi, Garibaldi: “Bixio, qui o si fa l’Italia o si muore! [Bixio, either we make Italy here or we die!]” (May 15). Bourbon troops are defeated at Milazzo and are forced to abandon Sicily (July 20). Garibaldi enters Naples; received as a national
hero (Sept. 7). Garibaldi and Victor Emanuel II meet at Teano and reach an accord about a peaceful transfer of power (Oct. 26).

1861.................Frederick William IV dies (Jan. 2); William, king of Prussia (–1888). The new Italian parliament meets at Turin and ratifies the unification of the country (Feb. 18). Victor Emanuel, king of Italy. Alexander II grants emancipation of serfs in Russia (March 3). Wagner’s Tannhäuser produced in Paris (March 13). Prince Albert, prince consort of Great Britain, dies (Dec. 14).


1863.................Insurrection in Poland (Jan. 22). Frederick VII of Denmark dies (Nov. 15); Christian IX succeeds (–1906). First underground railway (Metropolitan Line) in London.


1865.................Convention of Gastein (Aug. 18): Austria gets Holstein; Prussia gets Schleswig. Tolstoy’s War and Peace published.

1866.................Prussia defeats Austria at Königgrätz-Sadowa (July 3). Peace of Nikolsburg between Austria and Prussia (July 26). Prussia annexes Hanover, Hesse-Cassel, Homburg, Nassau, and Frankfurt (Sept. 7).


1868.................Wagner’s Der Meistersinger produced at Munich (June 28). Gladstone forms Liberal ministry after great election victory (Dec. 9).

1869.................Disestablishment of the Irish Church (March 1). Vatican Council meets (Dec. 8).

1870.................Doctrine of papal infallibility declared by Vatican Council (July 18). France declares war on Prussia (July 19). Prussia defeats France at Sedan; Napoleon III captured (Sept. 3). Siege of Paris begins (Sept. 19). Roman Catholic Center Party founded in Germany (Dec. 30).


1872.................Jesuits expelled from Germany (June 19).

1873.................Austrian stock market crashes (May 9); beginning of “Great Depression.” “May Laws” against Catholic Church passed in Prussia (May 11). French pretender (Henry V, comte de Chambord) refuses to accept tricolor as national flag (Oct. 27); destroys hopes of monarchical restoration.

1874.................Swiss constitution revised with stronger central government (May 29). Union générale des postes (“World Postal Union”) established at Berne (Oct. 9).

1875.................Britain buys Suez Canal (Nov. 25).

1876.................Turks massacre Bulgarian civilians (May 9–16). Serbia and Montenegro declare war on Turkey (July 2). Bayreuth Festspielhaus opens with Ring of the Nibelungen.

1877.................Russia declares war on Turkey (April 24).

1878.................Pius IX dies (Feb. 7); Leo XIII, new pope (–1903). Berlin Congress on peace between Russia and Turkey (June 12–July 13).

1879.................Germany abandons “free trade”; introduces tariffs (July 12). Austro-German “dual alliance” signed (Oct. 7).
1880…………….Gladstone forms second Liberal ministry (April 28).

1881…………….Alexander II assassinated by populists March 13); Alexander III (–1894) succeeds. League of Three Emperors (Germany, Austria, Russia) (June 18). Irish Land Law Act passed (Aug. 22).

1882…………….Phoenix Park murders: Irish nationalists murder Lord Frederick Cavendish and T. H. Burke (May 2).

1883…………….Friedrich Nietzsche, *Zarathustra*.


1886…………….Gladstone defeated on Irish Home Rule (June 7).

1887…………….Reinsurance Treaty between Germany and Russia (June 18). Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria (June 21).

1888…………….Emperor William dies (March 9); Emperor Frederick III dies (June 15); William II becomes emperor of Germany (–1918). Pasteur Institute established in Paris.


1890…………….Bismarck dismissed as Reich Chancellor (March 20).

1891…………….Rerum Novarum: Leo XIII’s encyclical on the rights of labor (May 15). Erfurt Congress of German Social Democrats adopts Marxist program (Oct. 21).


1893…………….First meeting of Independent Labor Party (Jan. 13).

1894…………….Captain Alfred Dreyfus arrested and charged with spying (Oct. 15). Alexander III dies (Nov. 1); Nicholas II, tsar of Russia (–1917).

1895…………….Russia, France, Germany intervene against Japan in Sino-Japanese War (April 22).

1896…………….Emperor William II sends encouraging telegram to President Krueger of the Boer Republic (Jan. 3); English public outraged. Anatolian railway begins operations (July 28).

1897…………….Czech language granted equal rights with German in Bohemia (April 5). Admiral Alfred Tirpitz appointed German navy minister (June 15). Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee (June 22).

1898…………….Émile Zola publishes “J’accuse” article against French army cover-up in the Dreyfus trial (Jan. 13). First German navy bill passed (March 28).

1899…………….International Working Men’s Congress in London (June 26). Dreyfus found guilty “with attenuating circumstances” at re-trial (Aug. 7).

1900…………….Second German navy bill passed (July 14).

1901…………….Queen Victoria dies (Jan. 22); Edward VII (–1910) succeeds. First wireless communication between America and Europe (Dec. 13).


1903…………….Pope Leo XIII dies (July 20); succeeded by Pius X (–1910).


1907 .................. Universal male suffrage introduced in Austrian “half” of Austro-Hungarian Empire (Jan. 10).

1908 .................. Asquith forms Liberal government (April 8); Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

1909 .................. Franco-German agreement on Morocco (Feb. 9). Young Turk rebellion deposes sultan (April 27). Lords reject Lloyd George’s finance bill; Parliament dissolved (Nov. 30).

1910 .................. Edward VII dies (May 6); George V succeeds him (–1936).


1912 .................. German army and navy bills passed (May 21). First Balkan War begins (Oct. 17– Dec. 3).

1913 .................. Irish Home Rule passes Commons (Jan. 16); Lords reject it (Jan. 30). Second Balkan War (Feb. 3– April 23). Irish Home Rule passes Commons (July 7); Lords reject it (July 15).

European History
and
European Lives:
1715 to 1914
Part II
Professor Jonathan Steinberg

THE TEACHING COMPANY ®
Jonathan Steinberg, Ph.D.
Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania

Jonathan Steinberg is the Walter H. Annenberg Professor of Modern European History at the University of Pennsylvania and Chair of the Department of History. He was born in New York in 1934, graduated from Harvard in 1955, and was immediately drafted into the U.S. Army, where he served two years in the Medical Corps. After a period in investment banking, he took his doctorate at Cambridge and was University Lecturer (from 1993, Reader) in European History; Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from 1966 to 1999; and Vice-Master from 1990 to 1994. From January 1, 1991, to December 31, 2000, he co-edited The Historical Journal (Cambridge University Press). In 1992, he served as an expert witness in a Commonwealth of Australia war crimes prosecution.

In December 1997, Professor Steinberg was appointed to the Historical Commission of the Deutsche Bank AG, Frankfurt am Main, set up to look into the bank’s activities under the Nazis, and was principal author of the commission’s report. He gave the biennial Leslie Stephen lecture on November 25, 1999, in the Senate House of the University of Cambridge with the title “Leslie Stephen and Derivative Immortality.” Previous Leslie Stephen lecturers include A. E. Housman, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Iris Murdoch, and Seamus Heaney.

Professor Steinberg is the author of Yesterday’s Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle Fleet (1965), Why Switzerland? (1976; paperback, 1980; 2nd ed., 1996), and All or Nothing: The Axis and the Holocaust, 1941 to 1943 (1990; paperback, 1992; also available in German- and Italian-language translations). All or Nothing tries to explain why Fascist Italy in its zones of occupation in Greece, Croatia, and southern France systematically refused to assist Nazi Germany, its nominal ally, in the extermination of the Jews. By using German and Italian sources, Professor Steinberg attempts to compare the two faces of fascism. He has also translated Margaret Boveri, Treason in the Twentieth Century (London, 1961), and Friedrich Heer, Intellectual History of Europe (London, 1965), from German and Pino Arlacchi, Mafia, Peasants and Great Estates: Society in Traditional Calabria (Cambridge, 1983), from Italian.

From 1979 to 1987, Professor Steinberg wrote a monthly column in New Society, and he has reviewed for The London Review of Books, The Evening Standard, The Financial Times, and The Times Literary Supplement. He has written radio and TV documentaries and talks, including BBC Radio Four’s salute to the U.S. Constitution on the 200th anniversary of its signing. He lectures regularly at the Royal College of Defence Studies, the Joint Services Staff College, and the IBM Cambridge summer school. Professor Steinberg is also a member of the Board of Trustees, Franklin College, Lugano, Switzerland, and of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets.
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European History and European Lives: 1715 to 1914

Scope:

This course of 36 lectures is an experiment. In my 40 years in the business of teaching history, I have never done anything like it. I don’t think anyone has. The idea is simple: to use individual lives to explain a great historical transformation. That sounds easy but is not. The great historical transformation I have in mind is no small matter: How did the world of lord and serf, horse and carriage, superstition and disease turn into the world of boss and worker, steam and steel, science and medicine? In other words, how and why did what we call the modern world come about? Why did it start in the Europe of lord and serf in the 18th century and end in the world of boss and worker by 1914? How and why did Europe, by the end of the nineteenth century, come to control all the ancient empires of the globe? The trick in this series will be to see these great transformations by looking at the lives of those who made it happen. Most of the lives will be those of great figures—kings, queens, generals, artists, thinkers, and entrepreneurs—but one lecture, that on the Irish famine, will have no single biography. The Irish people of the 1840s will be the actors.

The course falls into two clear sections: Section 1 covers the years 1715 to 1815, from the end of the attempt by one French monarch to dominate Europe—Louis XIV—to the final defeat of another—Napoleon. Its principal transformation is the French Revolution or the democratic transformation. Section 2 takes the story from 1815 to 1914, from the end of the Napoleonic war to the beginning of the first of two terrible world wars. In this period, the main transformation is the Industrial Revolution, with the accompanying explosion of science and technology.

To lecture on lives raises a serious problem of method. Much of what happened in the years 1715 to 1914 depends on the lives and activities of ordinary people whose struggle for existence and happiness makes up the great story of modern history. Changes in population, disease, famine, immigration and emigration, factory labor, strikes and trade unionism, literacy, emancipation of women, armies, and empires are mass phenomena, not individual ones. No single life can remotely express these huge forces. Much of the time, those then living had no way of knowing the things we now know. What justifies the biographical approach?

First of all, it is fun. It is in our nature to be interested in one another. The people whom we shall study are among the most interesting people who have ever lived. That’s why we remember them, and the rest have been forgotten. Telling the stories of their lives helps us to understand what it is to be human and to grasp the idea that even the “self” has a history that changes over time.

Second, it is way to look at the great changes. If we see the times in which our figures lived as a kind of lens or magnifying glass, we can look for the background, as well as the foreground. We know what they could not: what happens next. Their future is our past. We know what they had no words to describe or tools to measure.

Third, it is a way to educate ourselves, using the meaning for the Latin verb *e-ducere*, which means, according to my ancient Latin dictionary, “to lead or draw out.” In other words, education does not mean “stuffing the mind with information” but drawing out our awareness of ourselves and our world. By looking at what even the greatest of the actors of the past could not see or understand, we get a glimpse of what we may be missing in our own thinking. After all, the things we take for granted are rarely conscious and never written down. When we observe the way people in the past seemed unaware of great changes now obvious to us, we have a useful moment of self-doubt.

What are we missing in our world? We become one degree less self-confident that we know what is going on. That touch of humility, that creative moment of hesitation, that openness to the possibility that we might be wrong, those are the signs of a real historical education.
Lecture Thirteen
Adam Smith—The Wealth of Nations

Scope: A Prussian aristocrat said, in 1806, “Adam Smith is the uncrowned king of Europe.” His work, The Wealth of Nations, was published in 1776, the year of the American Declaration of Independence, and can be said to be equally revolutionary. Adam Smith has become an icon and the symbol of a certain kind of libertarian economic policy. Yet he was a Scottish moral philosopher who worried that “wealth and greatness are often regarded with the respect and admiration which are due only to wisdom and virtue; and that contempt, of which vice and folly are the only proper objects, is often unjustly bestowed upon poverty and weakness.” What made Adam Smith’s message so irresistible and what limits did Smith set on the operation of markets that some of his most fervent followers tend to overlook?

Outline

I. The year 1776 was one of revolutionary declarations.
   A. The three great documents of that year were Turgot’s Six Edicts presented to the Parlement of Paris in January 1776; An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations by Adam Smith, published in March, 1776; and the Declaration of Independence of July 4, 1776, written mainly by Thomas Jefferson. Let us take a look at each in turn.
      1. The Six Edicts, by Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot (1727–1781), proposed to abolish the guilds and open trades to everybody, to raise money by taxing lands owned by nobles, to abolish the corvée (compulsory peasant labor on noble estates), and to impose equality of taxation and rights.
      2. Adam Smith’s An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, published in March 1776, was an instant success and went through five editions in his lifetime.
      3. Also in 1776, Thomas Jefferson was writing, “We hold these truths to be self-evident…”
   B. These three declarations formed part of a common enterprise of reform of society, a set of common attitudes to human nature known as the Enlightenment.
      1. The Wealth of Nations was an expression of the Enlightenment. Smith used the power of reason to analyze the way an economy actually worked.
      2. The Enlightenment was not just a set of theories but a way of thinking about the world.
      3. Adam Smith was attracted by the idea of constructing systems, which he saw as “imaginary machines.” Thus, Wealth of Nations was a systematic enterprise and a description of the economy as a machine.
      4. Faith in machines and systems was in itself a rejection of the Old Regime’s messiness, irregularities, privileges, and restrictions. Adam Smith was, in a sense, part of the movement that caused the grain riots in France and the War of Independence in the British colonies.

II. During this period, economics was part of philosophy in general and was not separate from ethics, history, or political science.
   A. Philosophers wrote as economists and vice versa. Smith’s friend David Hume was a distinguished economic theorist. Hume’s “On Money” (1752) made an important and lasting contribution to the theory of exchange, and in Of the Jealousy of Trade (1758), Hume showed that foreign trade was not a zero-sum game but one of mutual gains.
   B. Adam Smith was a moral philosopher. In 1752, he was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow and served in that capacity until 1763. His other great work, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, was published in 1759 and made his reputation.
   C. The economist, then, was a kind of unwilling revolutionary, because systematic thinking about the economy undermined privilege and because economists argued for the freedom of the individual producer and consumer.
      1. Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) noticed the role of economists in his L’Ancien Régime et la révolution (1856), the most brilliant book ever written on the causes of the French Revolution. He noted that economists cling “more closely to facts” and, by doing that, unwittingly to the existing order.
2. Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* fits exactly into this context and is a revolutionary manifesto. As Emma Rothschild expresses it, “Freedom in one’s economic life is an end in itself for Smith… Economic restriction was, Smith believed, a form of oppression and hence immoral” (*Economic Sentiments*).

### III. In 1707, the Scottish kingdom agreed to an Act of Union that united the kingdoms of England and Scotland.

The Scots were divided by region into Lowland and Highland, by language into Scots-speakers and Gaelic-speakers, and by religion into Presbyterianism and Catholicism.

**A.** The revolts of the Highlands (1690, 1715, and 1745) against the Protestant succession and in favor of the Stuart King James (hence, they were called *Jacobites*) or the young pretender, Bonny Prince Charlie (Charles III), were finally suppressed in 1745.

**B.** The Highlands were “cleared,” and thousands of people were removed and sent into exile in the colonies.

**C.** Scottish culture and society were and are different from that of England.

1. Literacy in Scotland was higher than in the rest of Britain or in France.
2. The Scottish church was Presbyterian, and there was great insistence on Bible-reading among the faithful.
3. The idea of a “common market” with England was a threat, because Scotland had fewer people, fewer cities, less wealth, and far less commerce and industry. It is not surprising that Scottish intellectuals were preoccupied with economic issues.

**D.** The Scottish Enlightenment was centered in Glasgow and Edinburgh but differed in structure from its English, French, or German counterparts.

1. It most closely resembled the English public sphere but was centered on the universities and depended neither on aristocratic patrons or salons, as in France, nor on a substantial literary establishment, as in England.
2. Many of its leading figures were academics, such as Adam Smith and John Millar at Glasgow and Adam Ferguson and William Robertson at Edinburgh. It also included country gentlemen, such as David Hume, along with merchants, lawyers, and judges.
3. As in London, there was a small but active publishing business. In 1768, a “society of gentlemen” began to publish *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, first in a three-volume set, which quickly sold out. The announcement promised that in the new encyclopedia, all the subjects would be organized into “treatises or systems.”
4. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* was, like the French *Encyclopédie*, an attempt to systematize all knowledge and reveals the Enlightenment preoccupation with the systematic and regular. In *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith was, in effect, inventing systematic economics.

### IV. The outlines of Smith’s early life are vague, because he left no autobiography.

**A.** He was born in 1723 in a small fishing town, Kirkcaldy, but the exact date is not known. He was baptized on June 5, 1723. His father was a collector of customs, and his mother, Margaret Douglas, came from what Hume called “a good family.” He went to university in Glasgow when he was 14, then spent three years in Oxford, which he hated.

1. Smith presented public lectures in the late 1740s, which so impressed his audience that he was appointed to a professorship, first in logic, then in moral philosophy. In 1759, he published *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which established his reputation.
2. In 1763, the duke of Buccleuch offered Smith a lucrative post as tutor to his son, and Smith accompanied the young lord to France, where he met Turgot, Voltaire, and other *philosophes*. He lived in London in 1767, where he met Samuel Johnson, Burke, Boswell, and others.
3. From 1768 to 1776, Smith lived quietly in Kirkcaldy working on *The Wealth of Nations*. He was then appointed commissioner for customs and salt duties for the kingdom of Scotland, with a salary of £600 a year. He died on July 17, 1790.

**B.** Smith lived an uneventful life, never married, and was too cautious to get involved in public controversy (as his friend Hume did). In fact, the only time he stirred up public sentiment was when he described the notorious skeptic Hume, after his death, as saintly.

**C.** Smith did have a collection of odd habits, including “a stumbling manner of speech,…a gait described as ‘vermicular’ [worm-like],… and an extraordinary…absence of mind…” (*Encyclopedia Britannica Online*).
V. The *Wealth of Nations* is much too big to be explained in a short lecture, but we can attempt to summarize what we should know about it.


B. Books I to III contain the essentials of the economic system.
   1. One of the key elements of this system is the division of labor, illustrated by Smith’s famous example of the pin factory.
   2. The system of exchange arose because the division of labor and specialization mean that there is a need for exchange.
   3. The way we exchange is a function of the value of goods and services. Smith’s theory of value had two elements: Some objects were valuable because of scarcity (for example, water or diamonds), but most were valuable because of the amount of labor embodied in the object.
   4. Money is a system for exchanging items based on the value of labor.

C. Smith also outlined the market mechanism and prices.
   1. Smith invented the idea of supply and demand. In what is probably the most important passage in the history of economics, Smith explains the capitalist market for the first time. He noted the paradox that the competitive urges of individuals regulate the market machine.
   2. The equally astonishing fact is that Smith set out the agenda for economics from 1776 to the present. His book is still the subject of active theoretical analysis. It is not an antique but a living theoretical work.

D. Professor Jacob Viner defines Smith’s greatness in his detailed and elaborate application to the wilderness of economic phenomena the unifying concept of a coordinated and mutually dependent system of cause-and-effect relationships that philosophers and theologians had already applied to the world in general.

VI. The idea that there is an “invisible hand” that makes social good emerge from human greed and self-interest is the greatest justification of the free market.

A. The version of this idea that is widely known and believed by economic theorists is the one to be found in Paul Samuelson’s *Economics*. Samuelson says that in trying to promote his or her own security or gain, the individual unknowingly promotes the interests of society.

B. In fact, Smith uses the idea of the invisible hand as the organizing idea and justification for free markets only once, in Book IV on foreign trade. The idea that markets are “providential” arrangements is a later invention.

C. Smith had no doubt that there were evils in free markets. He saw slavery in the European colonies as one. The free market works against the moral outcome of decent treatment of slaves.

D. Smith distrusted the rich and powerful more than the ordinary people.

E. In the struggle between management and labor, Smith supported labor.

VII. The *Wealth of Nations* of 1776 is one of the most important books ever written and one of the most liberating. It provided a complete description of, and a set of principles for, the new capitalist market.

A. The application of the principles of free markets, free trade, and open economies was literally revolutionary when applied to an Old Regime state such as France, because those principles destroyed “privilege” and eroded the state’s control of people’s lives.

B. Further, the perfection of the book’s prose and the shrewdness of its observations make it a delight to read and still strike readers of our time as fresh and stimulating.

C. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Smith had no great faith in human virtue, and his economic theories rested on the view that the powerful, grasping, and selfish would always oppress the poor and weak. That is why he argued for the maximum economic freedom to liberate the weak from the grasp of the strong.

D. He died just after the French Revolution began and before industrialization spawned Blake’s “dark satanic mills” and imposed a new slavery—wage slavery—on those nominally free.
E. If the right-wing ideologues who praise Adam Smith without reading him were to do so, they might find a very different message than the market-driven remedies they claim in his name. He was, after all, a moral philosopher.

**Essential Reading:**

**Supplementary Reading:**

**Questions to Consider:**
1. Do you believe that individual enterprise and unrestricted market forces produce the best possible outcome for society?
2. Suppose that Smith really meant that actors in markets do not know that their private scramble for profits may yield a desirable public outcome. What happens after they read Smith and understand that? Can the system work if people settle for less than the most money they could make?
Lecture Fourteen
Marie Antoinette—Queen Beheaded

Scope: Marie Antoinette (1755–1793), a Habsburg princess, was the daughter of Maria Theresa and the sister of Emperor Joseph II. She married a Bourbon, uniting the two greatest European royal families, and became queen of France when her husband became Louis XVI. Unhappy in her marriage, she surrounded herself with a dissolute clique and threw herself into a life of pleasure and extravagance. Her reputation led to scandals. She never said, “Let them eat cake,” when told of the bread famine, but she could have. She became a symbol of everything wrong with France, and on October 16, 1793, she was executed by the guillotine, a victim of the French Revolution. How and why did this happen? This lecture looks at the failure of the French crown to reform itself and asks how much the flighty young queen contributed to it.

Outline

I. The problem with absolute monarchy can be seen in the two models of Joseph II and Louis XVI. Both brought their realms to the edge of revolution, one by reforming too much and the other, too little. Absolute monarchy depended on the personality of the monarch.
   A. Were Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette causes of the French Revolution or merely symbols of everything gone wrong?
   B. In this lecture, we look at the wider causes of the failure of France in the 18th century and the role of the unfortunate queen who paid for it. In this first part of the lecture, we look at the structural elements leading to the fall of the French monarchy and, in the second part, we consider the royal personalities.

II. France was the giant of the Western world. Economy and population figures show that France was three times more populous than England in 1750 and, in 1776, had 50 cities larger than Boston.
   A. The revenue of the French monarchy amounted to 500,000,000 livres (or roughly £20,000,000), which was more than that of Britain, the Habsburg Empire, Russia, or the United States in 1790.
   B. The dominance of French culture and the sheer size of Paris made France even more important in the world. The Parisian population was approximately 660,000 on the eve of the French Revolution, and the wealth of the city was reflected in its streets, shops, and noble homes.
   C. Paris was a city of violent extremes between wealth and poverty. Visitors remarked that being poor in Paris must be an experience akin to hell on earth. As a result of the terrible harvest of 1788, in July 1789, bread cost more than an unskilled worker earned; further, about 150,000 workers were jobless. July was—not surprisingly—the month when revolutionary violence broke out.
   D. France was the greatest continental power and, hence, more or less constantly at war. From 1756 to 1763, France was involved in the Seven Years’ War (the French and Indian War), which ended in humiliation and loss of her North American empire.
      1. In 1779, France intervened in the American War of Independence and paid an expensive price for its revenge on Britain.
      2. By 1789, France was so broke that it was unable to intervene in the revolt against Joseph II in the Austrian Netherlands (now Belgium) right on its own doorstep.
   E. The crisis of the French state was inevitably a world crisis. The equivalent today would be a bankruptcy in the United States.

III. As we saw, the Old Regime was a world of privilege and legal inequalities. Privilege had a specific meaning: the exemption of a person, place, or thing from the operation of the law, especially the collection of taxes.
   A. French society was based entirely on exceptions, rights, and jurisdictions. There was a sharp contrast with Britain, where equality before the law had been enforced since the 15th century. Imagine the problem of collecting taxes when everybody has a claim to exemptions.
   B. The parlements were the embodiment of privileges. There were 13 of these sovereign, quasi-judicial bodies in different places with different traditions and legal bases.
C. All 13 had the power to block royal decrees and register laws. In addition, they had the right of remonstrance, which allowed them to point out any breach of monarchic tradition. It was a sort of veto power that the king could override if he wished. Most parlements also functioned as ordinary law courts, but in response to royal demands, their main activity was to prevent the king from raising money.

D. Because the French state could not raise taxes or impose excises, it had two alternatives: to borrow money from its citizens or to sell offices of the state. This produced a market in corruption and a widespread demand for positions with fancy titles and little or no work.

E. The French government collected taxes through tax farming, a way of “outsourcing” the collection of taxes or a kind of sharecropping of the taxation system. The government got its share, and the tax farmer received a fat commission, plus the interest on the capital on his books.

F. The effect of inflation in 18th-century Europe made things easier in some ways but harder in others. Inflation reduced the real burden of state debt, but price increases as high as 50 percent hit the poor.

IV. The French state was almost bankrupt by 1786–1787.

A. The informed subjects of France talked of it openly. Arthur Young (1741–1820), an English agricultural expert, wondered, “The curious question…is would a bankruptcy occasion a civil war and a total overthrow of the government?”

B. The answer to the question was a resounding yes, because the “debt” (rente) was held by French subjects and because the aristocratic value system that most aspiring middle-class people wanted to imitate held that work was not noble. To live on investment income and not work at all was socially prestigious (to be a rentier meant to “live nobly”).

C. A state bankruptcy would mean not paying the interest income to the French upper and upper-middle classes, which would ruin them and destroy their way of life.

D. Charles Alexandre de Calonne (1734–1802) was controller general of the finances from 1783 to 1787 and had to deal with the bankruptcy, which he knew had occurred but dared not admit. His problem was to find a way around the parlements to raise taxes.

E. He failed because nobody trusted the state’s accounts, nor was anybody willing to subsidize “extravagance,” especially the queen’s.

F. The result of Calonne’s efforts was merely to cause agitation at the top of the French state about “rights” and blame. Calonne saw that a total bankruptcy was almost certain unless the real parliament, which had not met since 1614, assembled again to deal with the crisis. The king refused because a parliament was a limit on his power.

V. The combination of state paralysis, bankruptcy, and the terrible harvest of 1788 produced a general crisis of the system by 1789. The size and importance of Paris and French centralization meant that an incident of any kind was certain to cause a threat to the regime.

A. The chronology of 1789 shows how that incident occurred and how the price of bread was the catalyst.

1. In January, the Estates General was summoned; it was not really a parliament but an antique feudal assembly. Also in January, a crowd demanding lower bread prices was attacked by bands of students. Several were killed in the fighting. Over the course of the winter and into the spring, shortages led to higher prices and rising unemployment.

2. That April saw the Reveillon riots. Acting on rumors of wage cuts, rioters destroyed a factory, and 25 were killed when troops opened fire on them. In May, the Estates General convened. At the same time, bread riots occurred throughout Flanders, Artois, Picardy, and Normandy.

3. In June, the Estates General was replaced, and a National Assembly was proclaimed, the members of which swore not to disband until France had been truly reformed. At the end of the month, rioters protesting high prices destroyed the city’s tollgates.

4. In early July, troops were assigned to protect convoys of grain and flour. Rising grain prices and food shortages finally reached a new peak. A crowd seized the royal prison of the Bastille and threw open the gates. The French Revolution had begun.

B. The French state was in a terminal crisis in 1789. Individual actors seem dwarfed by the scale of the problems. What part did Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette play?
VI. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were very young (20 and 19) when they succeeded to the throne and had an unhappy marriage.

A. Louis was a shy, introverted person. His hobby was watchmaking.

B. Marie Antoinette was the youngest and prettiest daughter of the Austrian Archduchess Maria Theresa and Holy Roman Emperor Francis I.

C. Maria Theresa’s technique of diplomacy involved the use of her children for political ends, in this case, to strengthen the anti-Prussian alliance of the Seven Years’ War, in which Bourbon France and Habsburg Austria had buried centuries of rivalry in the face of the threat of Frederick the Great.

D. Marie Antoinette had one main task, her most important royal job: to bear a son. For seven long years, nothing happened, in spite of constant attention and intervention by all involved. Some recent research suggests that intercourse with Louis may have been painful for Marie.

E. The “smart set” at court was some compensation for the queen’s unhappy and boring marriage.
   1. Her court was the center of a group of elegant young figures who had contempt for the older courtiers and careful advisors.
   2. Her close “friends” used her power as queen to enrich themselves.
   3. Empress Maria Theresa urged the Austrian ambassador to France to keep Marie Antoinette away from politics.

F. Marie Antoinette became a symbolic figure for popular resentment.
   1. She was called “Madame Deficit,” and became the subject of scurrilous cartoons and pornographic pictures. There was a lot of anti-female hostility in this, plus the fury of an enraged, starving, dissatisfied city population, subject to an endless flow of rumor.
   2. All her habits, including playing at the simple life, further decreased her popularity, as did the scandal of the diamond necklace, in which a prominent aristocrat tried to buy advancement at court by giving the Queen a diamond necklace.

G. Throughout the horrible years of unrest, Marie Antoinette never lost her composure or dignity. She showed great courage during the French Revolution at each stage.
   1. Her position was impossible. She was a foreigner and hated as a symbol of the Old Regime. Her only hope was that the revolution would be defeated or that the intervention of her brothers, the Austrian emperors, would save her.
   2. Her “treason” was inevitable, built into the situation and unavoidable. The revolutionary mobs were correct to distrust her.
   3. On October 5, 1789, the women’s march on Versailles took place to bring the king and queen back to Paris.
   4. The king and queen were prisoners in Paris while public opinion moved toward a republican form of government. On June 20, 1791, the royal couple tried to escape to the Austrians but was caught. Now they were in real danger, even more so because Louis refused to accept decrees from the National Assembly.
   5. When the allies invaded France, the French declared war (April 20, 1792); this was a new kind of “war of liberation” for the oppressed peoples of Europe. When the war went badly, the Parisians grew more violent and, on August 10, 1792, an enraged mob invaded the Tuileries Palace and seized the royal family.
   6. On September 22, 1792, France was declared a republic. The king was tried and executed on January 21, 1793; the queen was executed on the guillotine on October 16, 1793.

VII. Marie Antoinette was a purely symbolic cause of the French Revolution, but symbols can be powerful factors in themselves. She was also a victim of her own habits and her gender. The death of Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette marked another stage on the road to modernity: the desecration of the royal bodies. Their execution as common criminals was carried out by a modern machine.

Essential Reading:
Antonia Fraser, Marie Antoinette: The Journey.
Supplementary Reading:

Questions to Consider:
1. Were Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette simply being “stubborn” when they refused to accept parliamentary government?
2. Compare and contrast recent state bankruptcies (Russia in 1998 and Argentina in 2002) with France in 1786. Why did the French crisis cause a revolution but not the modern ones? Would a bankruptcy in the United States cause a revolution here?
Lecture Fifteen  
Edmund Burke—The New Conservatism

Scope: Edmund Burke (1729–1797) was one of the greatest orators, stylists, and political figures of the late 18th century. An Irishman with a Protestant father and a Catholic mother, he rose to high office in the corrupt politics of Georgian England without wealth or connections because of his extraordinary intellectual power. Yet Burke became immortal not because of his politics, oratory, or other writings, but because when the French Revolution broke out, he wrote Reflections on the Revolution in France of 1790, which literally invented modern conservative ideology. Burke believed that human reason had less chance of making people happy than the political, social, and religious institutions that represented the wisdom of the ages. This lecture looks at the man and his ideas and asks what remains of Burkean conservatism today.

Outline

I. Edmund Burke was universally recognized as an extraordinary man by his contemporaries.
   
   A. Even his political opponents praised his intellectual gifts and morality.
   
   B. Burke was a man of contradictions.
   
   1. He became famous as the champion of liberty but was the author of the most important conservative text ever written: Reflections on the Revolution in France and on the Proceedings in Certain Societies in London Relative to That Event in a Letter Intended to Have Been Sent to a Gentleman in Paris, November 1790.
   
   2. He was an Irishman who embodied the Englishness of England.
   
   3. He was half-Catholic but a passionate spokesman of Protestantism.
   
   4. He was a social nobody who idealized and mixed with the great aristocracy.
   
   5. He was that rare combination, a practical politician with a highly speculative tendency.
   
   6. Burke was accused of inconsistency but was never, in any simple sense, inconsistent. Yes, he defended the American Revolution and attacked the French, but were the two revolutions really all that similar? The American Revolution has been seen as a “conservative revolution” to preserve rights. The French Revolution was undoubtedly the opposite.
   
   C. Burke was a spectacular prose stylist in an age of fine prose. He outshone Johnson, Boswell, Goldsmith, Warburton, Butler, Hume, and Smith. The sheer exuberance and gaudiness of his imagery and metaphors was astonishing.

II. Who was Edmund Burke?
   
   A. Edmund Burke was born in Dublin, Ireland, probably on January 12, 1729. He was the son of Richard Burke, an attorney. His father was Protestant and his mother was Catholic.
   
   B. After finishing Trinity College, Burke went to London to study law in 1750. He made his name with a satire called Vindication of Natural Society (1756), which attacked political rationalism and religious skepticism. His essay “Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful” (1757) was a study in aesthetics. In 1759, he founded The Annual Register, a kind of calendar of events that still exists.
   
   C. In 1757, he married Jane Nugent; they had one son who died young and whose death deeply affected Burke.
   
   D. Burke’s political career was based on a combination of his ability and the patronage of the great.
   
   1. In 1765, he became private secretary to the marquess of Rockingham, then the prime minister, and the two formed a lifelong friendship. Rockingham gave Burke a seat in the unreformed House of Commons, in which seats with few or no voters were called pocket boroughs, because they were in the pockets of the great lords.
   
   2. Burke made his name politically in the crisis leading up to the American War of Independence. In 1766, he spoke in favor of the repeal of the Stamp Act, although he supported the Declaratory Act, asserting Britain’s constitutional right to tax the colonists. He made speeches on American taxation...
(1774) and on conciliation with the colonies. In 1775, he urged that the British government consider the imprudence of exercising such theoretical rights.

3. In his *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents* of 1770, he was the first political philosopher to argue the value of political parties. Indeed, he is one of the few political philosophers who was successful both in philosophy and active politics.

4. Burke’s prestige rose after the Americans declared independence. He had the advantage of having been absolutely right in his predictions about the consequences of British policy in America.

5. Burke was famous as an independent voice and a champion of the rights of the people. In his “Speech to the Electors of Bristol” (1774) after his election as their MP, he explained that a representative must always be free to vote as conscience dictates.

E. Edmund Burke was a unique combination of practical politician, great orator, and philosopher. Nobody in our period between 1715 and 1914 came close to equaling his achievements in these endeavors.

III. Burke’s immediate reaction to the French Revolution was unlike that of most progressive Whigs, the party of liberty and Protestantism to which he belonged. Most favored the revolution until it became radical and executed the king and queen.

A. Burke opposed the revolution from the first day and had no illusions about where it would lead.

B. It is an oddity that Burke’s greatest work was an accident. A young French friend wrote to ask his opinion of the recent events. The result was a long letter that later appeared as a book, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. The work is one long, furious diatribe.

1. The text is full of exaggerations and mistakes. The account of the women’s march on Versailles on October 6, 1789, in which Burke describes the loyal Swiss Guard lying dead outside Marie Antoinette’s door, is simply wrong.

2. Errors did not prevent the book from becoming a success. Within six months, 19,000 copies had been sold. Its impact in the German states was even greater than in Britain. The German translation by Friedrich Gentz, who would later become Metternich’s Kissinger, became the Bible of European conservatism.

IV. Let us examine some basic principles of Burke’s thought.

A. Principle 1: There are absolute limits on the use of human ingenuity, which Burke called “the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reason.”

B. Principle 2: The people are too stupid to be trusted. Burke wrote, “We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own stock of reason; because we suspect that the stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would be better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations, and of ages.”

C. Principle 3: The solution is to rely on people’s prejudices, not their reason: “Prejudice is of ready application in an emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom, and does not leave the man hesitating in a moment of decision, skeptical, puzzled and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man’s virtue his habit, and not a series of unconnected acts.”

D. Principle 4: Life is too complicated for simple schemes: “The nature of man is intricate; the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity: and therefore no simple disposition or direction of power can be suitable either to man’s nature, or to the quality of his affairs.”

E. The result of the operation of these principles is that plans always go wrong, because they ignore the law of unintended consequences.

1. Burke rejected abstract plans in human affairs.

2. The present messy but stable order works better than any schemes for change. We do not need plans, but a complicated system of constitutional restraint is necessary to restrain powerful people and bad ideas.

3. It is obvious that people are not equal and ordinary men cannot govern.

4. Attempts to pretend that ordinary men can govern lead to disaster or, much worse, the emergence of a new elite who pretend that everybody is equal.

5. Democracy is, thus, really a form of tyranny.
6. Much of this was familiar to those who drafted the U.S. Constitution three years before Burke wrote *Reflections*. They understood the tyranny of the majority and saw it operate in 18th-century America. The Bill of Rights is an attempt (the best and wisest ever made) to prevent or, at least, control it.

7. Note that Burke was always essentially a liberal but not a democrat, not an egalitarian. It is also important to remember that liberalism is not democracy. The overwhelming majority of the drafters of the U.S. Constitution were also not democrats.

V. Burke’s legacy was a new conservatism to match the new radicalism in France. This new conservatism flourished on the continent of Europe, but only partially and temporarily (in the years 1800 to 1820) in England.

A. European conservatives attacked liberalism and all its features.
   1. Burke was always a liberal, and *The Reflections* assume the existence of the British constitutional arrangements. In England, the “better sort” already had the vote, and Burke wanted to be sure that not everybody did. Royal power was already limited by the great landed proprietors in the House of Lords and by the middling sort (like Burke) in the House of Commons. Security of private property was established, and there was a functioning legal system.
   2. Burke’s readers on the Continent lacked those realities. Burke delivered arguments against liberalization of reactionary regimes: The people are stupid; men are inherently unequal; planning for improvement is hopeless; stability is better than change.
   3. The opponents of France turned Burke’s *Reflections* into arguments for rule from above by the aristocracy and against the reforms enforced by enlightened despots.

B. The opponents of France attacked liberal capitalism, Adam Smith, and the free market and used Burke’s arguments in a different context.
   1. Burke had glorified the great English landowners, because land was stable and the “moneymed interest” was unstable and unrestrained. Money flowed in everywhere. The land became a mere commodity, an object of trade, and not the basis of a stable society.
   2. Those who stood to gain, Burke claimed, were Jews, who represented everything tawdry and commercial about markets.

C. Burke’s best pupils and most avid readers were the reactionary Prussian landlords (the *Junkers*), great Austrian and Polish magnates, enemies of “progress” in every country. After all, the ruling classes in Europe were landowners and feudal lords
   1. Their hatred of free markets, free citizens, free peasants, free movement of capital and labor, free thought, Jews, stock markets, banks, cities, free press, and free theater continued and helped to bring about the Nazi dictatorship in 1933.
   2. Burke, the classical liberal, was now the prophet of reaction, the perfect example of his own law of unintended consequences.
   3. Friedrich August Ludwig von der Marwitz (1777–1837) was a Prussian landlord who used Burke’s arguments to resist Prussian government reforms to liberalize society, free serfs, and introduce constitutional protections and representative government.

VI. Burke became the prophet of a right wing that he would not have liked. His real disciples were not liberals but reactionaries, anti-Semites, and enemies of the modern world. Can Burke be blamed for misuse of his ideas? In part, yes, as Leslie Stephen observed in 1881: “Burke could not or would not see that the old ideas were perishing...The creeds were rotten; and therefore the “dry rot” could sap the old supports and render the crash inevitable” (Stephen, *English Thought*).

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:

Questions to Consider:
1. Suppose the people are as stupid as Burke thinks they are, what consequences follow for American society today?

2. Should an author be blamed for what use others make of his or her ideas?
Lecture Sixteen
Robespierre—The Democrat as Terrorist

Scope: Maximilien Robespierre (1758–1794) was a provincial French lawyer who rose to head the French revolutionary Committee of Public Safety, in effect, the government at the most violent and radical stage of the French Revolution. Under Robespierre, terror first became a modern political concept. Some 40,000 “enemies of the people,” including King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette, were beheaded by guillotine or shot. Yet Robespierre believed passionately that the revolution would make human beings virtuous and happy. Terror was only a means to an end. Robespierre himself died by the guillotine, when his followers suddenly deserted him. This lecture examines the paradox in Robespierre’s life and death: how the search for ultimate virtue turned into terrorism.

Outline

I. Certain dates mark stages in human history. Two such dates are July 14, 1789, the storming of the Bastille, and September 11, 2001, the attack on the World Trade Towers.
A. Periods in history tend to begin with such breaks. The French recognized July 14, 1789, as a break in historical continuity. The world before the storming of the Bastille came to be seen as the Old Regime and after it was “the Revolution.” After September 11, 2001, Americans lost a sense of personal and national security, but whether anything else has changed remains to be seen.
B. The French Revolution introduced a new civic religion.
1. The new religion was a worship of the state and of civic virtue. The most brilliant insight into the new faith was that of Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859), who saw something that few understood: The revolt in France was a political revolution that took on the character of a religious movement, spreading to foreign nations and uniting or dividing people of all nationalities.
2. Osama bin Laden’s reactionary crusade is actually as much against the French Revolution as it is against the United States. Today’s Islamic fundamentalist terrorists are making war on Robespierre’s civic religion but using methods first developed in that revolution.
3. The methods of Robespierre and bin Laden are not dissimilar. They both need to control ideas. They both strive to produce what they consider to be pure and virtuous people and, in so doing, must keep out evil influences.
C. Political violence and terror emerged during the French Revolution in modern form.
1. Terrorism can be defined as the use of violence against civil populations or individual representatives of a government to achieve political ends. Terrorism is essentially modern and a European political innovation.
2. Assassination attempts came with the new technologies of guns and bombs but also needed the new religious/political fanaticism that emerged in the French Revolution.
3. The assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 by Narodnya Volya (“the People’s Will”) is an example. The Russian populist terrorist groups had become impatient with the tsar’s reform program. They wanted instant, dramatic change.
D. The problem in this lecture, then, is to explain how a revolution designed to liberate human beings ended by murdering them in the Great Terror. Why does the revolution devour its children?

II. The French revolutionaries wanted to create a new, rational society, and they largely accomplished that goal in only five years.
A. The legislative and institutional changes they put in place covered an incredible range of activities. The revolution led to the transformation or abolition of every aspect of l’ancien régime. The Old World was swept away, and by 1793, France saw:
1. Uniformity of weights and measures.
2. Bureaucratic rationality and centralization.
3. Abolition of the nobility, all titles, and all remnants of feudalism. Citoyen was the only correct form of address.
5. The levée en masse of 1793, a total mobilization of everyone and everything in France for war.
6. Abolition of the traditional calendar months, days of the week, and holidays, such as Easter and Christmas.
7. The replacement of the Roman Catholic Church and the synagogue with the religion of reason.
8. The opening of careers without restriction to talented people and guaranteed freedom of movement for all.

B. France accomplished these goals by imposing uniformity.
1. The new state was now the French Republic—one and indivisible—which imposed absolute uniformity and regularity on France.
2. Government was completely centralized in Paris.
3. The old provinces were abolished, and a new system of uniformity of provinces, the départements, was initiated.
4. Reason and rationality replaced history. All the historic divisions in France, such as that between the north and south, between langue d’oc and langue d’oui, were erased. In addition to the abolition of ancient provinces, guilds and corporations were also suppressed. There was to be nothing between the citizen and state.
5. Paris was also reorganized and given its own government. Ultimately, it was divided into 48 sections (1790–1795).
6. The sections elected the Commune de Paris, the city government, which became the center of radicalism and created a system of dual government. The elected national parliament and the elected government of Paris vied for control of the crowds and radical clubs.
7. The “crowd” or “mob” of Paris orchestrated riots as a means of political influence. The direction of mobs came from the political clubs, which were places where people of like minds gathered to hear speeches. The Jacobin Club was Robespierre’s base of power.
8. Inflation was an important means of financing war and revolution. The new government issued assignats, a paper currency backed by the confiscated lands of the Crown and Church. The idea was to sell the land and redeem the paper money, but the temptation to print money was great and the rate of land sales was too slow.

C. The French Revolution was an uprising of a new generation.
1. The main Jacobin political figures were mostly around age 30.
2. The great revolutionary soldiers were even younger in 1789, around the age of 20.

D. Two events served to radicalize the revolution.
1. The first was the flight of the royal family, who tried to escape to the Austrians and were caught at Varennes on June 20, 1791. The paranoia about Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette was now confirmed in the minds of the ordinary people.
2. The second was the outbreak of war on April 20, 1792. Gradually, the European powers agreed to suppress the French Revolution because its impact on its neighbors was subversive.
3. Success and failure in the war was the fever chart of radicalism. On September 21, a constitutional convention met, marking the beginning of Robespierre’s rise to dictatorship.

E. The bases of Robespierre’s power lay in a combination of his parliamentary status as member of the constitutional convention and his charismatic leadership of the Jacobin Club.
1. On September 21, 1792, the convention held its first meeting, abolished the monarchy, set up the republic, and agreed to try the king for treason.
2. The convention was supposed to draw up a constitution, which it did, but the document never went into effect. Instead, the convention became a new revolutionary parliament.

III. Who was Robespierre?
A. Maximilien Marie Isidore Robespierre was a bright but poor boy from Arras. He won scholarships to study law in Paris and returned to set up a small practice in his native town.
B. He was the classic example of the frustrated, small-town intellectual and exactly the type of person that Burke most feared. He read Rousseau and became obsessed with ideas of “virtue,” which in his mind, meant civic morality.
C. Robespierre was elected to the Estates General of 1789 and soon found his new role in the Jacobin Club, where his radical oratory gave him a following.

D. He was elected to the radical Commune of Paris, set up on August 10, 1792, and became a deputy from Paris in the National Convention. This double identity meant that he could summon up the “crowd” to force the assembly to do its will.

E. Robespierre was like Osama bin Laden: austere, dedicated, and fanatical. His nickname was “the Incorruptible.”

F. On July 27, 1793, Robespierre was elected to the Committee of Public Safety. The committee was simply an ad hoc group of 12 deputies elected to govern France in the crisis. Their term was 12 months. Robespierre became its chair by his moral and intellectual authority, in effect, by his “purity.”

IV. Robespierre was the spiritual leader of the Jacobin faction of revolutionaries and severe in his personal dedication.

A. His fundamental faith and that of the Jacobins was that the popular will was, by definition, right and had to be obeyed.

B. The object of the revolution was to make men virtuous, that is, to strip away superstition, ignorance, and laziness, which prevented them from expressing their natural goodness. On February 5, 1794, Robespierre delivered his “Report on the Principles of Political Morality which ought to guide the Convention,” declaring that the republic itself was a moral agent. It could and must make men virtuous.

C. If the people are good and the republic itself is good, yet not everybody behaves virtuously and opponents still exist to divide the general will, then conspirators must be to blame, that is, aristocrats, foreign agents, speculators, priests, and others who corrupt the good people.

D. Robespierre’s iron logic led to only one solution: to eradicate those who would corrupt the virtuous. As he said in his “Report”:

   If the mainspring of popular government in time of peace is virtue, then the mainspring of popular government in time of revolution is both virtue and terror: virtue, without which terror is evil; terror, without which virtue is helpless. Terror is nothing but justice, prompt, severe, inflexible; it is therefore an emanation of virtue (R. R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution*).

E. The Committee of Public Safety became the revolutionary government and assumed the right to fixes prices, but prices rose (the real cause was the paper money inflation of the assignat). Somebody—speculators, hoarders, or royal agents—must be to blame. The answer: execute the malefactors.

F. If anybody disagreed with the committee’s policies, they became “enemies of the people,” because they divided the purity of the general will. Such people must die. This is the philosophy behind the Reign of Terror and its spread. Because the cause is just and holy, opponents belong to the “axis of evil” and must be eradicated.

V. Revolutionary tribunals were established all over France to examine and execute people.

A. The guillotine was the beginning of the modern technology of mass murder. On October 10, 1789, Dr. Guillotin proposed that his humane machine for chopping off heads should replace all other forms of judicial execution and, in 1793, it came into full use.

   1. The guillotine was used on Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and thousands of others at public executions in Paris before huge and delighted crowds. In the provinces, less elegant measures were used, such as lynching or shooting.

   2. In 1793, armed resistance to the revolution broke out in various regions, and official terror to control the mob was accompanied by violence and unofficial terror.

B. From the beginning, the French Revolution had also attacked the churches and strove to replace them by the creation of a state religion. The Festival of the Supreme Being inaugurated the new religion on June 8, 1794, in a grand ceremony presided over by Robespiere. It was the high point of the French Revolution’s radical wave.

C. Ultimately, the Great Terror began to get out of control.
1. The committee decided that the Terror should escalate. By the Law of 22 Prairial (June 10, 1794), the Committee of Public Safety declared that there was no longer to be a defense against the charges nor any sentence other than death.

2. Between March 1793 and June 10, 1794, 1,251 people were executed in Paris alone and, between June 10 and July, an additional 1,376 people were executed.

3. When no one was safe any longer, the members of the convention rebelled. On the 9th of Thermidor (July 27, 1794), a conspiracy of moderates prevented Robespierre and his allies from speaking. The majority decreed the arrest of Robespierre, St. Just, and Couthon.

4. Robespierre’s support in the Commune of Paris was disorganized and without leadership. The convention seized control by night, and the next morning, Robespierre, St. Just, Couthon, and 19 other Jacobins were executed, without trial, by guillotine. The next day, 71 more Jacobin supporters of Robespierre were guillotined in the largest mass execution of the Terror.

VI. It is not coincidental that modern terror was born of puritan attempts to reform human nature.

A. Robespierre and Osama bin Laden are both “incorruptible” fanatics: The one wanted to enforce the French Republic as a mechanism to create virtue; the other wants to purify the true believers by enforcing the Wahabi version of Islam. For both, because the ends are pure and just, the means—mass murder—are entirely justified.

B. Modern terror is, thus, a paradox: It was born out of the Enlightenment’s attempt to reform human nature, to force us to be better, purer, holier, more virtuous than we are. Osama bin Laden is just as much a child of the French Revolution as Robespierre.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
Christopher Hibbert, *The Days of the French Revolution*.

Questions to Consider:
1. The French Revolution created the modern state and modern France. Was the Terror necessary to preserve it?
2. Is it ever justifiable to “force people to be free”?
Lecture Seventeen
Mary Wollstonecraft—The Rights of Women

Scope: Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) can be considered the first feminist. Her *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1785) and *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) were the first feminist manifestos. After all, if “all men were created equal” and if the French Revolution declared the “rights of man and the citizen,” the logical consequence must be the equality of “the second sex.” Yet Mary Wollstonecraft actually lived a life of suffering. She was in Paris during the ecstatic days of the French Revolution, where she lived with an American, Gilbert Imlay. After the birth (1794) of a daughter, Fanny, Imlay deserted Wollstonecraft, and in 1797, she married the English reformer and radical William Godwin. She died within days of giving birth to another daughter, who married the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. For her, “biology was destiny” in the most terrible way. Her career began the debate about what it means to be female, which has not ended yet.

Outline

I. The French Revolution left an ambiguous legacy.
   A. What was the relationship between the Terror and human rights? The French Revolution produced judicial murder by the guillotine and the frenzy of the Great Terror on one side but the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* on the other.
   B. The doctrine of absolute equality in rights is social dynamite. Where does it end? As early as 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville saw that the principle of equality was irresistible.
   C. de Tocqueville said that the demand for equal treatment is “providential.” It recognizes that no distinctions of race, creed, gender, age, language, or occupation are permissible.
   D. Equality has become a “human right.” The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* is the source of the U.N. Convention on Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Helsinki Agreement on Human Rights—it is part of our world now.
   E. The French Revolution both severed heads and established equality as *the* fundamental human right.
   F. The concept of equality often embodies contradictions.
      1. In the name of equality, the French Revolution gave religious minorities in France, such as Jews and Protestants, full rights as citizens. Yet it refused to recognize their rights as groups.
      2. Judaism and Islam are essentially communal religions and, by definition, each is “a separate order within the state.” A strictly orthodox Jew or Muslim is obliged by God to live as a “separate order.” Hence, there is dilemma: to be equal but not a Jew or a Muslim or to remain true to the religion and not be equal.
      3. Certain Protestant denominations (Mennonites, Amish) are also separate orders within the state. The Roman Catholic Church and its priesthood constitute a separate order.
      4. The French Republic, the revolutionaries believed, was an indivisible unit made up of citizens and the state with nothing in between, no guilds, no free associations, no distinct religious congregations.
      5. The revolution rejected the “private” sphere, bringing equality for the individual, but not the group.
   G. What is the identity of the equal citizen? Who is he or she?
      1. The simple idea that all are equal turns out to be complicated.
      2. Are a linebacker for the Philadelphia Eagles and a professor of history equal in physical strength? In verbal skills? In salary for their services?
      3. Are adults and children to be considered equal, and what is the meaning of *equal rights* here? Do teenage children have an equal right to their opinions? To access to alcohol?
      4. Do men and women have an equal right to breastfeed their children or to become linebackers for the Philadelphia Eagles?
   H. How does equality deal with human nature?
      1. The radical abstractness of the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* runs into the reality of human difference, variety, complexity, and connectedness.
2. The Burkean answer is to condemn the revolution as idealist nonsense, because human beings are simply unequal. Yet, as Leslie Stephen showed in 1881, Burke missed the main point. That view was no longer tolerable.

3. The old ideas of the natural inequality of human beings, the rightness of slavery, the appropriateness of privilege, the subordination of women, the exclusion of Jews from civil society, the divine right of kings were rotten. Increasingly, they were seen as unjust, unreasonable, or unrealistic.

II. Mary Wollstonecraft’s career was made possible by the new public sphere and the opportunities it opened for women.

A. Wollstonecraft had a miserable childhood. Her father, an unsuccessful gentleman farmer who lost his fortune, was a bully and a wife-beater. Mary’s long-suffering mother was from a good Irish Protestant family. Mary’s life was that of the impoverished single daughter of “good family” down on her luck.

B. Mary had the dreary choices open to somebody in her situation. She had a limited formal education, which allowed her, at most, to teach in a school for small children or to work as a governess. A friendly clergyman here and there helped her to gain a little knowledge, and she gained more through her periods as a governess to an elderly widow, then to the children of the Irish peer Lord Kingsborough.

C. The publication of Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1785) and a short novel gave Wollstonecraft the courage to go to London. In 1788, she began working as a translator for the London publisher James Johnson, who published several of her works, including the novel Mary: A Fiction (1788). Her early adult life serves an example of the way the new market for ideas offered opportunities for women.

D. Wollstonecraft translated enormous numbers of works but lived on as little as she could. She supported her father and helped her sisters to train to earn their living as teachers. She helped one brother to qualify for the navy and paid for her other brother to transfer his indentures.

E. In 1792, Wollstonecraft left England to observe the French Revolution in Paris, where she lived with an American, Captain Gilbert Imlay. In the spring of 1794, she gave birth to a daughter, Fanny. The following year, distraught over the breakdown of her relationship with Imlay, she attempted suicide.

F. Wollstonecraft returned to London to work again for Johnson and joined the influential radical group that gathered at his home, which included William Godwin, Thomas Paine, Thomas Holcroft, William Blake, and after 1793, William Wordsworth.

G. Her mature work on woman’s place in society is A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792), which calls for women and men to be educated equally.

H. Wollstonecraft’s story contains several important elements to notice:
   1. The existence of the public sphere in London made her career possible. The printing and publishing businesses needed skilled workers; a translator or freelance writer could be female and work out of sight.
   2. The presence of a sympathetic radical circle at the publisher’s home enabled Wollstonecraft to meet the foremost figures in British and American radicalism.
   3. The Enlightenment debate on first principles and theories of society had prepared the ground for radical reconsideration of all human relations, even before 1789. David Hume, Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, and Tom Paine had created a market for radical works and ideas in the years between 1776 and 1789, and Wollstonecraft had an audience ready for her message.
   4. The new “open society” and this debate undermined the old order. The status quo no longer seemed reasonable, fair, or defensible.

III. Wollstonecraft’s life was also a woman’s tragedy: She suffered with an unfaithful lover and died in childbirth.

A. Her life shows vividly the dramatic clash between the hope of equality and the reality of suicide, despair, and abandonment.

B. Her romantic attachments were part of the new “liberated” world. Wollstonecraft was the new woman, the person of principle, for whom marriage was simply an empty social convention; lovers must be free. She refused to marry Gilbert Imlay and burden him with her family responsibilities.

C. Imlay sent her to Scandinavia, where she conducted some business. When she got back in 1794, she found that he had moved in with an actress. She returned to London determined to kill herself. She went to
Putney Bridge on a rainy October night, walked up and down until her clothes were soaked, and jumped. Some bystanders saved her.

D. She had met a fellow radical, William Godwin (1756–1836), through Johnson, her publisher and sponsor. Godwin was as radical as she, publishing in 1793 a work that attacked the very idea of government.

E. In 1796, Wollstonecraft began a liaison with Godwin and got pregnant. This time, she decided it was safer to be married and, on March 29, 1797, she married Godwin. Six months later, on September 10, 1797, at age 38, Wollstonecraft died, after the birth of her daughter.

F. The daughter, Mary Godwin, ultimately married the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and wrote the novel *Frankenstein*.

IV. The first chapter of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) opens with a statement of the need to return to first principles and question prevailing prejudices.

A. The problem was one of doing away with prejudice, which men seem to want to justify.

B. Wollstonecraft then launches a fierce attack on all forms of subordination, especially to kings. Equality is necessary because of human imperfection. Because we are weak and prone to error, nobody should exercise authority over anybody else.

C. In chapter 2, Wollstonecraft sets out the case for women and attacks their subordination: “Women are told from their infancy… that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience, and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man; and should they be beautiful, every thing else is needless, for, at least, twenty years of their lives.

D. Why are women in such a weak position? Wollstonecraft answers that they lack regular education and have not been challenged to use reason.

E. The tone throughout the work is that of a rational, enlightened author, committed to equality, not just of the sexes but of all mankind. Love is “transitory”; friendship is steadier and to be preferred. Friendship requires equality of intellect and status. The long-run prospects are good because of the new “science of politics.”

V. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* is a splendid work, vivid, clear, and powerfully written. It is the first serious feminist tract and one of the greatest. Its language and tone arise from a combination of the theories of the Enlightenment and Wollstonecraft’s experience with French politics.

A. The “science of politics” was still a hopeful activity, before Jacobin dictatorship and the Terror. In its origins, feminism was, thus, a product of the principle of equality.

B. The problem of equality remains, and the Enlightenment argument from “first principles” cannot erase the reality of gender difference, nor did Wollstonecraft live her life by them. Abstract principle cannot make it a matter of indifference whether husbands or wives breastfeed their children.

C. What if women and men actually think differently? Have different instincts in dealing with the world? Wollstonecraft asked why women should not be equal, but it was she, not William Godwin, who died in childbirth.

Essential Reading:
Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman: An Authoritative Text*; Carol H. Poston, ed.

Supplementary Reading:
Janet Todd, *Mary Wollstonecraft*.
Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development*.

Questions to Consider:
1. Do physical (and mental) differences between men and women weaken the idea of absolute equality of rights?
2. To what extent do arguments for the rights of women depend on the idea of reason, as enunciated by Wollstonecraft?
Lecture Eighteen
Napoleon—The Revolutionary Emperor

Scope: Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) was born into a provincial gentleman’s family in Ajaccio, Corsica, and rose to be emperor of France and lord of the greatest empire since Rome. A brilliant general and canny politician, he converted the gains of the French Republic into a monarchy and installed his family as kings and queens. What he could not find was the way to make his clan into a dynasty that could survive his death. He attacked Russia in 1812 but was defeated by “King Winter.” His empire crumbled as his army lost battles. Yet, when he escaped in 1815 from exile on the island of Elba and returned to France for the “Hundred Days,” the whole empire reemerged as if by magic. Napoleon raises the problem of the power of the human personality in an acute way. What was his secret? What is charisma?

Outline
I. In a time of revolution, there is always a problem of the army, either the anti-revolutionary armed forces or the new revolutionary army.
   A. Revolutions create the potential for anarchy, for which the power of an armed force is the best antidote. An army is a form of social order.
      1. On June 4, 1790, Jean-Frédéric (1727–1794), count de la Tour du Pin, minister of war in the new French constitutional government, warned the National Assembly of the dangerous lack of discipline in the French army.
      2. The principle of equality was undermining the authority of officers. The officers were (indeed, had to be) nobles, and the soldiers were mostly peasants or workers. As we saw in the last lecture, equality as a doctrine is social dynamite. If all are equal, why have officers at all? Why not elect the officers?
      3. The count warned that such an army was a threat to the revolution.
   B. Napoleon’s career was entirely dependent on that situation. He admitted, “I am a child of the revolution.”
      1. The revolution changed career prospects for everybody. An open society meant “career open to the talents,” as it was called, another consequence of the principle of equality.
      2. There was no chance for a Napoleon to rise under the Old Regime, although he had enough noble ancestry to get into the cadet academy. He had neither money nor connections at court.
      3. The great generals of the Napoleonic wars came from varied social backgrounds, but all were, of course, young. In 1799, Napoleon himself was only 30.
   C. Napoleon Bonaparte was born on August 15, 1769, in Ajaccio, Corsica, shortly after the island’s cession to France by the Genoese.
      1. He was the fourth child of Carlo Buonaparte, a lawyer, and his wife, Letizia Ramolino. His father belonged to an ancient Tuscan noble family, which had emigrated to Corsica in the 16th century.
      2. His father’s aristocratic background allowed Napoleon to have a military career. He entered a military academy before 1789.
      3. He was a commissioned officer in the artillery at age 16. He read a good deal of Enlightenment literature, as Robespierre had done.
   D. The army was not a Napoleonic creation. The origins of new French tactics arose from the character of the revolutionary French society.
      1. The new French army was similar to the American Continental Army of 1776–1783. It was an ad hoc, unplanned creation.
      2. There were large-scale defections of former royal officers and the Terror eliminated many who had the wrong background.
      3. The defections and executions produced a disintegration of the military structures and a lack of discipline and traditional training.
      4. By 1793, the French army had no proper training or decent supply system, but it did possess the ability to mobilize large numbers of citizens.
      5. The French Revolution’s greatest military innovation was the introduction of universal conscription. The so-called levée en masse of August 16, 1793, meant total mobilization of a whole society, including women, children, and the elderly, for the first time in history.
6. This was a unique explosion of national power and a stark contrast with the professional army of the Old Regime, which used impressments, beating, and drill to discipline its soldiers.

7. The French Revolution created what some called a “military democracy,” an army of zealots and believers. The new French soldiers were not gentlemen and not bound by the concept of honor. New tactics were possible, because the soldiers were free citizens who believed that what they were doing was right.

E. The revolution won its most important battles from 1792 to 1798; it was “safe” by the time Napoleon seized power. Napoleon was, perhaps, its most brilliant general in the years 1795–1799, but he was not alone or unique in that capacity.

II. Napoleon was a genius in the literal sense of the word. His power rested in his personality, his charisma.

A. The concept of charisma as a political category was invented in the 20th century.
   1. The word comes from a Greek term meaning “favor” or “gift.” It has come to be defined as “the magnetic appeal of a leader, arousing popular loyalty.”
   2. The modern theory of leadership was developed by Max Weber (1864–1920), a German sociologist, economist, and political scientist. Napoleon falls under his “charismatic” category. People obey such a leader because they believe in him or her.
   3. Napoleon had a great impact on others. Like Hitler or Osama bin Laden, he had a strong sense of his special mission in life and persuaded those around him to believe in his mission.
   4. Napoleon’s care for his troops was extraordinary, and his soldiers responded with complete and permanent loyalty to him as a commander.

B. Napoleon also had astonishing physical and mental abilities. He had the capacity to work 18 to 20 hours a day. He once went three days without sleep but was able to sleep at will.
   1. Like Stalin, he had total recall memory, which was extremely useful in commanding armies of 200,000 men without radio or telegraph. Napoleon always had the complete order of battle in his head and knew where every platoon should be.
   2. It seemed that his powers were almost godlike.

III. Napoleon’s rise to power followed the arc of revolutionary developments.

A. Napoleon supported the radicals in 1793 and 1794, and his Jacobin sentiments gained him the patronage of Robespierre. Hence, he was in serious trouble when Robespierre fell.
   1. Through luck or shrewdness, he waited for his chance in Paris.
   2. A right-wing uprising tried to seize power in 1795. Napoleon was appointed to defend the National Convention and shot down the columns of rebels marching against it on October 5, 1795.

B. “The whiff of grapeshot,” as he called it, made him famous, and he married Josephine Bauharnais (1763–1814), who was older and well connected. She rose with him until he needed a better wife in 1809.

C. The real genius of Napoleon was revealed in his brilliant campaign in Italy 1796–1797, in which he consistently disobeyed orders from Paris.
   1. He was then given command of the army of Egypt to destroy the British Empire. Like Rommel in 1941–1942, Napoleon had dramatic success at first and got as far as Syria in 1798.
   2. On August 1, 1798, Admiral Horatio Nelson destroyed the French fleet, and the allies began to push the French revolutionary armies back in Europe.

D. On August 22, 1799, Bonaparte left his command in Egypt, arrived in Paris on October 14, and made contact with two government insiders who were plotting to overthrow the existing system.
   1. The brains behind the plot belonged to the Abbé Sieyès (1748–1836), a true survivor and a key player. Emmanuel Sieyès was a priest of bourgeois origins who became famous in 1789 for his pamphlet “Qu’est-ce que le tiers état?” (“What Is the Third Estate?”). Sieyès answered, “the nation.” He had been active at every stage of the revolution between 1789 and 1799 and had been looking for a tame general for some time; “I need a sabre,” he said.
   2. The coup d’état took place on November 9, 1799, with the help of Talleyrand and Fouche, the secret police chief. Sieyès designed a new dictatorial constitution, based on the organization of the Roman Republic, with Napoleon, Sieyès, and Pierre Roger-Duclos as consuls. Napoleon simply deposed the others and took power.
IV. Napoleon transformed France as much as the revolution had done. France today is as much Napoleon’s work as that of the men of 1789.

A. He first set about to tame the French Revolution.
   1. Napoleonic authority rested on the loyalty of the army, his personal charisma, and the use of the plebiscite, which he described as “authority from above; confidence from below.”
   2. Dictators like plebiscites. The Electoral College in the Constitution of 1787 was designed to prevent dictators from using direct elections as plebiscites.

B. Napoleon preserved the material gains of the revolution; he was not an ordinary military dictator. In many ways, he was still a Jacobin, but he knew how to choose the right bits.
   1. The French Revolution was “history’s greatest land transfer,” and in the new dictatorial Constitution of the Year VIII (December 25, 1799), Napoleon confirmed the sale of national property and upheld legislation against the émigrés.
   2. The new constitution had no guarantee of the “rights of man” and made no mention of “liberty, equality, and fraternity,” which meant that it renounced Jacobin radicalism.
   3. In other words, the new dictatorship secured the ill-gotten gains of the winner and cut the radical ideology.
   4. Napoleon was too shrewd to try to suppress the principle of equality. The Uniform Code of Justice (1804) established equality before the law and, together with his other codes, is still the permanent law of Europe today and of the State of Louisiana.

C. Napoleon transformed the administration of France by giving the Ministry of the Interior new powers.
   1. He created the prefectoral system to govern the 83 departments of France and closed the local democratic assemblies. It was the beginning of modern French administration.
   2. His dictatorship aimed to enforce uniformity and control. France was “modernized” by the creation of fundamental institutions, such as the Council of State and the so-called “great schools.”

D. There was, however, a problem of legitimacy. After all, Napoleon had taken power by “force and fraud.”
   1. During his entire career, he pursued an elusive goal: how to establish the regime for good?
   2. One answer was repression. He created the first modern police state and introduced severe press censorship.
   3. He created a whole range of new rewards; for example, the Legion of Honor was established on May 19, 1802. One of his advisors, a former Jacobin, said, “but it is bauble, Sire.” Napoleon replied, “Men are ruled by almost nothing else.”

E. Another device to win support was the establishment of the empire.
   1. In 1802, a plebiscite was held: “Shall Napoleon Bonaparte be consul for life?” In August, an overwhelming vote granted him the prolongation of his consulate, as well as the right to designate his successor. France was practically a monarchy already.
   2. Napoleon then transformed the consulate into an empire on December 2, 1804. The pope performed the coronation, but Napoleon took the crown himself and placed it on his head, a deeply symbolic act (but illegitimate).
   3. His Corsican family members were now princes. His seven brothers and sisters became royalty.
   4. A new aristocracy was created for the “new” men and women; his generals all became kings, princes, and dukes.

F. The French Revolution had attacked the Catholic Church. Napoleon reached an agreement with Pope Pius VII in 1801 to normalize church-state relations, although his own attitude toward religion expressed cynicism and manipulation.

G. The Habsburg alliance and marriage was another attempt to stabilize the empire. It was a rich irony that the French revolutionaries, who guillotined Marie Antoinette, now welcomed the fact that Napoleon was marrying her niece, Marie-Louise (1791–1847). Marie-Louise was married to Napoleon in Paris in April 1810. On March 20, 1811, she bore him the long-desired heir.

H. None of these efforts worked for the long term. Napoleon’s rule was a military dictatorship. His defeats in war eventually destroyed the empire, Habsburg queen notwithstanding.

V. The reaction against the French Revolution and Napoleon undermined the legitimacy of both.
   A. The Napoleonic Empire, for those who had been occupied by it, had two distinct sides:
1. Napoleon and the French exploited conquered territory, which contrasted with their revolutionary ideals.
2. On the other hand, the new Napoleonic states were progressive, modern, and open to the middle classes.

B. Napoleon’s success speeded up the reform of ancien régime armies, which were given new drill routines and a new spirit.

C. Great Britain could not be conquered and continued to harass the empire with its naval and commercial power. Britain financed the enemies of Napoleon.

D. The role of Russia was disturbing. Napoleon could not control it either.
1. There is a parallel between Napoleon and Hitler in this respect.
2. The 1812 invasion of Russia by the grande armée brought about the end of the empire. We shall see how in Lecture Nineteen.

E. Resistance to French occupation hastened the emergence of nationalism, because the French democratized societies by introducing rights, freeing peasants and Jews, and establishing the law codes.
1. The reaction against the Enlightenment turned into Romanticism, which eroded the claims of the French.
2. Romanticism merged with anti-French nationalism to glorify the occupied people and their suffering and to attack all abstract universal terms, such as “liberty, equality, and fraternity.”

VI. The comparison with the Nazi regime favors Napoleon. Hitler left Europe a smoking ruin with 20 million dead and a complete political vacuum. Napoleon left Europe permanently modernized and stabilized, instituting a rational code of law, establishing rational boundaries and modern structures for European states, and opening careers to men of talent.

A. His wars and occupations were great engines of modernization,

B. Napoleon is the greatest of all the modernizing lives we study and the one whose influence has been most general. After Napoleon, Europe was a different place.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
Geoffrey Ellis, Napoleon, Profiles in Power Series.

Questions to Consider:
1. “I am a child of the revolution,” said Napoleon. Was he?
2. What is charisma? How does it work?
Lecture Nineteen
Metternich—The Spider and the Web

Scope: Clemens Wenzel Nepomuk Lothar, Prince von Metternich (1773–1859), was Napoleon’s great adversary, not on the field of battle but over the lacquered tables of diplomacy. Prince Metternich was an aristocrat of the old school, danced beautifully, and had many lovers. His family had been independent rulers of a small principality until the French Revolution wiped the tiny states away. He became foreign minister of Austria and put Europe back together in 1814 and 1815 after the French Revolution and Napoleon had twisted it to their purposes. He then ruled Europe by persuasion, by suppression of liberties, and by maintaining the balance of power. Henry Kissinger learned his trade by studying Metternich. Do conservatives, who have a low view of human nature, make better statesmen than liberals?

Outline

I. What was the meaning of restoration after 25 years of revolution, war, and Napoleon’s empire? What could be “restored” of Old Europe?
   A. The survivors and leaders of the allied governments hated anything to do with Jacobinism. They desired to restore the Old World, literally.
   B. The year 1815 was a new era, and everybody knew it. After 25 years of upheaval and turmoil, new states and boundaries had been created, and vast changes of population and wealth had occurred.
   C. However, Europe faced the unavoidable fact of Napoleon’s legacy.
      1. The Swiss Confederation of 1803 had been created by Napoleon, and the modern federation was in place. Should it abolished?
      2. All ghettos and other restrictions on Jews had been abolished where France ruled. Would that situation be maintained?
      3. Napoleon had reformed dozens of German and Italian states and had abolished the old jigsaw puzzle of mini-states. The Holy Roman Empire had been destroyed.
      4. The surviving states had been modernized. They had been given the Code Napoleon, the prefects, and administrative centralization systems of France. Reactionary kingdoms were now efficient, modern, and rational. Were they “Jacobin” structures, too tainted with the evil of revolution to survive?
   D. The problem of legitimacy was now no longer Napoleon’s but that of the restored states. What claim could they advance?
      1. The victorious states were all monarchies. They wanted to reassert the divine right of kings, as opposed to the will of the people. Yet the idea that the will of the people was the real basis of legitimacy had been spread widely.
      2. Were the smaller princes, dukes, and counts, like Metternich himself, who had lost their thrones, to be restored?
      3. The justification of royal power applied to aristocratic power, as well. A noble was, indeed, a little king. His authority rested on history and his status; it was not a product of reason or logic.
      4. The religious princes were also a concern: Many archbishops had been almost mini-popes, rulers of sovereign territories. The French Revolution had abolished all the sovereign episcopal states, and Napoleon had twice arrested the pope and abolished the papal states. If the pope were to be “restored” as a temporal ruler of the papal states, what about the prince-bishops?
      5. The middle-sized kingdoms in Germany had made substantial territorial gains. Napoleon had used their greed to enlarge and compromise them. Should these corrupted states be punished and forced to disgorge their gains?

II. The problem of international order was how to restore the balance of power.
   A. France had dominated Europe so completely that only a coalition of all the other nations had contained and defeated it. How could a balance of states of equal power be restored?
   B. The French Revolution transformed the 18th-century balance of power.
      1. First, it brought about a significant increase in French military power and political idealism.
2. Second, it introduced revolutionary ideology as a cause: liberty, equality, and fraternity. In the end, the French made better soldiers because they were free.
3. The idea of equality was now loose in the world. The reactionary kingdoms had to concede some reforms to their subjects to free them enough to fight the French. Equality was explosive.

C. How were the victorious allies to restore order, subordination, and the divine rights of kings in the post-revolutionary world? The genie had to be put back in the bottle. The postwar dilemma was twofold.
1. On the international level, the allies had to restore the balance of power, to contain the French threat without making Russia too powerful.
2. On the domestic level, they had to restore nonrevolutionary authority but using the modernized state institutions, many of which had been introduced by the French Revolution.

III. The power vacuums in Europe posed the most important immediate challenge to the peacemakers.
A. The German problem was the most complicated and had the most dangerous implications, because Austria and Prussia were both great powers but also German states. Should the peacemakers aim at the restoration of the old Reich?
1. Complete restoration was impossible. These states had encompassed more than 3,000 units, some tiny and insignificant.
2. It was also probably undesirable, because the new kings of Bavaria and Württemberg; the grand duke of Baden; and the kings of Prussia, Saxony, and Hannover had all made significant gains. Napoleon had bribed them by encouraging them to swallow up the little states, bishoprics, and free cities in their borders.
3. All the surviving German states were quisling ("traitor") states. Should German quisling states keep their gains? Be punished?

B. The Italian problem was almost as tricky, because Napoleon had abolished the Republics of Genoa and Venice and, at various times, the papal states, as well.
1. Napoleonic reorganization had been thorough in Italy and long-standing. He had begun it as a 27-year-old general in command of the army of Italy in 1796–1797.
2. Should the papal states be restored? What about the northern Italian kingdoms, the kingdom of Naples, and the two Sicilies?

C. These questions had to be answered in an ad hoc fashion as the Napoleonic order began to disintegrate after the French invasion of Russia in 1812.

IV. The construction of a lasting peace and the restoration of order were the business of a meeting of the great powers and representatives of hundreds of smaller powers at the Congress of Vienna in 1814–1815.
A. The main actors at the Congress of Vienna were the tsar of Russia, Alexander I; the king of Prussia, Frederick William III; the emperor of Austria, Francis I (as Francis II, Holy Roman Emperor); King Louis XVIII of France; and King George III of Britain, who was not present because of his notorious “madness.”
B. But the producer and director was Metternich, Austrian chancellor from 1809 to 1848. Metternich was, perhaps, the greatest conservative statesman in modern European history; Vienna was his masterpiece.

V. Metternich was a perfect representative of the Old Regime.
A. He was born on May 15, 1773, in Koblenz. His family were Reichsgrafen, or “imperial counts,” and had a “county” of 75 square miles of territory, which yielded an annual income of £25,000. The Metternichs were not subjects to anyone but the emperor himself.
B. Metternich was socially in rank close to kings and princes. He was intensely aware of his standing as a great lord and behaved accordingly. He gave lavish parties, carried on numerous love affairs, and lived in a grand manner.
C. Contemporaries were often contemptuous of him, commenting that he seemed to be more concerned with matters of entertainment and extramarital affairs than diplomacy.
D. His wife was Eleonore von Kaunitz, the daughter of Maria Theresa’s foreign minister. Metternich had married into the most important diplomatic family in the empire.
E. His early career was conventional. He served as ambassador in Saxony, in Prussia, and finally, in Paris in 1809, when the emperor named him foreign minister.
Metternich’s diplomacy rested on a variety of techniques.
1. He had an extraordinary “feel” for the real elements in any situation and an uncanny ability to wait for the right moment.
2. Metternich loved spiders, an odd taste that gives us an insight into his methods. The spider is a perfect metaphor for Metternich’s technique—carefully spinning webs of intrigue and persuasion.
3. He had a dark view of human nature. He believed that the main job of diplomacy is to restrain human bestiality. Because any political order is fragile, statesmanship’s main object is not to disturb it.

Metternich was always a royal servant and subject to the will of the emperor. His relationship with Francis I was the basis of his power.
1. Here, we encounter the mystery of human chemistry. The emperor trusted Metternich. There is a striking parallel to Bismarck’s career. The positions of both were dependent on royal confidence.
2. Francis I disliked change. To every proposal, he would reply, “darüber muss man schlafen” (“let’s sleep on that”).
3. Metternich was always acutely aware of the weaknesses of the Austrian Empire. He knew about its inability to concentrate its immense resources and to collect taxes or balance its budget.
4. Because Austria could not operate on its own, Metternich convinced the emperor of the need to ally with Napoleon in 1809. He arranged the marriage of the emperor’s daughter to Napoleon but was not discredited when he turned against Napoleon.
5. After Napoleon’s defeats in Russia, Metternich waited patiently to find the perfect moment to betray France. It arrived in August 1813, when Austria declared war on the French Empire.

After France was defeated in October 1813, the Congress of Vienna was called to make peace in Europe.

The Congress, which took place from September 1814 to June 1815, was one of the most important international conferences in European history, called to remake Europe after the downfall of Napoleon I.

Metternich had to achieve stability in Europe, but to make a peace that did so meant depriving the victorious powers of victory. Russian forces had reached Paris, and Prussia was a close ally of Russia.

The other problem was how to repress the “poison” of French revolutionary ideas, such as government by the people or the principle of equality.

Domestic order and international peace were interlocked, because popular unrest or a revolution in any state created the threat of new power vacuums and the danger of intervention by a great power.

Metternich’s brilliance was revealed in the way he solved this double dilemma. The main points of the Vienna settlement are as follows:
1. Austria was to become the center of the European balance of power but at the cost of an active foreign policy.
2. France under Louis XVIII was to be welcomed as a great power and not to be punished for the deeds of the Jacobins or Napoleon.
3. Austria became the protector of the smaller kingdoms in spite of the fact that they had taken territory from Austria. Metternich offered them a position of mutual advantage.
4. He created a system of consultation, the Congress System, to make sure that no great power could spring any nasty surprises.
5. He agreed to the Holy Alliance to please Alexander, even though he thought that Christianity should be kept out of politics.
6. Censorship and abolition of all constitutions in European states would keep the lid on democratic urges. Metternich also formed an international coalition against political progress. All political gains were to be withdrawn, including those made by Jews.

Metternich restored the idea of royal legitimacy as far as he could. He encouraged the search for a new value system to replace the shattered one. He was helped by the spread of Romanticism and extremely conservative religious attitudes.

Metternich was a realist and compromised with what could not be undone. Many of the Napoleonic reforms were accepted, such as the recognition in 1815 of the Swiss Confederation or the usefulness to Austria of Napoleon’s German Confederation.

Metternich worked closely with Great Britain in spite of its liberal domestic order, because he saw that the British had a strong interest with Austria in maintaining a balance of power on the Continent.
VII. The “success” of the Metternich system was impressive. Its achievements included the following:

A. The system preserved the peace among the European great powers from 1815 to 1848. Great power conflict was the most dangerous threat to the European order; Metternich’s system avoided that by insisting that the powers consult collectively before acting.

B. As a statesman, Metternich saw the need to use power cautiously. Because all change disturbs the balance of power, no change, he thought, was likely to be desirable.

C. How could change be prevented?
   1. The principle of equality and what he thought were its consequences—the Terror, the wars—haunted Metternich.
   2. The only solution was to repress such ideas and their spread.
   3. Repression of liberty would prevent all change. Metternich imposed censorship, used spies, and jailed terrorists.

D. But change was inevitable, in spite of repression. Lord Palmerston said to the Austrian ambassador in 1848: “Your repressive and suffocating policy is also a fatal one and will lead to explosion just as certainly as a boiler that was hermetically sealed and deprived of an outlet for steam” (Sked, *Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815–1918*).

E. Did the revolutions of 1848 prove Palmerston right and Metternich wrong? Metternich’s diplomacy kept the peace from 1815 to 1848.

F. Are conservatives better than liberals as statesmen?
   1. Conservatives have a pessimistic view of human nature. Is that realism?
   2. Are Metternichian attitudes compatible with democracy and faith in the people?
   3. Even the most developed human shrewdness runs into the law of unexpected consequences. For example, by giving Prussia three river valleys rich in coal, (which, of course, nobody knew in 1815) Metternich unwittingly ensured that Prussia would defeat Austria in 1866.
   4. It is an irony of history that the most conservative upholder of the balance of power upset it more than anybody else. Burke would have been amused by that outcome.

**Essential Reading:**

Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire, 1815-1918*.

**Supplementary Reading:**


**Questions to Consider:**

1. Is there a “law of unexpected consequences” in human affairs?
2. Discuss the proposition that conservatives make better diplomats than liberals.
Lecture Twenty

N. M. Rothschild—Financier to the World

Scope: Nathan Mayer Rothschild (1777–1836) was the “English” Rothschild, one of five remarkable brothers whose father sent them to five European capitals to found banks. In the 1820s, this Jew from the ghetto of Frankfurt, who spoke broken English all his life, was probably richer, relative to his times, than Bill Gates is today. He got that way by acting as an agent of the British government in supplying subsidies to the powers opposing Napoleon I. He made Wellington’s victory over the French in Spain and, later, the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815 possible by supplying the British army and its allies with gold bullion, some of which he had to smuggle through the French blockade. He invented the international bond. Foreign government stock could be sold in Copenhagen or Naples as easily as in London, because the bonds paid interest and capital in pounds sterling, eliminating currency risk. Rothschild came to symbolize the power of “Jewish finance” and figured in the creation of modern anti-Semitism.

Outline

I. The name Rothschild is an international emblem of high finance.
   A. N.M. Rothschild & Sons is still in business after two centuries in London’s financial district, the only one of the five original Rothschild banks to have survived without interruption. It is still a functioning and profitable English “merchant bank” (investment bank) and a family business.
   B. What was the reality behind the Rothschild myth?
      1. In 1797, the Rothschilds were based in the Jewish quarter of Frankfurt, dealing in antiques and money-changing. Within a generation, they had become the richest family in Europe.
      2. Niall Ferguson, the author of the first study of the family to use the private archives, estimates that in 1825, the Rothschilds had combined assets greater than those of the Banque de France.
      3. The market share of the London house alone in the international lending business was considerable. The London bank was responsible for nearly 30 percent of all Britain’s government loans and 18 percent of both the French and the Holy Alliance international loans. The Rothschild London branch was equally important in the market for trade bills and domestic loans.
   C. What is the explanation of their success? The answer can be found in a combination of their Jewish identity, which gave them certain advantages; their use of the family as a business unit; and the outcomes of the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars.

II. The Jews of Europe and their history explain certain background elements in the success of the Rothschilds.
   A. Jews were always a small population. Jews made up less than 1 percent of the population in Britain, France, and Germany.
      1. The majority of Jews in 1800 lived in Eastern Europe, where they had gone after the expulsions from England and France between 1290 and 1320. After they were blamed for the Black Death in 1348 and 1349, most Jews also left Germany for Poland.
      2. In 1300 A.D., there were only about 5,000 Jews in Poland and Lithuania. By 1490, their number had increased to between 10,000 and 30,000 and, by 1765, there were 750,000 in Poland.
      3. The Jews of Eastern Europe are known as Ashkenazi from the Hebrew word for “German”; the other main branch of Jews in Europe was called Sephardim, from the Hebrew for “Spain.”
   B. Jews were unlike any other group in Europe and uniquely “other” as a minority in four ways:
      1. The self-definition of Judaism is that Jews are the “chosen” people and that they undertook a covenant with God to be his vehicle in world history when God revealed the Law to Moses.
      2. Because of this, God ordained that Jews were to maintain a separate identity and to display the visible marks of the covenant.
      3. The Jews were a nation but without their own territory. As the 19th-century trends led to national self-awareness, the Jews seemed anomalous and alien.
      4. The Jews are the people of the Old Testament and have an essential role in the Christian account of salvation.
   C. Jews were a constant problem for Christians.

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1. The continued existence of Jews was a theological problem for Christianity, but not for Islam. Why had Jews continued to exist after the appearance of the Savior?

2. The medieval solution was to remove Jews from Christian communities. At the Lateran Councils of 1179 and 1215, the Roman Catholic Church introduced measures to segregate Jews. One of the aims of the Crusades was to “purify” Christian communities of Jews.

3. The trouble was that kings and princes found the Jews “useful.” They were a literate, commercial population in a world of illiteracy and peasant agriculture. Jews provided the doctors, lawyers, court officials, money-changers, tax collectors, and merchants.

4. The first ghettos were established in Spain and Portugal at the end of the 14th century. The ghettos were typically walled, with gates that were closed at a certain time; all Jews had to be inside the gates at that time or suffer penalties. The Jews continued to be active in business but had to return to their walled prisons at night.

5. Within the ghetto, Jewish inhabitants usually had autonomy, with their own courts of law, their own culture, and their own charitable, recreational, educational, and religious institutions. Economic activities, however, were restricted, and beyond the ghetto walls, Jews were required to wear badges of identification.

D. The Rothschilds lived in the Frankfurt Ghetto, one of the most infamous in Europe. By an ordinance of 1460, Jews were crowded into a narrow, filthy section of the city.

1. The Rothschilds lived in a kind of prison. There was no place for exercise. There was permanent overcrowding and no possibility to escape. The only way to survive was to engage in petty business activities, trading in goods, pawn-brokering, and money-lending (Christians were forbidden to lend money on interest by the Church prohibition against “usury”).

2. The physical characteristics of the ghetto reinforced the religious requirements for self-segregation, including the full beards, caps or hats, and forelocks on the ears that men wore. The unhealthy lifestyle gave the Jews a ghostly pallor and the “ghetto stoop.”

3. Jews used private dialects that easily absorbed words from surrounding languages. Judendeutsch, or “Western Yiddish,” was the language of the Frankfurt Ghetto and of the Rothschilds. It was an important factor in their business, because it served as a secret code. A check or promissory note from one Jewish merchant to another was secure. No robber could read or cash it.

E. The Jews were well adapted to modern capitalism before 1789 opened new possibilities to them and swept away the feudal restrictions on trade and commerce.

1. They were a literate, mobile, commercial population, with special expertise in economic exchange.

2. Study of the Talmud served as a kind of mental gymnastics and prepared them for skilled intellectual activity.

3. Jews were multilingual. They used Hebrew for worship, Yiddish for daily life, and other languages in the market place.

4. They were suited to conduct long-distance trade. A Jew traveling with documents enjoyed complete security of exchange, because his business partners would debit and credit accounts in distant capitals.

5. The Jews lived in tightly knit family units, which was an important element in their commercial activities. Family ties gave some assurance against fraud and refusal to pay out as demanded.

III. The French Revolution was the final stage in the Rothschild’s transformation.

A. The destruction of the Société d’Ordres/Ständestaat by the French Revolution put an end to restrictive privilege, leveled the playing field for individual business activity, and secured modern ownership and transferability of property through the Napoleonic Codes.

B. The French Revolution institutionalized individual rights and abolished corporate rights. On July 10, 1797, Napoleon ordered the destruction of the Venetian ghetto. The Jews were among those who gained from the revolution and empire.

C. During the 19th century, Jews and liberalism were uniquely associated. All conservatism, corporatism, and peasant agriculture were inevitably opposed to Jews, as we saw Burke was. The Jews represented mobility, commerce, money values, banks, and stock exchanges.

D. Because Jews were symbols of modern changes and peculiarly prominent, they were vulnerable to attack. They figured in a new kind of modern paranoia, no longer as Christ-killers, but as the diabolic wire-pullers of world affairs.
E. In the 1790s, the Jews, now liberated, were able to leave the ghetto. An explosion of Jewish creativity and business activity followed.

IV. Let us examine the rise of the Rothschilds.

A. Mayer Amschel Rothschild (1744–1812), founder of the dynasty, fathered 19 children, 10 of whom lived to adulthood and 7 of whom reached their 70s or 80s. Longevity in earlier centuries yielded security and stability and undoubtedly created the basis of the financial survival of the family business.

B. The Rothschilds as bankers benefited from two revolutions: the French political revolution and revolutionary wars, along with the English Industrial Revolution.
   1. The 1790s, the period of the French revolutionary wars, was a key moment for enterprising financiers. At the beginning of the decade, Mayer Amschel was a successful antique dealer, until the Prince of Hesse-Cassel began to use him as a quasi-bank.
   2. In 1796, the French bombarded Frankfurt, and the ghetto burned. The Jews were allowed to move out. The Austrian army began to give contracts to Mayer Amschel and others to supply cash and grain, another opportunity.
   3. The English Industrial Revolution also played a role. In 1798, Nathan was sent to Manchester to act as agent for the family firm in the new machine-made textile business. He found that he could profit by supplying the raw material and dye for textiles and by selling the manufactured goods.
   4. England was the land of cheap manufactured cloth, for which high prices were paid in Frankfurt. The business was complicated by war and the English blockade of the Napoleonic Empire, which began in 1807. Nathan and his brother James, the French Rothschild, made money in smuggling during the blockade.

C. The growth of the Frankfurt business during the war encouraged Mayer Amschel to found a new firm in 1810, Mayer Amschel Rothschild & Sons. (Amschel, Salomon, and Carl were made partners.) Mayer Amschel’s famous will was crucial in firm history because it excluded daughters and sons-in-law. The five brothers were bound by their father’s legacy to maintain unity and collective decision-making.

D. Nathan Mayer founded his own firm, N.M. Rothschild & Sons, in 1811. The main element in his rapid success was Wellington’s campaign in Spain (1808–1812) and the need for gold to pay the troops and supply the army. Nathan got the contract to supply gold to the British army and began a career as official banker to the government.

E. N.M. Rothschild & Sons engaged in huge transactions from 1811 to 1814 and ran equally huge currency risks: balance-of-payment deficits, falls in sterling-denominated bills, and fluctuations in the gold price. The brothers managed the currency and the exchange-rate risks, got the supplies, and smuggled the gold through the French blockade.

F. In addition, Britain subsidized the allies, which provided another opportunity for the Rothschilds. Between 1811 and 1815, Britain paid £42 million to the allies, much of it arranged by the Rothschilds at handsome commissions.

G. The risks were terrifying. From time to time, the Rothschild brothers carried vast debts owed to them by the British government, but Nathan and the brothers survived and became rich.

H. Nathan Mayer now had an international reputation and was known as the Finanzbonaparte (the “financial Bonaparte”) to the Germans.

I. The other great coup was the 1818 Prussian loan. Nathan insisted that the loan be denominated in pounds sterling, not Prussian currency, and that security be deposited in British government bonds in London. He also made the Prussian government establish an amortization fund of the British kind (that is, a regular repayment schedule). The Rothschilds could market the bonds all over Europe because any holder could get interest in his own currency at one of the Rothschild banks.

J. Nathan was rightly credited with the invention of the modern international capital market.

V. Nathan was clearly the commanding figure among the five brothers and the most daring. By the 1820s, he was a celebrity.

A. Rothschild was striking in his appearance, as one visitor, Prince Pückler-Muskau, noted: “his squat, heavy figure, his coarse features, and his curious ill-fitting clothes… retained the influence of the Frankfurt

B. The German ambassador Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote about Nathan to his wife: “Yesterday Rothschild dined with me. He is quite crude and uneducated, but he has a great deal of intelligence and a positive genius for money” (Ferguson, The World’s Banker).

VI. The emergence of modern international finance was a creation of circumstances and the new economic structures.

A. Britain in the 18th century was the first industrial nation and, by far, the wealthiest. Its policy to subsidize its allies on the Continent kept its army small but its costs of payment high. It defended the British Isles with the Royal Navy. Hence, money—large, liquid, transferable sums—was an essential weapon.

B. Nathan Rothschild was the genius who saw how to wield that weapon, with his unique family business, multiple bases of activity, mutual credit arrangements, and trust among the branches. The Rothschild brothers built the first modern “multinational.”

C. Nathan Rothschild was a modern type: the new self-made tycoon. He was the Ross Perot or Sam Walton of the 1800s, crude, intelligent, and obsessed with business. Yet this tycoon was a Jew, which created peculiar resentment.

D. The Rothschilds soon became symbols of the imaginary international Jewish banking conspiracies and the subject of racist and paranoid fancies. The Jews of Europe were to pay with their lives under Hitler for those prejudices.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:

Questions to Consider:
1. Why did Burke and Heine, though very different in politics, think that land, not money, was the only stable basis of society?
2. Why were liberalism and capitalism favorable to the progress of the Jews?
Lecture Twenty-One
Goya—The Painter as Social Critic

Scope: Francisco de Goya (1746–1828) represents another step in the evolution of a recognizable “modern” sensibility. Often considered the “first of the moderns,” he believed in the priority of the artist’s vision over tradition. The uncompromising portrait of his times that Goya infused in his bold paintings and satirical etchings represents a starting point for 19th-century Realism. Like Beethoven, Goya was isolated by deafness; he also exploited the new Romantic cult of genius to exert influence beyond the conventional boundaries of art. He painted the horrors of war and the misery of the poor, using his art for political and social ends. At a time when Spain had lost its empire and independence, Goya embodied the traditions of Spanish culture but re-created them in a highly personal way.

Outline

I. Goya was an artist between two worlds (like C. P. E. Bach in Lecture Nine), between the traditional court painter and the new public artist.
   A. His life was marked by sharp contrasts.
      1. Goya’s rise to prominence was utterly conventional. He began as a typical painter of the Old Regime and advanced by following in the footsteps of Velasquez and Tiepolo, painting ceiling frescos in baroque domes and formal portraits of royals.
      2. Los Caprichos (“Caprices”), a strange collection of etchings of dwarves, witches, grotesque common people, and acts of violence and pornography, appeared in 1799 and was widely sold.
      3. The year after the publication of Los Caprichos, Goya painted a portrait of King Charles IV.
      4. We see the two sides of Goya: the royal, official, religious courtier and the investigator of the hideous underground of the spirit.
   B. Goya’s complex art raises many questions. His complex political career reveals other contrasts.
      1. He was unquestionably an Enlightenment radical intellectual and was friendly with the leading Enlightenment figures.
      2. At the same, he remained deeply Catholic and showed his continued devotion in his religious art.
      3. Goya worked with and for all the regimes: Charles III, Charles IV, the French invading army, and King Joseph Bonaparte. He painted the Duke of Wellington (1807) and the regicide French ambassador Guillemardet. He was investigated by the Spanish Inquisition in 1815 but cleared. He painted Ferdinand VII, the reactionary king of Spain after the Restoration.
      4. Ferdinand VII ordered that Goya be exiled, and the artist spent his last years among liberal exiles in France.
      5. His flexibility was, I think, not opportunism, because of his extraordinary intellectual honesty.
      6. For Goya, art was politics: The Third of May, 1808 has become justly famous and may be compared to Picasso’s Guernica as the emblem of an atrocity.
         a. Goya’s painting was the first representation of one modern horror. The victims of a firing squad are ordinary, unidentified people who took part in the revolt against French rule in 1808 in the first guerrilla (“little war”) in modern history. Their execution was an act of reprisal by French troops.
         b. The contrast between the victims and the power of the French state is shown by the “uniformity” of the firing squad. Goya created a symbol that is still relevant today.

II. The life of Goya was a kind of history of Spain between 1746 and 1828.
   A. Goya’s life gave him a breadth of experience. He rose from poverty to wealth, and his unique role as the artist of his time has turned this period in Spanish history into the “Age of Goya.”
   B. The special features of Spanish history begin with the peculiar place of the Roman Catholic Church.
      1. Spanish Catholicism was historically a “crusade,” called the Reconquista. Spain had to be reconquered and purified after the year 711, when Muslim armies overran the Iberian Peninsula.
      2. For 700 years, Spanish monarchs fought to reclaim the Peninsula, until in 1492, the “Catholic Monarchs,” Isabel and Ferdinand, completed the reconquest by taking Granada.
3. Because of this crusading zeal, Spain was the favorite nation of successive popes.
4. Spanish institutions in church and state were obsessed for centuries by the need for purity. Foreigners and foreign influences threatened Spanish purity, and as part of the victorious reconquest in 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella ordered the expulsion of all Jews. In 1603, the Muslims were also expelled.
5. Forced conversions of Jews and Muslims took place and created a suspect class of *conversos*. Spanish authorities worried: Were they false Christians? Some retained their faith in secret.
6. To counter these threats, Spanish governors and kings issued several statutes in the 15th and 16th centuries that prevented *conversos* and their descendants from occupying posts in religious, military, university, or civil service institutions.
7. But the *conversos* were still in evidence; to root them out, the Holy Inquisition went into action. The Inquisition had been established to combat heresy in 1231, but in 1478, Pope Sixtus IV authorized a special Spanish Inquisition, which became notorious for its use of torture and its severity.
8. Goya played a dangerous game: In *Los Caprichos* and other sketches, he caricatured the Inquisition.
9. In addition, Goya’s associations with radicals and the French government were risky after 1814. In 1815, he was tried before the Inquisition but acquitted. In politics, as in religion, Goya was not, in a simple sense, anticlerical. As always, Goya’s religious attitudes and relationship to the Inquisition were complicated.

C. The Church maintained the status quo. It was a place to settle younger sons of royalty and nobility, yet preserve a family’s economic interests.
1. Benefactors, similar to university donors today, made “naming gifts,” and Church painting and sculpture rewarded them.
2. The Church was a great landlord and, like the nobility, had common interests in maintaining the agrarian order and suppressing peasant unrest.

D. Then, as now, the intense regionalism of Spain threatened unity.
1. Regional differences rested on geographic, economic, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Spain was a union of crowns. The kingdoms of Castille and Aragon, the Basque provinces, Navarre, Galicia, and Valencia all had ancient feudal histories and their own dialects.
2. Spanish rulers feared disunity and disintegration.

E. From 1600 on, the Spanish Empire began its long decline.
1. The Spanish voyages of discovery from 1492 on led to the conquest of much of North, Central, and South America. The great silver mines of Mexico and Peru caused a huge inflation of Spanish currency but provided what seemed, at first, to be inexhaustible resources for the Spanish crown.
2. In the long run, Spain was ruined by the double effort of maintaining an empire abroad and military primacy in Europe.
3. The fanatical determination of Philip II, perhaps Spain’s greatest king, to destroy the Protestant Reformation and preserve Spain’s role as the greatest Catholic power led to bankruptcy by the 1570s.
4. The final slide came during the years 1618–1648, with the Thirty Years’ War. Between 1580 and 1648, Spain went broke trying to keep its holdings in the Netherlands from independence.
5. By 1659, Spain was defeated at home and abroad. The exhaustion of the economy and the great Castilian plateau were the results of the strains of empire and the extension of the system of huge estates.

F. The monarchy became, increasingly, the prize of other great powers.
1. The War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714) broke out when the Spanish branch of the Habsburgs died out. The French tried to install a Bourbon, and the Austrian Habsburgs resisted. Spain lost yet more of its European possessions.
2. The Bourbon dynasty in Goya’s time was unstable. Its foundations rested on French power. Spain was no longer a great power. The shame and humiliation were terrible.
3. Goya served Charles III (1759–1788), Charles IV (1788–1808), and Ferdinand VII (1814–1833). He also painted a portrait of Jovellanos, a radical who believed in creating a free market for land.
4. As the principal royal painter, Goya knew everybody and painted everybody who mattered.
III. When he died at age 82, Goya was still painting vigorously. Some of his most remarkable work was done in his 70s. Let us review some features of his career.

A. On March 30, 1746, Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes was born in Fuendetodos in the province of Aragon, the son of a master gilder.

B. In 1763, Goya entered a drawing competition, organized by the Royal Academy of San Fernando in Madrid, without success. At this time, he was probably studying with and assisting his future brother-in-law, Francisco Bayeu, who became an official court painter and introduced Goya to the court in Madrid.

C. In 1775, Goya and his family left Saragossa for Madrid, where he worked as a painter of cartoons for the royal tapestry factory.

D. Between 1776 and 1783, Goya’s “cartoons” came to the attention of the royal family. He painted several provincial churches and started doing portraits of senior government figures.

E. In 1786, he was appointed painter to King Charles III.

F. In October 1791, Goya sent a report to the Royal Academy of San Fernando, declaring, “there are no rules in painting,” a rejection of everything that academies represented and taught.

G. In January 1793, Goya fell seriously ill in Seville and, by March, was permanently deaf.

H. In February 1799, he published Los Caprichos, an album of 80 prints satirizing the “follies and errors” of society. This was quickly withdrawn from sale, probably because of threats from the Inquisition, but in October, Goya was appointed first court painter.

I. The characteristics of Goya’s career can be summarized as follows:
   1. The importance of connections: He owed his career to the Bayeu family through marriage and their patronage.
   2. The importance of institutions: The academies in Spain and Italy were the paths to achieving professional standing and security.
   3. Goya’s connection to politics: As a court painter and a friend of the liberal elite and the royal family, Goya was more intrinsically political than almost any painter in modern times. Every change of regime involved Goya’s subjects and, hence, his earning power and status.
   4. By the late 1790s, Goya committed himself to Romantic criteria of art. Individual judgment, not the formal rules of the academy, determined artistic creation. He praised “invention” and became part of the Romantic cult of originality.
   5. Goya was a Romantic “genius”: Goya’s mastery of all the forms of painting and etching and his early use of lithography gave him an incomparable dominance over all Spanish art and left an astonishing richness of achievement.
   6. His unrelenting creative energy and productivity deep into old age made him an absolutely remarkable symbol of the way art changed.

IV. We conclude Goya’s life with four observations:

A. Goya was a great success in his own lifetime. He was rich and enjoyed intimate relations with the queens and kings, dukes and duchesses of Spain. He was no starving artist in a garret.

B. Goya was a transitional figure. The 18th century, with its rules and adherence to reason, gave way to the 19th century, with its taste for the unique, the Romantic, and the original. Imagination replaced reason.

C. His art was uniquely double-sided: He was a painter of light, sun, beauty, and the powerful but also of the monstrous, the dark, the grotesque, the ugly, and the powerless.

D. The special character of Goya’s genius was his superb understanding of the human face and his constant fascination with it.

Essential Reading:
Sarah Symmons, *Goya: Art and Ideas*.

Supplementary Reading:
Questions to Consider:
1. Is art ever “above politics”?
2. How do we understand a portrait or a human face?
Lecture Twenty-Two

Giuseppe Mazzini—Idealist of the Nation

Scope: Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) dedicated his life to the revival of the Italian “nation” and to the establishment of a republic of free citizens. He believed passionately in the Risorgimento, or “resurgence,” of the Italian people, yet the realities were completely different. There was no “Italian people” in Mazzini’s time as there was no “Italian language.” Tullio De Mauro estimates that in 1861, when “Italy” was unified, less than 2 percent of the population would have understood Italian if they heard it. This lecture argues that nationalism and the “nation” are imagined or invented. It uses the sounds of Italian dialects today to illustrate the “dark wood of dialect,” the reality that frustrated and ultimately defeated the ideals of Mazzini. Yet the ideal became a reality in spite of the obstacles, for there is today an Italian people.

Outline

I. Nationalism grew as a hybrid mixture of French revolutionary radicalism and Romantic reaction against that radicalism.

A. The French Revolution served as the dominant model from 1789 to 1989. These two centuries were the era of revolutionary change.
   1. The era’s politics rested on certain assumptions about the impact of changing the political (or economic or social or gender) system.
   2. Revolutionaries believed that the change they had in mind would ensure that human beings would be made happy and virtuous; society would be transformed; and the earthly paradise achieved.

B. Nationalism was also an indirect legacy of the revolution because it grew out of the reaction against France and its dominance.
   1. The revolution proclaimed such universal values as liberty, equality, and fraternity.
   2. The French revolutionary armies preached these values but drafted locals, seized goods, and imposed taxes; in other words, they behaved as alien occupiers, not fraternal comrades.
   3. Their new model of state and public participation was also a factor, because they organized their conquered territories into “German,” “Italian,” and “Spanish” states.

C. For radicals and nationalists, the revolution was a blueprint; the Jacobin model was imprinted in the minds of the literate classes.
   1. They believed in rationalization and expansion of the power of the state (uniformity, centralization, the metric system, state monopoly of education, separation of church and state, and so on).
   2. They believed in democratization because, like the Jacobins, they equated the republic with “virtue” and thought that the people were fundamentally good.
   3. Mazzini, who was a radical and a nationalist, added the “nation” to the French-style state and believed that people would become virtuous if they lived in a self-governing, republican state.

D. Romanticism is hard to define beyond saying that it was a set of attitudes and a movement of ideas. It was a revolt against the prescribed rules of classicism and rationalism and a return to nature. Romantics revered the artist as a supremely individual creator. They exalted the senses and emotions over reason and intellect.

E. Romanticism and nationalism emerged together and combined.
   1. Nationalism is also hard to define; roughly, it makes the “national community” (defined by race, history, culture, or language) into the fundamental category of collective identity and demands for that community its own state and institutions.
   3. Language is, Herder wrote, human, not divine, but it grows out of the soul of each person and is the unique expression of the people. Herder’s equation looks like this: each Volk (“people”) has a Seele (“soul”), and that soul expresses itself in a Sprache (“language”).

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4. The equation can be questioned, and its assumptions are unverifiable, but it provided Italian and other nationalisms with a central idea: the popolo Italiano (“Italian people”) was a living creature with its soul expressed in the national language.

5. Mazzini was a believer in this “religion” of the nation.

II. The era after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the Restoration (1815–1848), was an extremely reactionary time. European states feared revolution, Jacobinism, and youth movements.

A. Metternich and Austria had not returned Italian territory seized in 1815. Metternich called Italy “merely a geographical expression,” not a potential unity.

B. The postwar settlement under Metternich had several objectives:
   1. To reverse the Napoleonic changes (the kingdom of Italy).
   2. To create several medium-sized states.
   3. To secure Austrian control of the peninsula.

C. If we look at the map of Italy in 1815, we can see that Austria controlled Lombardy and Venetia, the two richest regions in Italy and the most important sources of tax revenue for the Austrian Empire.

D. To maintain Austrian rule, every trace of the French Revolution and any ideas associated with it had to be suppressed: Jews were returned to the ghettos, books were censored, and schools were closed.

E. The pope was returned to his temporal kingdom, the papal states, and urged to allow no freedom of movement or expression.

F. Pope Gregory XVI (1830–1846) forbade the introduction of gaslights and railroads because there was a danger that modern conveniences would encourage sedition; it was better to keep the people in the dark and in one place.

III. The unification of Italy was a direct consequence of the French Revolution, because the revolutionary model of the unifiers was an underground Jacobinism and their revolutionary objectives were the installation of the rights of man but also the rights of the people of Italy.

A. At first, nationalism was understandably seen as identical to Jacobinism by Metternich and the princes.

B. In fact, nationalism eventually exalted the rights of the national community—its most extreme form was Nazism and its Volksgemeinschaft (“people’s community”)—over individual civil rights, but that could not be clearly foreseen in Mazzini’s day.

C. Nationalism played an important part in the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 in Italy.
   1. The Risorgimento of Italy was a nationalist movement aimed at the “resurgence” of Italian greatness.
   2. Secret societies, such as the Carbonari (“coalmen”), appeared and carried on revolutionary activity. They engineered uprisings in the two Sicilies (1820), in the kingdom of Sardinia (1821), and in the papal states, Modena, and Parma (1831).
   3. Italian literature played a vital role in the resurgence of Italian national identity, because the Risorgimento was a literary and middle-class movement.

IV. Giuseppe Mazzini fits the model of a Romantic hero. He spent his entire life taking part in failed revolutions.

A. He was born in 1805 and, even as a young man, became a member of the Carbonari, was imprisoned briefly, and went into exile.

B. In Marseilles, he founded the secret society Giovine Italia (“Young Italy”), which led a vigorous campaign for Italian unity under a republican government.

C. Mazzini’s influence on Italian radicals, as well as on revolutionaries throughout Europe, grew steadily.

D. During the revolutions of 1848, when uprisings occurred in Milan, the papal states, and the two Sicilies, Mazzini returned to Italy; in 1849, he was one of the leaders of the short-lived Roman Republic, which seized power from Pope Pius IX.

E. After its fall, Mazzini resumed his propaganda from abroad. He organized unsuccessful uprisings in Milan (1853) and an ill-fated expedition in southern Italy (1857). He often came secretly to Italy, although he had been condemned to death in absentia.

F. His ideas were radical, Romantic, and emotional.
1. Here is an example of Mazzini’s thoughts on nationhood: “O, my brothers, love your Country! Our country is our Home, a house God has given us, placing therein a numerous family that loves us, and whom we love…”

2. Note the Romantic language. The nation is a religious cause, and Mazzini uses his eloquence to move emotions. He was a prophet to thousands of Italian emigrant workingmen.

3. He was not corrupt and pursued his ends with singular purity and high ethical values. He believed that ends do not justify means and rejected power politics but not violence.

4. His was the first Italian democratic movement embracing all classes, because Mazzini believed that only a popular initiative could free Italy. “Neither pope nor king,” he declared, “only God and the people will open the way of the future to us.”

5. In the end, Mazzini was unable to create a mass movement, in spite of his fanaticism and purity. There was, in reality, no “Italian people” to “resurge”; that notion was a Romantic illusion.

6. Mazzini was, on the other hand, one of the first modern “terrorists” in his dedication. He believed that “ideas ripen quickly when nourished by the blood of martyrs.”

V. The unification of Italy took place as a rejection of Mazzinian values.

A. Mazzini refused to accept the realities of international power politics, which, he believed, would corrupt the purity of the democratic uprising.

1. In fact, the period 1859–1870 was one of modern state building, but the new states were built by three conservative statesmen, not by Romantic radicals like Mazzini: Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865); Camillo Benso, conte di Cavour (1810–1861); and Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898).

2. The unification of Italy and Germany needed war, and those wars had to be fought against Austria, because the Habsburg monarchy was the central structure of the 1815 settlement.

3. The new factor in the international system after the revolutions of 1848 was Emperor Napoleon III of France. France was a quasi-revolutionary state; Napoleon III imitated his great uncle by rejecting the Vienna settlement of 1815 and showing sympathy with the idea of “Italy.”

B. The man who unified Italy was a liberal conservative, the prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia, Camillo Benso, Count Cavour.

1. Cavour’s character was complex and manipulative. The official editions of his works “selected” and suppressed his cunning and cynicism, because Cavour’s real policies undermined the “myth” of the Risorgimento.

2. In 1858, he made a deal with Napoleon III to enlarge Piedmont and unify Italy. After the French victory over Austria in 1859, Napoleon made a separate peace with Austria. Despite the “sell-out,” Cavour began a policy of Piedmontese expansion by annexing northern territories and using plebiscites.

C. The Risorgimento’s one contribution to Italian unification was Giuseppe Garibaldi’s expedition to Sicily in 1860.

1. Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882) was an Italian patriot and a guerrilla leader in the Mazzinian mold. He was born in Nice and, as a youth, entered the Sardinian navy. Under Mazzini’s influence, he became involved in an unsuccessful republican plot and fled to South America. There, he gained his first experience in guerrilla warfare. Garibaldi was an ideal Romantic hero and a noble leader.

2. On April 4, 1860, in Palermo in Sicily, an insurrection against the Bourbon kings of Naples, rulers of Sicily, began that spread to the countryside and small towns.

3. On May 5, Garibaldi set sail from Quarto near Genoa with 1,000 volunteers, wearing red shirts, to assist the revolutionaries in Sicily. They landed at Marsala to enthusiastic demonstrations and, on May 15, won the battle of Calatafimi.

4. After his victories in Sicily, on September 7, 1860, Garibaldi entered Naples and was received with enthusiasm as a hero.

5. On September 18, the Piedmontese armies routed the pontifical troops at Castelfidardo, and on October 2, Garibaldi and his army of 20,000 defeated the Neapolitan forces at Volturro.

6. On October 26, Garibaldi and Victor Emanuel II met at Teano and reached an accord about a peaceful transfer of power in which Garibaldi accepted King Victor Emanuel II as his sovereign.

7. Italy was now unified, except for the city of Rome, which was still under the pope’s rule and guarded by French troops. Parts of northern Italy stayed under Austrian rule until 1918.
D. Thus, Italy was unified in direct opposition to Mazzini’s values.
   1. It was not unified by a national, popular uprising, nor was unified Italy a democratic republic.
   2. Italy was unified as a result of foreign intervention: France defeated Austria, while Britain and Russia stayed neutral.
   3. The new Italy was a kingdom, a monarchical state, established and ruled by an old aristocracy in Piedmont.
   4. Mazzini’s despair was great. He called the result “the ghost of Italy.”

VI. Mazzini’s project failed because the Risorgimento was, ironically, “the most poetic fact of the century” in a reality that was far from “poetic.”

A. Romanticism fed the Risorgimento and created the world of the Red Shirts, who saw reality through a haze of Walter Scott novels.
   1. The events had a significant impact on European public opinion. Lord Shaftesbury wrote to Cavour on September 12, 1860: “Your revolution is the most wonderful, the most honourable and the most unexpected manifestation of courage, virtue and self-control the world has ever seen.”
   2. Cavour himself was astonished by the European reaction to Garibaldi’s expedition, as he wrote to his ambassador in Paris: “The expedition of Garibaldi has turned out to be the most poetic fact of the century, and is praised by almost the whole of Europe.”
   3. The key words are “the most poetic fact of the century.” The impact of Romanticism is clear here; reality was simply not seen.

B. The harsh social and economic realities could not be wished away by Romantic rhetoric.
   1. Italy was a backward state in every way and by every indicator. Its agriculture was peasant based, and industrialization was rudimentary.
   2. In the new kingdom’s first census, 75 percent of the population was listed as illiterate.

C. The consequence was that the Italian population lived in the “dark wood of dialect,” as Tullio De Mauro has called it. Most people could not understand Italian or the writings of Mazzini and the Risorgimento.
   1. In 1861, Italian was all but a dead language, used almost solely among the educated. Dialects varied across the regions of Italy; some areas even spoke non-Italian dialects.
   2. Dialect does not mean just local accents but separate and mutually incomprehensible linguistic systems.

D. From the beginning, the Risorgimento was a linguistic crusade. The novelist Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873) “invented” modern Italian when he decided to write a novel in Italian in 1821.

E. The “Italian people” needed to speak Italian but did not. Hence—and this explains Mazzini’s failure—they could have no contact with the Risorgimento, nor any understanding of Mazzini’s nationalism and Romanticism.

VII. The disappointment of Mazzini was rooted in the reality of poverty, illiteracy, and economic backwardness.
   Two consequences followed:

A. There was no “Italian people” to rise up and play its part in Mazzini’s Romantic vision. Thus, Italy was founded on a myth believed in by the tiny educated class, rejected by the Roman Catholic Church, and ignored by 80 percent of the population.

B. It was not Italian military power that was able to win independence on its own. The great powers permitted Italy to be unified in their way, which made certain that a conservative government, not Mazzini’s Jacobin republic, was the outcome. Mazzini would always be disillusioned by the new Italy.

Essential Reading:
Denis Mack Smith, Mazzini.

Supplementary Reading:
Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, The Leopard. (One of the great novels of our age; set in Sicily in 1860 during Garibaldi’s invasion.)

Questions to Consider:
1. In what sense is nationalism “imaginary”?
2. Does language always create the basis for national identity? If not, why?
Lecture Twenty-Three

George Eliot—A Scandalous Woman

Scope: George Eliot was the pseudonym of Mary Ann or Marian Evans (1819–1880). An English novelist who grew up in a strict atmosphere of evangelical Protestantism, she eventually rebelled and renounced organized religion. Her generation looked to Germany, where the first scientific study of religion had begun, and she learned German in order to translate The Life of Jesus (1846) by David Friedrich Strauss. The book caused a sensation because it applied the “myth theory” to the life of Jesus and treated the Gospel narrative like any other historical work. Later, Eliot became sub-editor of The Westminster Review, contributed articles, and came to know many of the literary people of the day. In 1854, she began a long and happy relationship with the journalist and philosopher George Henry Lewes. Eliot scandalized her generation, both as a “professional woman” and as a person “living in sin.” This lecture looks at the crisis of religion in Victorian England that made Eliot’s career possible and at Middlemarch, her greatest work, as a reflection of those changes.

Outline

I. George Eliot’s standing among her contemporaries was high. Leslie Stephen, founder of The Dictionary of National Biography and an important literary critic, said that he would have chosen her as the greatest living writer of English in her time.
   A. For most Americans, the challenge of reading George Eliot arises from cultural differences between the English and Americans.
   B. The reader must understand irony, an expression in which the real meaning is the opposite of that intended.
   C. The problem is that English irony clashes with American seriousness. For example, in Middlemarch, Eliot includes an apology to the reader for writing about “low” people. It is difficult to know today if she is really apologizing or making fun of her readers’ snobberies.

II. The Victorian English were preoccupied with social class.
   A. The setting and time of Middlemarch were crucial in this respect. Eliot chose the years between 1829 and 1835 and was precise about the exact setting and political background.
      1. In these years, the forces of society transformed British politics from Burke’s world to the new, more modern society by offering the vote to the middle classes. Middlemarch is at its most brilliant as a chronicle of the provincial middle class, which was about to be enfranchised by the Reform Act of 1832.
      2. Earlier, we saw how the coffeehouse, shops, and publishers provided the basis for the public sphere. This Victorian society provided the “model” middle class for the continental bourgeoisie.
      3. The “gentleman” was a device to allow social mobility; Fred Vincy in Middlemarch is a wonderful example. Fred’s father was the mayor of Middlemarch, but because he was “in trade,” he could not be a gentleman. He paid to send Fred to Cambridge, and Fred’s accent showed that he had “moved up” to gentleman status.
      4. The English “public schools,” especially the new ones founded in the 19th century, performed similar functions and blurred the class boundaries by creating the “public school type” or “good chap.”
      5. This blurring of the significance of social origins in England contrasted sharply with what happened in Prussia or Austria.
   B. The spread of democracy and political reform “from above” led to the Reform Act of 1832, which is central to the structure of Middlemarch.
      1. Because the book is set in the years 1829–1835, the political background is important. Eliot includes scenes from the elections of the period and public meetings, and everybody has an opinion.
      2. “Reform from above” was a uniquely English response to the rise of the new middle classes. A liberal aristocracy, the so-called “Whig Grandees,” took the lead in promoting reforms.
      3. The reforming English nobility was unique in Europe and hard to explain. The highest members of the upper classes decided to share power with the middle classes without the revolutions that occurred on the Continent in 1830–1831 and 1848–1849.
4. One of the main objects of the 1832 Reform Act was the abolition of the “rotten” or “pocket” boroughs, empty districts with few voters, controlled by great landlords. Industrial and commercial cities, such as Birmingham and Manchester, had no MPs. Two characters in Middlemarch discuss the problem.

5. There is an exact parallel in France, where the demand for a wider franchise caused the revolution of 1848; in England, the same demand for a wider franchise produced peaceful reform.

6. The Reform Act of 1832 also brought new voting qualifications, which resulted in an increase of voters, those eligible rising to 717,000, or an increase of nearly 65 percent.

III. The novel was very much an English literary form.

A. The word itself comes from the Italian novella or “short story, tale, or fable.” Certainly, great novels were produced elsewhere before 1700, but English writers first produced what has come to be recognized as the modern novel.

B. The reasons for English predominance in the novel lie in the conditions of the new market. The novel was physically a portable and democratic art. Goya’s paintings were hanging in particular places, while George Eliot’s art could go in your pocket.
   1. Art was a commodity for sale. There was a huge English reading public in the 18th century.
   2. The novel described real people in real situations and served as a mirror to society. Eliot’s Middlemarch consciously imitated Fielding’s Tom Jones, especially Fielding’s tendency to address the reader.
   3. Like Fielding, Eliot “seems to bring [her] armchair to the proscenium and chat with us,” but with a difference: Eliot illuminated the new Romantic, bourgeois self, the idea of the inner life and genius.

IV. Mary Ann or Marian Evans was born in Warwickshire in 1819. Her father was a land agent, managing estates for the better classes, similar to Caleb Garth in the novel.

A. She had a strict evangelical Christian upbringing and attended a fairly good girls’ school in Coventry. In 1841, her father moved to the city of Coventry, where her life changed.

B. Evans met a group of radicals who questioned the tenets of Christianity, one of whom asked her to complete an English translation of Das Leben Jesu (“The Life of Jesus”) by the notorious German theologian David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874). Her new views led to a break with her father over religion in 1842.

C. The religious crisis created the conditions for Evans’s emancipation.
   1. The problem was serious in England in the 19th century.
   2. The natural sciences called into question the truth of the Bible. Findings in geology undermined the biblical account of creation.
   3. The publication of Charles Darwin’s Origin of Species in 1859 was another devastating attack on the creation story.
   4. Science undermined the authority of religion and replaced it with “natural laws.”
   5. The new German Bible criticism, which revealed inconsistencies in the texts, and archaeology in the Middle East provided more fuel for attacks on the Bible as simply another type of mythology.
   6. David Friedrich Strauss studied Hegelian philosophy. His Life of Jesus applied the “myth theory” to Jesus, treated the Gospel narrative as if it were any other historical work, and denied all supernatural elements in the Gospels.
   7. The crisis over his work spread across Europe. Riots broke out in Zurich in 1839 to protest Strauss’s becoming a professor at the University of Zurich. Evans, by her translation of his book, was suddenly at the forefront of an international controversy.

D. Evans moved to London and began a literary career there.
   1. She began to work with John Chapman, publisher of The Westminster Review, and the rumor was that she had an affair with him. She acted as his unpaid deputy editor in exchange for board and lodging. She also translated a book on religion by the left-wing radical Ludwig Feuerbach in 1854, causing further scandal.
   2. In that same year, she met George Henry Lewes, the translator and biographer of Goethe. Lewes and Eliot were instantly united by love and common interests.

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3. Lewes was living in a _ménage à trois_ with Thornton Leigh Hunt and Lewes’s wife, Agnes, who gave birth to a son by Leigh Hunt. Lewes adopted the son but left Agnes. He could not divorce her, because he had condoned the adultery.

4. Eliot and Lewes became an “adulterous pair” and were shunned by good society.

E. Lewes and Eliot lived abroad at first. He encouraged her to write fiction. In 1856, she began _Scenes of Clerical Life_, a series of realistic sketches, which first appeared in _Blackwood’s Magazine_ under the pseudonym Lewes chose for her, George Eliot.

F. Although not a popular success, the work was well received by literary critics, particularly Dickens and Thackeray. Three novels of provincial life followed—_Adam Bede_ (1859), _The Mill on the Floss_ (1860), and _Silas Marner_ (1861). All three were instant successes with large sales.

G. Thackeray’s _Cornhill Magazine_ published her historical romance _Romola_, a story of Savonarola. _Felix Holt_ (1866), a political novel, was followed by _The Spanish Gypsy_ (1868), a dramatic poem, _Middlemarch_ (1871–1872), and _Daniel Deronda_ (1876).

V. The image of the Spanish Catholic mystic St. Theresa of Avila is the central axis of _Middlemarch_, which is an odd way to begin a novel of English provincial life.

A. Eliot’s use of St. Theresa in the prelude tells us that _Middlemarch_ is not a comedy, like its predecessors, but a tragedy of female aspirations.
   1. Dorothea Brooke, who marries a pedant to fulfill her illusion about the scholarly life and “doing great things,” and Rosamond Vincy, who marries the young Dr. Lydgate because he has such good connections and is sure to rise in the world, are latter-day mystic visionaries, like St. Theresa.
   2. Of the main female characters, only Mary Garth, the daughter of the honest land agent Caleb Garth, refuses to aspire.
   3. Mary’s two principles were not to act in a mean or treacherous way and to make no unreasonable claims.
   4. Thus, Mary refuses to open the safe, as Mr. Featherstone lies dying, and to burn his second will, as he orders her to do. She refuses to accept a hundred pounds in cash, even though the Garth family is deeply and desperately in debt.
   5. Her stoicism is not rewarded; the only decent person among the Featherstone family and hangers on, she gets nothing. It is a classic example of tragic irony; we know what the characters do not.
   6. The other oddly blameless female character is Mrs. Cadwallader, the witty, sarcastic, snobbish wife of the nice but lazy rector. Mrs. Cadwallader had married beneath her but for love. She, too, renounces the great world and compensates for her despair at its loss by elaborate, ironic snobbery.

B. The male characters are much more varied, which is a reflection of the wider options open to men.
   1. Lydgate, the young doctor, is just as blind as Rosamond but with nobler objectives than snobbery.
   2. Some of the men are as frivolous as any of the women. Others, such as the Rev. Edward Casaubon, are monsters of self-righteous, self-pitying frigidity.
   3. Yet the good ones share with Mary Garth an almost divine resignation.

C. The women and the men among the “low people” are as varied and different as humanity itself.

D. Thus, _Middlemarch_ goes beyond where Mary Wollstonecraft left the question of women. For Eliot, women are no more nor less victims of their situations than men. Lydgate, for example, loses the battles of wills with Rosamond and dies at 50 quite clearly because of it.

E. Beneath the ironies and the loving reconstruction of individuals in _Middlemarch_, there is a vision of the tragedy of ordinary human lives. George Eliot heard the “roar on the other side of silence” and, out of those noises, created an immortal work of art.

**Essential Reading:**
George Eliot, _Middlemarch_, Rosemary Ashton, ed.
Questions to Consider:
1. What do we gain when we read a really great novel?
2. Why did George Eliot adopt irony as a means of describing her characters in Middlemarch?
Lecture Twenty-Four
The Irish Starve—The Great Famine

Scope: This lecture offers a collective biography of the people of Ireland in the famine of the 1840s. During these years, a blight ruined the potato crop, the staple food of the Irish population, and hundreds of thousands perished from hunger and disease. Many thousands of others emigrated; between 1847 and 1854, about 1.6 million went to the United States. The population dropped from an estimated 8.5 million in 1845 to 6.5 million in 1851 (and continued to decline until the 1960s). The Great Potato Famine (1845–1849) was one of the worst natural disasters in history and produced a human and national tragedy similar to the Holocaust, from which the Irish still have not recovered. Irish nationalists blamed the oppressive regime of Protestant landowners and the British government for the disaster, and nationalism flared into violence. Emigrants in America formed the secret Fenian movement, dedicated to Irish independence, which was the ancestor of Sinn Fein, the current Irish national movement in Northern Ireland.

Outline

I. These lectures offer a portrait gallery of the great and good, yet do not focus on the masses; thus, certain long-term, impersonal trends are underrepresented.
   A. The generation of the Irish people in the 1840s will be our exception. This generation shared a unique experience, parallel to the Front Generation of World War I or the Jews of 1939 to 1945, a unique experience of catastrophe.
   B. The Irish famine is the equivalent of the Holocaust for Jews. Between 1846–1851, the famine resulted in 1 million deaths, the equivalent of 12 percent of the population. Between 1845–1870, at least 3 million emigrated because of the famine. The ultimate result was the destruction of a way of life.
   C. Because England was the dominant political and cultural influence, it was blamed for the catastrophe.
   D. The identity of the Irish was formed in a complex struggle against English settlement.
      1. The Irish were unique in relation to other nationalities in the British Isles. The Welsh and Scots were also Celtic, but the majority in those countries was Protestant. The defeat of the Highland clans in 1715 and 1745 brought an end to Scottish military and religious threats.
      2. The Irish continued to resist the British from 1600 to the present.

II. Ireland emerged as a potato economy.
   A. Determining an exact date for the beginning of the potato economy is difficult. Arthur Young (1741–1820), an agricultural writer, toured Ireland in 1776–1779 and noted the dominance of potatoes and the potato-farming way of life.
      1. The diet of potatoes was washed down with buttermilk or whiskey and augmented by herring and cereal crops to add sources of vitamin A and D that are not found in potatoes.
      2. Whiskey was attractive from an economic standpoint. The culture of rebellious disobedience of English law also encouraged its production and use.
   B. The Irish population grew rapidly with improvements in diet, which had important consequences on the supply and demand sides of the economy.
      1. The rapid population growth ensured a large supply of labor.
      2. This, in turn, kept wages and costs low in agriculture and small-scale early-modern manufacturing.
      3. There was no incentive to improve productivity in either sector.
      4. On the demand side, the result was low purchasing power of the poor and dependence on demand from abroad.
   C. Two new sources of demand are critical in understanding the famine.
      1. As a result of the French revolutionary wars (1789–1815), English products were in high demand to cover European shortages.
2. The English Industrial Revolution and the growth of cities in England suddenly required much more imported food for the new factory class. The English population grew as Irish laborers emigrated.

D. The legacy of the wars was a crisis in European price levels.
   1. Contributing factors included a long wave of falling prices (from 1815–1848), weak harvests, particularly severe winters in 1819 and the mid-1840s, and the heavy costs of transporting cereals before railroads were widespread.
   2. The result was a paradox: England’s demand for imported food rose, but prices fell.
   3. London emerged as the capital of a worldwide market, but deflationary pressures were worsened by tight money and expanding production.

E. The production of Irish farms was sucked into exports. As Clarkson and Crawford, two researchers of the famine, noted, “The market swallowed up everything that was saleable.”
   1. The concentration on cash crops distorted the economy.
   2. When prices began falling after 1815, the weaknesses of the potato economy were exposed. When the blight hit in 1845, it attacked an already precarious system.

III. In September of 1845, Phytophthora infestans struck the potato crop of Ireland, rotting the potatoes in the fields.

A. The political response to the situation in Ireland was controlled by London, which in turn, was governed by the classical economics systematization of Adam Smith. Two figures played key roles in England’s response.
   1. Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834) was an Anglican clergyman and mathematician. His “Essay on the Principle of Population” said that population “increases in a geometrical relationship,” but food “increases only in an arithmetical relationship.” The population is reducible only by starvation; hence, 1845–1848 presented a classic Malthusian crisis.
   2. David Ricardo (1772–1823) was a British economist of Dutch-Jewish parentage. The main idea of his Principles of Political Economy and Taxation was that wages tend to stabilize around the subsistence level.
   3. These “laws” served as arguments for non-intervention from Britain.

B. Prime Minister Robert Peel (1788–1850), one of the founders of the modern Conservative Party, saw two solutions to the crisis: to stop grain exports from Ireland or to import more food.
   1. The continued existence of the Corn Laws to protect English agriculture blocked one of these solutions.
   2. The landowners, who were the backbone of Peel’s party, were against importing more food.
   3. On May 15, 1846, the Corn Laws were repealed by a combination of Conservatives, Whigs, and free traders.
   4. This solution had little immediate impact because of the slowness of imports and the scale of the disaster.

C. At the same time, the lack of modern welfare institutions and the enforcement of Poor Laws led to the conclusion that the Irish were starving while the English did nothing. Meanwhile, the famine worsened.

IV. The consequences of the catastrophe can be found in economics, religion, and language to this day.

A. The strong farmers survived, and the large landowners consolidated and expanded their holdings. The regional impact was sharp; the west (Gaelic areas) were hard hit.

B. The Irish experienced a “devotional revolution,” a revival of Catholic piety. The Catholic Church returned to its liturgical traditions and the worship of saints. The Church saw the need to comfort and care for the traumatized survivors.

C. The Gaeltacht, the Gaelic-speaking areas of the west, were hardest hit by the blight, resulting in loss of the language. This, in turn, fostered further hatred of the English “oppressors.”

D. Hatred of the Protestant ascendancy was inflamed. By 1850, even members of the clergy were advising laborers to claim their legal rights at the expense of their landlords’. This served as an invitation to violence in the 1860s and 1870s.
V. The Irish identity was formed in a series of disasters and in a complex interchange with the dominant English.
   A. The Great Famine was the most traumatic event in 19th-century history for the Irish.
   B. The resulting Irish diaspora in the United States played a significant role in American history.
   C. Fenianism, an Irish revolutionary movement, was founded in the United States and Ireland as a consequence of the famine.

Essential Reading:
Cormac O’Grada, *Black ’47 and Beyond*.

Supplementary Reading:

Questions to Consider:
1. Do you agree that economic and biological factors, not British rule, caused the Great Famine?
2. Why have Irish Protestants been less cohesive as an ethnic group in the United States than Irish Catholics?
Biographical Notes

Albert, Prince Consort (Franz Albrecht August Karl Emanuel, Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha) (1819–1861). The much-loved husband of Queen Victoria. He was an active reformer of stern principles and the organizer and guiding spirit of the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1851.

Alembert, Jean le Rond d' (1717–1783). French mathematician and philosopher. Diderot made him co-editor of the Encyclopédie, for which he wrote the “preliminary discourse” (1751) and mathematical, philosophical, and literary articles.

Alexander II (1818–1881) (tsar of Russia, 1855–1881). After Russia’s defeat in the Crimean War in 1856, Alexander began an era of reforms, especially the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. He reformed municipal government and introduced a limited self-government in the countryside.

Augustus the Strong (1670–1733). Duke of Saxony and king of Poland, he built palaces, collected art, and founded the famous Meissen china works. He ruled the richest of the German states and nearly exhausted the royal treasury.

Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel (1714–1788). C. P. E. Bach was the most distinguished son of the great Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) and himself a great composer. He said, “I never had a teacher other than my father,” yet their styles could not have been more different. The younger Bach developed an expressive style that reflects a change in the social reality and in the listening public, the beginnings of the market for art.

Bach, Johann Sebastian (1685–1750). J. S. Bach was, for much of his life, organist and choir master at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig. A pious and mystical Lutheran, Bach composed dozens of church cantatas and the towering musical representations of the Passions according to St. Matthew and St. John, as well as a Mass in B Minor. The greatest musical intellect of all time.

Bismarck, Otto von (1815–1898). The “Iron Chancellor,” he unified Germany in three wars and came to embody everything brutal and ruthless about Prussian culture. The real Bismarck had a different character: He was a hypochondriac, a brilliant and well-read man, a convert to an extreme form of Protestant mysticism, and one of the few Prussians who never served in the king’s army.

Boswell, James (1740–1795). The alter ego in Samuel Johnson’s life. Boswell, a Scottish gentleman of questionable character, arrived in London in 1762. He was a toady, a name-dropper, and a sexually irrepressible rake. His London Journal, 1762–1763 reveals that he was an anxious depressive, who suffered from mood swings, hypochondria, and fears of venereal disease, but he was, perhaps, the greatest biographer in the English language.

Burke, Edmund (1729–1797). One of the greatest orators, stylists, and political figures of the late 18th century. An Irishman with a Protestant father and a Catholic mother, he rose to high office in the corrupt politics of Georgian England without wealth or connections because of his extraordinary intellectual power. He “invented” modern conservative ideology in his book Reflections on the Revolution in France of 1790.

Butler, Bishop Joseph (1692–1752). Butler was an Anglican bishop. His sermons and The Analogy of Religion (1726) were attempts to construct a science of man but one compatible with the Christian faith. Hume was impressed by Butler’s philosophy but cut the ground from under it by his skepticism.

Calonne, Charles Alexandre de (1734–1802). Controller general of the finances in France from 1783 to 1787. He had to deal with the bankruptcy, which he knew had occurred but which he dared not admit. His problem was to find a way around the parlements and raise taxes.

Catherine II, the Great (1729–1796). A German princess from Anhalt-Zerbst, a minor principality. She became empress of Russia in a military coup that toppled her husband, Tsar Peter III, and began a campaign to Westernize Russia. She opened the country to foreigners, reformed the legal system, and waged a series of wars to establish Russian prestige as a great power.

Cavour, Camillo Benso Count di (1810–1861). Prime minister of the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, Cavour was responsible for the unification of Italy. He was a liberal in politics and economics but also anticlerical. Under his government, Piedmontese legislation grew increasingly hostile to the Church, and after the unification of Italy, his
legacy was a stalemate in church-state relations that lasted until Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaties with Pius XI in 1929, which established the Vatican as a separate state.

**Churchill, Sir Winston Leonard Spencer** (1874–1965). Grandson of the duke of Marlborough and son of Lord Randolph Churchill, Winston Churchill was born into the Conservative Party’s elite leadership. He made a name for himself as a soldier and war correspondent in the Boer War and was elected to Parliament as a Conservative. When the Conservatives became committed to “tariff reform,” that is, ending free trade, Churchill “crossed the aisle” in 1904 and joined the Liberals, where he became a friend of Lloyd George. In 1905, the Liberals formed a government and Churchill was appointed undersecretary for the colonies in the cabinet of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Under Asquith, he was initially (1908–1910) president of the Board of Trade, then home secretary (1910–1911), and championed innovative labor exchange and old-age pension acts.

**Darwin, Charles** (1809–1882). A member of a prominent Cambridge academic family, Darwin studied medicine at Edinburgh and for the ministry at Cambridge but lost interest in both. A botanist friend, J. S. Henslow, got him a job as official naturalist on a five-year cruise (1831–1836) aboard HMS *Beagle*. What Darwin saw, especially on the Galapagos Islands, started him on work that resulted in the formulation of his concept of evolution. In 1859, Darwin set forth the structure and evidence for his theory in *The Origin of Species*.

**Disraeli, Benjamin, the first Earl of Beaconsfield** (1804–1881). The elegant Jewish leader of the Conservative Party who was also a successful popular novelist and a great wit, Disraeli extended the mass base of the Conservatives and introduced the Reform Bill of 1867. Queen Victoria’s favorite prime minister.

**Dreyfus, Captain Alfred** (1859–1935). A French general staff officer, he became famous as the victim of the most notorious miscarriage of justice in the 19th century. Dreyfus was falsely accused of passing secrets to the Germans, convicted by court martial, and sent to Devils Island in solitary confinement. Dreyfus was an Alsatian and a Jew and, hence, obviously guilty. The secrets continued to be passed. The French army covered up the fact that they had convicted an innocent man.

**Drumont, Edouard** (1844–1917). The most brilliant and violent of the French anti-Semitic journalists, he used his paper, *La Libre Parole* (“The Free Word”), to blame the Jews for all the ills of modern society and to insist that Dreyfus was guilty, whatever the evidence might say.


**Engels, Friedrich** (1820–1895). One of the two founders of Communism, Engels was the son of a rich manufacturer from Barmen in the Rhineland. In 1842, he went to take a position in a factory near Manchester, England, in which his father had an interest and to learn the latest machine technology. In 1844, while passing through Paris, he met Marx, and their lifelong association began. Engels wrote *The Condition of the Working Class in England* and was the most important interpreter of Karl Marx’s thought.

**Fontane, Theodor** (1819–1898). A German novelist, Fontane, who grew up in Berlin Huguenot community, was the Jane Austen of the Bismarck era. His novels provide wonderful portraits of life in Bismarck’s Prussia, and several are available in English, such as *Effi Briest, Cecile*, and *Delusions and Confusions*. Fontane was a contemporary of Bismarck, who appears in several of the novels.

**Frederick II, the Great** (1712–1786). King of Prussia from 1740 to 1786, he embodied the principle of a rational autocracy. He wanted his state to hum like a well-oiled machine. All the parts had specific functions, but only the king could see the whole. Wit, philosopher, expert musician, brilliant general, tireless administrator, he called himself “the first servant of the state,” and for 46 years, he served the state with no family, no close friends, no advisors, and no confidantes—only his six beautiful greyhounds and a few silent servants.

**Garibaldi, Giuseppe** (1807–1882). Garibaldi was an Italian patriot and a guerrilla leader in the Mazzinian mold. Under the influence of Mazzini, he became involved in an unsuccessful republican plot and fled to South America. There, he gained his first experience in guerrilla warfare. Garibaldi was the perfect Romantic hero and a noble leader. His expedition to Sicily in 1860 triggered the events that led to the unification of Italy under the Piedmontese monarchy, not to Mazzini’s radical republic.
George I (1660–1727). King of Great Britain and Ireland, he was a German prince. In 1698, he became elector of Hanover. He was exactly like Augustus the Strong. As the heir of the last Stuart, Queen Anne, who died in 1714, he suddenly found himself king of England, unable to speak a word of English.

George II (1683–1760). King of Great Britain and Ireland, his long reign (from 1727 to 1760) coincided with the establishment of a two-party system in Great Britain. He is the monarch who most benefited from the economic growth of the 18th century. Under him, the last serious Scottish revolt on behalf of the Stuarts was crushed, and the Highlands were “ethnically cleansed.”

George III (1738–1820). King of Great Britain and Ireland (1760–1820), his long reign falls into two unequal parts; in the first, he tried to root out corruption in British politics and to assert royal authority. His policies and his ministers provoked the conflict with the North American colonies that resulted in the independence of the United States. He gradually succumbed to porphyry, a viral disease that made him insane and took him out of active life.

George IV (1762–1830). King of Great Britain and Ireland (1820–1830), eldest son and successor of George III. He spent much of his life as prince regent for his father, trying to gain the full powers of a king. Utterly dissolute, cynical, and fat, he is one of the “old royals” against whom the young Princess Victoria reacted when she became queen.

Gladstone, William Ewart (1809–1898). The stern moralizing leader of the Liberal Party under Queen Victoria, he espoused extreme Liberal views and wished to reduce the power of the state, reduce expenditure, and give home rule to the Irish.

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von (1749–1832). Goethe is to German literature what Shakespeare is to English. Goethe could do everything well. He painted, sketched, designed, and wrote poetry and plays. He had a large private income and could afford to travel. He wrote The Sorrows of Young Werther, which became a bestseller in 1774 and made Goethe famous everywhere in Europe.

Goya, Francisco de (1746–1828). A Spanish painter, he is often called “the first of the moderns” because of his bold paintings and satirical etchings, and his belief in the priority of the artist’s vision over tradition. He was also a traditional court painter who made his living painting kings and queens.

Habermas, Jürgen (1929– ). Habermas is German philosopher and emeritus professor at the University of Frankfurt. He developed the idea of the bourgeois public sphere. Habermas thought that the 18th century was a period in which a new space emerged, beyond and alongside the court, the closed corporation, and the family, which he called Öffentlichkeit, or the “public sphere.”

Heine, Heinrich (1797–1856). Germany’s greatest lyric poet, he was also born a Jew in the ghetto. He had to flee Germany in the reactionary period after the Napoleonic War and lived most of the rest of his life in Paris. He predicted with uncanny accuracy the explosion of German nationalism.

Herder, Johann Gottfried (1744–1803). A German philosopher, critic, and clergyman, he was a leader in the Sturm und Drang movement and an early Romantic. His most influential ideas are to be found in a pamphlet entitled “Über den Ursprung der Sprache” (“On the Origin of Language”) of 1772. It is the founding charter of Romantic nationalism.

Herzl, Theodor (1860–1904). The founder of Zionism, he was a German-speaking Hungarian Jew who worked as a theater correspondent for the Vienna Neue Freie Presse, the New York Times of the Habsburg Empire. His paper sent him to Paris, where he was appalled by the vicious anti-Semitism he observed during the public reaction to Dreyfus’s trial. Herzl decided that Jewish assimilation in Europe was impossible and that the only solution to the Jewish problem was the establishment of a Jewish national state.

Hobbes, Thomas (1588–1679). The philosopher of the English Civil War. Hobbes saw the religious wars as chaotic and dangerous to orderly rule. His Leviathan (1651) is a reflection of the chaos of civil war. It rested on a mechanistic view that life is simply the motions of the organism and that man is by nature a selfishly individualistic animal at constant war with all other men.

Holbach, Paul Henri Thiry, Baron d’ (1723–1789). A leading figure in the French Enlightenment. d’Holbach’s estate was a meeting place for the most important French radical thinkers (the philosophes) of the late 18th century. He was an atheist, a determinist, and a materialist. d’Holbach was protected in his extreme views by his high aristocratic rank and wealth.
Hume, David (1711–1776). The greatest British philosopher. The publication in 1739 of Hume’s *A Treatise of Human Nature: Being an Attempt to introduce the experimental method of reasoning in Moral Subjects* was a revolution. Hume’s application of the experimental method to ideas broke the continuity of human affairs and demolished existing rules of thought.

Johnson, Samuel (1709–1784). Johnson became the most famous literary figure in England during the 18th century. In 1755, he published his two-volume dictionary, the biggest commercial publication of its time. It became an immediate success, because Johnson’s definitions sparkled with wit, yet he is most famous as the subject of James Boswell’s *Life of Johnson*.

Joseph II (1741–1790). Holy Roman emperor (1765–1790) and king of Bohemia and Hungary (1780–1790), he was the son of Maria Theresa and Holy Roman Emperor Francis I, whom he succeeded. Joseph attempted to rule his immense and quarrelsome territories by pure reason. He tried to rationalize the mess of royal possessions that Maria Theresa had ruled by common sense.

Krupp, Alfred (1812–1887). Krupp built up the great firm of Friedrich Krupp Essen, which he took over at the age of 14 when his father, the founder, died. Known as the “Cannon King,” Krupp introduced new methods for producing large quantities of cast steel. After the Franco-Prussian War, he specialized more and more in armaments and acquired mines all over Germany.

Krupp, Friedrich-Alfred “Fritz” (1854–1902). The son of Alfred. Under Fritz, the Krupp family vastly extended its operations. Fritz, a fat, bespectacled, shy man, had to keep his true nature “in the closet.” He bought a villa on Capri, where he pursued his hobby of oceanography and set up a homosexual cult in a temple he built for the purpose. He kept it liberally staffed with compliant Neapolitan boys until the local Socialist paper found out about it and published a series of exposés. Fritz committed suicide.

Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim (1729–1781). One of the most influential figures of the German Enlightenment, he wrote the first plays about the middle classes and tried to create a German national theater.

Lloyd, Sir Nathaniel (1669–1741). Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from 1710 to 1735. He was an exact contemporary of Walpole. Lloyd’s was a perfect example of an 18th-century life: A wealthy civil lawyer, he held the mastership at Trinity Hall without giving up his fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford, or his London legal practice. The fact that he had three jobs presented no problems for him.

Lloyd George, David, First Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor (1863–1945). He was a brilliantly eloquent, forceful, and creative statesman who became famous as the British prime minister during the First World War. Elected (1890) to Parliament as a Liberal, the young Lloyd George soon became known as a radical. When the Liberals won an overwhelming victory in the election of 1905, Lloyd George became a cabinet minister and, in 1908, chancellor of the exchequer (the equivalent of secretary of the treasury). Lloyd George was the architect of the “Peoples Budget” of 1909, which introduced social security for the first time. The battle that ensued and his ultimate victory led to curbing the power of the House of Lords.

Macaulay, Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay (1800–1859). English writer and politician, he expressed Liberal views most brilliantly in his essays and speeches in Parliament. He defended the rights of non-baptized Jews to be elected to the House of Commons in a famous article of 1829. He wrote a *History of England*, as well as many nonpolitical essays. A contemporary said, “I wish I were as certain of anything as Macaulay is of everything.”

Malthus, the Reverend Thomas Robert (1766–1834). An Anglican clergyman and the inventor of modern demography, he was as influential as Adam Smith. In his famous “Essay on the Principle of Population,” he contended that poverty and distress are unavoidable, because population increases by geometrical ratio and the means of subsistence by arithmetical ratio.

Maria Theresa (1717–1780). Maria Theresa ruled over a complex of states and territories that had no overall name. She was archduchess of Austria above and below the Enns; queen of Bohemia, Hungary, Dalmatia, and Slavonia; and Duchess of Burgundy and held many other titles. The most important title, Holy Roman Empress, could not be hers, because the Salic Law forbade female succession. She was the mother of Joseph II and Marie Antoinette.

Marie Antoinette (1755–1793). A Habsburg princess, she was the youngest daughter of Maria Theresa and the sister of Emperor Joseph II. She married a Bourbon, thus uniting the two greatest European royal families, and
became queen of France when her husband took the throne as Louis XVI. She was beheaded during the French Revolution.

**Marwitz, Friedrich August Ludwig von der** (1777–1837). von der Marwitz was a Prussian landlord who resisted Prussian government reforms to liberalize society, free serfs, and introduce constitutional protections and representative government. His intellectual position reflected the influence of Edmund Burke.

**Marx, Karl** (1818–1883). The founder of Communism. Marx was the greatest theorist of society in modern times. His work is largely a criticism of the consequences of the new commercial society and capitalist markets. Marx’s most famous book, *Das Kapital* (1867), has as its subtitle: *A Critique of Political Economy.*

**Mazzini, Giuseppe** (1805–1872). He dedicated his life to the revival of the Italian “nation” and to the establishment of a republic of free citizens. He believed passionately in the so-called Risorgimento, or “resurgence,” of the Italian people. A purist, an idealist, and a Romantic, he used violence and even terror to achieve his aims but failed in the end, defeated by the backwardness of Italian society and its economy.

**Metternich, Clemens Wenzel Nepomuk Lothar Prince von** (1773–1859). Napoleon’s great adversary, not on the field of battle, but over the lacquered tables of diplomacy. His family had been independent rulers of a small principality until the French Revolution wiped the tiny states away. He became foreign minister of Austria in 1809 and put Europe back together in 1814 and 1815 after the French Revolution and Napoleon had twisted it to their purposes. He then ruled Europe by persuasion, by suppression of liberties, and by maintaining the balance of power until 1848.

**Moser, Johann Jakob** (1701–1785). The greatest constitutional expert of the 18th century in Germany, Moser explained the historical messiness of the old Holy Roman Empire in several works and defended the historic rights of its 3,000 separate sovereign units. He was twice jailed for his opposition to the duke of Württemberg, who was trying to turn his duchy into an absolute monarchy.

**Napoleon I** (Napoleon Bonaparte) (1769–1821). He was born into a provincial gentleman’s family in Ajaccio, Corsica, and rose to be emperor of France and lord of the greatest empire since the days of the Romans. A brilliant general and a canny politician, he converted the gains of the French Republic, turned it into a monarchy, and installed his Corsican clan as kings and queens.

**Napoleon III, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte** (1808–1873). The son of Louis Bonaparte and Hortense de Beauharnais, the daughter of Napoleon’s lover, and the nephew of Napoleon I. After the collapse of his uncle’s empire, the family was driven from France. Obsessed with Napoleon I, Louis planned unsuccessful coups, until the Revolution of 1848 gave him his opportunity. His reign, known as the Second Empire, was a glorious chapter in French history, which saw the rebuilding of Paris, but it came to a miserable end in the Franco-Prussian War in 1870.

**Newman, John Henry Cardinal** (1801–1890). A Catholic theologian who wrote “Lead, Kindly Light” and other hymns. In 1841, Newman published Tract 90, demonstrating that the Thirty-Nine Articles, the formulary of faith of the Church of England, was consistent with Catholicism, and in 1845, he was received into the Roman Catholic Church. Newman published the *Apologia pro vita sua* in 1864, a masterpiece of religious autobiography.

**Newton, Sir Isaac** (1642–1727). The greatest scientist of all time, Newton created a new relationship between man and nature. He discovered the law of universal gravitation, began to develop the calculus, and discovered that white light is composed of all the colors of the spectrum.

**Nietzsche, Friedrich** (1844–1900). The most important philosopher of the irrational, he was the prophet of a boundless attack on enlightened rationality, God, and conventional thought and morality. His cult of the “Superman” raised the great creative soul beyond good and evil. The new Superman with his “will to power” was to be the savior of decadent humanity.

**Pasteur, Louis** (1822–1895). A French chemist and microbiologist, he made numerous and varied contributions to science and industry. His experiments with bacteria showed conclusively that the theory of spontaneous generation was not valid and gave rise to the germ theory of infection. He was able to trace the cause of fermentation and specific diseases to specific microorganisms and created and used the first vaccines for rabies, anthrax, and chicken cholera. He was responsible for pioneering work in the area of stereochemistry, and his name has become forever linked with the process he invented, *pasteurization.*
Pius IX (Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti) (1792–1878; pope, 1846–1878). By far, the most important pope of the 19th century. Elected in 1846 as a young cardinal, for two years he pursued a progressive policy in governing the papal states and granted a constitution. However, the Revolution of 1848 embittered him by its excesses of liberalism and nationalism. In The Syllabus of Errors of 1864, he declared freedoms of speech, the press, and religion, indeed all freedoms, to be errors. In 1869, he convoked the First Vatican Council, at which the enunciation of papal infallibility was proclaimed.

Ricardo, David (1772–1823). An English “classical” economist, Ricardo put Smith and Malthus together in The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation of 1817. Ricardo stated the iron law of wages, according to which wages tend to stabilize around the subsistence level. Any rise in wage rates above subsistence will cause the working population to increase to the point that heightened competition among the glut of laborers will merely cause their wages to fall back to the subsistence level.

Robespierre, Maximilien (1758–1794). A provincial French lawyer who rose to head the French revolutionary Committee of Public Safety, in effect, the government at the most violent and radical stage of the French Revolution. Under Robespierre, terror first became a modern political concept. While he was in power, some 40,000 “enemies of the people,” including King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette, were beheaded by guillotine or shot.

Rothschild, Nathan Mayer (1777–1836). The “English” Rothschild, one of five remarkable brothers whose father sent them to five European capitals to found banks. In the 1820s, this Jew from the ghetto of Frankfurt, who spoke broken English all his life, was probably richer, relative to his times, than Bill Gates is today.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1712–1778). He wrote the first French bestseller, Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloïse, a story of passion across the lines of class. He also wrote works of philosophy in the 18th century, and his Social Contract remains one of the most important accounts of democracy ever written. He argued against the prevailing optimism about the progress of civilization and believed that the “noble savage” represented humanity’s highest form of morality.

Smith, Adam (1723–1790). Scottish moral philosopher. A Prussian aristocrat said in 1806, “Adam Smith is the uncrowned king of Europe.” His work The Wealth of Nations was published in 1776, the year of the American Declaration of Independence, and can be said to be equally revolutionary. It explained the way a capitalist market-based economy works. It is the most important work of economic theory ever written.

Stephen, Leslie (1832–1904). Founder of The Dictionary of National Biography and father of Virginia Woolf, he wrote countless books and magazine articles and was one of the most influential Victorian essayists and thinkers. His History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century is a forgotten masterpiece.

Strauss, David Friedrich (1808–1874). A German theologian, his Das Leben Jesu (“The Life of Jesus”) (2 vol., 1835–1836) applied the “myth theory” to the life of Jesus, treated the Gospel narrative like any other historical work, and denied all supernatural elements in the Gospels. The book caused an uproar and, in Zurich, led to a serious revolt against the government. George Eliot began her literary career when she translated it into English.

Tocqueville, Alexis de (1805–1859). Author of two of the wisest books of the 19th century: Democracy in America (4 vol., 1835–1840) and The Old Regime and the French Revolution (1856). de Tocqueville saw things few understood at the time but are now clear.

Tolstoy, Leo Nikolayevich (1828–1910). A Russian noble and novelist, Tolstoy wrote The Cossacks (1863) and the masterpieces War and Peace (1862–1869) and Anna Karenina (1873–1876). Tolstoy had a “conversion” in 1878 and, for the rest of his life, was a kind of prophet of nonviolence and moral reform. He exchanged letters with Gandhi.

Turgot, Anne-Robert-Jacques (1727–1781). A French economist and philosophe, he was a member of the Enlightenment circles in Paris. He was also a civil servant and a reformer who served as comptroller general of finances from 1774 to 1776 and tried unsuccessfully to introduce free trade in grain.

Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland (1819–1901). She gave her name to an entire epoch, the Victorian Era. Her importance as a symbol and in practice as the head of state of the greatest empire the world had known played a great part in the era, but in a deeper sense, she represented a new kind of monarch, the monarch as the ideal of the respectable middle classes.
Wagner, Richard (1813–1883). A revolutionary in politics and music. He fought on the barricades in Dresden in the Revolution of 1848 against the king of Saxony and the repressive regime of Metternich. In exile, he conceived an equally gigantic revolution in music that would create the “total work of art.” Its grandest expression is the Der Ring des Nibelungen (1853–1874), his tetralogy based on the Nibelungenlied. Here, he carried out his new ideas of opera and drama, which embodied large-scale quasi-religious myths.

Walpole, Sir Robert (1676–1745). Walpole served as prime minister for more than 20 years and created the first “modern” party government in the world. He made his reputation in dealing with the South Sea Bubble of 1720, a very modern stock exchange collapse, and protected his position with skilled use of corruption.

William II (1859–1941). German emperor and king of Prussia from 1888–1918. A difficult and bombastic man, Emperor William devoted his considerable energies to expanding German military and naval power and to increasing German prestige in the world. Many contemporaries blamed him for the catastrophe of the First World War.

William IV (1765–1837). King of Great Britain and Ireland (1830–1837), he was the third son of George III and the last of the “old royals.” His best achievement was not to oppose the reforms brought in by the Whigs during his reign and grudgingly to consent to create enough peers to allow the reforms to get through the House of Lords. He was about as dissolute as his brother, George IV, but the times were changing. His behavior was no longer as tolerable.

Wollstonecraft, Mary (1759–1797). Wollstonecraft can be considered the first feminist. Her Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1786) and A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792) were the first feminist manifestos. After all, if “all men are created equal” and if the French Revolution declared the “rights of man and the citizen,” the logical consequences of that must lead to the equality of “the second sex.”

Young, Arthur (1741–1820). An English agricultural expert, whose Travels in France (1788–1789) and Travels in Ireland (1776) offer a unique eyewitness account of life at that time. Young was one of the great pioneers of modern farming practice.

Zola, Emile (1840–1902). France’s most popular novelist, he used literature to expose the social evils of his time. In January 1898, he published an article in L’Aurore, a left-wing Republican newspaper, entitled “J’accuse” (“I accuse”), in which he told the story of the miscarriage of justice in the Dreyfus case and accused the entire French establishment of injustice, lies, and cover-up. Within 24 hours, 200,000 copies were sold.
Jonathan Steinberg, Ph.D.
Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania

Jonathan Steinberg is the Walter H. Annenberg Professor of Modern European History at the University of Pennsylvania and Chair of the Department of History. He was born in New York in 1934, graduated from Harvard in 1955, and was immediately drafted into the U.S. Army, where he served two years in the Medical Corps. After a period in investment banking, he took his doctorate at Cambridge and was University Lecturer (from 1993, Reader) in European History; Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from 1966 to 1999; and Vice-Master from 1990 to 1994. From January 1, 1991, to December 31, 2000, he co-edited The Historical Journal (Cambridge University Press). In 1992, he served as an expert witness in a Commonwealth of Australia war crimes prosecution.

In December 1997, Professor Steinberg was appointed to the Historical Commission of the Deutsche Bank AG, Frankfurt am Main, set up to look into the bank’s activities under the Nazis, and was principal author of the commission’s report. He gave the biennial Leslie Stephen lecture on November 25, 1999, in the Senate House of the University of Cambridge with the title “Leslie Stephen and Derivative Immortality.” Previous Leslie Stephen lecturers include A. E. Housman, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Iris Murdoch, and Seamus Heaney.

Professor Steinberg is the author of Yesterday’s Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle Fleet (1965), Why Switzerland? (1976; paperback, 1980; 2nd ed., 1996), and All or Nothing: The Axis and the Holocaust, 1941 to 1943 (1990; paperback, 1992; also available in German- and Italian-language translations). All or Nothing tries to explain why Fascist Italy in its zones of occupation in Greece, Croatia, and southern France systematically refused to assist Nazi Germany, its nominal ally, in the extermination of the Jews. By using German and Italian sources, Professor Steinberg attempts to compare the two faces of fascism. He has also translated Margaret Boveri, Treason in the Twentieth Century (London, 1961), and Friedrich Heer, Intellectual History of Europe (London, 1965), from German and Pino Arlacchi, Mafia, Peasants and Great Estates: Society in Traditional Calabria (Cambridge, 1983), from Italian.

From 1979 to 1987, Professor Steinberg wrote a monthly column in New Society, and he has reviewed for The London Review of Books, The Evening Standard, The Financial Times, and The Times Literary Supplement. He has written radio and TV documentaries and talks, including BBC Radio Four’s salute to the U.S. Constitution on the 200th anniversary of its signing. He lectures regularly at the Royal College of Defence Studies, the Joint Services Staff College, and the IBM Cambridge summer school. Professor Steinberg is also a member of the Board of Trustees, Franklin College, Lugano, Switzerland, and of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets.

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European History and European Lives: 1715 to 1914

Scope:

This course of 36 lectures is an experiment. In my 40 years in the business of teaching history, I have never done anything like it. I don’t think anyone has. The idea is simple: to use individual lives to explain a great historical transformation. That sounds easy but is not. The great historical transformation I have in mind is no small matter: How did the world of lord and serf, horse and carriage, superstition and disease, turn into the world of boss and worker, steam and steel, science and medicine? In other words, how and why did what we call the modern world come about? Why did it start in the Europe of lord and serf in the 18th century and end in the world of boss and worker by 1914? How and why did Europe by the end of the nineteenth century come to control all the ancient empires of the globe? The trick in this series will be to see these great transformations by looking at the lives of those who made them happen. Most of the lives will be those of great figures—kings, queens, generals, artists, thinkers, and entrepreneurs—but one lecture, that on the Irish famine, will have no single biography. The Irish people of the 1840s will be the actors.

The course falls into two clear sections: Section 1 covers the years 1715 to 1815, from the end of the attempt by one French monarch to dominate Europe—Louis XIV—to the final defeat of another—Napoleon. Its principal transformation is the French Revolution or the democratic transformation. Section 2 takes the story from 1815 to 1914, from the end of the Napoleonic war to the beginning of the first of two terrible world wars of the twentieth century. In this period, the main transformation is the Industrial Revolution, with the accompanying explosion of science and technology.

To lecture on lives raises a serious problem of method. Much of what happened in the years 1715 to 1914 depends on the lives and activities of ordinary people whose struggle for existence and happiness makes up the great story of modern history. Changes in population, disease, famine, immigration and emigration, factory labor, strikes and trade unionism, literacy, emancipation of women, armies, and empires are mass phenomena, not individual ones. No single life can remotely express these huge forces. Much of the time, those then living had no way of knowing the things we now know. What justifies the biographical approach?

First of all, it is fun. It is in our nature to be interested in one another. The people whom we shall study are among the most interesting people who have ever lived. That’s why we remember them, and the rest have been forgotten. Telling the stories of their lives helps us to understand what it is to be human and to grasp the idea that even the “self” has a history that changes over time.

Second, it is way to look at the great changes. If we see the times in which our figures lived as a kind of lens or magnifying glass, we can look for the background, as well as the foreground. We know what they could not: what happens next. Their future is our past. We know what they had no words to describe or tools to measure.

Third, it is a way to educate ourselves, using the meaning for the Latin verb *ducere*, which means, according to my ancient Latin dictionary, “to lead or draw out.” In other words, education does not mean “stuffing the mind with information” but drawing out our awareness of ourselves and our world. By looking at what even the greatest of the actors of the past could not see or understand, we get a glimpse of what we may be missing in our own thinking. After all, the things we take for granted are rarely conscious and never written down. When we observe the way people in the past seemed unaware of great changes now obvious to us, we have a useful moment of self-doubt. What are we missing in our world? We become one degree less self-confident that we know what is going on. That touch of humility, that creative moment of hesitation, that openness to the possibility that we might be wrong, those are the signs of a real historical education.
Lecture Twenty-Five

Napoleon III—The Empire of the Boulevards

Scope: Louis Napoleon Bonaparte (1808–1873) was the son of Louis Bonaparte and Hortense de Beauharnais, the daughter of Napoleon’s lover. After the collapse of his uncle’s empire, Louis’s family was driven from France. Louis spent his youth with his mother in Switzerland and Germany, where he became a captain in the Swiss army. Obsessed with Napoleon I, he planned unsuccessful coups until the revolution of 1848 gave him his opportunity. This lecture looks at the Second Empire, a glorious chapter in French history, the rebuilding of Paris, and the miserable end of the regime in the Franco-Prussian War. The lecture will close by examining the legacy of Bonapartism, the system by which France is still ruled today.

Outline

I. One of the odd features of French history is the relationship between continuity and change in France from 1815 to 1969. France has been the land of revolutions, but nothing seems to change.
   A. The political legacy of the French Revolution was complicated. It was the event of the modern era and soon became an object of literary and theatrical reflection. Great gains were also made in equality before the law and efficient administration.
   B. The revolution had gone through many stages and six different types of regimes, all of which had devoted supporters after 1815.
      1. There was the ancien régime itself; now wrapped in romance about the white flag of the Bourbons and the good old days.
      2. Next was the constitutional monarchy of the years 1789–1792.
      3. The republic of 1792–1793 was moderate and had not yet given way to Jacobin dictatorship.
      4. The radical Jacobin republic of 1793–1794 still had many ardent supporters, especially among the Paris working classes. It had been “their” government and that of the Commune of Paris.
      5. The Directory of the years 1795–1799 had restored executive power but vested it in a group of five directors.
      6. The Napoleonic Empire had been the period of France’s greatest glory.
   C. The legacy of the French Revolution meant that the future was in the past. Few wanted the existing regime, and most wanted to return to the regime of their choice among those six.
   D. France suffered from the impossibility of establishing any kind of political consensus.
      1. In 1815, there were two ruling classes: the new Bourbon one and the old Napoleonic one.
      2. The French Revolution created a permanent civil war, especially in religious matters, which continued into the 1980s.
      3. In Paris, revolution became a kind industry. Workers there possessed urban revolutionary “know-how.”
   E. Yet some powerful factors made for stability in France: The legacy of the revolution was not undone in property or administration of government.
      1. The revolution was “history’s greatest land transfer” and left a large group of peasants as property owners.
      2. Because France was fundamentally rural, industrialization and urbanization were slower there than in Germany or Britain. France became a peasant republic.
      3. The Napoleonic administrative system was maintained, as was the legal system, the Code Napoleon.
   F. Elements of continuity and change combined to produce the structure of French politics.
      1. The equation of French history reads as follows: small political elites + Paris + crowd + centralization + lack of consensus + stability of peasantry + continuity of traditions (anticlerical v. Catholic France) = constant possibility of revolution in Paris, but no change in society or administration.
      2. The situation in Paris was always the key.
      3. The instability of French regimes can be traced throughout the period from 1815 to the present. French politics combines continuity and conflict, as well as continuity in conflict. The country experiences constant turnover of regimes but in exactly the same traditional ways.
4. Until recently, France has not had parties in the Western sense, but parties about regimes: Legitimists, Orleanists, Bonapartists, Republicans, Gaullists, and now Chiracists. Is the system stable?

II. Bonapartism can be defined as dictatorship of the center. Napoleon’s unique combination of revolution and order created Bonapartism.
   A. Bonapartism opposes both the left (Jacobins, Communists) and the right (monarchists, Fascists).
   B. Its basis of legitimacy is the plebiscite, a direct vote in which the entire electorate is invited to accept or refuse a proposal.
   C. Bonapartism is an acknowledged type of rule and was recognized (not by that name) at the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention of 1787.
   D. The current Fifth French Republic has a president, directly elected by plebiscite, with a weak prime minister and parliament.

III. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, Napoleon III, was born April 20, 1808, the second son of King Louis of Holland and Hortense Beauharnais, daughter of Napoleon’s wife Josephine.
   A. When the Napoleonic Empire came to an end, the large Bonaparte family became an international problem. They had become a royal family and could not be disgraced, but the name itself was a threat.
      1. Louis’s family went into exile in Switzerland.
      2. Dramatic revolutionary causes attracted Louis; he and his two brothers decided to take a leading role in the Italian uprisings of 1831, where his elder brother was killed. When Napoleon’s son, the duke of Reichstadt, died in 1832, Louis Napoleon became the only living male heir of Napoleon I.
   B. The myth of Napoleon I was Louis’s main preoccupation. Napoleon I had created the myth of himself as the “Great Liberator.” Louis was obsessed by his uncle’s career and determined to imitate it.
      1. On October 30, 1836, he attempted a coup in Strasbourg and tried to reenact the magic of the Hundred Days. The coup failed.
      2. Louis tried to construct an image of himself as a “soldier-statesman” and propagate a sort of Napoleonic ideology: In 1839, he published Des idées Napoléoniennes. Bonapartism was now a kind of creed, and Louis was its successor.
      3. After another failed uprising in 1840, Louis was imprisoned but continued to dream of his destiny. In 1845, he escaped to London.
      4. Louis Napoleon faced a peculiar situation in the 1840s. There was no active Bonapartist party and very little support for the ideas. He was scarcely known in France, and the Napoleonic elite, who had served his uncle, unanimously supported the Orleanist monarchy.
   C. Louis’s character was hard for his contemporaries to grasp. He was notoriously taciturn and impenetrable but also a fine horseman, extremely courageous, and an impressive figure.

IV. In 1848, revolutions broke out in France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Poland. Napoleon III was the winner in the aftermath.
   A. When the Orleanist monarchy fell and King Louis-Philippe fled, a republic was proclaimed, but it was trapped in the model of 1792.
   B. The Republicans feared the precedent of the Committee of Public Safety. They were equally afraid of the “social revolution” and made sure that the workers were suppressed by the National Guard.
   C. The National Assembly opted for universal suffrage and a directly elected president to keep order.
      1. Louis Napoleon won the election by almost 4 million votes.
      2. The explanation of this astonishing result is not clear even today. A secret campaign committee was established to promote Louis’s candidacy, and he benefited from the fact that the Second Republic had an anti-Republican majority but also universal suffrage. France was essentially conservative in 1848, and the idea of revolution was now a threat.
      3. Napoleon’s name was a guarantee of order for the French.
   D. The constitution of 1848 had certain weaknesses. Because the National Assembly feared the crowd, it created a strong president, but it also feared a strong president; thus, the office was limited to one term. Because the assembly feared the people, it also severely limited the possibility of amendments. A stalemate was built into the system.
E. The coup of December 2, 1851, was superb. The usual Monday evening presidential reception took place in the ordinary way. The coup unrolled between midnight and 5:00 A.M. The next morning, the dictatorship was proclaimed.

F. The Constitution of January 14, 1852, gave total legislative power to the president and the right to name or dismiss ministers. The president governed by means of the Council of State, which prepared the laws; by the corps legislative (“lower house”), composed of deputies who had no right to initiate legislation or raise questions; and with a senate, formed of permanent dignitaries, as guardians of the constitution.

1. Yet Louis Napoleon was as much a prisoner of memory as the others. He needed to restore the empire, and on November 7, 1852, the senate reestablished the title of emperor for Louis Napoleon.

2. On November 21–22, 1852, a plebiscite approved the decision, and Napoleon III was crowned on December 2, 1852, one year after his constitutional coup.

G. The institutions were based on those of Napoleon, but Napoleon III was not Napoleon I, neither as a soldier, nor as a leader of genius.

1. Napoleon III had a serious problem stabilizing his regime. Even after the establishment of the empire, there was no real support for Bonapartism. From 1858 on, Napoleon III attempted to liberalize the dictatorship. The economic circumstances were favorable in the 1850s and 1860s.

2. Napoleon III was undone by his foreign policy. He was committed to fulfilling the great Napoleon’s “liberating mission” and made himself protector of national movements in the 1850s. He brought about Italian unification, the most dramatic factor in destroying Metternich’s system.

3. Napoleon III caused the weakening of Austria, defeated Austria in a war in 1859, and thus, created the necessary conditions for the rise of Bismarck and Prussia (1862–1890).

4. Bismarck outwitted Napoleon III and isolated France, enabling Prussia to defeat Austria and unify most of Germany before Napoleon III realized what had happened.

5. The Austrian defeat in 1866 was shocking, and Napoleon’s humiliation was complete. His dilemma was whether to support Austria, which would mean supporting reaction and the “enemy of nationalism,” or to stay true to his image.

6. In the end, Napoleon was a prisoner of his own image and could not form a proper coalition against Prussia; thus, Bismarck was able to avoid a squeeze movement on Prussia.

7. France was maneuvered into war with Prussia by Bismarck; in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, Napoleon was again the prisoner of a myth and commanded an army.

H. The end of the empire came in 1870. On July 19, France declared war on Prussia. On September 2, the French army capitulated at Sedan. On September 4, on hearing the news of Sedan, a Paris mob invaded the Palais Bourbon and forced the Legislative Assembly to proclaim the fall of the empire. The Third Republic was proclaimed.

V. The Second Empire did not end the French preoccupation with the future as past. Napoleon III attempted to revive the Napoleonic structures without the charismatic genius or a great army.

A. His legacy was, on one level, minimal. The basic structure of France was unchanged. The prefectoral system and the legal system continued unaffected, as in all previous and subsequent regimes.

B. Yet the Second Empire left one enduring legacy: the counterrevolutionary rebuilding of Paris directed by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809–1891). (See http://studentwebs.coloradocollege.edu/~c_neville/graphics.htm for pictures.)

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
Questions to Consider:
1. Was Louis Napoleon’s commitment to his image as a new Napoleon uniquely French or do such self-creations occur in all systems?
2. Try to explain in your own words, based on the evidence in this lecture, how France could combine extreme political instability with unusual social, economic, legal, and administrative stability.
Lecture Twenty-Six
Pius IX—The Infallible Pope

Scope: Pius IX (1792–1878; pope, 1846–1878) was by far the most important pope of the 19th century. Elected in 1846 as a young cardinal, for two years he pursued a progressive policy in governing the papal states and granted a constitution. However, in 1848, rioting drove him from Rome to Gaeta, and he returned embittered by the excesses of liberalism and nationalism and dependent on the soldiers of Napoleon III to maintain his rule. In “The Syllabus of Errors” of 1864, he declared war on the modern secular state, calling freedom of speech, the press, and religion “errors.” In 1869, he convoked the First Vatican Council, at which the enunciation of papal infallibility was proclaimed. When the Italian kingdom invaded Rome in 1870 and proclaimed it as capital of the new unified state, Pius IX excommunicated the king and his ministers, retired to the Vatican, and refused to recognize the new kingdom or to accept the proffered indemnity. The lecture looks at this eventful papacy, asks why the Roman Catholic Church has struggled to adapt to the modern world, and considers how far Pius IX set the terms of that struggle.

Outline

I. The legacy of the French Revolution affected the Roman Catholic Church.
   A. Religion was challenged by a new conception of the modern state, in which citizens without religion were supposed to live in a new, secular, rational state.
      1. As we have seen in several cases, the absolutist, monarchical state was already a threat to the Roman Catholic Church.
      2. Because of its religious views, the revolution was bound to clash with the churches.
      3. In 1798, French troops occupied the papal states; in 1799, “Citizen Pope Pius VI” was removed from Rome and died at Valence on July 13, 1799.
   B. Pius VII, whose pontificate lasted from March 14, 1800, to July 20, 1823, suffered at the hands of the French under the Napoleonic Empire.
      1. Napoleon represented a double threat. He was an absolutist monarch and a “child of revolutionary change.”
      2. On July 15, 1801, Pius VII signed a concordat with the empire, but it was an uneasy settlement. The concordat was a formal treaty that listed the division of spheres. It established a truce between Church and state.
      3. Pius VII was never a pure reactionary. In 1797, he had preached a sermon in which he stated that there was no necessary conflict between the Church and democracy.
      4. In 1805, when the allies and France went to war again, the pope insisted on neutrality. Napoleon was furious. On February 2, 1808, Napoleon ordered the reoccupation of the papal states.
      5. The pope was arrested and imprisoned. His sufferings in jail at Savona raised his prestige as the suffering servant of Christ.
   C. All the issues of the modern Church and the modern state were now obvious. Henceforth, the claims of the Church and those of the state would be in open conflict.
      1. On June 10, 1809, Pius VII issued an edict excommunicating those who had desecrated the Holy City.
      2. This was the first time in the modern period that the temporal power, that is, the right of the pope to rule a sovereign state, was contested.

II. What are the theological foundations of papal supremacy?
   A. Biblical foundations make St. Peter the rock on which the Church was built.
   B. The feudal history of the Roman Catholic Church created a historical foundation.
      1. The destruction of the Roman Empire left the popes as civil and ecclesiastical rulers of Rome and its environs.
      2. As Europe disintegrated into feudalism, the popes became feudal princes like all the others, holding fiefdoms dotted across the map.
      3. Other ecclesiastical rulers were both feudal princes and bishops or abbots, in effect, mini-popes.
4. The French Revolution wiped out the prince-bishops and other ecclesiastical states and abolished the temporal power.
5. At the Vienna Congress of 1815, the pope alone was restored to his lands and sovereign power as ruler of the papal states.

III. Temporal power was threatened in the age of liberalism and nationalism.
A. The general sense of insecurity after 1815 was worsened by the threat of a Jacobin revival.
   1. The Metternich system was based on repression of all liberal, democratic, or national ideas, and speech was rigorously censored.
   2. The popes after Pius VII were literally reactionary. They wanted to turn the clock back to 1789.
   3. Gregory XVI, for example, whose pontificate was from 1830 to 1846, refused to have gas lights installed in the papal states because gatherings at night were likely to be subversive.
   4. Gregory XVI also issued an encyclical, *Mirari Vos*, in which he attacked the absurd and erroneous proposition that claims that liberty of conscience must be maintained for everyone.
B. Italian nationalism directed its aspirations at the City of Rome as a future capital.
   1. Mazzini and all the nationalists demanded Rome, the unique, eternal city, as the only possible capital for Italy.
   2. Italy could be unified only by deposing the pope as a temporal ruler and seizing his lands or, as Pius VII put it, by “the occupation and dismemberment of the patrimony of Jesus Christ.”

IV. Pius IX, “the infallible pope,” came from an aristocratic Italian family. He was born Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti, the fourth son of a count, on May 13, 1792, in Ancona.
A. Giovanni was handsome, charming, and intelligent. He rose rapidly in the hierarchy. He was ordained a priest in 1819, consecrated as bishop of Imola in 1832 at age 40, and made a cardinal in 1840 at age 48.
B. In addition to his charm, he read the literature of the *Risorgimento* and encouraged Italian nationalism.
C. His election as pope on June 16, 1846, as a moderate progressive was greeted with enthusiasm by nationalists and liberals.
   1. After the pontificate of Gregory XVI, Pius IX was like a breath of fresh air. He introduced overdue reforms in the government of the papal states.
   2. “Pio Nono,” as Italians called him, embodied the dilemma of the moderate reformer. His moderate changes were overtaken by the radical events of the revolutions of 1848.
D. His experiences during the revolutions of 1848 marked the turning point in his pontificate and set the agenda for Church-state relations for decades.
   1. The revolution spread like a brush fire. In January 1848, a revolt broke out in Sicily, which was followed, in February, by revolution in Paris and, in March, by a revolt in Vienna. Metternich, the hated symbol of reaction to all liberals and nationalists, fled to England. An era of reaction was over.
   2. Excited crowds gathered in the main cities of the papal states, and on March 14, 1848, Pius IX was compelled to grant a constitution establishing a two-chamber parliament with full legislative and fiscal powers subject only to the pope’s personal veto.
   3. On March 23, King Charles Albert of Piedmont-Sardinia declared war on Austria under the slogan: *L'Italia farà da se* (“Italy will make itself”), and the war for national unity began.
   4. After that, moderate concessions were not enough, and on November 15, radicals murdered a papal minister and seized power. A radical ministry was appointed, and the Swiss Guard was disbanded. The pope was now a virtual prisoner.
   5. On November 24–25, with the aid of the French and Bavarian ambassadors, the pope fled to Gaeta in the kingdom of Naples. In his absence, elections were held for a constituent assembly, which ended temporal power and declared a democratic republic.
   6. The pope appealed to the great powers for aid but refused to concede any form of constitution. Napoleon III agreed with Austria to a restoration of papal rule, and on April 12, 1850, Pius returned to his capital guarded by French troops, who stayed until 1870.
   7. From then on, the maintenance of temporal power was a function of the balance of international power and the whims of Napoleon III.
E. From 1848, Pius IX was in a battle against liberalism and nationalism in all its forms and did not surrender to either after the defeat of 1870.
1. Conservatives learned lessons from 1848, in particular, the need to organize the masses as the nationalists had.

2. In the 1850s, new Catholic organizations grew up and refreshed traditional piety. There was a renewed cult of the Virgin Mary, and the pope declared the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Devotional exercises, pilgrimages, and mass meetings showed up liberalism’s greatest weakness—its lack of mass support.

3. The Church found a solution to liberalism by going to the masses and outflanking the liberals. Philipp Anton von Segesser, a Catholic Swiss nobleman saw that democracy was “preferable to the quasi-bureaucratic autocracy of the representative system.”

4. Pius IX rejected the democratic alternative of Segesser and others, and the lines were drawn.

5. The kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia was the new hope of unification after its defeat in 1849 and, under Camillo Benso conte di Cavour (1810–1861), could now be the unifier of Italy.

6. Cavour was a liberal in politics and economics but also anticlerical. Under his government, Piedmontese legislation grew increasingly hostile to the Church. On March 27, 1861, shortly before his untimely death, Cavour made his most important speech on Church and state, urging that liberty be introduced into “all parts of religious and civil society.”

7. The threat to temporal power was now much greater. The greatest Italian state was now becoming the agent of unification and an enemy of Pius IX’s idea of the Church.

F. Pius IX counterattacked with the two most important papal documents of the 19th century: Quanta Cura and “The Syllabus of Errors.”

1. Quanta Cura, an encyclical, contained as an appendix a list of 80 principal errors, “The Syllabus of Errors.”

2. It was a declaration of war on the modern state.

3. The pope rejected religious tolerance, freedom of worship, and all forms of pluralism.

4. Nor did believers have a choice in the matter; the pope was speaking as universal teacher and judge to Catholics the world over who were, therefore, bound to accept the “Syllabus.”

5. The reaction throughout the Protestant world was outraged, and even many Catholics were dismayed.

6. The “Syllabus” was just the first act of the drama.

G. The First Vatican Council proclaimed the doctrine of papal infallibility.

1. On June 29, 1868, Pius IX issued an invitation to a Vatican Council. No laypeople were invited, nor representatives of Catholic states.

2. On December 8, 1869, the Vatican Council began its sessions. In Session IV of July 18, 1870, the First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ was promulgated.

3. Chapter 4 stated: “He possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his church to enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals.”

4. The reaction to the new doctrine was violent both within and without the Church. Many Catholics were simply unable to accept infallibility as a binding article of faith.

H. The unification of Italy and the seizure of Rome completed the pope’s violent rejection of the modern world.

1. The Franco-Prussian War (1870) transformed European politics. When, on September 3, 1870, the French surrendered at Sedan and Napoleon III was taken prisoner, the new French Republic returned to its anticlerical traditions of 1789.

2. The garrison of French troops was withdrawn, and on September 20, 1870, Victor Emanuel of Savoy and the Royal Piedmontese Army defeated papal troops and breached the walls of Rome.

3. The pope was once again a prisoner, as Pius VII had been in 1809. Temporal power was abolished and Pope Pius IX went into inner exile. The gates of the Vatican were closed.

4. The new Italian parliament passed the Law of Guarantees as a gesture of good will. Pius IX’s reaction was an encyclical, UBI NOS (“On Pontifical States”), rejecting all relations with the godless Italian state. The struggle intensified in the 1870s, poisoning relations for 50 years.

5. In 1874, the pope declared it non-expedit (“not desirable”) for devout Catholics to take any part in the government of the kingdom of Italy. In 1877, the decree was strengthened to non-licet; it was now not “allowed” for Catholics to serve the kingdom in any capacity or even to vote in its elections.

6. On February 2, 1878, Pius IX died after the longest pontificate in history.
V. The pontificate of Pius IX deepened the divisions between Protestant and Catholic.
   A. To this day, Protestants are uninformed about Catholic doctrine and practice, which emerged from a context of special thought, and rest on a set of specific articles of faith.
   B. The current crisis of authority in the Roman Catholic Church is not understood by the non-Catholic population. Anti-Catholic sentiments among many Protestants, especially the biblical and evangelical wings of the Protestant churches, still bubble to the surface.
   C. The crisis in the 19th century and the one in our own time arise from a deeper conflict between the Magisterium and the modern world.
   D. The clash between American values and the doctrine that the Church is the kingdom of God on earth and, hence, cannot err seems to be insoluble. Pius IX saw clearly the incompatibility and dealt with it by extreme measures. His successors have yet to find an alternative.

Essential Reading:
Eamon Duffy, Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes, 2nd ed.

Supplementary Reading:
Garry Wills, Why I Am a Catholic.

Questions to Consider:
1. Can the authority of the Roman Catholic Church be reconciled with the assumptions of contemporary American political life?
2. Do Pius IX’s doctrinal positions follow logically from the fundamental doctrines of the faith?
Lecture Twenty-Seven
Richard Wagner—Revolution in Music

Scope: Richard Wagner (1813–1883) was a revolutionary in politics and music. He fought on the barricades in Dresden in the revolution of 1848 against the king of Saxony and the repressive regime of Metternich. In exile, he conceived an equally gigantic revolution in music that would create the “total work of art.” Its grandest expression is Der Ring des Nibelungen (1853–1874), his tetralogy based on the Nibelungenlied. Here, he carried out his new ideas of opera and drama, which embodied large-scale, quasi-religious myths. After he completed the first two works of the cycle, Das Rheingold (1853–1854) and Die Walküre (1854–1856), and two acts of Siegfried (1856–1869), Wagner laid the Ring aside without hope of ever seeing it performed, because its structure violated all operatic conventions of the day. This lecture looks at the theatrical structure and the politics of the Ring and asks if art could serve, as Wagner thought, as an alternative to conventional religion and what connection, if any, Wagner had to Nazism, which adopted his music as its theme song.

Outline

I. Contemporaries saw Wagner as a phenomenon like no other, and they were right. Wagner stands alone as the creator of a new art form and the center of a cult.
   A. The gigantic quality of his myth-making and its function as a substitute religion represented an entirely new artistic experience. A cult formed about his person, and the devotion to him was already impressive by the 1870s.
   B. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), the most important philosopher of the irrational, was also the sharpest observer of Wagner.
      1. Nietzsche’s ideas had a profound influence on the 20th century. He was the prophet of a boundless new attack on enlightened rationality, on God, and on conventional thought and morality.
      2. His cult of the “Superman” raised the great creative soul beyond good and evil. The new Superman, with his “will to power,” was to be the savior of decadent humanity.
      3. Nietzsche represented a new and different kind of conservatism from the historical solidity of Edmund Burke.
      4. Nietzsche’s Superman is unique, above morality, above conventions, beyond reason, and full of contempt for ordinary people.
   C. In our long journey from 1715 to 1914, Nietzsche and Wagner mark a new and fatal stage. They represent the wave of late Romantic irrationalism in Europe from the 1870s on. Wagner himself was one of its main sources.
      1. Nietzsche literally got “sick” on Wagner, was intoxicated by him, as he wrote at the beginning of The Case of Wagner (1888).
      2. Nietzsche also saw something disastrous in Wagner that nobody else saw. He realized that Wagner would seduce the Germans, especially their youth.
      3. On the other hand, there has never been a musician like Wagner. No other composer has had a comparable impact on civilization—both unique and disastrous.
      4. It is an irony that both Nietzsche and Wagner, in spite of their differences, became intellectual godparents of the anti-rational, mystical, cultic, racist culture of Germany between 1890 and 1945, which ended in Hitler’s Nazism.

II. The life of Richard Wagner is itself a romantic saga, and his attitudes turn into art.
   A. Wagner was born in Leipzig on May 22, 1813, and his childhood was suitably bohemian. It is still not clear who his father was, but we know that his mother was the mistress of Prince Constantin of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach.
      1. He had conventional music lessons, though he later tried to conceal that fact to promote the myth of his untutored genius. He was certainly gifted and began writing operas from the start.
      2. Wagner was always in love and had many affairs and romantic adventures. In exile in Switzerland in the 1850s, his female admirers paid for his living expenses and doted on him.
While writing music for a traveling theater company, Wagner fell madly in love with the leading lady, Christine Wilhelmine ("Minna") Planer. The two were married in 1836, the beginning of a tempestuous and unhappy marriage in which both partners were systematically unfaithful.

In 1869, Cosima von Bülow, the wife of his favorite conductor and the composer Liszt’s daughter, left her husband and family to live with Wagner.

Wagner and Minna had to flee by night from Riga, Latvia, where Wagner had directed the opera, to escape his creditors. From 1839 to 1842, Wagner was in Paris living from hand to mouth. His patron was Giacomo Meyerbeer, a celebrated Parisian composer. Meyerbeer, a German Jew, had settled in Paris and created the grand opera of the 1830s.

Meyerbeer consistently supported and promoted Wagner’s work in Paris and Berlin. Wagner’s way of repaying his patron was to suppress the story and to write a violently anti-Semitic pamphlet, “Das Judentum in der Musik” (“The Jews in Music”) in 1850.

Wagner’s anti-Semitism became a prominent feature of his worldview and endeared his art to Hitler and the Nazis.

1. Wagner’s attack on the Jews was written in exile, after his revolutionary heroics in 1849.
2. It belonged to a current of economic anti-Semitism, which we have seen in the reaction to the explosion of Jewish wealth.
3. Wagner had initially been a radical and a liberal favorable to Jewish emancipation, which he now repented.
4. According to Wagner, “the Jew” (always in the abstract) corrupts art by turning it into a market for “art commodities.” This theme, repeated ad nauseam, reflects the Romantic distaste for the fact that even the genius has to sell tickets.
5. Wagner’s radical anti-capitalism was directed at the Jews, and the key figures, of course, were N. M. Rothschild and his brothers.
6. In Wagner’s view, “the Jew” corrupted morals and culture with money; Jews also corrupted pure speech. The message would be transformed into racial terms in the arguments used by the Nazis. The connection is there, however often Wagnerians try to deny it.
7. Wagner was the first prophet of modern anti-Semitism, because his gigantic artistic achievement, like Nietzsche’s philosophy, rejected reason, free markets, private property, capitalism, commerce, and social mobility.
8. In this, Pius IX and Wagner had the same enemy, modern liberal capitalism, though Wagner was also anti-Catholic.

Wagner opposed the modern world by transforming the Romantic enthusiasms of the 1830s and 1840s for simple peasant and rural life into the cult of the Volk—the “pure people.”

1. The Volk was the pure source of culture. Wagner indulged in Romantic glorification of the Volk, pointing out that Jews had no connection to this “healthy stem” of society.
2. The only missing element in this approach is modern Darwinian racism. Wagner formed his ideas and rejected the Jewish “essence” but not yet on a “scientific basis,” because Darwin’s Origin of Species was not published until 1859.
3. All these doctrines were part of Wagner’s essential attitudes, not something outside his art. His greatest work, the Ring des Niebelungen, builds every one of these attitudes into a monumental attack on the modern world and everything in it.

From Nietzsche to the present, Wagner’s peculiarly nasty views have been the subject of a fierce debate.

1. What is the relationship between great art and artists who are bad people?
2. Wagner was a monster of ingratitude, hypocrisy, and deceit, a truly nasty person, but also one of the greatest geniuses of all times.
3. Even more troubling is the fact that Wagner’s art expresses racist, reactionary ideas and cannot be separated from them. Can we enjoy it in good conscience?
4. How do we assess the role of Wagner’s music under the Nazis? How far can Wagner be blamed for what others do with his art?

The revolution of 1848 was the turning point in Wagner’s life.

1. After 1842, Wagner settled in Dresden, the capital of Saxony, and in 1843, was appointed second Kapellmeister at the king of Saxony’s court (in effect, director of the Royal Opera House).
2. There, he had his first real successes with the operas Rienzi, The Flying Dutchman, and Tannhäuser.

3. Wagner threw himself into the turbulence and supported the revolution against the king, his employer, but he also made speeches against the money power. After the revolution’s failure in 1849, Wagner fled to Switzerland, and it was there he conceived the greatest idea of his career, the new music drama.

III. The musical innovations arose from the idea of the Gesamtkunstwerk (“the complete work of art”).

A. The work combined and transcended the traditional forms of theatrical and operatic art. Wagner abolished the recitative and aria forms and used music to express dialogue.

B. The Leitmotif (“leading theme”) sets a musical theme to certain ideas or events in the opera. The result allows the audience to “understand” emotions and motivation when the characters are not singing or speaking, as if we could read their minds.

C. Wagner created his own epic poem as a kind of ancient saga, which he completed and read to admirers in Zurich in 1853. He invented a whole mythology.

1. Wagner took up a numbers of legends and sagas, drawing freely from Nordic legends but also from Greek tragedy, to produce his artificial ancient myth.
2. The plot begins with the three Rhinemaidens—Flosshilde, Wellgunde, and Woglinde—playing water games. Alberich, a dwarf from the dark underworld of Niebelheim, tries to seduce the Rhinemaidens, until the sun suddenly breaks through the water and Alberich sees the Rhinegold at the bottom, a gold with magical powers. Whoever will renounce love can forge a ring from the gold—a ring that confers power over the universe. Alberich steals it, and tragedy follows from that.

D. The Ring was always intended as a religious experience.

1. Wagner won the patronage of the Romantic king of Bavaria, Ludwig II, who built Wagner his own temple, the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth, which opened in 1876. Pilgrims were expected to go to Bayreuth in a religious frame of mind and still are.
2. The work goes on for more than 16 hours, broken into four parts: the Rheingold on Friday night, the Valkyrie and Siegfried on Saturday, and Götterdämmerung on Sunday.

IV. “The case of Wagner” troubled Nietzsche and should trouble us.

A. One of the greatest musical geniuses of all times created a work so gigantic and so magnificent that it would replace traditional religion and purify us from the corruption of modern industrial society. The Ring and Wagner’s other operas transformed people into devoted members of a cult, the cult of Wagner.

B. How should we react to that? The art of music, the drama of Goethe, the confessions of Rousseau now achieved a symbolic fusion that was both brilliant and disastrous.

Essential Reading:
Bryan Magee, Aspects of Wagner.

Supplementary Reading:
John Deathridge, Carl Dahlhaus, Stanley Sadie (preface), Wagner: New Grove.

Questions to Consider:
1. What makes great art come close to achieving the status of religion?
2. Can we enjoy Wagner’s works without being involved in the views that they embody?
Lecture Twenty-Eight

Marx and Engels—The Perfect Collaboration

Scope: This lecture looks at the origins of Marxism from an unusual angle. Marxism was really the work of a unique partnership between two different people: Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), the son of a rich manufacturer, and Karl Marx (1818–1883), the son of a converted Jew from Trier. In 1842, Engels took a position in a factory near Manchester, England, to learn the latest machine technology. In 1844, while passing through Paris, he met Marx, and their lifelong association began. Engels wrote *The Condition of the Working Class in England* in 1844, the first great work in the Marx/Engels output. The two worked together, apparently without friction, until Marx died, though Marx was notoriously irritable and cranky. Engels’s fortune paid for Marx to write his diatribes against people who had fortunes. How and why did this extraordinary double act survive and what effect did it have on the way “Marxism” evolved?

Outline

I. Two 19th-century lives, those of Engels and Marx, set the agenda for much of the 20th century.
   A. Marxian socialism, which they jointly created, was both new and influential, the most important radical ideology since 1789. Understanding Marxism is crucial to understanding our age.
   B. Both Marx and Engels were men of their period, proper Victorians, but their influence became significant in the following century.

II. The contribution of Marx and Engels was the creation of a new conceptual framework for understanding history, society, economics, and politics.
   A. Marxism begins with Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, which was the fundamental text about capitalism for the 19th century.
      1. Radicals and conservatives reacted differently to Smith’s ideas and were often divided among themselves. For some radicals, Smith’s work suggested that the division of labor and mechanization could put an end to poverty.
      2. Others saw society as increasingly divided between a few rich and the mass of the new poor—the factory workers.
      3. From the left and the right, criticism of the consequences of the new commercial society and capitalist markets began to grow louder. Marxism is one of many such “critiques.”
   B. The main elements in the Marxist theory of development, which is fundamentally an approach to history, are as follows:
      1. History is linear, not cyclical, and moves in a progressive way.
      2. History has a fixed, determined trajectory that we can grasp through understanding the “laws of history.”
      3. The basis of historical change comes from changes in the relations of production, that is, how people make their living. Are they working the land as peasants under the control of great landlords, or is the factory the main mode of production? Economic activity determines the stage of development of a society.
      4. Individuals have no control over these processes.
      5. History moves toward a definite end, what the Greeks called a *telos*, or “final stage.” Thus, we can say that Marxism, which posits an earthly paradise in which “private ownership of the means of production” has been abolished, is “teleological.”
      6. Marx and Engels believed that their socialism, unlike that proclaimed by other groups, was “scientific.” The others were “utopian.” Marx’s idea of science was a 19th-century one, based on the existence of iron laws of development. Liberal capitalism obeyed such inner laws, which would lead to an inevitable crisis. It would, in effect, self-destruct.
      7. The process by which history evolves is *dialectical*, an idea Marx got from Hegel. Every human action, individual or collective, generates a resistance, equal and opposite to it. In the struggle, a new synthesis of the two forces emerges, which generates an equal and opposite reaction to the new force,
which leads to a new struggle, and so on. The terms for the stages in the process are *thesis, antithesis,* and *synthesis.*

8. The social, political, and intellectual life of society reflects only the economic structure, because human beings create the forms of social life solely in response to economic needs.

9. Men are divided into classes by their relations to the means of production—land and capital. The class that controls the means of production inevitably exploits the other classes; this class struggle produces the dynamic of history and is the source of progress toward a final uniformity.

10. The process works through categories, not individuals; thus, a class is a category irrespective of what individuals do or think.

11. The historical laws are “inside” the processes or, in technical terms, they are *immanent* as opposed to *transcendental* (as in God’s law or Newton’s laws of gravity). Immanent phenomena exist or remain within phenomena; they are what we call *inherent.*

12. Marxism is *relativist* (sometimes called *historicist*), because ideas, classes, or categories are always products of their times, that is, relative, not absolute. Marx rejected the idea of timeless “rights” as a bourgeois fiction.

13. Marx’s economic analysis rests on Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations,* in particular, Smith’s labor theory of value. Labor remains the only source of true value, but Marx added the idea of “surplus value,” the amount that Smith’s specialized worker produces above that required to sustain him. This surplus represents the source of profits of the entrepreneur.

14. Money is imaginary, a “fetish” or “false idol,” as are commodities, which we see as real objects when they merely circulate or embody the labor of those who created the real value.

15. The true evil of capitalism arises from the private ownership of the means of production and capital. The abolition of private property in the productive forces will permit Adam Smith’s machine to produce the wealth, and the social ownership of capital will distribute its fruits justly to those most in need.

C. Marxism represents the most brilliant, comprehensive theory of “everything” ever developed by the mind of man. How it led to tyranny continues to exercise historians, philosophers, and economists. Let us examine its virtues.

1. It has immediate effects on causality in history. We know what causes what and in which order.

2. It defines the importance of forces or objects. In the vast number of facts and events in history, we know what really matters.

3. It reveals the hidden causation behind the appearances and dazzles us by the revelation of causal chains we never suspected.

4. It is a secular religion and promises us a worldly paradise, when “swords will be beaten into ploughshares,” as the prophet Isaiah proclaimed, and when conflict among people will cease.

D. Its built-in flaws contributed to the distortion and transformation of Marx’s positive hopes into a caricature.

1. The theory hardened into doctrine. In place of analysis, dogma became the norm. Marxism continued to rest on 19th-century economic foundations. The theory froze, because its analyses were never changed to reflect the 20th century.

2. Lenin and Stalin used the frozen theory to justify the rule by the Bolshevik Party, which they substituted for Marx’s *proletariat,* or “working class.” In so doing, they turned the party into the bearer of historic destiny, which Marx had reserved for the masses. Once only the party knew the truth, dictatorship became almost inevitable.

3. Marxism continued to rest on 19th-century ideas about science and scientific laws. Because its “truths” are immanent, they cannot be subjects of knowledge, as Hume showed when he demonstrated that we can know only impressions of things, not the “thing-in-itself.” Nor can these truths be “falsified” in the modern sense used in most sciences.

4. The proletariat does not exist. Marx defined it as persons who have nothing to sell but their labor and imagined them as wage slaves in Engels’s 1844 factories. The theory could not deal with people who work in shops, secretaries pounding typewriters, or people in other service industries. As the share of industrial workers declined in total employment, Marxism drifted further from reality.
III. These theories were the work of two different but equally remarkable men and an even more unusual partnership.

A. Marx and Engels could not have been more different as people.
   1. Engels wore immaculate clothes; Marx was a mess. Engels kept himself scrupulously clean and his office organized; Marx would forget to wash and comb his hair and lived in chaos.
   2. Marx, the great revolutionary, lived a conventional bourgeois life. He married Jenny von Westphalen, the daughter of a wealthy Rhineland family, in 1843 and had a loving relationship for 40 years. They had seven children. Engels lived in a scandalous ménage with two sisters, both illiterate Irish girls.
   3. Engels lived a life of wealth. He had two houses in Manchester and one in London. Jenny and Karl lived from hand to mouth in one squalid hovel after another.
   4. Marx had a bad temper and, as his boils and carbuncles got worse with age, lived in excruciating pain and was impossible. Engels remained affable and calm to the end.

B. Engels always understood that he was the junior partner.
   1. In 1884, he wrote that he had played “second fiddle” all his life.
   2. He was himself a genius and indispensable to Marx in many ways.
   3. Engels spent years patiently deciphering Marx’s illegible handwriting and sorting his chaotic notes and manuscripts. Only Engels understood the theory of Das Kapital well enough to fill in the missing bits, edit the irregularities, and organize the argument after Marx’s death.
   4. Engels paid many bills for Marx and always found the money to bail out the Marx family with their huge brood of children and equally huge debts.

IV. Engels’s theoretical contribution was not less important than Marx’s. The link between the two names Marx and Engels has its justification.

A. Engels’s works have played a peculiar role in subsequent history.
   1. The two men wrote the famous Communist Manifesto together.
   2. Engels’s The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844 was the single most important piece of social history ever written.
   3. The shortened version of Engels’s Anti-Dühring of 1878 (Socialism, Utopian and Scientific) was second only to The Communist Manifesto in its number of translations and worldwide impact.

B. Marx admired Engels’s abilities and considered his friend an encyclopedia, ready to work at every hour of the day or night.

C. Engels assessed their relationship and summed it up after Marx’s death in these words: “What I achieved—apart from work in a few specialized areas of study—Marx could have achieved without me. But what Marx achieved I could not have achieved.”

V. The two friends, different as night and day, worked in a perfect partnership while both were alive, and even after Marx died in 1883, Engels continued to defend, extend, and elaborate his friend’s great ideas.

A. Engels and Marx hated formal religion, which Marx called “an opiate for the masses,” but unwittingly, they founded a new secular one.

B. We have now reached a new stage in modernity. Against the religion of art, the irrational, the nation, and against all traditional religions, Marx and Engels founded a secular faith.

C. In 1891, Engels saw with satisfaction that the largest workers’ party in the world, the German Social Democratic Party, adopted Marx’s and Engels’s theories as the party platform, calling for the “abolition of class rule and of classes themselves.”

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
Francis Wheen, Karl Marx: A Life.
Questions to Consider:
1. Can you see why Marxism has attracted people and, if so, can you explain why?
2. In what ways does the thought of Marx and Engels have the characteristics of a religion?
Lecture Twenty-Nine
Otto von Bismarck—Blood and Iron

Scope: Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), the “Iron Chancellor,” unified Germany in three wars and came to embody everything brutal and ruthless about Prussian culture. The real Bismarck had a different character, a hypochondriac, a brilliant and well-read man, a convert to an extreme form of Protestant mysticism, and one of the few Prussians who never served in the king’s army. Bismarck’s mother dominated his upbringing and gave him a bourgeois education, complete with university and a law degree, neither the sort of thing that proper Prussian chaps considered respectable. This lecture examines the strange relationship between Bismarck and King William I. Count Waldersee remarked cynically after Bismarck had been the king’s prime minister for more than 20 years, “Bismarck is the king’s last mistress because only such a creature could have such power over an old man.” Did that relationship change the course of modern history?

Outline

I. Bismarck’s transformation of Europe and his unification of Germany cannot be understood without first examining the peculiarity of Prussia as a kingdom. We saw earlier the astonishing level of absolutism in Prussia, but we need to examine the nature of that absolute state in its 19th-century form.

A. From 1640 to 1918, Prussia was a military state.
   1. Frederick William, Prince-Elector of the Holy Roman Empire (1640–1688), had an important idea during the Thirty Years’ War: “Alliances are good, but one’s own forces are better.” This idea was not obvious, because in that period, most princes hired troops for the war, who were paid by what they could loot.
   2. Frederick William’s innovation was what we now call the standing army, which had to be paid regularly or it would mutiny. The Elector could not pay the troops from his own revenues as a landlord and ruling prince, because Prussia, unlike Saxony, was a poor state.
   3. Frederick William created a corps of tax collectors who operated across his lands. To secure this system, he had to suppress his parliaments and buy off nobles, which he had achieved by the 1660s.
   4. When the elector died in 1688, he left an army of 30,000. From that point, army and state fused. The state grew to finance the army, and the army saw itself as the highest expression of the state.
   5. The Elector’s success involved a deal: The aristocracy agreed to the elimination of parliament in exchange for a Junker (a Prussian aristocrat) monopoly of the officer corps and bureaucracy.
   6. By the time of Frederick the Great’s father, King Frederick William I (1713–1740), Prussia had a standing army of 80,000.
   7. As we saw earlier, Frederick II transformed his father’s realm both in military and civil affairs. His legacy loomed over subsequent Prussian history.

B. The Prussian reform era followed the nation’s shattering defeat by Napoleon in 1806. Reformers agreed that they must inject “soul” and willing participation into the Frederician “machine state.”
   1. Army reform meant opening careers to talented non-nobles, which infringed the traditional monopoly of the aristocracy. The Prussian aristocracy outlasted the reformers, and the middle classes were excluded until 1918 from the aristocratic regiments.
   2. To rouse patriotism and expel the French meant liberation of the peasants (1807) and some sort of constitutionalism.
   3. After 1815, Metternich insisted that constitutions be revoked or reduced in importance. That year marked the frustration of most of the aims of the reformers.
   4. In 1848, revolution broke out in Berlin. King Frederick William IV (1840–1859) gave in to the revolutionaries for a time. When he regained his courage and put the reform down, Prussia was left with the constitution of 1850, which rested on universal but unequal male suffrage (and was not abolished until 1918!).

C. In 1850, Prussia enjoyed an increase in German prestige, because Frederick William had attempted to unify Germany from 1848–1850.
1. Prussia had become an industrial state and had completed the Zollverein, or “customs union,” which tied the smaller German states to a free trade zone with Prussia but excluded Austria.

2. Free compulsory primary education spread across Prussia. Prussian universities turned out scientific pioneers, and technical colleges trained engineers who could apply science to industry.

3. Industrialization in Prussia was rapid. The coal deposits of the Rhine, Ruhr, and Wupper valleys and the development of iron and steel produced the basic materials for a modern army and for the railroad boom of the 1850s and 1860s.

4. Prussia in 1860 presented a paradox. The Prussian aristocracy still monopolized power in the army and civil service, while society had begun to industrialize. This process brought with it the rise of a wealthy middle class and a large working class that demanded more representation and genuine parliamentary politics. Prussia remained a military state but one with huge factories, big cities, and advanced technology.

II. The achievement of Otto von Bismarck was the unification of Germany “from above,” without really undermining royal power. Bismarck, the political genius of the mid-19th century, preserved much of Frederick the Great’s absolutism and bequeathed it to the 20th century.

A. Bismarck was as interesting as Frederick the Great, a brilliant, complex, and witty conservative with a low view of human nature.

B. Bismarck’s background was unusual for an aristocrat. He had a thoroughly middle-class education, which gave him a peculiar status. He never served in the Prussian army, which for some old Prussians meant that he was a “pen-pusher” and, of course, too clever by half.

1. He was born on the family estate in Brandenburg on April 1, 1815. His father was from an old Brandenburg Junker family, but his mother, Wilhelmine Mencken, was bourgeois, the daughter of a prominent Prussian civil servant.

2. His mother was the dominant influence in his life; it was she who decided that he would go to gymnasiuam (a high school with strong teaching in Latin and Greek), not to a military academy.

3. He went to university at Göttingen and Berlin, where he studied law, an unusual of choice for a Junker, because it was a low, bourgeois profession.

4. After holding minor judicial and administrative offices, he quit with a characteristic Bismarckian flourish: “If I cannot play first violin, I shall not make music at all.”

5. The years on his estate turned out be formative. He fell in love with a noble lady who belonged to the Pietist Christians (a form of born-again spiritual Christianity that rejected “walled churches”) and eventually married her equally aristocratic and Christian friend, Johanna von Puttkamer. To make the marriage, Bismarck had to convert. The spiritual connection in the Pietist movement included many of the most influential Junker families and brought the brilliant young Bismarck to some influential people.

6. He owed his political career to several families in this community, who helped him, in the early stages of the revolution of 1848, to get elected to the Prussian Landtag (“parliament”), then to write for the reactionary newspaper, the Kreuzzeitung (“The Cross Newspaper”).

7. The first authentic Bismarckian tones were heard in a speech on December 2, 1850, when the Prussian Landtag debated the so-called “Shame of Olmütz,” a treaty forced on Prussia by Austria. Bismarck coolly defended the treaty on “realist” grounds.

8. Bismarck’s oratorical brilliance gained him an amazing promotion as the Prussian minister to the German Diet at Frankfurt from 1851 to 1859, where his “realism in politics” (in German, Realpolitik) horrified his former patrons, who remained Christian conservatives, persons of principle.

9. The break came when Bismarck defended the establishment of the French Second Empire on the grounds that Napoleon III kept order. Bismarck’s patrons hated Napoleon III as a revolutionary.

10. Bismarck rejected emotions and ideologies in his foreign policies. This new tone of realism and his biting cynicism made him feared and distrusted in upper-class Prussian circles. He made too many jokes.

C. Bismarck practiced what came to be known as Realpolitik, which was then and remains today a disturbing form of foreign political activity. Bismarck refused to allow sympathy, principle, or even his religious convictions to influence his policies.
III. The typical biography of Bismarck does not usually depict him as servant of the king, but without understanding the peculiar chemistry of that relationship, Bismarck’s career cannot be explained.

A. Bismarck became Prussian minister-president on September 22, 1862, because the entire Prussian state faced a possible revolution.
   1. The issue was army reform. The Austro-French War and the unification of Italy led to a threat of war, and Prussia mobilized.
   2. The failures of the mobilization led to the establishment of a military reform commission to recommend changes in service conditions. The draft was to be extended from two to three years, to be followed by five years in the active reserves. At a stroke, a better trained army would grow by 50 percent in size.
   3. The voluntary militia units were to be abolished or merged with the main force. Militias are, by nature, democratic and represent the citizen-soldier. Think of the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as an example.
   4. The Prussian liberal parties campaigned against the reforms, because they gave parliament no say and because they represented change imposed from above by the king and aristocratic generals.
   5. Successive elections resulted in majorities against the army and the king; the court circles and the generals began to fear another 1848.
   6. The minister of war from 1859 was Albrecht Theodor Emil, Graf von Roon (1803–1879), a Prussian general, a military reformer, and a noble lord. In 1849, serving under Prince William, he helped suppress the revolt in Baden.
   7. Roon was a political reactionary but smart. He knew that only Bismarck, now Prussian ambassador in Paris, had the guile and intelligence to get the army reforms through without a revolution. He urged Bismarck to speak with the king, an audience that changed the history of the world.

B. Bismarck used his literary talents to convince the king that he would be no more than a loyal, obedient servant, promising to stand by royal policy even if it led to violence.
   1. Bismarck knew that if revolution threatened, the king would abdicate in favor of his son, Prince Frederick, who was married to Princess Victoria, the passionately liberal daughter of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. A liberal reign meant parliamentary government and English-style reforms, Bismarck’s worst scenario.
   2. Bismarck knew, as well, that Queen Augusta hated and distrusted him because of his attempt in 1848 to persuade the then-Prince Wilhelm to lead a coup against his brother, Frederick William IV, who had granted liberal concessions to the revolutionaries.
   3. Bismarck’s first speech as prime minister became his most famous and almost put an end to his tenure of office after a week. To the Budget Committee on September 30, 1862, he said, “not by speeches and majority votes are the great questions of the day decided…but by blood and iron.”
   4. The effect on even right-wing opinion was catastrophic. The effect on the king was even worse. He was taking the waters at Baden-Baden but decided to interrupt his holiday, go back to Berlin, and fire Bismarck.
   5. Bismarck knew that his career—and, as we now know, the future of Europe—was at stake. Before William even reached Berlin, Bismarck boarded the train and managed to persuade the king to defend his own position to the death.
   6. William I was 65 years old when that scene took place; Bismarck was 47. Bismarck’s entire career of 28 years, in which he fought three major wars, unified Germany under a Prussian-style constitution, prevented the growth of parliamentary democracy, and preserved the Prussian army from parliamentary control, depended on the heartbeat and good will of an elderly man.

IV. Bismarck’s career can only be explained by a biographical approach, which highlights his masterly capacity to manipulate the emotions of an elderly, stubborn autocrat and, at the same time, avoid the fatal burst of royal impatience that would get him dismissed.

A. The king once observed that it was difficult to be emperor under a prime minister such as Bismarck, which was funny but also true. For his part, Bismarck once said, “The character of the king is my constant study.” That was also true. How did the partnership work?
   1. William I was no autocrat and, though a soldier, he preferred to arrive at peaceful solutions to problems.
2. Bismarck was not a reactionary but a realist. He made deals and used intrigue, as well as force.
3. Bismarck outmaneuvered the liberal forces by using democracy to undermine them. He knew that parliament in Prussia represented only the top 15 percent of taxpayers. In his declaration explaining why Prussia would not go to a conference of the princes sponsored by Austria in early 1863, he demanded that a future German constitution have universal manhood suffrage. The whole country mocked him, but he was right. The masses voted for their lords (and still do).
4. The king must have seen Bismarck’s genius and accepted that he could not get his ends accomplished without this difficult man.

B. Purely as a matter of speculation, there may have been a deeper bond that united William and Bismarck.
1. William had a powerful queen, an even more dramatic and powerful daughter-in-law, and a weak, apparently hen-pecked son, the crown prince.
2. Bismarck had been dominated by his strong mother and had suffered from the weakness of his father.
3. Bismarck maneuvered the king into a triangle in which Bismarck played the “good son,” while Frederick, corrupted by the bossy English woman, played the “bad son,” full of unpleasant liberal ideas about constitutional monarchy.
4. Bismarck had hysterical fits and hypochondriac ailments and threatened to resign whenever the king refused to do what he wanted. The king always gave in, often very grumpily. He needed the “good son.”
5. For 26 years, Bismarck ruled by the magic that he exerted over the old man. As General Alfred Count von Waldsee remarked in 1887, “Bismarck is the king’s last mistress because only such a creature could have such power over an old man.”

C. Biography in this case gives us insight into a relationship that created our modern world and reminds us that in all the noise of arms and machines, individual actors still make the crucial decisions in our lives.

Essential Reading:
Alan John Percivale Taylor, *Bismarck, the Man and the Statesman*.

Supplementary Reading:
Theodor Fontane, *Effi Briest*, Hugh Rorrison and Helen Chambers, trans.

Questions to Consider:
1. Can you imagine an American president or secretary of state talking the language of *realpolitik*? If not, why not?
2. Why did Bismarck see democracy as a weapon against liberalism?
Lecture Thirty

Charles Darwin—Origin of Species

Scope: Charles Darwin (1809–1882), a member of a prominent Cambridge academic family, studied medicine at Edinburgh and for the ministry at Cambridge but lost interest in both. His friend, the botanist J. S. Henslow got him a job as official naturalist on a five-year cruise (1831–1836) aboard HMS Beagle. What Darwin saw, especially on the Galapagos Islands, started him on work that resulted in his concept of evolution. In 1859, Darwin set forth the structure of his theory and the evidence for it in The Origin of Species. The book created a crisis in faith and religion that still rages in many schools in this country. This lecture tries to restore Darwin’s work to its Victorian context and asks where the ideas fit into the wider 19th-century world.

Outline

I. As we have seen, from the 1830s through the 1870s, Europe experienced a crisis of religion, which differed from country to country.

A. This crisis took many shapes in the British context. One issue was the problem of the establishment of the church.
   1. Many careers depended on being a member of the official religion of the state, the Church of England. Until 1829, public service jobs in the United Kingdom were closed to Protestants who were not members of the established church, as well as Catholics and Jews, and Parliament refused to admit Jews into the 1860s.
   2. Oxford and Cambridge were the only two universities in England in the first third of the century. In Wales, St. David’s Lampeter was founded in 1822 and University College London (UCL), in 1828. UCL was founded as an anti-establishment institution of higher learning.
   3. In “Oxbridge” (Oxford and Cambridge), there were only a few university professorships. Most dons (the popular word for “academic”) held fellowships in the various colleges. To hold a fellowship usually meant being a clerk in Holy Orders (that is, an Anglican priest) and remaining unmarried.
   4. Many young men drifted into the church, including Charles Darwin, who went to Christ’s College, Cambridge, in 1828 to become a clergyman. For such young men, a loss of faith later in life meant a loss of job.
   5. In his autobiography, Darwin describes his student days in these words: “My time was sadly wasted there and worse than wasted. From my passion for shooting and for hunting and, when this failed, for riding across the country, I got into a sporting set, including some dissipated low-minded young men.”
   6. Darwin actually owed his entire career to what he learned at Cambridge about nature and science, but little of that took place in class and none in the subjects he was supposed to study.

B. Theology and the new biblical criticism in Germany had begun to erode the foundations of revealed religion from within. The crisis of faith led to an Anglican reaction, the “Oxford movement,” that turned to less rational ways to know God and advocated a return of the Church of England to its Roman Catholic origins. Other reactions went in the opposite direction.

C. Cambridge ignored the Oxford movement contemptuously and produced instead a curious culture of practical Christianity and observation of nature. Bachelor dons collected botanical or geological specimens and published papers in scientific journals.
   1. This was Darwin’s real scientific education. He had spent 1826 to 1828 trying to be a medical student, but dissection sickened him.
   2. Cambridge proved the perfect environment for Darwin. He did almost no formal work, but spent his time hunting, riding, and drinking.
   3. He had free time to do what he had always done as a child—to collect specimens of plants and animals, particularly beetles.
   4. Darwin learned how to collect, observe, and catalogue natural phenomena in a systematic way. He came to think of science as “grouping facts so that general laws or conclusions may be drawn from them.”

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D. Cambridge had always had a strong scientific tradition. It was the university of Sir Isaac Newton, the greatest scientist who ever lived.
   1. Many of Darwin’s scientific friends at Cambridge became clergymen, and Darwin might have become one, too.
   2. That he did not had to do with one man, the Reverend Professor John Stevens Henslow (1796–1861), professor of mineralogy and botany. Darwin went walking with Henslow, who taught him to collect botanical specimens.
   3. Henslow brought Darwin together with the Reverend Adam Sedgwick, another Anglican clergyman and a professor of geology. Sedgwick taught the young Darwin to measure geological phenomena.
   4. Henslow used field trips and projects to teach practical botany and natural science; Darwin attached himself utterly to the professor.
   5. Henslow recommended his walking companion to Captain Fitzroy of the Royal Navy, who in 1831, needed a naturalist for a survey of the southern hemisphere aboard the HMS Beagle. The voyage that first made Darwin’s reputation allowed him to make the crucial observations that led to the idea of natural selection.

E. We might note a curious irony in this story. Faithful clerks in Holy Orders, such as Henslow and Sedgwick, educated Charles Darwin, who in 1859, published the book that undermined the faith that sustained his teachers and their university.

II. The early life of Darwin belonged to the world of Jane Austen.

A. The Darwins, the Wedgwoods, and the Allens intermarried so thoroughly and had such huge families that they all seemed to be related. They lived in spacious country houses and paid extensive visits to one another.
   1. Charles Darwin was born on February 12, 1809, the second son and sixth child of Dr. Robert Waring Darwin and Susannah Wedgwood, daughter of the famous Wedgwood pottery and porcelain manufacturing family.
   2. Darwin’s mother died in 1817, but he was brought up by the company of sisters and aunts and in 1839, married a Wedgwood cousin, Emma, with whom he remained deeply in love all his life.
   3. For most of his life, Darwin was ill and depended on Emma’s calm and nurturing presence for his survival.
   4. The Darwins had money, but the Wedgwoods and Allens had more. When Emma’s father, Josiah Wedgwood II, died in 1843, she became a rich woman. Darwin never had to worry about bills or servants.
   5. Because Darwin found London and urban society stressful, the couple moved to Down House in Kent, where they stayed until their deaths.
   6. The Darwins had more than enough money to raise a family of 10 children (3 died young), extend the house, and maintain experimental greenhouses and gardens.

B. The turning point in Darwin’s life was the five years he spent aboard HMS Beagle (1831–1836).
   1. The Royal Navy had sent out several ships since the end of the Napoleonic Wars on voyages to map, chart, and explore.
   2. Darwin recorded in his journal that the ship’s objectives were to survey Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego, the shores of Chile and Peru, and some islands in the Pacific.
   3. Darwin knew that his trip would make his name in the world of science, and he was unquestionably ambitious.
   4. Darwin’s eccentric scientific education had prepared him to note things carefully, and his obsessive temperament made him an immaculate naturalist.
   5. Three things struck him most on the voyage:
      discovering in the Pampean formation great fossil animals covered with armour like that on existing armadillos; secondly, by the manner in which closely allied animals replace one another in proceeding southwards over the Continent; and, thirdly, by the South American character of most of the productions of the Galapagos Archipelago and more especially by the manner in which they differ slightly on each island of the group. (Darwin, Autobiography)
The link among these three apparently different phenomena “could only be explained on the supposition that species gradually become modified; and the subject haunted me.”

The solution became the theory called evolution, though Darwin never called it that.

**III. The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life was published in 1859.**

**A.** The book was an instant success and sold out its first edition of 1,250 copies on the first day.

1. Darwin had already gained great scientific prestige from his journal of the voyage, which also sold well.

2. The drafts of *The Origin of Species* had been in the works from the 1840s, but Darwin was catapulted into action by the shock that a colleague, Alfred Russel Wallace, had made a study of comparative biology in Brazil and the East Indies and developed a similar concept of evolution.

3. Darwin, who was a thoroughly good and kind man, agreed to publish his findings with Wallace in a joint paper, which came out in 1858. His decision to get his findings into print made him finish what he might otherwise have fiddled with for years. The expectation that a book would follow had already been aroused.

**B.** The central arguments of *The Origin of Species* rested on a few relatively simple explanatory principles, expressed in Darwin’s limpid and lucid prose.

1. The first observation is that human beings select and breed different varieties of plants and animals for their own needs.

2. Darwin’s arguments answered the creationists, who asserted that God had made each breed perfect in itself and suited for human purposes.

3. Darwin’s solution to the puzzle in nature came from the idea of the “struggle for survival,” based on the population theory of the Reverend Thomas Malthus.

4. The principle of natural selection was possible because the world had not been created 6,000 years before Darwin’s time, as creationists believed, but billions of years ago. The geological evidence of great antiquity confirmed the variation of species over time, as Darwin had noticed on the HMS *Beagle*.

5. Darwin first showed how ecological systems interact and how changes in apparently remote species cause vast alterations in populations.

6. Darwin—uniquely among scientists—raises all the objections of proof and theory that might cause doubt and admits where the theory has weaknesses. For example, he acknowledged that the geological record has breaks.

7. The most serious missing piece in 1859, when Darwin published, was an understanding of what we now call genetics. Darwin always admits weaknesses frankly: “The laws governing inheritance are quite unknown.”

**C.** No aspect of Darwin’s argument has been refuted by modern science; all his guesses turned out to be right and, where he had no idea, modern research has filled in the gaps.

1. Ernst Mayr (1904– ) is a leading evolutionary biologist. His work contributed to the conceptual revolution that led to the synthesis of Mendelian genetics and Darwinian evolution and to the development of the concept of the biological species.


3. Mayr sums up the great features of Darwinian thought as five fundamental assumptions:

   a. The nonconstancy of species (the basic theory of evolution)
   b. The descent of all organisms from common ancestors (branching evolution)
   c. The gradual nature of evolution (no saltations, no discontinuities)
   d. The multiplication of species (the origins of diversity)
   e. Natural selection.

4. During the 1930s, genetics began to fill in the gaps, and in the 1950s and 1960s, molecular biology, the deciphering of the genetic code by use of DNA, completed the picture.
IV. Darwin marks yet another step on the road to modernization and secularization in the period 1715 to 1914.

A. Within weeks of the publication of *The Origin of Species*, Victorian Britain was convulsed by the debate on its implications.

1. It completely and comprehensively undermined the account of creation offered in the Bible.
2. It offered an alternative account for the emergence of *Homo sapiens* that abolished the uniqueness of human beings in the world of nature.
3. In a short time, the “struggle for existence” in nature, as Darwin conceived it, was applied to human societies, and the question of “survival of the fittest” was raised.
4. Distortions of Darwinian ideas began to emerge in racism, criminology, and eugenics and, in its most terrible form, fueled Hitler’s fanatical extermination of those “unfit to live.”

B. There is a paradox here: Darwin belonged to an old-fashioned world of science and culture, which depended on the existing system of social class and the amateur status of the “naturalist.”

1. Darwin belonged to a group of clergymen who collected samples and wrote papers. He could work in many branches of science, because he belonged to the old English gentry, had great wealth, and was completely free in his choice of occupation.
2. He “went up” to Christ’s College, Cambridge, to be a clergymen. Most of his closest friends became Anglican parsons. Darwin’s fanatical collecting urge, his obsessive desire to explain things, and the rather low-key religious temperature at Cambridge brought him to Henslow, and the rest is history.
3. The paradox of Charles Darwin, the non-modern modernist, reminds us once again that history moves by fits and starts, in unpredictable combinations of intention, chance, and unexpected consequences.

Essential Reading:
Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life.*


Supplementary Reading:
Ernst Mayr, *What Evolution Is.*

Questions to Consider:
1. Does the evidence presented in this lecture make a case for seeing Charles Darwin as “a non-modern modern”?
2. Can Darwinian arguments be “proved” by subsequent scientific discoveries?
Lecture Thirty-One
Queen Victoria—“We are not amused”

Scope: Victoria (1819–1901), queen of Great Britain and Ireland, gave her name to an entire epoch, the “Victorian era.” Her importance as a symbol and in practice as the head of state of the greatest empire the world had known played a great part, but in a deeper sense, she represented a new kind of monarch, the monarch as the ideal of the middle classes. She behaved respectably and expected the same of the public at large. She also managed to do something even more remarkable: she gave up her royal powers slowly, sometimes grudgingly, but more or less continuously, to her ministers. In this lecture, we shall see how a queen became the catalyst by which the British political system could transform itself and, thus, serve as the mother of the modern British constitution.

Outline

I. Victoria’s reign corresponds to imperial Britain’s primacy as an industrial power and its crucial role as the world’s banker.
   A. Industrial power rested in the huge gap that Britain enjoyed through its pioneering role in the Industrial Revolution. Economic statistics support this assertion. In 1870, Britain’s share of the world’s manufacturing production was 31.8 percent, the United States had 23.3 percent, and Germany had 13.2 percent.
   B. London had become the center of a globalized economic system, spurred on by developments in communications.
   C. The high point of British world supremacy was the 1851 Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace. Millions of visitors marveled at the huge new steam engines and machine tool-making equipment, along with ancient crafts and artworks made in Her Majesty’s colonies.
   D. The United Kingdom commanded a worldwide empire.
      1. At its height in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the empire included territories on all continents, comprising about one-quarter of the world’s population and area.
      2. The so-called “first empire” had been reduced by the loss of the American colonies by 1783, but the victories of the Napoleonic Wars added further possessions to the empire, including the Cape Colony in South Africa, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and others.
      3. Much of the “second empire” was informal, as is most of the U.S. empire today. Latin America, although nominally independent, belonged to Britain economically.
      4. Wars of conquest, such as the British invasion of Egypt in 1882, were unwelcome, because they were expensive and violated liberal principles.
      5. Both empires rested on ideas of globalized free trade. Britain’s new industrial supremacy lent greater force to doctrines of free trade, and some observers questioned the economic value of political ties between the colonies and the mother country.
   E. The British Empire served as a gigantic economic and trading bloc, with the pound sterling as the universal currency.

II. The Victorian ideology combined classical economics, classical liberalism, and a faith in linear progress.
   A. The economic laws had been defined by Adam Smith and Thomas Malthus.
      1. The market, left to its own devices, produced the greatest good for the greatest number. The Adam Smith of the 19th century lost his radical critique of owners and the powerful and was turned into the prophet of unrestrained capitalism.
      2. The Reverend Thomas Robert Mathus was as influential as Smith. In his Essay on the Principle of Population (1798, rev. ed. 1803), he contended that poverty and distress are unavoidable, because population increases by geometric ratio and the means of subsistence, by arithmetic ratio.
      3. David Ricardo (1772–1823) put Smith and Malthus together in The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation (1817). Ricardo stated the “iron law of wages,” according to which wages tend to stabilize around the subsistence level. Any rise in wage rates above subsistence will cause the working
population to increase to the point that heightened competition among the glut of laborers will merely cause their wages to fall back to the subsistence level.

4. The “laws” of economics resulted in the following equation: Iron law of wages + the Malthusian law of population prove that no intervention by the state or society could help raise wages or alleviate poverty.

B. Classical political liberalism, mixed with Burke’s reservations about schemes of improvement, argued for maximum individual liberty, low taxation, and minimal state intervention.
2. According to Macaulay, government exists only “to keep the peace.” The state is a sort of political night watchman, with no other functions.

C. Every evidence showed the British that the world was making progress and that progress was relentless, linear, and ever upward.
1. Macaulay looked to science to justify his faith in progress and believed that the sciences would never regress or remain stationary.
2. This view has been called the “Whig interpretation of history.” It is essentially Protestant, because Protestantism was seen by Victorians as a liberation from “superstition.”
3. The economic success of Great Britain was a further testimony to the inevitable triumph of liberal economic and political principles and to human progress in general.

D. One consequence of these views was the neglect of the poor and the appalling inequalities in society.
1. Modern historians like Eric Hobsbawm have described the utter lack of security in the lives of the poor.
2. As we have seen, Friedrich Engels conveyed the dreadful conditions of the working classes in Manchester in the 1840s in graphic terms.
3. The Victorian poor laws were notorious. Poverty was the fault of the poor. They were placed in workhouses and forced to work. The Poor Law Amendments of 1834 assumed that because the poor were unwilling to work, relief must be maintained at a level below that of the poorest laborer.

III. Queen Victoria ruled this complex state and empire for more than 60 years and gave the era her name. We turn to the life of the queen to see how she represented her age.

A. Alexandrina Victoria was born on May 24, 1819, daughter of Edward August, duke of Kent (1762–1820), and Princess Mary Louisa Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, sister of Duke Ernst, the father of Albert, prince consort and husband to Queen Victoria (1818–1861).
1. In this respect, Victoria belonged to that thoroughly unmodern world of European court and family politics.
2. On both sides, she belonged to ancient European and German ruling families, and even in her 80s, with her 37 grandchildren, she ruled the royal family as Maria Theresa had done.
3. The prince of Wales in his 50s would sweat and shake in her presence. Her “we are not amused” terrified the entire court.
4. She came to the throne through a series of royal deaths and accidents, as Augustus the Strong had done. Her father was the fifth son of George III, and there was no reason to imagine that his eldest daughter would succeed anybody.

B. The previous generation, the children of George III, were an exceptionally disreputable lot, known contemptuously as the “old royals.”
1. Victoria’s father, the duke of Kent, died unexpectedly, and little Victoria grew up in an entirely female household.
2. Victoria’s education was extensive, and she was well read, even by the age of 15.
3. Her seriousness of character marked her as completely the opposite of the debauched “old royals” and made her, in time, the emblem of an age of reform, decorum, middle-class self-control, and virtue.

C. Victoria had the gushing emotionalism so characteristic of the period, which we call Romanticism and have seen in such figures as Mazzini.

D. Romanticism and gushing emotion also marked Victoria’s relationships with men.
1. She had a special weakness for lordly and worldly figures who flattered her. Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881), the first earl of Beaconsfield and the elegant Jewish leader of the Conservatives, pleased her much more than the stern, moralizing Liberal leader, William Ewart Gladstone (1809–1898).

2. She hated such ministers as Lord Palmerston, who showed her too little deference and insisted on making policy in their own way and time. Lady Lyttelton noted “a vein of iron” in the queen, and there was no question of her mildly submitting to the demands of limited monarchy.

3. Victoria’s manner was direct, and she had a transparent honesty that allowed her to say exactly what she thought or felt, though limited by her strong moral code.

4. She had little time for high society and still less for elaborate feminine dress codes and fashion.

5. An odd and much noted relationship was that with her Scottish servant, John Brown, a Highland gillie (“an attendant on a Highland chief”), who became her personal servant later in life. Stories circulated that, after her husband’s death in 1861, Brown became her de facto husband; she was the butt of jokes about “Mrs. Brown.”

IV. Yet the crucial relationship in Victoria’s life was with her husband, Prince Albert. Albert’s life and death provide the clue to understanding the political and symbolic significance of Victoria’s reign.

A. Franz Albrecht August Karl Emanuel, Prinz von Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha, was born on August 26, 1819, in Schloss Rosenau, near Coburg, the younger son of the ruling duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

B. Saxe-Coburg-Gotha was one of the many German principalities with sovereign status but small populations that provided all of Europe with its surplus princes and princesses for marriage arrangements.

C. Albert’s parents divorced when he was young, and he came under the influence of his uncle, Prince Leopold, who had made a spectacular royal marriage to the prince regent’s only child, Charlotte. Had she not died in 1817, Leopold would have been prince-consort and Victoria would never have reached the throne.

1. Victoria and Albert were first cousins, and Leopold was a wise (and ambitious) uncle to them both. He engaged a shrewd and reliable German doctor, Christian Friedrich Stockmar, to train Albert for a role as Victoria’s husband.

2. It worked. Victoria fell madly in love with her Albert. On October 15, 1839, the young queen proposed to Albert, and they were married on February 10, 1840.

D. Albert had a university education, played the organ well, read German philosophy, and had an iron work ethic. The Victorian era belongs to both of them, because he turned the fat, stubborn young queen into a severe, duty-bound workaholic. They rose early, worked at desks opposite each other, and shared royal and family decision-making.

1. Albert remained strictly and utterly faithful to his wife. Their love life must have been active, because they had nine children.

2. Albert took an active part in royal decision-making from the beginning. No detail of public life, palace etiquette, royal accounts, or children’s education escaped his attention. He went to bed early, rose early, and deeply disliked the empty chatter of high society.

3. The bouncy, impetuous Victoria, who had liked to dance all night and loved London life, spent more time in the country.

4. Albert’s triumph was the conception and execution of the Great Exhibition of 1851, which he managed and supervised from the first to the last. He cut waste from the royal household and deluged ministers with schemes for improvement in everything from railways to sewage.

5. After a turbulent period of adjustment, Victoria accepted the new life of duty and service and adored her partner all the more.

E. Albert died on December 14, 1861, at Windsor, of causes that have not been clearly established. He seems to have been increasingly depressed in the 1850s and tried to fight it through yet more work. Weakened and tired, he died, possibly of cholera.

F. Victoria collapsed into mourning that went on for more than 20 years and was never really put aside. Everything that Albert had done or said became sacred. All persons, especially politicians, were judged by their devotion to Albert. Nothing shook her iron resolve to grieve for the rest of her life. The combination of stubbornness, royal haughtiness, high Romanticism, and real grief solidified into a living mummification. She wore only black until the 1890s.
V. Victoria and Albert represented the crux of a double paradox. 

A. Both of them, reigning sovereigns with the accompanying pride, disdained high society. Albert’s seriousness, though very un-English to the aristocracy, made a great impression on the plain folk in the churches. Victoria and Albert lived the lives of virtue that the Methodist ministers and Congregationalist pastors preached. They practiced fidelity and transformed the standing of the monarchy.

B. Between 1840 and 1861, when Albert died, the royal couple interfered more and more in politics. Albert toyed with the idea that the sovereign should again preside over the cabinet, as in the days of William III. Their neighbor, Napoleon III, ran a highly successful and popular royal dictatorship; why not reassert royal control over the two British parties and act as final decision makers in Great Britain?

C. Albert’s unexpected death and Victoria’s withdrawal from public life avoided a constitutional crisis. Lytton Strachey saw it clearly:

From 1840 to 1861 the power of the Crown steadily increased in England; from 1861 to 1901 it steadily declined… Paradoxically enough, Victoria received the highest eulogiums for assenting to a political evolution, which, had she completely realised its import, would have filled her with supreme displeasure. (Strachey, Queen Victoria)

D. Victoria’s long reign coincided with a transformation in monarchical power, the democratization of English life, the emergence of a powerful middle-class society, the spread of industry and technology, and the extension of the British Empire.

E. Victoria was born into a world still dominated by the 18th century but died quietly on January 22, 1901, in a world already arming its battleships and heavy guns for the wars of the 20th century.

Essential Reading:
Lytton Strachey, Queen Victoria.

Supplementary Reading:
Robert Blake, Disraeli, Lost Treasures Series.
Roy Jenkins, Gladstone: A Biography.

Questions to Consider:
1. Why is the Romantic worldview so hard to recapture?
2. Is constitutional monarchy not a contradiction in terms?
Lecture Thirty-Two
Friedrich Krupp—The New Plutocracy

Scope: This lecture combines the biography of a family and the rise of a great industrial empire. The core of the Krupp industrial concern was started by Friedrich Krupp (1787–1826), who built a small steel plant in 1811. His son, Alfred Krupp (1812–1887), known as the “Cannon King,” introduced new methods for producing large quantities of cast steel. After the Franco-Prussian War, he specialized in armaments and acquired mines all over Germany. Under his son, Friedrich-Alfred Krupp (Fritz Krupp, 1854–1902), the Krupp family vastly extended its operations. Fritz, a fat, bespectacled, shy man, had to keep his true nature “in the closet.” He committed suicide when his homosexuality was exposed, and the firm passed to his sister, Bertha Krupp. When she married Gustav von Bohlen und Halbach (1870–1950), Kaiser William II, the German emperor, knighted the bridegroom as his wedding gift, and he became Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach. The story of this family combines monarchy, feudalism, technology, capitalism, the new sexuality, and the mass press in a rich brew.

Outline
I. On July 30, 1967, the fourth and last “Cannon King,” Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach (born in 1907), suddenly died. The chain of lords of iron steel that began in 1811 came to an end.
   A. At Alfried’s death, the family empire faced bankruptcy and a bailout amounting to more than 600 million DM.
   B. The firm of Friedrich Krupp Essen sold the biggest cannons ever made.
      1. During World War I, the famous “Big Bertha” and “Fat Gustav” rained destruction on Allied trenches.
      2. During Hitler’s war, Krupp cooperated in supplying the Nazi war effort, used massive numbers of slave laborers, and made high-quality arms. During the war, Gustav Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach (1870–1950) stepped down and Alfried took over.
      3. Alfried was arrested by the Allies, tried as a war criminal, and jailed. The firm was ordered to be broken up and sold, but no buyers were found and Krupp survived, only to go broke in 1967.
   C. The lives of the Krupps take us another step from the ancien régime to the world of modern industrial capitalism, with a mixture of antiquated and modern elements.
      1. Krupp was one of the giant firms of the late 19th century that seemed to illustrate the correctness of Social Darwinian ideas.
      2. The Krupps were absolute monarchs of their empires. When the imperial German treasury and navy demanded lower prices for the firm’s steel, Krupp complained to the Kaiser and was placated.
      3. The Krupps arranged for the welfare of their workers. Friedrich Krupp Essen built houses, schools, and hospitals for workers and provided insurance and old-age pensions before the state did.
      4. When Friedrich-Alfred “Fritz” Krupp died in 1902, he had a private income of 21 million gold-backed marks, which would today be worth approximately $1–2 billion. The firm had 11 employees in 1811 and 42,000 in 1902.
      5. The sad story of Fritz Krupp brings us into the new world of industry but retains aspects of patriarchal society, family politics, and the repressed realities of sexuality in the early 20th century.
II. The growth of Friedrich Krupp Essen forms part of the astonishing economic explosion that made Europe briefly master of the world. How and why did this economic growth occur?
   A. Three important hypotheses explain this economic growth: the Marxian model of heterogeneous and homogeneous manufacture, Walt Whitman Rostow’s theory of take-off, and Alexander Gerschenkron’s idea of advancement through substitution effects.
   B. In terms of these hypotheses, Germany fell between Britain and Russia in the 19th century.
      1. Between 1819 and 1834, Germany had created the Zollverein, a “customs union,” to abolish tariffs among the many small states. It also had the advantage of excellent technical training in Prussia.
      2. What Germany lacked was capital. Gerschenkron saw the so-called “universal bank” (a bank that combined investment, savings, commercial banking, and stock brokering) as the secret.
3. The other secret of German industrial success was the Kartell, or a trust in which firms shared markets, fixed prices secretly, or otherwise colluded. In American antitrust language, Kartells acted as combinations in restraint of trade. Friedrich Krupp Essen refused to play this game.

III. The Krupp dynasty covers the history of the 19th and 20th centuries.

A. The founder, Alfred Krupp (1812–1887), may be the oddest character whose life we have considered.
   1. Alfred Krupp was born in the small market town of Essen in the grand duchy of Berg on April 26, 1812.
   2. His father, Friedrich (1787–1826), used the blockade of continental Europe in the later stages of the Napoleonic wars to set up a cast-iron plant similar to those in England.
   3. The Krupps had amassed a good deal of wealth and belonged to the patrician elite of the town. Friedrich got caught in the depression after the war and was washed away in the flood of cheap goods from Britain. He died nearly bankrupt in 1826.
   4. His wife, Theresia Wilhelmi Krupp (1790–1850), took over the firm and made the 14-year-old Alfred managing director. His inheritance amounted to seven unpaid employees, a few acres of ground on the outskirts of Essen, and a small workshop.
   5. The times favored the enterprise. The German customs union spread free trade and opened the markets of the 39 German states just at the right time, between 1819 and 1834.
   6. Krupp grew the firm by vertical rather than horizontal integration, that is, he brought the entire production process within the one enterprise, from the ownership of mines to the finished product, and refused to buy competitors or join Kartells.

B. Krupp lived for his work and wore himself out in service to the firm.
   1. His health had never been good, and he suffered several collapses, which turned him into a gaunt, ascetic figure without enjoyments.
   2. In 1853, at the age of 41, he married Bertha Eichhoff, the daughter of a Cologne tax inspector half his age. The marriage turned into a nightmare for her as Alfred became a crazed hypochondriac.
   3. Because no one dared to tell Krupp anything, he, like Frederick the Great, ruled his industrial empire absolutely. Unlike Frederick, Krupp was half-mad and took risks in business that nearly bankrupted his firm. On the other hand, he was almost always the first to use the latest technology in steel production.
   4. He blamed management for business reverses and refused to share any of his power until the end.
   5. On July 14, 1887, Alfred Krupp died of heart failure. In his time, the firm had grown from 7 employees to more than 20,000.

IV. Friedrich-Alfred Krupp (1854–1902), known as “Fritz,” inherited the throne and the absolute power on his father’s death.

A. Fritz directed the business in the spirit of his father, with much success.
   1. He positioned the firm to benefit from the ambitious naval expansion program of Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz. From 1898 to 1913, the firm’s naval contracts amounted to 130 million marks.
   2. In 1897, Fritz founded what became the biggest steel plant in Europe. The firm doubled its size under the second Cannon King.
   3. Fritz had a more modern view of the role of industry than his father. He secretly subsidized a pressure group called the Navy League to make propaganda for naval expansion.

B. Fritz’s character and personality were the opposite of his father’s.
   1. Fritz was born on February 17, 1854, the only child of Alfred and the unhappy Bertha Eichhoff Krupp.
   2. Fritz learned to adapt to his father’s rage, to bend to his will, and to turn himself into what Alfred demanded, a copy of himself.
   4. In 1879, Fritz asked his father’s permission to marry Margarethe, a suitable and well-born bride, but Alfred refused. Bertha left her husband as a result, and the old tyrant, surprised and shaken, consented to the marriage but refused to go to the wedding.
   5. Alfred now had a second young person to torture with petty criticisms and sheer nastiness. In the evenings, he would hold court and criticize everything the young couple did.
6. Fritz looked different from his gaunt, ascetic father. He was a portly man with a round face, drooping moustache, and a slightly melancholy look. He seems to have had the virtues that his father lacked—tact, patience, kindliness of temper, and sympathy.

C. In 1898, Fritz Krupp purchased a villa on the island of Capri, where he began to spend a good deal of time.
   1. Capri had just begun to attract the elite of tourism and was not yet overrun by the masses. It offered Fritz Krupp a chance to pursue his interest in oceanography and tropical biology.
   2. He bought a grotto and landscaped it with trees, terraces, and bushes. He built a road that made the grotto accessible by land.
   3. Gold keys to the grotto were given to attractive young men from Naples, and a cult of homosexuality flourished there. Unfortunately, Naples also had an active Socialist party. In May 1902, L'Avanti, the Socialist newspaper, broke the story.
   4. On November 15, 1902, the story was printed in Germany. The scandal was tremendous. The Krupp lawyers threatened libel, and Fritz begged an audience of the Kaiser.
   5. On the appointed day, November 23, 1902, Fritz was found dead in the Villa Hügel at the age of 48. The death certificate stated “stroke.”
   6. The widow took over the firm, and a few months later, the 16-year-old daughter, Bertha, inherited the controlling shares.
   7. In October 1906, Bertha married a diplomat. The Kaiser, who was guest of honor at the wedding, knighted Bertha’s husband, Gustav von Bohlen und Halbach, in a feudal ceremony with the title Krupp.

V. The Kaiser accused the Social Democrats of murder in their exposure of Krupp, but the real killer was society, defined by a complex set of inherited patterns of behavior and expectation, which in Europe had its origins in the ancien régime of late feudalism and became respectable during the 19th century.

A. As we saw in the previous lecture on Victoria, Fritz Krupp’s homosexuality would have been accepted with a joke by the corrupt and tolerant old royals and high society in the late 18th century.

B. On the other hand, as always, certain features of the sad tale of Fritz Krupp show the continued survival of attitudes from the Old Regime.
   1. There is the cramped, aristocratic snobbery of the mother of Fritz’s wife, Margarethe, the snobbery of a declining and impoverished rural nobility who bitterly clung to empty formulas to maintain their eroding prestige and status.
   2. The Krupps, though billionaires, were not yet acceptable at court. They were, after all, only commoners and newly rich ones at that.
   3. The modern and the ancient met and mixed in the odd feudal rite by which the Kaiser knighted a member of the aristocracy with the name of a family of modern industrialists, as if steel making had an element of chivalry in it.
   4. It is the incongruity that warns us against making our models or hypotheses in history too neat and rigid.

Essential Reading:
William Manchester, The Arms of Krupp: The Rise and Fall of the Industrial Dynasty That Armed Germany at War.

Supplementary Reading:
Toni Pierenkemper and Richard H. Tilly, The German Economy during the Nineteenth Century.
Jonathan Steinberg, Yesterday’s Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle, Modern Revivals in History.

Questions to Consider:
1. How far was the way Alfred Krupp ruled his company a form of industrial feudalism or a version of enlightened absolutism?
2. Why did sexual issues break through the Victorian repression in the two decades before the First World War?
Lecture Thirty-Three
Louis Pasteur—Modern Laboratory Science

Scope: Louis Pasteur (1822–1895) was one of those truly great scientists who changed the way we live. A French chemist and microbiologist, he made numerous and varied contributions to science and industry. His experiments with bacteria showed conclusively that the theory of spontaneous generation was not valid and gave rise to the germ theory of infection. He was able to trace the cause of fermentation and specific diseases to specific microorganisms and created and used the first vaccines for rabies, anthrax, and chicken cholera. He was responsible for pioneering work in the area of stereochemistry, and his name has become forever linked with the process he invented, pasteurization. In this lecture, we examine the nature of scientific creativity and the structures that society developed in the 19th century to make scientific work possible.

Outline

I. This lecture presents us with another stage on the path to modernity: the transforming power of “modern” natural science and the contribution of a great experimental scientist, Louis Pasteur.
   A. A comparison between Darwin and Pasteur helps to define certain crucial “new” features of the modern scientific approach.
      1. Darwin’s son made the shrewd point that his father, the “first” of the moderns, still inhabited the world of amateur naturalism. Except for a brief period, Pasteur was only and obsessively a professional scientist working in laboratories.
      2. Darwin descended from the Wedgwood porcelain dynasty and sensibly married a Wedgwood cousin, thus ensuring that he could finance himself. Pasteur’s father, a sergeant in Napoleon’s army, became a tanner after 1815, and Pasteur needed scholarships and research institutes to survive.
   B. Darwin’s contribution to the world was as great, revolutionary, and important as Pasteur’s, but it still used the language of ordinary prose. Pasteur, in contrast, wrote technical jargon.
      1. Pasteur’s real written legacy was his lab notebooks, 102 of which survive, recording his constant observation of what he saw in his experiments. He allowed no one to touch them.
      2. Darwin’s ideas undermined religion, because they gave an alternative explanation to that in the Bible for the rich variety in humans and animals. Pasteur died with a crucifix in his hand.
      3. Darwin’s science had an instant “public.” Pasteur, the great man and prophet of modern science, had become the hero of a cult by the 1880s, but his work was not widely known.
   C. In their lives and personal habits, we can see similar distortions of character and attitude in the two men, caused by obsessive behavior, by the burning desire for fame and recognition, and by the hypnotic preoccupation with the problems they were studying.
      1. Darwin spent years painstakingly examining barnacles and orchids and observed the subtle variations in the plants in his greenhouse.
      2. Pasteur spent years trying to establish how yeast worked in fermentation or why two apparently identical acids had different optical properties.
      3. Both had that unique capacity to see the significance of the unexpected phenomena. For the scientist of genius, something unexpected opens a vast new perspective.
      4. Both Pasteur and Darwin kept exacting records, observed their specimens with careful attention, and thought long and hard about the material, always looking for the pattern or key to explain it.
      5. Both were ill for much of their creative lives and worked while in great pain or, in Pasteur’s case, with the disabilities left from a series of strokes.

II. The nature of scientific creativity and greatness from Pasteur’s time to the present poses a peculiar problem for the historian.
   A. Scientists come in all shapes, sizes, temperaments, and skills. They all, however, face the same basic problem: Nature tends to be much more intractable and unexpected than the scientist imagines.
1. A scientist who asks the right question of the right material but at the wrong time (before the theoretical or practical tools are ready) can spend his or her life utterly defeated. One who asks the wrong question at the right time may spend years in a dead end.

2. A scientist may also ask the right question and get the right result but be met with incomprehension. Such was the case of American geneticist Barbara McClintock in the 1940s and 1950s.

B. The problem for us is how to understand what scientists do and, in this lecture, to understand Pasteur’s unique genius and impact.

1. Much of what scientists do can only be understood by others in the field. They communicate in a formulaic, established genre, known as the “scientific paper,” which is designed to be read by others in the field, not by the public. Such papers had already become institutionalized in France long before Pasteur’s time.

2. In some fields, knowledge of the significance of scientific work is limited to a handful of practitioners. This was true, even in Pasteur’s field and time.

3. To appreciate Pasteur’s achievement requires an understanding of isomers, acids, polarized light, symmetry and asymmetry, and so on. On the other hand, the “Pasteur phenomenon,” his capacity to gain and keep the public’s attention, can be understood.

III. Pasteur’s life followed a course almost entirely dictated by his scientific activities. Like Darwin’s, it was uneventful in one respect but utterly tremendous in another.

A. Pasteur came from a modest background and profited by a particular legacy of the French Revolution: the foundation of the grandes écoles, the “great schools.”

1. The grandes écoles are more highly regarded in France than the universities, especially in the engineering and technical fields.

2. Pasteur attended the École Normale, which like the other grandes écoles, provided secure jobs and openings to the elites.

B. For centuries, the Pasteurs had been small farmers or traders in eastern France.

1. Pasteur’s father, Jean-Joseph (1791–1865), the son of a tanner, was drafted into the Napoleonic army, fought with distinction in Spain, and was decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honor. He returned to practice his father’s trade as a tanner.

2. Jean-Joseph, like many skilled craftsmen, had a high regard for education and was himself intelligent and well read. He wanted his son to be a respectable bourgeois and encouraged him to try for the École Normale.

C. Louis, like many teenaged boys, showed his ability only at the end of his schooling and had to sit the examinations twice to get a place at a grande école. By now, his ambition had been aroused, and he wrote the famous chemist Jean Baptiste André Dumas, asking to be accepted as an assistant.

1. Dumas accepted him, and Pasteur joined the huge crowds who flocked to the chemist’s lectures at the Sorbonne.

2. In October 1846, Pasteur was appointed to the job of préparateur (“demonstrator”) in the chemistry lab, and he began to gain a reputation for his work in optical activity in organic compounds.

3. He became licencié ès sciences (M.S.) in 1845, and after acquiring an advanced double degree in physics and chemical sciences, he won his docteur ès sciences (Ph.D.) in 1847.

D. The revolution of 1848 centered on Paris, and Pasteur briefly joined the National Guard. His mother died in May of that year, leaving his father alone with his three sisters. Pasteur applied for a teaching job near home but got a post as acting professor of chemistry at the University of Strasbourg.

E. There, he met and married Marie Laurent. Marie supported Louis with the same selfless devotion that Emma Darwin supported and encouraged Charles. They had five children, but only two survived to adulthood.

F. In December 1854, Pasteur became dean of the faculty of sciences at the new University of Lille, in the heart of industrial northern France. By this stage, the French educational authorities were becoming aware of the figures we looked at in the lecture on Bismarck’s Prussia, which showed German scientific and technological achievements expanding more rapidly than French.
1. As a result, an imperial decree of August 22, 1854, stipulated that Pasteur’s new faculty should arrange for students to do their own lab work and for the introduction of a “certificate of capacity in the applied sciences,” designed to encourage future industrial managers to get some scientific training.

2. From 1857 to the end of his life, Pasteur worked in Paris, either at the École Normale or the Sorbonne, or from 1888 to his death, as director of the Institute Pasteur.

3. Pasteur was a superb administrator and an expert at raising money but had an authoritarian manner with students, eventually provoking a general strike against him and the École Normale. By appealing directly to Emperor Napoleon III, Pasteur got himself a new job at the Sorbonne and a brand new, purpose-built lab.

G. This career has all the features of a modern scientific life: labs, teaching, research, struggle for promotion, and constant movement for the successful scientist toward the centers of research and funding.

H. On the other hand, Louis Pasteur was extremely un-modern as a boss. He resembled his contemporary Alfred Krupp in attitudes and values. He ran his lab as Krupp bossed his factories, as a rigid authoritarian, and was extremely hostile to democracy. He liked Napoleon III and his imperial dictatorship.

IV. Pasteur’s scientific achievements cover a wide field, and he applied his science to many practical aspects of life, such as wine making, silkworm cultivation, and sugar-beet production, as well as to pure science.

A. One of Pasteur’s first discoveries, presented at the age of 26, was in crystallography; this led to his later finding that living organisms cause fermentation.

B. The nature of scientific creativity rests on an answer to the question: How can we understand the process of discovery? This problem occupies many historians of science.

1. Some argue that Pasteur noticed what other chemists did not. In 1857, when Pasteur saw that one of his precious specimens had gone moldy during warm weather, instead of pouring it away, he analyzed its optical activity and noticed that part of it was destroyed in fermentation.

2. In this dissymmetry, Pasteur began to believe that he had found the secret of life. As he wrote: “The universe itself is a dissymmetrical assemblage. I am inclined to think that life, as it appears to us, must be a product of the dissymmetry of the universe or of its consequences.”

3. Pasteur’s idea of fermentation as a vital act led to far-reaching consequences—to processes for preventing the organisms that created fermentation by heating the fluids, a process soon and permanently known as pasteurization.

4. It led in due course to the germ theory of disease and to Pasteur’s successful vaccines against anthrax, rabies, and chicken cholera.

C. The explanation of one of the greatest ideas in human history will never be complete, but with the aid of Gerald Geison’s analysis, we can chart the stages in this way.

1. Pasteur was convinced that optical activity was unique to organic compounds.

2. Chemical procedures by themselves could not produce substances that were optically active. In 1850, when Victor Dessaigne claimed to have produced an optically active acid by heating optically inactive substances, Pasteur dropped everything to test the finding, but wrote in his lab notebook, “no trace of optical activity.”

3. By repeated experimentation, he demonstrated that a biological catalyst was needed for fermentation and that no purely chemical process would yield it or the optically active substance that, for Pasteur, signified the presence of asymmetric and, hence, living matter.

V. Modern science has completely transformed and continues to transform our world, and Pasteur was the scientific genius who was involved in the early stages of that transformation.

A. This lecture has required us to peer into a world of great complexity, specialized knowledge, and intricate techniques.

1. Scientists combine human traits in varying proportions and strengths. Some scientists are modest and generous; others, megalomaniac and mean. There is no connection between these traits and scientific success.

2. Scientists sometimes “know” things about nature that they cannot initially justify. Pasteur simply believed from an early stage that life depended on asymmetry and optical activity signified the presence of organic matter.
3. That hunch, combined with his extreme clarity of mind and his natural flair as an experimenter, led him away from his initial success in crystal structures to the bold hypothesis about microorganisms in fermentation and to the series of experiments that changed human history and greatly enhanced the quality of human life.

B. The fact that the sciences and mathematics have technical vocabulary makes it hard for lay-people to appreciate the wonder, magic, and beauty of scientific work.
   1. Scientists and mathematicians get aesthetic pleasure from “beautiful proofs” and elegant experiments and are repelled by awkward, clumsy, and inelegant proofs or experiments, even if they are correct.
   2. The recognition that even great scientists enjoy rarely reaches the level of that heaped on Pasteur, who became a national monument from a fairly early stage in his career and has remained one.
   3. Most scientists hope at best for those elusive prizes conferred by other scientists.

C. The eureka effect pleases the public and flatters the images that scientists like to project. True creativity, however, operates in much more mysterious ways.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
Donald E. Stokes, *Pasteur’s Quadrant: Basic Science and Technological Innovation*.

Questions to Consider:
1. How can we explain that peculiar intuition about the natural world that we have seen in the cases of Darwin and Pasteur?
2. Does it matter that much of what determines our lives takes place in labs and institutes that we can neither understand nor assess? Are we prisoners of scientific progress?

Professor Steinberg acknowledges the assistance of Professor Mitchell Lewis, Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of Pennsylvania, and Ms. Jessica Reinisch, a historian of science at Imperial College London, with the material for this lecture.
Scope: Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828–1910) was born of a noble family at Yasnaya Polyana, his parents’ estate, near Tula. He grew up in an atmosphere of privilege, familiar to American readers from the pre-Civil War South. The grander nobles, like Tolstoy, never had to work. They lived wealthy and often profligate lives as absentee landlords in their palaces in St. Petersburg and Moscow and depended on the labor of thousands, in some cases, tens of thousands of serfs. Tolstoy did what all the rest did: failed at university, drank too much, got into bad company, and served as an officer in the tsar’s army. Unlike his fellow aristocrats, Tolstoy was a genius and unsatisfied with his life of frivolity. Gradually, he became involved in serf education. In 1862, he married Sophia Andreyevna Bers, a young, well-educated woman who bore him 13 children. After he married, he retired to his estate, where he wrote *The Cossacks* (1863) and his masterpieces, *War and Peace* (1862–1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1873–1876). Tolstoy had a “conversion” in 1878 and, for the rest of his life, was a kind of prophet of nonviolence and moral reform. This lecture looks at *War and Peace* as a portrait of a class Tolstoy believed to be doomed, and he was right.

Outline

I. No life we have studied so far presents us with so many contradictions and reversals as the life of Count Tolstoy.
   A. Tolstoy lived the life of a dissolute aristocrat, gambling, drinking, and chasing women, but later in life, he became a self-confessed prophet, declared sex immoral even in marriage, and proclaimed a new gospel of peace and nonviolence.
      1. He served with pleasure and distinction in the armed forces, yet he condemned war in *War and Peace* as “counter to human reason and to all of human nature.”
      2. He belonged to the high aristocracy and had an estate of some 4,000 acres that employed 350 serfs, essentially slaves. Yet he tried later to renounce his status and live as a peasant in a hut.
      3. No writer in modern times has been better at revealing human pretentiousness and poking fun at preachers; yet after his conversion, he turned into a fanatical preacher.
      4. The man who hated invention and loved truth devoted his life to imagination and fiction.
   B. *War and Peace* continues to provoke an intense critical debate. It stands as one of the greatest novels ever written, yet much of it is history, not fiction. Its style has the peculiar property of making the reader feel that its world is real.
      1. Critics from Tolstoy’s time to our own have tried to hold the great work up to the light of analysis with new techniques and approaches.
      2. The book continues to be a bestseller, has spawned its own academic journal and conferences, and even influenced the life of Gandhi.

II. In this lecture, we look at Tolstoy and *War and Peace* in the light of historical change in Russia in the middle of the 19th century. Tolstoy belongs to a category of “intellectual” not much known in the English-speaking world. In Eastern Europe in the 19th century (and, in some ways, under communism in the 1960s and 1970s), they “spoke” for the nation.
   A. Russian society was, it was widely agreed, “backward.”
      1. Russian society rested on unfree peasant labor. In the period of Catherine the Great (1762–1796), 34 out of 36 million peasant families were either landlord serfs or state peasants. Serfs were completely prohibited from moving from their estates without the permission of their landlord and owed him service.
      2. The *mir*, or “commune,” was another uniquely Russian feature. The lord’s land was divided by the peasant commune into three fields worked on a rotation-crop system. Each field was divided into strips, and each family was given so many strips in each field according to the number of male workers in the family or the number of mouths to feed. It was a form of peasant communism.
   B. The overwhelming majority of the Russian population were still peasants in Tolstoy’s time, a century after Catherine the Great.
1. The population was growing rapidly. Between 1796 and 1913, the Russian population grew from 36 million to 122 million.

2. Urban life was a small proportion of Russian society. In 1913, Russia had only 18 cities with more than 100,000 people. England and Wales had passed that mark by 1850. In 1913, Moscow had about 1 million people; St. Petersburg, about 1,250,000.

3. Russia had a small, weak middle class. St. Petersburg was a city of palaces and noble townhouses with few middle-class quarters.

C. The government structure gave absolute power to the tsar; until the 1860s, there were no forms of representative government, even at the local level.

1. Culture and the arts substituted for the absence of a genuine civil society or a flourishing bourgeois urban life. Artists, musicians, writers, and mathematicians became disproportionately important. They were civil society or, at least, thought they were.

2. Russian culture expressed the energy and frustration of a tiny class who wanted reform, change, enlightenment, better conditions for the peasants, or greater international power for Mother Russia. Hence, a writer such as Tolstoy was a national figure in a way that no American writer has come near.

3. The word intelligentsia was used to describe the part of the nation that aspired to intellectual activity or the class of society regarded as possessing culture and political initiative.

4. Russian culture in the 19th century produced amazing achievements.

III. Reform in Russia always followed military defeat, as it did in the 1980s.

A. Tolstoy fought in the Russian army in the Caucasus against the Chechens and against “the West” when Britain and France attacked Russia in the Crimean War in 1856. The humiliating defeat in the Crimea led to serf revolts and general unrest.

1. The young Emperor Alexander II (tsar from 1855–1881) realized that if the peasants were not freed from above, they would soon free themselves from below and that Russia needed to catch up with the West.

2. The most important reform was emancipation of the serfs in 1861, but this presented a huge problem: Liberating the serfs risked the destruction of the basis of the entire regime.

3. The nobility as a land-owning class was vital to the monarchy, and to take away their serfs might ruin them economically.

4. The final scheme was cunning. All personal serfdom was abolished, and the peasants were to receive land from the landlords and pay them for it. The state advanced the money to the landlords and recovered it from the peasants in 49 annual sums known as redemption payments.

5. The peasants got a raw deal. The average holding was tiny (less than 10 acres), and redemption payments were high.

6. The peasant commune now had legal responsibility for those payments, which was a way of reinforcing the mir and preventing anarchy at the base of society by slowing movement to towns.

7. Another reform affected Tolstoy’s position, the introduction of the zemstvo, a local assembly that functioned as a body of provincial self-government in Russia from 1864 to 1917. Each district elected representatives, who had control over education, public health, roads, and aid to agriculture and commerce. The district zemstvos elected committees and delegates to the provincial assemblies, which in turn, elected an executive committee for the province.

8. The local nobles, such as Tolstoy, could represent themselves for the first time.

B. Tolstoy was, first and foremost, a noble landlord.

1. War and Peace was written in the years 1863 to 1869, the years of the emancipation of the serfs and other reforms. On his estate, Tolstoy had to face the consequences.

2. War and Peace tells the story of the Russian struggle against the Napoleonic Empire between 1805 and 1815. Though the book is set in a period 60 years earlier, the reform era of the 1860s plays an important, if not obvious, part in it. Tolstoy became more and more hostile to artificial and abstract plans for reform, especially those imported from the West.

3. Tolstoy belonged to the so-called Slavophile side in the debate on modernization and reform. He believed in the unique communal principles of Russian peasant life.

4. The Russian people defeated the West in the form of Napoleon and his army, as portrayed in War and Peace, but Tolstoy believed that they must also reject Western-style schemes, plans, and models.
5. His is the voice of an authentic conservatism, which we first saw in Burke’s attack on the French Revolution. Russia still has doubts about the West today, and Tolstoy’s attitudes are echoed in the reaction of the Islamic world to the West.

6. The dilemma for Tolstoy’s generation was that Russia could not endure as a great power without the technical or industrial means to remain great.

7. For some idealists, populism, a form of socialism based on the idealization of peasant communalism, was the solution. They were called *narodniki*, Russian for “populists.” They envisaged a society in which sovereignty would rest with small, self-governing economic units resembling the traditional Russian village commune and held together in a loose, voluntary confederation replacing the state.

8. Tolstoy practiced a form of populism in his last years. The logic of his position led him to pacifism and rejection of power in all its forms.

IV. *War and Peace* concentrates on Russian high society; its main protagonists are princes and princesses, counts and countesses. The other themes address lords and peasants on the great estates, the nature of war, and the character of family life.

A. Society has rigid rules of behavior, and each member must be held to account for violations. It constitutes a closed world that Tolstoy knew well and to which the four main families of the novel all belong.
   1. The novel opens at a soirée at the palace of Anna Pavlovna Sherer, lady-in-waiting and confidante of Empress Maria Fyodorovna. From this setting, Tolstoy describes the way society works.
   2. Tolstoy introduces us to the main characters by quickly identifying them by tiny but essential physical features that act as motifs through the book.

B. The other side of “society” is the life of the great lords on their estates; in these areas, Tolstoy takes up the theme of lord and serf with irony.
   1. Pierre Bezukhov, who inherited his father’s title and immense wealth, has grand ideas for reform and wishes to emancipate his serfs.
   2. Tolstoy shows how the bailiffs and other officials on the estate see their comfortable lives threatened and make a fool of the idealistic young count.
   3. The chief steward on the estate arranges little scenes in which the peasants pretend to be happy.

C. Tolstoy’s account of battle has never been equaled. His capacity to depict the movements of thousands of men, the “fog of war” and its uncertainties, simply defies explanation.

D. The final grand theme of the book is family life, the relationships between parents and children, among siblings, between husband and wife, among cousins.

V. A short lecture cannot do justice to this vast work or to the extraordinary and eccentric life of Tolstoy as writer/prophet/aristocrat/peasant. As an old man, he complained in his diaries about his wife of 40 years. He died in the local railway station, having decided at the age of 82 to run away from her.

Essential Reading:

Supplementary Reading:
A. N. Wilson, *Tolstoy: A Biography*.

Questions to Consider:
1. How important in understanding a work of fiction is an acquaintance with the personality of the author?
2. Take any passage from this lecture to see if you can find clues to the way Tolstoy achieves the sense that the world he describes is real.
Lecture Thirty-Five
Alfred Dreyfus—First Act in the Holocaust

Scope: Captain Alfred Dreyfus (1859–1935), a French general staff officer, became famous as the victim of the most notorious miscarriage of justice in the 19th century. Dreyfus was falsely accused of passing secrets to the Germans, convicted by court martial, and sent to Devil’s Island off the coast of French Guiana. Dreyfus was an Alsatian and a Jew and, hence, obviously guilty. When secrets continued to be passed, the French army covered up the fact that an innocent man had been convicted. Émile Zola, a French novelist of the period, exposed the cover-up, and France divided in a near civil war between Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards. The case opened the gates on dark forces in European society that saw Jews as the source of all evil and refused to accept Dreyfus’s innocence. Members of Dreyfus’s family died in the Holocaust, the next stage in the destruction of Europe’s Jews.

Outline

I. We now open a chapter in our journey from the ancien régime to modernity that finishes in the factories of death created by the Nazis.
   A. The era of the 1890s marks one of those subtle but pervasive changes in the climate of opinion that we have seen in the rise of Romanticism.
      1. The unexpected onset of the so-called “Great Depression” in 1873 broke the long wave of prosperity after the revolutions of 1848.
      2. After German unification in 1870, there was a post-war boom, resulting in a classic “bubble” economy caused by the huge French reparation payments made after the war.
      3. On May 9, 1873, the Vienna stock market crashed and opened the first phase of a 25-year period in which prices fell steadily.
   B. Under the doctrines of liberalism, none of this was supposed to happen.
      1. The fall in prices threatened the survival of industrialists, such as the Krupps, because steel plants cost fortunes to build before a penny can be earned. If prices fall, the firm cannot pay interest on its capital, let alone make profits.
      2. The heavy industries formed trusts to share markets that seemed to yield less and less as prices continued to fall.
      3. Adam Smith’s little factory making pins had become Krupps’s rolling mills employing tens of thousands of workers.
      4. Markets in the United States, Great Britain, and Germany became Darwinian struggles of the fittest to survive and less like the self-regulating system that it was thought Adam Smith had discerned.
      5. Governments grudgingly gave up principles of free trade and introduced tariffs on foreign competition.
   C. The faith in liberalism eroded sharply; new ideas, such as those of Nietzsche, and doctrines of racial superiority and inferiority couched in Darwinian terms began to spread.
      1. Poverty, slums, and unemployment seemed to become permanent features of the new and frightening cities.
      2. Mass organizations of workers turned themselves into huge socialist movements, and trade union organizations grew rapidly.
      3. Terrorism spread from Eastern to Western Europe in various guises, such as anarchism and extreme socialist movements.
      4. The fabric of society began to tear apart; just at this moment, new theories about crowd psychology, the irrational in human nature, and the criminal type further alarmed the comfortable classes.
   D. The international system began to grow tense as the German Empire became a superpower and threatened its neighbors.
      1. The map of Europe had never been before, nor has it been since, so simple: the Russian Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the German Empire ruled huge tracts of today’s Poland, Czech and Slovak Republics, the former Yugoslavia, and the Baltic states.
2. The only areas of expansion open to European great powers were colonies outside Europe and the area of the Balkans where the Turkish Empire seemed to be in terminal decline.

3. The French Republic was falling behind in industry and technology. It had lost the War of 1870 and had to pay huge sums to the Germans and to surrender several crucial territories, such as Alsace and Lorraine, two of the most industrial parts of France.

4. All the European states had to develop intelligence systems to collect secrets about their neighbors and to assess the threat of a sudden attack. Spying and counter-spying became full-time activities and generated fears in high places and in the public.

E. On one level, the Dreyfus case fits into this model, a case of a “German spy” caught in the nick of time by alert French military intelligence. However, two things distinguished this case from a normal spy story: Dreyfus came from a wealthy Alsatian Jewish family, and he happened to be innocent.

II. The case became the greatest scandal in the history of France, nearly caused a civil war, and opened a new phase in the history of the Jews in Europe.

A. Modern Zionism was born when Theodor Herzl, a correspondent for the Vienna Neue Freie Presse and an observer at Dreyfus’s trial, decided that anti-Semitism would never end until the Jews had their own state. Thus, the state of Israel grew out of the Dreyfus affair.

B. The civil war in France had been brewing in latent and open forms since the French Revolution. In the revolution, the Old Regime was literally swept away and replaced by the modern state, created in less than 10 years.

1. The state replaced the ancient provinces with rational departments and established unified administration, currency, and laws.

2. It introduced the first fully secular society, attacked the churches, and subordinated the church to the state, which became an end in itself; Christian freedom was replaced by civic virtue.

3. The consequences of the French Revolution led to a religious civil war against the anti-Catholic measures, a sort of holy war against the revolution, which broke out in 1793 and left France divided into Catholic and anti-Catholic regions.

C. The paradox of an unchanging France plagued by constant revolutions in Paris is the other side of French history. By Dreyfus’s time, there had already been two republics, several monarchies, and one empire.

D. The Franco-Prussian War had ended in military and political catastrophe, the fall of the monarchy, and the revolution involved with the Commune of 1871.

1. The new Third Republic carried on the war until February 1871, but when it decided to accept peace, Paris rebelled, leading to the worst civil war in French history—Paris versus the provinces.

2. Between May 21 and 28, 1871, la semaine sanglante (“the bloody week”), the French army spent eight days clearing resistance. Thousands of Communards and innocent Parisians were executed; numerous others were imprisoned and deported.

3. The Third Republic was born in blood and civil war. It never had a constitution, because left and right could not agree and the specter of the Commune haunted the political scene.

4. The France of Dreyfus’s time still suffered from unhealed divisions, and unfortunately, anti-Jacobin, Catholic, monarchist, and reactionary forces had gained ascendancy in the French army.

III. The identity of Alfred Dreyfus captures in miniature the interconnections of French history, the inner civil war, and the peculiar way in which the status of Jews became a litmus test of attitudes.

A. We saw in the lectures on Burke and Rothschild how Jews became symbols of capitalism, the open society, social mobility, materialism, and anything else that conservatives disliked in modern society.

B. Dreyfus, in addition to his religion, suffered because of his regional origin. He was an Alsatian.

1. In 1871, as part of the peace treaty after the Franco-Prussian War, the new German Empire reclaimed this “long-lost,” ancient German land amid much rejoicing. For the French, regaining Alsace and Lorraine fused with the cry for “revenge” and helped to cause the First World War.

2. Because Alsace had a German heritage, its Jews were overwhelmingly Ashkenazi, often Yiddish-speaking, and still marked by the ghetto mentality by comparison with the Sephardic Jews in the rest of France.

3. In 1861, Jews in France still represented a tiny community of 96,000, but of these, more than 50 percent lived in Alsace, spoke either German or Yiddish, and were “aliens” in French culture.
C. The choice of Alfred Dreyfus as guilty of treason by the French army fitted so many prejudices that it must be called “over-determined.”

IV. The career of Alfred Dreyfus represents an important stage on the way to the world of the 20th century.

A. Dreyfus was born on October 19, 1859, in Mulhouse, an industrial and commercial center of Alsace.
   1. His father was a wealthy textile manufacturer and belonged to a family that thought of itself as primarily French.
   2. After his successful study at the École Polytechnique, Dreyfus decided to use his engineering degree in the French army.
   3. He became an artillery officer in 1889 and joined the general staff in 1894, the only Jew in that extremely important elite corps.

B. On September 26, 1894, the French Army counterintelligence office received the famous bordereau (“note”) that a French spy had found in the wastebasket of the German military attaché at the embassy.
   1. The note indicated that the author was forwarding information on technology, along with troop plans and formations.
   2. The minister of war was informed of the discovery and ordered an immediate investigation, primarily of the general staff.
   3. The search initially found nothing, but an officer had the idea that the traitor might have been a trainee, because they moved around in the general staff. Counterintelligence compared trainee handwritings to the note, and Dreyfus was arrested.
   4. Six handwriting experts could not agree that Dreyfus’s handwriting matched that on the note. One of them kept a copy of the note in his files.
   5. Because the handwriting test had failed, evidence was manufactured, and the minister of war announced that Captain Dreyfus was certainly the spy. Dreyfus was tried and, on December 22, 1894, convicted, stripped of his rank, and condemned to life imprisonment on Devil’s Island.

C. Dreyfus knew he was innocent, as did his wife and brother, who kept looking for a way to break the conspiracy of silence in the army.
   1. In July 1895, Colonel Georges Picquart took over as head of counterintelligence. Picquart was a notorious anti-Semite and an extremely conservative officer.
   2. In March 1896, a second document, the petit bleu (a sheet of telegraph paper) was found in the attaché’s wastebasket.
   3. Picquart suspected at once that Commandant Ferdinand Walzin-Esterhazy, a gunnery officer of loose morals, must be the spy and collected specimens of his handwriting. When Picquart compared Esterhazy’s handwriting with the bordereau, he was convinced.
   4. When Picquart reported the miscarriage of justice to the chief of staff, he was ordered to remain silent and, when he insisted, was transferred to Tunisia.
   5. Rumors of a miscarriage began to trickle out and, on November 10, 1896, Le Matin published a photo of a copy of the original note. A banker to whom Esterhazy owed money recognized the writing and told Mathieu Dreyfus.
   6. The “affair” began at this point in earnest and grew throughout 1897. On January 13, 1898, Émile Zola, France’s most popular novelist, published an article in L’Aurore entitled “J’accuse” (“I accuse”), in which he told the whole story and accused the French establishment of miscarriage of justice, lies, and cover-up.
   7. France split into Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards, along the lines of the civil war that had been raging since 1793.
   8. After a series of intrigues, more cover-ups, a new trial, and violent anti-French demonstrations around the world, the French president, Émile François Loubet (1838–1929), had no choice but to grant amnesty to Dreyfus, which he did on September 19, 1899, without declaring Dreyfus innocent.
   9. Dreyfus returned from Devil’s Island a broken man, old before his time, but determined to fight for his reinstatement. On July 12, 1906, he was declared innocent by court-martial, won reinstatement, and was promoted.

V. The Dreyfus affair marks an important and permanent step on the way to the modern world.

A. The media and the modern technology of reproduction created a worldwide sensation.
1. The mass circulation press in Paris and elsewhere jumped at the chance to exploit the affair commercially and journalistically.

2. World public opinion played a decisive role for the first time and, because of globalization, could make that opinion count.

3. Photography and techniques for printing photographs enabled Col. Picquart to make copies of the evidence before it was doctored and Le Matin to publish the facsimile of the first note, the breakthrough in the case.

B. Anti-Dreyfusard riots and demonstrations occurred across France. Opponents of Dreyfus used racial arguments against him and refused to accept his innocence, even after the fiasco of the Rennes trial and the vindication of 1906.

C. The arms race before the First World War played a crucial role as the context for the case. Robert E. Kaplan has recently advanced the hypothesis that the real background to the cover-up was military.
   1. Kaplan argues that Esterhazy had been planted to deceive the Germans and that the first note was not supposed to be found. Probably, it was not supposed to be written at all, yet the minister of war could not tell the sleuths in counterintelligence to forget about the note and not to seek the identity of its author.
   2. Kaplan makes the behavior of the French into what he calls “simple common sense,” because in view of the stakes involved, the fate of one officer could not, he argues, seem that important. What mattered was to convince the Germans that the French had not succeeded in developing the 75mm gun, a gun that played a decisive role on the Marne in August 1914.

D. Alfred Dreyfus died in Paris on July 12, 1935. Had he lived a little longer, he would have seen the ultimate betrayal of French Jews when the Vichy government between 1940 and 1944 assisted the Nazis in the roundup and deportation of the Jews of France.

Essential Reading:
Martin Burns, France and the Dreyfus Affair.

Supplementary Reading:
Jean-Denis Bredin, The Affair: The Case of Alfred Dreyfus.

Questions to Consider:
1. If we do not accept the Kaplan hypothesis, how do you explain the refusal of the French army to admit that Dreyfus was innocent?
2. Can you think of parallel phenomena in American history where a trial produced such divisions in society?
Lecture Thirty-Six
David Lloyd George—Champion of the Poor

Scope: David Lloyd George, first earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor (1863–1945), is the youngest character in our series and one of the most extraordinary. A Welsh-speaker, Lloyd George was a brilliantly eloquent, forceful, and creative statesman who became famous as British prime minister during the First World War. Elected to Parliament as a Liberal (1890), the young Lloyd George soon became known as a radical. When the Liberals won an overwhelming victory in the election of 1905, Lloyd George became a cabinet minister and, in 1908, Chancellor of the Exchequer (the equivalent of secretary of the treasury). This lecture focuses on Lloyd George’s “people’s budget,” which introduced social security for the first time, along with the battle that ensued and his ultimate victory. Lloyd George transformed British politics, broke the power of the House of Lords, and brought social security to the masses. In these days when “welfare” has become a dirty word, we consider the virtues of the welfare state, which Lloyd George helped to establish. The battle for welfare ends these lectures three years before the guns open fire in August 1914 and the lights go out all over Europe.

Outline

I. With the life of David Lloyd George, we come to the end of this course and to a period recognizably modern. Lloyd George is the first of our lives whose main significance is entirely in the 20th century.
   A. Lloyd George and Winston Churchill led their countries in the two great wars of the 20th century. Each was regarded as “the man who won the war.”
      1. David Lloyd George is also known as the “people’s champion,” author of the “People’s Budget” of 1909, and the architect of the welfare state. Churchill left no such domestic legacy.
      2. No prime minister before David Lloyd George and none after until Jim Callaghan (1976–1979) had so modest a background. As he announced triumphantly on the day he was first elected to Parliament at the age of 27 on March 28, 1890, “the day of the cottage-bred man has at last dawned.”
   B. As always in these lectures, we need to set David Lloyd George into a context. In a letter of December 31, 1903, Churchill wrote to Lord Hugh Cecil: “After all, Lloyd George represents three things—Wales, English Radicalism and Nonconformists, and they are not three things which politicians can overlook” (Chris Wrigley, Lloyd George).

II. The principality of Wales, or Cymru in Welsh, is a southwestern mountainous region of the British Isles.
   A. Welsh farms tended to be small and were rarely owned outright. Only 4.2 percent of the population actually owned the land; the rest was owned by wealthy landlords, a fact that generated unrest in North Wales.
   B. Welsh belongs to the Celtic language family and is descended from a variant of pre-Roman British.
      1. Pronunciation of Welsh is unusually difficult. Visit the “Sounds of Wales” (home.clara.net/wfha/wales/sounds/) to hear a sample.
      2. David Lloyd George grew up in a Welsh-speaking environment; English was his second language. He had an uncanny capacity to use both with equal mastery.
   C. The English conquered Wales but under a Welsh dynasty, the Tudors; they incorporated Wales by an Act of Union in 1536.
      1. From that time until the late 20th century, Wales had no legal identity, no separate school or administrative structures, and no independent Welsh church.
      2. Religion kept Welsh identity alive and resentments fresh; the majority of Welsh people belonged to the Methodist, Congregationalist, or Baptist churches and used the Welsh Bible and hymns in their services.
      3. Only the Anglican Church had the right to collect tithes, to receive state funds, and to determine dogma. Lloyd George took up the cause of “Welsh disestablishment” (that is, abolishing the privileged status of the Anglican church in Wales).
III. The British political system had undergone a sea change in the 19th century, as we saw in the lecture on George Eliot, whose novel Middlemarch took place at the time of the First Reform Act of 1832.

A. To appreciate the role of party in Lloyd George’s time and since, we need to look again at the peculiar structure of the modern United Kingdom, which is a constitutional monarchy without a constitution.
   1. In the lecture on Queen Victoria, we saw that the monarch gradually surrendered her powers over her long reign.
   2. The prime ministers had begun to exercise the crown prerogative, that is, “the residue of the discretionary or arbitrary authority which at any given time is left in the hands of the crown” (Dicey, “Introduction to the Study of the Law of the Constitution”).
   3. The House of Lords acted like the Senate under the U.S. Constitution, but their lordships represented themselves only. The 21 bishops as members of the Lords represented the Church of England. The House of Lords was also the equivalent of the Supreme Court after the Appellate Jurisdiction Act of 1876 established that 12 “law lords” would hear appeals.
   4. There were some 700 hereditary peers who transferred their rights to sit to their children, together with their titles. This was one aspect of British public life that Lloyd George truly loathed.

B. The House of Commons had become, by 1890, the more important of the two houses, but Lloyd George made the House of Commons into the dominant branch in his battle to secure the “People’s Budget.” He changed the constitution forever in 1911 with the Parliament Act.
   1. The House of Commons, like the American Congress, works on the “first past the post system,” a seat goes to the candidate with one vote more than the opponent or opponents.
   2. The system distorts the underlying realities. In the 1906 Liberal landslide that swept Lloyd George and his party to power, the result in seats distorted the reality of opinion in the country.
   3. From the 1880s on, party became ever more important in British politics.
   4. The people vote for a government, not for an individual member, no matter how popular.
   5. In 1913, Lloyd George commented, “party government is an essential part of the government of this country.”
   6. The combination of first-past-the-post elections, plus the growth of the electorate, the growing power of the House of Commons, and the absence of federal home rule for Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and the English regions, gave a potentially dictatorial power to a cabinet with a strong and stable majority.

C. The existence of English radicalism gave Lloyd George a public that, as a pure spokesman of Wales, he could never have had.
   1. English radicalism is hard to define; it is an amalgam of nonconformist religious traditions, individual conscience, and congregational control of preaching.
   2. The industrializing cities generated movements for rights for workers, shopkeepers, teachers, clerks, and others.
   3. The supporters of the French Revolution in England championed the ideas of rights, equalities, and opportunities.
   4. Hostility to the Anglican Church and to the landed aristocratic class united English and Welsh radicals. Lloyd George, the son of a schoolmaster, hated the world of the upper classes.
   5. Unlike Marx and Engels, Lloyd George hated landowners much more than he hated businessmen, many of whom, like himself, were self-made.

IV. Lloyd George’s life incorporated all the elements of radicalism and social and political change that made Edwardian Britain so astonishing a scene.

A. He was born on January 17, 1863, in Manchester, into a comfortable, middle-class Welsh family.
   1. His father died when he was a year old, and the family returned to Wales to live with his mother’s younger brother, Richard Lloyd, a skilled shoemaker and member of the local Baptist chapel.
   2. Uncle Lloyd provided moral, religious, and intellectual guidance to young David, and through him, Lloyd George learned how to be a lay preacher.
   3. Later in his political career, Lloyd George could speak with religious hwyl (“fervor”) at will and would combine this ability with English wit.

B. Lloyd George’s faith, like his politics, was more complicated than that of his uncle’s or his constituents.
   1. He was fiercely ambitious and found the chapel often suffocating and narrow. He had an ambivalent attitude toward his home in Wales, as well.
2. Yet his habits changed little as he rose to the summit of political power. Even when he was prime minister, he lived with his Welsh family, had a Welsh-speaking servant, and gave as few grand dinners as he could.

3. He loved his wife, Margaret, wrote her constantly, and relied on her common sense, but he was consistently unfaithful and, by 1913, had begun an affair with his secretary. He married her in 1943 at the age of 80 when Margaret died.

4. This complexity made him subtle, devious, charming, adaptable, and astonishingly effective in politics, where all those traits work well. After a fierce political battle, he would “take off his war paint,” charm his former foes, and work out a compromise.

C. Lloyd George owed his political career to Wales, but he soon outgrew nationalist and regional politics.
   1. The 1880s and 1890s were times of ferment in Wales as the depression hit small farmers. The burden of tithes to the established church made Welsh disestablishment an economic issue, as well as a religious one.
   2. Elected to the House of Commons in a by-election in 1890, Lloyd George spent his first six years in Parliament playing the Welsh card on church, temperance, and radical issues. He became known in English nonconformist circles.

D. Lloyd George became a national figure by opposing the Boer War in 1899–1902.
   1. Two Afrikaner-speaking small states in South Africa forbade uitlanders (foreigners) to settle in their territories, thus preventing big British mining interests from seizing their assets.
   2. British public opinion, fiercely patriotic, was outraged, and the Conservative government declared war in October 1899.
   3. Lloyd George condemned the war from the beginning and was physically attacked at one meeting and nearly killed at another.
   4. As the war ground down, Lloyd George’s prestige grew, and he augmented it by organizing much of Wales in a tax strike in 1903 to protest subsidies for Anglican and Catholic schools.
   5. In 1903, he became more famous yet for his brilliant attacks on Joseph Chamberlain’s plans to end free trade and introduce imperial preferences and taxes on imported food.

E. The Liberal landslide of 1906 gave the government a mandate for sweeping reforms. At the age of 42, Lloyd George reached his first position of power.
   1. From 1905 to 1908, he served as president of the Board of Trade, where he showed his knack for combining parliamentary brilliance and administrative mastery.
   2. In 1908, Herbert Henry Asquith became prime minister. He made Lloyd George Chancellor of the Exchequer, the second most powerful office in the cabinet.
   3. In his first speech on old-age pensions on June 15, 1908, the new chancellor announced that the problems of old age, the sick, and the unemployed were the business of the state.
   4. On April 29, 1909, Lloyd George presented his budget, an annual parliamentary ritual. He faced the challenges of financing the welfare proposals without using tariffs or excises. As chancellor, he had to find money for the 1908 old-age pension and the expense of armaments caused by the Anglo-German naval rivalry.
   5. His solution was direct taxes, including a 20 percent tax on earned gains on land and higher income tax on unearned income and on incomes over £3,000.
   6. It was a genuine people’s budget, because for the first time, it declared that the state had a right to tax the rich to help the poor.
   7. An overwhelming majority in the House of Lords rejected the budget in November 1908, beginning a constitutional crisis that required two general elections and a national agitation to quell.
   8. After King Edward VII died in 1910, his brother George V finally agreed that if the Lords continued to veto the budget legislation, he would create enough peers to pack the House. The lords gave in, and the 1911 Parliament Act, which drastically cut the powers of the lords, was passed.

F. The “cottage-bred man” had carried out his revolution, changing the British constitution forever and initiating the welfare state.
   1. National insurance was established (the equivalent of Social Security in the United States).
   2. The Parliament Act broke the rule of the old upper classes forever and established the supremacy of the elected chamber. The way to a fuller democracy was open.
V. It is altogether fitting that we conclude this historical portrait gallery with the life of David Lloyd George. His rich, complex personality is fully the equal of any of the great human beings whose company we have been privileged to share.

A. His unique genius, a combination of courage, wit, administrative efficiency, and political guile, made him a superb coordinator of a complex society at war.

B. The “Welsh wizard” had a magical way with words and an uncanny feel for what the people needed.

C. Lloyd George was modern, not so much in his instinctive hatred of the unequal distribution of wealth and income in his society as in his use of the power of the state to deal with it.

1. He promised his constituents in 1905 that he would be the “minister of the democracy,” and he believed that democracy required that incomes be fairly distributed and that the state had an obligation to help the poor.

2. We enter the modern era and close this series of lectures by asking: Was he right?

Essential Reading:
Chris Wrigley, Lloyd George.

Supplementary Reading:
John Grigg, Lloyd George: The Young Lloyd George.

Questions to Consider:
1. Does maintenance of an active democracy require equality of income and wealth?
2. Is the state the right agency to provide for the welfare of the poor?
absolutism: The political doctrine and practice of unlimited, centralized authority and absolute sovereignty, as vested especially in a monarch. The essence of such a system is that the ruling power is not subject to regularized challenge or check by any other agency, be it judicial, legislative, religious, economic, or electoral.

Ashkenazi: The Hebrew word for “German”; applied to all Jews who used a German dialect written in Hebrew characters and, by extension, all Jews north of the Alps and east of the Rhine.

assignat: Paper money issued in France as currency during the revolution. Its security rested on the value of seized royal, noble, and church property, but it depreciated because too much was issued and too few sales of land took place to redeem it.

Bonapartism: A political movement in 19th-century France that looked to the model of Napoleon I, strong executive power, and glory abroad as a counter to Jacobinism on the left and reaction and the Church on the right. It has been called the “dictatorship of the center.”

concordat: A pact, with the force of international law, concluded between the ecclesiastical authority and the secular authority on matters of mutual concern; most especially a pact between the pope and a temporal head of state for the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs in the territory of the latter.

deism: Deists believed that God and nature were essentially the same. They rejected revelation and the supernatural doctrines of Christianity in the name of natural religion.

département: The new units of provincial France after the revolution. The whole country was divided into 83 equal squares of territory.

dialectic: G. W. F. Hegel applied the term dialectic to the logical method of his philosophy, which proceeds from thesis through antithesis to synthesis. Hegel’s method was appropriated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in their philosophy of dialectical materialism.

division of labor: A central idea in Adam Smith’s The Wealth of Nations (1776), which attributes the great expansion in production to the rational and consecutive assignment of limited but specialized productive tasks in the modern machine-based industrial system.

dvorianstvo: The Russian term for nobility, which comes from the word for “house” or “court.” It expresses the dependence of nobles in Russia on the tsar.

Elector: One of the seven electoral princes (three of whom were archbishops) who had the right to “elect” the Holy Roman Emperor of the German nation.

Encyclopédie; ou, Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts, et des métiers: Edited by Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert, the Encyclopédie was rational and secular and expressed the new systematic view of reality.

Enlightenment: A movement of ideas that is difficult to define easily. Dictionaries start with the image receiving mental or spiritual “light.” The “light” in the 18th century was no longer the light of revealed truth but the light of human reason. This development was unique to Europe and is an essential element in the evolution of modern society.

Estate: The nearest equivalent in English to stand or ordre, which described corporate identities in Old Regime Europe. Its most famous application was in the name Estates General, the recall of which by a frightened Louis XVI of France marked a crucial stage in the fall of the French absolute monarchy.

feudalism: A system by which land was held by tenants from lords. As developed in medieval England and France, the king was the supreme lord with numerous levels of lesser lords, down to the occupying tenant. The system represented the disintegration of central authority.

gentry: The lower English nobility, often without any titles but with ancient lineages, country houses, and a distinct sense of their place in society.

ghetto: An enclosed quarter in European cities in which Jews were forced to live.

hwyl: A Welsh word for “passion” or “fervor,” used about oratory.
**ilustrado**: A Spanish term for a disciple of the Enlightenment.

**intelligentsia**: A Russian term to describe the class composed of writers, artists, musicians, and others involved as readers or critics in intellectual life.

**invisible hand**: Attributed to Adam Smith; the idea that market mechanisms operate to convert the individual search for profit into public benefits by a kind of invisible providence of which the individual is unaware.

**Jacobin**: The most famous political group of the French Revolution, which became identified with extreme egalitarianism and violence and led the revolutionary government from mid-1793 to mid-1794.

**junker**: Term used to describe the Prussian country squires from the old German term for a “young lord.”

**Kondratieff cycles**: The so-called “long waves” of business and economic activity, generally reckoned to be 50 years in duration, named after the Russian economic historian N. D. Kondratieff (1892–1938).

**labor theory of value**: The value of a good derives from the effort of production, based on supply. Ricardo asserted that the cost of production can be reduced to the cost of labor, either paid in wages or used as capital.

**Latifundia**: A great estate owned by a landlord, found in Spain and Italy.

**leitmotif**: A leading musical theme in a Wagner opera, often connected to a character or an idea.

**levée en masse**: Total mobilization of French society for war, according to the decree of August 23, 1793, which declared that all French men, women, and children were “in a permanent state of requisition for service in the armies.”

**magazine**: The original idea was a metaphor, because the meaning of the word is “a place where goods are stored.” In 1731, Edward Cave founded *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, as he wrote, “to treasure up, as in a Magazine, the most remarkable Pieces” from the many newspapers then circulating.

**Magyar**: A name for Hungarian as a nationality and the language known as Hungarian, which is member of the Finno-Ugric family. The Magyar language has affinities with Finnish and Turkish but is not an Indo-European tongue.

**Malthusian**: The adjective taken from the name of the Rev. T. R. Malthus (1766–1834), whose theory that human population would be limited only by the limits of the food supply became an essential part of the thought of 19th-century economists and politicians.

**mir**: The peasant commune in Russia under serfdom and afterward, in which land was communally held and, in some places, regularly reallocated to families that had more or fewer mouths to feed.

**natural selection**: The central principle used by Charles Darwin to explain the variety of plants and animals. It rests on the idea that the struggle for survival “selects” over time certain adaptations of form, color, behavior, or structure that have proved themselves.

**nonconformist**: All Protestant churches and sects in Britain that were not part of the established Church of England and would not “conform” to the 39 articles of dogma of the Church of England.

**non-expedit**: A papal or episcopal injunction against certain activities by faithful Roman Catholics; most famous as a prohibition on taking part in the politics of the Italian kingdom in the 19th century.

**Old Regime**: The English version of the French *l’ancien régime*, which describes the world before 1789 of particular, not general, rights; of *Estates*; and of irregular, overlapping administrative jurisdictions, weights, and measures.

**parlement**: A French court, descended from the medieval supreme court, which by the 18th century, had developed into a semi-parliamentary body with the right to register the king’s edicts. The *parlements* were the embodiment of privileges. Thirteen of these sovereign, quasi-judicial bodies operated in different places with different traditions and legal bases.

**philosophes**: The term used to describe the leading figures of the French Enlightenment.
**Pietism**: The name for the movement (originated by Philipp Jakob Spener late in the 17th century) for the revival and advancement of piety in the Lutheran Church by emphasizing conversion experience in the soul rather than external worship.

**plane polarized light**: A technique by which crystallographic structures in substances can be analyzed by placing a specimen between two glass planes and shining light through the two planes and the material. Used in the 19th century and still used today.

**proletariat**: In Marxian theory, the class of exploited workers and wage earners who depend on the sale of their labor for their means of existence.

**public sphere**: A term coined by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas to describe the new “public spaces” in the 18th century, such as coffeehouses or literary journals, in which people could gather for “conversation,” irrespective of rank or class.

**Realpolitik**: A completely unemotional or ethical attitude to practical politics; policy is determined by considerations of power and national interest, rather than by moral or ideological considerations.

**remonstrance**: The “right” or the power of the 13 French sovereign parlements to block royal decrees and register laws, which allowed them to point out any breach of monarchic tradition. It was a sort of veto power that the king could override if he wished.

**Restoration**: The attempt to restore monarchy, divine right of kings, religious observance, and social conservatism after the defeat of Napoleon; also the name for the period 1815–1848.

**Risorgimento**: Literally, “resurgence”; used generally to describe the rise of the national idea in Italy in the 19th century.

**Roman law**: The law of ancient Rome, which became the legal system in most Western countries except England, where common law based on precedent and adversarial proceedings continued. It formed the basis of the law codes of most countries of continental Europe west of the Russian border. It is frequently called civil law.

**Romanticism**: A powerful movement in art, literature, and sensibility that began just before 1789 but swelled in reaction to the French Revolution and Napoleonic Empire. Romanticism can be seen as a rejection of the precepts of order, calm, harmony, balance, idealization, and rationality that typified Classicism in general and late 18th-century Neoclassicism in particular. It was also, to some extent, a reaction against the Enlightenment and against 18th-century rationalism and physical materialism in general. Romanticism emphasized the individual, the subjective, the irrational, the imaginative, the personal, the spontaneous, the emotional, the visionary, and the transcendental.

**section**: One of the 48 electoral districts into which the city of Paris was divided and that sent representatives to the city government, known as the Commune de Paris.

**Sephardim**: The Hebrew word for “Spanish”; applied to those expelled from the Spanish and Portuguese Empires after 1492 who used Ladino as their native tongue. Castilian Spanish written in Hebrew letters.

**Slavophile**: A term for certain Russian intellectuals who rejected Western ways of life and praised the differences of the Russian way.

**South Sea Bubble**: The speculation mania that ruined many British investors in 1720. The bubble, or hoax, centered on the fortunes of the South Sea Company, founded in 1711 to trade (mainly in slaves) with Spanish America.

**suffragette**: A woman who campaigned with militancy and civil disobedience in the United Kingdom in the years before 1914 to gain the right to vote.

**take-off**: The term used in economic history to describe the “spurt” in growth rates that many developing economies experience as industrialization reaches a certain stage.

**temperament**: A musical term to describe a system of tuning instruments by equal intervals made up of semitone units, each of which is set exactly at a 12th of an octave. As a result, some intervals are a little flat and some are a little sharp in relation to their absolute harmonic relations.
**temporal power**: The doctrine that the pope, in order to guarantee his spiritual freedom, must be a sovereign ruler in the world of states.

**Tory**: A term used from the 18th century on to describe the main British conservative party, as well as attitudes of mind.

**Whig**: The slang term for the more liberal, progressive group in 18th- and 19th-century English politics.

**Zollverein**: The German word for “customs union,” but in particular, the one led by Prussia that developed between 1819 and 1834.
Bibliography

General Reference for the Course:

Essential Reading:


Darwin, Charles. *The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. London/New York: Penguin USA,1985. This great work is also wonderful to read, with astonishing descriptive passages. Easy to see why it became an instant bestseller in 1859.


Ferguson, Niall. *The House of Rothschild: Money’s Prophets 1798–1848*. New York: Penguin USA, 1999. This is the only work to use the Rothschild family archive and is essential for anyone interested in their extraordinary success.

Fontane, Theodor. *Effi Briest*. Hugh Rorrison and Helen Chambers, trans. New York: Penguin, 2001. This is the novel of Bismarck’s Germany by its most perceptive observer, who was Bismarck’s direct contemporary.

Fraser, Antonia. *Marie Antoinette: The Journey*. New York: Anchor Books, 2002. Lady Antonia Fraser has written more than 30 biographies and is one of the most successful biographers of our time.

Fulbrook, Mary. *Historical Theory: Ways of Imagining the Past*. New York: Routledge, 2002. There is no good piece of theory that explores the relationship between biography and history, but this new book by an excellent historian discusses the issues and does not use fancy jargon.
Geison, Gerald L. *The Private Science of Louis Pasteur*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996. This fine study makes it possible for a layperson to understand how Pasteur managed to do the experiments he did. It uses his original lab notes to do so.


Plumb, J. H. *Sir Robert Walpole: The Making of a Statesman*. London: Cresset Press, 1956. There is nothing in print, hardback or paperback, on Walpole. This is the book to read, if you can find it.


Smith, Adam. *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1991. Smith wrote beautifully, and his classic deserves reading and rereading. It is a superb piece of observation of human nature, as well as the most important work ever written in economic theory.


Strachey, Lytton. *Queen Victoria*. London/New York: Penguin, 2003. This biography of Victoria may not correspond to the latest academic research but it cannot be beaten as a work of art in its own right.


Wrigley, Chris. *Lloyd George* (Historical Association Studies). Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002. If you have time to read one brief life of Lloyd George, make this it. It allows you to hear Lloyd George speak.
Supplementary Reading:


Bredin, Jean-Denis. *The Affair: The Case of Alfred Dreyfus*. This is an ingenious study by a French lawyer who looks at the case with a professional eye. He also pays attention to the role of Theodore Herzl and the foundation of modern Zionism.

Burke, Edmund. *The Portable Edmund Burke*. Isaac Kramnick, ed. A useful selection of Burke’s main writings; helpful for readers who want to see connections between Burke and the early American Republic.


Fontane Theodor. *Effi Briest*, Hugh Rorrison and Helen Chambers, trans. Theodor Fontane (1819-1898) was a direct contemporary of Bismarck and the finest social novelist of his generation. *Effi Briest*, like many of his works, explores the inner world of the Junker aristocracy and the wider context of the empire Bismarck created.


Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993. One of the most influential modern works to claim that women see the world fundamentally differently from men.

Grigg, John. *Lloyd George: The Young Lloyd George*. London/New York: Penguin Books, 2002. This is a wonderful biography that covers the period before the lecture, but the book we need, *The People’s Champion*, is out of print. This one will have to do.


Hibbert, Christopher. *The Days of the French Revolution*. Quill, 1999. Focuses on the famous days of the revolution, including July 14, 1789, when the Bastille fell, and others.


Mayr, Ernst. *What Evolution Is*. New York: Basic Books, 2002. The greatest living evolutionist published this astonishing work at the age of 97. It is an excellent introduction to evolution as we now understand it, a century and a half after the publication of *The Origin of Species*. 


Pierenkemper, Toni and Tilly, Richard H. *The German Economy during the Nineteenth Century*. A short, readable history of German economic development during the period when the Krupp concern grew to world status.


Steinberg, Jonathan, *Yesterday’s Deterrent: Tirpitz and the Birth of the German Battle*, Modern Revivals in History. An attempt to trace the way in which naval expansion came to dominate German politics in the 1890s. It sheds light on the "military-industrial complex" which gave Imperial Germany its special character.

Steinberg, Jonathan. *Why Switzerland?* Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. This is the only general study of Switzerland and should help to offer background to Rousseau.

Stokes, Donald E. *Pasteur’s Quadrant: Basic Science and Technological Innovation*. A recent study of the interrelation between science and its applications as seen in the career of Pasteur, who made—unusually—great contributions in both fields.


