

CHAPTER
8

CHAPTERS IN BRIEF

Nationalist Revolutions Sweep the West, 1789–1900

Summary

CHAPTER OVERVIEW *Spurred by the French Revolution, Latin American colonies won independence. In Europe, liberals and radicals pushed for change but conservatives resisted. Nationalism spread throughout Europe, and Germany and Italy formed as nations. Artistic and intellectual movements emphasized nature and feelings, true life, and “impressions” of a subject or moment.*

1 Latin American Peoples Win Independence

KEY IDEA *Spurred by discontent and Enlightenment ideas, peoples in Latin America fought colonial rule.*

In the early 1800s, colonial peoples throughout Latin America followed the example of the French Revolution. In the name of freedom and equality, they fought for their independence.

In Latin America, society was divided into six classes of people. *Peninsulares*—those born in Spain—were at the top. Next came creoles, or Spaniards who had been born in Latin America. Below them were mestizos, with mixed European and Indian ancestry. Next were mulattos, with mixed European and African ancestry, and Africans. At the bottom were Indians.

The first movement for independence was the French colony of Saint Domingue, on the island of Hispaniola. Almost all of the people who lived in the colony were slaves of African origin. In 1791, about 100,000 of them rose in revolt. Toussaint L'Ouverture became the leader. By 1801, he had moved to the eastern part of the island and freed the slaves there. In 1804, the former colony declared its independence as Haiti.

Meanwhile in other parts of Latin America, creoles felt that they were unfairly treated by the government and the *peninsulares*. This bad feeling boiled over when Napoleon overthrew the king of Spain and named his own brother as king. Creoles in Latin America had no loyalty to the new king and revolted. However, even after the old king was restored, they did not give up their fight for freedom.

Two leaders pushed much of South America to independence. Simón Bolívar was a writer, fighter, and political thinker. He survived defeats and exile to win independence for Venezuela in 1821. José de San Martín helped win independence for Argentina in 1816 and Chile in 1818. Bolívar led their combined armies to a great victory in 1824

that gave independence to all the former Spanish colonies.

Turmoil continued in the region. Local leaders disagreed and split the new countries up into smaller units. In 1830, the territory of Gran Colombia divided into Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

In Mexico, mestizos and Indians led the fight for independence. The struggle began in 1810 when Miguel Hidalgo, a village priest, called for a revolt against Spanish rule. Creoles united with the Spanish government to put down this revolt by the lower classes, whom they feared. Fighting continued until 1815, when the creoles won. In 1820, a new government took charge in Spain. Fearing that they would lose their rights this time, the creoles now united with the rebels and fought for independence. In 1821, Spain accepted Mexico's independence. In 1823, the region of Central America separated itself from Mexico. In 1841, the United Provinces of Central America split into five republics.

In Brazil, independence took a different turn. When Napoleon's armies entered Portugal in 1807, the royal family escaped to Brazil, its largest colony. For the next 14 years, it was the center of the Portuguese empire. By the time Napoleon was defeated, the people of Brazil wanted their independence. In 1822, 8,000 creoles signed a paper asking the son of Portugal's king to rule an independent Brazil. He agreed, and Brazil became free that year through a bloodless revolt.

2 Europe Faces Revolutions

KEY IDEA *Liberal and nationalist uprisings challenged the old conservative order of Europe.*

In the first half of the 1800s, three forces struggled for power within the countries of Europe. Conservatives supported the kings who had ruled these lands for many centuries. These were nobles and other people who owned large amounts of

property. Liberals wanted to give more power to elected legislatures. They were typically middle-class merchants and business people. They wanted to limit voting rights to people who were educated and owned property. Radicals wanted the end of rule by kings and full voting rights for all people, even the poor.

At the same time, another movement arose in Europe—nationalism. This was the belief that a person's loyalty should go not to the country's ruler but to the nation itself. Nationalists thought that many factors linked people to one another. First was nationality, or a common ethnic ancestry. Shared language, culture, history, and religion were also seen as ties that connected people. People sharing these traits were thought to have a right to a land they could call their own. Groups with their own government were called nation-states. Leaders began to see that this feeling could be a powerful force for uniting a people. The French Revolution was a prime example of this.

The first people to win self-rule during this period were the Greeks. For centuries, Greece had been part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1821, Greeks revolted against this Turkish rule. Rulers in Europe did not like the idea of revolts, but the Greek cause was popular. Other nations gave aid to the Greeks, helping to defeat the Ottomans' forces in 1827. The Greeks won their independence by 1830.

Other revolts broke out. In 1830, the Belgians declared their independence from rule by the Dutch. Nationalists began a long struggle to unify all of Italy, which had been broken into many different states. Poles revolted against Russian rule. Conservatives managed to put down these rebellions. However, new ones broke out again in 1848 among Hungarians and Czechs. Once again, they were put down forcefully.

Events differed in France. Riots in 1830 forced the king to flee and put a new king in his place. A new revolt broke out in 1848 that overthrew the king and established a republic. However, the radicals who had won this victory began arguing over how much France should be changed. Some wanted only political changes. Others wanted social and economic changes that would help the poor. When these forces fought in the streets, the French gave up on the radical program. They introduced a new government, with a legislature and a strong president. The new president was Louis-Napoleon, Napoleon Bonaparte's nephew. He later named

himself emperor of France. He built railroads and promoted the growth of France's industry. The economy revived and more people had jobs.

Russia in the early 1800s had yet to build an industrial economy. The biggest problem was that serfdom still existed there. Peasants were bound to the nobles whose land they worked. Russia's rulers did not wish to free the serfs, though. They feared they would lose the support of the nobles. In the 1850s, the Russian army lost a war to take over part of the Ottoman Empire. The new ruler of Russia, Alexander II, decided that Russia's lack of a modern economy caused the defeat. He decided to begin many reforms.

The first, in 1861, was to free the serfs. Though it seemed bold, Alexander's move went only part way. Nobles kept half their land and were paid for the half that went to the peasants. The former serfs were not given the land. They had to pay for it, and this debt kept them still tied to the land. The czar's efforts to make changes ended short when he was assassinated in 1881. Alexander III, his successor, brought back tight control over the country and moved to make the economy more industrial.

3 Nationalism Case Study: Italy and Germany

KEY IDEA *The force of nationalism contributed to the formation of two new nations and a new political order in Europe.*

Nationalism can be a force uniting people who are divided from others like themselves. The case studies on Germany and Italy will show this. However, nationalism can also cause the break-up of a state. This may occur when a group resists being part of a state. The Greeks in the Ottoman empire are an example. Finally, nationalism can pull different groups together to build a nation-state. The United States is a good example of this.

In the late 1800s, feelings of nationalism threatened to break apart three aging empires. The Austrian Empire was forced to split in two parts, Austria and Hungary. However, nationalist feeling continued to plague these rulers for 40 years and the kingdoms later broke up into several smaller states. In Russia, harsh rule and a policy of forcing other peoples to adopt Russian ways helped produce a revolution in 1917 that overthrew the czar. The Ottoman Empire, like the other two, broke apart around the time of World War I.

Italians used national feeling to build a nation, not destroy an empire. Large parts of Italy were ruled by the kings of Austria and Spain. Nationalists tried to unite the nation in 1848, but the revolt was beaten down. Hopes rested with the Italian king of the state of Piedmont-Sardinia. His chief minister, Count Cavour, worked to expand the king's control over other areas of the north. Meanwhile, Giuseppe Garibaldi led an army of patriots that won control of southern areas. He put those areas under control of the king. In 1866, the area around Venice was added to the king's control. Four years later, the king completed the uniting of Italy.

Germany had also been divided into many different states for many centuries. Since 1815, 39 states had joined in a league called the German Confederation. Prussia and Austria-Hungary controlled this group. Over time, Prussia rose to become more powerful. Leading this move was prime minister Otto von Bismarck. He joined with Austria to gain control of new lands. He then quickly turned against Austria, defeating it in war to gain even more territory. Other German states formed a new confederation that Prussia alone controlled. Bismarck's next step was to win the loyalty of the remaining German areas in the south. He purposefully angered a weak France so that it would declare war on Prussia. When the Prussian army won, Bismarck reached his goal. The war with France had given the southern German states a nationalistic feeling. They joined the other states in naming the king of Prussia as head of united Germany.

As a result of these events, the balance of power in Europe had changed. Germany and Britain were the strongest powers, followed by France. Austria, Russia, and Italy were all even weaker.

4 Revolutions in the Arts

KEY IDEA Artistic and intellectual movements both reflected and fueled changes in Europe in the 1800s.

In the early 1800s, the Enlightenment was replaced by another movement, called romanticism. This movement in art and ideas showed great interest in nature and in the thoughts and feelings of the individual person. Gone was the idea that reason and order were good things. Romantic thinkers valued feeling, not reason, and nature, not society. Romantic thinkers held idealized views of the past as simpler, better times. They valued the common people. As a result, they enjoyed folk sto-

ries, songs, and traditions. They also supported calls for democracy. However, not all romantic artists and thinkers supported these ideas.

Romantic writers had different themes. French writer Victor Hugo—who wrote *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*—told stories of the poor individual who fights against an unfair society. English poet William Wordsworth celebrated the beauty of nature. Novels such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* were horror tales about good and evil.

Romanticism was important in music as well. Composers wrote music that tried to appeal to the hearts and souls of listeners. The German Ludwig van Beethoven was the foremost of these composers.

In the middle 1800s, however, the grim realities of industrial life made the dreams of romanticism seem silly. A new movement arose—realism. Artists and writers tried to show life as it really was. They used their art to protest social conditions that they thought were unfair. French writer Emile Zola's books revealed harsh working conditions for the poor, which led to new laws aimed at helping those people. In England, Charles Dickens wrote many novels that showed how poor people suffered in the new industrial economy.

A new device, the camera, was developed in this period. Photographers could use it to capture a real moment on film. In the 1860s, Parisian painters reacted against the realistic style. This new art style—impressionism—used light and shimmering colors to produce an “impression” of a subject or moment. Composers created moods with their music. They used combinations of musical instruments and tone patterns to create mental pictures. Things like the sight of the sea or a warm day were favorites of the composers.

Review

1. **Making Inferences** How did the divisions of Mexican society affect the movement to independence?

Drawing Conclusions

2. Explain how the freeing of Russia's serfs in 1861 was an example of both liberal and conservative thought.
3. Give one example each of how nationalism was a unifying and a destructive force.
4. **Determining Main Ideas** How did artistic ideas change in the 1800s?